

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES
IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1854-1908)

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ABSTRACT

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1854-1908)

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This dissertation explores the establishment, development and activities of international news agencies, particularly Reuter and Havas in the Ottoman Empire; and their relations with the Ottoman State. While the European imperialism dominated the nineteenth century, international communication was one of the main necessities of this expansion. The agencies, which mainly began their services in the mid-nineteenth century, became one of the significant tools of this expansion with the advent of telegraph. After occasional reporting of Havas in Istanbul during the Crimean War, both the French agency and Reuter established their offices in the Ottoman capital in the mid-1860s. However, the Ottoman State perceived the agencies as a “threat” because of their “malicious and detrimental” stories that they cabled to Europe and distributed in Istanbul. Yet, the Ottoman State lacked the institutional groundwork in order to manage the press. The relations between the Ottoman State and the international news agencies were interdependent and they pursued to benefit from the capabilities of each other. However, mutual struggle was inevitable when their interests conflicted. The agencies shared the world according to their respective empires’ political sphere but Havas and Reuter were in a hard

competition in Istanbul. They also served as instruments of their respective governments in order to penetrate into the Ottoman Empire at a time of European imperialism. However, the Ottoman State was not an object but a subject in the face of this penetration; and tried to handle them in an active way.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, News Agency, Press, Reuters, Havas

ÖZ

OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NDA ULUSLARARASI HABER AJANSLARI (1854-1908)

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Bu tez uluslararası haber ajanslarının-özellikle Reuter ve Havas- Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda kuruluşlarını, faaliyetlerini ve Osmanlı Devleti ile ilişkilerini konu edinmektedir. 19. yüzyıl Avrupa emperyalizmine sahne olurken uluslararası iletişim bu yayılcı uygulamaların önemli ihtiyaçlarından biriydi. 19. yüzyılın ortasında yaygın olarak hizmete başlayan uluslararası haber ajansları telgrafın icadıyla birlikte bu yayılcılığın önemli araçlarından biri oldu. Havas Kırım Savaşı'nda İstanbul'a muhabir gönderirken 1860'ların ortasından itibaren Havas ile Reuter Osmanlı Devleti'nin başkentinde bürolar açtılar. Ajanslar Osmanlı basını için haber kaynağı olurken ticaret çevresi de bundan istifade etti. Osmanlı Devleti ise kısa sürede ajansların en mühim müşterisi haline geldi. Ancak Osmanlı Devleti çok geçmeden ajansların Avrupa'ya yolladığı ve İstanbul'da servis ettiği haberleri "kötü niyetli ve düşmanca" olmalarından dolayı "tehdit" olarak görmeye başladı. Buna karşın Osmanlı Devleti'nin basını idare etmek için kurumsal altyapısı mevcut değildi. Osmanlı Devleti ile ajanslar arasında "karşılıklı bağımlılık ilişkisi" bulunduğundan iki taraf da birbirlerinin imkânlarından istifade etmeyi denediler.

Menfaatler çakışınca ise karşılıklı mücadele kaçınılmaz oldu. Uluslararası haber ajansları kendi aralarında işbirliği yapıp merkezlerinin bulunduğu devletlerin siyasi etki alanlarına göre dünyayı paylaşırken Osmanlı Devleti için Havas ile Reuter büyük rekabet içine girdi. Emperyalizm sürecinde Avrupa devletlerinin birer araçları olan ajanslar Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda nüfuz edinme arayışlarının bir parçası oldular. Osmanlı Devleti ise bunun karşısında bir obje olmamış; verdiği mücadele ile özne olmayı denemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Haber Ajansı, Basın, Reuters, Havas

To My Mother and Father

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOA	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives).
CUP	The Committee of Union and Progress
R.A.	Reuters Archives in London

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“If information is power, whoever rules the world’s telecommunication system commands the world.”¹

Peter J. Hugill

At a large dinner in honour of a renowned New York surgeon, a newly wed, I happened to be seated next to the charming bride. At once she started to shower with unending praise of her “marvellous, wonderful” husband. While I was politely giving her my undivided attention, the soup course was served. In crescendo she continued to praise her great surgeon. The soup was taken away untouched. The fish course was brought. Still she talked. The fish was removed untouched. By the time entrée arrived, she suddenly became interested in food but asked: “And what do you do?” “Did you ever hear of the Associated Press?” I asked. Balancing a forkful, she exclaimed: “Oh, yes, certainly. My husband takes it. He takes all the newspapers.” The lady was just one of millions who could have given no better answer.²

The quotation belongs to Kent Cooper who was General Manager of Associated Press between 1925 and 1948. He narrates this memoir in his autobiography. The response of the lady gives a great idea about what the news agencies were and how they were perceived in those years. That is the reason why it deserves to take a long quotation. Keeping this memoir in mind it would be meaningful to give a basic definition of a news agency; reminding that it though belongs to 1929 but the philosophy and practice have remained unchanged:

News or telegraph agencies are correspondence bureaus, whose special characteristic lies in the transmission of news reports. They are enterprises,

¹ Peter J. Hugill, *Global Communications Since 1844: Geopolitics and Technology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 2.

² Kent Cooper, *Kent Cooper and The Associated Press: An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1959), p.3.

which systematically gather news in the fastest possible way and, after reviewing and editing this, transmit it to newspapers and other interested parties in the most rapid manner possible.³

A news agency was also called wire service during its foundations since it owed its existence on the invention of telegraph. It is an organisation and business that gathers, writes and delivers news from a nation or the world to mainly media organisations. Its primary consumers have been newspapers; but government agencies and companies interested in trade and stock-exchange have also used them.⁴ The range of consumers has increased with the advent of new technological tools in communication such as radio, television broadcasters and lastly the internet. Shortly, they have become invisible dealer of news and information services to the most of media.

Meantime, throughout the history, the empires or the nations have been engaged in battles for news domination. Thus news wars have been carried out through the national news agencies almost for last two centuries. The same situation is still visible even in today's world. The news agencies, therefore, are no more or less than a "national political tool".⁵ As Shrivastava points out, during the World War I, in Germany it was believed that the British were using their worldwide cable network (i.e. Reuter news agency) to conduct an all-out propaganda campaign and to increasingly pour a flood-of-lies onto the whole world. Thus, Reuter⁶ was seen as "the most powerful weapon in the hands of the English government."⁷

The British Empire recognized the power of news very early on. Lord Palmerston, then-British Prime Minister, presented Paul Julius Reuter, who had set up on 10 October 1851 his shop in two rooms at Royal Exchange Buildings, London, at the court of Queen Victoria on 28 March 1861. That was an important sign of

³ Otto Groth, *Die Zeitung*, Band 1. Mannheim, 1928. p. 22. in Terhi Rantanen, *Foreign News in Imperial Russia: The Relationship between International and Russian News Agencies, 1856-1914* (Helsinki: Federation of Finnish Scientific Societies, 1990), p. 24.

⁴ K.M Shrivastava, *News Agencies from Pigeon to Internet* (Elgin: New Dawn Press, 2007), p. 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

⁶ The name of the agency was "Reuter's Telegram Company" and it was written as "Reuter" in the news bulletins and telegrams. In 1916, "Reuters Limited" was established. Therefore, Reuter has been used in this dissertation.

⁷ Shrivastava, *News Agencies*, p. 156.

recognition.⁸ The title of the article on the history of Reuters news agency, “Reuters: News Agency of British Empire” written by official Reuters historian Donald Read, tells a lot itself, too.⁹ Read clearly reflects that “for over a hundred years, from its foundation in 1851, Reuters was a national and imperial institution, the news agency of the British Empire.”¹⁰ Though it claimed to be an impartial or independent news agency, Reuter was evidently and definitely the unofficial voice of the Empire, giving prominence to British views.

Furthermore, Headrick comprehensively illustrates in his studies how the technological improvements affected the communication and their roles in expanding of empires especially in the nineteenth century.¹¹ Again, even the title of the book *-The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century-* is meaningful itself and gives an impression in this respect. That is the emergence of the efficient steamships, the submarine cable and the railroads which enabled the empires to establish and expand the control and power. Of all these advents and inventions, the telegraph was a real revolution giving birth to the international news agencies that served as one of the key tools of the empires in that century.

When examining the evolutions of the international news agencies, the imprints of capitalist system itself are clearly seen. Smith perfectly demonstrates the point:

For capitalism was an information system, as well as a financial and productive system; its development necessitated bringing one unexploited part of world after another into a single market in which social classes, companies,

⁸ Ibid., pp. 155-156.

⁹ Donal Read, “Reuters: News Agency of British Empire”, *Contemporary Record*, (1994) 8(2), pp. 195-212.

¹⁰ Donal Read, *The Power of News: The History of Reuters, 1849-1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.1.

¹¹ See: Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Daniel R. Headrick, *The Invisible Weapon: Telecommunications and International Politics, 1851-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); and Daniel R. Headrick, *Power Over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

transportation methods and stock markets became inextricably combined into a single, complicated and variegated, ever growing and interdependent system.¹²

Thus, it is useful to look at the European expansion and then examine the understanding of imperialism in this era to identify the role that the news agencies played in that vein.

1.1. European Imperialism and Its Expansion in the World

Some of the European countries occupied or controlled thirty-five percent of the land surfaces of the world either as colonies or as one-time colonies in 1800 and this figure dramatically rose in the nineteenth century. It was sixty-seven per cent in 1878; and Europeans dominated over eighty-four per cent of the world's land around by 1914.¹³ These figures clearly show that nineteenth century was the time of European expansion and domination. This is the reason why Mann says that "Europeans were from Mars."¹⁴ Superior military power was the main cause of European success; and "Europeans were probably more warlike than the inhabitants of any other continent over the second millennium AD" in Mann's eyes.¹⁵

The search for the causes of nineteenth century imperialism has created one of the liveliest debates in social sciences. The extant literature provides various explanations for this dramatic expansion. Some of them have underlined the role of political motives such as international rivalries and the instability of imperial frontiers. Some of them paid attention to economic motives such as the need for raw materials and new markets.¹⁶ Imperialism is neither the core issue nor the research topic of this dissertation. However, European expansion and domination were a matter of fact in the nineteenth century although social scientists still debate and have different explanations about the causes and motives.

¹² Anthony Smith, *The Geopolitics of Information: How Western Culture Dominates the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 73-74.

¹³ D.K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1973), p. 3.

¹⁴ Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Volume 3: Global Empires and Revolution, 1890-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 23.

¹⁵ Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 23.

¹⁶ Headrick, *The Tools of Empire*, p. 5.

Before delving into the dynamics of the context which the international news agencies were flourished, the concept of imperialism deserves to be examined with respect to its definitions and theorizations. First of all, there is no consensus on the definition of imperialism in the literature due to its complex and context-bounded nature, which denotes that the concept of Imperialism reflects a number of meanings depending on a range of different historical contexts. Therefore, Imperialism cannot be studied and explained through a single approach. It needs a framework that incorporates political, economic and cultural aspects.

The imperialism theory basically explains “the domination of underdeveloped areas by industrialized countries as the consequence of different economic and technological levels and unequal power potential resulting from a different economic growth.”¹⁷ The force for opening up as a result of the development of industrial capitalistic societies brings about military or political gaining; or keeping economic dependence. There are a lot of theories that try to explain the reasons for the pressure for expansion but the number of studies on this issue alone cannot be counted. The most seen explanation for this ascribes it to the incompetence to deal internally with the result of constant technological innovation and their effects on the society.¹⁸

The concepts of empire and imperial were derived from the Latin term *imperium*. The meanings and their use have diverged at different times in history and in different places.¹⁹ Broadly speaking, Baumgart defines imperialism as “the domination or control of one group over another group. There are widely varying relationships involving such domination and dependence. They may be planned or unplanned, conscious or half-conscious, unconscious, direct or indirect, physical or psychological, open or concealed.”²⁰ In general, it may be described as the colonial practices of the European states in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The more analytic definition comes from Tilly:

¹⁷ Frithjof Kuhnen, “Causes of Underdevelopment and Concepts for Development-An Introduction to Development Theories”, *The Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. VIII, 1986,1987, p. 20.

¹⁸ Kuhnen, “Causes of Underdevelopment”, p. 20.

¹⁹ For a detailed study, see: Richard Koebner, *Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 18–19, 59.

²⁰ Winfried Baumgart, *Imperialism: the Idea and Reality of British and French Colonial Expansion, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Translated by Ben V. Mast, p. 1.

An empire is a large composite polity linked to a central power by indirect rule. The central power exercises some military and fiscal control in each major segment of its imperial domain, but tolerates the major elements of indirect rule: (1) retention or establishment of particular, distinct compacts for the government of each segment; and (2) exercise of power through intermediaries who enjoy considerable autonomy within their own domains in return for the delivery of compliance, tribute, and military collaboration with the center.²¹

The use of the term imperialism can be traced back as referring to the policies of France during the 1840s, but it generally denotes British expansion in the nineteenth century. Imperialism is a kind of Europe's economic transformation thanks to its technological and organizational superiority; and its need for markets and sources of raw materials. Britain was the predominant European imperialist power as the absolute leader in European industrialization, which was the source of this economic transformation basically.²² It is not a surprise that most of the studies on imperialism are about the British Empire. This is the reason why Mann chooses Britain in his study; "I cannot deal with all these empires, so I focus on the biggest one."²³ In this thesis, imperialism is basically used to draw attention to massive expansion of European powers in terms of their increase not only in geography that they controlled but also their economic presence.

1.2. The Historical Context of International Communication

Hugill explains the relations between information and power basically arguing that "If information is power, whoever rules the world's telecommunication system commands the world."²⁴ Put differently, one needs information to be able to establish power. Since expansion or imperialism is a way of establishing power and control, the role of international communication to that end needs to be mentioned. Actually, communication has always been crucial for the establishment and securing of power

²¹ Charles Tilly, "How Empires End," in: Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds., *After Empire. Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building. The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1997), p. 3.

²² Stephanie Laffer, "'Masterly Inactivity' to Limited Autonomy: Afghanistan as a Catalyst for Liberal Imperialism," (Florida State University: 2005), Unpublished M.A Thesis, p. 1.

²³ Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, p. 28.

²⁴ Hugill, *Global Communications Since 1844*, p. 2.

and control over distance. For all the empires throughout the history such as Greek, Roman, Ottoman and British empires, efficient networks of communication were important not only for the imposition of imperial authority, but also for trade and international commerce. Even, the extent of empire can be used as an “indication of the efficiency of communication” since communication occupies a vital place in the organization of large areas.²⁵

Communication is the most important point with the military power in establishing states and empires in the eyes of Innis, a significant intellectual in communication studies. He prefers to use “pen and writing” in general referring the role of communication. Innis succinctly puts the point:

The sword and pen worked together. The written record signed, sealed and swiftly transmitted was essential to military power and the extension of government. Small communities were written into large states and states were consolidated into empire. The monarchies of Egypt and Persia, the Roman Empire, and the city states were essentially products of writing.²⁶

Tilly highlights another aspect and role of communication for empires. Accordingly, the empires need “reliable information-gathering” to establish and consolidate control in their land. He further explains:

Every empire does, indeed, face the problem of maintaining compliance and reliable information-gathering among regional agents who easily acquire ties, interests, and capacities that lead them to subvert the imperial enterprise, to ally with its enemies, or even to rebel on their own accounts.²⁷

The role of communication in economy and trade should also be addressed. Yet, at the outset, it is useful to stress that the connections and lines that held European countries to their colonies in the mid-nineteenth century were weak indeed. To illustrate, the minimum transmission time from Britain to Massachusetts was 48 days in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The news about the death of King

²⁵ Harold Adams Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: Dundurn Press Limited, 2007), p. 26; and Daya Kishan Thussu, *International Communication: Continuity and Change* (London: Hodder, 2006), pp.1-2.

²⁶ Innis, *Empire and Communications*, p. 30.

²⁷ Tilly, “How Empires End”, p. 5.

William in 1702 reached his American subjects almost three months later.²⁸ It took five to eight months for a letter to travel between Britain and India before the 1840s. The writer also could expect to receive an answer in nearly two years. Moreover, it still took six weeks in each direction even after steamships entered into use for the mail service as well.²⁹

The Industrial Revolution gave a great stimulus to the internationalization of communication. The industrialization of transportation and communications occurred with the invention of the steamships, the railways and the telegraph in the first half of the nineteenth century. International links were established thanks to these innovations. They accelerated the growth of European trade and consolidated colonial empires.³⁰

The communication network as a product of imperial system in the nineteenth century led to competition between capitalist powers for wielding control over larger territory in which to operate a privileged trade structure. The information network was an essential factor for the growing of international capitalism and trade. In a way, it was not only the cause but also the outcome of the capitalism.³¹ The growth of international trade necessitated a constant source of reliable data about international economic affairs. The demand for information resulted in the commercialization of news and information services in the nineteenth century. By the end of century, editors and publishers began to see their readers also as consumers. News was transformed into a commodity turning into a manufactured product. The need for gathering, processing, and distributing information as quickly as possible made the news a commodity produced and sold.³²

The invention of telegraph was a real milestone in the process. News agency histories illustrate how swiftness became really important with the use of telegraph in news transmission. In fact, the conveyed news was quite outdated before the

²⁸ Thussu, *International Communication*, p. 9.

²⁹ Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress*, p. 97.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19; and Thussu, *International Communication*, p.3.

³¹ Smith, *The Geopolitics of Information*, p. 74.

³² Terhi Rantanen, *When News Was New* (Wiley-Blackwell: 2009), pp. 45-46; Gerald J. Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (University of Wisconsin Press: 1992), p. 8; and Thussu, *International Communication*, p. 3.

telegraph but the telegraph revolutionized news transmission, communicating a message without a carrier and with the instantaneous speed of electricity.

As Headrick points out thoroughly, the causal relations between communications technology and imperial rule went hand in hand. Much of the telegraph lines all over the world were established for the use and benefit of the imperialists' demand for improved communications at any cost. An important part of the cables were directly subsidized by various governments for imperial reasons. The amount of cost remained a secondary issue. To illustrate, the first cable to India cost 800.000 pounds while never transmitting a single message. The cables around Africa, in the West Indies, and across the Pacific were similar examples. Although economy was the key motive in creating the communication lines, the Indian, Indochinese and Algeria telegraph lines were political, not commercial projects. Additionally, long-distance radio-telegraphy was partly funded by various imperial wireless chain projects.³³

Further, the newspaper industry played an important role in the development of international telegraph networks. They sought to benefit from the rapid increase in the demand for news about financial information to conduct international trade. The establishment of news agencies was the most significant development in the newspaper industry in this vein. Their birth is usually associated with the need to produce news on commercial basis. The French Havas agency was founded in 1835, the German Wolff in 1849 and the British Reuter in 1851. They first concentrated on the delivery of financial and economic news to traders and dealers. The first clients of these new agencies were business, banks and stock exchanges.³⁴

The three European news agencies were described as cartel. Colonial governments supported the cable companies in two ways; scientifically by research on maps and navigation, and financially by subsidies. These agencies totally controlled the information markets in Europe. Their expansion outside Europe was closely connected with territorial colonialism of the late nineteenth century.³⁵ Hence, the most industrialized countries were the first countries to make large-scale use of

³³ Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress*, p. 98; and Headrick, *The Tools of Empire*, p. 159.

³⁴ Thussu, *International Communication*, p. 9.

³⁵ Olivevr Boyd-Barrett, *The International News Agencies* (London: Constable, 1980), p. 23.

telegraph. Accordingly Britain, France and Germany were the countries with extensive telegraphs nets. They owned in total 89.6 per cent of the world's cables in 1892, while British predominance was clear with a control of 66.3 per cent, two-thirds, of the world's cable.³⁶

However, the influence of Reuter was matchless since its "reserved territories" enjoyed larger and greater news significance than that of the others. It also employed more staff and stringers all over the world, thereby producing more original news. More importantly, the most significant reason behind the success of Reuter was the British control of cable lines.³⁷ Private British companies owned 63.1 per cent of world cables in 1892.³⁸ Reuter was the only agency to finance telegraph cables. Julius Reuter's motto was "follow the cable."³⁹ The fortune of Reuter seems to run concurrent with the growth of British Empire. Reuter had offices in all major strategic locations of the empire by the 1870s. It also enjoyed very close relationships with the British foreign and colonial administrations. Read comprehensively shows that the agency functioned "as an institution of British Empire" during the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ More often than not Reuter worked like the unofficial voice of the empire and gave prominence to British views while claiming that it was an independent news agency. Reuter launched an imperial news service in 1910 and made a secret agreement with the British government. Reuter's Managing Director was also in charge of cable and wireless propaganda for the British Department of Information during World War I.⁴¹

1.3. Reasons of International News Agencies to Work in the Ottoman Capital

There is a wide range of significant reasons to study the Ottoman Empire with regard to international news agencies. To start with, the Ottoman Empire, as one of

³⁶ Headrick, *The Invisible Weapon*, pp. 38-39.

³⁷ Read, *The Power of News*, pp. 41-44.

³⁸ It was 66.3 with the government cables. Headrick, *The Invisible Weapon*, pp. 38-39.

³⁹ Read, "Reuters: News Agency of British Empire", p. 202.

⁴⁰ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 40.

⁴¹ Thussu, *International Communication*, p. 11.

the greatest, most extensive and long-lasting empires, had an important place in history.⁴² The continuing territorial erosion of the Ottoman Empire and how to settle the problems that it created led to the emergence of the “Eastern Question” from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. The “Eastern Question” was one of the most significant international issues especially in the nineteenth century diplomacy which provoked a strife that involved all the Great Powers of the time, namely Britain, France, Russia and Germany. It remained central and pressing on the political, diplomatic and economic agenda in every European capital for almost more than a century. The European powers pursued a policy to “keep up the *status quo* in Turkey” whenever they had to manage the Eastern Question.⁴³ Zürcher’s definition reflects it comprehensively:

The question of how to satisfy competing Balkan nationalisms and the imperialist ambitions of the great powers without causing the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, or, if this destruction was inevitable (something of which the majority of European statesmen were convinced), to dismember it without upsetting the balance of power in Europe and causing a general war, was known throughout the nineteenth century as the ‘Eastern Question’.⁴⁴

European leaders were aware of the serious risks that total Ottoman collapse would pose to peace and balance of power. They agreed to seek maintaining its integrity and stability, which were key to international balance of power. The years following the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774, in which the Ottoman Empire was clearly defeated, saw a marked increase in the major European powers’ interest in the Ottoman Empire. The weakness of the Ottoman Empire appeared obviously in the Greek revolt and Egyptian crisis. The decaying of the Turks alerted Britain since the fall of Ottoman Empire under Russian sphere of influence would enable the Russians to pose threat to the British position in the Mediterranean and in Asia. Austria also growingly became wary of Russian domination in the Balkans.⁴⁵

⁴² Quataert explains comprehensively why the Ottoman history should be studied and its role in World history in a chapter. Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge University Press: 2000), pp. 1-13

⁴³ Stoyan Vassilev Tchapravov, *The Eastern Question, Western Europe, and the Balkans in Fin-de-Siècle Literature* (The University of Minnesota: 2009), Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), p. 40.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

The point is that there were strong reasons for the international news agencies to come and work in the Ottoman capital. Having a correspondent and covering the developments in Istanbul were a must for the international news agencies mainly for two reasons: firstly, the diplomatic affairs as explained before and secondly the economy. Foreign news was very valuable for the national press organisations, namely for newspapers, since their homeland countries or empires were either at war or in a diplomatic struggle most of the time. The public was interested in learning the developments in the Ottoman Empire.

At the same time, the correspondents of the international news agencies were like semi-officers of their countries. Their activities and roles will be explained with examples in Chapter VII. The respective ambassadors of each country used the correspondents not only as a source of information but also directed them and sought their assistance about the kind of information they needed. The letters of Sigismund Engländer, the Reuter Correspondent in Istanbul, to the British Ambassador Austen Henry Layard reveal their professional relation and engagement conclusively. Istanbul was a must capital to have a correspondent in terms of the relationship between the correspondents and the diplomats. The use of international news agencies by the governments will also be explained in following chapters.

The second aspect about Istanbul's significance for foreign news agencies was economy. The question of integration of Ottoman economy with Europe in the nineteenth century is an overwhelming issue that remains beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it needs to be addressed basically since one of the initial motives of the international news agencies was to produce news about economy and trade. It should also be useful to briefly examine the economic relations in Europe, especially between the British Empire, France and the Ottoman Empire since the former one was one of the key dominant players in Ottoman economy in the nineteenth century.

The Ottoman Empire had been flooded with goods from Europe due to the concession agreements enacted with European countries such as with Britain in 1838. The Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Convention of 1838 -The Balta Limanı Treaty- was a milestone for the beginning of British imperial supremacy in the Ottoman Empire. As Kasaba points out, the treaty declared the foreign merchants and their agents equal to their Ottoman counterparts in all respects. The treaty disbanded not only all government monopolies but also outlawed locally imposed

surcharge. The rate and manner of collection of import, export, transit, and other local duties were also defined clearly. All subjects of the Empire had the right to benefit from these provisions in all around the Empire.⁴⁶

The notion of the 1838 Treaty was free trade but the practice did not conform to this concept. The British government shaped the implementation of the treaty and used it in favour of their advantage.⁴⁷ The result was expansion of British trade and interest through promoting the activities of British merchants rather than all traders by establishing British banks and insurance houses. The whole activity was carried out by or under the direct support and influence of the British Foreign Office.⁴⁸ The commitment of the Ottoman Empire to Britain was consolidated by loans that further deteriorated Ottoman disadvantages in trade and its dependence.⁴⁹ The figures reflect the British trade dominance in the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman trade with Britain was £ 4 million in 1829. It increased to £ 54 million in 1876 and to £ 63 million in 1911. It was almost an increase of fifteen times.⁵⁰ The Britain controlled about fifty per cent of the foreign investment in the Empire around the 1880s.⁵¹

The consequent collapse of production and its implications on Ottoman budget deficit, compounded by the repercussions of the Crimean War (1853-1856), forced the empire to borrow foreign loans from European countries in 1854. The Crimean War was not a war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, Britain and France were allied with the Turks in the context of 'Eastern Question'. The credits obtained from the foreign stock markets produced the transactions of state debenture bonds and shares. These transactions triggered the establishment of a stock exchange.

⁴⁶ Reşat Kasaba, "Treaties and Friendships: British Imperialism, the Ottoman Empire, and China in the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of World History*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall, 1993), p. 218.

⁴⁷ P. J. Cain, . and A. G. Hopkins, "The Political Economy of British Expansion Overseas, 1750-1914", *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Nov., 1980), p. 483.

⁴⁸ Kasaba, "Treaties and Friendships", pp. 230-231.

⁴⁹ D. C. Blaisdell, *European Financial Control in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: 1929), pp. 48-54.

⁵⁰ Niles Stefan Illich, *German Imperialism in the Ottoman Empire: A Comparative Study*, (Texas A&M University: 2007), Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, p. 76; and Charles Issawi, "Middle East Economic Development, 1815-1914: The General and the Specific," in *The Modern Middle East: A Reader* eds. A. Hortani, P.S. Koury and M.C. Wilson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 183.

⁵¹ Illich, *German Imperialism* p. 76; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 89; and, Jonathan Grant, "The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports, 1854-1914", *The Journal of Military History*, 66 (2002): pp. 20-21.

Then the first stock exchange in the Ottoman Empire was established with the name of “Stock Exchange of Debenture Bonds of Istanbul” (*Dersaadet Tahvilat Borsası*) in 1866.⁵² Stock exchange speculation was very common in Istanbul. International news agencies were effectively and successfully used in the speculations because newspapers were dependent on the information enabled by these agencies.⁵³ A document from the Ottoman archives demonstrates that the empire was aware of these speculations. It says that the depression in the stock exchange was not only associated with European market but also as a result of the collusion activities which is a kind of banditry by the Director Venisa.⁵⁴

The loans proved inefficient to sustain the economy and the Ottomans declared in 1875 that the Empire could no more pay its debts. The Public Debt Administration (*Düyûn-i Umûmîye İdâresi*) was established in 1881 to pay Empire’s debts under the auspices of European creditors. The empire allocated significant part of its income for payment of debts to The Public Debt Administration from 1881 to 1914. Foreign investments in transport, electricity, banking and mining sectors increased considerably during this period.⁵⁵

⁵² Murat Koraltürk, “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Şirketleşme. İlk Anonim Şirket ve Borsanın Kuruluşu”, in: *Osmanlı*, v. 3, eds: Cem Oğuz and Kemal Çiçek, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 1999); Murtaza Köse, “Osmanlı’da Borsa ve Galata Bankerlerinin Devletin Mali Yapısındaki Yeri”, *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 18, (2001): pp. 229-251; Kazgan, Haydar. *Galata Bankerleri*, (İstanbul: TEB, 1991); and, Mehmet Beşirli, “Osmanlı’da Borsa: Dersaadet Tahvilât Borsası’ndan Eshâm ve Tahvilât Borsası’na Yeni Düzenleme Girişimleri”, *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 19-1 (2009), pp. 185-208.

⁵³ Koloğlu shows how the agencies used their news to make speculation and benefited from it. See: Orhan Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter’den Anadolu Ajansına* (Ankara: Çağdaş Gazeteciler Derneği Yayınları, 1994); and, Orhan Koloğlu, “120 Yıl Önce Galata Borsası’nda Oyunlar”, *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 142. (Ekim 1995), pp. 57-60.

⁵⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.ŞH., 7/38, 10 CA 1313/29 October 1895. *Gerçi şu buhrân hâli Avrupa piyâsasına tâbi’ ve direktör Venisa’nın ma’den aksiyonlarında âdetâ kuttâ’-ı tarîklik idercesine çevirdiği dolaplarından nâşî ise de...*

⁵⁵ Some of the basic studies in this fiels as follows: Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: the Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Edhem Eldem, “Ottoman Financial Integration with Europe: Foreign Loans, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman public debt,” *European Review*, 13 (2005), pp. 431-445; Çağlar Keyder, *Dünya Ekonomisi İçinde Türkiye 1923-1929* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982); Rifat Önsoy, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Sanayi ve Sanayileşme Politikası* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 1988); Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme (1820-1913)* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2005); Donald Quartaert, *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Avrupa İktisadi Yayılımı ve Direniş, 1881-1908* (İstanbul: Yurt Yayınları, 1987); Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982); Bayram Kodaman, “Avrupa Emperyalizminin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’na Giriş Vasıtaları (1838-1914)”, *Milli Kültür*, 2-1 (1990), pp. 23-33.

Having briefly examined the role of the Eastern Question and the importance of economy for foreign news agencies activities in Istanbul, an additional issue involves where the Ottoman Empire stands in the imperialism debate. Pamuk's study stands out as one of the fundamental works in this field.⁵⁶ Pamuk offers three basic periphery categories. The first two categories come from the distinction introduced by Gallagher and Robinson in their leading article in 1953:⁵⁷ Formal colonies on the one hand and 'informal empire' of an imperialist power on the other hand. Pamuk introduces a further distinction as the third category in which the Ottoman Empire stands.⁵⁸

Gallagher and Robinson had pointed out that many of these countries in the periphery ended up belonging to the informal empire of one power or another. We would argue that there were cases where conditions of inter-imperialist rivalry prevailed and the country could not be incorporated into the formal empire of any single power. We would place the Ottoman Empire in this category.⁵⁹

The third category is the penetration of world capitalism under conditions of inter-imperialist rivalry. Pamuk explains what distinguished the third category from the category of informal empire was "a different combination of internal and external factors; namely, relatively strong state structures in the country in the periphery coupled with the conditions of a rivalry between the major imperialist powers in order to obtain greater political and economic advantage and influence."⁶⁰ According to Pamuk, not only the Ottoman Empire but also China and Persia fall under this category.⁶¹ The societies in these three countries were often characterized by a struggle between the central bureaucracy and the social classes asking for a quicker

⁵⁶ Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-1913: Trade, Investment, and Production* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁵⁷ John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson. "The Imperialism of Free Trade", *The Economic History Review*, Second series, Vol. VI, no. 1 (1953), pp. 1-15.

"But perhaps the most common political technique of British expansion was the treaty of free trade and friendship made with or imposed upon a weaker state."

⁵⁸ Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European capitalism*, p. 4.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

⁶¹ Kasaba, "Treaties and Friendships", pp. 215-241.

and direct integration in the world economy. They were the merchants and export-oriented landlords. Their central bureaucracy had the upper hand in this struggle in these societies during the nineteenth century. The reason why these countries never became part of a formal or informal empire is that the central bureaucracy was strong enough vis-à-vis imperialist powers and/or the rivalry among those powers.⁶²

1.4. The Problem to Study

In general, the scope of this study is to explore the establishment and development of international news agencies, especially Reuter and Havas in the Ottoman Empire. Most of the studies in the field of Ottoman press are about the relationship between the palace and the press. They examine how the Ottoman sultans, especially Sultan Abdülhamid II controlled and manipulated the press. They are right in the sense that the Ottoman sultans were aware of the significance of press, particularly foreign press. They tried to control the foreign news agencies and wanted them to make news in favour of the empire. However, this is not the whole story. The Ottoman Empire began to get into international debts in the second half of the nineteenth century and state bonds were utilized to borrow loans in this process. Consequently, economy played significant role for establishment of international news agencies in the crucial capitals, including Istanbul. One who wants to understand the existence of international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire has to look at the importance of Istanbul in the international market.

The news agencies were also a means of international propaganda. The second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century also saw the arrival of the modern mass media. It was the convergence of total war and the mass media that gave modern war propaganda its significance and impact. The governments first made a major attempt to win public support for its policies by mounting a large and systematic campaign of official propaganda.⁶³ Therefore, the attempts of the Ottoman Empire to control and manipulate foreign correspondents, agencies and newspapers also need to be analysed in this context. For, the history of

⁶² Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European capitalism*, p. 6.

⁶³ Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda From the Ancient World to the Present Era* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 174.

foreign news agencies in Istanbul is not about just the censorship of the Ottoman sultans and statesmen, but also about the way in which they served as a tool of diplomacy, especially in Europe.

After presenting general understanding of news agencies and their historical background; major questions in the dissertation that are to be examined in the Ottoman context are as follows: Why did the international news agencies come to the Ottoman capital in order to establish bureaus and to follow the events day to day in the Empire? How did these press agencies work? What were the plans and goals? What was the importance of the Ottoman Empire for the Western world in terms of economy, politics and diplomacy? How did the Ottoman Empire treat these news agencies? How were the relations between the palace and the foreign press and international news agencies? In what ways did the Ottoman sultans, especially Sultan Abdülhamid II, try to benefit from these agencies? What were the contracts between the Ottoman government and the foreign news agencies?

As regards to issue of Ottoman press, most of the studies are about censorship. They try to explain how the Ottoman government, particularly Sultan Abdülhamid II suppressed the press rather than to understand or explain the process in a historical context. In addition, they fail to examine and make any comparison with the situation in European empires in this period, which is essential to put the issue into a right context.

The shortcomings of the studies on press in the Ottoman Empire set aside there are few academic studies on the history of foreign press while almost no study exists on the role and activities of international news agencies. There is only one book and an article that their titles include “news agency”.⁶⁴ Another gap in the literature is that there are only few studies about press in the Ottoman Empire in English or in any foreign language, yet still short of the discussion on the critical role that news agencies played.

On the other hand, it should be also stated that the Ottoman documents in the archives were mostly political regarding the international news agencies. It shows that the Ottoman governments perceived and addressed the issue politically in the first place. Therefore, the relationship between the Ottoman State and the news

⁶⁴ İlhan Yerlikaya, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Yabancı Gazete ve Haber Ajanslarının Şantaj ve Yolsuzlukları”, *Toplumsal Tarih*, 3 (1994), pp 17-19; and Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter'den*,

agencies has been predominantly studied in terms of this aspect while reporting the economy has been shortly touched as well. Furthermore, political focus was particularly on Sultan Abdülhamid II given that his long reign dominated the history of international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire.

1.4.1. Methodology

Theories of communication began to occur in parallel with the fast economic, social and political change of the Industrial Revolution, “reflecting the significance of the role of communications in the growth of capitalism and empire, and drawing also on advances in science and the understanding of the natural world.”⁶⁵ The studies on international communication are mainly explained with reference to the following theories: Modernization theory, dependency theory, structural imperialism, hegemony, critical theory, the public sphere, cultural studies perspectives, information society, and globalisation discourse. They have their own history. They mirror the interest, points and concerns of the era they emerged.⁶⁶ Actually, international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire might be researched, studied, and explained through most of these approaches. Almost all of them would be relevant and enable us to understand the context from different aspects.

Boyd-Barrett categorizes the research on news agencies into three main perspectives: (1) analysis of content, (2) studies of structure and function and (3) historical accounts of agency development.⁶⁷ However, as Rantanen points out; none of these perspectives is comprehensive as such when news agencies are related with the process of globalization in a historical approach. The division of news agency studies into two separate fields, international communication and journalism history, has caused misreading of news agency operations.⁶⁸ News agencies are world-wide

⁶⁵ Thussu, *International Communication*, p. 40.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-65.

⁶⁷ Oliver Boyd-Barrett, “News Agencies: Political Constraints and Market Opportunities: The Case of 'Big Four',” in: U. Kivikuru, U. and T. Varis (eds) *Approaches to International Communication: Textbook for Journalism Education* (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino, 1986), p. 69.

⁶⁸ Terhi Rantanen, *Mr Howard goes to South America. The United Press Associations and Foreign Expansion*. Roy W. Howard Monographs in Journalism and Mass Communication research (2). (Indiana: Indiana University, 1992), p. 3; and Terhi Rantanen, “The Globalization of Electronic News in the 19th Century”, *Media, Culture and Society*, 19 (4), pp. 605-607.

media organizations. They sell news not only to various kinds of media but also to business enterprises, banks and governments. Therefore they are not feasible to research and study without crossing disciplinary frontiers.⁶⁹ Rantanen suggests a formula:

News agencies need to be studied at the crossroads of different approaches to understand their complex nature, because they cannot be reduced to only to the contents of news, political economy or institutional histories. What is needed here is holistic approach that is able to combine news agencies with different elements of globalization such as commodification, national and international formation, time, space and place.⁷⁰

Rantanen's proposal seems to be the appropriate approach to study the international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire. Beginning with historical agency development, their function and analysis of content; this study should also respond to the different elements of globalization covering the news as business, role of technology, time and place.

1.4.2 Sources

This study places the emphasis on the politics of news. The research therefore focuses mostly on notes consisting of minutes, documents, letters, dispatches; inter-agency correspondence and official records of mainly the Ottoman Empire. The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives is the primary source of this study. The Ottoman Archives is consisted of a wide range and extensive documents about every sphere of the empire. There are also dozens of documents about press activities and the news agencies in the archives. The archive, therefore, offers an invaluable primary source material on the topic. The National Archives in London, with hundreds of documents about the Ottoman Empire, the press in general and the Reuter specifically, has also provided valuable material for this study. Surely, the state documents belonging to the Ottoman, British and French empires were official materials that reflect the logic

⁶⁹ Rantanen, "The Globalization of Electronic News", p. 607.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

of the empires. However, bearing in mind this fact, historians can get a lot data and information by using these state archives in a critical way.

The archives of the news agencies in foreign countries also encompass useful documents for this research. Reuter and Havas were the most active agencies in the Ottoman Empire and the Reuters Archive in London is a case in point. Read and his team researched and wrote the history of Reuters⁷¹ at the invitation of Thomson Reuters Company. The company made all documents, such as the contracts and negotiations between the agencies, minute books and letters of the staff, available for Read's use. He visited most of the European archives and collected crucial documents except Istanbul. Reuters Archive also benefited from the memories and personal letters of retired personnel in the research.

More importantly, Reuters Archive has the photocopies of some important documents from French archives relevant for this research. All the documents that Read benefited and his personal notes are available in the Reuters Archive. Since Read was interested in the history of Reuters, the information about the activities in Istanbul is very limited -only two pages- in his book.⁷² Interestingly, no Turkish scholar or anyone with interest in press activities in the Ottoman Empire has researched at Reuters Archive, neither did they use any document from the Archive according to the information given by Reuters Archive Manager and bibliography research.

The copies of the news and bulletins are also a good source for this research. They are the primary and basic documents that show the kind of stories the agencies produced and spread. They provide answers to some important questions such as the topics they were interested in producing news, the issues that they cared about and the way that they perceived the Ottoman Empire. Newspapers which published the news of agencies are another source to examine their production.

⁷¹ Read, *The Power of News*,

⁷² Ibid.

1.5. Structure of Dissertation

Chapter I focuses on the conceptual and historical framework. Firstly, it sets out the enormous expansion of Europe in the nineteenth century and the role of the technological developments in communication in this fact. Based on a brief explanation of the historical context of international communication, the reasons for the coming of international news agencies to Istanbul to establish offices will be addressed. It also introduces the main questions and themes that will be answered in this dissertation. After underlining the scarcity of research in the field by a discussion of the main studies which are very few, the primary sources will be explained.

In Chapter II, after a brief introduction of the emergence of international news agencies, the background of the press in the Ottoman Empire in general will be outlined in order to reflect the circumstances that the agencies began to operate in Istanbul. The role of Crimean War has been widely recognized in the development of international news agencies and emergence of telegraphy in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the situation of telegraphy and how it contributed to the press in the Empire will be analyzed given that telegraph was the sole and crucial apparatus of international news agencies in cabling their reports swiftly. As the significant part of this chapter, the process of international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire will be chased in a detailed manner since their history in Istanbul has yet to be touched. During this research, every effort was made to access most of the available archives and sources to fill the literature gap about the arrival and beginning of their business in the Ottoman capital.

Chapter III seeks to demonstrate how the Ottoman government perceived the international news agencies as a threat and serious problem for its interests due to their “hostile and malicious reporting” against the Ottoman Empire. The themes that the Ottoman Palace and Ottoman ruling elite were concerned will be told under seven subheadings which have been determined according to the intensiveness of documents in the Ottoman archives. The chapter will narrate some of news stories of agencies in order to reflect their approach towards the Ottoman Empire. This will enable to see why the Ottoman government reacted to those stories and concluded that international news agencies were an issue which had to be coped with.

Chapter IV mainly seeks to address the Ottoman efforts for institutionalization of managing the press and international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire. It explains the press regulations and the institutions which were responsible to deal with the press. The *layihâs* which were the reports and proposals of Ottoman ruling elite on the issue are really significant in order to understand the mindset and perspectives of the Ottoman government and officials. The dissertation thus will discuss several *layihâs* thoroughly. The Directorate of Foreign Press (*Matbu'ât-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti*) which was established in 1885 is important part of this debate. Agreements between the Ottoman government and the news agencies will also demonstrate the cooperative framework between them which was essential part of institutionalization.

Chapter V argues that the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the news agencies were interdependent. This part tries to show how and why the Ottoman government and agencies were in need of each other. The practices that the Ottoman government carried out in order to have good cooperation with the agencies will be addressed by several archival documents. The way in which the Ottoman government benefited from the services and capabilities of the agencies in return will be also explained.

Chapter VI deals with the mutual struggle between the Ottoman Empire and the international news agencies given that establishing cooperation was not possible all the time. At the end of the day, the news agencies would report all developments in the region regarding the Ottoman Empire. Favorable news remained sustainable only through different kind of subsidies. In essence, the news that the agencies were interested in was mostly against the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, this chapter seeks to reveal in what ways the Ottoman government tried to make them friendly and the response of agencies as well.

Chapter VII fundamentally looks at the political role of international news agencies in the Ottoman context and the fight between them for the right of reporting and distribution of news in the Ottoman Empire. Both the agreements of agencies to share the Ottoman Empire and their fight in Istanbul when their interests were in conflict will be addressed in this part. After telling the relationship between the agencies and their homeland empires in general, the chapter will show the links between them in the Ottoman case. The relations between the correspondents of

agencies and their respective embassies in the Ottoman capital will be comprehensively outlined as well.

After summarizing the main points and findings, the conclusion chapter argues that the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the international news agencies should be explained with reciprocal “carrot and stick” approach. It means that the Ottoman government and the agencies were both giving rewards and punishing the other at the same time. The chapter also discusses the practices of Ottoman government in dealing with the agencies in terms of their historical context and seeks an answer whether they were implementation of an *Ancien Régime* or modern practice. It will examine the activities of agencies in Istanbul as a penetration of European hegemony towards the Ottoman Empire.

Lastly, it should be said that the differences of the new agencies were not taken into consideration with all their details and they can be seen as identical in this dissertation. However, they were not exactly alike in terms of structure, focus on reporting, mission, relationship with their respective empires and attitude towards the Ottoman Empire. A study to compare their activities and roles Istanbul; and reports on several issues such as the Armenian Question, Balkan Uprisings and the Baghdad Railway, would be a very useful one but it goes beyond the scope and purpose of this dissertation.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGORUND

2.1. Emergence of International News Agencies

The infrastructure for the production of global news was established during the mid-nineteenth century with the advent of the telegraph. It radically changed the way in which news was produced. The first telegraphic lines were set up in the 1840s and the first cable was laid across the Atlantic in 1858. The transatlantic communications were put in use the following decade. Use of the telegraph became widespread and major news agencies for news gathering and distribution emerged. Their connections became worldwide in just two decades. The constitution of global news agencies was a result of this new technology.⁷³

French Havas is accepted as the first professional news agency in the world. In 1832, Charles Havas opened Bureau Havas in Paris to provide service by translating foreign newspapers for the French media. His translation bureau was very functional and drew interest in a short time. It was transformed into a news agency which evolved into “Agence Havas”. It began gathering its own news as well as translating articles published by the foreign press. Havas used widely the developing telegraphic network and began delivering news to other European capitals.⁷⁴

After Agence Havas, the number of news agencies increased in a few years. The American agency “Associated Press” in New York, the German “Wolff” in Berlin and the British “Reuter” in London established in 1848, 1849 and 1851 respectively. Associated Press was the first real co-operative news gathering organization established by ten men representing the six most important New York newspapers. Their starting point was to create cooperation for themselves since the

⁷³ Esperanca Bielsa, “The Pivotal Role of News Agencies in the Context of Globalization: A Historical Approach”, *Global Networks*, 8: 3, 2008, p. 348.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 351; and Rantanen, *Foreign News*, p. 24.

cost of getting information was expensive. As to German one, Bernhard Wolff delivered economic news to his own newspaper *National Zeitung* in the beginning but then extended it to other newspapers.⁷⁵ The British Reuter⁷⁶ was the most successful and prevalent one. After having worked as a deputy editor in Agence Havas, Julius Reuter moved to London and started his own agency in 1851, just when the telegraphic link with the European continent was about to be opened. It first concentrated on the delivery of financial and economic news to traders and dealers.

The first news agencies really made a hit since they were very instrumental in supplying a great source for the newspapers. Especially the new penny press readily subscribed to the news services because people had particular interest for the latest news. In addition, Havas in France had a unique position as the main provider of news to other media outlets. Especially, it was widespread in local press outlets since they mainly depended on its Parisian news.⁷⁷ The situation was different in Britain, because *The Times*, with its own network of information-gathering services, including foreign correspondents, and due to the independent coverage they provided, did not subscribe to Reuter until 1859. However, other newspapers in Britain benefited from the service that Reuter provided.

The role of news agencies as a facilitator in receiving news from remote places has appeared by the 1850s. More specifically, it was the Crimean War that enabled the process, during which both Havas and Reuter made use of their agents in strategic places like St. Petersburg and Istanbul, which were the front lines in terms of diplomacy in those years.⁷⁸ By the beginning of the 1860s, it was clear that European news still predominated, but the news agencies sought to meet the growing demand for news about the wider world by the means of improvement in technology and infrastructure; mainly telegraph. To illustrate, Reuter started its ‘Special India and China Service’ in 1859. News from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa

⁷⁵ Rantanen, *Foreign News*, p. 25.

⁷⁶ Actually Julius Reuter was a German born and belonged to a Jewish family but then was converted to Christianity. The reason why its agency is called as a British one is that he began his operation in London and he made use of opportunities of the British Empire, especially the telegraph cables. For the history of Reuters, see: Read, *The Power of News*,

⁷⁷ Bielsa, “The Pivotal Role”, p. 351.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

had begun to feature regularly in the Reuter file by 1861. Then, transatlantic cable to America was successfully operationalized in 1866. In this process, correspondents and offices were also established in important capitals in non-European news markets.⁷⁹

The 1870s were characterized by the consolidation of British dominance of the submarine cable system as a consequence of technological improvements and the active policy of the British Empire.⁸⁰ Therefore, Reuter was the most aggressive and effective agency in the second half of the nineteenth century. Competition between the global news agencies, especially Havas and Reuter, was strong and severe. After a while, it was not only a struggle between those agencies but also between the empires, mainly the British and the French.

On the other hand, the struggle between the agencies did not hinder inter-cooperation and agreement. There was a lively process and negotiations; and they always remained in touch throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. There were a lot of agreements signed between Havas, Reuter, and Wolff in various manners.⁸¹ The basic goal of these agreements was to divide the world news market into spheres of interest. The agreements divided the market among the big three, which described as the Ring Combination. Although there were some exceptions and some blurry situations, only one of these three could operate in most territories. Rantanen summarizes the general model in this cooperation:

The international agency that controlled a given territory was to negotiate an agreement with the national agencies in its domain. The national agency obtained through these agreements an exclusive right to the news from the international agency as well as the other two international agencies, but at the same time lost its right to transmit news abroad, either directly or through any other agency. It could only send this news through the international agency with which it had concluded the agreement. In addition, the national agency paid commissions to the international agencies, not vice versa.⁸²

⁷⁹ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 37; and Bielsa, "The Pivotal Role", p. 353.

⁸⁰ Bielsa, "The Pivotal Role", p. 354.

⁸¹ One of the comprehensive studies on the international news agencies belongs to Alexander S. Nalbach. It seems that he really did a great research and explains them in a detailed way. See, Nalbach, "The Ring Combination",

⁸² Rantanen, *Foreign News*, p. 55-56.

2.2. The Press in the Ottoman Empire

As the newspapers of the time are regarded as the possible demanders and clients of news agencies, it embodies significance in exploring the topic. The press in the Ottoman Empire emerged at a very late stage as the newspaper as an institution appeared in the empire around the early 1800s, two centuries after it appeared in European continent. The reason behind this delay is said to be the false belief that the adoption of printing house was against the religious rules and orders.⁸³

Actually, the awareness and interest of the Ottomans on newspapers were dated back to earlier periods. During the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid I, who ruled between 1774 and 1789, the Grand Vizier⁸⁴ Seyyid Mehmed Pasha established an in-house translation department consisting of Phanariote dragomans in which the newspaper clippings of the major European newspapers were interpreted.⁸⁵ After Sultan Abdülhamid I, Sultan Selim III followed the same policy and also asked his ambassadors to report on the articles published in the European newspapers and to send them to Istanbul.⁸⁶ The *Tercüme Odası* (The Translation Office) was also translating these articles on Ottoman affairs by the 1820s.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, the preliminary phase in the emergence of newspapers in the Ottoman Empire is reflected in the form of embassy bulletins. The French Embassy in Istanbul, during the mission of Ambassador Raymond de Verninac-Saint-Maur, published three bulletins sequentially *Le Bulletin de Nouvelles*, *La Gazette Française de Constantinople* and *Mercure Oriental* between 1795 and 1791 in French. These were printed at a printing house established by French Embassy in Istanbul.⁸⁸ Then,

⁸³ A.D. Jeltyakov, *Türkiye'nin Sosyo Politik ve Kültürel Hayatında Basın* (Ankara: 1979), pp. 32-35.

⁸⁴ The Grand Vizier was the prime minister of the Ottoman sultans.

⁸⁵ Roderic Davison, "How the Ottoman Government Adjusted to a New Institution: The Newspaper Press", in Sabri Akural, ed. *Turkic Culture: Continuity and Change* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 17.

⁸⁶ Ercüment Kuran, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı İkamet Elçiliklerinin Kuruluşu ve İlk Elçilerin Siyasi Faaliyetleri, 1793-1821* (Ankara: 1966), p. 42.

⁸⁷ Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton, 1980) and; Davison, "How the Ottoman Government", p. 17.

⁸⁸ Abdolonyme Ubicini and Pavet De Courteille, *État présent de l'empire Ottoman* (Paris: 1876), p. 167 in Ahmet Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press," (New York: Columbia University, 1914), Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p. 28. For more information about journals of this period: L. Lagarde, "Note Sur Les Journaux français de Constantinople à l'époque

the private newspapers appeared in Smyrna (Izmir), a leading trading city in the coast of the Mediterranean, which hosted intense commercial activities and they increasingly improved thanks to the non-Muslim businessmen of the Empire.⁸⁹ *Le Smyréen* in 1824 and *Le Spectateur Oriental* in 1825 were the first examples of this phase. *Le Spectateur Oriental* which was published by a Frenchman Alexandre Blacque was undoubtedly noticed by Sultan Mahmud II and the Ottoman ruling elite. It proved itself of great service to the Ottoman Empire by defending her interests in international issues.⁹⁰

Sultan Mahmud II, well aware of the crucial role of press, thought that it was high time to publish his own newspaper. Alexandre Blacque was believed to be the right person for the job with his experience in the sector, but more importantly for his positive attitude with regard to the Ottoman Empire. Sultan Mahmud II invited Blacque from Izmir and put him in charge of producing an official newspaper, the *Moniteur Ottoman* in 1831, published in French. This paper was followed by an official newspaper in Turkish, the *Takvim-i Vekayi* (Calendar of Events).⁹¹ According to Sultan Mahmud II, the reasons for establishing an official newspaper were:

. . . The publication of a newspaper was for me an ideal for a very long time. But as the time was not yet ripe, I preferred to wait for the proper moment. As the time is now ripe, and as the matter does not harm our laws and religion, and is willingly recommended by everybody to be highly beneficial, we desire to proceed to the establishment of a newspaper...⁹²

Révolutionnaire”, *Journal Asiatique*, Vol. CCXXXVI, Paris, 1948, pp. 271-276 in: Ali Budak, “The French Revolution's Gift to the Ottomans: The Newspaper, The Emergence of Turkish Media”, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2/19, October 2012, p. 157. Also see: Nuri İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2005), pp. 165-172.

⁸⁹ For the role of Smyrna in Ottoman trade, see: Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁹⁰ Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 29; Davison, “How the Ottoman Government”, p. 18.

⁹¹ The first issue was published on 25 Cemaziyelevvel 1247 (1 November 1831). Nesimi Yazıcı, *Takvim-i Vekayi: Belgeler* (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi, 1983); Davison, “How the Ottoman Government”, p. 18. Yalman says that it appeared under this name on 14 May 1832, but it is widely accepted as 1831. Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 29.

⁹² Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 28. (The translation belongs to Yalman.)

The target readers were government officials, educated people and notables in the capital and in the provinces, as well as foreign ambassadors and ministers. Yalman⁹³ assumes that this was stimulated by the necessity of sending off the thousands of newspaper copies every week as the post service was organized in this era.⁹⁴ The content of the newspaper was similar to that of the imperial chronicler which was to record what happened, to inform the society, and to prevent rumours which were very common since the oral communication was widespread. It also seems that one of the aims was to provide support and explanation for the policies of the Palace. Davison states that it was also a link to hold the empire together, underlining that *Takvim-i Vekayi* were published not only in Turkish, but in five other languages of the empire, namely French, Arabic, Greek, and Armenian, and even in Persian.⁹⁵

The *Ceride-i Havadis* is the first Turkish private newspaper in the Empire, published in Istanbul from 1840 onwards by a British man, William Churchill. The Ottoman government provided the necessary allowance to cover the costs and Churchill received a salary as a donation in the policy of subsidies to unofficial journals.⁹⁶ Therefore, it is right to describe *Ceride-i Havadis* as a semi-official paper. It was followed by *Tercüman-ı Ahval*, which was published on 22 October 1860, by the intellectuals in opposition. It was the first independent Turkish newspaper in real sense that provided both news coverage and published critical opinions. Technically, it was more advanced compared to the official ones.⁹⁷ The prevalence of regulations with regard to the press was accompanied with the increasing number of newspapers and journals after the 1860s. Censorship and other forms of control of the content as well as the total prohibition of publications were in practice, too.⁹⁸

⁹³ Ahmet Emin Yalman was an important figure in the history of Turkish journalism. He worked as a journalist when he was studying law in Turkey. He then studied philosophy and journalism in Columbia University. His thesis was one of the earliest studies on Turkish journalism. He was also founder of *Vatan* newspaper which was very influential during the early decades of Turkish republic.

⁹⁴ Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 31.

⁹⁵ Davison, "How the Ottoman Government", p. 18.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁹⁷ Budak, "The French Revolution's Gift", p. 167.

⁹⁸ The regulations will be told and explained in upcoming parts of this chapter.

According to Yalman's research, the situation of the press in Istanbul in 1876 was not weak. Of forty-seven newspapers and journals published in Istanbul at the time, thirteen were in Turkish. Seven of them were published daily as for two semi-weeklies, one political weekly, one satirical weekly, one medical monthly and one illustrated monthly. There were thirty four non-Turkish papers. Greek, Armenian and French were the predominant ones. Nine of them in Greek, nine in Armenian, seven in French, three in Bulgarian, two in English, two in Hebrew, one in German, and one in Arabic.⁹⁹

2.3. Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire

The evolution of news agencies in the nineteenth century was simultaneous with the development of telegraph since they owed their emergence to this new revolutionary technology. Therefore, the development of telegraph in the Ottoman Empire deserves a brief explanation. It surely gives an idea about the background of the international news agencies in the Empire and makes it easy to understand the process; and circumstances in which they emerged.

When compared with the appearance of publishing house and written press, the arrival of the telegraph technology was not delayed in the Ottoman Empire. The electric telegraph was presented to Ottoman sultans in early years of its invention. In 1839, Mr. Chamberlain, an agent of Samuel F. B. Morse who was the inventor of telegraph, came to Istanbul to look for support and to make a presentation about the new technology which was not fully developed yet. The Ottoman Sultan Abdülmecid was interested in technologic developments. It was agreed that Mr. Chamberlain had better to go to Vienna to employ the best workmen to make an entirely new set of instruments. Mr. Chamberlain departed with high hopes and enthusiasm; however his boat was capsized in the rapids of the Danube River and he lost his life.¹⁰⁰

Attempts continued for the use of telegraph in the Ottoman Empire after this sad accident. John Lawrence Smith, an American geologist in the Ottoman Empire working on the mines, briefed and demonstrated the latest technology and benefits of

⁹⁹ Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁰ Cyrus Hamlin, *Among the Turks* (New York: 1876), pp. 185-186.

using telegraph to Sultan Abdülmecid in 1847, who was so impressed with the presentation and gave a message to benefit from it.¹⁰¹ But no telegraphic line was built. Cyrus Hamlin¹⁰² who participated in the presentation of John Lawrence Smith at the palace in the presence of Sultan Abdülmecid, states that several high level Ottoman officials united against telegraphy. They did not want such tell-tale to report their doings every day while in the distant interior.¹⁰³ Thus, the Ottomans had to wait until the Crimean War (1853-1856) to experience it.

The Crimean War made the telegraph a necessity consequently leading to the establishment of the first line during the war.¹⁰⁴ Actually, the telegraph technology was in use in most of the Europe in these dates. Since Britain and France engaged in war; they tried to benefit from this great technology to get advantage by saving time in communication. However, there was also another attempt before the war in the Ottoman Empire. The British companies projected a plan to establish a telegraph line between Istanbul and Belgrade, but it had to be altered because of the needs of the Crimean War.¹⁰⁵

The Crimean War actually began between the Ottomans and Russia over territorial claims of the Tsarist Regime. Shortly after, Britain and France joined the Ottoman to prevent the Russian expansion into the Mediterranean. The need for communication between the allied forces was important and urgent militarily. They

¹⁰¹ Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, p. 186; and, Bektaş. “The Sultan’s Messenger,” p. 671. For detailed information about this process, see also: Mustafa Kaçar, “Osmanlı Telgraf İşletmesi (1854-1871)”, in: Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and Mustafa Kaçar, (eds.) *Çağımı Yakalayan Osmanlı*, (İstanbul: IRCICA, 1995), pp. 45-120; and, Yakup Bektas, “Displaying the American Genius: The Electromagnetic Telegraph in the Wider World”, *British Journal for the History of Science*, 34 (2001), pp. 199-232.

¹⁰² Cyrus Hamlin was an American Congregational missionary. He tried to establish Robert College in Constantinople in 1860. He did not succeed to get permission to build the collage for many years. After all, Hamlin got an imperial order permitting college to be established under American protection in 1863. The Hamlin Hall, the famous building of the college, was established in 1871. The Hamlin Hall is still part of Boğaziçi University. For the memories of Hamlin, besides *Among the Turks*, see also: Cyrus Hamlin, *My Life and Times in Turkey* (New York: 1893).

¹⁰³ Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁴ Headrick, *The Tools of Empire*; and Erik Baark, *Lightning Wires: The Telegraph and China's Technological Modernization, 1860-1890* (Greenwood Press: 1997), pp. 48-49; Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁵ Kaçar, “Osmanlı Telgraf”, pp. 51-52; and BOA, İ.H.R., 111/5446, 28 L 1270/24 July 1854. Note with regard to the calendar: There are different ways and practices of changing the Muslim Hijri calendar into the modern one. There might be some differences in these practices. In this thesis, the software of the Türk Tarih Kurumu (The Turkish Historical Society) was used. It is available at: <http://193.255.138.2/takvim.asp>

needed at least five days to convey a message or news from Crimea to London. Two days required to reach from the Crimea to Varna by a steam ship and three additional days by horse from Varna to Bucharest which was the closest station that had been connected to the European telegraph network via the Austrian lines. It was really a long time especially during the war. Britain and France shared the task with a convention in February 1855. Britain was responsible to lay underwater cable lines between Varna and Crimea which was the base of the British army whereas France laid a line between Varna and Bucharest.¹⁰⁶

Britain also undertook to build the cable line between Shumen (Şumnu) and Istanbul to have communication with the Ottoman capital.¹⁰⁷ As the first part, the line between Istanbul and Adrianople (Edirne) was successfully completed on 19 August 1855. The historic telegram heralded this development: “Istanbul and Adrianople contacted. Schumla (Shumen) will be ready in a few days. Then there will be no distance between Paris and Istanbul anymore.”¹⁰⁸ The second part, which was the line between Edirne and Shumen, was completed on 6 September 1855.¹⁰⁹ The line between Shumen and Varna had already been established by France. As a result, Istanbul was linked to Europe by telegraphic communication through Varna and Bucharest by September 1855.¹¹⁰ The first telegram went out from Istanbul to Europe

¹⁰⁶ Ken Beauchamp, *A History of Telegraphy* (London: Institution of Electrical Engineers, 2001). pp. 103-108; Roderic H. Davison, “The Advent of the Electric Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire”, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923* (University of Texas Press: 1990), pp. 134-137; Bektaş, “The Sultan’s Messenger,” p. 675; Benjamin Silliman, *Memoir of John Lawrence Smith, 1818-1883* (Washington: Judd & Detweiler, 1884), pp. 217-248.

The role of the Crimean War in expansion of telegraph cables was not limited with the Ottoman Empire. Even, it made possible for Australia to be connected to London. See: Peter Putnis and Sarah Ailwood, “The Crimean War and Australia's Communications and Media History”, Paper presented at the Australian Media Traditions Conference, Bathurst, November 2007. The article is available at <http://www.csu.edu.au/special/amt/publication/putnis-ailwood.pdf>. (Accessed 1 April 2013).

¹⁰⁷ For the permission of Ottoman government for line, see: BOA, İ.H.R., 121/ 6031, 7 L 1271/23 June 1855.

¹⁰⁸ Asaf Tanrıku, *Türkiye Posta ve Telgraf ve Telefon Tarihi ve Teşkilât ve Mevzuatı* (Ankara: Efem Matbaacılık, 1984), p. 567.

¹⁰⁹ Tanrıku, *Türkiye Posta ve Telgraf*, p. 552.

¹¹⁰ Davison, “The Advent of the Electric Telegraph”, p. 136; Bektaş, “The Sultan’s Messenger”, p. 675.

on 14 September 1855. It announced to the Ottoman ambassadors in London and Paris that the Russian castle of Sevastopol in the Crimean peninsula had fallen.¹¹¹

After the Crimean War; European interest, mainly Britain and France, in constructing telegraph cable lines have not come to an end but increased on the contrary. As mentioned in the first chapter, the nineteenth century was the era of European expansion; and telegraph was one the most significant tools of the empires. Therefore, Britain and France wanted to keep on building telegraph network not only in Anatolia but also in the other regions of the Ottoman Empire for commercial and political interests. Beyond the Ottomans, Asia Minor was a crossroad between Europe and India. Particularly for Britain, having a telegraphic connection with India, their primary colony, was a crucial driving force. Britain used the advantage of commanding monopoly over the most part of the world's telegraphic industry.¹¹²

Meanwhile, interest of the Ottoman Empire in telegraphy increased considerably. The government assigned a committee from high rank bureaucrats to form a master plan for the establishment of telegraphic network in the empire.¹¹³ After the Crimean War, Britain made many proposals to get permission from the Ottoman government for building telegraph lines. However, the Ottoman Empire was in a paradox. While it was increasingly aware of the economic and political advantages of telegraph network between the capital and other major provinces, the Ottoman government desired to have overall control of the network. Serious negotiations took place between the Ottoman Empire and Britain in those years. The primary goal of the Ottoman Empire was clear; and they were resolved in keeping "the telegraph towards India in their own hands."¹¹⁴ Finally in early January 1865, the Ottoman overland telegraph connected the Indo-European submarine line. It allowed the first uninterrupted telegraphic communication between India and Europe.¹¹⁵ Britain therefore achieved its primary goal which was to have swift communication with India.

¹¹¹ Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph", p. 136.

¹¹² Bektaş, "The Sultan's Messenger," p. 676.

¹¹³ Bektaş, "The Sultan's Messenger," p. 675.

¹¹⁴ Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph", p. 136; and Bektaş, "The Sultan's Messenger," p. 679.

¹¹⁵ Bektaş, "The Sultan's Messenger," p. 686.

Britain's influence on the Ottoman Empire in establishing telegraphic system was evidently crucial. In addition to Britain, France also assumed a significant role in constructing the telegraphy by mainly providing engineers and technicians. They also helped in operating the system and administration of the telegraph service. Yet, French was the common language of international communication in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁶

The impact of the telegraph in the Ottoman Empire, especially its contribution to journalism and international trade should also be addressed for the purposes of this research.¹¹⁷ In the beginning, undoubtedly, it was the Ottoman government which alone benefited from the telegraphy. After the government, merchants in the Empire were probably its most active users since fresh information was very useful in trade thanks to the quick communication.¹¹⁸ Ambassadors, foreigners, brokers and speculators were among the actors who have frequently benefited from telegraphy. That was the reason why the new post and telegraph office was built in Beyoğlu where most of them resided. The Ottoman government thought that Beyoğlu region was the most appropriate place for it.¹¹⁹

In the long run, newspapers absolutely became the most significant distributors of news and information provided by telegraph. While the newspapers just emerged in Istanbul in the second half of the nineteenth century, their numbers were limited and their quality and content were also weak. The foreign language papers, mainly in French, inclined to publish more news received by telegraph. However, it did not mean that the news overflowed, rather news from abroad was sparse most of the time.¹²⁰ Yet, news exchange was reciprocal with Europe. European newspapers began to publish more news from the Ottoman Empire thanks to telegraphic dispatches. Davison illustrates the extent of interest of the European press in publishing Ottoman news:

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 687.

¹¹⁷ Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph", p. 153.

¹¹⁸ Tanrıku, *Türkiye Posta ve Telgraf*, p. 578.

¹¹⁹ Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph", p. 154; Tanrıku, *Türkiye Posta ve Telgraf*, p. 92.

¹²⁰ Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph", p. 154.

By the time of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, westerners were used to news each day by telegraph. That war has been called “the breakfast war”; Englishmen at breakfast read each day the latest wire despatches from the front in their newspapers.¹²¹

The specific role of the Crimean War which is commonly viewed as the first mass media war in history, in the development of press in general also needs examination. This media war was especially symbolized by first-hand reports from the battlefield sent out by *The Times* correspondent William Howard Russell. Besides Russell’s reports, photographs of Roger Fenton made the front line visible. They really stirred debate since the public were not accustomed to have such kind of information and photographs. Reports of correspondents, which were more credible than official army releases, were the primary source of information for the public this time. The British government and the army were concerned since they could not control or manage the flow of information. The public began to criticize the government and the army after they learned what was happening on the front. The Crimean War is defined as the forerunner in the development of modern propaganda in Britain.¹²²

The European newspapers published stories about developments in Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire before the advent of the telegraph. Their sources were often their own state officials and the foreign embassies in their capitals. Traders and travellers were additional sources. It was a rare occasion that the newspapers with financial capabilities sent their own correspondents to investigate and to cover any issue. Although the number of newspapers and bulletins in the Ottoman Empire were very limited before the 1850s, they were useful source for the European media.

Steamships had played a crucial role in communication given that the newspapers and letters were sent through them. Actually, it was a mutual process as the newspapers coming from Europe through steamships were also a main source for the Ottoman public. An interesting account proves the role of steamships at the time. In 1847, an American mission made a presentation to show the invention of telegraph in the presence of Sultan Abdülmecid at the palace. During the test, the

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 155.

¹²² Paul Jonathan Meller, “The Development of Modern Propaganda in Britain, 1854–1902”, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis (Durham University: 2010) Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/246/> p. 4. (Accessed 12 November 2012)

translator asked Sultan Abdülmecid for a message to send through telegraph. The Ottoman Sultan immediately replied: “Has the French steamer arrived? And what is the news from Europe?”¹²³

During the Crimean War, Istanbul and St. Petersburg were really important to obtain information for the European powers and their public. Therefore, many European newspapers stationed their own correspondents in these capitals. It was also a test case for the international news agencies to prove themselves while the correspondents also tried to cover the war. The agencies such as Reuter, Havas and Wolff felt the need for having permanent sources in Istanbul during the period. It was the time that the news agencies began to emerge and develop. However, it would take about a decade for them to have a permanent office in Istanbul.¹²⁴ The advent of telegraph made it easy and possible for them to work in the Ottoman capital.

From the Ottoman perspective, the Crimean War and the ensuing public willingness to receive war news shaped the status of the press. It increased the numbers of readers and prepared the ground for self-supporting and independent newspapers.¹²⁵ In particular, the Crimean War made a great contribution to the *Ceride-i Havadis*, known as the first private newspaper in Istanbul, in terms of both professional experience and as a means of profit. The publisher, William Churchill, went into the frontline to cover the war. His exclusive stories from the front were published in *Ceride-i Havadis*, helping both an increase in circulation and its reputation.¹²⁶

2.4. International News Agencies in Istanbul

As discussed in the preceding sections, Reuter and Havas news agencies reaped the benefits of sending their representatives to key locations and capitals like St. Petersburg or Istanbul during the Crimean war, which also proved the importance

¹²³ Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, p. 190.

¹²⁴ This process will be explained in a detailed way in the upcoming parts in this chapter.

¹²⁵ Yalman, *The Development of Turkey*, p. 33.

¹²⁶ Budak, “The French Revolution's Gift”, pp. 167-168.

of receiving and distributing information swiftly from remote places.¹²⁷ One might think that these agencies established their offices in Istanbul during the war and maintained them henceforth. However, it was not the case since the telegraph link from Istanbul to Europe was recently established and yet to function properly. At the same time, the Ottoman government heavily regulated its use by public.

Analysis of the activities of the international news agencies in the Crimean War will give some clues and ideas about their foundations in Istanbul. As opposed to the works of some scholars,¹²⁸ the role of Reuter was very limited in producing and spreading information about the developments in the Crimean War. Reuters historian Read also had doubts about the role of the British agency with regard to the Crimean War. Therefore, he preferred to express that “the Crimean War (1854[3]-1856) was one which Julius Reuter seemingly did not report”.¹²⁹ One of the main reasons for Reuter’s limited role seems that it had not managed to have contracts with the British press to distribute political news. Its services were either limited to commercial ones or major events such as the fall of Sebastopol in the Crimean War. *The Times* was more influential in Britain in the 1850s. Having its own correspondents in major European capitals, it did not accept service from Reuter until 1858. Therefore, it was *The Times*, rather than the Reuter, which enjoyed chief position in the reporting of the Crimean War.¹³⁰ In addition to Read; Storey, the author of first comprehensive book on the history of Reuter¹³¹ does not mention at all the role of Reuter during the Crimean War. No document confirming that Reuter had a correspondent in Istanbul during the war has appeared to date.

Unlike Reuter, Havas was really operational during the Crimean War. It was the only news agency that had a correspondent in Istanbul at the time.¹³² The

¹²⁷ Esperanca Bielsa, “Globalization and News: The Role of the News Agencies in Historical Perspective”, p. 39 in: Esperanca Bielsa and Susan Bassnett (eds.) *Translation in Global News* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008).

¹²⁸ In addition to Esperance Bielsa, Jane Chapman states that Havas and Reuter “both had agents in St Petersburg, Vienna and Constantinople to collect news and rumours from the Russian side and for reports of diplomatic manoeuvres”. See: Jane Chapman, *Comparative Media History: An Introduction: 1789 to the Present* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), p. 62.

¹²⁹ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 29.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Gaham Storey, *Reuters’ Century 1851-1951* (London: Max Parrish, 1951).

¹³² Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter’den*, p. 4.

correspondent of Havas lived around Therapia (*Tarabya*), a district in Istanbul.¹³³ In fact, Frédéricix preferred to say Therapia instead of Istanbul possibly for the reason that the summer residences of major embassies such as Britain, France and Russia, were located in Therapia.

There is no information about the duration that Havas correspondent stayed in Istanbul while it seems plausible that he should have worked until the end of the war. Telegraphic connection of Istanbul with Europe was yet to be completed when the agent arrived at the Ottoman capital in 1854. The first telegram from Istanbul was sent by September 1855. There is no information on whether he used telegraph to send his dispatches once the connection was established. The only available information is that he was in Istanbul in 1854.¹³⁴

It is unclear when and how the international news agencies, mainly Reuter and Havas, began to have permanent correspondents and established their offices in Istanbul and started to send stories. A plausible explanation seems that it occurred around the 1860s, which deserves a thorough examination and discussion. In order to find a satisfactory response, research was carried out to collect possible documents in Ottoman archives and that of agencies. However, the newspapers published in the Ottoman Empire and abroad during that period reveal more information in finding out the telegrams of agencies and their respective evolution.

There are two researches that provide information and date about when Reuter began to operate in Istanbul. One is Read's comprehensive book, *The Power of News*. He states that Reuter definitely became operational in Istanbul at the latest in 1870. The list of profit-and-loss figures of Reuter offices during the first half of 1870 that Read used for his research proves that Reuter had an office in the Ottoman capital in that year.¹³⁵

The second source is the work of Koloğlu, titled *Havas-Reuter'den Anadolu Ajansı'na* (From Havas-Reuter to Anatolian Agency). He exposed a Reuter advertisement published in *Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, an English and French journal in Istanbul, dated 23 November 1868. The advertisement announced

¹³³ Pierre Frédéricix, *Un siècle de chasse aux nouvelles: de l'Agence d'information Havas à l'Agence France-press (1835-1957)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1959), p. 50.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 52.

that Reuter would start to operate in the Ottoman capital which substantiates that the British agency was in Istanbul at the end of 1868. The advertisement reads:

The undersigned has the honour to share with your bankers and merchants of Constantinople; it will soon open a branch in this city. Arrangements have been concluded with the central office to send two telegraphic dispatches to Constantinople per day. These dispatches will be sent from London and Paris immediately after the close of stock markets. As soon as it arrives in Constantinople, a copy of each [telegraphic] dispatch will be distributed simultaneously to the offices of subscribers.¹³⁶

According to the advertisement, daily telegraphic dispatches would cover the financial and business news; such as Consolidated British, opening and closing prices of the Ottoman General Debt Obligations, Turkish Loan 1865 Discount the Bank of England, cereal price of Ibrail, Galatz, Odessa, Taganrog, Turkish cotton price, and Smyrna and Liverpool market situation. It would also include all political and finance news that could possibly influence the markets.

Edward Virnard, the agent of Reuter, asked those of the merchants and bankers of Istanbul who wish to make a subscription to contact him at the Hotel d'Angleterre in Pera. The conditions were laid out:

The subscription to this telegraph service is fixed twenty-four pounds per year; payable in advance every three months. The first quarter will be paid after the opening of the service. The undersigned will always be happy to consider any feasible proposal that would aim to improve service. The Gentlemen subscribers can be confident that the service will be conducted with the utmost impartiality and discretion. Service will begin as soon as a certain number of signatures will be obtained.¹³⁷

Storey's account shows that the agency still received news from Istanbul through steamer in 1858. Julius Reuter visited the major newspapers in London in 1858 in order to subscribe them. The newspapers paid 40 pounds monthly for telegrams from the Continent. He instead made a proposal for "earlier, more ample, more accurate, and more important information from the Continent" and to charge 30

¹³⁶ Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter'den*, p. 10. For the advertisement see: *Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, 23 November 1868, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, 23 November 1868, p. 1.

pounds per month for all these services.¹³⁸ A trial for two weeks was free. Reuter would distribute the following during that time:

.. short political despatches from Berlin, Vienna, Paris and Madrid, and telegrams from Marseilles bringing 'advices by the last steamer' from Constantinople and Athens up to the previous week. He reported 'fermentation in Crete', and the Turkish mob's loudly announced desire to 'massacre all the Christians'¹³⁹

Storey's narrative demonstrates that the Reuter received no telegrams from Istanbul at the end of 1858 and it still obtained the news through steamer in those years. Yet, it is uncertain whether it was his own correspondent who sent the stories by steamer. It seems more likely that Reuter had no correspondent in Istanbul during that period based on an assumption that his agent would have used the telegraph service to send news, as the cable line was already operational between the Ottoman capital and Europe. More importantly, it was not the practice of the agencies to send their dispatches via steamers in that period.

2.5. Reuter and Havas Became Operational

After explaining the initial interests of international news agencies to report from Istanbul, their attempts to have a permanent office in the Ottoman capital should be addressed. It was definitely earlier than the cited sources mention. It is convenient to tell the stories of Havas and Reuter together since they were really close to each other.

As regards to the Reuter, a document in the Ottoman Archives, which was found out during this research, demonstrates that Baron Julius Reuter sent a letter to the Ottoman government on 27 October 1854.¹⁴⁰ He requested permission and concession to establish a telegraph line in the Ottoman Empire. The letter shows that the Ottoman government asked Julius Reuter for a feasibility study to set up a telegraph line in the empire, but it has no further detail. He informed the Ottoman

¹³⁸ Storey, *Reuters' Century*, p. 21.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 18/14, 27 October 1854.

government that the works to establish a line between Istanbul and Belgrade were still underway;¹⁴¹ and he added that the Turkish Empire would have a better communication opportunity thanks to this line. Julius Reuter then asked for a permission to create a line between Istanbul and Izmir. He stated:

After the line [between Constantinople and Belgrade] was connected, a [new] line between Constantinople and Smyrna [Izmir], which is a harbour city, will be able to be established. This then will strengthen the communication network. If the Excellencies, your worship permits me to establish this connection that I kindly requested last year, I would like to start the project without losing any time. Because of my short delay in establishing the line between Constantinople and Belgrade, your government draws my attention to this issue. However, all the necessary materials are already in place.¹⁴²

As the letter shows Julius Reuter had already asked for permission in 1853, an indication of his earlier interest. Constructing telegraph line and operating as a news agency were definitely different issues. However, given the practices of Reuter in its initial years, it seems likely that it would also have used the line for news agency services.

No response to Julius Reuter could be found in the Ottoman Archives. The archives neither have any document on any activity of Reuter in the said period. Given the official policy of the Ottoman government to exercise full control of the telegraph network in the Ottoman Empire, it would be prudent to imagine that the response of the Sublime Port might have been negative.

The best way of catching and following both incoming and outgoing telegrams of the international news agencies is to examine content of the newspapers published in Istanbul and Europe. The telegrams sent from the Ottoman capital give more idea about connection of Istanbul with Europe. Most of the British dailies closely demonstrate the progression of those telegrams since they were subscribed to Reuter and Havas. The telegrams sent from Istanbul do not mean that they were cabled by the correspondent of agencies. The agencies had a chance to get

¹⁴¹ Belgrade was the Eastern terminus of the telegraph network in 1853. Horse messengers carried diplomatic bags back and forth across the Balkans between Belgrade and Istanbul. See: David A. Welch, *Justice and the Genesis of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 233.

¹⁴² BOA, HR.SFR.3., 18/14, 27 October 1854. The original letter is in French.

information from their respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs given that they had regular communication with the embassies in Istanbul.

It is obvious that Reuter regularly served telegraphic dispatches from Istanbul from the beginning of 1859 and onwards. The first one that was discovered in this research was dated 17 February 1859.¹⁴³ The dispatch states that the origin of telegram was Istanbul, but it was received via France. It can reasonably be supposed that the telegram from Istanbul was sent to France, the original telegram belonged to Havas since the French agency was based in Paris and that Reuter then reused it after receiving it from Havas.

There is no other document or information that supports this view except the agreement between the “big tree” which were Reuter, Havas and Wolff in 1856. They agreed for an exchange of information basically on financial news such as market prices and quotations.¹⁴⁴ They extended the cooperation with a new agreement on 18 July 1859 and joined their forces “mutually to assist one another in the extension and the development of the telegraphic services, in such a way as to prevent attempts at competition and to increase the services according to the needs of the public, of the press and development of the telegraphic lines”.¹⁴⁵

There are various examples in the British dailies showing telegrams from Istanbul in different years in the 1860s,¹⁴⁶ the most of which were Reuter telegrams received via France. There are also others titled “a telegram from Constantinople” with no reference to any news agency. One example deserves a specific examination. The news published in the *London Daily News* in 27 October 1863 reads:

Mr. Reuter’s telegrams from Constantinople to-day affirm that “it has been decided that the Imperial Bank will pay the November dividends upon the consolidés in London and Paris;” and the announcement has helped the cause the slight improvement recorded above in the price of consolidés; but the

¹⁴³ *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 February 1859.

¹⁴⁴ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 70-71; Shrivastava, *News Agencies*, p. 13; Rantanen, *When News*, p. 97; and Jonathan Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution of News: The Associated Press, Press Association, and Reuters, 1848-1947* (Cambridge: 2004), p. 198.

¹⁴⁵ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 84-86; Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 198; and Reuters Archives, (London) (hereafter R.A.), 1/8714301. (The Photostat of treaty is available at Reuters Archives.)

¹⁴⁶ To illustrate: *Derby Mercury*, 22 February 1860; *London Standard*, 23 January 1861; *Exxex Standard*, 8 April 1863; and *London Daily News*, 28 March 1864.

intelligence in question has as yet met with no confirmation in London, either at the Imperial Ottoman Bank or elsewhere.¹⁴⁷

The significant point in this news is the reference to “Mr. Reuter’s telegrams from Constantinople”. It can be assumed that Reuter’s correspondent in Istanbul could have sent this dispatch. However, there is no evidence or record to support this view. Had Reuter had its reporter at that time in the Ottoman capital, it would be reasonable that the British dailies would have regularly published its dispatches, yet that was not the case. In addition, the earliest Reuter informants were not its own correspondents. The British agency also collected official statements and reports of newspapers.

The British dailies continued to publish telegrams from Istanbul which they received through the news agencies until 1867. They contain no information whether these agencies had their own correspondents in Istanbul. According to a news story, the earliest date that the Reuter had its own correspondent in Istanbul was September 1867. A Reuter telegram announced the release of the Abyssinian captives by King Theodore at the intervention of the Armenian Bishop Isaac. Almost all the British dailies published the news since it was a significant one for the British public. However, the story was untrue. The British Charge d’Affaires at Istanbul reported that he received no news about the release of the Abyssinian captives, and that he could not account for the rumour. The British dailies then asked for an explanation from Reuter’s Office. At the beginning, Reuter responded that he asked for an explanation from his agent in Istanbul. After two weeks, Reuter forwarded an explanation to the dailies by attaching the answer of his agent. As a result, it was a groundless story and the responsibility for the false telegram was to rest with Mr. Reuter’s agent at Istanbul.¹⁴⁸ The significance of this case for the purposes of this research is that Reuter already had his own agent in Istanbul by September 1867.

With regard to the incoming telegrams, *Journal de Constantinople* is a useful source since French Embassy in Istanbul supported it. It was one of the earliest

¹⁴⁷ *London Daily News*, 27 October 1863.

¹⁴⁸ Almost all the British dailies published the telegrams of Reuter and explanation of the agent taking the responsibility. The case will be comprehensively debated in a different manner in coming sections of this thesis. For the dailies, see: *London Daily News*, 28 September 1867; *The Examiner*, 14 September 1867; *Sheffield Independent*, 5 September 1867; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 September 1867; and *Western Daily Press*, 13 September 1867.

newspapers in the Ottoman capital. A story in *Journal de Constantinople* shows that the journal used telegraphic dispatches in the spring of 1856. It stated that “several telegraphic dispatches arrived in Constantinople” announcing the peace talks.¹⁴⁹ There is no information and reference whether it was a diplomatic telegram or a dispatch of an agency. The point is that *Journal de Constantinople* was able to get news through telegraph at that time. The first time that *Journal de Constantinople* made a reference to any news agency was 16 December 1856. The journal published stories stating that it took them from Havas correspondence.¹⁵⁰ There was also a Reuter telegram in the newspaper on 31 December 1860.¹⁵¹ However, they were still unclear on how the journal received these despatches.

The Levant Herald Weekly also published stories that were obtained “by electric telegraph” from London and other European cities.¹⁵² However, there were no any Reuter and Havas telegrams until 1866 except two examples in 1860. The journal published a story stating the source as “by special telegram of ourselves from Reuter’s Office, London”.¹⁵³ The second was published under the explanation of “the following are Reuter’s and others telegrams of the week”.¹⁵⁴

The telegraphic despatches went on to appear both in the *Journal de Constantinople* and *The Levant Herald Weekly*¹⁵⁵ until 1866 but their source was not clear. They do not give any clue how the journals received despatches and whether these agencies operated in Istanbul. There is a possibility that they might have received these despatches from the French and British embassies in Istanbul since the journals were really affiliated with them.

According to newspapers in Istanbul, 1866 was the crucial year for the coming of international news agencies, namely Havas and Reuter. *The Levant Herald Weekly* began to publish Havas telegrams by a reference to 1866. The first one is

¹⁴⁹ *Journal de Constantinople*, 3 April 1856, No 690, p.1.

¹⁵⁰ *Journal de Constantinople*, 25 December 1857.

¹⁵¹ *Journal de Constantinople*, 31 December 1860.

¹⁵² *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 27 April 1859.

¹⁵³ *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 29 August 1860.

¹⁵⁴ *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 19 December 1860.

¹⁵⁵ They were mostly supporting the British interests.

dated 18 July of 1866 was published under the title of “By Special Telegrams from Havas’ Agency, Paris.”¹⁵⁶ *The Levant Herald Weekly* continued to use the telegrams of Havas regularly for three years which demonstrates that the French agency was operational in Istanbul from mid-1866. In addition to *The Levant Herald Weekly*, *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin* also published the telegrams of Havas from the beginning of 1867 regularly.¹⁵⁷ They both continued on to publish the despatches of Havas until the first week of August 1868 when Reuter started to distribute news in Istanbul.

As for the start of Reuter’s operations in the Ottoman Empire, its agent Edward Virnard arrived in Istanbul by mid-1866. Virnard gave an advertisement in *The Levant Herald Weekly* on 20 June 1866. He heralded the “accelerated daily telegraphic service” in Istanbul. The advertisement was as follows:

Reuter’s Telegram Company, Limited:

ACCELERATED DAILY TELEGRAPHIC SERVICE

The Public in this Capitol is hereby informed, that, on a sufficient number of persons subscribing to this useful enterprise, two DAILY TELEGRAMS will be despatched from London to Constantinople for the exclusive information for each subscriber. These telegrams will contain a complete summary of COMMERCIAL NEWS, together with all important POLITICAL and FINANCIAL information of the day. For further particulars, apply to the undersigned, at the Hotel d’Angleterre.

Pera, June 16, 1866. Edward Virnard¹⁵⁸

The important detail with regard to this advertisement is that it announced that the British agency would start to operate in Istanbul which was two years earlier than what Koloğlu stated. The date of the advertisement that Koloğlu mentioned in *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* was 23 November 1868.¹⁵⁹ It clearly demonstrates that the attempt of Reuter to have an office in the Ottoman capital dated back to an earlier time.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 18 July 1866.

¹⁵⁷ *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, 3 January 1867.

¹⁵⁸ *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 20 June 1866.

¹⁵⁹ Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter’den*, p. 10. For the advertisement see: *Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, 23 November 1868. p.1.

¹⁶⁰ Actually, it is not an important point but the advertisement in November 1868 in *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* began to be seen a week earlier than Koloğlu stated. It was published 17, 18 and 21 November 1868.

The same advertisement was also published in the following week in June 1866. Despite its agent's announcement for the start of the service, the British agency was not able to conclude the agreements and could get permission from the Ottoman government. Edward Virnard's new advertisement announced the trouble:

Notice, is hereby given that the telegraphic service proposed in my circular of 16 June has been postponed for a short time, pending the conclusion of certain arrangements with the Imperial Ottoman Government.
Edward Virnard, Constantinople, Aug. 22 1866.¹⁶¹

Did the Reuter overcome the trouble? No documents could be found in the Ottoman Archives, but according to the newspapers in Istanbul, it certainly took around around two years given that no despatch of Reuter was published in *The Levant Herald Weekly* and *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin* until August 1868. Both began to publish the telegrams of Reuter from August 1868. The first despatch was seen on 14 August 1868 in *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*.¹⁶² *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* also published the telegrams of Reuter just after the start of its publication on 16 November 1868. The first telegram in it was on 21 November 1868.¹⁶³ Both *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* and *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin* continued to use Reuter's telegrams until February 1870.

Reuter's advertisement went for publication until April 1869. Virnard gave another advertisement in March 1869 informing that the regular telegraphic commercial news service was to begin shortly. He underlined that he had taken extraordinary measures to ensure the accuracy of the prices of the items from London, Liverpool and Marseille to fully satisfy the needs of commerce. Virnard listed the prices of many items such as cotton, wheat, rice, silk and coffee. The service was to begin as soon as sufficient number of subscribers was obtained. The subscription to this telegraph service was fixed twenty-four pounds per year; payable in advance every three months.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, the service should have already begun

¹⁶¹ *The Levant Herald Weekly*, 22 August 1866.

¹⁶² *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, 14 August 1868.

¹⁶³ *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, 21 November 1868.

¹⁶⁴ *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, 27 March 1869.

since the Istanbul newspapers used the telegraphic dispatches by giving reference to Reuter.

Reuter and Havas began to jointly distribute telegrams from March 1870 under the name of Reuter-Havas-Bullier.¹⁶⁵ Their cooperation continued for a year. At the end of 1872, they cooperated and forwarded telegrams under the title of “Reuter-Havas”.¹⁶⁶ This cooperation continued at least for three years. According to the Ottoman Archives, Havas had a correspondent in Istanbul in 1867; Reuter in 1873 and the German Wolff in 1888 at latest.

Lastly, Reuter Archive is really helpful to identify the beginning of the British agency in Istanbul. It seems that Reuter had a staff or a connection in the Ottoman capital in 1865. In the minute book of Reuter, there is a record stating “bills accepted during the week and approved: April 22, Macoan Constantinople, £60”. It was a board meeting held at the Company's offices in Royal Exchange Buildings on Friday 28 April 1865.¹⁶⁷ There was no more detail about it. It is not clear what his/her responsibility was. There are other records about Macoan as well. In February 1866, the minute book includes the record of “the following bill was signed. Macoan £50”.¹⁶⁸ There is one more record confirming the acceptance of a bill in July 1866.¹⁶⁹

There is no further information in Reuters Archive about who Macoan was and what he did for the British agency. However, a coincidence was noticed during the research to identify Macoan. The name of founder and editor of *The Levant Herald* in Istanbul was James Carlile McCoan. He was an Irish Protestant educated at Dublin Trinity College who went to the Crimea as war correspondent for the *Daily News*. Following the war, McCoan travelled in Georgia and Circassia, and afterwards settled in Istanbul. He founded and edited an English newspaper in Turkey, *The Levant Herald*, which represented the interests of the British government.¹⁷⁰ The

¹⁶⁵ *The Levant Herald Daily*, 1 March 1870.

¹⁶⁶ *The Levant Herald Daily*, 16 September 1872.

¹⁶⁷ R.A., LN 288 Archive No 1/883501, p. 17.

¹⁶⁸ R.A., LN 288 Archive No 1/883501, p. 79.

¹⁶⁹ R.A., LN 288 Archive No 1/883501, p. 111.

¹⁷⁰ Howard Vining Brasted, “Irish Home Rule Politics and India 1873-1886: Frank Hugh O'Donnell and Other Irish 'Friends of India'” (University of Edinburgh: 1974), Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p. 339; D.N.B., *Second Supplement*, Vol. II, p. 507; and François Georgeon, “Kemalist Dönemde

handwritten minute book of Reuter mentioned about Macoan which was only differed by a letter from McCoan. As a result, it would be fair and reasonable to argue that Macoan could have been James Carlile McCoan. The British Government's extensive support for *The Levant Herald* and McCoan's closeness with the British Government add up to this argument.

Having presented in detail the examination of different sources and discussion on them, some conclusions can be drawn. The international news agencies, mainly Havas and Reuter, were interested in the Ottoman Empire from their initial years. They distributed news to European press from Istanbul by the late 1850s. However, the source of early news was unclear. One possible explanation is that the Ottoman newspapers sent through steamers and diplomatic telegrams could be their source. It is evident that both Havas and Reuter were operational and had their own agents in Istanbul by the mid-1860s. Reuter was most likely had a staff in Istanbul in 1865, but it is certain that both agencies had their correspondents in 1866. They cooperated and provided service together in the 1870s although they competed with each other in other times. The competition, even the fight, became really fierce in the late 1870s, especially during the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in 1877-1878. That competition will be discussed separately in following chapters.

Furthermore, the German Wolff Agency was interested in working Istanbul and contacted to the Ottoman government. It had a correspondent in the Ottoman capital in the late 1880s. As far as the Ottoman documents show, the American Associated Press Agency did not establish an office in Istanbul but sent its correspondents for occasional reporting in the first decade of the twentieth century.¹⁷¹

Türkiye'de Fransızca Yayın Yapan Basına Toplu Bir Bakış", *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, Translated by Niyazi Öktem, V.VI, March 1990, p.17.

¹⁷¹ BOA, BEO, 2621/196529, 10 Ca 1323/12 July 1905; and, BOA, DH.EUM.VRK., 25/9, 4 C 1333/19 April 1915.

CHAPTER III

NEWS AGENCIES AS A “THREAT” FOR THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Any discussion on press in general and foreign press in particular in the Ottoman Empire is mostly identified with Sultan Abdülhamid II. Koloğlu defines it as “the press regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II.”¹⁷² This argument stands to reasonable on two grounds. First, Sultan Abdülhamid II stayed on the throne for thirty-three years between 1876 and 1909. Since the international news agencies intensified their operations in Istanbul after the 1870s, their history in the Ottoman Empire mostly coincides with with the rule of Sultan Abdülhamid II. Second, it was the period that the press in the empire developed not only in terms of numbers but also content and quality with the advent of communication technology. Consequently, the last decades of the nineteenth century corresponded to a period that Ottoman Empire was exposed to reality, problem and pressure of press. The Ottoman government first experienced the problem firsthand in time, and then sought to manage it which was really a very lively process.

Sultan Abdülhamid II succeeded to throne at a hard time for the Ottoman Empire on the eve of an upcoming war against Russia. The uprisings in the Balkans and financially bankrupt treasure only compounded the troubles. The image of the Empire was really damaged in the Western world. To illustrate, the April Uprising of Bulgarians in 1876 and the response of the Ottoman Empire to suppress it draw reactions of the European powers. The report of British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of East*, was an example of it. The reputation of the empire in Europe further deteriorated.¹⁷³ Deringil describes the circumstances:

¹⁷² Orhan Koloğlu, “‘Abdülhamid’in Basın Rejimi Deyimi’ Üzerine”, in: *Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Devri Semineri (27-29 Mayıs 1992) Bildiriler*, (İstanbul: 1994), pp. 35-46.

¹⁷³ Selim Deringil, “Ottoman Image Management and Damage Control”, *Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London and New York:

As their world shrank around them, the Ottomans realized that a vital aspect of survival was the projection of a positive image abroad. In a world where there was increasingly less space for the “unspeakable Turk”, in Gladstonian parlance, this was more often that not a question of damage control as Ottoman statesmen tried to desperately to make the case that they were a Great Power recognized by the Treaty of Paris of 1856, with a legitimate right to exist.¹⁷⁴

Under such an atmosphere, Sultan Abdülhamid II had to deal also with the matter of “image” because of its influence on politics. The effort of the Ottomans in this vein was focused mainly on two matters. Firstly, they tried to cope with the damage caused by “endless harsh and hostile news and comments” in the international media, particularly in Europe. The source of these reports was often the international news agencies, particularly Reuter and Havas. The aim of these publications was to portray the Ottoman state “as a degenerate nest of blood-thirsty tyrants at worst, or a decaying fleshpot of ‘Oriental’ vice best”, in the words of Deringil.¹⁷⁵

The second method to address the image problem was counter propaganda activities to present a positive image in the world. Therefore, every opportunity to appear in the mainstream of world events was used in this course. Broadly speaking, the aim of the entire endeavour was to back up the Ottoman Empire’s shaky demand to be perceived as a member of the civilized world and part of the Concert of Europe. Opportunities in this endeavour varied from sending of 300 *liras* to the victims of forest fire in the United States to financial aid for medical purposes to both Russian and Japanese sides in the war.¹⁷⁶ Participation at international fairs was another tool; the “Turkish Village” was established in Chicago World Fair in 1893. These efforts were followed by initiatives like sending a collection of a photograph albums to the US Library of Congress, portraying the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Sultan

I. B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 135-136; and Zekariya Kurşun, “The Image of Abdülhamid II in the Context of the Ottoman World”, pp. 181-182. In: Çoşkun Yılmaz, (ed.) *II. Abdülhamid, Modernleşme Sürecinde İstanbul* (İstanbul: 2011).

¹⁷⁴ Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*, p. 135.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 135-136.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

Abdülhamid II. The photographs highlighted the modernization of various aspects of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷⁷

However, the things that the Ottoman government presented to world were not sufficient. It was essential to be announced, published and demonstrated to foreign nations. It was the era of discovering the power of the popular press. In the eyes of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the Ottoman Empire could not lag behind in this new fight. As Deringil rightly points out, it was no accident that one of the major collections in the Ottoman Yıldız Archives consists of newspaper cuttings about the Ottoman Empire. There are more than 100 newspapers like *The New York Times*, *The Times*, *Correspondance de Vienne*, *Le Matin*, *The Pall Mall* and *Debats*, from different countries.¹⁷⁸ It is evident that the Ottoman government was absolutely aware of the significance of the European public opinion.

The international news agencies were at the hearth of such process. The Ottoman government timely understood that Western newspapers, particularly European ones, were fed from the telegraphic dispatches of the international news agencies. Before examining the way in which the Ottoman government regulated the relations with international news agencies, it is necessary to dwell on how the Palace and Ottoman ruling elite perceived them. Since the first endeavour of the Palace was to control and contain the damage that the international press inflicted, there is a need to explain why the international news agencies were a big problem and a threat for the Empire in the eyes of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman ruling elite. Analysing the content of the telegraphic dispatches will help reveal it. Their content will be examined under seven subthemes according to intensity and concentration of documents in the Ottoman archives and response of the Ottoman Empire. The first six of them are external “threats” and the last one is internal.

The methodology in showing the content needs an explanation at this point. The telegraphic dispatches of the news agencies on these issues and reply of the

¹⁷⁷ The albums featured images of educational facilities and students; well-equipped army and navy personnel and facilities; technologically advanced lifesaving and fire fighting brigades; factories; mines; harbours; hospitals; and government buildings. See: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ahii/> (Accessed 4 May 2013)

For the photograph albums, see: Muhammad Isa Waley, “Images of the Ottoman Empire: the photograph albums presented by Sultan Abdülhamid II”, *The Electronic British Library Journal* (1991), pp. 111-127.

¹⁷⁸ Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*, p. 136.

Ottoman government will be displayed. Checking and examining the credibility of these dispatches are beyond the scope of this chapter. In terms of the position of the Ottoman government, they refuted the reports and sought publishing of corrections. Narrating denials of the Ottoman government does not attest that the Sublime Porte was right. The purpose is to exhibit to the readers how the system worked. Several reports of the agencies being mentioned in the Ottoman Archives have been in this chapter. The primary goal of this to indicate on what kind of issues the international news agencies mostly reported and how they described these incidents in general. Besides, by doing so, the issues and their contents will hopefully help seeing why the Palace was discontent and became gradually annoyed.

3.1. The Armenian Issue

The role of foreign press in the Armenian Question has been addressed in several studies.¹⁷⁹ An article also studied the counter attempts of Ottoman government for eliminating the efforts to create a positive attitude in the Western world in favour of the Armenians.¹⁸⁰ However, the role of international news agencies has yet to be tackled. In particular, the agencies played the key role in this process since they were the basic source of the European press to supply the dispatches. Most of the European dailies had no correspondents in Istanbul and they depended on the telegraphic news of the agencies.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ In the chapter of “Attack Tactics of Europe”, Orhan Koloğlu gives “Armenian Question” as the first example and explains it in the subheading. See: Orhan Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kısacasında Abdülhamit* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1998), pp. 157-171. Also see: Taha Niyazi Karaca, *Büyük Oyun: İngiltere Başkanı Gladstone'un Osmanlı'yı Yıkma Planı* (İstanbul: Timaş, 2011). Besides them, the following articles might be useful as well: Fikretin Yavuz, “Armenian Question and Western Public Opinion (From the Congress of Berlin to the 1890s)”, *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol. 11, December, 2012, p. 61; and Memet Yetişgin, “Batı Basınından Osmanlı Devleti'ne Yaklaşımlar ve Osmanlıların Bu Yaklaşımlara Tepkileri”, *OTAM*, 2010, No 28, pp. 119-162.

¹⁸⁰ Hilmi Bayraktar, “Batıda Ermeniler Lehinde Kamuoyu Oluşturma Çabaları Karşısında Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye İdaresi ve Çalışmaları”, in: Metin Hülügü (eds.), *Hoşgörüden Yol Ayrımına Ermeniler* (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), V. II, pp. 321-342.

¹⁸¹ It seems that the academics working on the role of press in Armenian Question do not have a comprehensive approach how the European dailies got information from abroad; and how system of international news agencies worked in these years. They have mostly looked at the consequences which were the publication of European dailies; but not their sources which were the international news agencies.

The Armenian Question commonly refers to developments about the Armenians subjects of the Ottoman Empire mainly from the second half of the nineteenth century to their forced deportation from Anatolia in 1915 and 1916. The 1856 Treaty of Paris provided the Great Powers with the claim of authority to intervene in order to protect the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire. Although the Armenians, described by the Ottomans as the “loyal nation” (*millet-i sadıka*), remained passive in the beginning, they changed their position in the wake of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. They hoped to carve out their own state like other minorities in the empire such as the Greeks. The Ottoman government failed to keep its promises to make reforms to improve the conditions of the minorities while the European powers and Russia closely monitored the issue.

The attitude of the European press about the Ottoman Empire was dominated by traditional European prejudices which described them as “Barbarian Turks” and “Sick Man of Europe”. Yet, the Western public opinion and especially the Western press were always sympathetic towards the Armenians.¹⁸² Havas and Reuter informed the Western public opinion by distributing dispatches nearly to all European dailies when the Armenian Question became a crucial international issue after the Berlin Congress of 1878; and when the clashes and events hit the top in the 1890s.¹⁸³

The Armenian Issue was certainly the most popular topic for the international news agencies and the telegraphic dispatches especially in the 1890s.¹⁸⁴ The Ottoman Archives has hundreds of documents on this issue. It can also be seen by telegrams that were sent from Istanbul as well as the stories published in British and French newspapers. The common theme in the telegrams followed a similar line: The public order was completely disturbed in the Ottoman Empire. The Armenians were exposed to torture. Muslims and Kurdish people systematically attacked the Armenians. Muslims also forced the Armenian people to change their religion.

The story of Kent Cooper, who was General Manager of Associated Press between 1925 and 194, shows that subscribing a news agency meant taking all the newspapers in these years. The story was told in first page of introduction chapter. See: Cooper, *Kent Cooper*, p.3.

¹⁸² Yavuz, “Armenian Question and Western Public Opinion”, p. 61.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁸⁴ The role and dispatches of news agencies about the Armenian Issue during the First World War will not be examined in this study.

The first example of such a telegram is from Havas in 1894. It reported that “bashi-bazouks”, irregular soldiers of the Ottoman army, attacked Armenian villages, and killed and wounded around six thousand people. The British Embassy in Istanbul therefore sent an officer to investigate the incidents.¹⁸⁵ The second document is from the Ottoman Embassy in Paris. The embassy requested information from the Ottoman government in order to refute the reports in French press distributed by Agence Havas. The story based on Havas reporting claimed that the Kurdish people raided the Armenian villages in Van, east of Anatolia, and killed the people there.¹⁸⁶ Havas had already distributed dispatches reporting a row occurred between gendarmes and Armenians in an Armenian cemetery in 1895¹⁸⁷ and the Kurdish people in Van attacked the Armenians in 1899.¹⁸⁸

As the documents in the Ottoman Archives indicate, the state officials always argued that the news agencies tried to demonstrate the number of murdered Armenians more than the factual figures. To illustrate, the telegraphic dispatch gave the number of Armenians who were murdered in Sason, a region in the east of Turkey. The Ottoman government claimed the figure was untrue; it had to be less and refuted the story distributed by a foreign news agency.¹⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the Ottoman archival document does not give any figure regarding the number of murdered people.

Furthermore, one of the points about which the Ottoman government complained was that the agencies mostly received information from the Armenian committees and newspapers without checking their credibility and verifying them. The Ottoman documents claim that the correspondent of Havas in Athens visited the Armenian committee in order to get information with regard to a claimed fight.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, according to the account of an Ottoman document, an Armenian newspaper published stories that narrated the suppression of Ottomans towards the

¹⁸⁵ BOA, A.}MKT.MHM., 750/24, 21 Ca 1312/20 November 1894.

¹⁸⁶ BOA HR.SYS., 2799/26, 3 March 1912.

¹⁸⁷ BOA, HR.SYS. 2856/44, 19 April 1895.

¹⁸⁸ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 395/128, 29 Z 1316/10 May 1899. The document says that it was re-attack which meant there were previous attacks.

¹⁸⁹ BOA, HR.SYS., 29/88, 24 January 1895.

¹⁹⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 20/4, 6 C 1312/5 December 1894.

Armenian people in several places based on a Havas report that failed to confirm and inquire about the allegations with the Ottoman officials. The Ottoman Embassy in Paris accordingly sent denials to the newspapers that published this telegram.¹⁹¹

The reports that Armenians were subjected to torture were another common theme in the news stories of the agencies. The *Daily News* published a telegraphic dispatch of Reuter stating that the Armenian prisoners were tortured. The Ottoman document claimed that it was not true by describing it “so-called torture”.¹⁹² A case in 1893 shows how the Ottoman government was sensitive about the issue and monitored the news closely. The British *Daily News* published a story reporting some Armenian prisoners were exposed to torture and maltreatment. After the publication of story, the Ottoman Embassy in London and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs were alarmed. The embassy immediately made inquiry and informed the Ministry in Istanbul. The cable said:

At first glance, although it seems that the telegraphic dispatch sent from Vienna, it is evident that it was sent not from a correspondent in Vienna but from a special correspondent who is more likely an Armenian living in Istanbul or London. This was a special telegram. That is the reason why it was not published in other dailies. I have already contacted the [Reuter] company to notify about our disappointment since the company became an instrument for the false and defamation news stories about the Ottoman Empire. I also asked for a correction.¹⁹³

Another point in the reports of agencies with regard to Armenian issue is that they mentioned of a possible uprising of Armenians in Anatolia. There are different documents that prove the point. For instance, in 1895, Reuter reported that Armenians were preparing for an uprising.¹⁹⁴ In 1893, another document also described how the correspondent of Reuter reported that Armenians would revolt against the Ottoman Empire. The agency also ensured that the British press published the story. In response, the Ottoman Sultan expressed that the British government would be responsible for such news.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 320/20, 22 Ş 1312/18 February 1895.

¹⁹² BOA, HR.SYS., 2825/77, 27 July 1893.

¹⁹³ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 278/148, 25 July 1893.

¹⁹⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 325/69, 27 L 1312/23 April 1895.

¹⁹⁵ BOA, HR.SYS., 2819/34, 9 August 1893.

The agencies sometimes reported serious claims that made the Palace and the Ottoman government annoyed. An example was a report claimed that the Armenian monks were forced to change religion and convert to Islam. It further stated that the Armenian women were kidnapped. The reaction of the Sublime Porte was similar: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied the claims as total lies and instructed the Ottoman Embassy in London to refute the report.¹⁹⁶ Another report which sparked the reaction of the Ottoman State was based on a Reuter telegram that stated a lot of Armenian girls were compelled to conversion. The Porte instructed the Embassy to deny the story.¹⁹⁷

Along with these lines, another story is related on how the police sought suspected Armenians. One of them committed suicide in Istanbul when they saw that the police was very close to them. The report was sent by William H. G Werndel, the correspondent of Reuter in Istanbul.¹⁹⁸ Yet, 1300 Armenians were in prison in different cities in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Embassy in London informed the Porte of the list of newspapers which published these stories of Reuter.¹⁹⁹ From the perspective of the Ottoman government; Reuter reported false and baseless stories against the Empire.²⁰⁰

Other examples from telegraphic dispatches are as follows: A report of Havas stated that some Armenians were imprisoned after they applied to the governor to complain about the Ottoman army who attacked the Armenians in Yozgat.²⁰¹ A Havas story reported that the officer of British post office was arrested just because he was Armenian.²⁰² The Reuter story with the headline “Disorder in Yozgat” stated that Armenians killed an Armenian informant and that the security forces arrested Armenians. The Armenians in the region then attacked prison and succeeded in setting their comrades free. They also killed some gendarmes in the process. Some

¹⁹⁶ BOA, HR.SYS., 2759/35, 7 September 1898.

¹⁹⁷ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 383/85, 19/Za/1315/11 April 1898.

¹⁹⁸ BOA, Y.MTV., 165/191, 25 Ra 1315/24 August 1897.

¹⁹⁹ BOA, HR.SYS., 2856/7, 15 March 1895.

²⁰⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 326/95, 7 Za 1312/2 Mayıs 1895.

²⁰¹ BOA, HR.SYS., 2824/78, 4 March 1895.

²⁰² BOA, Y.A.HUS., 318/8, 1 Ş 1312/28 January 1895.

people were killed and some were wounded as a result of the clash between the gendarmes and Armenians.²⁰³ The point in mentioning all these stories here is to stress that the agencies reported dozens of news on the issue.

3.2. The Balkan Issues

The reports of Reuter and Havas on the developments in the Balkans during the last decades of nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century occupy a large place in their telegrams. It will be useful to briefly present some dynamics about the political situation: The nineteenth century was an era of decay for the Ottomans in the Balkans. The Empire was exposed to a lot of uprisings of Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians. In this sense, the last two decades of the century was a nightmare for the Ottoman Empire. After the defeat in 1877-1878 War with Russia, the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) marked big loss for the Ottomans. Immediately after, the Treaty of Berlin paved the way for the separation and independence of Romania, Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria. The Balkans issues increasingly became part of international politics. The European Powers, especially Britain, France and Germany were in a power struggle with Russia on the future of the Ottoman Empire. They sought to control the decay of the Empire without damaging the “balance of power” while simultaneously trying to maximize individual interests. As a result, Greek, Bulgarian and Serb nationalists in the region organized several clandestine committees to maintain and guarantee their survival. Their revolts and clashes with the Ottoman forces became very frequent in the period.

The European powers and public followed the events very closely. Some of the European dailies occasionally sent their own correspondents to cover the developments, but Reuter was the dominant player in reporting. Havas also sent telegrams, but compared to Reuter, the French agency was not that influential. Crete and Thessaloniki were the center of the reports. Most of the dispatches were about the uprisings and fight between the Ottoman army and the rebels. The agencies underlined how the Ottomans suppressed the revolts. They also reported that the Ottoman government mistreated the non-Muslim people in the region. A common

²⁰³ *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Yayınları, 1984), C. 17, Belge No. 7.

theme in the reports was that the Ottoman soldiers committed the crimes of torture and rape. Conversely, the Ottoman government was cognizant of the role of the news agencies and sought to use it as a weapon for its interests even by way of bribery, the story of which will be thoroughly told in Chapter V.

Some dispatches of the agencies would give an idea about their attitude. A Reuter dispatch reported the details of how the Albanians began their uprising. However, the official document on the topic argues that the story exaggerated the incidents. As a result, the Porte ordered the Ottoman Embassy in London to refute the report in an appropriate manner.²⁰⁴ Further, Reuter reported that a control committee from the Great Powers (*Düvel-i Muazzama*) to monitor the reforms in Rumelia, which was historical term describing the area of Balkans under the Ottoman domains, would be established. The Ottoman document asserted that it was a groundless story and accordingly the Ottoman government issued a warning to the Reuter that the British agency had to be more careful in producing its news.²⁰⁵

Reuter had a particular interest in Crete and covered the developments very closely. It was not a coincidence given that the British government was a key player on the island in the second half of the nineteenth century. Reuter correspondent in Istanbul sent a telegram to London conveying the comment of Ottoman admirals to the ambassadors. The comment was that the Ottoman rule in Crete was nor more sustainable and possible.²⁰⁶ Reuter also reported that a gang of Turks murdered fourteen Christians in Crete. From the perspective of the Ottomans, the attitude of British agency was very hostile to the Ottoman army in Thessaly.²⁰⁷

Furthermore, *The Times* and some other newspapers in London published a story which Reuter received from Istanbul and distributed. It claimed that the Austrian and Russian consuls visited Tetova (*Kalkandelen*), a Macedonian city and that they blamed the Albanians for oppressing and slaughtering Christians.²⁰⁸ The next Reuter report claimed that a battalion of a *Redif*, a reserve force in the Ottoman

²⁰⁴ BOA, TFR.I.A., 17/1665, 13 S 1322/29 April 1904.

²⁰⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 453/122, 13 Ca 1321/7 August 1903.

²⁰⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 370/75, 25 L 1314/29 March 1897.

²⁰⁷ BOA, HR.SYS., 2870/20, 1 June 1897.

²⁰⁸ BOA, TFR.I.A., 10/963, 13 Ca 1321/7 August 1903.

army, murdered Christian gendarmes in Mitrovica, a Kosovo city. The Porte denied the claim.²⁰⁹ Reuter also reported that soldiers of the Ottoman army mistreated and suppressed the villagers in the Balkans. The British dailies published these dispatches. The Ottoman government launched an investigation about the allegations in the telegram, but neither denied nor confirmed them.²¹⁰

There were other examples as well. Reuter reported a story received from Sofia which stated that the Ottoman government planned to place the Muslim people instead of the Ottoman Bulgarians in the Coast of Maritsa River.²¹¹ In addition, Reuter reported that the police and gendarmes of the Ottoman Empire tortured and maltreated the people in Skopje. The Ottoman government argued that the allegations were groundless and completely false.²¹² Havas reported that a clash occurred between the Muslims and the Jews in Thessaloniki. The French agency received the story from Greek newspapers.²¹³ Also, a report of Reuter claimed that the gendarmes and a Bulgarian bandit gang battled in Monastir. In the clash, fourteen of gendarmes were killed or injured while the bandits escaped. The Sublime Porte's response followed a similar line arguing that the dispatches were utterly lies.²¹⁴ Lastly, all the newspapers in London published a dispatch of Reuter which claimed that the *tenkil*, the punishment to give a lesson, was not only against the Bulgarians but also for the annihilation of all the Christians.²¹⁵

Meanwhile, revitalization of nationalist feelings in Macedonia was prevalent in the beginning of the twentieth century. Sultan Abdülhamid II offered reforms in 1902, but they failed to satisfy the demands of the people. The Boatmen of Thessaloniki, the Bulgarian comitadjis whose aim was to attract the attention and the intervention of European opinion, bombed the Ottoman Bank in Thessaloniki in 1903 resulting in many casualties. It sparked a big uprising and led to clashes

²⁰⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 456/104, 18 C 1321/11 September 1903.

²¹⁰ BOA, BEO., 2190/164209, 19 B 1321/11 September 1903.

²¹¹ BOA, BEO., 2625/196824, 16 Ca 1323/ 19 July 1905.

²¹² BOA, DH.MUI., 2/-1/44, 16 Ş 1327/2 September 1909.

²¹³ BOA, HR.SYS., 2856/44, 19 April 1895

²¹⁴ BOA, DH. MKT., 574/43, 5 C 1320/9 September 1902.

²¹⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 456/104, 18 C 1321/11 September 1903.

between the Ottoman army and Macedonian rebels. More than five thousand people from each side died.²¹⁶ Henceforth, the international pressure on the Ottoman Empire intensified and grew stronger. The Palace and the Ottoman officials were furious with the telegrams of new agencies due to their “baseless and malicious” reporting.²¹⁷

3.3. Muslim World, Asia and Africa Regions

The situation in the Muslim world and the Asian issues, including the Middle East, was yet another area that the reporting of international news agencies annoyed the Ottoman Empire. It was no surprise that Reuter and Havas covered the developments in this region very closely. Their “homeland”, namely Britain and France, were active powers in this geography. They were rivals in their expansionist objectives.²¹⁸ Therefore, reports about India, Egypt, Yemen, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq and Iran were very common. Not surprisingly, the content was mostly parallel with the interests of the countries they were based.

The Ottoman state documents on telegraphic dispatches of the agencies observed that the common theme in these dispatches was the description of relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim world as troubled. The dispatches were provocative and tried to show that there was uneasiness towards the Ottoman government in this geography. Reporting fight between the Ottoman army and local groups was one of the familiar stories. Another one was to show that the peoples of these regions were unhappy with the Ottoman government.

As for the samples, the newspapers in Bucharest published a telegraphic dispatch of Agence Havas which stated that the Arab sheiks were imprisoned since they attempted to revolt in the *Mabeyn-i Hümayûn* (Imperial Court or Imperial

²¹⁶ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912-1913* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), pp. 41-44. See also: Mahir Aydın, “Arşiv Belgeleriyle Makedonya’da Bulgar Çete Faaliyetleri”, *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)* (1989), IX, pp. 209-234.

²¹⁷ In 1903, Reuter correspondents paid a visit to region with the assistance and invitation of the Ottoman government. The trip will be comprehensively explained in Chapter VI under the “Propaganda” subheading.

²¹⁸ The competition of the agencies for the Ottoman Empire will be comprehensively be told in Chapter VII.

Office acting Cabinet Secretary). Upon the instruction of the Sublime Porte, the Ottoman Embassy in Bucharest denied it without any examination.²¹⁹ Moreover, the Ottoman government had permitted Reuter to report the daily incidents from Medina. However, the Sublime Porte also warned William H. G Werndel, the representative of Reuter in Istanbul, when the British agency reported that there was turmoil among the Ottoman soldiers in the holy city of Medina. It seems that the agency reported several similar stories.²²⁰

Another example is the report of Reuter which claimed that a rally and raid occurred against the Ottoman Sultan that led to excitement in Beirut. However, the Ottoman document on the topic asserted that no rally and raid took place and the Porte denied the report immediately.²²¹ Also, a Reuter story stated that the Ottoman government forcibly collected money from the people in Najaf, Iraq for the army. The report went on to express that the people in this region were forced to become soldiers in the Ottoman army as well. However, the Ottoman documents refuted these stories as completely false and baseless. More importantly, the official document underlines that this kind of stories had created severe reaction in Iran against the Ottomans.²²² Besides Najaf, Reuter reported that Talip Bey [Seyyid Talib el-Nakib]²²³ and other tribes revolted against the Ottoman government in Basra, a large city in southeast Iraq.²²⁴

In addition, a dispatch of Reuter reported that the Ottoman soldiers destroyed the spiritual places and chapels in Palestine and that they robbed the St. Jean Baptiste Chapel in particular. Surprisingly, no denial is seen in the documents.²²⁵ The next one reports that the Ottoman Empire tried to recruit soldiers for its army. Also, there

²¹⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 203/13, 3 N 1304/26 May 1887.

²²⁰ BOA, BEO., 2577/193263, 13 Ra 1323/16 July 1905)

²²¹ BOA, BEO., 3364/252248, 3 Recep 1326/1 August 1908.

²²² BOA, DH.EUM.4.Şb, 2/45, 14 Şaban 1333/27 June 1915.

²²³ He was one of the significant notables in Basra. In 1904, he was forced to stay Istanbul because of his opponent activities against Sultan Abdülhamid II. He returned to Basra after the announcement of The Second Constitutional Rule. He then took the control of Basra with his local soldiers. See: Gökhan Çetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908* (London: Routledge, 2005), p .21.

²²⁴ BOA, HR.SYS., 84/65, 21 May 1913.

²²⁵ BOA, HR.SYS., 2451/53, 25 April 1918.

was excitement and worries in Jerusalem County.²²⁶ Reuter also published that the Arab soldiers in the Ottoman army were mistreated just because of their ethnic origin.²²⁷ Besides Reuter, Havas reported that the notable Muslims in Jerusalem were expelled. However, the Sublime Port denied these three reports by sending telegrams to Havas and Reuter. If they did not publish the denials, other news agencies such as Agence National in Paris were used for this purpose.²²⁸

The dispatches about Yemen were remarkable. The Havas reported that Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, was occupied and suppressed by the insurgents and that they mistreated the people. The Ottoman government immediately denied it through its embassy in Vienna.²²⁹ The report informing that a clash occurred between the Ottoman army and a group under the leadership of Said Muhammed Yahya made the Palace angry.²³⁰ From the Ottoman perspective, Reuter stories aimed at denying the success of the Ottoman State in Yemen.²³¹ Also, Havas reported Sana'a was sieged by insurgents and the Ottoman government sent soldiers and doctors from Istanbul.²³²

The Ottoman documents also show that the Palace and Ottoman officials were concerned about Reuter's role in Pakistan and India, which were British colonies. From the Ottoman government's point of view, Britain tried to assert hegemony and control on Punjabi Muslims as a part of its policy of expansion and used Reuter in this vein. Reuter also played a key role in India by its negative reports against the Ottoman Empire.²³³ Also, Havas reported that some Arab people living in the Ottoman Empire were on trial and the Ottoman Sultan asked to cancel the trial.²³⁴

²²⁶ BOA, Y..MTV., 175/20, 2 Za 1315/25 March 1898.

²²⁷ BOA, HR, SYS., 2448/17, 13 February 1918.

²²⁸ BOA, Y.MTV., 174/87, 24 L 1315/18 March 1898.

²²⁹ BOA, BEO., 1860/139452, 27 S 1320/5 June 1902

²³⁰ BOA, HR.SYS., 36/8, 6 December 1895.

²³¹ BOA, HR.SYS., 107/28, 24 June 1911.

²³² BOA, Y.A.HUS., 251/180, 29 S 1309/4 October 1891.

²³³ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 373/96, 25 M 1315/26 June 1897.

²³⁴ BOA, İ.HR., 336/21671, 13 Z 1299/26 October 1882.

Lastly, the Ottoman government was discontent with the stories and policies of Reuter on Central Asia.²³⁵

3.4. Uprisings Against the Ottoman Empire

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by the uprisings and disintegration process in different parts of the Ottoman Empire. They occurred mostly in the Balkans and the Middle East. Rebellions in Anatolia also emerged for different reasons. The policy of Sultan Abdülhamid II to centralize the power certainly played a part in these uprisings. The telegraph in particular was an effective instrument for the centralization of power. In 1874, an American missionary in Beirut portrayed the telegraph service as “enabling the central power in Istanbul to move the whole empire like a machine”.²³⁶ On the other hand, the Ottoman public was not happy with this development at all. In 1867, the people destroyed telegraph poles and prevented the works to establish roads in Amasya, an Anatolian city close to the Black Sea region. The reason of this conduct was that they worried losing their autonomy since they would be directly connected to Istanbul. There were several similar cases in various cities during this period.²³⁷

International news agencies reported uprisings against the empire. The Ottoman government took them seriously and tried to deny them immediately. There were many examples. For instance, Havas reported that *ihtilal* -revolution-²³⁸ took place in Yozgat, a city in Anatolia. The Ottoman document has no details about the telegram but the Sublime Porte rejected the story without any examination.²³⁹ The Italian news agency reported that the uprising in Kurdistan was suppressed bloodily. Asım Bey, an Ottoman official denied the report.²⁴⁰ Reuter also reported that some

²³⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 385/150, 28 M 1316/18 June 1898.

²³⁶ Bektaş, “Sultan’s Messenger”, p. 694.

²³⁷ Orhan Koloğlu, “Yeni Haberleşme ve Ulaşım Tekniklerinin Osmanlı Toplumunu Etkileyişi” in eds. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and Mustafa Kaçar, *Çağımı Yakalayan Osmanlı Devleti'nde Modern Haberleşme ve Ulaşım Teknikleri* (Istanbul: İrcica, 1995), p. 606.

²³⁸ The term that was used in the Ottoman document is *ihtilal*. Its meaning is different from uprising and rebellion.

²³⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.TKM., 30/70, 23 N 1311/30 March 1894.

²⁴⁰ BOA, HR.SYS., 84/1, 13 January 1912.

tribes revolted against the Ottoman government in Iraq.²⁴¹ Another Reuter dispatch reported that the Albanians started yet another uprising. However, the Ottomans argued it was not the case and the news story overplayed the scope of the incidents.²⁴²

In addition to the reporting on general uprisings, a specific issue that caused great concern was the reporting about the public uneasiness against the Ottoman sultanate. Rebellions and call for reforms were the reality of Ottoman history since its early days. Some of the Ottoman sultans had been dethroned. However, this time the target was directly the Ottoman sultanate. The Ottoman government took such kind of stories very seriously. The immediate denial and correction of such reports set aside, an official document indicates how seriously the Palace pondered on the question. Due to the continued publications in the foreign newspapers against the Ottoman dynasty and especially the Sultan, an informal policy paper was prepared to dwell on the reasons of these stories and the recommendations to prevent them.²⁴³

In terms of examples, *Le Matin* daily in Switzerland published a story based on a dispatch from international news agencies. It reported that the Muslims in Istanbul would revolt against the Ottoman sultanate.²⁴⁴ Furthermore, several European newspapers published telegrams of the news agencies reporting that uprisings against the Ottoman sultanate occurred in Istanbul.²⁴⁵ More importantly, *Kölnische Zeitung* published a story that *mullahs*²⁴⁶ in Konya preached a sermon in the mosques in order to dispose the Ottoman dynasty. The Ottoman government urgently refused these stories that were based on telegraphic dispatches of news agencies.²⁴⁷

Especially, the British dailies published telegraphic dispatches on the Ottoman sultanate. The point was that they not only criticized the policies of the

²⁴¹ BOA, HR.SYS., 84/65, 21 May 1913.

²⁴² BOA, TFR.I.A., 17/1665, 13 S 1322/29 April 1904.

²⁴³ BOA, Y.EE., 38/102, 6 R 1327/25 June 1909.

²⁴⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 21/71, 11 N 1313/25 February 1896.

²⁴⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 17/44, 14 Z 1310/28 June 1893.

²⁴⁶ Mollahs are a kind of Muslim religious scholar in *medreses*. They are highly distinguished and respected scholars.

²⁴⁷ BOA, HR.SYS., 25/32, 16 March 1878.

empire but also did intentionally target the sultanate. In this context, *The Pall Mall* published a letter harshly criticising the Ottoman sultanate.²⁴⁸ In the eyes of the Ottoman officials, the British dailies persisted on publishing stories that targeted the Ottoman sultanate.²⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, this kind of reporting also took place in India, a British colony. *Nuhbetü'l-Asar*, an Arabic newspaper in Bombay, published several articles against the Ottoman sultanate. The Porte prohibited its import.²⁵⁰ From the outset, the Ottoman government was resolved to combat with the publications against the sultanate. Consequently, in the 1880s, the Porte decided to sue the European newspapers through its embassies because of such kinds of reports.²⁵¹

3.5. “Insulting” Reports and Describing as “Exotic”

First of all, the wording of this part and subheading such as “insulting” needs an explanation. In the Ottoman Archives, the state officials use different definitions for the attitude and reports of international news agencies and foreign press about the Ottoman Empire. They used several adjectives in describing the reports of the agencies. Hurtful and detrimental (*muzır*), rancorous and spiteful (*garazkarane*), malicious (*kötü niyetli*) and hostile (*düşmanca*) were the most used terms in the official correspondence. Humiliating and insulting (*tahkîr edici-aşağılayıcı*) were also used though limited.

For instance, in 1889, the report of *Correspondance de Vienne* with the headline of “Constantinople” was depicted as “very hostile and humiliating the Ottoman Empire”.²⁵² Further, an Ottoman document states that the “*Washington Post* published a murder in the Bosphorus in such a way to insult the Turks although it was denied.”²⁵³ They were the official narratives of the Ottoman documents and almost all the negative reports of the international news agencies were perceived and

²⁴⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.ŞD., 2/24, 29 Z 1313/11 June 1896.

²⁴⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 466/68, 23 Za 1321/10 February 1904.

²⁵⁰ BOA, DH.MKT., 1355/82, 13 L 1303/15 July 1886.

²⁵¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 263/46, 10 M 1310/4 August 1892.

²⁵² BOA, HR.SYS., 25/79, 25 September 1889.

²⁵³ BOA, HR.SYS., 65/5, 1895.

described with these negative adjectives by the Ottoman officials. Therefore, it will be pertinent to reflect these perceptions and narratives in order to examine how the Palace and Ottoman officials tried to manage its problems in the coming chapters.

The Ottoman governments were really obsessed with their image in the Western world. Deringil comprehensively revealed this *idéefixe* in his book.²⁵⁴ For Deringil, the Ottoman's obsession with their image especially in the Western world "was most certainly a reaction to what would today be called Orientalism."²⁵⁵ Most of the time, the Europeans portrayed the Ottomans, the Turks in general, as non-Western, grim and exotic in daily life and understanding. Travellers helped a lot in creating this image.

The historical context notwithstanding, portraying and describing the Ottomans as "the exotic" became really common and popular by the advent of daily newspapers in the nineteenth century in the West. It was a good story to sell in which the European dailies were interested. Cognizant of this point, the correspondents of the international news agencies produced this kind of dispatches. They needed these stories since their customers had particular interest in them. Slavery, rape, torture, discrimination and hostile attitude towards non-Muslims were the regular themes of the reported news.

In terms of examples, the German agency Wolff reported that three Ottoman navy soldiers yelled "We will kill the non-Muslims" and they attacked and injured the nephew of former Minister of Treasury, Agop (Kazazyan) Pasha who was an Armenian.²⁵⁶ *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* newspapers published that two officials of the Ottoman government raped two foreign women. The source of the daily was the dispatches of the news agencies. However, the Sublime Porte flatly denied these two reports.²⁵⁷

In 1895, the French Havas reported that Muslims attacked the Armenians during a funeral ceremony of an Armenian and they murdered a number of them in Kayseri.²⁵⁸ Havas also reported that the residences of some clerics were destructed in

²⁵⁴ Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

²⁵⁶ BOA, HR.SYS., 31/62, 26 June 1895.

²⁵⁷ BOA, HR.SYS., 189/10, 31 March 1895.

²⁵⁸ BOA, HR.SYS., 2825/25, 29 April 1895.

order to expel and force them to leave the city in Anatolia in 1880.²⁵⁹ The Ottoman government refuted both stories. A further report alleged that many priests and bishops were subjected to torture, maltreatment and violence in Trabzon, an Ottoman city in the Black Sea region. This dispatch caused anger and fury in Spain. The Ottoman Embassy in Madrid and Minister of Foreign Affairs exchanged views on how to respond to this kind of stories.²⁶⁰

Wolff reported that a British postman was arrested in Istanbul.²⁶¹ In addition to Wolff, Havas sent a dispatch that officer of the British post office was arrested since he was Armenian.²⁶² Given the closeness of the dates of the two stories, it seems most likely that they reflected the same narrative. The Sublime Porte examined the accuracy of these reports but made no statement on them. Further, Reuter reported that Yuvan Radna, the wife of a Bulgarian officer, was subjected to torture when she refused to testify on an issue.²⁶³

Rape and torture reports were regular stories with regard to the Armenian Issue and the uprisings in the Balkans. Even though some of them were already discussed in this chapter, it would be prudent to touch upon some others here. For example, a report claimed that the Armenian monks were forced to change religion and convert to Islam forcibly. It also stated that the Armenian women were kidnapped.²⁶⁴

Stories about slavery in the Ottoman Empire were attractive narratives for the Western society. The correspondent of *The New York Times* visited Istanbul in the 1880s. He published an extensive story about the slavery in the empire. Dr. Sigismund Engländer, the Reuter representative in Istanbul, and Mr. Werndel, his assistant and successor, hosted, helped and guided *The New York Times* correspondent in covering the theme. The headline and the lead story were sufficiently thrilling for the readers. The headline was “Sold to the Turk-Secrets of

²⁵⁹ BOA, HR.TO., 557/82, 5 Novemver 1880.

²⁶⁰ BOA, HR.SYS., 2762/22, 13 December 1895

²⁶¹ BOA, HR.SYS., 30/10, 9 February 1895

²⁶² BOA, Y.A.HUS., 318/8, 1 N 1312/28 January 1895.

²⁶³ BOA, HR.SYS., 99/ 2870, 17 December 1903.

²⁶⁴ BOA, HR.SYS., 2759/35, 7 September 1898.

Constantinople” and the leading was “How the Vile Traffic in Girls is Still Carried On in the East-Sights which an American Correspondent Saw for Twenty Dollars-In the House of a Grand Old Turk of Dealer”. The beginning of the story read:

While a guest at the hospitable board of Dr. S. Engländer, the Chief of Reuter’s Agency in the Orient, five days ago, my neighbour, the young Count de Ortega Morejoin, attache to the Spanish Legation here, remarked quite accidentally: “By the way, young Arietarchi Pasha has a young Circassian slave who is said to be as beautiful as the moon -that’s his expression. He paid £200 Turkish for her- a steep price nowadays. But he had had a windfall and could afford it.”²⁶⁵

The reporter was astonished and asked immediately: “Is the trade in female slaves still being carried on right here under the eyes of virtuous England’s representative? My impression had been, up to the present time, that this sort of thing belonged to the past.” His query was received with a shout of laughter, and he heard enough that evening and since from well-informed persons, long-time residents in this most strange and interesting of capitals, to make him understand why he had been thought a little too unsophisticated in patting such a question. Subsequently, he directed special attention to the matter in the coming days. The reporter, in the company of Reuter correspondent Mr. Werndel, visited the related places to see the situation of slaves. He witnessed and took part in the bargaining process. In the news story, he broadly told almost all details of slavery in Istanbul, such as price, ethnic origin and age. Naturally, the story portrayed the Ottomans as “exotic” and Eastern.²⁶⁶

The Western newspapers published the stories about slavery experienced not only in Istanbul but also in the other parts of the Ottoman Empire. *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, a French language newspaper published by French immigrants in New York, published news telling the slavery in Tripoli. The source of the story was Havas in Paris.²⁶⁷ Six months before this news, the *Courrier des Etats-Unis* had also published a story about slavery in Turkey.²⁶⁸ Another telegram reported that Ekrem

²⁶⁵ *The New York Times*, 28 March 1886, p. 6.

²⁶⁶ *The New York Times*, 28 March 1886, p.6. For a study on the slavery, see: Georgi Chochiev, “XIX. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kuzey Kafkas Göçmenlerinin Toplumsal Uyarlanmasına Dair Bazı Görüşler (Göçmenlerin Otoriteye Başvuruları),” Translated by Ekin Uşşaklı, *Kebikeç*, 2007, no 23, pp. 407-456.

²⁶⁷ BOA, HR.SYS., 60/23, 5 August 1890.

²⁶⁸ BOA, HR.SYS., 60/7, 25 February 1890.

Bey, the son of ex-high rank official in Al Hudaida, a Yemeni city, sold black slaves in Jeddah.²⁶⁹ Apart from the stories of international news agencies, there are many documents on slavery in the Ottoman archives proving that slavery was a fact during this era.

3.6. Health of the Sultan and Imperial News

One of the themes that the international news agencies closely covered was the health of Ottoman sultans, particularly Sultan Abdülhamid II. They reported several dispatches on this topic in different times. The European newspapers were also interested in this issue. They published the telegrams of the agencies extensively whereas the Yıldız Palace followed and took the stories very seriously. As expected, the position of the Palace was to refute them immediately. The Ottoman documents are explicit in demonstrating that the reports on the health of Ottoman sultans irritated them, and Sultan Abdülhamid II, in particular.

The following case was a good example to show the level of discontent that these stories have caused. Reuter reported a dispatch about the health of Sultan Abdülhamid II stating that the Ottoman sultan was sick and had nervous problems. From the perspective of the Ottoman officials, it was groundless and completely false. The government then denied the report through several newspapers in Europe, including *Norddentische Allgemeine Zeitung*.²⁷⁰ However, it was a sensitive issue for Sultan Abdülhamid II. The story really made him furious. He ordered to find the responsible people and media outlets behind this story. The Ottoman embassies in Berlin, London and Vienna made a great effort for it. The process will be thoroughly addressed in Chapter VI under the “Chasing the Reporters and Their Sources” subheading.²⁷¹

Yet, reports on the health of Sultan Abdülhamid II continued on. Two years later, the German newspapers reported that the Sultan had neurological disease. The source was Wolff agency.²⁷² Also, *Extrablatt* reported that the Sultan had the

²⁶⁹ BOA, DH.MKT., 372/14, 12 Za 1312/7 May 1895.

²⁷⁰ BOA, HR.SYS., 26/29, 14 May 1892.

²⁷¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/19, 17 L 1309/15 May 1892.

²⁷² BOA, HR.SYS., 29/58, 21 December 1894.

problem of neurological disorder. The Palace denied it via *Correspondance de l'Est*.²⁷³ There are several documents in the Ottoman archives about the reports on Sultan's health as well. These are the reports which were cabled by correspondents of agencies.

In terms of publications in the European press on this issue, there are many examples in different times and their source was mostly Reuter. The recurring theme in these reports is the emphasis on the anxiety disease of the Ottoman sultan. For instance, the headline of *Wagga Wagga Express* was "Is the Sultan Mad?" The dispatch stated that various alarming reports were in circulation with respect to the state of the sultan's health and that several European doctors were recently called in to examine his Majesty.²⁷⁴

The reports questioning the state of the mental health of the Ottoman sultan continued in the following years as well. In 1903, to illustrate, *The Daily News* in Australia also published a detailed dispatch about the health of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The story implied that the deteriorating political situation made the sultan sick, "while the condition of Macedonia is going from bad to worse, the sultan's health is breaking down". The portayal of the Sultan in the report read:

He sleeps only two or three hours out of the 24, and then only when somebody is reading to him, or an orchestra or a musician is performing in the adjoining room. His Majesty is a victim of neurosthenin. His psychological condition presents a most interesting problem for his symptoms are complex, and vary materially from time to time. Long fear of assassination has brought on chronic insomnia, and having naturally suspicious nature abnormally developed he has become a monomaniac on the subject of self-preservation. Darkness frightens him, consequently, a light is always kept burning in his room; and Ismet Bey, his foster brother and Grand Master of the Imperial Wardrobe, invariably sleeps with him in the same chamber.²⁷⁵

Furthermore, in 1906, *The Mercury* stated that "Professor Bergmann was again at Constantinople, attending the Sultan of Turkey, whose condition was causing anxiety."²⁷⁶ *The Mercury* also reported that there was great excitement in Istanbul

²⁷³ BOA, HR.SYS., 188/43, 20 December 1894.

²⁷⁴ *Wagga Wagga Express*, 15 September 1896, p. 2.

²⁷⁵ *The Daily News* (Perth) 15 September 1903, p. 5.

²⁷⁶ "The Sultan's Heath", *The Mercury* in Hobart, 13 September 1906, p. 5.

due to “a rumour that the Sultan was to undergo an operation”.²⁷⁷ A year later, *Evening News* published a story with the headline of “Sultan’s Illness Worries Europe”. It noted, “in diplomatic circles the condition of the Sultan of Turkey is regarded with misgiving, a cancerous growth having made itself apparent”.²⁷⁸ The stories about the new ruler’s health, Sultan Mehmet Reşad, immediately followed. *The Catholic Press* reported that the new sultan’s health created great anxiety.²⁷⁹

In addition to the reports on the health of the sultans, the Palace and the Ottoman officials was also very delicate with reports on spiritual themes. Wolff agency reported a dispatch about the special day of *Hırka-i Saadet*, The Holy Mantle of the Prophet, depicting the day and the holy relics as exotic. However, it was a well established tradition for the Ottoman sultan and other high rank officials of the empire to visit the place where it was displayed on the fifteenth day of the holy Ramadan month. In the eyes of Ottoman officials, the Wolff story was not respectful of the faith of Muslims. The Ottoman government immediately requested and the correction of the story on the grounds that the Holy Mantle of the Prophet was very important for the Muslims as well as the Ottoman sultanate since they maintained the caliphate.²⁸⁰

Sensational stories were also good piece for the international news agencies to sell to their customers. Imperial news was a popular topic in this sense. To illustrate, Havas reported that a person was murdered in the palace of the Sultan. *Intransigent* daily published it.²⁸¹ Further, Reuter reported that the daughter of Izzet Pasha, ex-director of *Istabl-ı Amire*, imperial horse house where the horses of Sultans

²⁷⁷ *The Mercury* in Hobart, 13 August 1906, p. 5.

²⁷⁸ *Evening News* (Sydney: NSW, 1869 - 1931), 18 January 1907, p.5.

²⁷⁹ “The New Sultan’s Health”, *The Catholic Press* (Sydney,) 24 June 1909 , p. 7.

²⁸⁰ BOA, HR.SYS., 36/64, 10 March 1896/25 Ramadan 1313. The date of the Ottoman document complaining about the Wolff report was in Gregorian calendar. When it was converted to Muslim calendar it came up to 25th of holy Ramadan. It was evident that the dispatch of Wolff was about visiting the Holy Mantle of Prophet on the 15th of Ramadan.

Furthermore, Apartments of Mantle of the Prophet still include the hair from the Prophet’s Beard, the bow and the sword of the Prophet, the staff of Moses, the sword of David, the robe of Joseph and other holy relics. They were brought to Constantinople by Sultan Selim I after the conquest of Egypt. For the information about Hırka-ı Saadet and visits: Dündar Alikılıç, *İmparatorluk Seremonisi; Osmanlı’da Devlet Protokolü ve Törenler*, (İstanbul: 2004).

²⁸¹ BOA, HR.TO., 81/8, 17 February 1883.

and other people living in the palace stayed, committed suicide. There is no information whether it was the case or not.²⁸²

3.7. Becoming Source for Ottoman Newspapers

Being the major source of world press, particularly the European dailies, the international news agencies also became the main news supplier of domestic newspapers in the Ottoman capital. First of all, the Ottoman ruling elite, intellectuals and journalists, the influential actors in determining the *efkâr-ı umûmiyye* (public opinion), depended to a great extent on foreign sources, especially the European ones, to get news and follow the world affairs. News was essential, yet there was not enough staff and institution to inform the public with prompt information in the Ottoman Empire. The official statements were old fashioned and superficial short of meeting the needs of the people whereas the European newspapers and dailies in foreign language using the telegraphic dispatches of international news agencies provided fresh and relatively impartial information. Even though the European newspapers belonged to a few days earlier, they were more useful and actual than the Turkish press for the Ottoman readers.²⁸³ In addition to these structural and technical problems, censorship was becoming the reality that the Ottoman newspapers were exposed each and every day.

Dependency on foreign sources did not change even in the 1890s. Ahmet Midhat Efendi, one of the significant Ottoman popular writers and intellectuals in the last decades of the nineteenth century, clearly underlined the role and importance of foreign newspapers for the Ottoman public in his daily, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* (Interpreter of Truths) which was one of influential newspapers established in 1878 supported by Sultan Abdülhamid II:

The circulation of Ottoman publications was very limited and they did not have any income. It is certain that the circulation of foreign press in Constantinople is more than the national one. It is a practice that almost all pubs, coffeehouses and clubs, preferred and visited by foreign costumers and Ottoman people speaking foreign languages provide newspapers and journals in French, English, Greek, German and Italian. In addition to them, foreign newspapers are sold on the [Galata] bridges. You can see thousands copy of Parisian newspaper Petit Journal, sold twenty *para* [money] in Istanbul whereas its price is just ten

²⁸² BOA, Y.MTV., 158/104, 26 Z 1314/28 May 1897.

²⁸³ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kışkacında*, p. 43.

money in France. The number of newspapers coming to Constantinople with mail service is around a hundred with more than three thousands circulation daily.²⁸⁴

It was reported that *Le Temps* had around four thousands daily circulation in Istanbul in the first decade of twentieth century. The total number should be around seven thousands when the local French newspapers, which mostly used the stories and columns of European dailies, were added to *Le Temps*. Ahmet Mithat Efendi stated that there were around fifty-five thousands people reading newspapers while Ahmet Emin [Yalman] nearly calculated the number of daily circulation between thirty and forty thousand.²⁸⁵

In this vein, another aspect of how the international news agencies were a “threat” for the Ottoman Empire is that they increasingly became the main news source of domestic newspapers. For the Ottoman government, the news distribution of agencies to the Ottoman newspapers in Istanbul was a serious problem due to their “malicious and detrimental” content given that the newspapers mostly published all the content of the telegraphic dispatches. The dependency of the newspapers for the news of agencies and their relationship should be explained in order to reflect this issue.

The European newspapers coming through the steamships had been the major news source for the domestic newspapers in the capital until the arrival of agencies’ distribution. The news service of agencies was a great development for the newspapers since they had the ability to receive the news swiftly and regularly. Most of the domestic newspapers subscribed the news distribution service. Some of them also published the stories of the newspapers in foreign language such as *The Levant Herald* and *La Turquie* since they subscribed to services of the agencies. The publisher of *Basîret*, one of leading newspapers in the 1870s, Ali Efendi immediately subscribed to the news service of Havas and Reuter in 1870. In his memoirs he states:

The war [The Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871] now intensified. The Prussians are continuing to invade French territories. We subscribed to Agence Havas and Reuter telegraph agencies in Beyoğlu by paying 75 British *liras* for six months.

²⁸⁴ Ahmet Mithat Efendi, “Ecnebi Gazeteler”, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, 6 July 1891.

²⁸⁵ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kiskacında*, pp. 44-45.

We are regularly receiving the news regarding the war day and night. We increased the number of columns on each page to four. We published 10.000 copies daily at the price of 40 *paras*.²⁸⁶

Not only *Basîret* but also other newspapers such as *Vakit* used the telegraphic dispatches of Reuter and Havas. These agencies were the only source for foreign news.²⁸⁷ Besides *Basîret* and *Vakit*, foreign news had a large place in the pages of *Ceride-i Havadis*, *Tercüman-ı Ahval* and *Tasvir-i Efkar*. They mostly received these news from the agencies.²⁸⁸ Further, Istanbul newspapers published in foreign languages particularly in French and English benefited from the news service of agencies. *The Levant Herald Weekly*, *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, *La Turquie* and *Journal de Constantinople* published the dispatches of Havas and Reuter. All these newspapers used the telegraphic news on their front pages.²⁸⁹ The Accounts Book of Reuter including the “Constantinople Agency” demonstrates that the agency had subscribers in the Ottoman capital in the 1870s and the 1880s.²⁹⁰

In the meantime, some of the Ottoman newspapers did not subscribe to the agencies even though they published their telegrams that they received in illegal ways or they translated from the French and English ones. For Reuter, it was a violation of copyrights. Therefore, the British agency made it a big issue in order to keep its rights and decided to sue through its agent in Istanbul:

A power of attorney prepared by the solicitors authorizing Mr James G. Lane, the Company agent at Constantinople, to take proceedings to prevent the piracy of the telegrams by the newspapers and also to obtain account books and funds from Mr George Fuller, the former agent was submitted and approved and it was resolved that the same be signed and sealed which was accordingly done on the presence of MR Vonse Public notary.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul'da Yarım Asırlık Vekayi-i Mühimme* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1997) p. 119.

²⁸⁷ İlhan Yerlikaya, “Bir Osmanlı Gazetesi Olan Vakit Gazetesi'nde (1875-1884) İlan ve Reklamlar”, *Marmara İletişim Dergisi*, No. 8, Ekim 1994, pp. 201-212.

²⁸⁸ İzzet Öztoprak, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Türk Basını* (Ankara: Türkiye İşbankası Yayınları, 1981), p. 29; Muzaffer Şahin, “Siyasal İletişimde Anadolu Ajansı'nın Rolü”, *İletişim ve Diplomasi*, No. 3, p. 114.

²⁸⁹ Some of the examples showing the telegrams in these newspapers are available in the appendix.

²⁹⁰ For the Accounts Book of Reuter belonging to the 1870s, see: R.A. LN 69 1/872201.

²⁹¹ R.A. The Minutes Book, The Board Meeting of Reuter, 5 April 1871. LN 288, 1/883502, pp. 275-276.

As a result of “correspondence from the Company’s agent Constantinople and the Solicitor relative to the piracy of news by the Constantinople papers”, Reuter resolved that “the question of a further registration of telegrams at Stationers Hall [Court]”.²⁹² Unfortunately, no document could be found neither in the Reuter Archives nor the Ottoman regarding the conclusion of the dispute.

The point here is that the newspapers in Istanbul largely and increasingly published the telegrams of Reuter and Havas which were perceived as “detrimental and hostile” against the interest of the Ottoman Empire. The domestic newspapers in Istanbul were evidently dependent on the news agencies due to the fact that the Ottoman Empire did not have its own national information distribution. For the Ottoman government, inevitable result was to censor the incoming telegrams and seek in controlling the news distribution. The government told the agencies not to distribute any news stories that they received not through the Ottoman telegraph offices. The response and ways of controlling the information will be explained in Chapter VI.

²⁹² R.A. The Minutes Book, The Board Meeting of Reuter, 18 May 1871. LN 288, 1/883502, pp. 289.

CHAPTER IV

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF MANAGING THE PRESS

With the advent of journalism in the Ottoman society, the Palace and the Ottoman officials began to seek ways to manage press affairs. During the second half of the nineteenth century, press regulations gradually came into force. The Ottoman government issued notices and enacted laws in this respect. Also, different departments and directorates were established to check and supervise the press in general. Undoubtedly, dealing with the foreign press was the most difficult issue for the Ottoman State. International news agencies were a crucial part of foreign press in this process. The summarizing the press regulations in general, then explaining the regulations and establishment of responsible directorates; and analysis of the *layihas* (explanatory report and proposal) of the Ottoman ruling elite will reveal how the Palace perceived and responded to the international news agencies which “were often cabling detrimental news stories against the Ottoman State” in the eyes of Ottoman officials.

4.1. The Press Regulations in General

The Ottoman government gradually devised mechanisms in order to control printed material as a response to the development of the print culture in the second half of the nineteenth century. These apparatus were definitely need-based provisions in their origins.²⁹³ The regulations changed many times according the needs of the day. “Trial and Error” method was the most appropriate description for the Ottoman government in managing the press affairs.

The first Ottoman Turkish newspaper *Takvim-i Vekâyi* (The Calendar of Events), which appeared in 1831 and *Cerîde-i Havâdis* (Register of News) in 1840

²⁹³ İpek Yosmaoglu, “Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913”, *Turkish Studies Association Journal*, 2003:27, p. 17.

were initial examples of the Ottoman press until the publication of the first private daily, *Tercüman-ı Ahval*, in 1860. Except a notification, the Ottoman government did not issue any regulation or enacted any law that directly dealt with the publication matters or circulation of press in this period. The notice was a memorandum issued on 11 June 1849 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and sent to the foreign embassies in Istanbul. It obliged every embassy to give notice to the Ministry before publishing any book or periodical.²⁹⁴

In 1857, *Basmane Nizamnamesi* which was relatively a formal press regulation was issued by the directive of The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Keçecizade Fuat Pasha. It ordered that Ottoman citizens had to apply to the Council of Education and the Ministry of Zaptieh to acquire publication licence.²⁹⁵ It is claimed that the model for this regulation was French press law of 1852 by Napoleon III.²⁹⁶ Beside *Basmane Nizamnamesi*, some articles with regard to the press affairs were added to the Criminal Code of 1858 and 1860. Establishing printing houses without state approval, printing books and publishing newspapers against the state and members of the government and printing material which was detrimental to public morality were illegal in 1860.²⁹⁷

In 1864, a real and comprehensive press regulation was issued.²⁹⁸ It was a very effective and long-lasting regulation that remained in use until 1909 as a result

²⁹⁴ Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri ve Politikaları*, (Ankara: Basın ve Yayın Umum Müdürlüğü, 1943), p. 5. The official newspaper *Takvim-i Vekâyi* published the memorandum on 27 Receb 1265 (18 June 1849). In addition to this book, other study İskit is used as the main source in examining the regulations and laws in the Ottoman press history. See: Servet İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat Rejimleri*, (İstanbul: Ülku Matbaası, 1939).

²⁹⁵ İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri*, p. 10; and Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word", p. 17.

²⁹⁶ İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), p. 199. By the way, it is common that the laws and regulations regarding to press in the Ottoman Empire after 1852 took as its example Louis Napoleon Bonaparte's press law of 17 February 1852. Most of the time, the scholar have found close similarities between the Ottoman ones and French examples.

²⁹⁷ Ebru Boyar, "The press and the palace: The two way relationship between Abdülhamid II and the press, 1876-1908", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 69, (2006), p. 421.

²⁹⁸ *Düstur*, Tertip I, Volume 2, 2 Şaban 1281/19 Kanunuevvel 1280 (31 December 1864) "Dersaadet'de ve Memalik-i Şahane'de tan ve neşrolunun her nev-i gazete ve evrak-ı havadis-i mülkiye ve politikaya tab ve neşri hakkında bu kere tanzim olunan nizamnamedir", pp. 220-227. For the 1909 Press Law, see: Yavuz Güçtürk, "A Comparative Study of the Press Laws of 1909 and 1931," (Ankara: METU, 2005), Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Interestingly, Yavuz Güçtürk gives the date of press regulation as 1865 but not 1864. See: Güçtürk, *A Comparative Study of the Press Laws*, p. 22. The reason for this confusion should be a mistake in converting the dates from Muslim Hijri to Gregorian calendar since it was the last day of 1864.

of the constitutional restoration in the Ottoman Empire. Yet again, it is widely accepted that this regulation was based on Napoleon III's press decree of 1852, as an example. Further, Yosmaoğlu underlines that the 1864 Press Regulation “was in effect an adaptation of the 1852 Press Law of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte”²⁹⁹. The French law is described as “[one] of the most ingenious punitive-censorship laws of nineteenth-century Europe”³⁰⁰ and “perhaps as innovative and ingenious as it was repressive”.³⁰¹ The 1864 Press Regulation, composed of two chapters and 35 articles, introduced a framework about the rules that the Ottoman press should obey and the punishable press offenses. The regulation outlined the process for setting up a newspaper in the Ottoman Empire. There was no article in the regulation imposing a pre-publication censorship on newspapers and journals but it entailed strict post-publication control mechanism.³⁰² Yosmaoğlu explains the regulation:

Ottoman subjects and foreigners were required to apply to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectively to obtain a license before starting publication, and these licenses could at any point be suspended or annulled by the state if it was deemed necessary. Punitive responsibility was shared by the editor and the publisher; who would sign each issue of the periodical and send a copy to the Administrator of Press Affairs in the capital or to the governor in the provinces. These regulations also listed what would constitute a press offense and the corresponding punishment.³⁰³

As mentioned previously, the regulations on press affairs were need-based, and the 1864 Press Regulation failed to satisfy the needs of the Ottoman government. Consequently, only three years later, in 1867, a new decree known as *Kararname-i Ali* was issued by the Grand Vizier Ali Pasha. It was seen as the first serious attempt to censor newspapers and journals that published news against the Ottoman

²⁹⁹ Yosmaoğlu, “Chasing the Printed Word”, p. 17. Further, A Turkish journalist and scholar studied on Turkish press history states that it was translated from French law. See: Alpay Kabacalı, *Başlangıçtan Günümüze Türkiye’de Basın Sansürü* (İstanbul: Gazeteciler Cemiyeti, 1990), p. 26.

³⁰⁰ Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Censorship of the Arts and Press in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), p. 44.

³⁰¹ Robert Justin Goldstein, “France”, in Robert Justin Goldstein (ed.), *War for the Public Mind: Political Censorship in 19th Century Europe*, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2000), p. 149.

³⁰² Boyar, “The press and the palace”, p. 421.

³⁰³ Yosmaoğlu, “Chasing the Printed Word”, p. 18. For more detail about the 1864 Press Regulation, see: Erol Baykal, “The Ottoman Press, 1908-1923,” (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2013) Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, pp. 22-23; and Güçtürk, *A Comparative Study of the Press*, p. 22-24.

government in general. The decree provided not only extensive powers for the government to “be able to protect public order and general interest of the country” but also to take preventive measures against a newspaper or journal opposing the government and “spreading detrimental ideas”. As İskit points out, the really important point was that the government had the discretion to close a newspaper or journal with a decree. Though the Regulation was a temporary one, it lasted until 1909.³⁰⁴

As regards to reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, almost all the works on the issue describe his policies as a clear censorship. It is no surprise that most of the books are titled “Abdülhamid and censor”.³⁰⁵ In addition, other books on Turkish press portray his reign as the time of fierce censorship. The image of Sultan Abdülhamid II was a strict censor in Europe as well.³⁰⁶ On the other hand, Boyar explains the relations between the palace and the press from a different perspective. She underlines that censorship was not a new phenomenon when Sultan Abdülhamid II succeeded to throne in 1876. Laws, regulations and decrees permitting state to control the press were already in practice.³⁰⁷

Sultan Abdülhamid II gradually increased his control over the press. According to the *Kanun-u Esasi*, the Ottoman constitution declared by Sultan Abdülhamid II on 23 December 1876 after four months he came to rule, “the press was free under the law”. However, he gained great experience how to rule the press during his long reign. That is the reason why Koloğlu describes it as “the press regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II” to underline its uniqueness.³⁰⁸

Instead of issuing new regulations Sultan Abdülhamid II preferred to use laws, regulations and decrees adopted before his term to create his own

³⁰⁴ İskit, *Türkiye’de Matbuat İdareleri*, pp. 24-26; See also: *Düstur*, Birinci Tertib, Vol. II, p. 223.

³⁰⁵ Cevdet Kudret, *Abdülhamit Devrinde Sansür* (İstanbul: Yeni Gün, 2000); Fatmagül Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür* (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2007); Süleyman Kani İrtem, *Abdülhamid Devrinde Haftiyelik ve Sansür: Abdülhamid’e Verilen Jurnaller* (İstanbul: Temel, 1999).

³⁰⁶ İskit, *Türkiye’de Matbuat İdareleri*; Kabacalı, *Başlangıçtan Günümüze*; Enver Behnan Şapolyo, *Türk Gazeteciliği Tarihi Her Yönüyle Basın* (Ankara: Güven Matbaası); Palmira Johnson Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000); E N Bennette, “Personal Observations During the Balkan War II, Press Censors and War Correspondents: Some Experiences in Turkey”, *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, 73, January 1913, pp. 28-40.

³⁰⁷ Boyar, “The press and the palace”, pp. 420-421.

³⁰⁸ Koloğlu, “Abdülhamid’in Basın Rejimi”, pp. 35-46.

understanding of the press. In 1877, a press law draft was accepted by the Chamber of Deputies (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) and the Senate (*Meclis-i Ayan*). However, Sultan Abdülhamid II did not approve it since he was opposed to some articles in the law.³⁰⁹ In 1888, Sultan Abdülhamid II issued the *Matbaalar Nizamnamesi* (The Printing House Regulation) to make it clear to the public the existing laws, regulations and decrees. Rules of printing within the empire were set out with this regulation. However, the serious problem was that the principles and rules of censorship were not established and defined clearly in the regulation. With the words of Boyar, the censors “interpreted the regulations according to their own perception of threat, and so the day-to-day running of the press thus depended on the atmosphere of the moment”³¹⁰ since it included ambiguous and flexible points.

4.2. Institutions

Before delving into the *Matbuat-ı Hariciye Müdürlüğü* (The Directorate for Foreign Press) in the Ottoman Empire, there is a need to address its evolution. *Bab-ı Âli Tercüme Odası* (Translation Office of the Sublime Porte) was established in 1821 upon the need for credible translators for state affairs. The Office gradually developed. In addition to translating the governmental and foreign affairs issues, the Office made contribution in following the foreign press. The Office translated the news in the foreign press about the Ottoman Empire and reported them to the Sublime Porte.³¹¹ The Translation Office therefore could be defined as the precursor of not only The Directorate for Foreign Press but also as the first institution on the press affairs in general.

However, *Matbuât Müdüriyeti* (Administration of Press Affairs), an institution directly responsible to follow and organize press affairs was created following the introduction of first regulations regarding the press and printing

³⁰⁹ Server İskit, *Türkiye’de Matbuat Rejimleri* (İstanbul: 1939), pp. 699-706; and Kabacalı, pp.49-50.

³¹⁰ Boyar, “The press and the palace”, p. 422.

³¹¹ There are dozens of studies in Turkish about the Translation Office of the Sublime Porte. For a useful work in English, see: Carter Vaughn Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922*, (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, c1980), pp. 132-139. Also see: Berna Kamay, “Public Diplomacy and the Translation Office (Tercüme Odası) in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1876),” (Ankara: Bilkent University History Department, 2012), Unpublished M.A. Thesis.

houses. Even though there is confusion about the type, function and history of Administration of Press Affairs, it deserves to be elaborated. Hopefully, new findings of this research and interpretation will contribute to the subject.

Most of the works in the literature agree that the Administration of Press Affairs was established in 1862.³¹² However, Yazıcı argues that administration or department of press affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had already been established at latest in 1858. This bureau, which he calls as *Hariciye Nezareti Matbuat Kalemi* (Press Department of Foreign Ministry) or *Matbuât-ı Ecnebiye Kalemi* (Department of Foreign Press), seems to be formed before 18 August 1858 since an Ottoman document on this date mentions the existence of this bureau.³¹³ Kabacalı makes the same observation by asserting that it was established in 1858 at latest or possible even before this date.³¹⁴ Yet, the date of the Ottoman document that he rests his argument should be 4 July 1859, not 1858.³¹⁵

At the same time, Kabacalı asserts that the Administration of Press Affairs which he mentions and the one that Yazıcı states are different ones. According to Kabacalı, the administration that Yazıcı talks about was under the *Maarif-i Umumiye Nezareti* (Ministry of Public Education Ministry) whereas the office that he discussed belonged to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.³¹⁶ However, his argument does not stand to scrutiny since Yazıcı was completely aware of the difference and he clearly distinguished two bureaus in his article published before Kabacalı's book.³¹⁷

³¹² According to Servet İskit, this bureau had been established in 1862 at the latest. See: İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri*, p. 14. Besides him, Nesimi Yazıcı gives the date of 2 February 1862 (2 Şaban 1278). See: Nesimi Yazıcı, "Matbuat Müdürlüğü'nün Kuruluşu", *Gazi Üniversitesi Basın-Yayın Yüksekokulu Dergisi*, 1983, no 5, p.115. See also: Nesimi Yazıcı, "Tanzimat Dönemi Basını Konusunda Bir Değerlendirme", *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu: 31 Ekim - 3 Kasım 1989*, (Ankara: TTK), pp.81-83.

³¹³ Yazıcı, "Tanzimat Dönemi Basını", pp.82-83.

³¹⁴ Kabacalı, *Türkiye'de Basın Sansürü*, p. 22.

³¹⁵ Alpay Kabacalı got the information from the article of Tülin Sümer. The date of Ottoman document that Tülin Sümer published is 3 Zilhicce 1275 in Hijri calendar. She converted this date as 6 July 1858. However, it should be 4 July 1859 according to calendar application used in this dissertation. Most probably, Alpay Kabacalı used her conversion without checking it. Tülin Sümer, "Türkiye'de İlk Defa Yabancı Kaynaklı Zararlı Yayınlaar Hakkında Tedbirler", *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, 1969, no 22, pp. 68-71. Tülin Sümer published the document. BOA, İrade (Hariciye) No 9120.

³¹⁶ See, Kabacalı, *Türkiye'de Basın Sansürü*, pp. 22-23.

³¹⁷ Yazıcı, "Tanzimat Dönemi Basını," pp.81-83.

More importantly, it seems that an administration in charge of foreign press had been already created earlier than Yazıcı claimed. An Ottoman document proves that there was a *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye* (foreign press) bureau in 1853. The document is about Pavlaki, who was described as a civil servant of *matbuat-ı ecnebiye* at customs.³¹⁸ Unfortunately, the document does not provide more detail regarding this institution. It can be assumed that Mr. Pavlaki was responsible to check the imported publications such as newspapers, journals and books at customs. An account that Hayreddin Nedim, an Ottoman diplomat and bureaucrat in the last decades of the empire, shared gives clues on this issue:

As is understood from an official document, it was a practice that books and journals that arrived in container firstly submitted to customs; and then they were inspected and examined by special servants sent from Sublime Porte during reign of Sultan Abdülmecit.³¹⁹

4.3. Reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II

There are clear indications of how much the Ottoman government was in disarray regarding the press affairs. The Sublime Porte made no decision under which ministry the Administration of Press Affairs would work for a long time. That was the reason of frequent changes; it functioned under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Public Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in different times. The Administration of Press Affairs was under the Ministry of Public Education between 1862 and 1869. It was then attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs until 1870, nearly for a year. In 1870, the administration was attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a duration of seven years. Then it was reattached to

³¹⁸ BOA, HR.MKT., 57/45, 19 Ca 1269/28 Şubat 1853.

³¹⁹ Hayreddin Bey, *Vesâik-i Tarihiye ve Siyasiye Tetebbuâtı* (İstanbul: 1910), p. 78. The book was republished in modern Turkish by İshak Keskin and Ali Ahmetbeyoğlu: Hayreddin Nedim Göçen, *Belgelerin Dilinden Osmanlı ve Avrupa* (İstanbul: Selis, 2008), pp. 65-66. Information about Hayreddin Nedim in English, see: Doğan Gürpınar, *Ottoman Imperial Diplomacy: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (London: I.B. Tauris: 2014), pp. 178-179, 201. For Turkish, see: Osman Nuri Ergin, *İstanbul Şehreminleri*, (İstanbul: 1927), pp. 541-551.

Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1877.³²⁰ The same confusion went on after *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti* (The Directorate of Foreign Press) was established in 1884.

At the beginning, the directorate was organized under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1893; and returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yet again in 1898.³²¹ This was an indication that the Ottoman government had difficulty in managing the press affairs. Furthermore, it seems that the Sublime Porte was not in a quest to find ways and solve this issue professionally. The reason was obvious. It was a new reality that the Ottomans discovered. Also, it was the era that the press in the empire developed both in numbers, the content and quality as a result of the advent of communication technology.

Furthermore, it was clear that the Sublime Porte had not conscious, planned, and professional policy to “fight the attacks from European press” in their eyes. The wars, rebellions, decaying process, bankruptcy and international pressure were underway. It was not easy to handle this new soft war since the Ottomans were stranger to this game. Harsh censorship and unpersuasive denials were the response of the Sublime Porte, yet they had no positive effect in reality for the empire at all.

Sultan Abdülhamid II was the person who really began to look for ways in order to manage the press affairs after he succeeded to throne in 1876. As Edwin Pears³²² points out, Sultan Abdülhamid II had “learnt the power of the foreign, and especially of the British, press in consequence of the attention aroused by the Moslem outrages in Bulgaria” during the first months of his reign.³²³ Pears explains:

³²⁰ Murat Ardiç, “Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti”, (Konya: Selçuk University, 2009) Unpublished M.A. Thesis in History, p. 29.

³²¹ Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür*, p. 48.

³²² Sir Edwin Pears is described as follows in Wikipedia: Sir Edwin Pears (18 March 1835 – 27 November 1919) was a British barrister, publicist, and historian. He lived in Constantinople for about forty years. Pears settled in Constantinople in 1873. He practised in the consular courts and becoming president of the European bar there. He rose to become one of the leaders of the British colony in Constantinople. Pears travelled much through Turkish dominions, and studied Turkish history from both the Turkish and foreign perspectives. In this way, Pears acquired an intimate knowledge of Turkey. In 1876, as correspondent of *The Daily News*, he sent letters home describing Ottoman atrocities and the April Uprising in Bulgaria which aroused popular demonstrations in England led by William Gladstone. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwin_Pears (Accessed 3 April 2014.)

³²³ Edwin Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid* (London: Constable, 1917), p. 198.

In his endeavours to make himself an absolute ruler Abdul Hamid tried to obtain control over the foreign as well as the Turkish press. It may safely be said that he was the first Ottoman ruler who had had any such design; for the ignorance which prevailed regarding foreign newspapers even amongst the Turkish governing class is almost incredible.³²⁴

Beginning from the early months of his reign, Sultan Abdülhamid II engaged in an effort to design both foreign and domestic press. It was not an easy task although the Sultan was aware of the significance and role of the press. For Sultan Abdülhamid II, it was a learning process according to needs of the day. He did not refrain from taking advice and remained open to suggestions. He always sought proposals of Ottoman pashas, statesmen and ambassadors. That was the reason why more than ten *layih*as and reports were submitted to the Sultan between 1878 and 1896. The timeframe indicates that there was no concrete and immediate solution to the problem and the search took years.

4.3.1 *Layih*as

Even before taking the proposals from the Ottoman statesmen, Sultan Abdülhamid II had already indicated that he would be very active in designing the press and contacting the journalists directly in the early months of his reign. The Sultan tried to send positive messages to the British public opinion by publishing articles in *The Times* through Admiral Hobart Pasha, which was an example of modern public relations.³²⁵ Moreover, Sultan Abdülhamid II personally had a good contact with John Drew Gay, the correspondent of *Daily Telegraph*. The Sultan received him at the palace on many occasions and briefed him about recent political and diplomatic developments.³²⁶ He presented a horse as a gift to John Drew Gay's son.³²⁷

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 194.

³²⁵ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kısacasında*, p. 65. Also, see: *Times*, 14 May 1877.

³²⁶ John Drew Gay, *Plevna, the Sultan, and the Porte. Reminiscences of the War in Turkey* (London: 1878).

³²⁷ *Basiret*, 17 January 1878 in Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kısacasında*, p. 66.

The Sultan also briefed the correspondent of *The Times* at the palace regarding “Russian atrocities against Muslims.”³²⁸ Further, Sultan Abdülhamid II welcomed the report of *Journal des Débats* stating more than hundred thousand Turkish and Circassian were captives in the hands of the Russians. The daily reported that sending these captives to Siberia to make them work in the mines was against the human rights. The Palace immediately asked the names of the correspondents and editors of this news from the French Embassy and decorated them with the imperial Mecidî Order.³²⁹ Giving present and money were not new practices of Sultan Abdülhamid II, but he was personally engaged with press. Briefing a correspondent directly was undoubtedly a new phenomenon breaking the customs.

One of the earliest report and proposal on how to manage the press issues came from Administration of Press Affairs by the end of 1878. Most likely, it was prepared upon the order of Sultan Abdülhamid II and submitted to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then to the *Mabeyn-i Hümayun* (Imperial Court) by the ministry. The Administration mainly asked to expansion of its mandate by giving examples from Western counterparts. The *layiha* suggested the following:

As it is known, the administration of press affairs in every state is responsible to follow the national and foreign press regularly. Then they examine the content of reports and submit their conclusions to the high level officials. They implement the orders that they receive to respond to these reports. In Austria, the administration of press affairs summarizes the content of newspapers and submits them to the imperial court. They are also responsible to make corrections on the reports which include groundless information and comments.³³⁰

After explaining the Western practice, the *layiha* comprehensively laid out the situation and problems in the Ottoman Empire. It suggested reforms and ways to respond to the contemporary challenges of the time. It deserves a quotation:

³²⁸ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında* , p. 66.

³²⁹ BOA, Y.A.RES., 1/45, 22 L 1295/19 October 1878.

³³⁰ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878. See also: Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, p. 69.

On the other hand, the Ottoman administration of press affairs is not entitled to deny the reports which are against the interest of the Ottoman Empire published both in the empire and abroad. Neither is it entitled to charge reports which are against sultanate law. The Ottoman one is not mandated to give present and money to correspondents and newspapers that have done something in favour of the empire. Furthermore, it is not entitled to inform the high level officials with regard to the detrimental reports of correspondents of foreign newspapers; and fulfil efficient and necessary treatment about them [in order to prevent repetitions].³³¹

The *layiha* criticized the existing role of the administration stating that its function was limited to send official statements to a few newspapers in Istanbul. As it stated, another duty of the administration was to prevent and shut down the newspapers that were “publishing against the state and damaging the great sultanate of Ottomans.” It continued:

Moreover, granting money as a help and gift to some of the newspapers and correspondents inside and abroad without the consent and proposal of the administration is seen and perceived as the private donation of the officials who give them. Then these officials are praised and glorified in the stories rather than the Sultan and the Sublime Porte. It is ironic that these newspapers and correspondents surprisingly criticize the policies of the sultanate. It is therefore necessary to reorganize and regulate the administration in order to address this kind of disarrangements. The administration then will be able to follow and examine the content of national and foreign newspapers closely.³³²

With the *layiha*, the Administration of Press Affairs also presented a draft of regulation offering restructuring of the institution.³³³ The draft proposed to divide the administration into two *kalems* (departments) in terms of structure. They were *Muayene-i Matbuat* (Examination of Publications) and *Umur-ı Adiye-i Matbuat* (Regular Press Affairs). The draft suggested the following: The director of the administration would be responsible for the content of the domestic publications and to refute the reports in the foreign press against the Ottoman Empire as well. Examination of Publications Department, which would be under the management of a *muavin* (assistant director), would inspect the newspapers in Turkish, Arabic,

³³¹ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³³² BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878. See also: Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kışkacında*, p. 69.

³³³ *Matbuat İdaresinin Nizamname-i Dahiliyesi* (Internal Regulation of Administration of Press Affairs)

Persian, French, Greek, English, Russian and Armenian through its civil servants. The servants would summarize the reports and comments about the Ottoman Empire in the newspapers that they examined. They would also write denials if necessary.³³⁴

As to the Regular Press Affairs Department, it would be under the authority of another assistant director and would consist of two registration officers for French and Turkish with their clerks. The duty of this department would be sending the instructions of the Sublime Porte for making the official statements to be published in the Istanbul newspapers. It would also archive every issue of newspapers.³³⁵

The second part of the proposal in *Layiha* explained the tasks of the Administration of Press Affairs. The Administration would examine the content of the newspapers published in Istanbul and in other parts of the Empire and would submit their summary to the higher office that they were responsible to. It would perform the necessary denials and carry out the punishments against the newspapers if any. The Administration would follow and check the content of newspapers published abroad and report about the comments against the Ottoman Empire to the *Sadaret* (Prime Ministry).³³⁶

Furthermore, the administration would deny and correct these comments either by calling the correspondent and editor of the newspapers or through the Ottoman ambassadors in abroad. It would also prepare fact sheets praising the activities and achievements of the Ottoman government and send them to newspapers in Istanbul and Europe as well. The Ottoman ambassadors would check the content of newspapers where they served and send information about them to the Administration of Press Affairs. The ambassador would report to the administration about the correspondents who would visit the Ottoman cities with their background information.³³⁷

With the help of city police, the administration would research and check the authenticity of the names of correspondents in Istanbul newspapers. The civil servants of the administration would communicate with these correspondents and

³³⁴ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³³⁵ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³³⁶ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³³⁷ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

have a good dialogue with them. If deemed necessary the correspondents would be invited to the administration to ensure they send “true” stories from the Ottoman perspective. If the correspondents would send stories against the Ottoman State, the Administration would have the power to request their deportation.³³⁸

Encouraging Ottoman subjects to establish newspapers was another proposal in the *layiha*. In this respect, if the newspapers of foreigners were shut down, the Administration of Press Affairs would give priority to the Ottoman subjects in issuing licence to establish a newspaper. In addition, the administration would carry out the orders with regard to rewarding newspapers in Europe that publish news in favour of the Ottoman government and thereby serve for the interest of the Ottoman Empire in the long run. No department of state could provide “financial aid” to the foreign journalists without the approval of the Administration. No department or institution, except the Administration of Press Affairs, would distribute money to the publishers. The Administration would have the mandate to stop providing “financial aid” if any newspaper benefiting from it published “inappropriate” news and if the owner of the newspaper used the aid for personal gains.³³⁹

It is not clear what happened with this comprehensive proposal and draft and whether it was put into practice at all. The following reports and proposals that will be discussed indicate that it was not accepted fully due to the fact that the proposed structure would transfer extensive authority to the Administration of Press Affairs. However, there are indications that some of the advices were implemented. To illustrate, distribution and selling of some newspapers such as *İstikbal* published in Naples and German *Augsburger Zeitung* were banned in the Ottoman cities namely Bursa and Aydın.³⁴⁰

The Administration of Press Affairs prepared another report a few years later, in 1883. It was evident that the officials of the administration were not satisfied with the practices. They requested budget increase and more and competent civil servants from the Palace. The Administration also underlined that the institution needed to

³³⁸ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³³⁹ BOA, Y.A.RES., 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878.

³⁴⁰ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, p. 70.

recover and get organized again.³⁴¹ The administration presented another report just two months later. It stated that number of staff should be increased to keep the foreigner correspondents and columnists under control since the numbers of the members of press significantly increased.³⁴²

The reports of Ottoman ruling elite with proposals on how to manage press related matters continued on for years during the reign Sultan Abdülhamid II. Sadrazam Said Pasha was one of the officials who authored two reports in 1880 on mainly foreign press. Said Pasha proposed to expand the role of Ottoman ambassadors in abroad in this struggle.³⁴³ Two years later he wrote down another comprehensive report upon the order of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The theme of document dated 13 December 1882 was “due to the poisonous reporting of foreign newspapers, the report of Said Pasha on the policies of the European states against the Ottoman State, the internal reforms [in the Ottoman Empire], and the correspondents of the foreign newspapers.”³⁴⁴ Regarding the specific and immediate evaluation of correspondents in Istanbul, Sadrazam Said Pasha stated that the press was mostly in the hands of foreigners in the Ottoman Empire. He drew attention to the negative aspect of the dominance of foreign journalists. He underlined that no state could allow their dominance in its country. He argued:

It is unreasonable to expect that any foreign journalist, even if he is a good person, will favourably take into account the interest of the host country where he works rather than that of the embassy, tribe and nation which he belongs. If the Great Sultan [of the Ottoman Empire] permits, the right of publishing a newspaper should be given to the Ottoman residents... There are several newspaper correspondents in Istanbul. According to inquiries, some of them get the salary between hundred fifty and two hundreds money. In order to keep their salaries, they therefore make up groundless stories and report them even when there is no news stories to write down. It is in their interest and their

³⁴¹ BOA, Y.PRK.DH., 1/50, 27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883. Fatmagül Demirel also uses and mentions this document with the same identification tag. However, she states that the date of the document was 28 October 1882 without giving the original hijri calendar. The date of document was 27 Ra 1300 which meant 5 February 1883 according to calendar conversion system. There is no idea with regard to this conflict. Wrong converting the date into Gregorian calendar might be an option. Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde*, p. 47.

³⁴² BOA, Y.PRK.DH., 1/51, 1 C 1300/9 April 1883.

³⁴³ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, pp. 74 75.

³⁴⁴ BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300/13 December 1882. *Ecnebi gazetelerin fesad yayınları münasebetiyle Avrupa devletlerinin Osmanlı Devletine karşı güttüğü siyasete, dahili islahata ve ecnebi gazetelerin muhbirleri hakkında Said Paşa'nın layihası.*

mission to report even a minor incident to Europe in a horrible and strange way.³⁴⁵

Said Pasha made some suggestions on measures to be implemented in this struggle. According to these proposals, the Ottoman government should form alliance with a few European states on the basis of mutual interest. Ambassadors who would be able to make a strong case that the Ottoman sultan was not the enemy of peace and civilization, should be appointed. The Sultan should meet with the foreign ambassadors in Istanbul frequently. The financial aid to the foreign journalists should also be revived. Additionally, Said Pasha underlined that the deportation of foreign journalists was a not an appropriate measure. From his perspective, they deserved to be expelled as the threatening them with a care and mild failed to make them docile. However, expulsion was not in the interest of the Ottoman Empire since these journalists could inflict more damage to the empire by several kinds of slander and lies.

Furthermore, the Pasha underlined that the conduct of journalists and their sponsors was to depose the allies who were not acting in their interest through fervently praising and glorifying them if they could have not succeeded in achieving it by harsh criticism.³⁴⁶ The Sadrazam most probably saw the risk of how much the Ottoman Sultan was fond of being glorified. Therefore, he sought to stress it in a diplomatic way.

Three days after the report of Sadrazam Said Pasha, another *layiha* was submitted suggesting that it was essential to establish a bureau with the title of *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Kalemi* (Department of Foreign Press) under the supervision of Artin Efendi,³⁴⁷ the undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, since the

³⁴⁵ BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300/13 December 1882.

... memleketimizde ekseriyâ gazetecilik ecnebîlerin elindedir hiçbir devlet ise buna müsâ'ade itmez ve bir ecnebî gazeteci doğru âdem olsa bile efkârını mensûb olduğu sefâretin veyâ kavmin veyâhûd ale'l-ittlâk erbâb-ı ağrâzın menâfi'inden ziyâde misâfir olduğu memleket-i ecnebiyenin hayr u menfa'atine sarf itmesine akıl kesmez... İstanbul'da bir çok gazete muhbirleri olup tahkîkâta göre bunların içinde mensûb oldukları telgraf ve gazete şirketlerinden yüz elli ve iki yüz liraya kadar ma'âş alanlar bulunduğundan bunların işleri kârlarından mahrûm kalmamak için havâdis olmadığı günler bile an aslin hâdiseler tertîb idüp yazmaktır ve en küçük bir hâdiseyi Avrupa'ya dehşetli sûretde bildirmek menfa'at ve me'mûriyetlerine muvâfıktır...

³⁴⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300/13 December 1882.

³⁴⁷ The archbishop of Sis, Artin Efendi with Armenian origin was converted to Islam and taken the name of Mehmet Emin Efendi. It is quite remarkable that an Armenian bureaucrat was responsible to deal with the "attack" of European press. The Armenian issue had a large place in these reporting.

capacity of the Administration of Press Affairs was inadequate to examine the content of foreign press and to control the telegraphic dispatches sent by foreign correspondents in the empire. The new bureau was to be responsible mainly for two areas. The first would be following and examining the foreign newspapers coming from abroad and preventing their import as well as preparing denials and corrections should they have had “any detrimental stories against the Ottoman government”. The second was to inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to implement the necessary measures which were declared in the other memorandum³⁴⁸ aimed at “frightening the correspondents in Istanbul in order to prevent from repeating the mistakes [writing critical news] if they continued cabling detrimental news”³⁴⁹

On the same day with the *layiha*, the government enacted a decree on 16 December 1882 and sent them to the foreign embassies in Istanbul with a diplomatic note the same day. The theme of the note was the measures against the correspondents of the European newspapers who “wrote harmful stories against the Ottoman government.” The note drew attention to “the hostile attitude of foreign correspondents in recent years” and gave information about the upcoming Department of Foreign Press. This bureau would be as the mandated authority for foreign correspondents to confirm their stories and information that they had. Henceforth, the foreign correspondents would register their names with this bureau and get the “right information” from there. Should “the correspondents would continue on sending groundless and false news” in spite of “such a great service for them” provided by the Ottoman government, then they would be warned in the first mistake. In the second, their names would be declared and lastly they would be expelled. The Sublime Porte notified the embassies in Istanbul with regard to these decisions and requested them to inform the correspondents who were their citizens.³⁵⁰ The decisions were also sent to Ottoman embassies in Europe and they were instructed to announce them.³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/33, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

³⁴⁹ BOA, Y.A.RES., 18/20, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

³⁵⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 172/33, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882. Meanwhile, there is a huge confusion with regard to Ottoman documents on these days. As far as it has been detected in this research, there are three different documents. First one which was a report of Said Pasha, is on the 13 December 1882 and its reference code is BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300. When it comes to 16 December 1882, there are two different documents. One is BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/33, 5 Safer 1300 and the other is BOA, Y.A.RES., 18/20, 5 Safer 1300. It is seen that they are confused in some studies.

However, these measures did not work. The problem was really sophisticated. It required long-term and a comprehensive approach whereas Sultan Abdülhamid II was so impatient and had no time to lose. For Sultan, “the hostile attitude of foreign press” raged on. Therefore he asked for a new report and proposal from *Hariciye Mektupçusu* (Chief Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Salih Münir Bey³⁵² just a few weeks after the latest decisions. Münir Bey prepared and submitted an extensive report titled “Report on the Foreign Press and Their Correspondents” on 5 February 1883.³⁵³

Salih Münir Bey’s report started with the categorization of foreign correspondents into three groups.³⁵⁴ After an introduction of the situation of foreign press and correspondents, the first proposal of Salih Münir Bey was “to create a credible and loyal committee or body in order to manage the foreign press affairs”. This committee should pursue a policy to provide for publication of internal and external political views of the Ottoman government in accordance with the interests of the state. It would then obtain the significant European newspapers through their correspondents. According to the *layiha*, the committee would act “wisely, reasonably and forethoughtfully with a long-term approach” in the direction of this policy.

In addition to this, the reference code system in the Ottoman Archives changed in the last years. Some of the studies which were published after this change still used the old reference code system. It is inevitable to find the documents with the old codes. This situation gives the impression that they did not see the original Ottoman documents and just re-used them as their source without referencing the original studies.

³⁵¹ Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, p. 97.

³⁵² Salih Münir Pasha was born in 1859 and he was just 24 years old in these days.

³⁵³ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300]. There is a great confusion on the date of this report. First of all, the date on the original Ottoman document is clearly 27 Rebiülevvel 1300 in Hijri calendar and 24 Kanunusani 1298 in Julian calendar. It is undoubtedly 5 February 1883 in Gregorian calendar. However, Orhan Koloğlu gives the date as 3 February whereas Fatmagül Demirel accepts it as 6 February by referencing the same document while Zekariya Kurşun rightly states it as 5 February. See: Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında* p. 101; Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür*, p.48.; Zekariya Kurşun, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Batı Basınında İmaj Düzeltme Çabaları: Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti'nin Kurulması ve Faaliyetleri”, *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi*, no. 1(2000), p. 108.

Those three sources give the reference with the old code system in the Ottoman Archives. It was “BOA, Y.EE. 14 88/23 88 12” whereas the new one is “BOA, Y.EE. 12/24”. There is a fatal mistake in a new source as well. Although the original date on the document is 27 Rebiülevvel 1300 in Hijri calendar, the date of document is written as 29 Zilhicce 1300 (31 October 1883) in the new catalogue. Therefore, an academic argued the date on the catalogue as the date of original document. See: Ardiç, *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti*, p. 44.

³⁵⁴ He uses the “*sınıf*” (class).

In addition, the *layiha* suggested that the establishment of such a committee would be declared neither publicly nor officially since it was to work with kindness, great hospitality and present gifts. It was vital to “employ loyal, clever and talented officers” since they could maintain sincere dialogue with the correspondents both to learn their views and to influence them in the interest of the Ottoman State. The committee would be composed of mainly two departments, internal and foreign. Their activities would be kept very confidential. It would not distribute money to both national and foreign press unless it was really crucial.

Furthermore, Salih Münir Bey underlined that the Ottoman officials should absolutely behave very politely and friendly in their relations with these correspondents and refrain from creating trouble for them. He advised to establish friendships and dialogue with the correspondents in the first group. According to his proposal, the officials should create faction and competition between correspondents; and benefit from these circumstances. To illustrate, some of the significant news such as official releases should be given not to all correspondents but only one of them as exclusive stories in a secret manner. Then, those who were deprived of this favour would understand that they should go along with the government. In addition, spreading money in order to warrant the publication of denials and corrections of the Ottoman government was essential. Cutting financial aid to those who continued to write against the Ottoman State was also crucial.³⁵⁵

For the second and third category of journalists, Salih Münir Bey stated that there was no need to provide significant exclusive news. Sending corrections would be enough if “their newspapers published groundless stories”. He underlined that their salaries were low. Allocating a few coins of golden money monthly would be very useful in order to assure that they would not write against the Palace and the Ottoman State anymore. Some of them would only appreciate this favour.

Furthermore, according to the *layiha*, the department of Administration of Foreign Press would be responsible in relations with the owners and columnists of European newspapers. Regular meetings and a friendly dialogue were essential in their conduct and the administration would give information to them. This department would also be responsible for ensuring publication of positive articles to

³⁵⁵ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883].

serve the interests of the Ottoman government and to write denials and corrections against “hostile reports.” This department would organize granting Mecidi Orders to the European journalist and columnists as well as and sending commending letters.³⁵⁶

4.4. The Directorate of Foreign Press

The formation of *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti* (The Directorate of Foreign Press) seems an unresolved issue at the time. The establishment of initial administrations have already been addressed in this chapter under the headline of “Institutionalization”. However, these administrations were unfit for the purpose and failed to meet expectations. Their responsibilities were limited, red tape was prevalent and they were short of devising a coherent policy and a comprehensive approach. The real effort began with Sultan Abdülhamid II and in essence, the earliest report submitted to him in 1878 advised to create an exclusive department or administration to deal with the foreign press.³⁵⁷ Main studies on this subject concur on the point that that the Directorate of Foreign Press was established in the beginning of 1883 following the proposals of Sadrazam Said Pasha on 13 December 1882 and Salih Münir Bey on 5 February 1883.³⁵⁸ However, that was not the case. The establishment of the directorate took nearly a year and half after the submission of these proposals. As stated in an official Ottoman document, it was officially

³⁵⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883].

³⁵⁷ BOA, Y.A.RES 2/2, 2 M 1296/27 December 1878. Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, p. 69.

³⁵⁸ They assume that The Directorate of Foreign Press should be established after the two proposals but they do not give any reference to a document revealing their assumption. Orhan Koloğlu states that “a bureau was formed most probably just three days after the report of Sadrazam Said Pasha on 13 December 1882”. See: Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında*, p. 95. Zekariya Kurşun is more sure. He says that “upon the proposal of Sadrazam Said Pasha, administration of foreign affairs under the foreign ministry was established in the beginning of 1883.” Kurşun, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde”, p. 107. In the eyes of Fatmagül Demirel, “it is understood from the report of Salih Münir Bey in February 1883 that the department of foreign press has been established.” Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde*, p. 48. Nesimi Yazıcı has the same thought on this issue. After he reminded the circular letter on 16 December 1882 which was sent to embassies in Istanbul, he presumes that the department was created on this date. Nesimi Yazıcı, “Sadrazam Kamil Paşa'nın Yabancı Basınla İlgili Bazı Görüşleri” in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan*, (İstanbul: 1991), p. 417. Lastly, Hamza Çakır tells that it was created in 1882. See: Hamza Çakır, “Resmi Belgeler Işığında Osmanlı'nın Türkçe Dışı Basın İlişkileri”, *Communication in the Millennium: A Dialogue between Turkish and American Scholars*, <http://cim.anadolu.edu.tr/pdf/2004/> p. 457. (Accessed 4 May 2014)

formed on 4 May 1884.³⁵⁹ In addition to it, the Ottoman *salnames* (yearbook) substantiate this document as a directorate of foreign press under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs³⁶⁰ has started to appear from 1884 onwards in *salnames*.³⁶¹

Complexity and obscurity in the history of how the Ottoman government sought to manage the issues related to the foreign press can be considered as an evidence of the extent and scope of how Ottoman government strived in this issue. The history of institutionalization process clearly indicates that the Ottoman State had no long-term approach. Sultan Abdülhamid II and the ruling elite learned it by trial and error method. The policies and decisions were always subject to change. There was no effective mechanism to follow and examine the foreign press until the *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti* (The Directorate of Foreign Press) was established. The foreign press was mostly followed by the notices of Ottoman embassies and through the newspapers circulated in Istanbul. However, the directorate made it possible to examine almost all the important newspapers and journals of the time especially in Europe and in several countries.³⁶² A research report shows that the number of newspapers and journals regularly followed by the directorate was around six hundred. The publications in Egypt and Northern Africa were not included in this figure.³⁶³

³⁵⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 11/56, 18 R 1306/22 December 1888. The document clearly states: “Matbuât-ı Ecnebiye Kalemî'nin tarih-i te'sisi olan binüçyüz senesi nisanın yirmiikisinden (22 Nisan 1300 [in Julian calendar]) itibaren”. As Hijri calendar, it is equal to 8 Receb 1301. The author of this dissertation noticed this document thanks to the study of Murat Ardıç. See: Ardıç, “Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti”, p. 40. See also: Bayraktar, “Batıda Ermeniler”, pp. 325-326. On the other hand, Orhan Koloğlu accepts the precise date of the departments as 1884 in his another book. Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter'den*, p. 17.

³⁶⁰ It is sometimes written as “Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye” and sometimes “Matbuat-ı Hariciye”. İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri*, p. 118.

³⁶¹ İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri*, p.108 and 118. On the other hand, first day of 1302 equals to 21 October 1884.

Actually, determining the founding date of Department of Foreign Press is not a crucial point in the history of Ottoman press. It will definitely not change all the approach in this field. The reason why it has been debated comprehensively in this dissertation is to introduce all the possible documents while examining the available sources. The large documents in the Ottoman Archives give a possibility to find always a new document which can make a contribution and fill a gap and ambiguity in the relevant literature. It is duty of a historian to show the conflicts and mistakes if any. Then next ones can write more proper and consistent story.

³⁶² Kurşun, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde”, pp. 109-110; Muammer Göçmen, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Yabancı Basın Nasıl Takip Edilirdi?”, *Tarih ve Toplum*, Ağustos 1994, No 128, p. 84. pp.82-88.

³⁶³ Göçmen, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Yabancı Basın”, p. 86.

Did the establishment of the Directorate of Foreign Press really contribute to improve the image of the Ottoman Empire in Europe? Was it an operative solution? Did it solve the problems? Practices after this period demonstrated that there was no conclusive response to this new challenge. Disorganisation, nonstrategic policies and the search for appropriate solutions continued ever. Sultan Abdülhamid II requested new reports and proposals from ruling elite on many occasions until the end of his reign. He always searched and employed additional measures to respond to the problems and risks that the news reporting created. However, improvements in communication technology hardened the difficulty to manage the press affairs. The Ottoman Empire was always in a position of defense in this struggle.

The news stories in European press, outraging Sultan Abdülhamid II continued on even after the establishment of The Directorate of Foreign Press. In 1888, the Sultan requested proposals from his pashas. Said Pasha submitted a report on how to tackle with this problem by explaining the practices and laws in Europe. He stated that insulting the emperor through press was a criminal offence in Europe, even in France where the freedom of press was broader.³⁶⁴ However, all the Ottoman attempts to sue the foreign journalists and close down the newspapers in Europe failed to work.

In addition to the several reports from Said Pasha, Sultan Abdülhamid II also received the views of Kamil Pasha who served as grand vizier of the Sultan several times. He prepared four different reports in the beginning of 1890.³⁶⁵ The common tendency of the Ottoman ruling elite in dealing with the foreign press was to prevent the “detrimental publications” by either prohibiting them or bribing the journalists. However, Kamil Pasha had a difference approach. He argued, “the cure to stop damaging publications should be sought in the incidents that caused them”.³⁶⁶ However, he did not propose a revolutionary and a creative solution in tangible terms. He highlighted the difference in the mentality with regard to the freedom of press in the Ottoman Empire and Europe: “In Europe, the press has no such importance as it enjoys in the Ottoman Empire. A critic against the state, which can

³⁶⁴ BOA, Y.EE., 83/21, 23 S 1306/29 October 1888.

³⁶⁵ Yazıcı, “Sadrazam Kamil Paşa’nın Yabancı Basınla”, pp. 427-434.

³⁶⁶ Yazıcı, “Sadrazam Kamil Paşa’nın Yabancı Basınla”, p. 423.

“Neşriyât-ı muzırranın men’i çaresini buna sebebiyet veren vukuatta aramak lâzımdır.”

be perceived as a murder among us, is not seen in this way in Europe but it is rather considered as an ordinary fault.³⁶⁷

Kamil Pasha implicitly gave the message that the Ottoman State should be more liberal in managing the press. For him, the press had mainly three purposes: pursuing his/her own benefit by exploiting/misusing journalism (*cerr-i menfaat*), taking revenge on someone (*teşeffi-i sadr*); and serving for humanity. Spreading money as bribe would not work for the first two groups, but would only motivate and encourage the journalists and publishers to carry on intentional reporting to extract more money.³⁶⁸

4.5. Cooperation Contracts with the Agencies

How the Ottoman sultans and bureaucrats were aware of the notion and role of the international news agencies? How did they realize the difference between the European newspapers and the news agencies? These are the pertinent questions that need to be addressed to comprehend the history of international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire. The ideas in the proposals and especially the cooperation contracts with the agencies give answers to these questions.

Although the Ottoman bureaucrats learned the function of the telegraph for the press during the Crimean War, practically the Ottoman government was faced with the reality of the international news agencies in the late 1860s. In 1867, Monsieur Brot, the permanent representative of Havas in Istanbul, contacted the Ottoman government in order to discuss the telegraphic communication facilities between Istanbul and the Ottoman provinces. He wanted to receive news from the Ottoman cities and he told the Ottoman officials that he would cable them to Europe.³⁶⁹ During those years, the Ottoman bureaucrats had some notion about the international news agencies and their function.

In essence, it can be argued that it was the 1870s that the Ottoman government was faced with the reality of international news agencies and had a proper

³⁶⁷ BOA, Y.A.Hus., 233/29, 15 C 1307/6 February 1890.

³⁶⁸ BOA, Y.A.Hus., 233/29, 15 C 1307/6 February 1890.

³⁶⁹ BOA, HR.TO., 509/29, 10 December 1867.

understanding of their role. The Ottoman officials saw that the European newspapers mostly published the telegrams of the news agencies. The Ottoman ambassadors in Paris and London helped explaining elaborately the role of the agencies in their letters to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs.³⁷⁰ The bureaucrats realized that it was the telegrams of the agencies that were the main source for the European newspapers. They believed that controlling or having good relations with Havas and Reuter were the key in order to “prevent hostile reporting” against the Ottoman Empire.

There is a good example that reflects the perspective of the Ottoman bureaucrats on the international news agencies in 1875. Reuter-Havas Company³⁷¹ applied to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a proposal to ask for privileges.³⁷² The proposal argued that the Ottoman government would directly benefit from this agreement more than the Reuter-Havas company since the news agency would serve to “deny all the baseless reports against the Ottoman State.” The government could have the chance to access all telegrams of the company since the agency would get them through Ottoman telegraph offices. They would be a good source for the government and Ottoman officials since the Reuter-Havas Company had several correspondents in Europe, good at reporting on the significant issues in European capitals. The proposal lastly suggested: “The Company will become the unofficial tool of the Ottoman government when the requested privilege is granted. That is to say, the Sublime Porte also gets rid of its responsibility [to publish the statements] everyday.”³⁷³

The Ottoman government pondered on the offer in a very detailed manner. The details of the offer show that the Ottoman bureaucrats were aware of most functions and advantages of the agencies in that time. The Ottoman government

³⁷⁰ For example, Mehmed Sadık Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador to Paris, wrote letters to tell the significance of Havas. BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

³⁷¹ Reuter and Havas made an agreement to incorporate and they operated under the name of “Reuter-Havas” for a limited time.

³⁷² BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875. The letter was in French. The original letter with its Ottoman translation is available in the Ottoman Archives.

³⁷³ BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875.

Kumpanya imtiyâzât-ı meşrûhanın istihsâliyle hükûmet-i seniyyenin vâsıtâ-i gayr-ı resmîyyesi olur yani hükûmet-i seniyye her gün mes'ûliyyetden vâreste olduğu hâlde vireceği ma'lûmâta resmî nazarıyla bakmağa başlar.

granted the company to send all its dispatches swiftly and free of charge through the telegraph offices in Istanbul and the region.

In addition to this, Mehmed Sadık Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador to Paris, sent several reports to Istanbul to explain the importance of French Havas agency and the benefits of possible cooperation with it. In 1876, the Ambassador told that Havas Telegraph Agency had served the interests of the Ottoman State considerably.³⁷⁴

The contracts with the international news agencies reflect the evolution of their role for the Ottoman State and the perception of Ottoman officials. Most likely, following on the suggestions of Mehmed Sadık Pasha, the Sublime Porte and Havas came to the table in 1878 for negotiating on a cooperation contract. The agreed contract was signed by the Grand Vizier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Saffet Pasha and Mossier Chato representing Havas. However, the Ottoman documents are silent on whether it came into effect with its all articles.³⁷⁵ The agreement had following terms: In addition to its regular reporting service, Havas would distribute and publish all telegrams sent by the Sublime Porte by using all available means. The company would accept and publish all the news and official announcements of the Sublime Porte and Ottoman embassies in the newspaper of *Correspondence Havas* by free of charge. It would also make publication to defend the interests of Ottoman State in the context of the letters, notices and briefings sent by the Sublime Porte every week.³⁷⁶

Apart from the regular reporting news service, Havas would supply a special telegram news service secretly in order to provide the information for the Sublime Porte that it demanded on the European political issues related to the Ottoman Empire. The company would reflect the views of the Sublime Porte and Ottoman ambassadors in Europe when it was cabling from Europe to the Ottoman State.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

³⁷⁵ The wording of contract says that it was signed. However, there is not any signature on the document. In addition to this, the day and month of the agreement was not written in the document near the year. This part is blank with dots.

Meanwhile, the date of the file including this document in the Ottoman Archives is 6 R 1327/27 April 1909. See: BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909. However, date of the contract is clearly written as 1878 in the Ottoman document: *İş bu mukavele bin sekiz yüz yetmiş sekiz senesi...*

³⁷⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909.

³⁷⁷ BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909.

Thanks to its services, Havas would have some rights in return. The Ottoman government would pay 1500 francs monthly to the French company. Havas would have the right to cable 100 words in a day free of charge. It would be valid when it cabled from Istanbul to Europe and the other way around. The company would pay the fee of telegrams in the end of the month if it cabled more than its free of charge rights. The Ottoman government would keep the right of examining and withholding the telegrams of Havas when it cabled from Istanbul and received from Europe.³⁷⁸ The content of the contract was very simple. It proposed basic cooperation between the sides. There was not any special article assuring extended rights for the Ottoman government. What it demonstrated was that the Ottoman government was aware of potential advantages of working with an international news agency.

Cognizant of the role of news agencies, Sultan Abdülhamid II instructed the Ottoman bureaucrats³⁷⁹ to meet with the representatives of news agencies and newspapers in Istanbul in 1879. It is clear that the Ottoman government had made a distinction between the reporters of the European newspapers and news agencies. The bureaucrats described Havas and Reuter as telegraphic agencies. Their approach was to understand the reasons of “these hostile reporting” and the ways to manage it. The report proposed, “the first condition of managing and controlling the newspapers as the Sublime Porte desired was to attract the support of telegraph agencies.”³⁸⁰

An agreement between the Ottoman government and Reuter in 1880 evidently demonstrates that the Ottoman State fully comprehended how the international news agencies worked and the way in which they could be used for the interests of the empire.³⁸¹ It was not clear whether the Ottoman bureaucrats or Reuter prepared the

Kumpanya Avrupa'dan memâlik-i devlet-i aliyeye irsâl olunacak telgrafların suret-i tahrîr ve terkîbinin hükümet-i seniyyenin veya düvel-i muazzama nezdindeki süferâsının eşkârını istihrâc edecektir.

³⁷⁸ BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909.

³⁷⁹ The Ottoman archival document does not include the name of the bureaucrat who submitted this report.

³⁸⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 4/80 2 Ca 1296/24 April 1879).

... gazetelerin matlub vechile idâre olunabilmesinin birinci şartı telgraf acentelerinin celbi kazıyyesi olarak bunların başlucalarından biri Havas ve diğeri Reuter acenteleri bulunduğundan bunlarca şimdilik cüz'î ba'zı fedâkârlık ihtiyârıyla bundan böyle mazarrat şöyle dursun mu 'âvenet eylemeleri kazıyyesi taht-ı ta'ahhüde aldırılmış olduğunun...

³⁸¹ BOA, HR.TO. 476/48, 9 August 1880. Meanwhile, the agreement was prepared both in Ottoman and French. In this dissertation, the Ottoman language has been used to understand the content and to

agreement but its provisions obviously show the mutual visionary perspective for the cooperation. Yet, it should be mentioned that the Ottoman archival documents do not provide any information about whether this deal was put into practice. However, another document in 1883 shows that it had not been in practice at that time.³⁸² The point of explaining the background of this agreement is to show that the Ottoman government was fully aware of the capabilities of Reuter and the advantages of cooperation with it during that period.

With regard to the content of the agreement, Reuter firstly was obliged to publish [distribute] all the news and notifications of the Ottoman government to the main newspapers in Europe, America and India as well as to the telegraph agencies. Reuter was also committed to dispatch them to the contractor Havas Agency in Paris through telegraphy. The Ottoman government undertook that it would give information to the representative of Reuter Agency in Istanbul as well as forwarding him all diplomatic documents to be published. The Ottoman government would assign an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to carry out this task.³⁸³

Furthermore, the Ottoman government accepted that Reuter would cable all the official documents, diplomatic memorandums, denials and declarations of the Ottoman State by free of charge. The Ottoman government permitted that Reuter would have the right to cable its own telegrams with a limit of hundred words daily between Istanbul and London free of charge. The same right would also apply for the telegrams between Istanbul and Bombay.³⁸⁴

translate into English in order to show how the Ottoman bureaucrats perceived and interpreted the articles.

On the other hand, there are three different files in the Ottoman archives regarding this agreement. The first one is BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880. The file includes both the Ottoman and French version of the agreement with the secret articles. Interestingly, the same agreement with different hand writings is available in another file. The date of the file is 6 R 1327/27 April 1909. However there is no any date on the original documents in both Ottoman and French. For the agreement, see: BOA, Y.EE., 41/161, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909; and for the secret articles, see: BOA, Y.EE. 41/162, 6 R 1327/27 April 190. These two files have been classified with the title of “Proposal on the designed contract with Reuter Agency” (*Ajans Reuter ile tasarlanan mukavele name layihası*). The date of 27 April 1909 is quite interesting since it was the date that Sultan Abdülhamid II was dethroned. Unfortunately, there is no explanation why the agreement was rewritten with a different handwriting.

³⁸² BOA, Y.EE., 43/152, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

³⁸³ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

³⁸⁴ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

In these years, Reuter Agency was using telegraph lines under the sea when it cabled to India, China and Australia. If the telegraph lines in the Ottoman lands worked properly and the Ottoman government would discount for fifteen percentages, then Reuter would cable its telegrams through the Ottoman lines. However, Reuter would pay itself when it cabled the demands of the Ottoman government from London to its correspondents and agencies in Europe and America. There was a price tag attached. The Ottoman government made a commitment to pay for 15.000 francs annually for these expenses. Reuter would give the salary out of this this money to the secret official of the Sublime Porte who would work in London.³⁸⁵

The agreement was for a three years term and the Ottoman government reserved the right of withholding the telegrams of Reuter Agency if necessary. The agreement, written in French and Ottoman, had also confidential articles. They were mainly about how the Ottoman secret official would work in London. Having its own official at the headquarters of Reuter to look after the interests of the Ottoman State was really a great opportunity. As set out in the confidential articles, this official would have a major role in London. The first secret article explaining the rights and responsibilities of the official is as follows:

Since the Reuter Agency has established political services all over the world, it will use this asset for the interest of the Sublime Porte. Reuter will introduce the secret official of the Ottoman State to the ministries, deputies, foreign ambassadors, members of the parliament, and directors of the prime ministry archives in Britain. The Ottoman secret official, assigned by the Sublime Porte, will be defined as the staff of Reuter not to evoke any insecurity and doubts; [and to conceal his identity]. Therefore he will able to contribute significant services for the interest of the Sublime Porte. For instance, he can ask questions in the parliament regarding the Eastern Question and he will send the news on this subject to the newspapers.³⁸⁶

In addition, the secret official would assure that Reuter would put out the announcements, events and opinions which the Ottoman State wanted to spread, into its bulletins that were sent to the newspapers in Germany and Austria. He would elaborately explain and interpret the telegrams coming from Istanbul to the British

³⁸⁵ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

³⁸⁶ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

newspapers. He would also select the news to be cabled to Istanbul from London office of the Reuter. He would distribute the news that was in favour of the Ottoman State with a view to enabling its publication in the newspapers all over the world through Reuter's network.³⁸⁷

Article two shows that the target territory of the Ottoman government in the treaty was really large. Since only Reuter functioned in India and had branch offices in several cities in India and also in China, Iran and Australia, the British agency made a commitment to use its publication abilities in the service of the Ottoman State. Particularly, its publication capabilities in India were crucial for the Ottoman State as stated in the contract. The third article is also remarkable. It suggested that Reuter, with branch offices everywhere, had the ability of catching, extracting and learning the thoughts of British ministers and that of several other states. Therefore Reuter could send the articles and news to the Sublime Porte that were published all over the world.³⁸⁸

Furthermore, the Ottoman government was expecting special reports from his secret official explaining the political situation in Britain. Put differently, the responsibility of this official was devised like an intelligence officer. Therefore, Reuter would assist this official in sending confidential letters to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs every week. These confidential letters would be very useful and beneficial for the Ministry since they would include credible information and give a sense about the views and opinions of the British bureaucrats and other officials.³⁸⁹

The Ottoman government was also ready to benefit from the economic news of Reuter. The contract assured that these would be useful for the Ottoman officials since Reuter supplied information to major banks, department of treasuries and traders. In conclusion, it was set forth by this contract that Reuter undertook the mission of presenting its services in its publications at the interest of the Ottoman State all over the world. It also pledged to use all its assets in the service of Ottoman politics.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

³⁸⁸ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

³⁸⁹ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

³⁹⁰ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

In view of the recognition of the capabilities of the international news agencies, the endeavours of the Sublime State how to manage relations with them continued on while their influence increased. In this respect, several proposals of high-level Ottoman officials were submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid II at his orders. Some of them, such as the *layiha* of the Grand Vizier Said Pasha,³⁹¹ have already been explained in this chapter. In addition, Salih Münir Bey, in his report, underlined that Havas and Reuter supplied news to most of the European newspapers. He told, “Havas and Reuter are the informant of two thousands newspapers directly or by other means.”³⁹²

Besides them, Mehmed Esad Safvet Pasha, known as Saffet Pasha, who served as the grand vizier and minister of foreign affairs for six times submitted two proposals on 9 January 1883. The first one was about the draft agreement between the Ottoman government and Reuter dated 9 August 1880. It seems that Sultan Abdülhamid II requested the views of Saffet Pasha on the draft agreement. In his report, Saffet Pasha stated that distributing the announcement and briefings of the Ottoman government was essential. He saw two problems with regard to the secret articles of the agreement. He believed allowing the Ottoman secret official in Reuter to ask questions in the parliament would disturb the British government and cause troubles. Secondly, Britain and the Ottoman Empire had conflicting interests in India. The attempt for a kind of propaganda in India would surely irritate the British government. Therefore, he said these two articles should be excluded from a possible contract during the negotiations. Saffet Pasha viewed a possible agreement as useful and positive for the interest of the Ottoman Empire.³⁹³ It may fairly be assumed that the agreement was not signed in the beginning of 1883. The deliberations of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman officials took at least two and half years.

In the beginning of 1883, according to another report by Saffet Pasha,³⁹⁴ it is evident that Sultan Abdülhamid II was unhappy since he could not explain his

³⁹¹ BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300/13 December 1882.

³⁹² BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300].

... *Havas ile Reuter acentaları gerek doğrudan ve gerek bi'l-vasıta iki bin gazeteye muhbirlik etmektedirler...*

³⁹³ BOA, Y.EE., 43/152, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

³⁹⁴ BOA, Y.EE., 44/149, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

performance and achievements to the European public. Saffet Pasha underlined the need for seeking a tool and instrument in this respect.³⁹⁵ He then explained that Havas in France and Reuter in Britain were the agencies that supplied news and information for the newspapers in their countries. He specifically emphasized that it was not possible to win over all the foreign publication even by paying millions of *akçe*.³⁹⁶ Saffet Pasha did not directly proposed to establish a separate Ottoman national news agency, but his comments might be construed as such since he drew attention to the need of an instrument to inform the European public.³⁹⁷

What was the fate of these proposals? Were there any concrete and tangible decisions taken and practices put into effect following on these proposals? Did institutionalization occur? As previously mentioned, *Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti* (The Directorate of Foreign Press) was established in on 4 May 1884 after several proposals and long deliberations. Actually, its initiation was a response to “attacks of European press” in general. From Ottoman officials’ perspective, international news agencies, especially Havas and Reuter were the main source of these attacks. However, the way that the directorate was organized gave no priority to international news agencies at all. In this respect, the basic responsibility of the directorate was to check the telegrams of the news agencies when they were cabling to Europe and distributing the news in Istanbul. The structure of the directorate was not a direct measure to the conduct of the international news agencies in practice. There was not any special department in charge of relations with the news agencies in this directorate.

³⁹⁵ BOA, Y.EE., 44/149, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

... *icrâât-ı vâkı‘a ve bi‘l-husûs velî-ni‘met-i bî-minnetimiz efendimiz hazretlerinin memâlik-i mahrûse-i şâhânelerinin ma‘mûriyeti ve tebe‘a ve ahâlinin husûl-i sa‘âdet-i hâli hakkında olan efkâr ve niyât-ı şâhâne ve ol bâbda olan mesâ‘î-i mülûkânelerini âleme bildirecek bir vâsıta aranmak lâzım gelüp...*

³⁹⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 44/149, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

... *kâffe-i matbû‘ât-ı ecnebiyenin taraf-ı Devlet-i aliyeye celb ve imâlesi ise milyonlarla akçe sarf olunsa yine kâbil olamayacağından...*

³⁹⁷ The title of the document in the Ottoman archives is “Proposal of Saffet Pasha to form an institution like Reuter and Havas in order to tell the reforms in the Ottoman Empire to the foreign countries” However, there is no such a direct suggestion like this. BOA, Y.EE., 44/149, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

Since there was not any specific institutional structure with regard to the international news agencies, the draft agreements give some clue about the way in which the Palace and the Ottoman officials both perceived and tried to handle the issue. In essence, the scope of the agreements might be interpreted as a way of institutionalization, but whether they were put into effect remains unclear. Yet, an account of the agreement negotiations could provide some insight in this respect.

In a document dated 1893, signing a contract with Reuter was suggested. The document does not entail any detail about who made the proposal. However, the introductory paragraph of the agreement gives the impression that it was an offer of the British agency, but it also covered the comments of the Ottoman officials. It reads:

Whereas the European states really allocate large sums of money for the press in order to wield influence and domination on the public opinion, the Sublime Porte can win over the public opinion of both Europe and Turkey with insignificant expenses thanks to the means of the [Reuter] company.³⁹⁸

Actually, the contents of the contract with its secret articles were very close to the draft agreement of 1880 between Reuter and the Ottoman government.³⁹⁹ Unlike the 1880 draft agreement, the Ottoman secret official, who would work in Reuter's London office as a journalist to guard the interests of the Sublime Porte, was referred only in confidential articles and there was no mention of him at all in the other provisions of the agreement. This time, he was defined as "the telegram representative of the Ottoman State in London" instead of "secret official". His roles and responsibilities remained the same. The suggestion underlined that this servant could make great contribution for the interest of the Ottoman State thanks to the large opportunities of the British agency.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 9/14, 7 Z 1310/24 April 1893.

Avrupa devletleri efkâr-ı umûmiye üzerine icrâ-yı nüfûzı müceb neşriyât için senevî pek külliyetli akçeler sarf ve hasr eyledikleri hâlde devlet-i aliyye şirket-i mezkûrenin vâsıtasıyla mesârif-i cüz'îyye ile Avrupa'nın efkâr-ı umûmiyesini ve bi'l-mukâbele Türkiye'nin efkâr-ı umûmiyesini celb idebilecektir.

³⁹⁹ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880.

⁴⁰⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 9/14, 7 Z 1310/24 April 1893.

The remarkable difference was on provisions related to the publishing in India. In the draft agreement of 1880, it was mentioned that Reuter functioned in India and had branch offices in several Indian cities. The British agency had promised to use its publication assets for interests of the Ottoman State. Particularly, its publication capabilities in India were crucial for the Ottoman government as stated in the contract. The new draft contract contained the same points, but also added in some new thoughts:

India is the issue that Britain is most afraid of. Any moral pressure to the deputies and ministers of England might be possible by winning over the public opinion there. For England, the most significant concern is a possible occurrence of enthusiasm [for a revolt] of Indian Muslims who have always been loyal and had never gave up obedience. A deal might be possible with Reuter on this issue. For instance, once the Sublime Porte gave information and briefing to the correspondent of Reuter in Istanbul, he would cable it to India directly by using the lines between Istanbul and Bombay.⁴⁰¹

Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that the comments of Saffet Pasha were not taken into consideration on the Indian issue.⁴⁰² The issues about India set aside, the draft agreement underlined that the centers of the news and publication about the Ottoman State were Britain and Germany. It further stated, “there is no need to tell that the diplomatic attempts regarding the Eastern Issue were organized in Britain. At all costs, an instrument and a way have to be found to exchange news and information from the Ottoman country to Europe and the other way around through telegraphy.”⁴⁰³ According to the document, there was no need to transmit official news because people did not read the official statements were at all. The telegraphic dispatches, informative, awareness-raising and uncovering the political issues, were evidently the most effective news on the public opinion. Therefore, this kind of news stories would conform to the Ottoman interests. The document read:

⁴⁰¹ BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 9/14, 7 Z 1310/24 April 1893.

⁴⁰² BOA, Y.EE., 43/152, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

Devlet-i aliyye hakkındaki havâdisât ve neşriyâtın merkezleri elyevm İngiltere ile Almanya olup husûsen mesâil-i şarkiyeye dâir harekât-ı diplomatikaya ale'l-âde İngiltere'den mübâseret olunduğu âzâde-i îzâhdır. Binâen aleyh her ne sûretle mümkün olur ise olsun memâlik-i şâhânedan Avrupa'ya ve Avrupa'dan memâlik-i şâhâneye vâsita-i telgrafla te'âtî-i havâdisât eylemek üzere bir tarîk ve sûret bulmak hükûmet-i seniyye için vâcibât-ı umurdandır.

The Sublime Porte should negotiate with Reuter, whose headquarters in London, in order to inform Europe about its views, activities and accomplishments that it wants to be published. Reuter is superior to all other [news] companies. Having its headquarters in London is an asset itself. Reuter is distributing the telegraphic news to more than two thousands publications. It has correspondents and representatives all over the world and it is providing communication in Europe, America and India. The Ottoman State can greatly benefit from the facilities of Reuter since there are 40 million Muslims in India.⁴⁰⁴

Two and half years later, the Ottoman government looked for ways to get full support of Reuter and Havas. The government thoroughly deliberated on the issue within the different Ottoman departments, such as The Directorate of Foreign Press, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ottoman embassies in Europe. Consequently, the Grand Vizier Halîl Rıf'at, the Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmâ'îl Hakkı, and Head of Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet Reîsi*) Mehmed Sa'îd prepared a report together. It suggested no new approach, but repeated the common understanding and stance of the Ottoman ruling class. In the report, they primarily offered to work with Reuter and Havas, underlining that there were no alternatives at all. They reiterated that controlling the import of foreign newspapers was not possible and that the official denials and corrections were not influential and credible in the eyes of the European press. Subsequently, they proposed to benefit from the services of Reuter and Havas:

It is essential that the telegraph companies like Reuter and Havas and other correspondents should be won over. Once it is achieved then the desired content and articles can be published through them. This system needs a budget around 5000 *liras* annually to get their support and loyalty. It is possible to win over the Havas and Reuter by this money. It has already been agreed with Reuter by speaking with its representative. The support of Havas can also be secured.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 9/14, 7 Z 1310/24 April 1893.

Hükümet-i seniyye neşrini arzû eylediği efkâr ve icrâatını Avrupa'ya bildirmek için merkez idâresi Londra'da bulunan Ajans Reuter şirketiyle bu bâbda müzâkereye girişmelidir... Kürr-e arzın her cihetinde dahi müte'addid vekil me'mûrlar bulundurarak bu sûretle de Avrupa ve Amerika ve Hindistan'la muhâbere idiyor...

⁴⁰⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 339/35, 22 Ca 1313/10 November 1895.

...Dersa'âdetce hayırhevâh ve mu'temed muhbirler ve Ajan Reuter ve Ajan Havas gibi telgraf şirketleri elde edilerek ânlar ma'rifetiyle ve istenildiği sûretle Avrupa gazetelerine lâzım olan mevâddın yazdırılması iktizâ idüp bu da biraz masraf ihtiyârına ve iktizâ idenlerin hüdmet ve sadâkatleri derecesinde taltiflerine tevakkuf ideceği ve bu yolda senevî tahmînen beş bin lira mikdârı akçe sarf olunur ise Dersa'âdetce işe yarar muhbirler ve Ajan Havas ve Ajan Reuter telgraf şirketleri elde idilmek mümkün olup hattâ Ajan Reuter şirketinin vekîliyle söyleşilerek

To conclude, the policy of Ottoman State in managing the international news agencies can be summarized as follows: Different offices in charge of press matters under the ministries of internal and foreign affairs were set up in the Ottoman Empire. The Directorate of Press Affairs was redesigned and restructured on many occasions. The performance of Sultan Abdülhamid II was remarkable. He greatly benefited from and made use of several reports. He did not yield the mandate to the directorate. As Kolođlu points out, Sultan Abdülhamid II successfully designed the press regulations and practices according to his needs and created a mechanism that would absolutely work in his favour gradually.⁴⁰⁶ At one point, the Ottoman government began seriously considering to set up a national news agency, a topic that should be comprehensively addressed in a separate study.

karârı dahi virildiđi gibi Ajan Havas Őirketiyle de derdest tezekkür olup vakt ü hâl îcâbınca bu sûretin icrâsı münâsib olacađı...

⁴⁰⁶ Kolođlu, “Abdülhamid’in Basın Rejimi”, pp. 44-45.

CHAPTER V

INTERDEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES

One of the main aspects of the practices of how the Ottoman State managed the affairs regarding the international news agencies was interdependent nature of these relations. The government tried to maintain good relations with the international news agencies by various methods such as subscription, free telegraph privilege, subsidy as salary or grants, awarding Ottoman decorations, supplying exclusive news and yielding different concessions in accordance with the needs of agencies. In return, the Ottoman government used the agencies as a tool for propaganda activities such as publishing denials and corrections, producing and publication of news in favour of the empire in European newspapers and “preventing hostile news stories of agencies” by way of maintaining good relations with them.

Yet, the interdependent nature of relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the international news agencies needs explanation. What were the reasons for them to need each other? On the fundamental basis, the Ottoman government was really dependent on the international news agencies during a time when a war of propaganda was prevalent in the international arena in which the Ottoman State had to take part. The European public was shaped to a great extent by French and British newspapers at the time. It was vital to make agreements with these news agencies since they were really influential and the leading ones.⁴⁰⁷ The succinct explanation of Boyar regarding the relations between the palace and the press in general can also be applied in the context of agencies:

The sultan thus needed the press as much as the press needed the palace for its survival. This meant that relations between the palace and the press were not based merely on oppression by the political power, formularized as censorship.

⁴⁰⁷ For a summary of discussions on the development of public opinion and propaganda in the nineteenth century, see: Meller, *The Development of Modern Propaganda*, pp. 2-6.

It was a mutually beneficial arrangement-although the character of this relation cannot be described as a relationship between equals.⁴⁰⁸

The correspondence between the Sublime Porte and the Ottoman embassies in Europe on subscription to the services of Havas at a time of huge financial troubles for the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century is a testament to both the significance of the international news agencies for the Ottoman Empire and its dependency on them. The Ottoman economy was really in dire straits in the last quarter of the century. The ever increasing foreign loan burden and the budget deficits had led to the bankruptcy in 1876.⁴⁰⁹ In 1895, the government considered suspending subscription to these agencies, as it was unable to pay the fee. The Sublime Porte asked the opinion of the Ottoman Embassy in Paris and The Directorate of Foreign Press. It inquired about whether the Ottoman State really benefited from the services of Havas in the value of six thousands francs and continuation of subscription was essential. The Embassy replied that the agency would abandon its services which were useful for the Ottoman State if subscription was terminated.⁴¹⁰

The deliberations took few months. Nearly three months later, a new report by the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that Havas was a crucial telegraph agency and the Ottoman State benefited from its services. Accordingly it was appropriate to pay subscription fee and provide it with the same privileges that were enjoyed by the other agencies. The Minister also added that he consulted and agreed with the Director for Foreign Press on the matter.⁴¹¹

The inquiries about the benefits of Havas notwithstanding, the Ottoman Empire was incapable of paying the subscription fee at the time. It could not pay the fee regularly and the French agency sent a protest for the bill. The government looked for a bank credit upon the warnings of Ottoman Embassy in Paris that swift payment was inevitable. The Ottoman government ordered to take credit from a

⁴⁰⁸ Boyar, "The press and the palace", p. 425.

⁴⁰⁹ For the Ottoman economy in this era, see: Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁴¹⁰ BOA, BEO., 671/50302, 28 S 1313/20 August 1895.

⁴¹¹ BOA, BEO., 679/50916,19 Ra 1313/7 November 1895.

bank.⁴¹² The Ottoman Bank⁴¹³ was ready to supply the credit. Although the decision was made to pay the debt through the Ottoman Bank,⁴¹⁴ it took quite time due to the inefficient structure of the Ottoman bureaucracy. There are several official correspondences between the ministries on this issue.⁴¹⁵

In 1897, the Ottoman government cancelled its contract with Havas despite the opposite recommendations by bureaucrats. In essence, the decision was taken at least a year ago, but the Ottoman officials had neglected to notify the agency at least three months before the end of contract. Thereby the contract had been renewed automatically. No specific reason appears as to why the Ottoman government decided to cancel the contract, but a most plausible explanation seems it was possibly related to the subscription fee as the government paid only 6 thousand francs in 1895 whereas the total figure was 45 thousand by 1897.⁴¹⁶ As the economy further deteriorated, the Ottoman government suggested looking for a new agency to get an equivalent service with an affordable price.⁴¹⁷ However, it was not possible since Havas and Reuter were the cartels in the sector.

In view of the failure in managing the public relations, propaganda and press issues without the cooperation with the international news agencies, the relationship with Havas was crucial for the Ottoman government. Given this context, the Ottoman Embassy in Paris, which was exposed to this problem directly, urged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to re-subscribe to services of Havas just six months later. They underlined the significance of the services and influence of Havas in European press.⁴¹⁸ Concurring with the Embassy, the Ministry applied to the Ottoman

⁴¹² BOA, BEO., 596/44646, 13 L 1312/9 April 1895).

⁴¹³ For the role of Ottoman Bank see: Edhem Eldem, *A Hisstory of the Ottoman Bank* (İstanbul : Osmanlı Bankası, 1999); and Christopher Clay, "The Imperial Ottoman Bank in the Later Nineteenth Century: A Multinational 'National' Bank", in G. Jones (ed.), *Banks as Multinationals* (Londra: 1990).

⁴¹⁴ BOA, BEO., 603/45178, 23 L 1312/19 April 1895.

⁴¹⁵ BOA, BEO., 580/43447, 2 N 1312/27 February 1895; and BOA, BEO., 589/44125, 27 N 1312/24 March 1895.

⁴¹⁶ It was equal to 195018 *kuruş* in Ottoman Money according to the Ottoman document.

⁴¹⁷ BOA, BEO., 928/69566 , 28 L 1314/1 Nisan 1897.

⁴¹⁸ BOA, BEO., 1054/79039, 23 B 1315/18 December 1897.

government. Subsequently, the government requested information on the usefulness of subscription and about the company upon the request of the Palace.⁴¹⁹

The consultations between the Ottoman departments took more than half-year. Interestingly, there are several files including dozens of documents in the Ottoman Archives on this issue. The reply of Ottoman Embassy in Paris was self-evident; they believed it was a must for the embassy to work with Havas. The ambassador underlined that most of the European states including the French government did not abstain from benefiting from the services of Havas, which had influence and dominancy in political circles. He also mentioned that it was of utmost importance to get the help of this news agency to “prevent the hostile attitude of European press against the Ottoman State.”⁴²⁰ Furthermore, the ambassador compared the subscription fees that several governments paid for the services of Havas. In another cable, he stated that the Serbian government paid 90 thousands and Bulgaria 110 thousands francs annually whereas the Ottoman government paid 45 thousands francs last time. Once more, he called for renewal of subscription due to the urgency of the issue in order to “reassure the assistance of Havas to suppress the poisonous reporting in Europe against the Ottoman government.”⁴²¹

During the long consultations, although the Palace ordered to find a better solution with a new affordable contract,⁴²² the response of the Ottoman ambassador in Paris was negative since the director of Havas News Agency explicitly stated that

... mezkûr şirketin telgraf acentaları meyanında hâiz olduğu mevki'in ehemmiyetine mebnî hizmetlerinden istifâde edilmesi muvâfık-ı maslahat görünüyor...

⁴¹⁹ BOA, BEO., 1054/79039, 23 B 1315/18 December 1897.

⁴²⁰ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 1 S 1316 /21 June 1898.

... Fransa hükümeti dâhil olduğu halde devletlerin ekserisi cidden mühim olan şu mutâla'aya mebnî âlem-i matbû'ât ve mehâfil-i siyasiyece hâiz-i nüfûz olan mezkûr şirketin muâvenetine murâca'at etmekde ve cânib-i hükümet-i seniyyeden verilecek tahsisât hükûmât-ı sârenin i'tâ eyledikleri mebâliğ'e nisbetle cüz'î olup Avrupa'da neşriyât-ı kâzibe ve mel'anetkârânesini redd ve tekzîb etmek üzere elde emniyetli bir vasıta bulundurmak için şirket-i mezkûrenin te'mîn-i devam-ı muâveneti muktezî görünmekde olduğundan bahisle bu bâbda iktizâ eden tedâbirin ittihâzı lüzumunu...

⁴²¹ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 1 S 1316/21 June 1898.

... Sırp hükümeti senevî doksan bin ve Bulgaristan emâreti dahi yüz on bin frank i'tâ eylemekde imiş âtiye'z-zikr iki mutâla'a-i esasıyeye mebnî metbû'-ı mufahham ve muazzamımız padişahımız efendimiz hazretlerinin emr u ferman-ı hümayûnları mucibince havâdis-i kâzibenin intişârını men' etmek sâniyen Avrupa matbû'âtının neşriyât-ı kâzibe ve hasmânesini redd ve tekzîb etmek üzere emniyetli bir vasıtayı elde bulundurmak için “ajans Havas”ın muâvenetini kendimize temin etmeliyiz...

⁴²² BOA, BEO., 1095/82097, 28 L 1315/22 March 1898.

a new deal with a discounted fee and better conditions was not possible for them.⁴²³ The Ottoman bureaucrats suggested increasing the subscription fee offer from 12 thousands francs to a figure between 15 to 20 thousand francs. The ambassador also informed Havas that the payments would be made regularly unlike the past practice. However, he told the Sublime Porte that the Havas Director did not accept the offer and kept insisting for 45 thousands francs. Then, the officials in Istanbul said in another letter that the representative of Havas who visited Istanbul seemed to accept incremental rise on the fee which amounted to 12 thousand francs.⁴²⁴

In a separate letter, the Ottoman officials argued that the cost of establishing a national news agency would be less than half of the requested subscription fee of 45 thousand francs. The ottoman bureaucrats tried their best to convince Havas for a better deal. However, the director of Havas in Paris stated in definite terms that it was impossible to accept the offer of the Ottoman government although he acted in a manner to “give the impression that he was in favour of the Ottoman State.”⁴²⁵ All these correspondences once again reveal that the Ottoman government insisted on working with international news agencies despite the severe financial crisis that it faced at the time.

The agencies and their staff were part of these interdependent relations as well. They were absolutely aware of the significance, role and power of the press. Besides, the Ottoman sultans and especially Sultan Abdülhamid II attached major importance to the press. Therefore, news reporting was a great tool for the news agencies and their staff to earn money. Further, the agencies could not survive without subscriptions and free telegraph priveleges over the long-term. Their first priority was to ensure the subscription of the governments wherever they began to operate. To illustrate, in 1875, Reuter-Havas Company⁴²⁶ proposed a contract to the Ottoman

⁴²³ BOA, BEO.,1127/84504, 1 M 1316/22 May 1898.

... *şirket-i mezkûre direktörünün her ne kadar hükümet-i seniyyeye hoş görünmek arzu-yi kavîsinde isede evvelki mukavelenameden daha nâfi' şerâiti hâvî yeni bir kontrato akd ve imza etmesi gayr-i kâbil idüğüne kat'î surette beyan eylediğine dair Paris sefâret-i seniyyesinden meb'ûs tahrîrât...*

⁴²⁴ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 1 S 1316/21 June 1898.

... *zaten bir aralık der-sa'âdete gelmiş olan ajans Havas şark şubesi müdürü Mösyö Vesîye'nin lisanından şirket müvekkilesinin bi-hesab takrîbî zikr olunan on iki bin frank bir mikdar şey zammı mukabilinde mukaveleye girişmeğe müste'idd bulunduğtu ta ol-zaman anlaşılmış idüğünden...*

⁴²⁵ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 1 S 1316/21 June 1898.

⁴²⁶ Reuter and Havas made an agreement to incorporate and they operated under the name of “Reuter-Havas” for a limited time.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking for privileges.⁴²⁷ The document states that the number of customers of the company highly decreased and therefore it could only briefly report about the incidents. The company would be fully capable to continue its operations only if the Sublime Porte granted money by subscription.⁴²⁸

In 1889, Reuter and Correspondenz-Bureau of Austria made a plan to establish a joint news agency in Istanbul, Agence de Constantinople, in order to outmanoeuvre Havas. They elaborated on how to get the support of the Ottoman State in their attempt before the month the bureau became active. The prospective representative Julius Grosser was instructed to ask for free telegraphic privileges and official subscription of the Ottoman government since he was already based in the Ottoman capital as reporter of *Kölnische Zeitung*. The communication of the agencies evidently shows how much they needed this support.⁴²⁹ The interdependency in relations/practices can be explained in the following sub-headings.

5.1. Subscription

The international news agencies, basically Havas and Reuter, began to operate with an office in Istanbul by the late 1860s. Naturally, their first attempt was to look for potential customers such as bankers, tradesmen and newspaper publishers. They sought customers by giving advertisements in the newspapers that they were ready to supply economy and political news mainly from Europe. Besides bankers, tradesmen and newspapers, the Ottoman government was a customer with great potential, even the most significant one to make money because of its vast resources and needs. Therefore, they immediately looked for ways to subscribe the Ottoman government for their services. However, it took almost a decade to make the Ottoman government a generous customer.

⁴²⁷ BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875.

⁴²⁸ BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875.

⁴²⁹ The negotiations regarding the plan between Engländer of Reuter and Hahn of Correspondenz are available at Reuters Archive in the file of "Read Papers". Vienna, 17 March 1889. In: Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 315.

One of the earliest attempts in the pursuit of subscriptions dates back to 1867. Monsieur Brot, the permanent representative of Havas in Istanbul, contacted the Ottoman government in order to discuss the telegraphic communication facilities with the Ottoman provinces. Thereby, he spoke about the advantages of benefiting from telegram news service.⁴³⁰ Yet, no information can be found regarding the position of the government in these documents. The endeavours of the agencies intensified in the late 1870s and the Ottoman government was fully subscribed to the services of both Reuter and Havas in the 1880s. The improvement of telegraphy and news services, need for information, extortion and “hostile reporting” of agencies and growing need to manage the Ottoman image in Europe paved the way for the contracts between the Ottoman government and the international news agencies. Most of the time, it was the agencies that made proposals for cooperation.

Subscription to services of international news agencies began in late the 1870s. The first contract seems the one with Havas in 1878. The Ottoman government permitted to send a telegram in a day for Havas correspondent in *Vilâyet-i Cezair-i Bahr-i Sefid* (Vilayet of the Archipelago), which included the Ottoman Aegean islands, Cyprus and the Dardanelles Strait. The Sublime Porte subscribed to the news services of the French agency.⁴³¹ Then, the Ottoman officials in the province of Archipelago asked to continue with subscription to Havas.⁴³²

From the perspective of the Ottoman officials, one of the first motivations of why the Ottoman State engaged with the international news agencies was to “prevent hostile reporting against the Ottoman Empire” in European newspapers. In 1879, upon the order of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the Ottoman officials met with the representatives of the agencies in Istanbul. Their objective was to understand the reasons of these “hostile reporting” and the ways to manage it. In the report that they prepared the officials argued that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs watched out the foreign newspapers no more like they did in the past. They also told that the rules were not implemented seriously. More importantly, they observed:

⁴³⁰ BOA, HR.TO., 509/29, 10 December 1867.

⁴³¹ BOA, DH. MKT., 1324/40, 20 N 1295/17 September 1878.

⁴³² BOA, DH. MKT., 1139/30, 7 L 1299/22 August 1882.

The first condition of managing and controlling the newspapers like we desire is to attract the support of telegraph agencies. Havas is a leading one, and the other is Reuter. There is no need to mention that they will no more act harmfully but rather will assist the Ottoman government. Their commitment has been assured with a small amount of sacrifice [generosity].⁴³³

That is to say, they realized that “generosity” was the most appropriate step at that stage. It seems that a kind of subsidy or subscription began in those years.

Subsequently, the 1880s was the period that subscription policy was magnified. The Ottoman government was subscribed to news services of both Reuter and Havas henceforth although it had several disputes and problems in the process with the agencies. 1877 was a milestone for Reuter activities in Istanbul simply because Sigismund Engländer arrived in Ottoman capital. He started working as the acting manager.⁴³⁴

Engländer immediately sat to work in order to make deals with the Ottoman government, an area of his expertise. He asked for an agreement to cable news stories from Istanbul to London.⁴³⁵ The British agency was resolved to make an agreement with the Sublime Porte. Just three months after the initiative of Engländer, Herbert Reuter -the son of Paul Julius Baron de Reuter- wrote a letter to the Ottoman government this time. He offered to set up news exchange and cooperation between Istanbul and London.⁴³⁶ It took two years to materialize an agreement. In 1880, the Ottoman Empire and Reuter reached an agreement on the first comprehensive deal. It was not just a subscription, but rather a mutually advantageous and multifaceted cooperation agreement between two parties.⁴³⁷ In 1883, the Ottoman government signed a new agreement with Reuter. The content and cooperation possibilities were really significant for the government.⁴³⁸

⁴³³ Y..PRK.HR., 4/80 2 Ca 1296/24 April 1879.

... gazetelerin matlub vechile idâre olunabilmesinin birinci şartı telgraf acentelerinin celbi kazıyyesi olarak bunların başlucalarından biri Havas ve diğeri Reuter acenteleri bulunduğundan bunlarca şimdilik cüz'î ba'zı fedâkârlık ihtiyârıyla bundan böyle mazarrat şöyle dursun mu'âvenet eylemeleri kazıyyesi taht-ı ta'ahhüde aldırılmış olduğunun...

⁴³⁴ Role and activities of Engländer will be comprehensively told in Chapter VII.

⁴³⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 252/43, 3 November 1877.

⁴³⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 260/52, 26 February 1878.

⁴³⁷ BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 September 1880.

⁴³⁸ BOA, Y.EE., 43/152, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883; and BOA, Y.EE., 43/155, 29 S 1300/9 January 1883.

The German Wolff Agency was also operative in the Ottoman capital in these years. In examining the application of Wolff to work in Istanbul, the Ottoman bureaucrats portrayed it as follows: “Agence Wolff gathers reliable news from everywhere and it publishes stories without adding any comment. It will work here under the support of the German Embassy and it will never send a telegram on political issues.”⁴³⁹ The Sublime Porte gave Wolff permission to work in Ottoman Empire and made an agreement for cooperation. However, it was not comprehensive as the ones with Havas and Reuter.

The subscriptions regularly continued until the end of century. The documents demonstrate that the Ottoman government made agreements with Havas more than with Reuter. However, it is not clear whether it paid more for the French agency. As far as the Ottoman Archives shows, the Ottoman government subscribed to news service of Havas in 1878, 1888, 1893, 1895, 1896 and 1897 and 1911⁴⁴⁰ while to Reuter in 1880, 1883, 1888, 1897 and 1909.⁴⁴¹ These are the confirmed ones in the Ottoman Archives. However, it is most likely that the subscriptions were extended in other years as well.

5.2. Free Telegraph Privilege

Telegraph was one of the most significant tools for international news agencies in carrying out their services. However, there were some problems and setbacks in benefiting from the telegraph services in the Ottoman Empire. Firstly, sending telegrams almost every day had a fix and heavy cost for them. Secondly, the telegraphy was under the control of the Ottoman government, which required the news agencies to get its approval for use of the service. Thirdly, the Ottoman officials had the right to check the content of the telegrams. Therefore, the agencies

⁴³⁹ BOA, İ.DH., 1110/86906, 2 Ra 1306/6 November 1888.

⁴⁴⁰ For Havas subscriptions see: BOA, DH. MKT., 1324/40, 20 N 1295/17 September 1878; BOA, Y..PRK.TKM., 13/8, 29 Z 1305/6 September 1888; BOA, DH.MKT., 1558/4, 19 S 1306/25 October 1888; BOA, BEO., 218/16286, 26 Za 1310/11 June 1893; BOA, BEO., 671/50302, 28 S 1313/20 August 1895; BOA, BEO., 749/56113, 17 N 1313/2 March 1896; BOA, Y..A...RES. 86/38, 16 Za 1314/18 October 1897; BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 1 S 1316/21 June 1898; and BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909.

⁴⁴¹ For Reuter subscriptions see: BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 September 1880; BOA, Y.EE., 43/152 29 S 1300/9 January 1883; BOA, DH.MKT., 1558/4, 19 S 1306/25 October 1888; BOA, MV., 93/29 25 Ra 1315/22 October 1897; and BOA, Y.EE 41/162, 6 R 1327/18 April 1909.

tried to find ways to overcome these problems during the negotiations for contracts with the Ottoman Empire. They mostly offered to establish cooperation in accordance with the interests of the Ottoman government. Publishing denials and corrections and pledges to serve the Ottoman propaganda in their reporting were the main instruments they used to persuade the Ottoman officials.

Providing free telegraph privilege began in the early days of the operations of international news agencies in the Ottoman domains around the 1870s. The Havas correspondent in Vilayet of the Archipelago made a contract to use the telegraph service regularly. He also applied for having a privilege of sending telegrams free of charge in 1878. The local Ottoman officials requested the consent of the Ottoman government.⁴⁴² The privilege was granted, however the Ottoman government ordered to cancel it two years later.⁴⁴³

Free telegraph privilege for Havas and Reuter continued on through the last quarter of nineteenth century to the first decade of the twentieth century. The numbers of words free of charge to send in telegrams gradually increased. The Ottoman government granted Havas and Reuter the right to send twenty words daily without payment in 1888.⁴⁴⁴ Then the Directorate of Foreign Press advised to increase the number of words for free of charge. It suggested that it might be three hundreds for a day in 1893.⁴⁴⁵ The reason behind it could be that the cooperation between the Ottoman government and Reuter intensified and the issues that mattered for the Ottoman government in the European press increased. Therefore, the necessity for denials and corrections as well as the propaganda activities grew. For the Ottoman officials, it was in the interest of the Ottoman government to provide more free of charge words for the news agencies.⁴⁴⁶

In the years 1903 and 1909, the Ottoman government made deals providing free telegraph rights for occasional purposes. Firstly, the government sent an order to supply this privilege when Reuter reporters sent dispatches against Bulgarians and in

⁴⁴² BOA, DH. MKT., 1324/40, 20 N 1295/17 September 1878.

⁴⁴³ BOA, DH. KMT., 1331/78, 23 C 1297/2 June 1880.

⁴⁴⁴ BOA, Y.A.RES., 44/8, 6 Za 1305/15 July 1888.

⁴⁴⁵ BOA, DH. MKT., 164/93, 29 R 1311/9 November 1893.

⁴⁴⁶ BOA, DH. MKT., 164/93, 29 R 1311/9 November 1893.

favour of the Ottoman State.⁴⁴⁷ Three weeks later, the government resent a similar instruction which stated that the reporters of Reuter had the right to send telegraphic dispatches in favour of the Ottoman State.⁴⁴⁸ In 1909, The Ottoman government approved to pay half of the telegraph costs of the British agency since Reuter released the statements of the Ottoman State in Europe.⁴⁴⁹

Although archival material on the periods of free telegraph is not exhaustive, it is plausible to think that it was provided for several years. A document dated 1908 seems to substantiate this assumption. The Sublime Porte extended the right for sending free telegraph for a month for the international news agencies in Istanbul the Ottoman documents describe them as the foreign telegraphic agencies- when they would send telegraphic dispatches to Europe. The document underlines that extension decision was taken in accordance with the press policy of Ottoman government.⁴⁵⁰ After a month, the directors of new agencies applied for a new extension. The Ottoman government immediately approved it.⁴⁵¹ Moreover, all the cooperation contracts between the Ottoman government and the international news agencies in different years had an article which granted free telegraph service.

Lastly, free telegraph privilege was not limited to Reuter and Havas. Other news agencies operating between Istanbul and European capitals benefited from this opportunity as well. The National Telegraph Agency based in Paris opened a branch office in Izmir, a really important city for trade with its harbour in Western Anatolia, in the last decade of nineteenth century. It applied for making use of free telegraph opportunity like other agencies. It requested to send eighty words in a day for free. The Ottoman Central Telegraph Administration asked the view of the Directorate of Foreign Press about this demand.⁴⁵² Upon the positive response of the directorate the agency began to benefit from it. Five years later, the agency demanded to increase the number of words to be dispatched for free. However, the administration replied

⁴⁴⁷ BOA, İ.PT., 10 N 1321/30 November 1903.

⁴⁴⁸ BOA, BEO., 2236/167653, 27 N 1321/17 December 1903.

⁴⁴⁹ BOA, MV., 134/59, 16 ZA 1327/31 October 1909.

⁴⁵⁰ BOA, DH. MKT., 21 L 1326/16 November 1908.

⁴⁵¹ BOA, DH.MKT., 9 Z 1326/2 January 1909.

⁴⁵² BOA, BEO., 745/55860, 4 N1313/18 February 1896.

negatively this time upon the instruction of the Directorate of Foreign Press.⁴⁵³ The Sublime Porte also extended the exemption of a hundred words in a day for the Agence de Constantinople and other agencies in 1908. The Ottoman document underlined that these agencies were used for rejections and corrections of news published in European dailies against the Ottoman State. Extension decision was for this function.⁴⁵⁴

5.3. Subsidies and Salaries

Another way of allocating money for the international news agencies was the direct subsidies. The Ottoman government paid for the correspondents and reporters of the agencies for their services and benefits to the state. In reality, making payments to the journalists was not a new practice for the Ottoman State. The Ottoman governments distributed significant sums of money to the journalists from the early years on since the publication of newspapers in the 1830s. This policy was put into practice for the reporters and correspondents of international news agencies as well.

The subsidies of the Ottoman government to the agencies began from very early years after they set up their offices in Istanbul. As regards to examples, a dispute between Reuter and Havas reveals that the Ottoman government paid subsidies to the French agency in early 1870s. Reuter learnt that Havas received subsidies both from “the French and Turkish governments” in 1871. The British agency considered it as a “breaches of agreement.”⁴⁵⁵ Therefore Reuter decided to send a letter to Havas regarding the conflict.⁴⁵⁶ The reply of Havas confirmed the subsidy from the Ottoman government while rejecting the French subsidies:

A letter from Mr Auguste Havas dated Paris 23 February 1871 was read denying emphatically the receipt of a subsidy from the former Imperial French

⁴⁵³ BOA, BEO., 1625/121818, 11 Za 1318/2 March 1901.

⁴⁵⁴ BOA, BEO., 3395/254579, 17 Ş 1326/14 September 1908.

⁴⁵⁵ The Minute Book of Reuter does not refer to any specific agreement. It should be one of the cooperation deals between Reuter and Havas. Meanwhile, The Minute Book of Reuter consisting of several volumes is very useful given that it included the all decisions of The Board Meetings and the issues which were discussed there.

⁴⁵⁶ The Board Meeting of Reuter, 8 February 1871. R.A. The Minute Book, LN 288, 1/883502, p. 237.

Government, explaining the payment made by the Porte through the Imperial Ottoman Bank in Paris and disclaiming intention to violate his agreement with the Company.⁴⁵⁷

The Ottoman documents demonstrate the subsidies in the late 1880s and onwards. In 1888, the Ottoman government paid a special grant to Havas in order to ensure support of the policy of Ottoman State in Europe. The document does not include specific amount.⁴⁵⁸ Ensuring support of the policy of the Ottoman State meant that the agency would work in the interest of the Ottoman government with its telegrams, bulletins and other publication facilities. The documents clearly demonstrate that there was no absolute solution to prevent the “hostile reports” of the European newspapers against the Ottoman government. It was a bitter reality that the Ottoman State had to deal with. In fact, it was more of a way of life for the newspapers and news agencies to exploit money. They published “hostile reports” in order to extract more money to stop their detrimental publishing.⁴⁵⁹

In 1895, the Ottoman government looked for ways to “obtain the full support of Reuter and Havas in order to combat the news stories of European dailies against the Ottoman State”. The government discussed the issue in a detailed way within the different Ottoman institutions such as The Administration for Foreign Press, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ottoman embassies in Europe. Due to the economic hardships of the government the focus of the debates revolved around how to spend money.⁴⁶⁰ This policy continued on until the end of Sultan Abdülhamid II’s reign. For example, in 1907, the Sublime Porte allocated an amount of money to the news agencies and important newspapers of Paris in order to prevent the negative reporting against the Ottoman State.⁴⁶¹

The subsidies and salaries were given not only to Reuter and Havas but also to the other influential news agencies operating in Europe. Agence Fournier of

⁴⁵⁷ The Board Meeting of Reuter, 8 March 1871. R.A. The Minute Book, LN 288, 1/883502, pp. 271-272.

⁴⁵⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.TKM., 13/8, 29 Z 1305/6 September 1888.
...saltanat-ı seniyyenin politikasının muhâfazası hakkında ittihâz itmiş olduğumuz mesleği terk itmek için...

⁴⁵⁹ Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde*, p. 133.

⁴⁶⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 339/35, 22 Ca 1313/10 November 1895.

⁴⁶¹ BOA, Y.PRK.ESA., 50/4, 16 M 1325/1 March 1907.

France was one of them. The Ottoman government decided to put the director of Agence Fournier in Istanbul on salary on 12 March 1899.⁴⁶² However, Mossier Albert had to remind the Ottoman officials that his salary was due in a request that he made a month later. The Ottoman government then ordered the ministry to pay his salary, 50 Turkish *liras*, out of the budget.⁴⁶³ Mossier Albert continued to receive his salary in the following year as well.⁴⁶⁴ In addition, the director of Agence de Constantinople, Anna Grosser, who took over this responsibility after his husband Julius Grosser passed away, received salary from the Ottoman government. The government decided to pay 50 *liras* monthly following an assessment of the service of her agencies to the Ottoman State.⁴⁶⁵ The director of Agence National, Mossier Carvola, was also receiving 20 *liras* monthly as of 1900.⁴⁶⁶

Havas and Reuter jointly⁴⁶⁷ tried to get funds from the government until the last days of the Ottoman State. They made a proposal to defend the interests of Turkey and publish reports in favour of the Turkish people. The Ottoman officials replied that there was no possibility to provide funds for Havas and Reuter in the last days of 1922. That was a time that the new Turkish parliament in Ankara, the Turkish Grand National Assembly, abolished the Ottoman Sultanate on 1 November 1922 and the last Ottoman Sultan Mehmed VI Vahideddin departed the country on 17 November 1922.⁴⁶⁸

5.4. Granting Orders and Decorations

For the Ottoman government, granting medals and decorations to the representatives, directors, correspondents or reporters of international news agencies

⁴⁶² BOA, BEO., 1279/95854, 29 L 1316/12 March 1899.

⁴⁶³ BOA, BEO., 1290/96711, 23 Za 1316/11 April 1899.

⁴⁶⁴ BOA, İ.HR., 365/39, 26 N 1317/12 January 1900.

⁴⁶⁵ BOA, BEO., 750/56194, 20 N 1313/5 March 1896.

⁴⁶⁶ BOA, BEO., 1564/117231, 20 C 1318/15 October 1900.

⁴⁶⁷ They established a new agency together in 1920 after the invasion of Constantinople by the Allied forces. Agences Le Turquie-Havas-Reuter (Turkey-Havas-Reuter Agency) worked for the interest of Allied states, particularly Britain and France.

⁴⁶⁸ BOA, HR.İM., 234/26, 31 December 1922.

were other instruments in maintaining good relations with them. In essence, the custom of Ottoman orders and decorations dates back to the last decade of eighteenth century. Imperial symbolism became an established practice especially during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, which was also reflected in his policies. Eldem points out that Sultan Abdülhamid II achieved to promote his own image as a sovereign through the arbitrary and politically manipulative use of medals and decorations in order to consolidate his version of Ottomanism through a consciously paternalistic approach.⁴⁶⁹ He granted several medals and decorations to different parts of society including the European journalists and representatives of international news agencies. From his perspective, it was a way of establishing friendly relationship with them. The objective was self-evident in the sense that he sought to “prevent hostile reporting against him and the Ottoman government” thanks to these relations.

Dating back to the 1840s, the practice of granting medals and decorations to foreign journalists was not a new policy of the Ottoman sultans. For instance, in 1846, Sultan Abdülmecid rewarded two famous French journalists with orders. Four Parisian journalists received orders in 1851 because of their reports in favour of the Ottoman State. Also, Sultan Abdulaziz granted an order to an American journalist in 1868.⁴⁷⁰ Sultan Abdülhamid II expanded the scale and scope of this practice for the international news agencies and their staff also benefited from it. Almost all representatives and correspondents of Havas, Reuter, Wolff and staff of other European agencies got decorations and orders during Sultan Abdülhamid II’s reign. They were all *Mecidi Nişanıs* (Mecidi Order)⁴⁷¹.

As stated in the Ottoman documents, the reason to grant orders to the representatives was almost the same. They were rewarded since “they worked for the interests or benefit of the Ottoman State and they were in favour in the Ottoman sultanate.”⁴⁷² Thus, it was considered also as a tool for ensuring that reporting and

⁴⁶⁹ Edhem Eldem, *Pride and Privilege a History of Ottoman Orders, Medals and Decorations* (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, c2004).

⁴⁷⁰ (BOA, İ.H.R., 33/1487, 14 M 1262/12 January 1846; BOA, C.H.R., 162/8068, 29 Ra 1267/1 February 1851; and BOA, İ.H.R., 232/13651, 19 S 1285/11 June 1868.

⁴⁷¹ The reason why it was called “Mecidi” was that it was created during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecid. In 1851, as part of new regulations, the Mecidi Order was created which met all the requirements of a Western system.

⁴⁷² BOA, DH.MTV., 55/16, 1 Za 1331/2 October 1913.

comments were in the favour of the Ottoman Empire. In 1882, the Ottoman officials suggested to grant orders and decorations in order to encourage the reporters and other journalists to write in the interest of the Ottoman State. They emphasized that it would help having good relations with them, consequently leading to the publication of positive articles.⁴⁷³

The kind of benefits that these agencies provided for the Ottoman State was not explained comprehensively in the Ottoman documents. It is more likely that they reported and wrote commentaries in favour of the Ottoman government. In this context, Jorj Vesb, the general director for East offices of Havas, got Mecidî Order in 1895.⁴⁷⁴ A year later, Mossier Sandos, Istanbul Representative of Havas, was rewarded with the Mecidî Order of the third degree.⁴⁷⁵

Granting orders to journalists became a regular practice. Apart from Havas and Reuter, other European agencies also benefited from the rewards as well. The deputy representative of Agence Fournier in Istanbul, Mossier Moris Albert received the Mecidî Order of the fourth degree.⁴⁷⁶ Paris based the Agence Nationale was another example. The Athens director of the agency, Mossier Janpart was rewarded with the Mecidî Order of the forth degree in 1899 while its director Mossier Edward Dins received the Mecidî Order of the third degree with other gifts in 1900.⁴⁷⁷ The reason remained the same. From the Ottoman officials' point of view, these people served the interests of the Ottoman State in one way or the other.

The practice also continued in the same context in post-Sultan Abdülhamid II period. The former Istanbul representative of Reuter Mossier William Werndel received the Ottoman order in 1913.⁴⁷⁸ Mr Ferguson, correspondent of Reuter in

Dersa 'âdet muhâbiri Mösyo Vrendal'in hayr-hevâhân-ı saltanat-ı seniyyeden olmasına mebnî üçüncü rütbeden Osmâni nişân-ı zîşâniyla taltifi menût-ı müsâ'ade-i aliyye-i fehimâneleridir" and "Mösyo Ferguson'un hayır-hâhân-ı Devlet-i Osmâniyeden olmasına mebnî...

⁴⁷³ BOA, Y.PRK.ESA., 3/14, 20 R 1299/11 March 1882.

⁴⁷⁴ BOA, İ.TAL., 86/54, 23 Ca 1313/11 November 1895.

⁴⁷⁵ BOA, İ.TAL., 94/40, 26 L 1313/10 April 1896.

⁴⁷⁶ BOA, İ.TAL., 171/57, 2 Z 1316/ 13 April 1899.

⁴⁷⁷ BOA, İ.TAL., 184/13, 1 R 1317/9 August 1899 and BOA, İ.TAL., 220 /75, 24 R 1318/21 August 1900.

⁴⁷⁸ BOA, DH.MTV., 55/16, 1 Za 1331/2 October 1913. Sultan Abdülhamid II was dethroned on 27 April 1909.

Istanbul after Mr Werndel, was also given the *Osmânî Nişân-ı Âlî* (The Grand Ottoman Order) of the third degree in 1913. The reason of this grant was that “Mr Ferguson was in favour of the Ottoman State.”⁴⁷⁹ The suggestion to grant him an order came after his appointment to Egypt as the director of Reuter. The Sultan approved the proposal and the order was sent through by post.⁴⁸⁰

The interesting point is that Werndel⁴⁸¹ worked in Istanbul several years during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, but the order was granted after he was dethroned. Like Mr Werndel case, Mr Ferguson received the order after the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The Ottoman archival document does not give any clue as to its reasons. A reasonable answer appears that Sultan Abdülhamid II was probably not content with the reporting and role of those representatives or the policy of British Reuter agency. The latter seems more likely since Sultan Abdülhamid II granted no order and decoration to the staff of British Reuter during his term.

The director of the German Wolff Agency, Mr Mantler, was also rewarded with the Mecidi Order. While Wolff was in operation in Istanbul since the 1880s, the first time that the staff of the German agency was granted with orders occurred in 1917.⁴⁸² There is a reasonable ground to claim that timing corresponded with the nature of Ottoman-German relations in those years as two states entered into an alliance shortly after the outbreak of World War I.

The Ottoman government also granted decorations to the staff of international news agencies working in their headquarters. In 1886, the Ottoman Embassy in Paris suggested to grant decoration to Mossier Markadiye, the official of Havas in Paris. The Ambassador told that Mossier Markadiye acted very politely and was really helpful to Ottoman officials during his term of six years. Sultan Abdülhamid II approved to grant Mecidi Order from the third degree.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁹ BOA, İ.TAL., 489/5, 1 S 1332/30 December 1913.

Mösyö Ferguson'un hayır-hâhân-ı Devlet-i Osmâniyeden olmasına mebni...

⁴⁸⁰ BOA, İ.TAL., 489/5, 1 S 1332/30 December 1913; BOA, DH.KMS., 10/12, 12 Safer 1332/10 January 1914 and BOA, A.}MTZ.(05) 32-C, 397/5, 1 R 1332/27 February 1914.

⁴⁸¹ William. H. G. Werndel was in Constantinople at the latest 1883. Werndel was the chief correspondent of Reuter in the Ottoman State for twenty five years. He was known as the best British foreign correspondents and a Balkan expert speaking a lot of languages.

⁴⁸² BOA, İ.DUİT., 70/74, 27 M 1336/12 November 1917.

⁴⁸³ BOA, İ.HR., 302/19141, 29 Ş 1303/2 June 1886.

5.5. Special Treatment and Favouritism

The international news agencies sometimes asked for easiness, special treatment and favouritism from the Ottoman State. Their demands changed over time. At the beginning, they were really dependent on the help of the Ottoman government when they began to operate in Istanbul in 1870s. They basically needed the permission of Ottoman government to send telegrams. In addition, sending telgrams was really expensive for them. Furthermore, the news agencies desperately needed information regarding government's policies, including foreign policy issues. It is understood that the Ottoman officials were meticulous in engaging conversation with the staff of new agencies.

Furthermore, it seems that the need of international news agencies for the assistance of the Ottoman government decreased gradually over time. They had already established their offices and work in Istanbul. They were also using Varna to cable their news stories without censorship. Therefore, their demands and policies changed as well. By the 1890s, the Ottoman government needed the agencies more than they needed the Ottoman State. The agencies gained a strong foothold and influence in the Ottoman State and society both politically and economically. Therefore, it can be argued that the roles changed dramatically as the Ottoman government became ever dependent on the international news agencies, mainly Reuter and Havas.

In terms of tangible examples, according to the account in an Ottoman document, it seems that Reuter-Havas Company applied to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a proposal, asking for privileges in several matters in 1875. The Ottoman government debated the issue and gave a positive response. Even though the Ottoman archival includes no details about the proposal made by the Reuter-Havas Company, the response of the Ottoman government gives some idea on the details of cooperation and privileges extended. The Ottoman government granted the privilege to promptly send all telegrams of the company free of charge through telegraph centers in Istanbul and the region. In return, the company accepted to send the statements and significant notes of the Ottoman government to Europe, yet there would be a limit for the words. The Ottoman officials believed they did a great job and the deal was largely in the interests of the Ottoman State. In their eyes,

the Ottoman government would benefit from this agreement more than the Reuter-Havas company since the news agency would serve to discredit “all the baseless reports” against the Ottoman State.⁴⁸⁴

The Sublime Porte would pay 2.600 Turkish *liras* annually for the deal. The Ottoman officials believed it was more of an investment for the Government rather than an expense. They also considered that the government could have the chance to reach all telegrams of the company since the agency would get them through Ottoman telegraph centres. They were a good source of information for the Ottoman government and officials since Reuter-Havas Company had several correspondents in Europe and was good at reporting on the significant issues in European capitals.

The French Agency Havas was trying really hard to get assistance and concessions to have access to detailed information on political and diplomatic issues as well as privileges in other areas of interest. The General Director of Havas Mossier Levy, visited Mehmed Sadik Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador to Paris, on several occasions. In 1876, the Ambassador wrote a letter to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ask for extension of assistance to the Havas representative Mossier Chatou. In the letter, the Ambassador communicated that Havas Telegraph Agency served the objectives and interests of the Ottoman State considerably as he had repeatedly stated before. According to the letter, the Ottoman government recently granted an order to Mossier Levy as a favor, yet he had complained, “the Ottoman government did not provide any assistance, support, favouritism, protection and permission to their correspondent, Mossier Chatou, in Istanbul.”⁴⁸⁵

The letter further expressed the Director of Havas reiterated that “they were ready to serve for the Ottoman State, but the Ottoman officials did not ask for their contribution.” The Ambassador Mehmed Sadik Pasha made the point that every state permitted Havas agency to work in their territory comfortably and provided support to its correspondents. He then suggested, “supplying information and intelligence which were not detrimental to interest of the Ottoman State.” The Ambassador lastly said that he would warn the Havas agency if their correspondent had an improper conduct in Istanbul.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875.

⁴⁸⁵ BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

⁴⁸⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

Besides Havas, Reuter sent a special correspondent to Istanbul at the end of 1876. The General Director and owner of the British agency, Mr Julius Reuter sent a letter to Ottoman Ambassador in London, Constantine Musurus Pasha⁴⁸⁷ to request help for his newly appointed Istanbul correspondent, Matheus de Civiny. He first asked for information on the official procedures in the arrival of Mr. Civiny to Istanbul. Julius Reuter also explained his expectations for possible support during Mr. Civiny's work in the Ottoman Capital.⁴⁸⁸ It is testament of their competition which will be comprehensively examined in Chapter VII.

Furthermore, other European news agencies, namely Agence Nationale in Paris as one of them, also enjoyed the privileges and favoritism. The French agency benefited from the favoritism of the Ottoman government both economically and logistically for years. The Ottoman officials supplied it with exclusive news. There were rumours that Agence Nationale went bankrupt by the end of 1906, but the Ottoman Embassy in Paris discovered that "they were groundless stories". As a result, the Ottoman government ordered to continue on providing favouritism for the French agency.⁴⁸⁹

Another example in this respect was a Greek journalist, Nicola Naumof, based in Selanico who wanted to establish a news agency operating in the Balkans. He applied to the Ottoman government to request support and favour declaring, "his agency would serve the interests of the Sublime Porte and the Ottoman Sultanate." The government replied positively. The content of the support was mostly economic.⁴⁹⁰ It seems that Nicola Naumof's motivation was business rather than journalism. During that period, it was a regular practice to set up a press organization such as a newspaper or news agency to earn money through the subsidies of government.

⁴⁸⁷ Musurus Pasha who had Greek origin served as the Ottoman Ambassador to London between 1850 and 1885.

⁴⁸⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 232/52, 18 November 1876. The letter is in French.

⁴⁸⁹ BOA, BEO., 2983/223713, 7 Z 1324/22 January 1907.

⁴⁹⁰ BOA, DH.MKT., 2856/68, 7 C /1327/26 June 1909.

5.6. Tool for Denials and Corrections

Undoubtedly, the most significant role and support of the international news agencies for the Ottoman State was in the form of publishing denials and making corrections on the reports and commentaries mostly in European newspapers. Since there was no alternative to substitute, the Ottoman government had to work with them in any case. Actually, the agencies were mainly the source of problem for the Ottoman government in this new modern fight. However, they were also the only mechanism to cooperate and combat with “hostile reporting” against the interests of the Ottoman State since they were mostly supplying the news for European newspapers.

Correspondences on rebuttals and corrections stand out as the most mentioned two issues in the Ottoman archives. The archival documents are full of these examples. As the international news agencies as a challenge and problem for the Ottoman State have been discussed in Chapter III, the documents which are pertinent in showing the motivation and opinions of the Ottoman government will be debated here comprehensively. The purpose is to indicate how the Ottoman government sought to use and benefit from the international news agencies in this context.

The mechanism for denials and corrections had worked through the Ottoman embassies in Europe, mostly in Paris and London. At the beginning, there were no close cooperation and strong relationship between the Ottoman government and the international news agencies in Istanbul by the 1870s. Following his accession to throne in 1876, Sultan Abdülhamid II directly ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deal with the reports and commentaries that made him unhappy or angry. The Ministry then instructed the embassies to work on the issue. The embassies responded that they carried out the instructions and provided information about the possible reactions and results.

However, by and large it was a futile effort and waste of time. The system was short of working properly in order to meet the expectations and objectives of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The international news agencies were gaining more ground in Istanbul with their experienced staff such as Sigismund Engländer of Reuter. Their role and significance in the world press grew large as well. The Ottoman

ambassadors had no right or opportunity to apply pressure on the news agencies. Direct contacts and cooperation appeared as a way forward to overcome this challenge and the Ottoman officials initiated a process to work together with the directors and correspondents of agencies in Istanbul from the 1880s onwards. It was a more useful and effective mechanism for the Ottoman government.

For the official statements, disclaims and revisions, the French Havas was the preferred agency by the Ottoman government in general. Naturally, Reuter was selected when “the hostile report” was published in a British newspaper. In terms of samples, a document dated 1882 reveals that a mechanism had already been set up to refute the “false news” stories about the Ottoman State in foreign press. It states that a denial and correction statement for them were seriously prepared and sent to the news agencies.⁴⁹¹

There were several illustrations increasingly thereafter. At first, reports mostly political or “attacking the Ottoman sultanate” were responded through the news agencies. For example, the rumours alleging that Kadri *Efendi* in Egypt sent crucial messages to *Mabeyn-i Hümayun* (Imperial Office) was denied through Reuter.⁴⁹² The number of disavows and corrections increased remarkably over time. The Ottoman government officially preferred to work with Havas in the 1890s. Most likely, upon the instruction of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed the Administration of Foreign Press to work with Havas in issuing denials and corrections and give the agency information to explain the policies the Ottoman State on certain issues.⁴⁹³ The document contains no information about the backdrop of this instruction. However, as the other Ottoman archival documents conclusively show the direct involvement of the Ottoman Sultan on these issues, it may fairly be assumed that the instruction came from Sultan Abdülhamid II.

Working with Havas did not suffice to cope with the “attacks of European newspapers.” Therefore, just seven months after the decision to use Havas, the Ottoman government issued a decree to provide financial support for Reuter in order to assure that “British agency would prevent some of the hostile reporting against the

⁴⁹¹ BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 1/79, 17 S 1300/28 December 1882.

⁴⁹² BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/117, 9 R 1300/17 February 1883.

⁴⁹³ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 286/68, 9 C 1311/18 December 1893.

Ottoman State.”⁴⁹⁴ The British newspapers were full of harsh criticisms against the Ottoman State especially in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The Ottoman Embassy in London repeatedly suggested supplying Reuter information and background on the position of the Ottoman government. Once again in 1894, the embassy wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to deal with the reports against the Ottoman soldiers. The regular reporting was to portray the Ottoman soldiers as brutal and rapists in the Balkans. The embassy thus recommended giving Reuter data and information on the perspective of the Ottoman government in view of the agency’s role in the British press.⁴⁹⁵

During this period, the international news agencies also made various offers to work with the Ottoman government. In 1895, the representative of Reuter in Istanbul, Mr. Werndel, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to offer a deal. The offer underlined the significant status of Reuter to serve for the interests of the Ottoman Empire in dealing with press issues in Europe. Mr. Werndel stated that the British agency was ready to work in this mission. Naturally, the proposal mostly included the ways to cope with “attacks and hostile reporting” and how to issue responses to false reports. Obviously, it was not a free of charge service. Reuter requested 800 British *liras* annually and the right for its Istanbul office to send telegrams with no payment. The Ottoman government responded positively due to the fact that it failed to overcome the “hostile news stories” and it necessitated such a service.⁴⁹⁶

1894 and 1895 were the years of trouble and hard times for the Ottoman State in terms of responding and overcoming “European press attacks”, especially in French and British dailies. Endeavours of the Ottoman officials for an efficient response to this question were intensified during that period. Due to an urgent need, a significant proposal was submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid II by end of 1895. The

⁴⁹⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.BSK., 39/61, 3 S 1312/6 August 1894.

⁴⁹⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 314/134, 10 C 1312/9 December 1894.

⁴⁹⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 317/117, 29 B 1312/26 January 1895.

...Hükümet-i seniyyenin bir müddetden berü işâ'a olunan havâdis-i bedhevâhâneyi tashîhe ve menâfi'-i devlet-i aliyyeye îrâs-ı mazarrat idemeyecek bir hâle vaz'a sâlih bir vâsita-i müessire isti'mâl eylemesi müceb-i fâide olarak Ajans Reuter'in bu hizmet-i ifâya muktedir olduğundan ve şirket-i mezkûrenin hükümet-i seniyye ile bir mukârenet-i sahiha husûli arzusunda bulunduğundan...” and “...şirketin Dersa'âdet vekili Mösyö “Werndel'den alınan tezkere tercümesinin takdîmini ve vekil-i mûmâ ileyhın şirketinin menâfi'-i saltanat-ı seniyyeye hüsn-i hizmete sarf-ı makderet ideceğini dahi bi'z-zât ifâde eylemiş bulunduğı...”

proposal was debated and undersigned by the most important and high level officials of the Ottoman State, including Grand Vizier Halil Rıfat Pasha, The Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Pasha and *Şûrâ-yi Devlet Reisi* (Head of Council of State) Said Pasha. The proposal put forward that the endeavours to refute and issuing corrections in the European press by the Ottoman embassies did not work since they were seen as the official statements of the Ottoman state. It suggested that the best way to deal with this problem was to “win over the international news agencies such as Reuter and Havas and the credible correspondents who could work for the interests of the Ottoman State.”⁴⁹⁷ It recommended: “Once it is achieved, it can be possible to publish in the European newspapers whatever necessary [for the benefit of the Ottoman State] through these agencies.”⁴⁹⁸

This deal apparently required a considerable budget. The proposal estimated that nearly five thousands Turkish *liras* would be needed in this vein which would be distributed among the agencies and correspondents at the levels of their services and loyalty to the interests of the Ottoman State. The three pashas stated that the officials had already contacted both Reuter and Havas and “the agencies were ready for the deal”.⁴⁹⁹ Sultan Abdülhamid II approved the offer. The Ottoman pashas had already made preparation for the budget even before the submission of their proposal. They negotiated with the agencies on the fee and other elements of the deal.⁵⁰⁰

However, the deals with Havas and Reuter were not enough for the Ottoman government. Remarkably, at the same month of 1895, the government tried to benefit from the other agencies one of which was Agence de Constantinople. The government pondered on the impact of this agency on European newspapers. They made a deal to convey the messages and statements of the Ottoman State to

⁴⁹⁷ BOA, İ.HR., 349/25, 23 Ca 1313/11 December 1895.

... der-sa ‘âdetce hayır-hâh ve mu‘temed muhbirler ve ajan Reuter ve ajan Havas gibi telgraf şirketleri elde edilerek onlar ma‘rifetiyle ve istenildiği suretle Avrupa gazetelerine lazım olan mevâddın yazdırılması iktizâ edib buda biraz masraf ihtiyârına ve iktizâ edenlerin hizmet ve sadâkatleri derecesinde taltiflerine tavakkuf edeceği ve bu yolda senevî tahminen beş bin lira miktarı akçe sarf olunur ise der-sa ‘âdetce işe biraz muhbirler ve ajan Havas ve ajan Reuter telgraf şirketleri elde edilmek mümkün olub hatta ajan Reuter şirketinin vekiliyle söyleşilerek kararı dahi verildiği gibi ajan Havas şirketiyile der-dest-i tezkere olub vakt u hal icâbınca bu suretin icrası münasib olduğu tezekkür olunmuş..

⁴⁹⁸ BOA, İ.HR., 349/25, 23 Ca 1313/11 December 1895.

⁴⁹⁹ BOA, İ.HR., 349/25, 23 Ca 1313/11 December 1895.

⁵⁰⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 339/35, 22 Ca 1313/10 November 1895.

Europe.⁵⁰¹ In addition to this, the Ottoman Embassy in Madrid subscribed to the services of Spanish Fabra Agency upon the instruction of the Ottoman government. The goal was to publish the official statements such as denials and corrections of the government through Fabra Agency in Spain. The subscription fee was 50 francs monthly.⁵⁰²

Naturally, the need for denials and corrections remained strong for Ottoman government in the following decade. Therefore, the Ottoman State maintained the policy to make cooperation deals with the international news agencies. The government provided free telegraph opportunity for the agencies that communicated the messages of the Ottoman State. The Ottoman government extended telegram privileges for Reuter and Agence de Constantinople in the first decade of the twentieth century in order to “deny the false news” in some of the European newspapers.⁵⁰³

5.7. Favourable News and Propaganda

Denials and corrections were not enough for the Ottoman State. In the eyes of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman officials, the Empire was under the attack of European powers in terms of press and propaganda. Actually, as Deringil points out, propaganda and counter-propaganda were essential concepts which gained ground and significance especially during the world wars. However, Sultan Abdülhamid II had greatly used this instrument for various purposes.⁵⁰⁴ The Sultan and officials believed that they had to make every effort to respond to the attacks in the same way. Besides the European dailies, the international news agencies were absolutely a great tool for the Ottoman government. The purpose of this section is not just to tell how the Ottoman State used the agencies for favourable news and propaganda, but rather

⁵⁰¹ BOA, BEO., 708/53056, 7 C1313/25 November 1895.

⁵⁰² BOA, BEO., 721/54043, 9 B 1313/26 December 1895.

⁵⁰³ BOA, BEO., 3395/254579, 17 Ş 1326/14 September 1908; and BOA, MV., 134/59, 16 Za 1327/29 November 1909.

⁵⁰⁴ Selim Deringil, “The Struggle Against Shi’ism in Hamidian Iraq”, *Die Welt des Islams* 30 (1990), p. 45.

to give examples of how agencies could serve as an apparatus and to present the mindset of the Ottoman officials in this respect.

Propaganda was a sophisticated issue for the Ottoman State. Most of the studies concur on the point that the Palace and the Ottoman officials felt the need for propaganda for internal purposes such as consolidating the loyalty of the Ottoman people and mobilizing them for the Balkan Wars and World War I.⁵⁰⁵ In this part, favourable news and propaganda will be addressed to illustrate the endeavours of the government to foster a positive image in Europe. One of the significant tasks of the Ottoman ambassadors especially in the European capitals such as London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna was to publish articles and news stories in the favour of the Ottoman Empire. With the increasing role of the news agencies and their dominance over the European press affairs, the ambassadors also began to enjoy good relations with the correspondents and directors of the news agencies.

An additional method to use the news agencies for favourable news and propaganda was to inform and brief them in Istanbul. The Ottoman officials gave exclusive news stories to them mainly for two reasons. While ensuring the publication of the desired information, they simultaneously aimed at fostering friendly relations with the agencies. However, the Ottoman government was not successful well enough in this respect.

As regards to examples, Sultan Abdülhamid II was aware of the significance of briefing the international news agencies. In 1886, he instructed the officials to brief Havas and the other news agencies every day as the Greeks did. It seems that the Ottoman sultan was cognizant that the Greek government used the international news agencies for propaganda purposes. In this respect, the Greeks simply provided the agencies with their own version of political developments to convince the European public for the Greek propaganda. The Sultan ordered straight away to follow the same policy to defend the interests of the Ottoman State. Sultan Abdülhamid II instructed the Ottoman Press Directorate to assign someone to give information to the foreign press on the recent developments, especially on wars and political issues. Consequently, the

⁵⁰⁵ Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913): Awakening from the Ottoman Dream", *War in History* 12, no. 2 (2005), pp 156-177; Erol Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda & Turkish Identity: Literature in Turkey During World War I* (New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007); and Deringil, "The Struggle Against Shi'ism", pp. 45-62.

Ottoman officials began to send a briefing paper to the news agencies every evening that were to be cabled to Europe.⁵⁰⁶

More importantly, the Ottoman government put propaganda campaigns into practice whenever needed. In face of intensified pressure and hostile news against the empire, the Ottoman government searched for ways to express itself in the European public opinion and to influence it. In this vein, in 1903, the Ottoman government organized a trip for the Reuter correspondents, Mossier Govink and Lord Brook,⁵⁰⁷ to Thessaloniki, Monastir and around in order to “respond to the hostile reporting against the Ottoman State” regarding conflicts between Muslim and non-Muslims.

Actually, Reuter was eager to cover the events in the region. Reuter correspondent Mossier Govink visited the Ottoman Embassy in London to ask for the assistance and permission of the Ottoman officials. He underlined that he had positive attitudes toward to the Ottoman Empire given that he had established a great friendship with the Ottoman military officials during the war with Greece.⁵⁰⁸ The Ottoman government thought that it was a good opportunity to tell its perspective in a time of harsh critics in the British press and public against the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the government permitted Reuter staff to observe the region but it reminded that the villages and rural areas were not secure because of the Bulgarian bandit gangs.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁶ BOA, İ.MTZ.(01), 18/669, 19 Ş 1303/23 May 1886.

Ahvâl-i hâzireden dolayı kendülerini inzâr-ı ecânibde haklı göstermek üzere Yunanluların Havas vesâir telgraf kumpanyaları vâsıtasıyla Avrupa'ya ba'zı neşriyât ve işâ'âtta bulunmaları tabî'i olmasıyla bizim dahi menâfi'imize hıdmet için bu vâsıtalar ile neşriyâtda bulunmaklığımız muvâfık-ı hâl ve maslahat olacağından karîben hüsn-i sûretle netîce-pezîr olması eltâf-ı subhâniyeden mes'ûl ve müsted'â bulunan mesele-i hâzirenin hitâmına kadar devletce bu yolda bir meslek ittihâzıyla vukû'ât-ı harbiyeye ve esbâb-ı mucibesine dâir hergün matbû'ât idâre-i behiyyesi ma'rifetiyle Avrupa'ya telgraflar keşidesiyle her ahşam bir jurnalinin arz-ı atebe-i ulyâ kılınması...

⁵⁰⁷ Two reporters of Reuter visited the region including Monastir, Krushevo and Thessaloniki but their names cannot be fixed in Latin alphabet despite almost all the newspapers and Reuter dispatches of the day have been scanned. Their names were read in different ways such as Gobeau, Gaudin, Godvin, Kovink and Kureyş in the Ottoman Archives in Arabic alphabet. Interestingly, the related report presented to the Ottoman government does not include their names. Their names will be used as Mossier Govink and Lord Brook in this dissertation.

⁵⁰⁸ BOA, BEO., 2170/162693, 15 September 1903.

... vazîfesinin hîn-i ifâsında Devlet-i aliyye hakkındaki hissiyât-ı dostânesini essü'l-esâs ittihâz ideceğini dahi te'mîn eylemekliğimi recâ eylemişdir mûmâ ileyhin Yunan muhârebe-i âhiresi esnâsında ba'zı ümerâ-yı askeriyemiz ile peydâ itmiş olduğu münâsebât-ı hasenenin kendüsünün şu hissiyâtına küllî medârı olmuşdur...

⁵⁰⁹ BOA, BEO., 2170/162693, 17 September 1903. Meanwhile, Brooks states that British officials had advised the Ottomans to respond to press reports in August 1903 whereas the Ottoman Ambassador in

The Ottoman documents demonstrated both the level of the attention of the Porte on that trip and how they followed it closely. First, the Porte instructed the local authorities to assign officers to serve as guides for the Reuter correspondents as well as ensuring their protection from any possible negative influence and provocation.⁵¹⁰ The government also instructed to provide all necessary facilities and extend assistance to Reuter correspondents.⁵¹¹ On the same day, the Ottoman government informed the Rumelia Inspectorate in Thessaloniki that Mossier Govink and Lord Brook had permission to go to Thessaloniki accompanied by a staff with an ability to keep an eye on them.⁵¹² The Ottoman government was interested in almost every detail in order to facilitate the work for the Reuter correspondents.⁵¹³ The government also provided free telegraph service when they sent dispatches in favour of the Empire.⁵¹⁴ After Reuter correspondents⁵¹⁵ visited Thessaloniki and surrounding region with six Ottoman officers. The Ottoman document reports that as the correspondents arrived in Monastir, they were convinced of the malicious activities of Bulgarians. They cabled two telegraphic dispatches in order to “deny the claims of Bulgarians.” The Ottoman officials added that they would continue on with their telegrams to inform the European public by rebuttals and corrections.⁵¹⁶

London had replied that there was no need for this. See: Lansdowne to O’Conor, August 13, 1903, FO 421/198/155; and Musurus Pasha to Lansdowne, August 14, 1903, FO 421/198/167 in Julian Brooks, *Managing Macedonia: British Statecraft, Intervention and ‘Proto-peacekeeping’ in Ottoman Macedonia, 1902-1905*, Simon Fraser University, PhD Dissertation, 2014, p. 394.

⁵¹⁰ BOA, BEO., 2177/163262, 3 B 1321/25 September 1903.

⁵¹¹ BOA, BEO., 2177/163262, 3 B 1321/25 September 1903.

⁵¹² BOA, İ.HUS., 110/1321/B-002, 3 B 1321/25 September 1903.

⁵¹³ BOA, BEO., 2188/164043, 15 B 1321/7 October 1903.

⁵¹⁴ BOA, BEO., 2236/167653, 27 N 1321/17 December 1903.

⁵¹⁵ In the index of the Ottoman Archives, they are written as “Mr. Kuyeş and Lord Barak”. However, they should be the same correspondents which have already been stated as Mr. Govink and Lord Brook in the archives.

⁵¹⁶ BOA, TFR.I.A., 13/1248, 18 B 1321/10 October 1903. Unfortunately, it was not possible to find out their telegrams in the archives or in the newspapers of the time. It could have been very useful to compare the official account of the Ottoman State and the original telegrams of the agencies.

... her ikisi Bulgarların harekât-ı hûnrizânelerine kanâ’at hâsıl idüp İngiltere matbû’âtının neşriyât-ı gayr-ı sahîha ve garazkârânesini tekzîb ve tashîh ve inkâr-ı umûmiyeyi mecrâ-yı hakîkate ircâ’ itmeğe bâdî olacak iş’ârâta devâm ideceklerdir.

In addition to Monastir, Reuter correspondents also visited Krushevo. According to the account in the Ottoman document, Mr. Kuyeş [Mr. Govink] denied the previous groundless and false claims of Reuter Agency which had stated that the soldiers discarded the old people and that the women were raped. The document also informed that Mr. Kuyeş [Mr. Govink] would visit Krushevo next day “to refute the defamations” that the Ottoman soldiers raped and killed Christians.⁵¹⁷

The vital objective was to provide information for the Reuter correspondents. The Porte ordered the Rumelia Inspectorate to give detailed information about the Ottoman activities, reforms and achievements in the region since Reuter correspondents would possibly report favouring the Ottoman government when they returned to Europe.⁵¹⁸ Reuter correspondent Mr. Kuyeş [Mr. Govink] returned from Krushevo and accompanying Ottoman officials believed he would report that there were no rape or murder incidents there.⁵¹⁹

The Ottoman officials sent a cable to the Sublime Porte that Reuter would report a comprehensive account which would include the statements of eyewitnesses and observers with regard to the incidents in Krushevo and the activities of *başibozuks* (bashibazouks)⁵²⁰ on 27 October 1903. The incoming report with an introduction of S.C. Clements, the Manager and Secretary of Reuter, was presented to Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha.⁵²¹ During the research in the archives, no agreement between the Ottoman government and Reuter has been discovered on this occasional trip. However, it seems most likely that there could have been a deal since it was clearly a special and exceptional service provided by the British agency.

Another example, in 1897, shows that the Sublime Porte and Reuter made an occasional contract to “defend the Ottomans regarding the incidents in Crete”. Reuter

⁵¹⁷ BOA, TFR.I.A., 13/1257, 20 B 1321/12 October 1903.

⁵¹⁸ BOA, BEO., 2196/164639, 23 B 1321/15 October 1903.

⁵¹⁹ BOA, TFR.I.A., 13/1284, 24 B 1321/24 October 1903.

⁵²⁰ Bashibazouks basically irregular reserve soldiers in the Ottoman Empire to use them mostly during the uprisings in order to secure public order,

⁵²¹ BOA, TFR.I.ŞKT., 21/2060, 2 Ş 1321/24 October 1903. In 1902, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha was appointed as Inspectorate-General of Macedonia. During his duty until to 1908, he was responsible to monitor the situation in the Balkans for the Ottoman Empire. He then became grand vizier two times for a short time.

agreed to report on the developments in the island.⁵²² The Ottoman officials in the island drew attention to “the necessity of favourable news and propaganda to tell the perspective of the Ottoman Empire in Europe.” The proposal, cabled by the Crete Command proposed:

Reporters in the place of incidents [Crete] are avoiding the news in favour of the Muslims, such as the killing and wounding of Muslims around the harbour. They are reporting anti-Muslim news stories to the European newspapers in total exaggeration. Even though the Ottoman embassies in Europe are explaining the truth, it makes no sense and effect in the European public opinion since the source of the briefings is the state officials. In order to explain the incidents directly to Europe as the way they happen it is essential to send someone [a reporter] to the island or the Ottoman officials can handle [to get service by money] the agency of Reuter. In the former option, the Sublime Porte will pay 1.500 *kuruş* and cover the expenses of telegraphy whereas it will pay 4.500 *kuruş* monthly in the latter.⁵²³

The Ottoman government preferred the first option since the Ottoman bureaucrats believed that informing the European newspapers through Reuter would be politically appropriate. The Ottoman government instructed to make a deal for three months.⁵²⁴ However, these deals no way meant that the reports began to flow in favour of the Ottoman Empire. According to the account in the Ottoman documents, “hostile attitude” prevailed even after these agreements. For instance, in 1904, the Ottoman government complained about the reports of Reuter on Thessaloniki and blamed them as groundless.⁵²⁵

Furthermore, the target public was not only in France and Britain, Germany was also significant for the Ottoman government. In 1892, the Ottoman government released a statement through Reuter regarding the Ottoman-Prussian relations. Several German newspapers published the statement. The Ottoman Embassy in Berlin informed the Ottoman government about the publications.⁵²⁶

⁵²² BOA, İ.MTZ.GR., 31/1224, 19 Ra 1315/16 October 1897.

⁵²³ BOA, MV., 93/29, 25 Ra 1315/21 November 1897.

⁵²⁴ BOA, MV., 93/29, 25 Ra 1315/21 November 1897.

⁵²⁵ BOA, TFR.I.A., 15/1482, 18 L 1321/7 January 1904.

⁵²⁶ BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 8/78, 18 L 1309/16 May 1892.

CHAPTER VI

TOOLS OF MUTUAL STRUGGLE

Mutual struggle between the Ottoman Empire and the international news agencies was unavoidable when their interests conflicted and they pursued individual benefits. The inevitable result was negative relations or a policy of imposing punishments and certain constraints. Implementing several ways of censorship, controlling the cabling, issuing warnings and threats to the news agencies, deportation, unsubscribing and cutting off the subsidies were some of the practices in this regard. The official Ottoman narrative and account frequently implying or using terms such as “extortion, abuses and threats from agencies” set aside, it must be mentioned that several cases substantiated these arguments. In essence, compelling subscription and maximizing profits were the main objectives and policies of these agencies. After all, it was a mutual struggle between the Ottoman government and the agencies in which they did not refrain using their hard and soft powers. This chapter aims to elaborate on this issue under several subheadings.

6.1. Extortion and Blackmail of the News Agencies

First of all, the terminology and wording of this part need an explanation. Undoubtedly, the terminology of “extortion, abuses and threats of agencies” can be perceived as the official narrative of the Ottoman government. As for the primary material researched for this dissertation, it must be said the Ottoman documents do not directly use the terms “threat, extort or blackmail” in defining the attitude of the international news agencies. However, the Ottoman officials told about some cases in the nature of extortion, blackmail or threats. Their objectives were not to blame the agencies, but to convey the messages and statements of directors of these agencies to the Ottoman ministries. The following examples support this view. One of these

cases have already been defined as an explicit blackmail and threat in a Turkish article.⁵²⁷

Enrolling the journalists or publishers through regular salary, making payments and giving gifts to them, endowing with state subsidies and subscriptions which had begun with the advent of journalism were the common practices both in the Ottoman government and in Europe.⁵²⁸ Several examples support this observation. To illustrate, the Russian government subsidized the French newspapers and news agencies including Havas at various times. Although the subsidies were in practice before 1904, it boomed between 1904 and 1906 on a larger scale. The main reason was to protect Russia's credit standing in France. The Russian government paid two and half million francs to French press during these two years.⁵²⁹

In addition, Havas signed contracts with Serbia, Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire between 1889 and 1907, which are present at the Archives of Havas. Mesevage clarifies them as follows:

These contracts are for the receipt of news by Havas from those governments. Each government agrees to pay Havas a set fee for the transfer of information to Havas, and in turn, Havas agrees to give the information as much publicity as possible-while pretending that the information originated with Havas' own foreign correspondent. ... The existence of these payments from sovereign borrowers to media organizations invites speculation as to the consequences of a successful financial propaganda campaign.⁵³⁰

Besides these governments, Russia still continued on making payments to the French press. In July 1914, Russia's representative in the Paris markets "was getting tired of continually bribing the French press" including Havas.⁵³¹

⁵²⁷ The short article focuses mostly on foreign journalists by narrating a few Ottoman document. See: İlhan Yerlikaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Yabancı Gazete ve Haber Ajanslarının Şantaj ve Yolsuzlukları [The Blackmails and Corruptions of News Agencies and Foreign Newspapers during Abdülhamid II]", *Toplumsal Tarih*. 3 (1994), pp. 17-19.

⁵²⁸ See: James William Long, "Russian Manipulation of the French Press, 1904-1906", *Slavic Review* Vol. 31, No. 2 (1972), pp. 343-354; Gabriel Francis Geisler Mesevage, "Havas and the Foreign Loan Market, 1889 to 1921," *Centre for Finance and Development*, Student Working Paper Series, No. 02, 2013; Vincent Bignon and Marc Flandreau, "The Economics of Badmouthing: Libel Law and the Underworld of the Financial Press in France before World War I", *Journal of Economic History*, September 2011, v. 71, iss. 3, pp. 616-53.

⁵²⁹ Long, "Russian Manipulation", pp. 343-345.

⁵³⁰ Mesevage, "Havas and the Foreign Loan", pp. 3-5.

⁵³¹ Mesevage, "Havas and the Foreign Loan", p. 2.

In essence, the Ottoman government also followed the same path from the early years of journalism in the Empire.⁵³² The European journalists, who really contributed the establishment of press in the Ottoman Empire, greatly benefited from this opportunity. However, it turned into a serious problem for the Ottoman government in the last quarter of nineteenth century. The Ottoman State was encroached by both national and international press, the reporters and publishers as well. The government made payments to dozens of journalists and newspapers during this era.⁵³³

As the international news agencies looked ways to get their own share, they regarded subscription as a legitimate way. Their correspondents were not only news reporters but also businessmen to make money on their behalf and companies. Havas and Reuter were really powerful and influential since they were cartels thanks to their extended network supported by the British and French governments. They did not refrain from misusing their power in this competition. They put pressure on the Ottoman government to obtain subscription to their services. Extortion and threats were useful instruments in this mission. From the perspective of the Ottoman government, “hostile reporting against the Ottoman State” was enough to draw the attention of the Palace and Ottoman officials since the Ottoman State was really dependent on their services and it had no alternative. The following examples will clarify this point.

The attitude of the international news agencies on reporting on the Armenian issue was discussed in previous sections. It was the soft belly of the Ottoman Empire given the European states attacked the Empire through their press tools according to the official Ottoman point of view. The government was trying to “prevent hostile reports” and ready to pay for it when someone demanded more. It was the Armenian issue that the agencies mostly made use of in extracting money from the Ottoman government. In 1893, several incidents occurred in the Anatolian city Kayseri between the Muslim people and the Armenians. The European newspapers reported

⁵³² Orhan Koloğlu states that the tradition of subsidy and allocating salaries for the journalists were invented in the European society. He defends that it was not the crime of Sultan Abdülhamid II but the Europeans. He does not refer any academic study but he just defend the policies of Sultan Abdülhamid II. See: Orhan Koloğlu, “II. Abdülhamid’in Basın Karşısındaki Açmazı”, *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: İletişim.), V 11, p. 8

⁵³³ The salaries for the correspondents of news agencies have been already told in this chapter. For the salaries of journalists of foreign newspapers, see: Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde*, pp. 136-142.

that these were the attacks of Turkish and Kurdish people against the Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire. The premise of these reports was that Muslims killed the Armenians. The European newspapers basically published the telegrams of the news agencies. Havas refused to publish the denials of these reports when the Ottoman government asked for it. According to the official account in the related Ottoman document, the reason for the rejection of the French news agency to publish the rebuttal of the Ottoman government was that the Ottoman Embassy in Paris had not subscribed to the news services of Havas. The Director of Foreign Press (*Matbuat-ı Hariciye Müdürü*) Abdullah Macid Bey explained the issue in his petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was then submitted to the Sultan through *Sadaret* (Grand Vizierate). The petition argued that the deputy representative of Havas in Istanbul applied to the Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in person or in a written way several times. It further explained the representative of agency stated that Havas more likely declined to publish denials of the Ottoman government since the Ottoman Ministry and the Embassy in Paris were not subscribed to the French agency. He implicitly warned the Ottoman government to work with Havas through payments.⁵³⁴

In 1895, the Ottoman government was incapable of paying for the subscription fee to Havas due to deep financial crisis. From the Ottoman perspective, the content of Havas' telegraphic dispatches promptly turned against the Ottoman Empire. Actually, it had never been in favour of the Ottomans before, yet there was "a dramatic hostile change" this time. Ottoman officials thought that Agence Havas persistently and intentionally produced and distributed news against the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis the Armenians. In fact, they were right given that the directors of Havas in Paris personally informed the Ottoman Ambassador in France on the reasons of this change. According to the letter of the ambassador on his conversation with the directors of Havas, they stated that the Ottoman government had yet to pay for the subscription fee. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs warned the Ministry of Treasury to make the payment immediately.⁵³⁵

⁵³⁴ BOA, İ.HR., 341/1310, 23 Za 1310/8 or 9 June 1893. See also: Yerlikaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminde", p. 19. İlhan Yerlikaya states that the date of the document as 9 June 1892 but it is definitely June 1893.

⁵³⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 322/10, 19 N 1312/16 March 1895.

Besides them, in 1897, the Ottoman government cancelled its contract with Havas despite the contrary suggestions of nearly every Ottoman department. The possible reason denotes the dramatic increase in subscription fee and economic problems of the Ottoman government.⁵³⁶ Henceforth, the Havas directors overtly warned the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris that the French agency would soon pursue the policy of free flow of information against the Ottoman government unless the Ottoman State would continue subscription. The ambassador reported, “the aim of Havas is to coerce the Ottoman State for a new contract by hostile reporting.”⁵³⁷ Threats were not limited to the international news agencies. Other agencies in Istanbul and foreign newspapers also the same tool on many occasions. The solution of the Ottoman government by giving money to the press bodies that harshly criticized the Ottoman State created the understanding that “hostile reporting makes money”.

Furthermore, the European sources also point out the blackmails and threats that European newspapers in Istanbul made to the Ottoman government. For instance, in 1900, Austrian writer and journalists Karl Kraus harshly criticized a group of journalists in Istanbul by blaming them for making a lot of money from the Ottoman Sultan. Gummer, an academic who studied public relations of Germany in the Ottoman society, explains the point of Kraus:⁵³⁸

But according to the Kraus, the system ran both ways. Not only did correspondents engage in self-censorship, painting a rosy picture of life in the Ottoman domains, but they also attempted to blackmail the Sultan by threatening to publish uncomfortable information about the real state of his empire's affairs.⁵³⁹

...Ajans Havas telgraf şirketinin bu vechile hakkımızda neşriyat-ı gayr-ı marziyede bulunması abonman bedelinin henüz i'tâ olunmamış olmasından münba'is olduğuna dâir hâriciye nezâret-i celîlesinin tezkeresi melfûflarıyla ma'ân arz ve takdîm kılınmış ve mezkûr abonman bedelinin sür'at-i tesviyesi mâliye nezâret-i celîlesine te'kiden iş'âr edilmiştir.

⁵³⁶ BOA, BEO., 928/69566 , 28 L 1314/1 Nisan 1897.

⁵³⁷ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 26 C 1313 /22 Kasım 1897.

... mezkûr mukavelenamenin fesh edilmesine mebnî şirket-i mezkûrenin hükümet-i seniyyeye karşı karîben serbestî-i hareketini kâmilten iktisâb eyleyeceği müdür-i mûmâ ileyh tarafından beyan ve ihtâr edilip bundan maksat hükümet-i seniyyeyi tahsîsât i'tâsına devama icbâr etmek kazıyyesi olduğu der-kâr isede müdür-i mûmâ ileyhın hükümet-i seniyyeye karşı hasmâne bir meslek ittihâz etmesi menâfi '-i saltanat-ı seniyyeye müceb -i mazarrat eyleyeceğinden...

⁵³⁸ Steven Chase Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy: German Turcophilism and the Ottoman Empire, 1871-1914”, (Georgetown University: 2010), Unpublished Ph. D.Dissertation.

⁵³⁹ *Die Fackel*, nr 42, 28-29. In Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy”, pp. 145-146.

6.2. Censorship and Pressure

Actually, censorship of printed material, journals and newspapers were not a new practice in the Ottoman Empire by the 1870s. However, as Cioeta points out, “the first steps toward a systematic strict censorship regime in the Empire” came after the accession of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The suspension of the Press Law gave the Ottoman officials the right to authorize the immediate closing down or suppression of any journals and newspaper without stating any reason.⁵⁴⁰

The extent and format of censorship changed over time with the advent of new communication tools such as telegraph. As to the international news agencies, censorship in several ways, such as censoring the content of the incoming and outgoing telegrams in both ways to and from Istanbul, restricting the use of telegraph, pre-publication censor and control of the correspondents by pressure were the major solutions when the Ottoman government failed to find a way out in dealing with international news agencies. Harsh censorship for the international news agencies remarkably intensified after the 1880s.

In the eyes of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman ruling elite, the necessity to check and control the international news agencies emerged by the end of 1870s because of their growing role and impact in the Ottoman Empire. They had permanent and experienced reporters who were very ambitious in producing news stories in Istanbul. The Ottoman archival documents clearly demonstrate that efforts to handle the problem of international news agencies geared momentum in the early 1880s. The Grand Vizier Mehmed Said Pasha submitted a proposal to Sultan Abdülhamid II on this issue in 1880. He argued, “[foreign] reporters in Istanbul maliciously invented several news stories which were false and groundless against the Ottoman State and its officials.”⁵⁴¹ In the proposal, Mehmed Said Pasha explained the issue comprehensively:

The correspondent of Reuter Company [Sigismund] Engländer attempted to send a telegram this night that includes ... fixing of the issue⁵⁴² was dependent

⁵⁴⁰ J. Donald Cioeta, “Ottoman Censorship in Lebanon and Syria, 1876-1908”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (May, 1979), p. 170.

⁵⁴¹ BOA, Y.A., RES., 7/50, 9 L 1297/14 September 1880.

⁵⁴² The issue was not mentioned.

on the involvement of the [European] states. The telegram was immediately stopped and cancelled since it contained detrimental content. In addition to this, the [British] Embassy was informed of the incident. However, the reporters are giving a lot of telegrams to [the telegraph offices] in order to send. The attempts [to censor] by the other officers will not work unless the [Ottoman] Telegraph Authority will be responsible and take control of examining the content of telegrams timely and to distinguish the ones that are detrimental [to the interest of the Ottoman State].⁵⁴³

The following Ottoman archival documents evidently indicate that the Ottoman government issued a notice and sent it to the correspondents of the international news agencies in Istanbul. Shortly after the proposal of Mehmed Said Pasha, the notice set forth “the prohibition of sending telegrams which include detrimental content.” They were also restricted from releasing news stories that were not received through the Ottoman telegraphy offices. They would only be able to distribute news stories in Istanbul received through telegraphy and checked by the Ottoman officials. The agent of Havas Telegraph Company sent a letter to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 11 November 1880. He told:

After the Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the warning notice, my company has not released and distributed any news story which were not allowed by the Ottoman government, nor were received through telegraph. I declare that the information which has been conveyed to Sublime Porte as opposed to this fact is not true.⁵⁴⁴

As stated in the reply, there was a complaint against Havas and the Ottoman government asked for an explanation. It is also apparent that the Ottoman authorities had already sent a notice to Havas.⁵⁴⁵ The point of the matter is that in terms of censorship the agencies were controlled not only for outgoing telegrams to Europe, but also for incoming ones and distributing news stories in Istanbul.

However, the problem increasingly deteriorated for the Ottoman State. In 1882, upon the reports of The Grand Vizier Mehmed Said Pasha, the Ottoman

⁵⁴³ BOA, Y.A., RES., 7/50, 9 L 1297/14 September 1880; and also see: Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kışkacında*, p. 74.

⁵⁴⁴ BOA, HR.TO., 524/73, 8 Z 1297/11 November 1880.

Taraf-ı âlilerinden bendenize icrâ olunan ihtârattan sonra telgrafla gelmeyen ve binaen aleyh neşr ve ilanı cânib-i hükümet-i seniyyeden müsaade olunmayan havâdislerin hiç birini ilan etmediği tebliğât-ı şifâhiyye-i atûfilerine cevâben ve bunun hilâfına olarak Bâbiâli'ye verilen ma'lumâtın sahih olmadığını beyan ederim.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

government took significant measures “against the correspondents who have written and cabled detrimental news stories to the European newspapers”. In addition to setting up the Department of Foreign Press in order to control the telegraphic dispatches of foreign correspondents in the Ottoman Empire, the decree evidently paid attention to the problem of news agencies operating in the Ottoman capital. The Ottoman officials defined the news agencies as telegraph companies. The decree included the following measures:

I would like to draw your attention to the problem of reporters of telegraph companies and foreign newspapers in Istanbul. Their attitude and activities were openly irregular. Almost all of the letters and news stories written by these reporters were not only hostile and detrimental to the Ottoman State but also most of them were false and exaggerated. Opposing foreign reporters to stay in our country when they perform their profession is a mistake and we cannot imagine such kind of a thing.⁵⁴⁶

The decree, however, underlined that performing “their profession should not go beyond the rule of law, wisdom and justice.” It blamed most of the reporters acting against those rules. It continued:

The publications motivated by hostile attitude not only reflect the situation and incidents incorrectly but also create a negative impact in the Ottoman territory. No state with a sense of personal dignity can tolerate these activities. In order to fix this trouble, the reporters must register their names with the office which will be under the supervision of Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They should apply to this office to get both information and comment and to correct their information. This office will inform the reporters with right information like everywhere. In the first violation, the reporters who continue to send false and baseless news stories without looking at the information provided by the office will be given an official warning and invited to do right reporting. They will be pronounced both in the Ottoman State and foreign countries in the second violation. They will be deported by the Ottoman government in the third violation.⁵⁴⁷

These decisions were sent to the foreign embassies especially to the European ones in Istanbul and the Ottoman embassies in Europe with a diplomatic note.⁵⁴⁸ The Ottoman government gradually broadened the censorship for the international news

⁵⁴⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/33, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

⁵⁴⁷ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/33, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

⁵⁴⁸ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/33, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

agencies. Two weeks after the new regulation and announcement on 16 December 1882, Sultan Abdülhamid II ordered to tighten the content of the telegraphic dispatches. The Ottoman officials were given the task to see the corrections and the information which would be delivered to the news agencies before they were sent.⁵⁴⁹

An Ottoman bureaucrat immediately visited Dr. Sigismund Engländer, the Istanbul Correspondent of Reuter, after the announcement on 16 December 1882. Engländer complained that two of his telegrams were suspended in the Ottoman telegraph office. The official explained the reasons of this conduct. Then Engländer admitted that he sent some of the telegrams through Varna and Shumen⁵⁵⁰ and pledged no more to send through these cities. The Ottoman official advised Engländer not to send any telegraphic dispatch that he was not sure of its credibility and validity. The official also told, “not to trust and rely on the statements and news spread by the poisonous people”. Reuter correspondent Engländer promised that he would definitely avoid any telegraphic dispatch that could cause any discontent for the Ottoman sultan.⁵⁵¹

The document also gives significant information on how the international news agencies and the foreign embassies in Istanbul responded to the attempt of the Ottoman government to censor the telegrams. The Ottoman official stated, “the London newspapers were against the truth and they were full of telegrams, correspondence and information which were sent from Istanbul.” He then explained their response:

The diplomatic memorandum [with regard to new regulation of telegrams to be censored] sent by Arif Pasha to the foreign embassies in Istanbul led to negative, annoying and malicious influence in the capital. The reporters send their telegrams from Varna and Shumen, yet creating an impression as if they were sent from Istanbul. In this case, they produce more false and delusional news by their stories.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 1/79, 17 S 1300/28 December 1882.

⁵⁵⁰ The reporters were sending their uncensored telegram from Bulgarian telegraph offices. The issue will be debated comprehensively in upcoming pages.

⁵⁵¹ BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 1/79, 17 S 1300/28 December 1882. “...kendü vazîfet ve menfa‘ati sahîh olmayan telgrafların göndermemek ve erbâb-ı fesâdın ekâvîl ve işâ‘ât-ı kâzibesine i‘timâd ve istinâd itmemek muktezî bulunduđı kendüsine nasîhat eyledikden sonra...”

⁵⁵² BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 1/79, 17 S 1300/28 December 1882.

...Matbû‘ât-ı ecnebiye mes‘elesî pâdişâhımızın medâr-ı efkâr-ı sâkıbeleri olması lâzım gelüp zîrâ Londra gazeteleri hakîkata muhâlif buradan giden telgraf ve muhâberâtla meşhûn ve memlûdur Arifî Paşa’nın buna dâir süferâ-yı ecnebiyeye irsâl itdiđi layiha ve natolayı

The telegrams of the international news agencies were strictly censored from early on the 1880s to the mid-1910s. Mostly, the Ottoman officials preferred to use the term “withheld” for censoring telegrams.⁵⁵³ The censorship was also a term used. There are several archival documents demonstrating the examples of censorship in the Ottoman territory. The Ottoman government censored a lot of telegrams of both Reuter and Havas in mid-the 1880s.⁵⁵⁴ For instance, most of the telegraphic dispatches from Istanbul to Europe were withheld in 1883. The censored ones were marked in the long list.⁵⁵⁵ It seems that withholding the telegrams of the news agencies became a big and serious problem for the Ottoman government in 1886 as the agencies asked for the telegram fee they paid to send. It really prompted a debate in the Ottoman State and remained an important agenda at least for another two years. The Ottoman officials discussed how to pay it back.⁵⁵⁶

The Ottoman government not only censored telegrams outgoing from Istanbul but also the incoming ones. Both the outgoing news stories and incoming information were potentially harmful in the eyes of the Palace and Ottoman officials. The aim was to prevent the distribution of the reports of the news agencies to the newspapers in Istanbul. For example, the Ottoman officials detected that Agence de Constantinople and Agence Oriental succeeded in receiving telegrams from Europe by preventing them from any kind of censorship and they distributed the telegraphic dispatches to their subscribers. Someone notified the Ottoman authorities.⁵⁵⁷ The Ottoman government immediately went into action to “prevent this kind of abuses.” The Ottoman government instructed the telegraph authorities to follow the issue closely and not to allow “such detrimental activities.”⁵⁵⁸

Dersa'âdetde sù-i te'sîr hâsıl olmuş çünkü gazeteler muhbirleri telgraflarını Varna'dan veyâ Şeyre'den Dersa'âdet ünvanıyla gönderüp ol vakit daha ziyâde hezeyân ve ekâvîl ihtirâ' iderler...

⁵⁵³ The original Word in Ottoman is “tevkif”.

⁵⁵⁴ BOA, DH.MKT., 1424/14, 12 Ra 1304/9 December 1886.

⁵⁵⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 172/96, 23 Ra 1330/23 February 1883.

⁵⁵⁶ The issue will be told in a detailed way in the end of this sub-section.

⁵⁵⁷ BOA, DH.MKT., 1676/35, 28 RA 1307/22 November 1889.

⁵⁵⁸ BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO., 173/30, 10 R 1307/4 December 1889.

The reason for this strict practice was that the public opinion became gradually significant for Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman government.⁵⁵⁹ Actually, image both in homeland and abroad was crucial for the Ottoman sultan.⁵⁶⁰ As the main mass communication tool, the newspapers increasingly played an important role in shaping of the public opinion. Therefore, the Palace sought to intensify the censorship on the incoming information, mainly provided by the international news agencies. In 1892, the government introduced a new practice in this respect. The Ottoman censor authorities began to check the content of the news stories and information distributed by the telegraphic news agencies to the Ottoman newspapers.⁵⁶¹ The decision was announced and explained:

Agence Havas and other telegraphic news agencies distribute news and information in different languages. However, most of them were unsuitable and unacceptable to be published in the newspapers. It is very difficult for the censorship officers to check and examine the content of the telegraphic dispatches distributed by the news agencies. Therefore, it is necessary to examine them during the day-time so the newspapers can publish them. The agencies thus must send the copies of their telegraphic dispatches to the Ottoman Press Directorate on time.⁵⁶²

Censoring the telegraphic dispatches distributed to the newspapers by the agencies was insufficient to keep the control over news and information in the capital. The agencies were resolved to spread all information they had without any

⁵⁵⁹ Cengiz Kırılı, "Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire", in Salvatore, Armando&Eickelman, Dale F. (eds), *Public Islam and the Common Good* (Leiden; Boston, Köln, 2004), pp. 75-97; Doğan Gürpınar, *Ottoman Imperial Diplomacy: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (London ; New York : I.B. Tauris, 2014), pp. 147-148 ; and Bedri Gencer, "The Rise of Public Opinion in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1909)", *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 30 (2004), pp. 115-154.

⁵⁶⁰ Selim Deringil, "II. Abdülhamid döneminde Osmanlı Dış İlişkilerinde 'İmaj' Saplantısı", in *Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Devri Semineri: 27-29 Mayıs 1992* (İstanbul : İÜ Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1994), pp. 149-162. See also: Selim Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1908", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, 1993, pp. 3-29.

⁵⁶¹ BOA, DH.MKT., 1948/59, 15 L 1309/13 May 1892.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

Der-sa'adet'de elsine-i muhtelif'e üzre tab' ve neşr edilmekte olan evrâk-ı havâdis namına ajans Havas ve sair telgraf şirketlerinin tebliğ etmekte oldukları telgrafnamelerden ekserisinin mündericâtı gazete sütunlarına derc edilecek surette olmadığına ve bunların sansür memurları tarafından gecelerde tetkik ve muâyenesi müşkilâtı mûcib olmakda idüğüne binaen ba'de-evin vurûd edecek telgrafnamelerin gündüzden muâyenesi icra olunarak ona göre gazetelerin neşrine me'zûniyet i'tâ edilmek üzre birer kopyasının vakit ve zamanıyla matbû'ât idaresine gönderilmesi...

ensorship. It was brought to the attention of the Palace and Ottoman officials that some of the news agencies distributed the censored parts of telegraphic dispatches in public places. As the routine practice, the news agencies sent their telegraphic dispatches to the Ottoman Press Directorate during the day-time before the newspapers published them. Parts of the dispatches were censored by the Ottoman censorship officers. The Ottoman government learned that these censored parts were released in public places and ordered to take all measures to prevent this misconduct.⁵⁶³

The objective to control the public opinion that has been reflected as keeping control of incoming news from Europe in Istanbul gradually tightened. Subsequently, the distribution of all telegraphic dispatches of the international news agencies to the newspapers was stopped unless the Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs allowed it. To put it another way, Sultan Abdülhamid II viewed the performance of censorship officers who examined and censored telegraphic dispatches insufficient. Hence, he opted for a tighter step in 1894 which stipulated that the agencies had to acquire the approval of the Undersecretary to distribute their dispatches to the newspapers.⁵⁶⁴ The Ottoman document explained:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed that the newspapers and the news agencies publish the telegrams coming from Europe that are not examined by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The news agencies were notified that they could not distribute any telegraphic dispatches unless they get the approval of the Undersecretary henceforth.⁵⁶⁵

As the Ottoman government tightened the censorship, the international news agencies naturally tried their best to overcome it. They looked for alternative ways and routes to send their news from Istanbul. The easiest way that the agencies resorted was mostly to send the telegrams from Bulgarian port of Varna since the Ottoman government had no control there. Varna evolved into a great asset for the

⁵⁶³ BOA, DH.MKT., 178/21, 27 Ca 1311/6 December 1893.

⁵⁶⁴ BOA, DH.MKT., 302/10, 29 R 1312/30 October 1894.

⁵⁶⁵ BOA, DH.MKT., 302/10, 29 R 1312/30 October 1894.

Avrupa'dan gelen ve Hâriciye müsteşârı devletlü paşa hazretleri cânibinden mu'âyene idilmeyen telgrafnâmeleri gazete ve ajansların neşr itmekde oldukları hâriciye nezâret-i celîlesinden bildirildiği cihetle ba'demâ müsteşâr-ı müşârün ileyh tarafından neşrine me'zûniyet virilmedikçe ajanslar tarafından gazetelerden öteden berüden alınan ve telgrafnâme şekline konulup i'lân edilen havâdisin neşr olunmamasıçün ajanslara tebligât...

foreign new agencies and newspapers to freely cable their telegrams following Bulgaria's independence from the Ottoman rule in 1878. An Ottoman archival document clearly indicates that the control of telegraph office in Varna was not in the hands of the Ottoman authorities in 1878. The document stated that taking telegraph fee from Russians was not suitable in Varna given the city was evacuated.⁵⁶⁶ Varna was 160 miles away from Istanbul by sea and the ship steamers were working regularly in this line. There was a railway connection between Istanbul and Varna as well.

There were several cases that the reporters of international news agencies sent their telegrams through Varna and other Bulgarian cities. Moreover, they wrote down "Constantinople" as the dateline, which described the date and location where a news article originated. By labelling Istanbul as the dateline, they showed as if the telegrams were sent from there. It made Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman bureaucrats really angry. Actually, the reporters had begun to use Varna telegraph office in the early 1880s in order to avoid censorship. As the Ottoman officials were aware of it, they tried to prevent these attempts. However, it evolved into a serious problem for the Ottoman state in the mid-1890s.

One of the earliest examples clearly reveals the scope of the problem for the Ottoman State. After Sultan Abdülhamid II ordered to tighten the content of the telegraphic dispatches on 16 December 1882,⁵⁶⁷ an Ottoman official met with Dr. Sigismund Engländer to discuss the situation of the telegraphic news agencies. Dr. Engländer admitted that he sent some of the telegrams through Varna because of strict censorship.⁵⁶⁸ Mr. Werndel, the assistant and successor of Engländer, told how they overcame the censorship:

My arrival relieved him [Engländer] of some of the complicated work we had to do in those days of Hamidan rule in Turkey, consisting in the collection of news for transmission to London. We had to devise all kinds of combinations to circumvent the Turkish Censor who as remorseless. Thus, we had transmitting agents on the Bulgarian side of the frontier to who we addressed our dispatches, while special codes, worded in homely language, we prepared for the purpose of dealing with any possible contingency, during periods of crisis which, in those days, were frequent. In this manner, we were often able to score over our

⁵⁶⁶ BOA, A.}MKT.MHM., 483/8, 29 Ş 1295/28 August 1878.

⁵⁶⁷ BOA, Y.A.RES., 18/20, 5 Safer 1300/16 December 1882.

⁵⁶⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 1/79, 17 S 1300/28 December 1882.

numerous competitors, much to the amazement and annoyance of the latter who wondered how we managed to get the news home.⁵⁶⁹

That is the reason why Storey describes Engländer in the following way: “He [Sultan Abdülhamid II] feared and disliked Engländer - who, of course, had soon become an institution in Constantinople - for his knack of getting inconvenient news out of the country.”⁵⁷⁰

In 1886, the Ottoman government once again warned the international news agencies not to send any telegram through Varna. The Ottoman officials noticed that the telegraphic news agencies sent the news to o Varna by steamer or train and from there on to Europe by telegraphy. The Ottoman government ordered the news agencies “to give an end to these illegal practices.”⁵⁷¹

Remarkably, the issue became more significant for the Ottoman State in the mid-1890s. To illustrate, Reuter published a telegraphic dispatch on the Armenian issue through Varna. The British and American newspapers published these news stories with the dateline of “Constantinople”. The Ottoman government responded with fury. The bureaucrats firstly rejected the content of the news. Followingly, they took some measures to stop these incidents. In addition, the Ottoman government went a further step forward. The reporter of Reuter in Istanbul was interrogated.⁵⁷² In addition to this, other news agencies operating in Balkans adopted the same method. The correspondent of Agence Balkanik in Sofia wrote news stories “which were false and malicious.” He showed the dateline as “Constantinople” in the telegrams.⁵⁷³

In 1895, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the Ministry of Post and Telegraph how the [international] telegraphic news agencies could send telegrams without any censorship. The ministry replied:

The uncensored telegrams of the agencies were not cabled from the Ottoman telegraph offices. It can be broadly concluded that they were cabled through

⁵⁶⁹ William H.G. Werndel to Managing Director, 21 February 1919 in “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes,” R.A.

⁵⁷⁰ Storey, *Reuters' Century* pp. 98-99.

⁵⁷¹ BOA, DH.MKT., 1352/54, 24 N 1303/26 June 1886.

⁵⁷² BOA, Y.PRK.A., 9/59, 19 Ca 1312/18 November 1894.

⁵⁷³ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04), 37/48, 16 R 1314/24 September 1896.

[Bulgarian city] Felipe. The agencies send the [news] letters directly to these [Bulgarian] telegraph offices by train. Besides them, the telegrams including the false and hostile news [about the Ottoman State] which have been published in European newspapers seems ought to be conveyed to these [Bulgarian] telegraph offices and be cabled from there. These offices also delay our communication by arguing that their telegraph lines are so busy.⁵⁷⁴

The dateline issue has turned into an obsession for the Ottoman State over time. Actually, dateline was more of an interest for them rather than the content. The archival documents indicate that this fixation stemmed from the attitude of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The search for a possible solution took months. There are several documents on this issue. Firstly, the Ottoman government instructed the officials to check whether there was a mechanism or convention to stop this practice.⁵⁷⁵ The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied two weeks later on how to cope with the problem of dateline in the telegrams. The response suggested no concrete solution. It implied that prohibiting news agencies from sending telegrams from Bulgaria was not possible at all.⁵⁷⁶ Despite responding to the inquiry of the government on the question, the other Ottoman departments could not propose a workable plan as well.⁵⁷⁷

The censorship applied to the international news agencies remained a strict and common practice in the first decade of the twentieth century. The agencies also kept on releasing censored parts of their telegrams in public places although the Ottoman government detected the issue and ordered to take all measures to prevent this “misuse” in 1893.⁵⁷⁸ Upon the instruction of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the Ministry of Interior investigated the issue and wrote to the Ministry of Post and Telegraph and Zaptieh of Istanbul Municipality. As stated in the reply, the telegraphic dispatches of the news agencies released their telegrams, which were censored by the Ottoman Foreign Press Directorate, by inserting them into bulletins in the clubs, coffeehouses, beer houses and other public places. The order of government to forbid and stop this practice was notified to the news agencies and these places. The police forbid the

⁵⁷⁴ BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO., 183/23, 11 Ca 1313/30 October 1895.

⁵⁷⁵ BOA, BEO., 1056/79196, 29 B 1315/24 December 1897.

⁵⁷⁶ BOA, BEO., 1064/797766, 11 Ş 1315/5 January 1898.

⁵⁷⁷ BOA, BEO., 1094/82025, 26 L 1315/20 March 1898.

⁵⁷⁸ BOA, DH.MKT., 178/21, 27 Ca 1311/6 December 1893.

posting of telegram bulletins in the coffeehouses and beer houses. However, according to the report of the Ministry of Post and Telegraph, these telegrams were allowed to get in the clubs. Consequently, the police was given the right to get into the clubs to check and prohibit the releases totally.⁵⁷⁹

The endeavours of the Ottoman government to censor the incoming telegrams also continued. In 1900, the Ottoman government ordered once again to “examine the case of distributing uncensored telegrams of news agencies which inflicted damage on the interests of the Ottoman State” and to prohibit this kind of activities totally and definitely. The order was extended to include not only the release of the telegrams but also their publication in the newspapers in Istanbul.⁵⁸⁰

Furthermore, the Ottoman government continued to strictly censor the telegrams of news agencies when they cabled to Europe during the first decade of the twentieth century. The Ottoman government observed that the agencies tried to cable their news without censorship. Agence de Constantinople succeeded in sending some of its telegraphic dispatches without being subjected to the examination by Ottoman censorship officers. However, as soon as the government noticed the situation, it ruled to take appropriate measure.⁵⁸¹

The Ottoman government also looked for alternative ways to deal with the violations of the news agencies. However, it was not possible to find a feasible solution to this problem and in fact it was really hard to control the activities of the agencies. The correspondents of the agencies always pledged to obey the regulations and laws. Although they looked for alternative ways to overcome the constraints and obstacles, there remained no other way than violating the regulations. In this respect, as reported in the Ottoman documents, Reuter received its uncensored telegrams in the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia, several times. The British agency distributed them to the newspapers in Istanbul in 1905. From the Ottoman perspective, the content of the dispatch was provocative. The report stated that the Ottoman State would locate the

⁵⁷⁹ BOA, DH.MKT., 2388/102, 15 R 1318/12 August 1900.
Matbu'ât-ı ecnebiye idaresince tevkîf olunan ajans telgraflarının bültenlere derc ile kulüp ve kahve ve birahâne ve sair mecâmi'-i nâsda neşr edilmiş olmasıyla men'i muktezâ-yı irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i Hilâfet-Penâhî bulunduđu...

⁵⁸⁰ BOA, DH.MKT., 2407/108, 1 C 1318/26 September 1900.

⁵⁸¹ BOA, DH.MKT., 2474/141, 29 Z 1318/19 April 1901.

Muslim people instead of the Ottoman Bulgarians along the Coast of Maritza River. The story really upset the Ottoman government.⁵⁸²

An interesting story regarding the telegraphic news agencies gives clues on the nature of the relationship between the Ottoman government and the agencies. It also shows how some of the agencies worked. The Sublime Porte learned that the National Agency Company in Paris went bankrupt. The correspondent of French agency in Istanbul, Mossier Carolla changed the title of his company into “Agence National in Constantinople” in the documents. This way, it acquired a separate managerial identity without permission. According to the Ottoman document, Mossier Carolla has never received a telegram from Paris or Europe but he distributed some news bulletins by fabricating the stories. The Ottoman Embassy in Paris also informed that there was no relation or contact between Mossier Carolla and an agency in Paris operating with the title of National Agency. In the eyes of Ottoman bureaucrats, there was a possibility that this company could fabricate political news in the future. Therefore, the Ottoman authorities went into action through prohibiting its distributions and publications.⁵⁸³

Meanwhile, while Sultan Abdülhamid II personally led and supervised the policy on the press, a crucial change has occurred in the Ottoman Empire in 1908. The second Constitutional Rule restoring the abolished 1876 Constitution was announced on 24 July 1908. It is widely considered as a milestone in the Ottoman history. Especially after the dethronement of Sultan Abdülhamid II by the Young Turks⁵⁸⁴ on 27 April 1909, it is generally accepted that an era of freedoms in many fields, including press, started in the Ottoman society. Baykal, describes the general outlook in this era:

⁵⁸² BOA, BEO., 2625/196824, 16 Ca 1323/18 July 1905.

⁵⁸³ BOA, BEO., 2783/208667, 21 M 1324/17 March 1906.

⁵⁸⁴ The Young Turks were a political reform movement in the early twentieth century in the Ottoman State. It was officially known as the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Their main goal was to replace of the absolute monarchy of the Ottoman State with a constitutional monarchy. They were accepted as the group who forced to Sultan Abdülhamid II to restore the constitution in 1908 and deposed him in 1909. See: Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908* (Oxford University Press: 2001).

It would trigger a boom in the Ottoman press. This press boom, characterized by unusually high activity in the press, was the unintended and unforeseen consequence of the promulgation of the constitution in July 1908, which granted freedom to the press within the boundaries of the law. As a result of the strict policies Abdülhamid II had adopted towards the press and the sudden appearance of press freedom, the floodgates opened and all over the empire a barrage of news press publications appeared, produced by all the various constituent people of the empire. However, after peaking in its first few months, the boom was followed by a crash as many of the news publications were not destined to live long.⁵⁸⁵

The purpose of this dissertation is not to discuss and make a comparison in terms of press freedom between the era of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Second Constitutional Rule which was mainly the governing of the Committee of Union and Progress. However, it will be useful to briefly describe the practices in this era in the context of censorship to the international news agencies as well.

Undoubtedly, the censorship to the news agencies continued in the new period. However, it seems that Sultan Reşad Mehmed V and the Committee of Union and Progress were not determined as Sultan Abdülhamid II in controlling the press. For Sultan Abdülhamid II, it was nearly an issue of survival to manage and fight the international news agencies and press in general. It was also a personal matter for him since “the attacks and insults directly targeted him.” For the others, it was a problem for the interests of the Ottoman State but not a personal one. In addition to this, political outlook in the Ottoman Empire and the world politics were totally different due to World War I.

With regard to the practices and examples in this era, the Ottoman government detected that some of the news agencies insisted on cabling “harmful news” on the affairs of the Ottoman State. Accordingly, in the first month of the Second Constitutional Rule, the government ordered the examination of possible solutions and taking necessary measures for prohibiting them.⁵⁸⁶ In 1913, the telegrams of the international news agencies created troubles for the Ottoman State. As stated in the Ottoman documents, the Ottoman government instructed to prohibit the news agencies’ telegrams since they blocked the internal communication of the

⁵⁸⁵ Baykal, *The Ottoman Press*, p. 29.

⁵⁸⁶ BOA, DH.MKT., 2637/14, 26 N 1326/24 August 1908.

Ottoman Empire. The document stated that the problem was understood thanks to the telegrams sent from Romania Steamer in Istanbul.⁵⁸⁷

In 1914, the Ottoman government set up a committee of censorship under the supervision of The Ministry of War in order to assure “the safety and salvation of the nation.” The censorship practices were tightened both for the press and foreign embassies in Istanbul.⁵⁸⁸ In 1916, the Ottoman government ordered to close down two agencies in Jerusalem and Beirut. The *Matbuat-ı Umumiye Müdüriyeti* (Directorate General of Press) wrote both to Jerusalem *Mutasarrıflığı*⁵⁸⁹ -an administrative region under the Ottoman State- and to province of Beirut⁵⁹⁰ to give instruction to close down two agencies, Agence General Ottoman in Jerusalem and Siryen Agency in Beirut.⁵⁹¹

Lastly, another document showing the censorship for the news agencies in the Ottoman State belongs to 1919. The Ottoman government, in a notice sent to the local authorities clearly accepted that the telegrams of the news agencies were censored in Istanbul. The notice stated that incoming and outgoing telegrams of the news agencies were strictly examined and censored. Therefore, it instructed that it was no longer necessary to re-censor the telegrams where they arrived.⁵⁹²

The problem of dateline in which the news agencies used the Bulgarian telegraph offices for avoiding censorship continued through the mid-1910s as well. The Ottoman Embassy in Sofia informed, “Reuter distributed detrimental and malicious news against the Ottoman State” despite the censorship practice in Istanbul. The embassy suggested compelling Reuter to obey the regulations of censorship. In response to the Sofia Embassy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that these news stories were not released from Istanbul, but spread by intermediaries and foreign embassies. The response of the ministry was also a confession of

⁵⁸⁷ BOA, BEO 4144/310779, 10 Ra 1331/17 February 1913.

⁵⁸⁸ BOA, BEO 4303/322707, 12 N 1332 /4 August 1914.

⁵⁸⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR., 67/44, 19 L 1334 9/August 1916.

⁵⁹⁰ BOA, DH.ŞFR., 67/46, 19 L 1334 9/August 1916.

⁵⁹¹ It is not sure how the name of Beirut agency was written. It was transcribed from Ottoman letters and language. Meanwhile, for the censorship practices in Lebanon, see: Cioeta, “Ottoman Censorship”, pp. 167-186.

⁵⁹² BOA, DH.EUM.6.Sb., 48/8, 15 R 1337/18 March 1919.

limitations of the Ottoman State. It stated: “The warnings delivered to Reuter have no influence at all on it. However, we confirm that the reporter of Reuter was warned.”⁵⁹³

Another significant aspect of censorship to the international news agencies was the compensations that the Ottoman State had to pay them for their withheld telegrams. It really caused big troubles for the Sublime Porte. The telegraph authorities in France and Italy, which cabled the telegrams to Istanbul, asked for reimbursement of telegraph fees and demanded compensation for the censorship. Unfortunately, no provision can be found in the archives regulating this issue in the contracts between the Ottoman government and the international news agencies, especially Reuter and Havas. As understood from the content of the Ottoman documents, the French and British demands stemmed from the International Telegraph Convention of 1875.⁵⁹⁴ Furthermore, it should be stated that the settlement of this problem took almost four years for the Ottoman State as seen in the archival correspondences dating from by the end of 1886 to early 1889.

As regards to the details of withheld telegrams, the documents on this issue evidently reveal the strict censorship by the Ottoman government applied to Reuter and Havas news agencies. The document dated 1882 or 1883⁵⁹⁵ stated that the telegraph authorities of Italia and France asked for the fees of telegrams cabled to Reuter and Havas from Europe, yet withheld by the Ottoman telegraph offices because of “their harmful content.” Therefore, the Ottoman telegraph authorities requested to get an additional budget for the year of 1300 in Hijri from the government. The request was for the payments for already withheld telegrams and future ones. As a result of consultations between the Ministry of Post and Telegraph

⁵⁹³ BOA, HR.SYS., 2402/95, 12 September 1914.

Celiyelerine icra edilen ihtâratta tesiri pek de görülememektedir. Ma'a-mâ-fih ajans Reuter muhabirine ihtârât-ı ceride ifâ olunduğu ma'lûmât olmak üzere beyan olunur.

⁵⁹⁴ After the first International Telegraph Conference was held in Paris in 1865, the fourth plenipotentiary conference took place in St. Petersburg 1875. The conference completely re-drafted the International Telegraph Convention. It was explained in the Ottoman documents as follows: *...Müfâd-ı iş'âr-ı âlî-i âsafâneleri rehîn-i ikân-ı âcizî olarak keyfiyyet be-tekrâr Bâb-ı âlî hukûk müşâvirlerine lede'l-havâle bin sekiz yüz yetmiş beş senesi telgraf mukâvele-i diiveliyyesi ile buna merbût nizâm-nâme ahkâmı mücebince ucûrât-ı mezkûrenin tesviyesi lâzım geleceğini...* See: BOA, DH.MKT., 1460/72, 4 S 1305/22 October 1887.

⁵⁹⁵ The document does not mention the exact date but states just the year of 1300 in Hijri. It was between November 1882 and November 1883.

and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, paying back the fees was seen an appropriate step.⁵⁹⁶

However, reimbursement of fees was not an appropriate solution in the long run since the censorship to the news agencies would definitely continue. The Ottoman government also began considering alternative solutions. The Ottoman bureaucrats proposed not to censor the incoming telegrams but to force the news agencies not to distribute “detrimental stories” that they received. In this plan, they also suggested to deliver a warning to the agencies that they would be responsible to pay the fees and compensation if they kept insisting.⁵⁹⁷ However, this suggestion was not taken into consideration.

The Ottoman government could not find an appropriate response to this challenge even after a year. The search was underway in 1887. The Ottoman government was in a rush and instructed:

The measures as a response to the prospective claims of the European telegraph authorities for the fees and compensation due to the censored telegrams of Reuter and Havas should be immediately put into practice. The result should also be informed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁵⁹⁸

For the Ottoman officials, the best way was to sign a contract with Reuter and Havas in order to avoid large amount of compensations. Therefore, the Ottoman government sought ways to make deals with them⁵⁹⁹ but it was not acceptable for the agencies.

⁵⁹⁶ BOA, DH.MKT., 1424/14, 12 Ra 1304/9 December 1886.

⁵⁹⁷ BOA, DH.MKT., 1386/89, 25 Ra 1304/22 December 1886).

... *mâdâm ki bu misillü telgraftnâmelerin memâlik-i mahrûse-i şâhânedede neşrince mahzûr görülüyor o hâlde bundan dolayı zâyi' idilen vâridât üzerine bir de tazmînât i'tâsından ise mezkûr şirketlerin havâdis-i telgrafti celb itmeleri hakkında ihtârâtda bulunulup yine ısrâr iderler ise vukû'bulacak zarar ve ziyânın taraflarına âid olacağıın kendülerine tebliği...*

⁵⁹⁸ BOA, DH.MKT., 1460/72, 17 S 1305/4 November 1887.

⁵⁹⁹ BOA, DH.MKT., 1585/87, 17 Ca 1306/19 January 1889; and BOA, DH. MKT., 11588/16, 24 Ca 1306/26 January 1889.

6.3. Chasing the Reporters and Their Sources: Investigation, Threats and Legal Acts:⁶⁰⁰

One of the measures that the Ottoman government applied in managing the international news agencies was chasing the news which “were harmful for the interest of the Ottoman State”, the reporters and their sources. Investigating the source of news, interrogating the reporters, getting in contact with the directors or owners of the international news agencies, delivering harsh warnings to reporters and the agencies, using threats and making possible legal charges against them were the common tools that the Ottoman government had and tried to use when it deemed necessary in this vein. The vital objective in all these endeavours was to control the news and prevent any undesired stories both in European and Istanbul newspapers. Illustrating the issue with several cases and points will reveal the mindset of both the Ottoman government and the news agencies and how the system worked in this respect.

The chasing process was initiated towards the end of the 1870s simply because the reporting activities intensified in these years following the international news agencies began to operate fully in Istanbul. The initial cases that made the Ottoman government uncomfortable were about the news stories of Reuter’s representative, Sigismund Engländer. Actually, there were several cases that involved him during his tenure in Istanbul. The Ottoman government and Reuter directors or the owner of the company had many correspondences on this question as the letters evidently show.

The first complaint of the Ottoman government was about the news of Reuter on the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78). The Ottoman government claimed, “the British agency distributed baseless news which was continuously in favour of Russia from the start of the war.” The government called for an impartial reporting through the Ottoman Embassy in London. The Ottoman diplomats delivered the warning to Baron Paul Julius Reuter, the founder and owner of the agency. Then, they met with

⁶⁰⁰ The article of İpek Yosmaoğlu, “Chasing the Printed Work” inspired me for in selecting this subheading. Yosmaoğlu, “Chasing the Printed Word,” pp. 15-49.

Baron Reuter to discuss the issue. However, he kindly rebuffed the claims of the Ottoman government.⁶⁰¹

After a year, the Ottoman government this time complained about the nature of news stories cabled by Engländer from Istanbul. The government conveyed its discontent and discomfort via the Ottoman Embassy in London once again. In general, the Porte argued, “most of the telegrams sent by Engländer were baseless and they were intentionally written to inflict harm on the Ottoman State.” Also, the Ottoman government was annoyed since Engländer sent his stories through Syros and Odessa instead of Istanbul directly. The government demanded to see the telegraphic dispatches before their distribution to the newspapers in London. As stated in the letter, the demand was that the Ottoman Embassy in London would check the accuracy of the news about the Ottoman State.⁶⁰²

However, Reuter’s response did not correspond with the expectations of the Ottoman government. Herbert Reuter, the managing director and the son of Baron Reuter, replied to the complaint of the Ottoman government. The letter reflects the mindset of the Ottoman government regarding the issue and international news agencies in general. Herbert Reuter in his response to “the Charge D'affairs of the Imperial Ottoman Embassy in London” stated:

With reference to your communication to me on the 29th (Nov) to the effect that you had received a despatch from the Sublime Porte complaining of the character of our news-service from Constantinople as inaccurate and untrustworthy, permit me to express my great regret that the Sublime Porte should have considered it necessary to prefer such serious charges against this branch of our service.⁶⁰³

Reuter was uncomfortable with the complaint in the sense that it targeted the reporting in general rather than some specific news. Herbert Reuter continued:

⁶⁰¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 248/87, 29 December 1877.

On the other hand, Britain was not happy with the success of Russia; and supported the Ottoman State. The war ended thanks to intervention of Britain.

⁶⁰² BOA, HR.SFR.3., 260/74, 26 November 1878. Herbert Reuter wrote the letter in English. Most of the correspondences between the Ottoman offices and Reuter were in French.

⁶⁰³ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878. This letter is in English.

I cannot for a moment suppose that the Sublime Porte intends that its remarks should apply without distinction to our Constantinople service in its entirety, as the truth of the news we have received thence as been subsequently corroborated as to many and various quarters that we can only imagine that allusion is made to certain messages on particular events. However, this may be, I can only express my sincere desire to the informed of the specific occasions when these regrettable inaccuracies occurred, in order that our agent may be called upon to give us explanations.⁶⁰⁴

He assured that “their chief desire and preoccupation is to serve the public with absolutely authentic and impartial information”. He underlined that “each and every representative of the company has received the most stringent instructions to conform strictly these essential principles” in this respect. Moreover, they believed that they were “justified in assuming that the reputation enjoyed by the agency was wholly due to rigorous adherence to these rules.” He also added that “if any derivation from these instructions were to come under their notice they should not hesitate to take such steps as the circumstance might require in order to ensure the prefer observance of their directions.”⁶⁰⁵

Furthermore, Herbert Reuter stated that it was quite possible that error might have occurred owing to telegraphic mutilations distorting the original sense on some occasions. However, he held the Ottoman government responsible by stating, “Under these circumstances while fully admitting the possibility of error occasionally appearing in our telegrams we can only attribute the graver change made by the Sublime Porte to erroneous information.”⁶⁰⁶

With respect to the reasons why Engländer sent the messages via Syros and Odessa and by other indirect routes, Reuter regretted that this practice was due to the fact that Engländer was under the pressure of these restrictions and consequently expressive methods of transmitting the news. He further stated:

We would, however, beg to offer in explanation of this measure on his part, the fact that on several occasions where he was handed in to the telegraph office at

⁶⁰⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878.

⁶⁰⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878.

⁶⁰⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878.

Constantinople messages containing nothing had⁶⁰⁷ authentic facts he was informed that their transmission could not be sanctioned.⁶⁰⁸

As to the demand of Ottoman government for a kind of pre-examination of the news, the position of Reuter was obvious. The British agency rejected on the grounds of independent reporting. Herbert Reuter explained:

With the regard to the suggestion of the Sublime Porte, that in order to ensure accuracy we should submit our messages to the Imperial Embassy before publication permit us to explain that such a measure would be utterly impracticable compromise the independence of the agency. Whenever we may receive intelligence of a dubious character, respecting which it might be desirable to obtain more precise information we shall be happy to be permitted to consul the Imperial Embassy upon the authenticity of the news.⁶⁰⁹

Surely, it was not the response that the Ottoman government looked for. The attempts and demands to have a control on Reuter's reporting continued in the following decades. Only four months after the last attempt, the Ottoman government contacted Reuter again. The center of the problem was again Engländer. The Ottoman government was absolutely furious with the attitude of Reuter agent in Istanbul regarding "his hostile reporting" against the Ottoman State. Herbert Reuter stood behind his agent politely but staunchly.⁶¹⁰

The attempts and warnings of the Ottoman government about Engländer did not end in 1879. The Ottoman government wrote letters of complaint to Reuter because of "his false and fabricated news" in the eyes of Ottoman officials. Herbert Reuter replied that if there was any mistake, it was not made intentionally but rather accidentally.⁶¹¹ To illustrate, as also understood from the correspondences, Reuter made factual mistakes in the news on Lebanon. The Governor General of the Lebanon telegraphed to the Sublime Porte on contradicting Reuter news that disturbances had occurred out between the Druses and the Maronites; and peace and tranquillity prevailed among the different communities in the Lebanon. The

⁶⁰⁷ This Word is not clear in the letter but it looks like "had".

⁶⁰⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878.

⁶⁰⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878.

⁶¹⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 265/36, 9 April 1879.

⁶¹¹ BOA HR.SFR.3., 268/88, 11 September 1879; and BOA, HR.SFR.3., 265/38, 29 October 1879.

Governor pointed out that the mistake surely emerge from confusing Lebanon with the Houran in Syria, where a conflict had actually occurred between the Druses and Muslims as a result of abduction of a girl. The Governor asked for a correction through the Ottoman Embassy in London. In his response to Constantine Musurus Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador, Herbert Reuter accepted the error and corrected it. He said: “Your Excellency will no doubt have remarked that the error was purely accidental and doubtlessly due to the mutilation of our message in transmission. I beg therefore to enclose a copy of the corrected version we have sent.”⁶¹²

The pressure or endeavours to keep the international news agencies under control was certainly implemented for the French Havas as well. It is evidently seen in a letter of response of Havas’ agent to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1880. He wrote the letter upon a complaint against his company: He told that he had not distributed any unchecked telegram after the warning.⁶¹³

In 1888, a telegraphic dispatch of Havas really made the Ottoman government furious.⁶¹⁴ The story distributed in Bucharest was published in almost all the newspapers in the city. It was not a censored telegram because the agent of Havas sent it through the Bulgarian city of Varna. The policies of the Ottoman government were harshly criticized. For the Ottoman government, it was very harmful for the interests of the state.

The story mainly reviewed the extent of the collapsing state of the Ottoman economy. According to the story, the Ottoman government needed credit to pay the salaries of Ottoman officers and civil servants and the Sublime Porte therefore borrowed 100 thousands *liras* with seven percent interest rate. The dispatch explained the position of the government: “Like every borrower whose debt has penetrated to his marrow, the Ottoman government sees itself in safe and secure, too. However, the Ottoman State was never situated in such a heartrending and painful position.”⁶¹⁵

⁶¹² BOA, HR.SFR.3., 265/40, 31 October 1879.

⁶¹³ BOA, HR.TO., 524/73, 8 Z 1297/11 November 1880.

⁶¹⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/56, 15 Z 1305/23 August 1888.

⁶¹⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/56, 15 Z 1305/23 August 1888.

... borc iliğine işlemiş her bir medyûn gibi Bâb-ı âlî dahi kendini yine sâhil-i selâmetde add idiyor ise de Devlet-i aliyye hiçbir vakit bu derece elîm bir mevki’de bulunmamıştır...

The Ottoman diplomat in Bucharest immediately summoned the agent of Havas in the city. He rejected the content of the story and ordered for a correction by delivering him a warning. The agent explained the telegram was cabled by his colleague in Istanbul. The Ottoman government reacted very seriously. It threatened both the agent of Havas in Istanbul and the Head Office of French agency in Paris that the agent would be expelled if they distributed similar news once more.⁶¹⁶

Undoubtedly, in terms of chasing the reporters and their sources, the telegrams on the health of Sultan Abdülhamid II occupied a large place. The news reports that Sultan Abdülhamid II was psychologically sick caused big controversy since it drew the Ottoman Sultan crazy. He immediately ordered almost all the Ottoman embassies in Europe to “learn the source and motivation of such hurtful news.” In 1892, a dispatch of Reuter cited from the German newspaper *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on this issue led to a diplomatic crisis in this respect. The report mainly argued that the Sultan of Turkey was seriously ill and had been suffering from series of nervous attacks.⁶¹⁷ Sultan Abdülhamid II warned almost all his diplomatic staff to deal with this issue. Several correspondences between the Sublime Porte and the Ottoman embassies in Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna and St. Petersburg took place. The Ottoman diplomatic staff interviewed both the agents of Reuter in these cities and the directors of the British agency to find the source of this report. However, the issue was complicated and it was not possible to detect the original source in the global news mechanism.

The correspondences obviously show how the Ottoman diplomats chased the source of this news. *The Times* published the telegraphic dispatch of Reuter. The dateline of the telegram was Berlin. Upon the instruction of the Palace, the Minister of Foreign Affairs immediately requested the Ottoman embassies in Berlin and London to investigate the source of Reuter’s story.⁶¹⁸ In the enquiry, Reuter correspondent Gorven Smith confessed that he distributed the report. He also

⁶¹⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/56, 15 Z 1305/23 August 1888.

... şâyed yine böyle bir hareketde bulunulur ise buradaki muhbirinin tardının taleb idileceğinin tefhîmi zımnında Paris sefâret-i seniyyesine de telgraf yazıldığı...

⁶¹⁷ *Western Gazette*, Friday 13 May 1892; and *Western Gazette The Evening News*. 11 May 1892.

⁶¹⁸ BOA, Y..A...HUS., 260/19, 17 L 1309/15 May 1892.

promised to find the real staff responsible for this report, referring the source.⁶¹⁹ Tevfik Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador to Berlin, immediately examined and explained the incident. According to the account in his letter, the Ambassador summoned Mr Horiç, who was assumed as the reporter of the news and had a conversation with him. Mr Horiç told that he never worked for Reuter and hence had no information about the report. Tevfik Pasha also learnt that Mr Vitte, another agent of Reuter, visited Istanbul a week ago. In addition to this, the Ambassador heard that the news was firstly published in a newspaper called *Algemeine Rayher Kurspondayh*⁶²⁰ which was considered “as serving the interests of Russia.” Tevfik Pasha stated that he would continue investigations. The denial and correction of the Ottoman government were published both in the official newspaper and several dailies in Berlin.⁶²¹

According to the second letter of Tevfik Pasha, the active reporter of Reuter in Berlin was Doctor Mantele who was also the director of German Wolff agency.⁶²² The Ottoman Ambassador contacted him and asked about the issue. Doctor Mantele replied that he did not receive any report stating the Ottoman Sultan had been suffering from series of nervous attacks from Istanbul.⁶²³ He also added that he never cabled such a telegram. Ambassador Tevfik Pasha also met with Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, the Secretary of the German Foreign Affairs who would also serve as the German Ambassador to Istanbul after 1897. Baron Marschall stated, “if the source of this baseless report was in Germany he would do everything in order to punish this person rigorously in accordance with the laws of Germany.” He promised to thoroughly examine the incident. More importantly, Baron Marschall underlined, “his conviction was that news was fabricated in another country but represented as if Germany was the source.”⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁹ BOA, HR.SYS., 2867/46, 15 May 1892.

⁶²⁰ The name of the daily was written in this way in the Ottoman script. The original name might be different.

⁶²¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 259/94, 16 L 1309/14 May 1892.

⁶²² The intelligence of Tevfik Pasha was probably not true because it was not common to work for two rival agencies. There might be a cooperation to exchange or share the news.

⁶²³ The illness was described in Ottoman language as follows: *zât-ı şevket-simât-ı hazret-i pâdişâhînin mizâc-ı hümâyûnlarına inhirâf-târî olduğuna dâir...*

⁶²⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 259/94, 16 L 1309/14 May 1892.

Upon the intelligence given by Tevfik Pasha stating that Mr Vitte, another Reuter agent in Berlin, visited Istanbul, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs inquired about the issue and this person with the German Embassy in Istanbul.⁶²⁵ The Ministry also asked about what actions Germany had carried out to investigate the issue. The response of the German Ambassador in Istanbul was not cooperative and polite. The ambassador told that Germany was not responsible for uncovering how Reuter had cabled such a dispatch. In his response he forwarded the disavow that he prepared for publication in a German newspaper. The denial read:

Reuter cabled a dispatch from Constantinople about the health of the Ottoman Sultan, which is totally false and baseless. The Sultan today met and had conversation with the German Prince and Princess visiting Constantinople. Although it is well-known in Berlin that this friendly conversation and attitude are the evidences of the Sultan's welfare and perfection of health, this kind of a report is an inexcusable stupidity. This dispatch of Reuter must certainly be condemned and denied. However, it is not our duty to seek and investigate how this report was fabricated. Yet, it should not be forgotten that there is no immediate and necessary tools to stop the activities of these people who have represented Berlin as the source of these reports for their political goals.⁶²⁶

In addition to the embassy in Berlin, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also instructed the embassy in London to inquire about the source of the story as the British capital hosted the headquarters of Reuter. Baron Reuter, the founder of the Reuter agency, was summoned to the embassy in London for the enquiry of the telegram about the illness of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The Ottoman diplomats tried to learn which correspondent and editor were behind the story. Baron Reuter, whose

⁶²⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 259/94, 16 L 1309/14 May 1892.

⁶²⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/6, 17 L 1309/15 May 1892.

Reuter telgraf kumpanyası zât-ı şevket-simât-ı hazret-i pâdişâhînin ahvâl-i sıhhiyye-i hümayûnları hakkında telâşi müceb ve asl ve esâdan kâmilen ârî bir takım havâdisi hâvî Berlin'den bir telgrafnâme keşîde eylemişdir zât-ı şevket-simât-ı hazret-i pâdişâhînin elyevm Dersa'âdet'de bulunan fehâmetlü prens ve prenses "Rosafis Mayninken" hazerâtıyla bu son günlerde ale'd-devâm münâsebât-ı muhâlesat-şi'ârânede bulunarak kemâl-i sıhhat ve âfiyetlerinin delâil-i aliyyesini ibrâz buyurdıkları Berlin'de herkesce ma'lûm iken böyle bir havâdisin tasnî'i-i afvî nâ-kâbil bir eser-i hamâkatdır Ajans Reuter'in muhtezî'ât-ı mel'ânet-kârânededen olduğu muhakkak ve sûret-i kat'iyede tekzîb idilmesi tabî'î olan böyle bir havâdis ile nasıl iğfâl idilebildiğini aramak bize âid değildir fakat ba'zı mekâsîd-ı siyâsiyelerine vüsûl için bu misillü telgrafnâmeleri Berlin'den yazılmış diyü neşr iden eşhâs-ı harekât ve ilfââtlarına derhâl nihâyet virmek için vesâit-i lâzîme mefkûd olmadığını hâtırdan çıkarmamaladırlar.

name was actually Paul Julius Reuter, promised to do his best in order to reveal the incident.⁶²⁷ The ambassador narrated the conversation with Baron Reuter:

Baron Reuter brought the letter he received from his agent in Berlin. In the letter, the agent tells that he took this cursed news from Berlin newspapers. He also adds that the newspapers received this dispatch from a German telegraph company [news agency] cabled from Vienna. I insisted on deepening the investigation to uncover the original source. He replied he would do his best despite the fact the German telegraph companies were out of his potency. Moreover, Baron Reuter explained his regret since his company mediated for the publication of such a baseless dispatch. He promised to dismiss his Berlin agent. Baron Reuter agrees with the German newspapers which claimed that this rumour was a Russian contrivance.⁶²⁸

However, the incident did not occur like Baron Reuter explained according to the results of Ottoman investigation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs reached a conclusion on the issue after gathering information from the Ottoman Embassy in Vienna. The enquiry into the matter concluded that the correspondent in Berlin was responsible for the dispatch. The Minister discovered that the explanation of Baron Reuter was full of contradictions. The report was published in the Berlin newspaper *Algemeine Rayher Kurspondayh* on the 9th of May. The following day, on the 10th of May, it was transmitted to *The Times*. The newspapers in Vienna published this news on either 12th or 13th of May through citing *The Times* whereas Baron Reuter claimed that his agent cabled the reports received from Vienna.⁶²⁹

From the perspective of the Ottoman government, Reuter was not innocent, but rather it was responsible in this case. The Grand Vizier in his petition to Sultan Abdülhamid II reported that Reuter would not distribute such crucial news before it comprehensively checked its credibility. He underlined that this mistake was unacceptable for a big news agency even if the company just conveyed the story of newspapers in Berlin and Vienna. From the perspective of Ottoman government, however, Reuter acted not in this way and distributed the dispatch without checking its accuracy. Therefore the Ottoman diplomats told Baron Reuter that the distribution

⁶²⁷ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/44, 19 L 1309/17 May 1892.

⁶²⁸ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/59, 19 L 1309/17 May 1892.
...Baron Reuter bu şâyi'anın neşri bir Rus entrikası olduğu hakkında Almanya gazeteleri tarafından beyân olunan sûret-i fikr ve mütâla'aya iştirâk idiyor.

⁶²⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/59, 20 L 1309/18 May 1892.

of an unconfirmed story created regret and that the Reuter Office in Istanbul would absolutely be shut down if a similar incident recurred.⁶³⁰ The son of Baron Reuter and director of the agency, Herbert Reuter sent two replies to the warnings of the Ottoman government. He basically promised to help revealing the source and act more prudently on such news.⁶³¹

The reports of Reuter annoying the Ottoman government continued in spite of the serious warnings. In 1893, the Ottoman government sent a reprehension to Herbert Reuter because of the news cabled by Reuter agent in Vienna and published in the British newspapers.⁶³² Two months later, the Ottoman government once again sent a warning to Herbert Reuter complaining about the report on the Armenian incidents in Kayseri. The dispatch published in *Daily News* in Britain was about the Ottoman policies on Armenians. It reported that Muslims attacked the Armenian people living in this region.⁶³³

From the Ottoman point of view, the continuous and deliberate reports against the Ottoman State made Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman officials furious. Finally, the government considered to take an additional measure and to prohibit the activities of Reuter in Istanbul. In the fall of 1894, the *Daily News* and several newspapers published a telegraphic dispatch of Reuter. The Ottoman government prohibited the import of these newspapers. While chasing its source, the Ottoman bureaucrats drew attention to that “another baseless and intentionally harmful dispatch” was distributed by Reuter recently. A petition submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid II stated that the licence for these news agencies to operate in the Ottoman State was issued under the condition that “they would not cable any news which was malicious and had fake content.” The petition then suggested:

If any of them dare to deviate from any of these conditions and act in breach of these principles, then they will be subjected to violent treatment that would prohibit them distributing and publishing news. In fact, an agent of a news agency in Bulgaria was prohibited from performing his profession and he was

⁶³⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 260/59, 21 L 1309 (19 May 1892)

⁶³¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 395/19, 21 May 1892; and BOA, Y.A.HUS., 261/63, 8 Za 1309/4 June 1892.

⁶³² BOA, HR.SFR.3., 414/29, 19 April 1893.

⁶³³ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 410/78, 25 July 1893.

deported since he cabled a false and groundless dispatch. Now, a similar powerful action is required for Reuter.⁶³⁴

It is unclear whether suggested measure of prohibition was put into practice. It seems that Sultan Abdülhamid II initially approved the proposal, yet no document showing that the decision was issued to Reuter could be found in the Ottoman archives.⁶³⁵ On the other hand, it is apparent that Reuter was operating in Istanbul and its agent was in the capital just two months after this crisis as will be seen in the following case. Therefore, it is fair to argue that prohibition remained as a threat on the table without implementation.

Once more, the British agency made the Ottoman government furious with its story on Armenian issue reporting that *Bashi-Bazouk* volunteers raided the Armenian people in the east of Anatolia.⁶³⁶ The Reuter telegram read:

The Alleged Massacre of Armenians: A Reuter's telegram, dated Varna, Wednesday, says: Various accounts have reached here regarding a massacre of Armenians, alleged to have occurred in the Samoun district, near Moush, in Asia Minor. Nothing of an authentic character is, however, yet known, although it would appear that there is no question of an attack by regular troops, but rather that the villages were raided by Bashi-Bazouk volunteers, who killed or wounded a very large number of inhabitants. The British Embassy at Constantinople has sent officials to the district to ascertain the facts.⁶³⁷

⁶³⁴ BOA İ.HR., 436/53, 16 Ra 1312/17 September 1894.

... zikr olunan havâdis-i kâzibenin ajans Reuter tarafından keşide edilen telgrafname ile neşr edilmiş olmasına nazaran mârru'z-zikr ercûfe-i mel'anatkârının dahi yine mezkûr ajans tarafından tasnî' ve ihbâr edilmiş olması lazım geleceğinden ve bu nevi' ajanslara memâlik-i şahanede icrâ-yi muâmele için i'tâ edilen ruhsat hilâf-ı hakikat bir takım havâdis-i muzırta ihbâr etmeyip tarik-ı rast-gûyu ve rıza cüyiden zerre kadar inhirâf etmemek şartıyla mukayyet olarak bunun hilâfında hareket edenlerin haklarında neşr-i havâdisden men' edilmek gibi mu'âmelât-ı şedide icrası tabî'î bulunduğu ve hatta Bulgaristan'da böyle bir haber-i kâzib tasnî' ve işâ'a eden bir ajan icrâ-yi muâmeleden men' ve memlekette hârice tard edilmiş olduğundan ajans Reuter hakkında dahi buraca icrâ-yi muameleden men' olunmak misillu muâmele-i şedide icrası lâzime-i hal ve maslahattan iken...

⁶³⁵ It does not mean that there is no any document on this issue. The archives are so sophisticated. It might be revealed in the future researches if there is any one /anything.

⁶³⁶ For a comprehensive article with the Armenian incidents in these days, see: Selim Deringil, "The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed?: Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895–1897", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Volume 51 / Issue 02 / April 2009, pp. 344-371. Also, for the discussion on historiography of Armenian issue, see: Eldem, Edhem. "26 Ağustos 1896 "Banka Vakası" ve 1896 "Ermeni Olayları"", *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 5 (Bahar 2007), pp. 113-146; and Özel, Oktay. "Muhacirler, Yerliler ve Gayrimüslimler: Osmanlı'nın Son Devrinde Orta Karadeniz'de Toplumsal Uyumun Sınırları Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler", *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 5 (2007), pp. 93-112.

⁶³⁷ "The Alleged Massacre of Armenians", *Edinburgh Evening News*, 14 November 1894

In addition to this, the Istanbul correspondent of the *Daily News* telegraphed that it was impossible to obtain the correct details of the incident, yet three thousands Armenian were killed. Almost all the British dailies published the Reuter telegram and the Ottoman Embassy in London informed the Sublime Porte on the issue. The Ottoman government in response banned to import most of these newspapers, the *Daily News* in particular. Furthermore, the Ottoman officials chased the Reuter agent in Istanbul since he was the source. He was immediately summoned⁶³⁸ to the Ottoman office for questioning.⁶³⁹ Unfortunately, no document on the response of the agent could be found during this research. However, it is certain that he continued to report from Istanbul.

Just a week later, the Ottoman government contacted Reuter once again concerning the reporting of a particular case. According to the Ottoman document, Sigismund Engländer, the director of Reuter at the time, informed Sir Alfred Sandison, the First Dragoman of the British Embassy at Istanbul⁶⁴⁰ that the Ottoman State was planning to borrow through the Ottoman Bank. In his report, Engländer who learnt from different sources stated that Reşad Efendi⁶⁴¹ told someone that the government was considering borrowing. The Ottoman government immediately started to search for the source. He was Engländer who worked in Paris at the time

⁶³⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.A., 9/59, 19 Ca 1312/18 November 1894. It was described as *Reuter telgraf şirketinin Dersa'âdet'de bulunan muhbiri heman celb olunarak bu havâdisi nereden ahz ve istirâk itmiş olduğunun bi's-suâl iş'ârı ve mu'âmele-i sâirenin dahi ifâsı husûsuna*. "Celb" does not include the meaning of force but a kind of enforcement.

⁶³⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.A., 9/59, 19 Ca 1312/18 November 1894.

⁶⁴⁰ Sir Edwin Pears pointed out; next to the Ambassador the First Dragoman is the Englishman of most influence in Turkey. See: Sir Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople* (London : H. Jenkins, 1916). Third Edition. pp. 137-140.

Pears who knew him very well portrays Sir Alfred Sandison as follows: "... [He] possessed the fullness of knowledge of Turkish. The son of a Scotsman, he had been born in Turkey, lived in generally amongst the Turks, as was, to say the least, quite as familiar with Turkish as he as with English. Great confidence had been reposed in him by Sir William White and Lord Dufferin, and the only fault that I ever heard found with him was that he assumed too much authority and occasionally softened down messages which he considered likely to be offensive."

Sandison died at Constantinople in 1906 after a long illness. He was a well-known figure in Constantinople diplomatic and official society. He entered the British Consular Service in 1859, was appointed dragoman of the Embassy in 1860 and retired on pension in 1894. See: *Evening Post*, 2 March 1907.

⁶⁴¹ The document does not give any information about who Reşad Efendi was. However, He is most probably Crown Prince V. Mehmed Reşad Efendi who succeeded to throne after Sultan Abdülhamid II. since he was depicted as "devletlu necâbetlu Reşad Efendi hazretlerinin" in the document.

after he left Istanbul in late 1888.⁶⁴² Therefore, the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, Yusuf Ziya, called Engländer to the embassy to inquire about the issue. Engländer told he heard about this claim from a Syrian when he was in hot springs in France. The Syrian told Engländer that a Greek moneylender was given the task for the borrowing. However, the document contains no information about how the Ottoman officials learned about the report of Engländer.⁶⁴³

Another case that depicts the position of international news agencies in the context of investigations and pressures by the Ottoman government is pertinent to elaborate. It seems that *The Standard* and *The Daily Telegraph* published a telegram of Reuter including “damning (*melânetkâr*) and harmful content” as the Ottoman document describes. Unfortunately, the document remains silent on the theme of the report. The focus of the report might have been on the Armenian issue or Crete since the British newspaper had been devoting particular attention to these issues during that weekly timeframe. The Ottoman government swiftly summoned Mossier Werndel, the Reuter agent in Istanbul who cabled the story, to ask about the source and how he got this information. Werndel replied that he recounted a rumour that transpired in Istanbul in those days.⁶⁴⁴ He stated that he showed the irrelevance and invalidity of the hearsay in the telegram. He also demonstrated both the translation of the articles published in the British newspapers and his telegram in order to compare their contents and to prove that he was not responsible.⁶⁴⁵

The Ottoman officials questioned Mr. Werndel about from whom he received the news and how he learned it. However, he neither provided the name of the source nor did describe him. He replied, “Telling the source of these kinds of news is contrary to [the ethics and spirit of] my job, journalism.”⁶⁴⁶ The officials were

⁶⁴² Actually, Engländer was retired from Reuter in 1894. He travelled extensively throughout Europe on behalf of Reuters, ending his career as the company’s representative in Paris.

⁶⁴³ BOA, Y.PRK.ESA., 20/100, 25 C 1312/24 December 1894.

⁶⁴⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 21/91, 19 Z 1313/1 June 1896.

...kendisi mezkûr telgrafnâmede bir güne ma'lûmât-ı kat'iyeye yazmayup belki o sırada Dersa'âdetce cereyân itmiş olan bir şâyi'ayı hikâye eyledükden sonra ...

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

resolved and insisted on getting any clue. They asked whether the source was a foreigner living in Istanbul or Muslim Ottoman nationals. He replied that he heard it from people living in Istanbul and he got his news mostly from foreigners. Once again, the officials asked whether these people were Muslims or not. The Reuter agent told he had acquaintance with a few Muslims in the capital, but he heard the rumour not from Muslims. Werndel also made a defense that *The Times* published a similar report ten days before his telegram. He underlined that he defied the rumours by writing a conclusion following the account on the incidents. He reiterated that he had no harmful intentions in his telegrams and pledged to check his stories with the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁶⁴⁷

Furthermore, the Ottoman government closely followed the reports of French Havas agency and examined its sources as well. Havas cabled that Bashi-Bazouk volunteers raided the Armenian villages and Druses in Havran province in Syria looted Catholic villages. The Ottoman Embassy in Paris informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when the French newspapers published these telegrams. The government's first response was to categorically deny the news. The officials then investigated how Havas managed to cable these telegrams although they were supposed to be checked by the Undersecretary of Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The officials also tried to learn the source of these reports by questioning the agent of Havas in Istanbul. Unfortunately, there is no information regarding the questioning. The government ordered to do whatever necessary for maintaining control over publications.⁶⁴⁸

Furthermore, in 1902, a report of Havas really annoyed the Ottoman government. It reported that Sana, the capital of Yemen was captured by the insurgents, the governor of the city escaped and the people were afraid that the regular army would take away their weapons. It also stated that the entire Arabian region revolted against the Ottoman State and the treasury of the Ottoman

... bu şâyi 'a-i kâzibeyi kimden haber aldığı soruldukda bu misillü havâdislerin menba'ını haber virmek mesleğine mugâyir olduğunu söylemiş ve bu bâbda idilen ısrâr üzerine de ta'yîn-i zât idemeyeceğini kat'iyen beyân eylemiş olduğundan...

⁶⁴⁷ BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 21/91, 19 Z 1313/1 June 1896).

⁶⁴⁸ BOA, İ.HUS., 31/131, 18 Ca 1312/17 November 1894.

government has got into troubles. The telegram of Havas was published both in French and German newspapers. The Ottoman government immediately chased down the correspondent of Havas in Istanbul in order to “awake”⁶⁴⁹ him “who dared to cable such harmful and baseless stories.” The Minister of Interior, Memduh Pasha, proposed to take necessary measures to prohibit possible recurrence of such telegrams. He suggested, “The agent of Havas should be expelled. If expulsion is not possible he should be prohibited from reporting at the least.”⁶⁵⁰ However, the documents do not confirm that the agent was deported.⁶⁵¹

Following the source of “harmful telegrams” and interrogating the correspondents regularly continued in the first decade of twentieth century. In 1905, *The Daily Telegraph* published a Reuter telegram reporting that the Ottoman soldiers mistreated the villagers in Simok, Beça and Ehla during their searches. The Ottoman government immediately instructed the interrogation of Reuter agent in Istanbul since the dateline of telegram was the Ottoman capital in the story. The Ottoman officials summoned Werndel, the Reuter representative, to their office. He kept insisting that he definitely did not cable such a telegram and the dateline was the mistake of the newspapers.⁶⁵²

The Ottoman officials also examined the reports of the German Wolff Agency. In 1914, Wolff correspondent cabled the latest situation of the Ottoman State on the World War I. The Ottoman Ambassador to Berlin, Ahmet Muhtar Pasha, told the Sublime Porte not to believe these reports unless he confirmed them. Then the ambassador talked to directors of Wolff agency and asked the source and ground of their telegrams.⁶⁵³

The chasing was not limited to Reuter and Havas but also directed at other small sized news agencies operating in Europe. Agence Fournier Telegraph

⁶⁴⁹ It described as “*muâmele-i intibâhiye icrası*” in the Ottoman document. “*İntibâhiye*” means to warn and push him to awake for acting properly.

⁶⁵⁰ BOA, BEO., 1857/139209, 21 S 1320/30 May 1902.
... *memâlik-i şahane ahvâlini muhtell gösterecek işâ'ât-ı bed-hâhâne ve müfteriyâneye cüret eden mezkûr ajans Havas telgraf şirketinin Der-sa'âdet muhbiri hakkında da muâmele-i intibâhiye icrâsı muktezî olmasıyla kendisinin memâlik-i şahanedan tard ve ihrâcı ve hiç olmazsa muhbirlik ifâsından men'i için nezâret-i müşârun ileyhâ ma'rifetiyle tevessülât-ı lâzime icrâ ettirilmesi...*

⁶⁵¹ BOA, DH.MKT., 514/24, 20 S 1320/29 May 1902.

⁶⁵² BOA, BEO., 2566/192405, 28 S 1323/4 May 1905.

⁶⁵³ BOA, HR.SYS., 2402/38, 24 August 1914.

Company was one of them. It distributed that Russian Emperor passed away. The Ottoman government instructed to investigate the source of this dispatch. As usual, the Istanbul correspondent of the agency Mossier Albert was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ottoman officials questioned him about how he got this information. Mossier Albert did not give any concrete answer.⁶⁵⁴

In their quest for controlling the content of the reporting of agencies as well as news published the European press, the Ottoman government had another weapon in the form of possible legal actions, mainly prosecution, against the reporters both in the country and abroad. One of the significant attempts in this respect occurred in 1895 due to a Reuter telegram. The British agency reported that the Armenian people were preparing for a rebellion and they were getting arms and ammunition. The report made the Ottoman government furious. The government applied to the British authorities to prosecute the correspondent of Reuter. The Ottoman Ambassador expressed the determination of the Palace. However, the response was not positive. The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs John Wodehouse, who was known as Lord Kimberley, replied that it was not possible to sue the correspondent.⁶⁵⁵

In essence, at the orders of Sultan Abdülhamid II the Ottoman officials had explored whether prosecuting the correspondents of the news agencies and other journalists was possible. The Ottoman Embassy in Paris prepared a memorandum. It suggested that suing the correspondents was not a proper and right attempt to “prevent the detrimental reporting” against the Ottoman State.⁶⁵⁶ The demand of the Ottoman government to punish a newspaper in Bucharest had already been refused by the Romanian government in 1888. Remarkably, the Romanian government

⁶⁵⁴ BOA, BEO., 492/36898, 11 R 1312/12 October 1894.

⁶⁵⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 326/95, 7 Za 1312/2 May 1895. Meanwhile, it should be stated that the British authorities had double-faced practices in these issues. In 1894, to illustrate, the British government prohibited the publication of *Hürriyet* newspapers, which was published by the opposition to the Ottoman government, in London. The Sublime Porte sent its thanks to Lord Kimberley. See: BOA, Y.A.HUS., 295/21, 22 L 1311/28 April 1894) On the other hand, Lord Kimberley refused the demand of the Ottoman government in another case. The correspondents of *The Daily News* were in Erzurum, a city in the east of Anatolia where a lot of Armenians lived, in order to cover the Armenian incidents. From the Ottoman officials’ point of view, their stories were against the Ottoman State. Therefore, the government asked the British authorities to take them from there. However, Lord Kimberley responded negatively defending that the press was free. See: BOA, Y.A.HUS., 325/80, 27 L 1312/23 April 1895.

⁶⁵⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 233/29, 15 C 1307/6 February 1890.

replied that a newspaper “which published detrimental stories against the Ottoman State” could not be closed down since the press was free in Romania.⁶⁵⁷

Besides, the correspondent of Agence Fournier, Mossier Alberti faced the possibility of persecution due to misconduct in the free telegraph privilege granted by the Ottoman government. The Ottoman officials closely examined the book of accounts and concluded that there was no need to sue him since it was his assistant’s fault and he had no responsibility.⁶⁵⁸

A story published in the *Today* in London really made the Ottoman government annoyed. According to the Ottoman document on the subject, the British newspaper benefited from the Reuter telegrams, yet it collected news from different sources and published them like a commentary. An analysis of this case would be useful to see how the process worked and to understand the way in which the Ottoman government perceived the issue in general as well as the position of British government. The report was about the Ottoman policies on Crete and the Armenians, which went beyond harsh criticism. For instance, the *Today* wrote the following: “... Abdul Hamid will be able to enjoy his usual sport of Christian hunting...”⁶⁵⁹

The Ottoman government took the case very seriously. Upon the instructions of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the Ottoman Embassy in London mobilized all of its resources. The ambassador found a famous and experienced lawyer, Mosier Chearl Matiyo and had meetings with him and and the legal counsellor of the embassy Alfred Mati to discuss and determine the possible steps. They concluded that the British government could sue the *Today* on behalf of the Queen Victoria upon the complaint of the Ottoman Embassy to Lord Salisbury. It was the best option in their eyes. If the British government

⁶⁵⁷ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/81, 26 Z 1305/3 September 1888.

⁶⁵⁸ BOA, BEO., 2056/154184, 29 M 1321/27 April 1903.

⁶⁵⁹ It is useful to look at a paragraph of the news to see why Sultan Abdülhamid II went mad: “The Armenians having been all but exterminated, and the Kurds having had a good time, Sultan Abdul Hamid has evidently determined to give his faithful Cretan soldiers their turn at massacre and pillage. Of course we shall be told that it is necessary to the great cause of peace that Europe should stand by and watch the slow butchery. *The Pall Mall Gazette* young man will write his humorous paragraphs on the subject, mildly chaffing the Cretan Christians; and Lord Salisbury will explain to England that it will be dangerous for us to interfere. So Abdul Hamid will be able to enjoy his usual sport of Christian hunting, unless the Cretans prove themselves possessed of a little more manhood than their Armenian co-religionists.” See: *Today*, 6 June 1896, p. 146.

avoided taking any legal action, the Ottoman Embassy was also entitled to do it directly.

Based on this analysis, the Ottoman ambassador visited Lord Salisbury in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and submitted the letter of complaint. According to the minutes of the meeting, the Ottoman Ambassador pointed out to his British counterpart that the Ottoman government viewed it impossible that the British government would avoid suing. Lord Salisbury expressed his deep regrets about the publication and pledged that together with his government they would do their best within the legal context. However, he also added that he could not assure the desired outcome since it was necessary to transfer the issue to a committee of jury. Lord Salisbury diplomatically declined to give a positive response.⁶⁶⁰

A document which was already mentioned in previous sections within the context of chasing the source is also relevant with respect to legal attempts of the Ottoman government and to show how difficult it was to prosecute the journalists even under the Ottoman rule. It was a Havas report on Yemen which was already explained partly above. The Minister of Interior, Memduh Pasha offered to prohibit the Havas agent from reporting at the least.⁶⁶¹ The term “at the least”⁶⁶² obviously shows that prosecution or implementation of any enforcement or sanction was not easy in the Ottoman practice. It would be reasonable to argue that most likely there were several benchmarks to be met for taking these measures and Memduh Pasha was aware of the difficulty of the process.

The most significant case with regard to the chasing of international news agencies was obviously the one about Mossier Charle Jol Sandos, the Havas reporter in Istanbul. He was faced with several investigations due to his activities and connections. The first case regarding Mossier Charle Jol Sandos took place in 1902. The Ottoman Embassy in Bern reported that Sandos attended the conference called “Pro-German” in Brussels and he signed the document against the Ottoman State there. Therefore, the Ottoman government decided that it was essential to deport him.

⁶⁶⁰ The incident will be studied in a detailed way in the next subheading. BOA, Y.PRK.HR., 22/7, 15 M 1314/26 June 1896.

⁶⁶¹ BOA, BEO., 1857/139209, 21 S 1320/30 May 1902.

⁶⁶² *hiç olmazsa*

The Havas director in Istanbul immediately visited the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to ask for cancellation of this decision. The director told:

Mossier Sandos never attended the conference in Brussels neither did he sign any declaration in the conference. This mistake and misunderstanding should be stemming from the fact that he participated in a press congress in Bern. However, no political issue was debated there. Mossier Sandos believes that his rivals the aim of which is to seize his job that they envy have slandered him. He is a loyal servant of the Ottoman State and makes his best [in fighting] with regular damaging stories against the Ottoman government. I strongly believe that Mossier Sandos will never deviate from his responsibilities. I kindly request abandoning of the decision against him.⁶⁶³

After the correspondences with the French Embassy in Istanbul and the Swiss authorities, it seems that the government definitely waived the decision because Mossier Sandos continued his job in Istanbul.

In addition, in 1905, Mossier Charle Jol Sandos was accused of paying money to a Bulgarian servant of the telegraph office in Sofia to get encoded telegrams of the Ottoman State. According to the account in the Ottoman document, he fled to Sofia from Istanbul when the Ottoman government learned this transgression but he was arrested in the Bulgarian capital. He was tried by the Bulgarian court and sentenced to a year in prison because of committing the crime of bribery. For the Ottoman government, one-year prison sentence was not enough. The reason for a minor punishment was that Mossier Charle Jol Sandos was in favour of Bulgarians while he was against the Ottoman state as he confessed in the court. His son bailed him out and he left Sofia.

As to the specifics of the case, it was a common practice that almost all correspondents of the international news agencies used the Bulgarian telegraph offices to avoid the Ottoman censorship in their outgoing and incoming cable stories. However, the conduct of Mossier Charle Jol Sandos went beyond that. As the court testimonials show, he attempted to access the encoded Ottoman governmental telegrams by bribing the Bulgarian telegraph servant. The Ottoman documents provide no information when Sandos began to get the encoded telegrams of the Ottoman government. Sandos fled to Sofia right away when he learned that the Ottoman officials were aware of this misbehaviour. The Ottoman government,

⁶⁶³ BOA, Y.MTV., 236/123, 21 Ş 1320/23 November 1902.

through the Ottoman Chief Inspector in Sofia, requested from the Bulgarian authorities to detain Mossier Sandos. The police raided his hotel room in the company of a representative from the French Consulate. He accepted that the two illegal letters belonged him. Mossier Sandos was then taken into the custody.⁶⁶⁴

In the court, Mossier Sandos was interrogated about whether he received the encoded telegrams from Mossier Teodorov, the officer in the telegram office in Sofia. In his testimony he told how he recruited the officer:

A friend of mine entrusted me with the mission of spying which is to acquire the telegrams sent from the Ottoman authorities to Sofia- it might be directly to Sofia or to be conveyed to another place from there- since I am interested in the works of trade and finance. I have undertaken this mission as long as it is not harmful for the interests of the Bulgarians... I invited Mossier Teodorov, whom I have known for a long time to my hotel. I told him about my idea and intention. I got his pledge that he will not divulge our secret. I explained him whom to send the telegrams. Mossier Teodorov replied that he did not know this [receiving] person. I told Mossier Teodorov that this person would pay the money immediately after he cabled a few telegrams. Then, Mossier Teodorov asked for a time to think.⁶⁶⁵

After the testimony of Sandos, Mossier Teodorov spoke as witness. The telegraph officer confessed the offer and bribe. He explained his version of events:

Mossier Sandos has demanded all telegrams either cabled to Sofia or transferred from Sofia. He offered eight or ten francs for each telegram. He even told me that there was a great tension between the Ottoman State and Bulgaria that might easily turn into a war. I was supposed to send the telegrams through Austria if the prospects of war became real.⁶⁶⁶

Then the judge questioned Mossier Teodorow whether the demanded dispatches included the telegrams of the Ottoman State. He denied the claim by responding that telegrams of the Ottoman State were not involved. Therefore, the prosecutor expressed that Mossier Sandos would be indicted with the offence of offering bribe. The lawyer of Sandos gave information about the profession, activities and background of his client. The lawyer and Sandos underlined that he

⁶⁶⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS, 500/8, 2 M 1323/9 March 1905.

⁶⁶⁵ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 140/4, 4 S 1324/30 March 1906. Actually, the trial was in March 1905. However, the details of the testimony and supplements were sent to Istanbul one year later.

⁶⁶⁶ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 140/4, 4 S 1324/30 March 1906.

was in favour of Bulgarians and against the Ottoman government. They also added that his news stories evidently proved it. However, the judge gave no credit and did not take into consideration the testimony of Mossier Teodorov during the police interrogation in which claimed that only telegrams coming from the *Mâbeyn-i Hümâyûn* (Imperial Court) and *Sadaret* (Office of the Grand Vizier) were demanded. Finally, the judge sentenced Mossier Saldos to one-year in prison. As the decision was announced, he fainted away for a while by saying “Oh my God, what a heavy punishment this is.”⁶⁶⁷ Following the decision, his son living in the Swiss city Neuchâtel paid the bail which was five thousands francs. Mossier Saldos was released and he left the country immediately.⁶⁶⁸

Besides all these particular cases, the Ottoman government all the time closely followed the actions, networks, relationships, salaries of the correspondents in Istanbul. In this respect, Chief Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Salih Münir Bey explained the relations and salaries of almost all the significant foreign correspondents in the Ottoman capital including the international news agencies.⁶⁶⁹ After stating the salaries of Reuter and Havas correspondents, he told that the reporter of *The Times*, Mr. Valasi cooperated with Havas correspondent against Reuter. For Salih Münir Bey, Reuter did not receive correct and confirmed news every time and therefore it was not credible in Europe as much as Havas.

In 1907, more importantly, The Directorate of Domestic Press (*Matbû'ât-ı Dâhiliye Müdüriyeti*) prepared a detailed list of correspondents which includes the attitudes of them toward the Ottoman Empire. The aim was to keep an eye on them. The list is very useful to demonstrate how the Ottoman officials described the correspondents:

Agence Reuter: Its director is Mossier Werndel. He stays at an apartment whose number is 15 in Tepebaşı, Beyoğlu. His monthly salary is 90 British *liras*. He is a good friend of *Tahrîrât-ı Hâriciye Kâtibi* (Clerk at Diplomatic Translations Department) Nuri Bey and they often meet. This guy [Werndel] has an assistant whose name is Ferguson. His salary is 20 *liras*. The reports that he [Werndel] has cabled are definitely pessimistic and accursed [malicious].⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶⁷ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 140/4, 4 S 1324/30 March 1906.

⁶⁶⁸ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 139/80, 29 M 1324/25 March 1906.

⁶⁶⁹ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883]. The date of this document has been previously discussed.

⁶⁷⁰ BOA, Y..PRK.DH., 13/92, 16 Z 1324/31 January 1907.

The list mentions another company which was The Official Telegraph Agency of the Austrian Embassy. After giving the address and salary data, it provided detailed comments on the correspondent and his contacts:

His [Albertal] profession [mission] is to edit and distribute the news which is in favor of the Austrian government. It is rumored that he buys news from the [Ottoman] servants working at governmental encoded telegram departments by paying two, three or five *liras*. His assistant, Mosssier Polo, is eager to collect news regarding the Rumelia, [area of Balkans under the Ottoman domains]. He has contacts and friends at the Sublime Porte. He has two main sources for the news that he receives and distributes: the Ottoman governmental circle and letters coming from Thessaloniki.⁶⁷¹

6.4. Deportation

Deportation of the reporters and representatives of international news agencies was another instrument in dealing with them. There are several cases that the Ottoman government debated to expel some of the reporters of the agencies. However, almost none of them were taken into practice. Frequently, the Ottoman government preferred to warn the reporters and correspondents in Istanbul or the directors at the headquarters of the international news agencies as an initial measure when “a harmful news” in their eyes was published. The bureaucrats extensively debated the possible outcomes, advantages and drawbacks of any deportation. It is obvious that deportation was not a preferred practice for the Ottoman State. The

Ajans Reuter – Müdürü (Werndel) nâmında biridir. Beğoğlu'nda Tepebaşı'nda 14 numrolu apartmanda sâkindir. Ma'âşu şehri 90 İngiliz lirasıdır. Tahrîrât-ı hâriciye kâtibi Nûri Beğ ile pek ziyâde dostdur. Kendüsüyle dâimâ görüşüyorlar. Bu adamın (Ferguson) isminde bir de mu'âvini vardır. Ma'âşu 20 liradır. Merkûmun kaleminden çıkan ihbârât derece-i nihâyede bedbînâne ve mel'ûnânedir.

⁶⁷¹ BOA, Y.PRK.DH., 13/92, 16 Z 1324/31 January 1907.

Avusturya Sefâretine Merbût Resmî Telgraf Ajansı – müdürü (Albertal) nâmında biridir. Beğoğlu'nda Tomtom zokağında bir hânede sâkindir. Ma'âşının 2000 frank olduğu haber alınmıştır. Mesleği Avusturya hükûmetinin menâfi'ine yarayacak sûretde aldığı havâdisi tağyîr itmekdir. Bâb-ı âli şifre odalarında müstahdem efendilerin ba'zılarında bir iki üç ve nihâyet beş liraya kadar havâdis satun aldığı mervîdir. Bu herifin mu'âvini (Mösyö Polo) nâmında bir âdemdir. Ma'âşu dört yüz frankdır. Mezkûr zokakda bir apartmanda ikâmet itmekdedir. Rûmili vilâyât-ı şâhânesine dâir havâdisi toplamağa pek ziyâde sâ'idir. Bâb-ı âli'de tanıdıkları vardır. Havâdisi bir bu menba'dan ve bir de Selanik'den kendisine gelen mektûblardan alup virmekdedir.

Grand Vizier and ministers did not refrain from revising their decisions in this respect. There are several examples that a decision to deport was given but was not put into practice. The objective of this weapon was to apply heavy pressure on the journalists to control their work rather than deporting them.

Remarkably, the Ottoman government made a distinction between the reporters of international news agencies and the foreign newspapers with regard to the policy of expulsion. The government's perception about them diverged. The Sublime Porte was certainly aware that the roles of international news agencies and daily newspapers were totally different. The Porte was also cognizant that they needed the international news agencies for many reasons, including the rebuttal of "the detrimental stories" and publication of positive news in Europe. The consequences of deporting a reporter of a news agency and a newspaper would be different since the agencies were the main source of information for the newspapers. Therefore, they believed it was in their best interests to seek managing relations with the reporters of agencies.

The deliberations on expulsion of the agencies began in the late 1880s and intensified in the 1890s when the pressure of European press institutions on the Ottoman State increased by their seriously critical news stories. One of the earliest examples is Sigismund Engländer, Reuter representative in Istanbul. Storey narrated that Engländer faced the risk of being deported two times. Storey told:

In Constantinople, the agent of a free Press had by no means an easier time. The Sultan was no less suspicious than the Czar of public opinion inside and outside his country, and he feared and disliked Engländer - who, of course, had soon become an institution in Constantinople - for his knack of getting inconvenient news out of the country. Twice the Sultan threatened him with expulsion.⁶⁷²

It was not possible to find any document in the Ottoman Archives with regard to this issue during this research. However, Engländer was the most prominent and successful correspondent in Istanbul. He was the leading reporter in making Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman government furious which thus substantiates the account of Storey.

⁶⁷² Storey, *Reuters' Century*, p. 100.

In 1888, the Ottoman government responded furiously to the telegraphic dispatch of Havas that was previously discussed. It reported that the Ottoman government needed credit in order to pay the salaries of Ottoman officers and civil servants.⁶⁷³ The Ottoman government threatened both the agent of Havas in Istanbul and the Head Office of French agency in Paris that the agent would be deported if they distributed similar news again.⁶⁷⁴

In 1896, the telegraphic dispatches distributed in Bulgaria by the Balkanik News Agency operating in the Balkan region led to a debate in the Ottoman bureaucracy. The Ottoman government viewed the telegrams damaging as usual. The Ottoman Chief Inspector in Sofia reported that the telegrams had really negative impact on the people and ruined the minds of Bulgarians [against the Ottoman State]. He also underlined that the Bulgarian government would have deported any reporter who cabled or published such kind of news against themselves in twenty-four hours.⁶⁷⁵

The Ottoman officials looked for the most appropriate solution in this case. The Director of Foreign Press proposed to deport the agent of Balkanik and made a strong argument in this vein. For him, not to deport this kind of reporters was unfavourable and presented not a good image for the Ottoman State whereas the Bulgarian government would expel them in a day.⁶⁷⁶ However, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Pasha in his letter to the Minister of Interior, considered the proposal for deportation not a right action. Tevfik Pasha had two points. First, he stated that although the Ottoman State was entitled by all means to expel the reporters who cabled and published harmful stories against the Ottomans, it had to be conclusively proved that these reports were written and orchestrated by them. Otherwise, he warned, there

⁶⁷³ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/56, 15 Z 1305/23 August 1888.

⁶⁷⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 216/56, 15 Z 1305/23 August 1888.
... *şâyed yine böyle bir hareketde bulunulur ise buradaki muhbirinin tardının taleb idileceğinin tefhîmi zımnında Paris sefâret-i seniyyesine de telgraf yazıldığı...*

⁶⁷⁵ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 38/47, 23 R 1314/1 October 1896.

⁶⁷⁶ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 38/47, 6 R 1314/14 September 1896.
... *Bulgaristan aleyhinde neşriyâta bulunan muhbirlere cânib-i imâretten yirmi dört saat zarfında tart edilmekte olduğu halde hükümet-i seniyyece o yolda muamele olunmaması mehâzir-i adîdeyi dâ'î göründüğünden...*

would be several complaints and requirements which were the interferences of the foreign embassies.

The second and the most significant concern that Tevfik Pasha had, was the future implications of this step. In his opinion, it was certain that “they would write many harmful stories more than they cabled and published here, wherever they go if they were deported in this way.”⁶⁷⁷ Although the Minister of Interior did not agree with Tevfik Pasha,⁶⁷⁸ there is no document that confirms the deportation of correspondents. On the contrary, in 1914, the Ottoman Ambassador to Sofia, Ali Fethi [Okyar] Bey, suggested helping the said agency gain the public opinion of Bulgarian people in the favour of the Ottoman State in 1914.⁶⁷⁹

In general, Sultan Abdülhamid II was not comfortable with the stance and views of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He urged the Ottoman government to take action for finding a better proposal and solution. The government gave this task once again to the ministry, the Ottoman Embassies in Europe and Directorate of Foreign Press. It underlined that whenever the foreign embassies were notified that the reporters of the agencies would be expelled, they always replied that “the harmful news stories” were not orchestrated and produced by the correspondents of international news agencies and that they just cited the reports written and published by others.⁶⁸⁰

In the eyes of the Ottoman government, however, the Ottoman embassies could not suggest any possible solution which would work “in preventing the recurrence of detrimental news stories.” The Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Pasha confessed that the measures did not work. He reminded that the officials

⁶⁷⁷ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 38/47, 24 R 1314/2 October 1896.

... nezd-i âlî'-i âsafânelerinde dahi mustağnî'-i tarif olduğu üzere memâlik-i şahanede ve hükümet-i seniyye aleyhinde neşriyât-ı muzırıra ve kâzibe bulunan bu gibi muhbirlerin tart ve teb'îdlerine saltanat-ı seniyyece hakk u salahiyet derkâr ise de bunlar hakkında bu yolda mu'âmele icrası sebab-i teb'îdleri olacak âsârın kendi tarafından tertîb ve tahrîr olunduğunun maddeten subutuna ta'likî icâb-ı maslahattan olup aks-i hal ise birçok şikâyât ve sadâ'î müstelzim olacağına ve bu suretle dahi teb'îd olunacakların gidecekleri yerlerde burada mütecâsir-i tahrîri oldukları şeylerden kat kat ziyade neşriyât-ı bed-hâhâne ve muzırraya ibtidâr edecekleri bedihî bulunmasına nazaran...

⁶⁷⁸ BOA, A.}MTZ.(04)., 38/47, 25 Ca 1314/1 Novemver 1896.

⁶⁷⁹ BOA, DH.KMS., 30/3, 27 M 1333/15 December 1914.

⁶⁸⁰ BOA, BEO., 1133/84915, 10 Z 1315/2 May 1898.

could not find a solution to the problem that the news agencies cabled their telegrams from Sofia with the dateline of “Constantinople”. The minister stated that there was no tangible and conclusive evidence so far proving that these news stories were orchestrated and fabricated by the reporters of the international news agencies. He, therefore, underlined that the attempts of the Ottoman government to expel them would remain as a threat but they could not be implemented this time.⁶⁸¹

The next significant example is related to Reuter’s senior and long-standing correspondent in Istanbul William H. George Werndel who was faced with the threat of deportation. He was the assistant to Sigismund Engländer and replaced him in the late 1880s. He covered the Ottoman Empire and regional issues almost for three decades. Although he cabled several controversial news stories against the Ottoman State, especially his report that Sultan Abdülhamid II sent gifts to the Afghanistan Amir made the Ottoman Sultan very angry in 1897.⁶⁸² Several British dailies published the telegram arguing that Sultan Abdülhamid II aimed at wielding influence on Afghanistan.

In a letter to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ottoman Grand Vizierate stated that disclosing the people who fabricated and wrote such kind of news was essential to the interests of the Ottoman State. In fact, this measure was the instruction of Sultan Abdülhamid II. The Ottoman officials learned that Mossier Werndel, Reuter agent, was the reporter who cabled “these totally groundless stories”. The Grand Vizierate also underlined that the denial of the report would not suffice and proposed to deport him:

Fabricating news stories which do not include the slightest degree of truth and cabling them for publication denotes action and treatment against the Ottoman government. The continuation of such an attitude and conduct here is hazardous, impossible and unlawful. It is essential that the mentioned person [Werndel] should be expelled and deported from the Ottoman lands so that the

⁶⁸¹ BOA, BEO., 1133/84915, 10 M 1316/31 May 1898.

... işbu havâdisi mezkûr muhbirlerin bizzat tertîb ve tasnî' ettiklerini müsbit elde kavî delil olmadıkça bunlar hakkında tedâbir-i şedîde icrası sefâretlerce şayan ve müstelzim olub bu yolda henüz hiçbir gûna delâil-i kaviyyeye dest-res olunamamasına ve binâberîn teblîğât-ı vâkı'a tehdîd derecesinde kalarak fi'liyât cihetine gidilememekte olmasına nazaran...

⁶⁸² BOA, BEO., 1004/75299, 11 R 1315/9 September 1897.

news agency that he works for would replace him with a honest, credible and an acceptable reporter.⁶⁸³

Just two days after the *irâde-i seniyye* (the Imperial order), Sultan Abdülhamid II asked once again about what action the Ottoman government took on the issue. The Grand Vizier Rıfat replied that the report had already been denied and the order to deport the Reuter agent and replace him with a credible correspondent was conveyed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁶⁸⁴ The Minister of Foreign Affairs responded to the Grand Vizier that the Ottoman State had the right to expel Mossier Werndel and other reporters who acted “against the Ottoman rules and published news stories against the Ottoman State.” Yet, the Minister proposed to revise the order of deportation:

We have been informed to implement the order of deporting Mossier Werndel since it had been already announced that the reporters who did not obey the rules of the Ottoman government would be expelled. However, Mossier Werndel is not in the capital [Istanbul] at the moment. Furthermore, the Reuter agency has declared that Mossier Werndel did not arrange and fabricate the news story, the subject of the complaint. The agency has also told that the story was arranged and fabricated by others but the impression was created as if Werndel wrote it. Reuter stated that Werndel just reported the information which had already been written by others. If there is no concrete evidence proving that these news stories are arranged and fabricated by those journalists [including Werndel and other correspondents], the embassies will absolutely complaint and make troubles when these reporters are punished in this way.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸³ BOA, BEO., 1004/75299, 11 R 1315/9 September 1897.

... merkûmun zerre kadar esası olmayan bir şeyi bi'l-umum gazeteler tarafından nakl ve derc olunacak sûrette tasnî' ve havâdis şeklinde telgraflar etmesi hükümet-i seniyye aleyhinde bir hareket ve muâmele demek olarak bu yolda bir adımın ise burada bekâsı min külli'l-vücûh râ'î-i mehâzîr ve gayr-i câiz idüğü cihetle kendisinin kendisinin ahvâli vechiyle memâlik-i şahaneden def' ve ihrâcıyla mensûb olduğu telgraf idaresinin yerine namuslu ve mevsûku'l-kelm ve evsâf-ı makbûle ve lâzimeyi hâiz birini göndermesi icâb edeceğinden...

⁶⁸⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 376/58, 13 1315/11 September 1897.

⁶⁸⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 377/29, 3 Ca 1315/30 September 1897.

...Hâriciye Nezâret-i celîlesine icrâ-yı teblîgât ve vesâyâ olunarak ol bâbda cevâbı hâvî tevârüd iden 18 Eylül sene 313 târîhli tezkere arz ve takdîm kılındı tezkere-i mezkûrede mûmâ ileyh Verandel'in şu aralık Dersa'âdet'de bulunmadığı gibi mebâdî-i şikâyet olan havâdisi tertîb ve tasnî' iden başkaları olduğu ve kendüsi tarafından nakl sûretiyle yazıldığı ifâde olundığı gösterilmiş...” and “ .. bu gibi muhbirlerin bu yolda neşr olunan havâdis-i gayr-ı maziyyeyi kendülerinin bi'z-zât tertîb ve tasnî' etdiklerini müsbet elde bir delil-i kavî ve fi'li olmadıkça haklarında bu yolda tedâbîr-i şedîde icrâsı sefâretlerce şikâyât ve müşkilâtı müstelzim olacağıderkâr bulunduğuna nazaran icrâ-yı icâbı menût-ı irâde-i aliyye-i sadâret-penâhîleri bulunmuş olmağla emr u fermân hazret-i veliyyü'l-emrindir.

The Grand Vizier Rıfat informed Sultan Abdülhamid II of the reply of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also added that a deep and comprehensive investigation was required to find and discover the real responsible people behind “these harmful stories.” He told that the Ottoman government would work to this end and safeguard the interests of the Ottoman State.⁶⁸⁶ It seems that the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was accepted as Mossier Werndel was not expelled and continued with his work in Istanbul for more than a decade. There are several documents in the Ottoman archives proving that he was in Istanbul in the first decade of twentieth century.⁶⁸⁷

Another example of non-implementation of the decision for deportation was the case of Havas’ agent in 1902 related to his report on Yemen. As previously mentioned, The Minister of Interior’s suggestion to deport him notwithstanding,⁶⁸⁸ the documents do not confirm the expulsion of the agent.⁶⁸⁹

The case of Mossier Charle Jol Sandos, reporter of Havas in Istanbul, has already been extensively addressed in the previous part “Chasing the Reporters and Their Sources”. In the first charge of working against the Ottoman State, the Ottoman government abandoned the decision of expulsion upon the plea and assurance of Havas director in Istanbul. As a result, he went on his profession.⁶⁹⁰ The Ottoman government took into account the role and significance of relations with Havas.

Besides, there is an example that a reporter of international news agencies was deported. By the end of 1914, the agent of Havas, Mossier Alber Motyon, travelled in Anatolia to cover the incidents there. Ottoman officials believed that there was something wrong in his conduct while he was in Çorum, a city in Central Anatolia, because of his suspicious actions.⁶⁹¹ Mossier Motyon was responsible to provide

⁶⁸⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 377/29, 7 Ca 1315/4 October 1897.

⁶⁸⁷ Y.A.HUS., 461/71, 23 S 1321/21 May 1903; and BOA, BEO., 3213/240945, 22 B 1323/22 September 1905. He had already been left Constantinople in 1913. See: BOA, DH.MTV., 55/16, 1 Za 1331/2 October 1913.

⁶⁸⁸ BOA, BEO., 1857/139209, 21 S 1320/30 May 1902.

⁶⁸⁹ BOA, DH.MKT., 514/24, 20 S 1320/29 May 1902.

⁶⁹⁰ BOA, Y.MTV., 236/123, 21 § 1320/23 November 1902.

⁶⁹¹ BOA, DH.EUM.5.Sb., 83/17, 8 Ra 1333/24 January 1915.

communication between the Ottoman territory and the Havas news agency. The Ottoman officials became suspicious of letters coming for Mossier Motyon. Also, when they checked the content of the letters the Ottoman officials discovered that Mossier Motyon secretly communicated with other tools apart from regular post.⁶⁹²

Upon the instruction from Istanbul, the Ottoman officials in Çorum inspected and searched Mossier Motyon. According to the account in the Ottoman document, they found several documents about operations of the Ottoman army and navy as well as notes on the internal affairs and politics of the Ottoman State. The officials concluded that having these notes was neither in good faith and positive intent nor could be explained only by journalistic motives. The Ottoman police officials argued that it was not possible to permit anyone engaged in such kind of activities to stay and work in the Ottoman territories.⁶⁹³

The Ottoman army headquarters wrote to the Ministry of Justice also calling for deportation of Mossier Motyon.⁶⁹⁴ Therefore, he was sent first to Ankara from Corum, transferred to Istanbul by train next and deported through Alexandroupoli finally.⁶⁹⁵ Several correspondence in the Ottoman archives show that all Ottoman departments closely followed the issue. They wanted to make sure that he was definitely deported. While the Ottoman government dealt so delicately with the previous cases of potential expulsions, it seems that he was not tried and there was no objection from the French Embassy in Istanbul this time. It could also have been related to the circumstances of World War I.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned cases are the examples that involve the staff of international news agencies and do not relate to the reporters of foreign newspapers. There are also several cases about them. Regarding the international news agencies, the Ottoman government was so sensitive and acted responsibly in the expulsion. As far as discovered in this research, the Ottoman government expelled only a single reporter of international news agencies. From the Ottoman perspective, the reason for expulsion was not a “detrimental” news report, but a kind

⁶⁹² BOA, DH.EUM.5.Sb., 83/17, 8 Ra 1333/24 January 1915.

⁶⁹³ BOA, DH.EUM.5.Sb., 83/17, 4 S 1333/22 December 1914.

⁶⁹⁴ BOA, DH.EUM.5.Sb., 83/17, 1 S 1333/19 December 1914.

⁶⁹⁵ BOA, DH.EUM.5.Sb., 83/17, 3 Ra 1333/19 January 1915.

of spying activity of the correspondent. The Ottoman government was aware that they needed strong and legal evidences to expel the reporters of news agencies. It can also be argued that they took into consideration the reaction and response of the European embassies. However, the Ottoman officials used the possibility of expulsion as a threat while appreciating that it proved no solution. Thanks to their capabilities and extensive services, the international news agencies would be ready to assign new correspondents and reporters. More importantly, the deported ones would still continue to work against the Ottoman State wherever they went.

6.5. Threat of Unsubscription and Cutting Off Subsidies

Another tool and instrument that the Ottoman government had were the threat of terminating subscription and cutting off subsidies. The Ottoman State was the main customer of the international news agencies although they also sold telegraphic dispatches to the newspapers, traders and bankers in Istanbul. The subscription of the Ottoman government was vital for the survival of the agencies since it paid more for their services compared to other customers. The subsidies were also one of the main sources of income for reporters and the Ottoman officials were well aware of it. They viewed it as a threat and an instrument “in order to ‘awake’ the directors of the news agencies when they cabled detrimental telegrams against the interests of the Ottoman State.” The pertinent question is whether it worked as a measure in preventing the negative news. It seems that it was certainly inefficient and a temporary help at best. The reason was that the need for Ottoman government for the international news agencies because of denials and publishing favourable news stories in Europe went beyond their need for the Ottoman government.

In terms of particular cases, Havas correspondent in Vilayet of the Archipelago made a contract with the local authorities for the regular use of telegraph service.⁶⁹⁶ He was also granted free telegraph privilege, but the Sublime Porte ordered to cancel it two years later since the content of his reporting on political news was not in favour of the Ottoman State.⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁶ BOA, DH. MKT., 1324/40, 20 N 1295/17 September 1878.

⁶⁹⁷ BOA, DH. KMT., 1331/78, 23 C 1297/2 June 1880.

The Ottoman government closely followed whether subscription and subsidies worked in ensuring the publication of positive news stories as well as controlling the reporters of international news agencies. The government asked the press directorate to prepare the list of foreign reporters including the agents of international news agencies receiving subsidies. The reason was obvious; they continued to write against the Ottoman State. The government ordered to check their subsidies paid to them and their news stories. The subsidy of a news agency's reporter was suspended during the inquiry.⁶⁹⁸

The Ottoman government warned and threatened the French Havas in this respect in 1896. The Ottoman officials invited the director of Havas to a meeting and underlined that “there were false and baseless content” in several telegrams. They warned him to stop continue on such kind of reporting. They threatened that otherwise the subsidies of Havas would be immediately stopped. The director made a defence that they were unintentional mistakes and pledged to be more careful.⁶⁹⁹ The Ottoman government suspended its contract with Havas next year, in 1897, a measure that was discussed under the “Subscription” heading. In addition to the financial crisis in the Ottoman State, the reason for the termination of the contract was that the Ottoman government was unsure of the benefits of subscription to Havas since the “harmful reporting continued on.”⁷⁰⁰

Furthermore, in 1906, the Ottoman government suspended all subsidies and exemptions such as free telegraph privileges to the Agence de Constantinople. The government explained the decision was based on the fact that “the agency insistently went on cabling to Europe and distributing in Istanbul false news stories.”⁷⁰¹ It seems that suspension definitely served the purpose. That should be the reason why the Ottoman government resumed providing the free telegraph privilege in the following year whereas no subsidy was allocated for the Agence de Constantinople in the archives in that time. Insomuch, two years later in 1908, the government decided to cut the subsidies of other telegraphic news agencies as well.⁷⁰² However, it should be

⁶⁹⁸ BOA, Y.A.RES., 71/29, 2 S 1312/5 August 1894.

⁶⁹⁹ BOA, BEO., 818/61322, 19 S 1314/30 July 1896.

⁷⁰⁰ BOA, BEO., 928/69566, 28 L 1314/1 Nisan 1897.

⁷⁰¹ BOA, BEO., 2834/212523, 30 Ra 1324/24 May 1906.

⁷⁰² BOA, MV., 120/54 1 13 § 1326/10 September 1908.

said that the pressure on Reuter and Havas did not work like in the other agencies since their scale and capabilities were really large.

CHAPTER VII

FIGHT FOR THE NEWS: COMPETITION OF AGENCIES AND EMPIRES

M. Brun, local director of Havas' Agency, has addressed us a letter replying to the complaints made by *The [Levant] Herald* that Reuter's telegrams are intentionally delayed in transmission in order to give a priority to Havas' service... This implies that there is at work somewhere or another official influence hostile to Reuter's Agency, and M. Brun will, perhaps, favour us and the public by making generally known to what government he refers.⁷⁰³

In 1868, the above-mentioned story of *The Levant Times* was a clear indication of the competition between Reuter and Havas for distributing news in Istanbul. Actually, it was a good example reflecting the rivalry between the international news agencies from the second half of the nineteenth century to early decades of the twentieth century although this was only one of many examples. The international distribution of news, cooperation agreements between the international news agencies, their cartel structure and the competition among them have been lively debated topics for the recent three decades.⁷⁰⁴ The agreements have been explained in a detailed way in several studies.⁷⁰⁵ However, these studies fall short of an analysis based on a comprehensive examination of the Ottoman archival documents especially on where the Ottoman Empire fitted in this general debate.⁷⁰⁶ Besides the competition for gathering and distributing news, the political aspects of this struggle also need explanation.

⁷⁰³ *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*, 16 December 1868.

⁷⁰⁴ Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*.

⁷⁰⁵ Nalbach, "The Ring Combination"; Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*; and Rantanen, *Foreign News*.

⁷⁰⁶ On the other hand, it should be stated that Alex Nalbach has made useful contribution by pointing out the competition between Reuter and Havas for Constantinople in general terms by studying the Havas archives in Paris. His study really contributed to the this part of dissertation.

It is no an accident that Kent Cooper, the general manager of the Associated Press, described the European news agencies namely Reuter, Havas and Wolff, as the “most powerful international monopoly of the nineteenth century.”⁷⁰⁷ The several agreements between the European agencies to cooperate and divide the world for gathering and distributing the news according to their interests were major reasons that support his description in this respect. The cooperation of Havas, Reuter and Wolff was dated back to their foundations. The collaboration began in the 1850s just after establishment of Reuter in 1851 in London. The significant point is that the founders of the agencies, Charles-Louis Havas, Bernhard Wolff and Paul Julius Reuter, knew each other very well since they had worked together at Havas Office in Paris. In 1859, all of them agreed “to avoid competition with each other, divide markets, enter into exclusive contracts, and refuse to exchange or sell their news to rival organizations.”⁷⁰⁸

7.1. Agreements to Share Turkey⁷⁰⁹

Before telling how the international news agencies made agreements to share the coverage of the Ottoman Empire, a brief summary of the initial cooperation agreements between the international news agencies might be useful. In the first agreement in 1856, they made an alliance for an exchange of information basically on financial news such as market prices and quotations.⁷¹⁰ They then extended the cooperation with a new agreement on 7 July 1859. Henceforth, they joined their forces “mutually to assist one another in the extension and the development of the telegraphic services, in such a way to as to prevent attempts at competition and to

⁷⁰⁷ Kent Cooper, *Barriers Down: The Story of the News Agency Epoch* (New York: Kennikat Press, 1942), pp. 7-9. Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 196.

⁷⁰⁸ Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 198.

⁷⁰⁹ “Turkey” was used in the agreements.

⁷¹⁰ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 70-71; Shrivastava, *News Agencies*, p. 13; Rantanen, *When News Was New*, p. 97; and Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 198.

On the other hand, the original or copy of agreement is not available in the archives. The secondary sources accept its existence since the latter one in 1859 apparently referred the cooperation that already existed. As Rantanen points out, the authors of the primary sources did not see the agreement.

See: Rantanen, *Foreign News*, pp. 389-39.

increase the services according to the needs of the public, of the press and development of the telegraphic lines”.⁷¹¹ The agreements were renewed many times in different years.⁷¹² As Silberstein-Loeb rightly points out, the international news agencies had to seek steadily for a “balance between exclusivity and cooperation that fit with changing economic, political and technological conditions.”⁷¹³

In January 1870, the representatives of three agencies met to reach a comprehensive treaty. They had long negotiations by unrolling a map to draw the lines.⁷¹⁴ After all, they agreed on the treaty which established the fundamentals of cartel cooperation for decades. Basically, the agreement divided the world between Havas, Reuter and Wolff according to their interests. In this division, undoubtedly, politics as much as business reasons played a significant role. The agencies took into consideration not only the geographic connections, but also spheres of political influence of their home countries in sharing the territories. Reuter took the right to cover Britain, Holland and their colonies. Havas obtained Western and Southern Europe such as France, Italy, Spain and Portugal. The German Wolff received the control of Scandinavia and Russian metropolis such as Moscow and St. Petersburg. Reuter and Havas also shared the Ottoman Empire, Egypt and Belgium. Other territories were accepted as neutral. The treaty included several articles regulating the details of cooperation and exchange of news. The agreement was never published. It remained secret between the officials.⁷¹⁵

The significant point was that the territories of the Ottoman Empire became the topic of an article of the treaty between international news agencies. The tripartite agreement proposed that Reuter and Havas would share Turkey and Egypt equally in

⁷¹¹ R.A., 1/8714301. The Photostat of treaty is available at Reuters Archives. Also, see: Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 198.

⁷¹² Rantanen, *Foreign News*, pp. 37-44.

⁷¹³ Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 197.

⁷¹⁴ Alexander S. Nalbach, “The Software of Empire’: Telegraphic News Agencies and Imperial Publicity, 1865–1914”, in *Imperial Co-Histories: National Identities and the British and Colonial Press* edited by Julie F. Codell, (Madison Nj: Fairleigh Dickonson University Press, 2003), Footnote 4, pp. 89-90. The map mentioned is not available now. It might be lost. The former directors of Reuters saw it before the World War II. Jonathan Fenby, *The International News Services* (New York: 1986), 252 n.

⁷¹⁵ For the copies of the Reuters-Havas-Wolff Treaty, 17 January 1870, see: R.A., LN 446 (uncatalogued); Rantanen, *Foreign News*, pp. 41-42; and Nalbach, “The Software of Empire”, p. 68.

terms of news gathering and distribution.⁷¹⁶ Wolff had no rights on the Ottoman Empire according to this treaty. The two agencies, Havas and Reuter decided not to abandon the right of exploitation of the Ottoman territories.

Actually, in November 1869, Havas and Reuter had concluded a joint-purse agreement through which they intended to form a working alliance. Rantanen explains the details of the agreement:

The aim of the agreement was for the first time explicitly stated: “exploiter télégrammes sur tous les points du globe”. The control over news in France was solely reserved to Havas, as England was to Reuters, but in all other regions a combination of Havas-Reuters or Reuters-Havas were to operate jointly. The agreement stipulated that the profits from all sources would be divided equally between Havas and Reuters.⁷¹⁷

The main point of this contract was to establish joint offices. Silberstein-Loeb states that the “two agencies entered into a joint-purse agreement” in 1870. As part of this initiative, an agency was jointly operated in Brussels and an office was founded in Istanbul in this respect.⁷¹⁸ He does not mention which agreement was the source of this joint exploitation and gives the starting date as 1870. Most probably, it was not the agreement of 17 January 1870 but it should be the contract of November 1869 given that the joint telegrams of Reuter-Havas-Bullier began to be published in March 1870 in the newspapers of Istanbul.⁷¹⁹

Meanwhile, several bilateral or multilateral negotiations were carried out between the different news agencies to enlarge the cooperation in order to maximize their profits and interests. They were not only between the Reuter, Havas and Wolff but also included other small scales agencies of Europe. The most important ones were between Reuter and Havas. Baron Julius Reuter had the dream of a world news

⁷¹⁶ Reuters-Havas-Wolff Treaty in 17 January 1870, R.A., LN 446; and Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 200-201.

⁷¹⁷ Rantanen, *Foreign News*, p. 41.

⁷¹⁸ Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*, p. 199.

⁷¹⁹ *The Levant Herald*, 1 March 1870. Only, the telegrams of Reuter was seen in the newspaper in 1869. It continued like this until 15 February 1870. For the last two weeks of February, *The Levant Herald* published the telegrams of both Reuter and Havas separately. The title of “Reuter-Havas-Bullier Telegrams” began to appear from 1 March 1870. It went on with this title until February 1871 according the copies of *The Levant Herald*. This time, in November 1872, the titles of “Reuters-Havas Telegrams” and “Reuters-Havas Despatches” were seen. It continued like this in 1873, 1874 and 1875. The copies of 1876 and onwards could not be checked.

monopoly. He never gave up this plan through the decades in the nineteenth century. His henchman, Sigmund Engländer, absolutely encouraged and provoked Reuter in this ambition. Engländer got the licence to negotiate the purchase of Havas by Reuter. Reuter made an offer to buy Havas in 1872 but the French agency refused it immediately.⁷²⁰

The territories of Turkey and Egypt were on the target of Reuter to exploit exclusively. Upon the suggestion of Havas, the British and French agencies met to negotiate a new treaty in 1873. As expected, Reuter demanded the rights of Turkey and Greece with other significant regions.⁷²¹ The negotiations took almost three years. In 1876, they accepted to share Turkey whereas Egypt remained neutral in the treaty.⁷²² Actually, the situation of Turkey was so sophisticated and ambiguous in the treaty that would later cause serious misunderstandings and disputes between the two agencies. Although Havas had the right of operating in Turkey, Reuter would also enjoy the same right in exceptional cases.

The exception in the article six of treaty regulating the exploitation of Turkey was remarkable. Upon “for an interest of high political order” Reuter could send a correspondent to Istanbul.⁷²³ With this exception, the representative of Reuter in Istanbul would have the permission to distribute news from Reuter territories to the newspapers in the Ottoman capital. Nalbach succinctly explains what it meant:

The caveat was granted to Reuters to assist this correspondent in cultivating relations with newspapers for political ends. Because of the growing importance of the press to the pursuit of political objectives abroad, and because the agencies were becoming ever-more naked proxies of their respective foreign ministries, the treaty sanctioned a loophole in the system of exclusive spheres of influence.⁷²⁴

The fight for Turkey was absolutely related to the political developments in this era. The fate of the Ottoman Empire, which was described as the Eastern

⁷²⁰ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 179-180.

⁷²¹ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 184.

⁷²² Treaty between Havas and Reuters, 20 May 1876. R.A. 1/8818001. The Reuters Archives include the copy of treaty as unsigned whereas the French Archives has the signed version. Archives Nationales (Paris) (hereafter A.N.), 5AR 411.17.

⁷²³ Treaty between Havas and Reuters, 20 May 1876. R.A. 1/8818001.

⁷²⁴ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 191-192.

Question, was under discussion. Britain was closely interested in the future of the empire and the balance of power in the region. For Britain, Istanbul was a very strategic capital to exploit in such circumstances given that the significance of the Ottoman capital had already been seen during the Crimean War. Therefore both Reuter and Havas did not want to abandon their rights on Turkey.

The possible tension stemming from the conflicting interests and ambiguous structure of Article Six in the 1876 Treaty was not late but it occurred next year. The war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia was unavoidable because of the situation in the Balkans. Russia declared war on the Ottomans on 24 April 1877 and its troops entered Romania starting The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. Just five days before it, on 19 April 1877, Havas made a proposal to Reuter and the Continental (The German Wolff) to work together. In the eyes of Havas, it was high time to unite and coordinate their facilities and works for the three agencies in order to gather news in Turkey and Russia. The necessity for this alignment was very simple: They needed to share the costs and combine the information coming from different sources. Therefore, in the spring of 1877, Havas suggested “a system of centres which would expedite news which could not be telegraphed, highlighting its own preparations at Bucharest, Constantinople; and at Russian and Turkish headquarters.”⁷²⁵ Reuter and Continental refused the offer. It was the time for giving priority to their individual interests. Moreover, it was not only about business interests, they obviously had political concerns as well.

The tension between Havas and Reuter was ever obvious. The French agency blamed Reuter for neither keeping its promises nor obeying the articles of the contract. They absolutely needed a swift settlement. In this respect, Eduard Lebey and Baron Julius Reuter met to seek for a resolution of the problem in September 1876. It seems that Reuter felt no need for such an agreement, as it was apparent in the letter of Lebey to the son of Julius Baron, Herbert, who was the Assistant General Manager. The letter that complained about his father and explaining his negative approach read:

... all the acts of the agency of London are in contradiction with the words of your father... all your acts are hostile and sometimes worse... Tell me clearly if

⁷²⁵ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 195.

you treat us as enemies but do not profit in bringing your hostilities at the moment when we least expect it while acting accordance to the protestations of friendship of your father.⁷²⁶

At the time, Reuter took a significant step by sending his famous and senior correspondent Sigmund Engländer⁷²⁷ to Istanbul. Engländer was a kind of “General Agent” of Reuter in Europe. It can be said that he was the most significant figure apart from Baron Julius Reuter for the British agency. It is therefore necessary to give some details about this main player in Reuter, which is instrumental to explain the fight in Istanbul during that period. He was chief of the editorial department in London. He was also responsible for managing the contracts and negotiating the agreements with other news agencies and also with the British government. That should be the reason why Engländer often claimed and insisted he was the co-founder of the Reuter. In the words of Storey, “Reuter early realised that he was just the man he would need for the struggle ahead to set the Agency going in Europe.”⁷²⁸ The reason was obvious that Engländer not only had an extraordinary instinct for political news but also an access to most of different political societies in Europe. For Read, Engländer was the great gatherer of news and opinion whereas Julius Reuter was the organizer of the company. According to his colleagues, he was really an extraordinarily clever man and was most fully versed in every political question of his day.⁷²⁹ For example, one of his colleagues, Evis Scudamore,⁷³⁰ portrayed him:

He was irresistible. Engländer himself was one the most remarkable men I have ever met. A great journalist -greater I would say than de Blowitz, the *Times*

⁷²⁶ Havas to Reuters, 25 October 1876. A.N. 5AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, ““The Ring Combination”, p. 198. Translation belongs to Nalbach.

⁷²⁷ Engländer was a Viennese who fought on the side of the people in the 1848 revolution. On the surrender of Vienna after its resistance to the government troops, Engländer was sentenced to death penalty by the military regime. Therefore, he who actually was a German Jew, escaped to Paris thanks to the timely warning. He met with Julius Reuter in Havas’s Bureau when he was working as a translator.

⁷²⁸ “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes”, R.A.; Storey, *Reuters’ Century*, pp. 16-17; and Read, *The Power of News*, p. 41,

⁷²⁹ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 41.

⁷³⁰ He was the Director General of International Posts with several other titles and experiences. He came to Constantinople upon the invitation of the Ottoman Sultan to organise the Turkish post offices. See: Charles R. Perry, “Frank Ives Scudamore and the Post Office Telegraphs”, *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Winter, 1980), pp. 350-367.

Paris pride, it was he who had been the coadjutor of Baron Reuter of Hesseccassel when he founded the vast news-distributing organization.⁷³¹

In addition to his wide knowledge of politics and culture, his Bohemian lifestyle and colourful personality surely helped him in opening many doors. Besides his keen political instincts, Engländer was “equally well known as a scoundrel and a womaniser.”⁷³² His assistant and then successor in Istanbul, William Werndel, also describes Engländer, “I have a vivid recollection of the wily Doctor wearing in all weathers two flannel vests, a woollen-lined waistcoats heavy coat and trousers. I often wondered how he could put up with such attire.”⁷³³

Actually, even though it is claimed that Reuter sent Engländer to Istanbul, it is fair to assume that Engländer made the decision himself to go to the Ottoman capital. He was not just a loyal staff of Reuter carrying out his orders. He absolutely had a word in managing the British agency. When his way and practise during the negotiations with Havas and other agencies are taken into consideration, it seems that he really liked taking the wheel. He did not only implement the instructions, but he also preferred to voice his own ideas and arguments in order to convince Julius Reuter. Therefore, arguing “He appointed himself to Istanbul” would be a sound assumption. Engländer should have believed that the British agency had to be represented in the Ottoman capital during an important war. The time proved him right because the war was also significant for Europe. He stayed around 10 years in Istanbul.

Arrival of Engländer to Istanbul in the summer of 1877 heated up the tension between Reuter and Havas that would ultimately end in the court. In 1876, Havas had already sent an additional representative, Chat(e)au who⁷³⁴ was the most

⁷³¹ Frank Ives Scudamore, *A Sheaf of Memories* (London: Dutton, 1925), p. 234.

⁷³² John Entwisle, “Reuter's First editor-scoundrel, womaniser and journalist of flair” <http://www.thebaron.info/archives/reuters-first-editor-scoundrel-womaniser-and-journalist-of-flair> (Accessed 27 July 2013) Entwisle is the archive manager of Reuter Thompson Company. Piers Cain, “A Glimpse of the Archives: Sigmund Engländer” *Reuters World*, May 1990, pp.8-9; and Read, *Power of News*, pp. 41.42.

⁷³³ “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes”, R.A.

⁷³⁴ Alex Nalbach states that Mossier Chatau was sent to Constantinople in December 1876. However, he should be in Istanbul few months earlier according to the Ottoman documents. See: Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p.202; and BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

influential agent of Havas in Istanbul. He stayed for years and represented the French agency.⁷³⁵ Havas exerted a great deal of effort to obtain Ottoman government's favourable treatment for him. The General Director of Havas Mossier Levy, frequently visited Mehmed Sadık Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, to ask for assistance to Mossier Chatau. The Ambassador recounted in the letter to the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs that every state permitted Havas agency to function in their lands comfortably and they provided support for its correspondents.⁷³⁶

Besides Havas, Reuter had already sent a special correspondent to Istanbul in late 1876 prior to the arrival of Engländer. The newly appointed Istanbul correspondent, Matheus de Civiny was working for Reuter at that time.⁷³⁷ It is remarkable that both Havas and Reuter requested help for their correspondents in Istanbul during the same month of 1876.

The fight immediately began with the arrival of Engländer. The intention of Engländer was clearly to compete with Havas in Istanbul. He did not conceal his plans, but rather told them to representative of Havas, Mossier Chatau explicitly. Engländer believed Reuter had a legitimate ground for acting this way. He claimed Havas had used Reuter telegrams in Egypt for its own services, which for him was a violation of Reuter-Havas agreements. Therefore he argued that Reuter ought to have the same right in Turkey.

As soon as Engländer arrived in the Ottoman capital, he began distributing news that he received from London to the newspapers in Istanbul. Yet, he was prudent about legal risks and found his own solution in order to circumvent Havas. He distributed the news under his name instead of Reuter. His dispatches were published with the title, "Mr. Dr. Engländer, representing Reuter of London, we release the following dispatch" from July 1877 henceforth.⁷³⁸ The same practice

⁷³⁵ Frédéric, *Un siècle de chasse aux nouvelles*, p. 142. Mr. Chateau's name was written as "Chatau" in another source. See: A.H. Boyajian, *Russian Atrocities in Asia and Europe During The Months, July, and August 1877* (Constantinople: 1877), p. 86. Since Boyajian studied the telegrams of Mr. Chatau, it is reasonable to accept it as "Chatau".

⁷³⁶ BOA, Y.EE., 44/60, 11 Za 1293/28 November 1876.

⁷³⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 232/52, 18 November 1876. The letter is in French.

⁷³⁸ *La Turquie*, 16 June 1871. "M. le Dr. Engländer, représentant de l'agence Reuter de Londres, nous communiqué la dépêche suivante"

continued in 1878 and 1879.⁷³⁹ In these years, the title also underlined that the dispatches were reproduced verbatim and the possible errors had occurred in the transmission.

Engländer's approach made Havas furious. The French agency promptly communicated with Reuter and draw attention to expensive investments that it made to assure Istanbul remained its exclusive market for gathering and distributing news. The two agencies blamed each other for violating the rules of news exchange. The French agency persistently asked Reuter to take measures to stop Engländer for not to distribute any news from the reserved territories of Havas and carry out financial services in Istanbul.⁷⁴⁰

The problem was so serious. Reuter and Havas had conflicting interpretation of the Treaty of May 1876. Article six of the Treaty read:

Turkey should be exclusively worked by Havas, Laffite and Co. from a financial and political point of view but nevertheless for highly important political considerations Reuter Telegram Co. might at the expiration of one year establish a correspondent there whose powers so far as regarded the working of Turkey should be confined to the delivery to the newspapers at Constantinople of political news proceeding from territories other than these reserved to Havas, Laffite and Co.⁷⁴¹

Reuter argued that it had the right to distribute news in Turkey and set up a news agency in Istanbul in line with the exception provided in this article. Havas became furious with this explanation and condemned Reuter. Havas claimed that the agents of Reuter in Istanbul had no right to distribute news and that they could only communicate telegrams of political importance if they did not emanate from the

⁷³⁹ *La Turquie*, 13 July 1878 . « M. le Dr. Engländer, représentant a l'agence Reuter a Londres, nous communiqué la dépêche suivante que nous reproduisons textuellement, bien qu'a notre avis elle contienne des erreurs resultant sans doute de la transmission. »

⁷⁴⁰ Havas to Reuter, 10 August 1877. A.N., 5 AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 204.

⁷⁴¹ Treaty between Havas and Reuters, 20 May 1876. R.A. 1/8818001. The article six was officially translated into English during the arbitration case. It is available at Reuters Archives with other arbitration files which was dated to 1879. See: R.A. LN 73, 1/889003.

In addition the official translation, Nalbach interpreted it in the following way: "Turkey will be exclusively exploited by the Agence Havas from the financial and political point of view. However, for an interest of high political order, Reuter's Telegram Company may, at the end of one year, establish there a correspondent, of whom the attributions, in that which concerns the exploitation of Turkey, will be born, in all cases, at the remittance of the newspapers of Constantinople, of political news originating in territories other than those reserved to the company Havas, Laffite and Co." See: Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 204.

territories of Havas. The French agency warned Reuter, “We can only see in this an act of gratuitous hostility” if Engländer went on distributing Havas dispatches by free of charge in Istanbul.⁷⁴²

The warnings did not work at all. Neither did Reuter take them even seriously. The explanations of British agency were inattentive and not serious most of the time. Engländer went on his activities for months in spite of all official protests of the French agency.⁷⁴³ Nalbach explains the position of Havas:

Reuters tried to disassociate itself from Engländer, claiming that it sent Havas’ information to Engländer only for his own personal information, and that Engländer had communicated this information to the newspapers on his own initiative. Havas rejected this distinction.⁷⁴⁴

This defence was not convincing and credible when Reuter’s approach was taken into consideration. As a result, the relations further deteriorated. Engländer did not care about what Havas was saying. He distributed the telegrams directly to the newspapers in Istanbul to be published in Turkish and foreign languages as well as to the embassies, bankers and tradesmen. He proceeded in this way for at least two years until the summer of 1879. Havas had no other choice than filing a lawsuit in accordance with the arbitration mechanism in the treaty. However, Reuter’s strategy was to play for time.

The two agencies began to talk for the modalities of arbitration in February 1879. The meeting did not take place until June 1879 because of the conflict on appointing a sur-arbiter. Reuter rejected the proposal of Havas for Richard Wentzel of the German Continental as the sub-arbiter. After long discussions, they agreed on Alphonse Willemaers, a lawyer of the court of appeals in Brussels as the third member of the tribunal besides Frederick Griffiths of Reuter and Edouard Lebey of Havas. The three arbitrators met on 20 June 1876 in Brussels. They made tight

⁷⁴² Havas to Reuter, 3 August 1877. A.N., 5 AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 211.

⁷⁴³ Havas to Reuter, 25 October 1877. A.N., 5 AR 6. Quoted in Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 211.

⁷⁴⁴ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 205.

discussions and examined all the articles of the treaty. The result was in favour of Havas. They concluded that content of article six as formal and absolute.⁷⁴⁵

Engländer neither welcomed the decision of arbitration nor did respect the conclusion in practice. He went on distributing telegraphic dispatches not only from London but also from reserved Havas territories such as France, Russia and Egypt. It was clear violation of the rules and conclusion of the arbitration despite the warnings of Reuter. Engländer created and designed a kind of subterfuge mechanism to legitimize his own activities in distributing news of Havas or territories outside Reuter. The solution that he found was to send reports in the newspapers of Istanbul to the headquarters of Reuter in London and then retransmit those dispatches for Turkish customers citing the British newspapers as his source.⁷⁴⁶ As understood from the Ottoman newspapers, it seems that it was just a way of justification in theory rather than in reality. In practice, he distributed the information of Havas as he received them from the British press.

Reuter evidently played a double game in this process. Although Reuter instructed Engländer to obey the conclusion of arbitration, the British agency continued to send dispatches to Engländer while it did not provide those news to agent of Havas in Istanbul. The agency did not provide full service to Havas in spite of its clear commitments.⁷⁴⁷ The attitude and activities of Engländer enraged Havas. It informed Reuter once again stating, "... Since arriving at Constantinople appears to have taken up the task of injuring the business of a company which has treaties of friendship and even to a certain extent joint business with yours [Reuter's]".⁷⁴⁸

In spite of continued Havas' protests, Reuter went on to give the same response, arguing that it was Engländer who personally violated the treaty. The British agency also expressed it was preparing to totally prohibit Engländer distributing news and stop all of his activities if he continued in the same way. Havas was not satisfied with this response and questioned Reuter about the sort of measures

⁷⁴⁵ "Sentence Arbitrale", 20 June 1879. R.A., 1/850738.

⁷⁴⁶ Havas to Reuter,, 9 September 1879. A.N., 5AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 207.

⁷⁴⁷ Havas to Reuter,, 9 and 29 September 1879. A.N., 5AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 207.

⁷⁴⁸ Emard to Reuters, 9 September 1879, A.N., 5AR 63. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 208.

the British agency took. Further, Havas asked for another arbitration in January 1880.

The response of Reuter was disturbing:

To you, it is as if our treaty did not exist. You have the right to communicate in Turkey only news originating in territories belonging to you: you distribute the news of all countries. You have the right only to transmit them to the newspapers of Constantinople: you transmit them to ministries, to embassies, to everyone. There are twenty letters which we have addressed to you on this subject: nothing is done about it.⁷⁴⁹

Under the circumstances, Havas had no choice other than asking for Engländer leave Istanbul. Havas reiterated the demand for second arbitration, yet Reuter paid no attention to it. The French agency insistently claimed for the recall of Engländer from the Ottoman capital or compensation for its losses and costs. On the contrary, Reuter made a proposal for the joint exploitation of the Ottoman Empire like in Egypt but Havas obviously refused the offer.

By examining Havas archives and following the correspondence between Havas and Reuter on this issue, Nalbach states that Engländer seemed to have abandoned his news distribution for the Ottoman press in the winter of 1880-1881 and recommenced distribution in the spring of 1881.⁷⁵⁰ The examination of *La Turquie* newspaper published in Istanbul confirms that only Havas distributed news from the beginning of 1880 until May 1882. Afterwards, Engländer went on distributing news for the Ottoman newspapers until his departure in 1888. His assistant after 1883, William H. G. Werndel told how the system of Engländer worked in the Ottoman capital:

Besides the news-service for London, Dr. Engländer insisted on publishing a news-service in Constantinople notwithstanding the fact that Turkey came within the bounds of activity of the Havas Agency for the propagation of the news locally. There were I believe, protest from Havas, but these were overcome finally by our news being published under the name of Dr. Engländer, the name 'Reuter' not appearing. Although this service of telegrams was a restricted one, and entailed a loss financially, nevertheless, it proved of value as a means of propaganda besides enhancing our moral position and prestige in this part of the world... Dr. Engländer was naturally proud of his achievements in that respect, especially after his successful struggle with

⁷⁴⁹ Havas to Reuters, 8 February 1880. A.N. 5 AR 63 in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 208.

⁷⁵⁰ Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 208.

headquarters in London, convincing the latter of utility and value to the Company of a service to Constantinople.⁷⁵¹

Werndel confirms the way that Engländer discovered in order to circumvent Havas by distributing the news under his name instead of Reuter. As previously mentioned, his dispatches were published with the title of “Mr. Dr. Engländer, representing Reuter of London, we release the following dispatch” after May 1882.⁷⁵² Meanwhile, Engländer never ceased cabling news stories to London on the Ottoman Empire during his term in Istanbul including 1880 and 1881. The British newspapers regularly published the dispatches of Reuter.

7.2. Competition in Istanbul

In Istanbul, the competition and rivalry between Havas and Reuter on the ground in order to distribute telegraphic dispatches had begun at the level of correspondents much earlier than the headquarters of the agencies. The speed was the most significant point in this competition, that is to say receiving telegrams earlier than the rival was critical for a news agency. In order to distribute the news faster than the others, the correspondents of agencies needed to have good relations with the Ottoman Telegraph Authority and their civil servants.

As expectedly, the first dispute among the correspondents of the news agencies occurred in the precedence in the Ottoman telegraph offices in receiving telegrams from their headquarters in London and Paris. It seems that Havas Bureau in Istanbul had friendly business relationship with the Ottoman telegraph servants. A complaint by *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin* in August 1868 reveals the preferential treatment for Havas. It was a problem between the newspaper and Havas, but the former was in cooperation with Reuter at the time. As stated in the story, Havas’s Pera agent set up a branch in Istanbul. His messages were now delivered to his subscribers in advance of all others. The result was that while the despatches had a privileged treatment and came in without any delay in five to ten minutes from Pera,

⁷⁵¹ William H.G. Werndel to Managing Director, 21 February 1919 in “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes,” R.A.

⁷⁵² *La Turquie*, 2 May 1882. “M. le Dr. Engländer, représentant de l’agence Reuter de Londres, nous communiqué la dépêche suivante”

other messages -even though deposited in the latter Office before them- frequently were not delivered earlier than one to two or even three hours. In the eyes of *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, it was “confer a favour on many of our local merchants by calling attention to an abusive privilege accorded here by the Telegraph authorities to Havas’s agent, to the detriment of the general public”. The newspaper therefore called for explanation from Feizi Bey, probably the official in charge of telegraph issues:

This favouritism has occasioned great public dissatisfaction, and on inquiry at the Telegraph Office it has been ascertained that a special order has been received from headquarters directing that Havas’s messages should have precedence every morning over all others from private sender, and that for this reason the line is not opened to the public until Havas’s morning despatch has been completed. Surely this is an abuse. In Turkey it may not be considered so, but by calling attention to the facts you may perhaps at least elicit some explanation of a fact which would be so regarded anywhere else.⁷⁵³

The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin did not publish any response by Ottoman officials. An inquiry into the matter was made, but there is no information about its scope and conclusions. The conflict between Reuter and Havas continued until the end of year. As understood from the story, *The Levant Herald* persisted in complaining on this issue. *The Levant Herald* argued that Reuter’s telegrams were intentionally delayed in transmission in order to give precedence for Havas’ service. Therefore, Mossier Brun, local director of Havas’ Agency, sent a letter to *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* in December 1868. Mossier Brun told that Havas’ despatches were always ahead of Reuter’s in point of time and that there could be no question regarding it. *The Levant Times* recounted the disagreement:

On the cause of this difference -often one of no less than three or four days- M. Brun throws no light, we merely learn from his that an enquiry has been made the result of which has shown “what government is to be complained of”. This implies that there is at work somewhere or another official influence hostile to Reuter’s Agency, and M. Brun will, perhaps, favour us and the public by making generally known to what government he refers. The “attacks” M. Brun refers to were really, as it seemed to us, directed against the Turkish Telegraphic Administration, which was charged with giving a most unfair preference to Havas’ Agency. If Havas does get such an advantage, we

⁷⁵³ “The Smyrna Telegraph,” *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, 10 August 1868, p1.

ourselves- sufferers as we are- cannot complain of his Agency making the most of it.⁷⁵⁴

The Levant Times also stated that the disagreement was between Reuter's Company including its subscribers and the imperial Telegraphic Administration. The Telegraphic Administration apparently did not deem it worthwhile to vindicate itself from the charges. With regard to the services of Reuter, the daily declared that it trusted the Administration:

We are satisfied that the company's representative here does the best he can under the circumstances, and having had his assurance that the causes of the delay- whatever they may be- in the transmission of its despatches would very soon be removed, we have not ourselves been prou⁷⁵⁵ to grumble publicly on the subject.⁷⁵⁶

The method of Havas in distributing news also created discomfort in Istanbul. The French agency did not distribute the news to all of its subscribers at the same time. It was a serious problem especially for economy and stock market news.⁷⁵⁷ While Reuter refused the preferential distribution, it ruined the business of Havas. With Reuter's entry into the distribution of news in Istanbul, the services of agencies became more regular and competitive.

The competition had a break in 1870 owing to the treaty between Havas and Reuter in order to establish a joint agency in Istanbul. The title of "Reuter-Havas-Bullier Telegrams" began to appear from 1 March 1870. It continued the same way until February 1871 according the copies of *The Levant Herald*. The titles of "Reuter-Havas Telegrams" and "Reuter-Havas Despatches" also appeared in November 1872 and continued in the same way from 1873 to 1875.

An additional aspect of the competition between the international news agencies was accusing their rival agencies for illegal activities by informing. Although they looked as very simple incidents, *journals* (a report of an informer) were very significant in the way that Sultan Abdülhamid II governed the country.

⁷⁵⁴ *The Levant Times and and Shipping Gazette* 16 December 1868.

⁷⁵⁵ It was written in this way in the text.

⁷⁵⁶ *The Levant Times and and Shipping Gazette* 16 December 1868.

⁷⁵⁷ Koloğlu, *Havas-Reuter'den*, p.10. There were also some debates and stories in Istanbul newspapers regarding this issue. To illustrate, see: *La Turquie*, 7 February 1871.

Therefore, denouncing a rival was an important tool in local competition given that the Ottoman government took action against the accused agency by applying pressure and launching investigations. There are several cases in this respect.

To illustrate, the Ottoman officials detected that Agence de Constantinople succeeded to receive telegrams from Europe by preventing them from any kind of censorship and that they distributed the telegraphic dispatches to their subscribers. Someone denounced this case to the Ottoman authorities.⁷⁵⁸ Even though there is no clear evidence confirming that Havas was behind it, the Ottoman officials believed that it came from the rival agencies. In 1880, the Ottoman government sent a notice to correspondents of the international news agencies in Istanbul instructing to release no telegram received through the Ottoman telegraph offices. Someone made a complaint against Havas blaming that the French agency did not obey this regulation, but the agent of Havas refused the accusation. In his letter to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he also he blamed his rivals claiming that they sent non-permitted news to Europe through post.⁷⁵⁹ Furthermore, whenever the Ottoman government initiated an investigation against them, it was a common practice for the agents of international news agencies to make a defence that they were subjected to smear campaign from their rivals. The story about Mossier Charl Jol Sandos, reporter of Havas in Istanbul Istanbul, explained in previous chapter is a case in point.⁷⁶⁰

7.3. Push to Detach Havas from Istanbul

The cooperation and alliances between the news agencies were not independent from the political developments and balance of power in Europe and but closely interlinked with them. The tensions between the Great Powers naturally raised problems within the news agency alliance. The relations between the agencies and their governments were increasingly fortified. The political developments became an important and even evolved into a determining factor for a new set of

⁷⁵⁸ BOA, DH.MKT., 1676/35, 28 RA 1307/22 November 1889.

⁷⁵⁹ BOA, HR.TO., 524/73, 8 Z 1297/11 November 1880.

⁷⁶⁰ BOA, Y.MTV., 236/123, 21 Ş 1320/23 November 1902.

... Mösyo Jul Sandoz'un hal ve mevki'ine hasedkeş ve me'mûriyetini iğtisâba müterassıd-ı fırsat olan Dersa'âdet'deki rüfekâsından ba'zıları tarafından iftirâya uğradığı zannında bulunduğunu beyân itmiş...

alliances better suited to the interests of the great powers and the profits of the agencies. In the words of Nalbach, the relations between the agencies “were becoming a function of the relations between the powers”.⁷⁶¹

In 1886, Sigmund Engländer, the political mastermind of Reuter, visited several capitals in Eastern Europe to recruit their own correspondents since the significance of these cities was increasing. After his meetings and contacts, he concluded, “In all circles at Vienna and at Sofia, I was told in plain language that Havas was viewed as a black spot which tarnished the prestige of our agency.”⁷⁶² He wrote his observations and proposals to Herbert de Reuter. It was now Reuter questioning its long established ties with Havas.

Engländer believed that a rapprochement might be possible between Britain and Germany based on their mutual opposition to Russia. Engländer foresaw that Reuter could become “the intermediary between public opinion in Britain and Germany” if it was not overly associated with Havas, which he believed had become the naked pawn of French diplomacy. The role of Havas for France was a common knowledge. As far as Engländer stated, the Ottoman Minister for Post and Telegraph knew very well that France used the foreign offices of Havas to inform its representatives. Further, the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Stefan Stambulov acknowledged that Havas “certainly reflected the tendencies of France for Russia.”⁷⁶³

After long visits, meetings and negotiations, Engländer took a significant step in fight with Havas in February 1889. Reuter, Continental of Germany and Correspondenz-Bureau of Austria agreed on a protocol proposing a common fight against Havas in Turkey, Romania, Greece, Italy and Belgium. These were the cities

⁷⁶¹ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 285.

⁷⁶² Engländer to H. de Reuter, 12 October 1886. Quoted in Michael Palmer, “L’Agence Havas et Bismarck: l’échec de la Triple Alliance télégraphique (1887-1889)”, *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* (July-December 1976), p, 337. The letter was in English but it was re-translated from French owing the loss of original copy.

As Alex Nalbach pointed out, the original correspondence between Sigmund Engländer and Herbert de Reuter has been lost from the Reuters Archives. The Reuters official historian Donald Read and the Reuters Archive manager John Entwisle could not find the letter book Engländer. Professor Palmer had researched and benefited from the letter book before it disappeared. Nalbach “explicitly acknowledged the heavy debt of his chapter to Palmer’s study.” See: Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 285.

⁷⁶³ Engländer to H. de Reuter, 12 October 1886. Quoted in Michael Palmer, “L’Agence Havas et Bismarck”, p, 338.

that Reuter and Havas had serious conflicts.⁷⁶⁴ Obviously, the core of Engländer's effort was not only for Turkey but also for the Balkan cities.

Next month in March 1889, Engländer and Hahn representing Correspondenz-Bureau elaborated the plan regarding how they would work in Istanbul. They reached an agreement to form a news agency named the Agence Orientale to operate in Sofia, Athens and Istanbul.⁷⁶⁵ The plan included the following steps: The Sofia bureau would begin its activities in July by the agent of Reuter, William H.G. Werndel, Engländer's assistant in Istanbul. The two agencies would also request Bulgaria's approval for free telegraph rights.

According to the plan for Istanbul, the bureau, with the title of "Agence de Constantinople" would start as of 1 October 1889 under the Reuter agent Maffei and the correspondent of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, Julius Grosser in the Ottoman capital. Grosser was given the task to ask for free telegraphic privileges as well as official subscription of the Ottoman government. Further, Reuter agents and Austrian diplomatic and consular representatives in the region would be responsible to contribute to this new branch. Taking into account that Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stood behind the Correspondenz-Bureau, Nalbach prefers to say "[they] would be placed at the disposal of the Constantinople service."⁷⁶⁶ The plan also proposed to make contracts with newspapers with limited financial assets on reasonable fees in order to win the subscribers of Havas.

The plan regarding Istanbul was successful taken into effect in the fall of 1889. The wife of Julius Grosser, Anna Grosser Rilke, stated that the agency began to operate in September 1889.⁷⁶⁷ The first Ottoman archival document discovered in this dissertation on the topic dates back 25 December 1889. It was not described as the "Agence de Constantinople" at the time. It was a privilege granting free telegraphy since the correspondent of *Kölnische Zeitung* Julius Grosser sent

⁷⁶⁴ Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", pp.304-306.

⁷⁶⁵ The negotiations between Engländer and Hahn are available at Reuters Archive in the file of "Read Papers". Vienna, 17 March 1889..

⁷⁶⁶ Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 307.

⁷⁶⁷ Anna Grosser Rilke, *Avrupa Saraylarından Yıldız'a: İstanbul'da Bir Hoş Sada* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2009), Translated by Deniz Banoğlu, p. 162.

telegrams in favour of the Ottoman State.⁷⁶⁸ The definition of Agence de Constantinople entered into use towards the end of 1890 for the first time in the Ottoman documents.⁷⁶⁹

The plan successfully proceeded. The agency succeeded to get both free cabling rights and the subscription of the Ottoman government. Furthermore, the newspapers in Istanbul trusted in the services of Agence de Constantinople and benefited from it until the late 1910s. Agence de Constantinople absolutely gained a significant ground and role in the Ottoman press. Its service regularly continued for decades and it was also operational during World War I. When Julius Grosser passed away, his wife Anna Grosser Rilke continued with the mission.⁷⁷⁰

Havas in Istanbul really run into difficulty with the advent of Agence de Constantinople. The German diplomatic documents argue that Havas transferred its subscribers to newly established Agence de Constantinople and formally left the Turkish market.⁷⁷¹ It seems that it was not the case at all when the date in the German report, 24 August 1889, is taken into consideration. Agence de Constantinople was just set up at that time. Evidently, Havas had many subscribers in the Ottoman press and the Sublime Porte also worked with Havas. The point is that the new agency really undermined Havas' strong position in Turkey. That was the reason why the French Ambassador Gustave Louis Lannes Montebello got worried:

I must insist [...] upon the interest which attends, from the point of view of French interests in the country, the fact that the telegraphic news from abroad continues to be punished by the intermediary of a French agency. The succession of the Agence Havas in Turkey will be inherited by a company composed of Germans, Austrians, Italians and Englishmen. Naturally the embassy will have for the future no power an agency directed by political adversaries who seek to spread in the public news of an anti-French tendency. The Sultan and the Porte, who are so easily roused by the telegrams sent from Europe, will be constantly under unfavourable impression from rumours propagated with the intention of injuring us.⁷⁷²

⁷⁶⁸ BOA, Y.A.RES., 50/10, 2 Ca 1307/25 December 1889.

⁷⁶⁹ BOA, DH.MKT., 1785/96, 14 R 1308 /27 November 1890.

⁷⁷⁰ Rilke, *Avrupa Saraylarından Yıldız'a*, p. 281.

⁷⁷¹ German Legation (Constantinople) to German Foreign Office, 24 August 1889, P.A./A.A., Europa Generalia No 86, Band 6. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 320.

⁷⁷² Montebello (Constantinople) to Spuller (French Foreign Minister), 8 September 1889. A.M.A.E., Correspondence politique, Turquie. Quoted in Palmer, "L'Agence Havas et Bismarck", pp. 331-332. For the translation, see: Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 320-321.

Upon the letter of Ambassador Montebello, French Minister of Foreign Affairs Eugène Spuller immediately went into action and asked Havas not to abandon the services in Istanbul.⁷⁷³ Despite all attempts against Havas, the French agency stayed in Istanbul until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government bought its services in the 1890s. It was not easy to break the practices and habits of the Ottoman press since they were dependent on the French agency for decades. In addition, Reuter had its own agent in Istanbul regularly. The British agency made occasional contracts with the Ottoman government many times.

Surprisingly, the political developments brought together Havas and Reuter in Istanbul once again in the end of the World War I. The two agencies established Agences Le Turquie-Havas-Reuter (Turkey-Havas-Reuter Agency) after the occupation of Ottoman capital by the Allied Forces, namely Britain, France and Italy in November 1918. The agency was mandated to work for the interests of Allied Forces. Actually, it was not a new agency, but rather the Ottoman National Telegraph Agency was converted into Agences Le Turquie-Havas-Reuter and remained in service until 1922.

When it comes to the position of Wolff, the German Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck was clearly discontented with the dominance of Havas and Reuter in the Ottoman Empire. He wanted to break this monopoly given that the Ottoman Empire was increasingly becoming an issue of international crisis. From the perspective of Bismarck, France had the control over the Orient including Istanbul with anti-German bias since Havas had the right of cabling news from the Ottoman capital and distribution of news as well. However, it was very difficult to detach France from Istanbul due to the fact that it required a re-alignment and treaty with Reuter and Havas to share the world news distribution.⁷⁷⁴ Anyone who wanted to circumvent the dominance of Havas in Istanbul had to collaborate with Reuter. Having the same goal, Reuter cooperated with Correspondenz-Bureau of Austria that resulted in establishing a joint news agency, Agence Orientale, in 1889.⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷³ Havas to Havas/Vienna, 1 October 1889, A.N., 5AR 148.

⁷⁷⁴ Gummer, "The Politics of Sympathy", p. 110.

⁷⁷⁵ Meanwhile, Gummer states that Austrian and German officials discussed establishing a "Correspondence Orientale" and the *Viennese Politischer Korrespondenz* founded a bureau in

The discontent of Germany is apparently seen in the memoirs of Anna Grosser, the wife of Julius Grosser who took the lead of establishing the joint news agency, Agence de Constantinople. She reflects the project as her husband's plan:

My husband's plan to establish a news agency [in Constantinople] materialized in these days [September 1889]. Until that day, the only source sending news by telegraph to the newspapers published in Constantinople was the Havas Agency in Paris; and therefore [the news] were naturally under the effect of France and they had French perspective. My husband had an idea of reducing this influence to the extent possible. ... It aimed at working for the interests of Germany. This was really a great and big initiative. It was also politically significant since it aimed to decrease the widespread influence of France."⁷⁷⁶

The penetration of Germany in order to expand its influence on the Ottoman public opinion increasingly intensified in the last decade of nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries given that the Ottoman and German got closer for an alignment. The competition of Wolff with others was not as tough like Reuter and Havas had in the 1870s and the 1880s in Istanbul. The German agency mainly followed the policies of its respective empire by close contacts with German diplomats in the Ottoman capital.

7.4. Political Role of Agencies for Their Homeland States

The goal of this dissertation is not to prove that the international news agencies were the proxies and agents of their homeland states. However, the relations of agencies with their homeland states vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire should be examined and explained in order to have a better understanding of their activities and roles in the Ottoman lands. There are several quotations, cases and examples showing that the international news agencies were supported, subsidised, directed or even instructed by their governments. This issue has been discussed and

Constantinople in 1890 in this respect. It is not clear whether the new bureau was Agence Orientale or not. Gummer also describes the "Agence de Constantinople" as "an arm of the Politischer Korrespondenz", the Viennese wire-service run by the Austrian Ministry of Trade and Finance. It is not clear whether the new bureau was Agence de Constantinople or not but it seems that they were different. The latter was founded in 1899 which has been told in the previous pages in this chapter.

See: Gummer, "The Politics of Sympathy", p. 113 and 148.

⁷⁷⁶ Rilke, *Avrupa Saraylarından Yıldız'a*, p. 162.

demonstrated in several studies in a detailed way.⁷⁷⁷ It is useful to outline some cases just to confirm the point before delving into the cases in the Ottoman Empire.

The relationship between the British Empire and Reuter, which was accepted as an “imperial institution”, was obvious. Read describes:

Rapidly from the 1850s Reuters had become accepted as a semi-official national and imperial institution. Revealingly, by the end of the century it was calling itself a ‘service’, and senior staff in London and overseas began to be described as ‘officers’. Reuters pictured itself as operating in parallel with the dome and colonial civil services...⁷⁷⁸

Reuter especially worked in India and Pakistan as an imperial institution as of its early years. The government of India was paying the Reuter agent in Karachi to deliver telegraphic dispatches to British imperial officials in 1867. The description of paying was subscription in that time. In 1873, it became “subsidy”. In Nalbach’s words, the agency “itself seemed unashamed of the expression.”⁷⁷⁹ Reuter asked the increase of this subsidy and succeeded it in the following years. The content of Reuter was clearly recorded in the Minute Book of the agency in 1879 with the doubling of “the subsidy granted to the Company”.⁷⁸⁰

In addition to close relationship with the British Empire starting from its early years, the Reuter set up an “imperial service” in the 1910s. The British Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith managed to pay for reporting ministerial speeches at much longer than normal through the service of Reuter by subsidizing it in 1911. The British government took care of concealing these subsidies. The correspondence between F.W. Dickinson, the managing editor and Roderic Jones, the general manager in South Africa clearly reveals this fact. The letter of Dickenson to Jones states:⁷⁸¹

⁷⁷⁷ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”; and Silberstein-Loeb, *The International Distribution*.

⁷⁷⁸ Read, Donald. “Reuters: News Agency of British Empire”, *Contemporary Record*, (1994) 8(2) p. 211.

⁷⁷⁹ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 178.

⁷⁸⁰ The date of record in the Minute Book is 18 June 1879. Read, *The Power of News*, pp. 60-63 and Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, pp. 178-179. Further, Read comprehensively explains that Reuter provided the special service of news to the Indian government during the Franco-Prussian War. Read, *The Power of News*, p. 93.

⁷⁸¹ Read, “News Agency of British Empire”, p. 205.

It is a great advantage to us to act on these occasions as the hand-maid of the Government. Our doings so strengthens our position in this country very considerably, and, at the same time, it shows to those in authority, who have it in their power to be agreeable or disagreeable to ourselves, that our great organization can be of infinite value to them.⁷⁸²

The role of Havas for France was more evident when compared with Britain-Reuter case. The agency was voluntarily ready for the directives of French government. For example, Havas played a significant role in favour of France during the war with Prussia in 1870 and 1871. The note of Havas for the French Ministry of Interior told: “We did not wish to make a business of this service. We wished to do all that was in our power to make French propaganda abroad [...]”⁷⁸³

In this respect, Havas sent to the foreign agencies long and detailed telegrams with double addresses, “Minister of France” and the name of the agency. The foreign agencies were not happy and complained about this practice. They stated that they could not meet the costs of telegrams, which was actually true. As stated in the note, it was the strategic plan of French agency. Havas had foreseen the situation before beginning the service. Subsequently, Havas distributed the telegrams free of charge stating that the costs of telegrams would not put on the account of foreign agencies. The conclusion of this plan was a great victory for France. Havas note narrates: “We succeeded, however, in maintaining this publicity favourable to France everywhere, without, we repeat, having anything to pay to the agencies nor to ourselves, the advantage being limited to the free delivery.”⁷⁸⁴

Further, the status of Havas was remarkable and well-known during that period in both government and media circles. The correspondent of *Times* portrayed it very simple. In his eyes, Havas “is entirely at the orders of the government of the day and

⁷⁸² Dickenson to Jones, 4 July 1910. RA. Quoted in: Read, “News Agency of British Empire”, p. 205.

⁷⁸³ Unsigned Havas note “recommandé à l’attention de M. Le Ministre de l’Interieur B. St. Hilaire”, 27 January 1873. A.N., 5 AR 486. Quoted in Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 171.

⁷⁸⁴ Unsigned Havas note “recommandé à l’attention de M. Le Ministre de l’Interieur B. St. Hilaire”, 27 January 1873. A.N., 5 AR 486. Quoted in Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 171.

suppresses or colours what is disagreeable to them. In return they give him facilities which are unfair to other journalists.”⁷⁸⁵

In addition, Charles Rouvier, who was the former director of Havas’ political news at the National Parliament and later became the head of new *bureau de press* of the Quai d’Orsay,⁷⁸⁶ prepared a report for the French Premier Waddington. After he explained the role of news agencies given his familiarity with their practices, he underlined that Agence Havas should be “an indispensable auxiliary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” not only for French propaganda at abroad, but also for domestic press. Rouvier was sure that Havas was ready for such a relation and cooperation voluntarily.⁷⁸⁷

The German Wolff’s Telegrafisches Bureau (WTB) was no different in this context. From the early years, Bismarck noticed the significance and value of maintaining the independence of Wolff given that Reuter and Havas intended to take over the German news agency. That was the reason why Wolff entered into a limited partnership with the Prussian government by having the major stake for not being dependent on the news sources, mainly British and French news agencies. Wolff also received preferential credits from the state without paying any interest. Wolff had the priority in state telegraph lines for sending political telegrams. The agency also gave special attention to the significant news for the interests of Prussian government.⁷⁸⁸ In essence, the Bismarck government subsidized Wolff in the nineteenth century.⁷⁸⁹ Strong influence of the government continued in the first half of the twentieth century. Basse describes the relation as “state controlled agency in private hands”.⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁵ F. Hardman to Morris, 15 October 1870. Hardman papers, *The Times Archives*, London. Quoted in Michael Palmer, “The British Press and International Affairs, 1851-99”, in G. Boyce et al, eds., *Newspapers History* (London: 1978), p. 209.

⁷⁸⁶ That is the description of Nalbach. See: Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 211. Another source portrays him as the “redacteur in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 1879” after his significant reporting at Berlin Congress for Havas. See: *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 89 June to November 1894, p. 66.

⁷⁸⁷ Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 211.

⁷⁸⁸ Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy”, p. 110.

⁷⁸⁹ Oliverd Boyd-Barrett, “‘Global’ News Agencies”, in *The Globalization of News* Eds. Oliverd Boyd-Barrett and Terhi Rantanen, (London: Sage, 1998), p. 23.

⁷⁹⁰ Volker Barth. “The formation of global news agencies, 1859-1914”, in *Information Beyond Borders: International Cultural and Intellectual Exchange in the Belle Époque*, ed. W. Boyd Rayward, (Ashgate Publishing: 2014), p. 39.

It can certainly be argued that Wolff was an imperial institution of the German Empire.

The examples and practices that reveal the relations and connections of the international news agencies with their respective empires vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire were also evident. The correspondents of the agencies always had close contacts with their respective embassies in Istanbul. They visited the ambassadors to share and get information. Furthermore, the ambassadors sometimes paid for the sources of agents. In this respect, the cases involving Reuter will be extensively addressed in this part thanks to wide range of documents and sources, while the ones that relate to Havas and Wolff will be told concisely because of limited information for the time being.

7.4.1. Reuter as the Reporter of His Excellencies

The relationship between the British Ambassador to Istanbul, Sir Austen Henry Layard and the correspondent of Reuter, Sigmund Engländer is a perfect example that shows the scope of cooperation between the international news agencies and their respective empires. The significance and abilities of Engländer has already been addressed in the section “Agreements to Share Turkey” in this chapter. Beside, he had really outgoing personality helping him greatly in getting into new societies and obtaining information and political rumours. With the portrayal of Read, “his knowledge of Continental politics and culture, coupled with his engaging even if Bohemian personality” opened many doors for him.⁷⁹¹

The skills of Engländer definitely worked in Istanbul as well. He got adopted into the political environment in a short time. He established close friendships both with the Ottoman ruling elite and the foreign diplomats in the Ottoman capital. They were very useful sources for Engländer. He arrived at Istanbul in 1877, the same year with Ambassador Layard. Actually, the ambassador was very familiar with Istanbul and the Ottoman society given that he had lived there for years and travelled a lot in Anatolia and Northern Iraq.

⁷⁹¹ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 41.

Although it is not clear how their cooperation began, they were both very experienced in anticipating how to get information and news. Nalbach states that the success of Engländer attracted the attention of Layard whereas Read expresses that Engländer established good relations with the ambassador.⁷⁹² The manner and content of the letters of Engländer to Layard gives the impression that correspondent of Reuter was more eager in this cooperation. As Read underlines, establishing good relations with the British ambassador for a Reuter correspondent was an expected and appropriate practice. However, the relation of Engländer with Layard was a different one and went beyond journalism activity: “He [Engländer] seems to have acted as a spy-master.”⁷⁹³

Engländer evidently worked as an intelligence officer of Layard during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. He informed the British Ambassador regarding the political developments by frequently writing letters while Layard paid for the sources of Engländer. Before delving into the context of letters, their features should be elaborated due to its significance. As far as discovered during this research, there are thirty-two letters sent to Layard by Engländer. Rough Notes of Read at Reuters Archives⁷⁹⁴ include only five of them without their full content. Read mentions in his book only four of them without stating the source.⁷⁹⁵ During the course of this research, the letters were found at the British Library under the title of The Layard Papers in three different volumes. They mostly belonged to last four months of 1877, the oldest of which dates 2 September 1877 while its content clearly reveals that Engländer had already sent letters before that date. The latest letter available is dated 14 March 1878. Read states that English style of Engländer was sometimes slightly awkward and betraying his foreign origins.⁷⁹⁶ In addition, his handwriting in the letters is really hard to read that caused missing of some words in the text.

⁷⁹² Read, *The Power of News*, p. 97; and Nalbach, “The Ring Combination”, p. 203.

⁷⁹³ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 97.

⁷⁹⁴ Donald Read prepared “Rough Notes” during his comprehensive research in order to write the history of Reuters. He collected and compiled all possible information, documents and secondary sources on Engländer in that notes. He used the necessary ones in the book. The “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes” is available at Reuters Archives.

⁷⁹⁵ Read does not give any reference to any source entire his book.

⁷⁹⁶ “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes”, RA.

Engländer had several sources but two of them were really important and valuable. The first was the case related to a high level Turkish official portrayed as “The Gentleman in Question” in the letters who leaked information from inside the Ottoman government. There might be different explanations about the identity and motivation of the Turkish official. A plausible explanation could be that he was opposed to the regime of of Sultan Abdülhamid II if he intentionally passed information to Engländer. Another sound explanation might be that it could have been a function of political rivalry within the Ottoman ruling elite since Sultan Abdülhamid II frequently changed his ministers.

The other source in the payroll of Engländer was a reporter described as the “The Reporter of Your Excellency” the payment for whom was evidently made by the British Embassy at a high rate of 50 pounds per month. Engländer was really intelligent and knew very well how to earn money. Therefore, it is also likely that Engländer received the money for himself from the embassy while there is no document substantiating this possibility. He was also very successful in representing the information that he supplied as crucial, valuable and accurate. For instance, he wrote to Layard on 19 December 1877, “I beg to forward to Your Excellency copies of two telegrams I sent to London because they contain the real thought of the Porte at the present moment.”⁷⁹⁷

In addition, Engländer tried to draw attention to the confidentiality and exclusivity of the information that he provided in the letters several times. In one of the earliest letters, he reminded that his source, “gentlemen in question” ought to be kept as secret because of his concerns about revealing the identity of his source. He wrote:

I beg to enclose another report of the Gentlemen in question regarding Your Excellency at the same time not to forget the condition of that gentleman that no mention should be made of his [cannot be read because of handwriting] at the [Sublime] Porte.⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁹⁷ Engländer to Layard, 19 December 1877. The Layard Papers, The British Library (London), MS 39017, ff .154. Hereafter, The Layard Papers.

⁷⁹⁸ Engländer to Layard, 2 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 12.

Engländer warned that the information was strictly confidential stating “a fact known only to three persons”. The letter ended with the same phrase that was used almost in all other letters, “I have the honor to be Your Excellency’s most obedient servant”.⁷⁹⁹

Engländer repeated his warnings in this respect many times. He stated that the information he provided should be kept as secret in order to hide the identity of his source. He pointed out that the identity of his source might be revealed if Ambassador Layard shared it with someone else. It is useful to give a quotation from his letter to the Ambassador also to show the extent and scope of cooperation and communication between them:

I beg to forward to Your Excellency a document which must be treated as strictly confidential, as it is still under consideration of the Porte and the knowledge of its contents is limited to a very few persons. The least hint to [Minister of Foreign Affairs] Server Pacha or to one of the Ambassadors about this note which has not yet been agreed to by the Minister might seriously compromise the person who has communicated to me.⁸⁰⁰

Besides underlying confidentiality, it seems that Engländer also tried to demonstrate that the services he provided were really difficult to obtain as well as to show how close he was to the sources within the Ottoman government. He stated that the text of his telegram “was communicated for him yesterday on condition to keep it strictly private as two persons only in addition to the Minister know of its existence.”⁸⁰¹ It is not easy to make a comment on whether he really told the truth, but it must be stated that he was very successful in this job in general. More importantly, the following examples will reveal that he was loyal to the truth in terms of respecting confidentiality.

Furthermore, it is most likely that the main sources of Engländer, “the Gentleman in question” and “the reporter of your excellency” might have not known that their notes, including important background information regarding the meetings of Ottoman cabinet, were shared with the British Ambassador Layard. They might have believed that they were providing information for a journalist. It was inherent for reporters to compile information. Engländer informed Layard about this fact. He

⁷⁹⁹ Engländer to Layard, 2 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 12.

⁸⁰⁰ Engländer to Layard, 17 November 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39016, ff. 262.

⁸⁰¹ Engländer to Layard, 5 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 59.

enclosed a few notes of “the Gentleman in question” to the Ambassador with the following explanation:

As he is unaware to whom his papers will be communicated the bad writing paper used by him and the rather free manner in which he mentions Your Excellency in one of his sheets must be excused. I did not correct a few of his mistakes in spelling the French language.⁸⁰²

Engländer also informed Ambassador Layard on the details of almost all his activities and the news that he cabled to Reuter headquarters in London. He was acting like an officer of Layard. For instance, he shared, “I beg to enclose a statement I sent this morning to the [*La*] *Turquie*. I telegraphed last night a denial to London.” In one occasion, he even talked about the illness of “the Gentleman in question”. He told Layard that the Gentleman “who supplies His Excellency with intelligence of a confidential character being detained at his house by a bad influenza-cold”. However, Engländer announced that “the Gentleman would be enabled next week to have a richer budget of news.”⁸⁰³

As regards to the content of Engländer’s correspondence with Ambassador Layard, the time that he wrote these letters naturally makes sense. While the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia was ongoing, there were also negotiations that would bring about the Treaty of San Stefano (Yeşilköy at Istanbul) on 3 March 1878. Therefore, most of his letters were about the war, negotiations and the impending as well as on the position of the Ottoman government and other nations on these issues.

As seen in the letters, Engländer primarily focused on the position of Ottoman government, the perspective of Minister of Foreign Affairs Server Pasha, reports of Ottoman ambassadors, particularly of Mussurus Pasha in London and correspondence of Ottoman government with its counterparts regarding the issues on the agenda such as political developments and war. The subjects directly related to Britain had the top priority for both the “Gentleman in question” and Engländer. To illustrate, Engländer wrote, “I asked him to state the real position as regards the

⁸⁰² Engländer to Layard, 15 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 195.

⁸⁰³ Engländer to Layard, 15 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 111. There are two letters on 15 September 1877 in different pages.

objection of the Porte to the treaty recently⁸⁰⁴ between the Khedive and the British government.”⁸⁰⁵

It seems that Engländer was hard-working and committed to work for Ambassador Layard. He shared with him every bit of information and political rumours that he heard. He always kept in touch with the diplomatic corps and he was always in the land to grasp any detail. For example, he conveyed his conversation with Count Ferenc Zichy, Austrian ambassador at Istanbul from 1874 to 1880, to British Ambassador Layard with a note that “it may be of some interest to his excellency” which reads:

I saw yesterday Count Zichy and being anxious to learn from him whether his second interview with the Sultan had any special political bearing I told him that one of the Correspondent of the London new had telegraphed (and this is a fact) that the Austrian Ambassador had sounded the Sultan on the question of mediation. Count Zichy denied this assertion and in reply to my observation that the said Correspondent asserted to Havas on good authority that there had been mention made of mediation.⁸⁰⁶

Also, the interest and inquiry on British-Khedive treaty was still underway for extracting further information. Engländer gave the good news that the gentleman “who acts provisionally as his reporter would send to his excellency tomorrow an important document with the text of the note in reference to the recent Anglo Egyptian treaty.” The names cannot be read in the letter clearly but it is understood that the note was from an Ottoman pasha in Istanbul addressed to Ottoman Ambassador in London, Mussurus Pasha.⁸⁰⁷

In terms of contemporary news and issues, the meditation of Germany between the Ottoman Empire and Russia was on the agenda in those days. Engländer had close interest on this issue. He benefited not only from “the Gentleman in question” but also the other sources. He explained the latest situation stating that Germany had no intention for intervening for peace:

⁸⁰⁴ It is not easy to read the handwriting of Engländer. I am not sure about this word but it seems like “recently”.

⁸⁰⁵ Engländer to Layard, 20 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 139.

⁸⁰⁶ Engländer to Layard, 25 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 162.

⁸⁰⁷ Engländer to Layard, 25 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 162.

I have just learnt from very good authority that [German Ambassador to Istanbul] Prince Reuss has not received any instructions in reference to mediation. Since Reuss is of opinion that it has been agreed between [Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs] Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck to manage matters in that manner that Turkey and Russia who begun the war by themselves should also eventually terminate it without any intermediary.⁸⁰⁸

Engländer informed about all information on the war. He wrote the Turks “had yesterday a victory near Ahmedli and they captured Elena making a great number of prisoners and taking a certain number of canons. Mehmed Ali also repulsed the Russians.” He knew that British Embassy also had the ability to get similar news. He therefore used a caveat to “announce to His Excellency in case the news has not yet reached the Embassy”.⁸⁰⁹

Ten days later, this time, Engländer informed the British Ambassador that the Ottoman Council of Ministers had discussed for six hours mainly the response to be given to the declaration of war by Serbia. He explained, “this became known at the Porte because from time to time messengers came claiming for the Minister’s documents, treaties and pieces relating to Serbia.”⁸¹⁰ Further, mediation and negotiations for a treaty were in progress. On this issue, Engländer wrote that several powers “amongst which Italy had already sent telegrams to acknowledge the [circular]⁸¹¹ note of the Porte on the mediation.” He promised to send the note next day but he reminded that it did not contain the condition which would be accepted by Turkey.⁸¹²

Engländer consulted with Ambassador Layard on complicated matters, particularly regarding the British Ambassador himself. Both gentlemen tried to control and manage the news concerning them. As understood from the letter, Engländer cabled a news dispatch to London denying a “telegram about the alleged promise of British help made by Layard in order to obtain the refusal of the Ottoman government to a ... [missing word] demand of Russia to open the Dardanelles to

⁸⁰⁸ Engländer to Layard, 30 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 207.

⁸⁰⁹ Engländer to Layard, 5 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 21.

⁸¹⁰ Engländer to Layard, 15 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 122.

⁸¹¹ The Word is not clear in the text but it looks like “circular”.

⁸¹² Engländer to Layard, 15 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 122.

Russian men-of-war.”⁸¹³ Then, Mr Anotin⁸¹⁴ just called on Engländer informing him that he had heard the cabled denial. Mr Anotin asked whether it was the request of Ambassador Layard or not. Although Engländer told that Layard denied the statement, Mr Anotin again telegraphed it to be true.⁸¹⁵ It seems that the goal of this letter was to create concurrence on the issue.

Engländer was chasing the details of negotiations and treaty. On 9 February 1878, he gave the signal that he would obtain them by stating, “I beg to inform your Excellency that I have seen this morning the Gentleman in question who will draw up a complete account of the negotiations which I shall be able to communicate tomorrow.”⁸¹⁶ The intelligence arrived a week later. Engländer gave early warning about the Treaty of San Stefano on 15 February 1878. He stated:

Your correspondent at Adrianople has telegraphed today by a ‘phrase conventionnelle’ that the conditions of the Russians are of a severe character. It has been agreed between us before his departure if the attitude of Russia should in any way offer some fresh hardship to Turkey or if they should sternly refuse any modification and in general if their tone should be that of master that a certain word should be added to a trivial message.⁸¹⁷

Engländer enjoyed having such an important and useful source. The following week, on 21 February 1878, he cabled the details of “wide boundaries proposed for the state of Bulgaria demanded by Russia as a condition of peace.” However, these demands were unacceptable to the other Great Powers.⁸¹⁸

Engländer knew in certain terms that he was working for the interests of Britain. He received the views of Ambassador Layard when he wrote any news story on Britain. In fact, given the style in Engländer’s letters, it can be argued that it was more of asking for permission rather than views. He told: “I beg to state that I should consider it a great favour if Your Excellency would instruct Mr Kennedy to let me

⁸¹³ Engländer to Layard, 25 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 199.

⁸¹⁴ It is not clear how he was but it seems that he was an diplomat or correspondent of another media outlet.

⁸¹⁵ Engländer to Layard, 25 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 199.

⁸¹⁶ “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes”, R.A.

⁸¹⁷ “Sigmund Engländer Rough Notes”, R.A.

⁸¹⁸ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 97.

know whether I may deny the assert of the *Basiret* of the approaching departure of the British fleet from Betika.”⁸¹⁹ His letters give the impression that he had really good sources in Ottoman diplomatic circles. For example, he argued that he obtained a significant diplomatic text of Minister of Foreign Affairs Server Pasha addressed to the Ottoman Ambassador Mussurus Pasha in London before it was sent. Engländer obtained that information from “the Gentleman in Question”. He stated, “the text of the note which will be sent today by Server Pacha to Mussurus Pacha is of special interest as Mussurus Pacha will not communicate ...[with Secretary of Foreign Affairs] Lord Derby”. He also added, “I trust that Your Excellency will consider this communication as useful for the Foreign Office.”⁸²⁰ Two days later, he informed of the changes in the note of Server Pasha which would be sent to Mussurus Pasha.⁸²¹

Furthermore, it is understood that some of the intelligence provided by Engländer from his sources did not work. For example, some of the official notes of Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs expected to be sent were not cabled at all. Engländer accepted that one of them was not sent after all. However, he was aware that the intelligence he gathered was useful for the interest of Britain in managing the issues. He explained the point:

I told however Your Excellency that the Gentleman will sometimes send communications on what is going on or discussed at the Porte... Such proceedings have sometimes the advantage to enable Your Excellency to influence the acts of the Porte before they are actually concluded but on the other hand the draw back that they do not take place after all.⁸²²

In addition, Engländer was sometimes seriously wrong in intelligence information. For instance, on 10 December 1877, he claimed, “There is no truth in the rumour current here today that Mehmet Ali Pacha has been recalled”. However, only two days later, he wrote that Pasha was recalled on that day but he gave no

⁸¹⁹ Engländer to Layard, 26 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 167. Betika or Besika is a bay on the Asiatic coast, near the mouth of the Dardanelles.

⁸²⁰ Engländer to Layard, 26 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 167.

⁸²¹ Engländer to Layard, 28 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 191.

⁸²² Engländer to Layard, 12 October 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39016, ff. 12.

explanation. The comment of Read on this case is that “Engländer liked to hint at his inside knowledge”.⁸²³

Ambassador Layard sometimes asked Engländer to learn about the facts of a specific matter. To illustrate, he requested “civil procedure” which was being prepared by the Council of State, but it was unclear what it was since the letter included no information. Engländer positively replied and shared the file sent by his friend stating, “in conformity with the wish expressed by Your Excellency to receive a communication on the civil procedure which is being prepared by the Council of State.”⁸²⁴

Furthermore, Sigmund Engländer also worked as a press adviser to Layard. He compiled the reports in Ottoman newspapers and sent them to Layard with his comments and explanations. He described the affiliations and roles of the newspapers with the government. He enclosed an article regarding the peace rumours published by the *Vakit* newspaper. The peace was for Turkish-Russian war. Engländer stated that there was not “any foundation in fact in the assertions of the *Vakit*” but he shared this article in order to acquaint Ambassador given that “the article was inspired by Savfet Pasha”.⁸²⁵ Savfet Pasha was an important political figure serving as the Grand Vizier in 1878 and in ministerial capacity including in the foreign office several times.

In his letter, Engländer also told, “the *Vakit* was organ of the Porte at the time when Savfet Pasha was the Minister of Foreign Affairs whilst the *Basiret* was organ of the clique usually styled the Palace.” According to explanation of Engländer, the *Vakit* issued 4000 copies daily at that time while its sale gone down to about 1200 copies a day in those days. He advised, “It is no doubt in order to increase its circulation that sensational articles of this kind are published. It would therefore be erroneous to attribute this article to inspiration of the Porte.”⁸²⁶

⁸²³ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 98. This part was not available in the letter of Engländer on 10 December 1877 that I have seen in the British Library. Also, the Layard Papers that I have studied do not include any letter dated 12 December 1877. It seems that Donald Read might have used other documents.

⁸²⁴ Engländer to Layard, 12 October 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39016, ff. 12.

⁸²⁵ Engländer to Layard, 26 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 167.

⁸²⁶ Engländer to Layard, 26 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 167.

Besides, Engländer provided services as the “reporter of Ambassador Layard” in defending his personal interests. In his letter, he stated that he telegraphed a further denial to the Athens’ telegram [agency or office] regarding the rumour that Layard had communicated to anyone for publication the contents of Mr Gladstone’s letter to Mr. Negroponte.⁸²⁷

Despite all these embedded style of journalism, Engländer never forgot his real mission for reporting. In one incident, he stated that the news did not reach him from the “Gentleman in question”. He therefore telegraphed it to London.⁸²⁸ It seems that there was an unofficial agreement or practice between Engländer and Layard that Engländer would be able to cable any news story that was not received from the “Gentleman in question” who was paid by the British Embassy. The fact that Engländer happily served British interests the intelligence he obtained set aside, he always bore in mind that he was a journalist and his news stories had a commercial value as well. In this respect, he reminded Layard:

I have the honor to send to Your Excellency a few slips of one of my reporters employed by our agency. As this information belongs to our agency Your Excellency will pardon my request not to mention its contents to any correspondent.⁸²⁹

As regards to the perspective of Ambassador Layard about Engländer and his style of work, he narrates a reflecting case and reveals one of the main sources of Reuter’s agent in his memoirs. The case really indicated how effective were the

⁸²⁷ Menelaus Zannis Negroponte was a Greek merchant in Constantinople. The correspondence between Gladstone and Negroponte created a debate in British media in 1870’s. Ambassador Layard was accused of being revealing the details of this correspondence. More about for “The Negroponte Affair” see: R. W Seton-Watson, *Disraeli Gladstone & the Eastern Question* (New York: W.W. Norton Co., 1972), pp. 358-361; and <http://www.agelastos.com/genealogy/documents/gladstone.htm> (Accessed 2 May 2014)

Meanwhile, regarding the relationship between the ambassadors and correspondent, Layard’s earlier comments was in this way although he used Engländer for his own interests: “There was a chorus of praise of the English Ambassador in the European Press, and I learnt by experience how much the success and reputation of a diplomatist may depend upon his skill in obtaining the support of newspaper correspondents and their incessant and exaggerated approval of all that he says and does. The public can only be guided by reports coming from such quarters, and is only too ready to believe everything that is written concerning a man who is so universally commended. Although I had early obtained this experience, I did not in after life profit by it.” See: N Bruce William, *Sir Henry Layard Autobiography and Letters: From His Childhood until His Appointment as Ambassador at Madrid [1869]* (London: John Murray, 1903), pp. 103-104.

⁸²⁸ Engländer to Layard, 30 September 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39015, ff. 207.

⁸²⁹ Engländer to Layard, 29 December 1877. The Layard Papers, MS 39017, ff. 254.

telegrams of Reuter and how close Sultan Abdülhamid II followed the newspapers. It also gives an idea about not only how Engländer worked, but also on the role of press in Ottoman politics. The Ottoman Sultan suddenly dismissed Grand Vizier Mehmet Sadık Pasha on 28 May 1878.⁸³⁰ It was a big surprise since he was appointed only 40 days ago. Layard saw that the report of Engländer was the cause of this dismissal. The British Ambassador provides an account about the incident:

When I saw him [Sultan Abdülhamid II] immediately after Sadık's dismissal he placed a newspaper in my hand and asked me to read a telegram of Reuter's agent at Constantinople. It was to the effect that Prime Minister was preparing a new organic law as an addition to Constitution, for the purpose of "restraining the Palace's influence and to increase the independence of the Porte", in fact to restraint the authority and prerogatives of the Sultan.⁸³¹

Undoubtedly, Sultan Abdülhamid II was disappointed with the initiative and he was most likely unaware of the intentions of the Grand Vizier. From the perspective of the Ottoman Sultan, it was absolutely an act of disloyalty. During the conversation with the Sultan, Layard observed that it was an "act of treason on his part to be thus secretly contriving to deprive his sovereign of his legitimate rights". The telegram in the newspaper served to confirm his mistrust for Grand Vizier Mehmet Sadık Pacha's loyalty given that the Sultan's suspicious and susceptible temper was provoked by the incident.⁸³²

Actually, the case was definitely true according to Layard's account. Mehmet Sadık Pacha was considering some changes in the constitution with the intention of defining the position and rights of the Sultan as a constitutional monarch. The Pasha had asked the idea and comments of Ambassador Layard by submitting his draft. In addition to Layard, the Pasha gave it to M. Tarin, a talented French advisor of the Sublime Porte in legal and international issues as well as preparing the diplomatic documents in French, for revision of the draft and translating it into French. However, M. Tarin was definitely not the right person for this mission as Layard described it:

⁸³⁰ Layard states the date of dismissal as 27 May 1878.

⁸³¹ The Layard Papers, MS 38937 Vol VII. The memoirs of Layard was also published, see: Selim Kunalp, *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan: Memoir's of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy 1877-1880* (Istanbul: ISIS, 2009).

⁸³² The Layard Papers, MS 38937 Vol VII.

This gentleman was notoriously corrupt and was in the habit of selling state secrets confined to him as an official employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I may say that I can affirm this fact from personal knowledge. He was in the regular pay of Mr. Engländer, an active Jew news monger who acted at Constantinople as the agent of Reuter's company.⁸³³

While Mehmet Sadık Pasha was waiting for the editing, comments and translation of the M. Tarin to submit the draft law to Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Council of Ministers, the telegram of Reuter on this issue was published in the newspapers. It seems that the Ottoman Sultan was not aware of the work and intentions of Pacha. The rivals of Pacha immediately directed the attention of the Sultan to Engländer's telegram since they saw it a great opportunity to provoke the well-known suspicions of the Sultan. Engländer had informed the ambassador that he had received the copy of the Pacha's draft and cabled it to London to publish. Layard informed the Pacha regarding Reuter's telegram and he stated that only one person knew about his intentions. It was absolutely M. Tarin who betrayed him. As soon as Ambassador Layard saw Engländer's telegram in the newspaper, "he felt certain that Sadık Pasha's fall was inevitable"⁸³⁴ and he was right.

Finally, Engländer's reputation in the eyes Layard was not positive although he benefited greatly from the services of Reuter's agent. He describes Engländer in his memoirs:

So long as he could furnish news to his employers he was indifferent as to the manner of its acquisition and reckless in its use. During my residence at Constantinople, he more once compromised persons in high position and was the cause of serious mischief. He almost forced his way into the house of the foreign representatives and boldly maintained that he had a right as an agent of the Press to be furnished with information as to their proceedings and negotiations with the Porte, a right that could not bring myself to admit, and

⁸³³ The Layard Papers, MS 38937 Vol VII.

⁸³⁴ The Layard Papers, MS 38937 Vol VII. Meanwhile, the reports of British press were very influential in Ottoman politics. Minister of Foreign Affairs Server Pasha resigned because of a news published in *Daily News*. He blamed that Ambassador Layard was stealing the time of Ottoman Empire by misinforming the Ottoman government given that he promised to provide British help against Russia. Layard revealed that the source of story was Server Pasha and it caused to a diplomatic which resulted in the resignation. In his letter to Derby, Layard told: "With reference to secret telegram. I have no doubt that Server Pasha is the traitor. I will take steps to ascertain. Russia has agents on every side, and, as I have frequently stated, finds a most-powerful assistance in the German Ambassador. This state of things is most dangerous o us and to our interests." See: Layard to Derby, 20 February 1878, Foreign Office, 78/2810, Telegram No 250.

which my colleagues refused to acquiesce except when they had some object in doing so.⁸³⁵

In addition to providing Layard with information, intelligence and all diplomatic rumours, Engländer absolutely received information from the British ambassador in return. He had easy access to Layard. They met frequently in every week. As Read points out, Reuter telegrams gave prominence to the official British line as the result of this cooperation.⁸³⁶ The ambassador directed the agent of Reuter in Istanbul in favour of the British Empire. Ambassador Layard tried to grasp in advance the possible steps and position of the Ottoman government thanks to those background information and news. Were they useful for him? Did he benefit from them in his reports to Foreign Office? It seems that Engländer greatly contributed to Layard's work. He provided the Ambassador with the opportunity to learn almost all developments and diplomatic rumours in the Ottoman capital thanks to his reckless and ambitious journalism abilities and experience.

7.4.2. Havas under the French Instruction

Examples regarding the relations and cooperation between Havas and French mission in Istanbul though limited were definite. As it was already discussed, French Minister of Foreign Affairs opposed the intention of Havas to close down its bureau in Istanbul when Agence de Constantinople began to dominate the market in 1889. Havas decided to keep an agent in Istanbul following Minister Eugène Spuller directly communicated with Havas in Paris.⁸³⁷ Absolutely, both Havas and French Minister of Foreign Affairs were aware of how the other states supported their respective news agencies through their embassies. The Ministry assured Havas to assist it in supplying news and other facilities as well. Therefore, the correspondent of Havas in Istanbul was responsible not only for cabling news stories but also for

⁸³⁵ The Layard Papers, MS 38937 Vol VII.

⁸³⁶ Read, *The Power of News*, p. 98.

⁸³⁷ Havas to Havas/Vienna, 1 October 1889, A.N., 5AR 148.

“entering into constant relations with the representative of France and to second his actions to the greatest measure of his abilities.”⁸³⁸

7.4.3. Activation of Wolff and Agence de Istanbul for Germany

Guiding both Wolff and Agence de Constantinople in Istanbul, the German Embassy carried out the instructions and policies of its German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The German ambassadors had close contacts with most of the German media outlets in Istanbul. To illustrate, as Gummer points out, the permanent correspondent of the *Kölnische Zeitung*'s in Istanbul, Julius Grosser, was a significant figure for the German Embassy. He had a large network to gather news thanks to his contacts with diplomatic corps, including the Ottoman officials, military men, and diplomats of other embassies. He was also the representative of the Agence Havas in the Ottoman lands until the Agence de Constantinople was set up in 1889. Gummer also argued Grosser “could keep German diplomats abreast of what was going on in the Havas bureau” and explained his role:

Grosser was a crucial consultant in the negotiations to change the monopoly structure in the late 1880s. His expertise and connections in the newspaper business were called upon by the ambassador Radwitz and Bismarck at many points, and the negotiations stalled, in part, because neither the WTB [Wolff] nor the German government was willing to buy out of his Havas contract and install him at the head of a new wire service of the Triple Entente. Grosser enjoyed the singular position at two main “chokepoints” in the network of news from the Ottoman Empire as both a correspondent for the *Kölnische Zeitung* and an employee for Havas. German diplomats needed him as much as he needed them.⁸³⁹

Establishing the Agence de Constantinople was not an easy task to accomplish. Anna Grosser clearly mentions the role of German Empire stating the bureau “was constituted by the help of German Ambassador Radowitz and Austrian Ambassador Calice.”⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁸ Havas to Havas/Constantinople, 28 September 1889, A.N. 5AR 47. I am aware of the fact that the dates of these two documents are conflicting in terms of historical order. However, the difference is just three days and it should be related to archiving.

⁸³⁹ Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy”, p. 142.

⁸⁴⁰ Rilke, *Avrupa Saraylarından Yıldız'a*, p. 162.

Ambassador Marschall and Otto Hammann, a former journalist and Director of the Press Section of the German Foreign Office, worked closely to break the established influence of news agencies working against Germany. Although Agence de Constantinople was charged for this mission, it failed to live up to the needs and expectations of Germany. Therefore, Marschall permitted a German dragoman to cable news directly to Wolff through telegraph system of the embassy.⁸⁴¹

In 1902, German government believed that having its own complementary service in Istanbul was necessary to work exclusively in favour of Germany. They were satisfied with the activities of their own correspondent in Sofia working for Continental. However, the government was unable to find a person with political and journalistic background and who would absolutely be reliable. Heavy costs of a correspondent were another obstacle in this respect.⁸⁴² Once again, the assignment of an officer of the German Embassy was the best alternative for this mission. Therefore, a dragoman of the embassy, Dolmetscher, was charged to send dispatches for Continental by compiling all possible information in Istanbul. He cabled the news in code as diplomatic telegram and they were subsequently conveyed to the Continental offices in Berlin. He continued his mission around five years.⁸⁴³

After the Young Turks came to power, both Ambassador Marschall and Hammann forced Wolff to send an agent to Istanbul in order to cable favourable news despite Agence de Constantinople remained operating in the Ottoman Empire. As the Ottoman newspapers were heavily dependent on the telegrams of the news agencies, Gummer's explanation for this push was obvious:

Agencies sought to provide favourable news from their respective country as well as negative news from their rivals, especially about Germany, which had

⁸⁴¹ PA AA R 13896. Padel to Berlin 10 January 1898. Quoted in Gummer, "The Politics of Sympathy", p. 148. On the other hand, Gummer also draws attention to competition between WTB and Agence de Constantinople. He states that Marschall took the measures when he felt that Agence de Constantinople sent news in favour of Austria-Hungaria. See: Gummer, "The Politics of Sympathy", p. 148. However, Anna Grosser does not make such a differentiation and uses the concept of "Germany's interest".

⁸⁴² German Legation (Constantinople) to German Foreign Office, 14 August 1902, P.A./A.A., Europa Generalia No 86, Band 1. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p.322.

⁸⁴³ German Legation (Constantinople) to German Foreign Office, 6 December August 1902, P.A./A.A., Europa Generalia No 86, Band 1. Quoted in Nalbach, "The Ring Combination", p. 322.

been the strongest supporter of the Hamidian government after the turn of the century.⁸⁴⁴

Another example shows succinctly the perception of German Empire and how they viewed the role of Wolff agency. German Emperor and King of Prussia Kaiser Wilhelm II paid a visit to Istanbul in 1898. He also visited the other Ottoman cities, including Damascus. He called on the Umayyad Mosque and the Tomb of Sultan Selahaddin Eyyubi in Syria. Kaiser Wilhelm II delivered a speech there, which was commented as “one of the most notorious speeches in his career”.⁸⁴⁵ Prince Bernhard von Bülow, Kaiser’s State Secretary for Foreign Affairs tried his best to edit the speech before it was distributed to the press. However, Kaiser Wilhelm II was sure of what he told and it was too late to make changes given the German Ambassador in Istanbul had already sent the text to the Wolff news agency “on a direct order from His Majesty”.⁸⁴⁶

The significant benefits that Agence de Constantinople provided were evident during World War I given that reporting and propaganda were crucially important parts of the fight during the period. The agent of agency, Anna Grosser, stayed in Istanbul despite the fact that her friends began to leave the Ottoman capital since the Ottoman territory became dangerous in those days in 1917, while the work at the bureau really increased. She clearly explains the role of agency:

Agence de Constantinople was working and serving under the instructions of German and Austrian governments in the last dates of the war. The General Staff of these countries were enormously sending news to the agency. In the received telegrams, it was demanded that the morale of Turkey which was our ally would keep very high. Optimistic and positive news should be distributed and spread to the world in such an era.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴⁴ Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy”, p. 151.

⁸⁴⁵ Sean Mcmeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's bid for world power* (Cambridge, Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 14. The Kaiser described Sultan Selahaddin Eyyubi as the “one of the most chivalrous rulers of all times, ... a knight without fear or fault”. Then he saluted Sultan Abdülhamid II by the following statement: “May the Sultan and his 300 million Muslim subjects scattered across the earth, who venerate him as their Caliph, be assured that the German Kaiser will be their friend for all time.”

⁸⁴⁶ Mcmeekin. *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*, p. 15; and Bernhard Fürst von Bülow, *Memoirs of Prince von Bülow*, vol I, trans. F. A. Voigt, (Boston: Little, Brown Company, 1931-1932), p. 254.

⁸⁴⁷ Rilke, *Avrupa Saraylarından Yıldız'a*, p. 281.

Besides the agencies, the German Embassy in Istanbul made payments to the correspondents of the newspapers. For instance, Paul Weitz, the reporter of *Frankfurter Zeitung* in the Ottoman Empire received payments from German Ambassador to Istanbul, Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, who arrived in 1897.⁸⁴⁸ Further, Ambassador Marshall took the responsibility during the negotiations of a large railroad agreement between the Ottoman government and Deutsche Bank when he perceived the negative reporting as a potential challenge for the German interests. In this respect, the ambassador tried to silence Eduard Mygind, reporter of *Berliner Tageblatt*, with a subsidy given he was blamed of blackmailing Sultan Abdülhamid II by provoking the Ottoman army in his news. Subsidizing him went on next year while Marschall asked him to write on music and culture but not on the politics.⁸⁴⁹

7.5. Competition from the Perspective of Ottoman Empire

The question whether the Ottoman government was fully aware of the competition of international news agencies and their relations with their respective states vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire warrants an analysis. In terms of the agreements, treaties or cooperation of international news agencies to exploit the world in terms of gathering and distributing news, there is not even a single reference to them in the Ottoman documents. Neither an Ottoman diplomat nor an official did mention these agreements in their reports and proposals. It seems that the Ottoman government was unaware of these particular agreements. Yet, the Ottoman documents and the proposals of Ottoman ruling elite on press matters contain comprehensive and detailed information even on the secret articles of the agreements with the international news agencies. Therefore, it may fairly be assumed that had the Ottoman officials had any information and intelligence on those agreements between the agencies, they would have certainly reported them to the Ottoman government.

On the other hand, it would be imprudent to argue that the Ottoman government was totally unaware of the competition between the international news

⁸⁴⁸ Gummer, "The Politics of Sympathy", p. 145.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 146.

agencies in general. Cognizant of the rivalry between their agents in Istanbul for exclusive news, the Ottoman diplomats advised Sultan Abdülhamid II to make use of it for favourable reporting. Chief Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Salih Münir Bey, in his proposal titled “Report on the Foreign Press and Their Correspondents” on 5 February 1883,⁸⁵⁰ suggested that the Ottoman officials should create faction and competition between correspondents and then benefit from these circumstances. He further suggested that some significant news such as official releases should be given in a confidential manner to only one correspondent as an exclusive story instead of all others. Consequently, those deprived of this favour would understand that they should go along with the government.⁸⁵¹

Regarding the tough competition between the agencies to share the world, it seems that the Ottoman government took no sides politically. It had really pragmatic and need-based understanding in this issue. It made no distinction between Reuter, Havas or Wolff in determining policies. Expectedly, Reuter was preferred for denials and corrections if the negative news was published in British press and it was Havas for the French newspapers.

Although the Ottoman government made occasional agreements with Reuter upon urgent needs, the number of years that it subscribed to the services of Havas surpassed that of British agency. Having examined the reports, proposals and correspondences of Ottoman ruling elite, it would be sound to argue that there were no strong reasons and indications to claim that it was a political choice. The significant point for the Ottoman government was the “hostile reporting” of European press, including the international news agencies. Its whole concentration was to prevent this kind of news stories and convert them into favourable news whenever it was possible.

After all, the need-based policy of the Ottoman government changed towards World War I. After the declaration of Second Constitutional Era, the Committee of Union and Progress followed a policy closer to Germany. It became prevalent on the eve of war and the Ottoman Empire joined the war in alliance with Germany in 1914. When reporting and propaganda became crucial with the start of the war, the

⁸⁵⁰ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883]. The date of this document has been previously discussed in this dissertation.

⁸⁵¹ BOA, Y.EE., 12/24, 29 Z 1300 [27 Ra 1300/5 February 1883].

Ottoman government inevitably took sides with Germany also in this aspect of the fight. The first step came with the change in the administration of Ottoman Telegraph Agency.⁸⁵² The founder and director of agency Salih Gourdi, was said to be in favour of France in terms of politics and mindset. He was absolutely against Germany. As a result, the Young Turk rule could not permit him to work as the director of the agency anymore and fired him in September 1914.⁸⁵³

When it comes to the connection between the foreign press, including the news agencies and their governments, the Ottoman government and the Ottoman ruling elite were absolutely aware of this phenomenon. Sadrazam Said Pasha explained the relationship between the states and role of their press in policies with examples. He stated that the British press generally supported the policies of Ottoman State when the Sublime Porte and Britain enjoyed good relationship and had similar policy on an issue. Furthermore, Said Pasha underlined that the Ottoman Sultan was trying to save the country and consolidate power in response to the expansionist and colonial policies of France to Tunis; Britain to Egypt; and Russia to Bulgaria and Armenian regions. For him, “hostile reports aimed at preventing these endeavours of the Ottoman Sultan.” Said Pasha explained the mentality of foreign press:

In parallel with policies of their governments, when the newspapers see any poisonous incident and disorder; or when they hear anything [against us] which is groundless or not in the Ottoman Empire, publishing them by exaggeration serve their interests. The correspondents benefit from this kind of things by portraying them as very strange; and then publishing them as well. For the foreign ambassadors, using these publications and improper statements are necessary for their interest and missions. After the opinion of Europe is inclined against the survival of the Ottoman State, there is not a single copy of a newspaper that does not contain hostility against us. In fact, the things that they write to glorify the ruling elite include a kind of malicious intent and insult as well.⁸⁵⁴

Further, Kamil Pasha underlined, “the hurtful reporting of foreign press against the Ottoman Empire stems from the rivalry between the states.” From his perspective,

⁸⁵² The history of Ottoman Telegraph Agency and Ottoman National Telegraph Agency was sophisticated and needs to be explained in a particular study comprehensively. I am eager to write the issue soon.

⁸⁵³ *The New York Times*, 20 August 1918.

⁸⁵⁴ BOA, Y.EE., 82/58, 2 S 1300/13 December 1882.

those publications, which were directed by these [European] states, aimed at influencing both internal and foreign policy of the Ottoman government.⁸⁵⁵

However, the interpretation of Ottoman government was not always right and fair in this respect. For example, the Ottoman government complained about the news of Reuter on the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78) by arguing that the agent of British agency in Athens continuously reported groundless telegrams in the favour of Russia from the beginning of the war. The Ottoman diplomats in London asking for impartial reporting warned Baron Paul Julius Reuter.⁸⁵⁶ However, it would be wrong to suggest that it was the British government asking for such kind of reporting given that Britain supported the Ottoman Government, not Russia in this war.

Furthermore, the Ottoman government thoroughly grasped the connections and relationships between the international news agencies and their respective states over time. By the first decade of twentieth century, the Ottoman officials were certainly aware of such cooperation. During the discussion in the Ottoman Parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) in 1911 to set up an Ottoman telegraph agency, the Director of Domestic Press Fazlı Necib Bey explained the issue with examples. He stated that all constitutional governments protected a telegraph agency and these agencies worked with the help of those governments. He told:

There is a telegraph agency that every government has benefited from like Fournier in Austria, Reuter in Britain and Corriere in Italy. These agencies have great services for the governments both in foreign policy and internal affairs... These agencies always follow their own⁸⁵⁷ interests.⁸⁵⁸

In conclusion, the nineteenth century increasingly experienced the spreading of global telegraph communication extensively that paved the way for the emergence

⁸⁵⁵ BOA, Y.EE. Kamil Paşa Evrakına Ek. 86/3, 257 in Yazıcı, “Sadrazam Kamil Paşa’nın Yabancı Basınla”, p. 432.

⁸⁵⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3, 248/87, 29 December 1877.

On the other hand, Britain was not happy with the success of Russia; and supported the Ottoman State. The war ended thanks to intervention of Britain.

⁸⁵⁷ In the statement of Fazlı Necib Bey, it is not clear whether “their own” refers to the interest of agencies or their respective states. It seems that he mentions both of them given that he saw the agencies and their respective states as an united body.

⁸⁵⁸ *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1991), Devre 1, İçtima Sene 3, İnikat 85, pp. 525-526.

of international news agencies. While the European powers expanded their territories through colonies, their interests definitely conflicted. The communication was not an exception to but rather a part of this new modern competition. Even though the international news agencies mostly shared the world according to their respective governments' political sphere, discrepancies were also inevitable. The Ottoman Empire was one of the main areas of conflicts in this respect that resulted in arbitration cases between Reuter and Havas.

The respective governments also played significant role in the competition of international news agencies. The European powers, Britain, France and Germany tried to benefit from the assets of the international news agencies by subsidies as well as directing them. The political role of the international news agencies and the engagement of their respective empires in this harsh competition were evident in the Ottoman case. To illustrate, The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs directly instructed to Havas directors not to abandon its bureau in Istanbul when Agence de Constantinople was set up there in order to check and balance the role of French agency in Ottoman domains. Furthermore, the German Embassy in Istanbul supported the staff of Wolff and Agence de Constantinople. Dragomans of the embassy were given the task to send news stories directly to Wolff Headquarters as well.

The relations between the correspondents of agencies and the ambassadors of their nations were another dimension of this phenomenon. The relevant ambassadors and the correspondents of the agencies worked closely. The correspondence between British Ambassador Layard and Reuter agent Engländer explained above sets out a good example to show this relationship. The skilful Engländer worked as the intelligence officer of British Ambassador by sharing his information and political rumours in his letters while Layard paid him for his services in return.

As response and position of the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman ruling elite and the diplomatic staff in Europe in particular, were fully aware of the competition of agencies in general, yet it seems that they had no information on particular cooperation agreements between the agencies to share the world. The Ottoman government worked to benefit from this rivalry given that agencies in Istanbul competed to produce exclusive news stories and distribute news earlier than their rivals. The friendly and docile correspondents would receive the support of the

Ottoman officials and obtain exclusive news whereas the “disobedient ones” would be excluded from the Ottoman diplomatic and political circles.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

While the tools of power and governing have always changed and enlarged by time, the communication, the most significant apparatus of this phenomenon, has evolved thanks to the technological developments as well. Telegraph which can be described as the “internet or online communication of the time” was a great revolution in the nineteenth century. The advent of telegraph gave way to the birth of international news agencies, most importantly Reuter, Havas Wolff and Associated Press.

From their emergence in the mid-nineteenth century until the advent of internet, news agencies have always been the sole and the most influential center of news production regardless of the spreading instruments of the era such as newspapers, radio and television.⁸⁵⁹ They have definitely dominated the news production for almost one and a half century. They have largely determined the content of mass communication with their agenda building capability. Therefore, the international news agencies have been the battlefield of empires and governments throughout their history in order to control the public opinion.

The nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century experienced one of the greatest imperial expansions. The domination of eighty-four per cent of the world’s land by the European powers before the World War I was a clear evidence of this fact. That should be the reason why Eric Hobsbawm portrays the era between 1875 and 1914 as *The Age of Empire*.⁸⁶⁰ Surely, the technological developments in transportation and communication largely contributed to this expansion. As one of them, the international news agencies immediately became a crucial tool of empires in extending their powers. They served as imperial institutions in a time that mass

⁸⁵⁹ Actually, the international news agencies still keep their importance despite of internet age but the digital media increasingly extend its role while the structure of journalism is changing.

⁸⁶⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Ages of Empire 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage: 1989).

media and propaganda increasingly became important equipment of total wars.⁸⁶¹ Nalbach illustrates the issue: “Like submarine telegraph cables, the telegraphic news agencies served a vital function in holding the colonial empires together. If cables were the hardware of the new imperialism, the agencies became the software of empire.”⁸⁶²

At this point, this dissertation has mainly attempted to explain the establishment, activities and roles of international news agencies, particularly Reuter and Havas in the Ottoman Empire while the agencies pervaded the entire world according to domains of their respective empires. In a time of Europe’s enormous political and economic expansion in the nineteenth century, namely imperialism, Istanbul was one of the strategic capitals to set up representations for the international news agencies.

The agencies were not late at all in coming to Istanbul after the Ottoman capital was connected to the European cable lines during the Crimean War, a period that they proved their role in conveying the news swiftly. Unlike Reuter, Havas had a permanently based correspondent in Istanbul. These two agencies distributed news from Istanbul that they mostly received via steamships in the late 1850s. Havas and Reuter established their bureaus in Istanbul in the mid-1860s. Ottoman newspapers, bankers and tradesmen welcomed the news distribution of these two agencies given that they really valued fresh information. The Ottoman government became the main customer of agencies as well in order to assuage the “hostile reporting” in the European newspapers against itself and to make counter-propaganda.

The Ottoman government to a great extent perceived the international news agencies as a threat for its interests because of their “hostile, detrimental and malicious reporting” against the Ottoman Empire after they consolidated their existence in Istanbul in a short time. Inherently, most of the issues that the agencies reported were closely connected to the political and diplomatic problems of the era. The specific titles were Armenian Issue, Balkans, uprisings against the empire,

⁸⁶¹ I refer the role and significance of mass media in reaching to “minds and hearts of people” in wars. See: Jeremy Black, *The Age of Total War, 1860-1945* (Westport, Conn : Greenwood Publishing Group. 2006) and Ian Beckett, “Total War”, in: Arthur Marwick, Clive Emsley and Wendy Simpson, eds., *Total War and Historical Change: Europe, 1914-1955* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001).

⁸⁶² Nalbach, “The Software of Empire”, pp. 44-45.

Muslim world, “insulting” the Ottomans and the health of the Ottoman Sultan. Yet, these recurring themes were not exhaustive; the Yıldız Palace was also annoyed by other reports as well.

Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman ruling elite believed that the international news agencies intentionally distributed news against the Ottoman Empire both abroad and at home on these issues. For them, the agencies had several motivations for this kind of reporting. First and foremost, the agencies and their agents took into consideration the interests of their respective governments while concurrently attempting to maximize their benefits. They believed that the reports hugely harmed the position of the Ottoman Empire abroad particularly in Europe because of their wide network and hegemony in news distribution. As a result, from the Ottoman perspective the foreign press and international news agencies grew into a serious problem that had to be dealt with.

In seeking for a solution, the Ottoman government endeavoured to institutionalize the relations with press in general and international news agencies in particular. In the nineteenth century, both the domestic and foreign press were a new phenomenon for the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, “trial and error” approach seems to be the definition that most conveniently suits to explain the policy of the Ottoman government in managing the press affairs. It was definitely need-based provisions in their origins according to the problems of the day. That was the reason why the Ottoman government gradually devised, produced and changed different mechanisms in order to control the press several times. However, the Directorate of Foreign Press which was set up in 1885 did not worked out at all.

For the Ottoman government, negotiating with international news agencies on cooperation agreements was another aspect in dealing with them. The agencies were also ready for such kind of contracts. The agreements described the possible framework for cooperation between the Ottoman government and the agencies. It is not clear whether all the negotiated agreements were signed and put into practice but they were really comprehensive in providing extensive rights and opportunities for the Ottoman Empire. Remarkably, some of the articles were such an advanced and modern that showed that the Ottoman government fully grasped the technicalities and peculiarities of agencies.

One of the basic contentions of this dissertation is that the relations between the Ottoman government and the international news agencies were interdependent. Both needed each other to pursue and maximize their individual interests and to achieve their purposes. The need for the other can be best described as *sine qua non*. It can also be interpreted as a type of reciprocal “carrot and stick” approach.⁸⁶³ In essence, both sides tried to establish good relations with each other in accordance with a “win-win” situation in which the both sides benefit and enjoy the outcome. Briefly, the Ottoman government was the major customer of international news agencies since it could absolutely pay more for their services and also provide free telegraph. On the other part, the agencies were the only vehicles in order to deny the “baseless” reports of European press, including the agencies, against the Ottoman Empire and correct them in a swift way. Furthermore, the Ottoman government was desperate for the assistance of agencies for favourable news and making of propaganda, as they remained the main source and distributor of news not only in Europe but also in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

If having good relations was the carrot, mutual rivalry between the Ottoman Empire and the agencies was the stick in this issue. The Ottoman government had significant hard power instruments whereas the agencies had very strong soft power apparatus in this struggle. News was the main weapon of agencies to force the Ottoman government to accept their demands mainly subscription and free telegraph. This was an influential weapon to extort and threaten the Ottoman government if it responded unfavourable to the demands of the agencies. They did not refrain to use it explicitly if and when they deemed it necessary through which they certainly achieved the expected results. On the other hand, the Ottoman government had also important “sticks” such as censorship, pressure, investigation, threat of expulsion, un-subscription and cutting of subsidies. Although the government definitely applied these instruments by gradually tightening its levels, the agencies were always one step ahead in this struggle while the Ottoman Empire was in defence during the process. The Ottoman State failed to control the activities of international news agencies despite of all its efforts.

⁸⁶³ For a recent discussion on the reciprocity of “carrot and stick” approach, see: Florian Herold, “Carrot or Stick? The Evolution of Reciprocal Preferences in a Haystack Model,” *American Economic Review*, 2012, 102(2): 914–940.

Meanwhile, the second half of the nineteenth century was marked by several agreements between the agencies to exploit the world in terms of reporting and news distribution. Most of the time, the political sphere of their respective empires was the defining factor in this cooperation. “Sick Man of Europe” certainly became an item of the provisions in these agreements at a time of Eastern Question. The Treaty between Havas and Reuters on 20 May 1876 set out the frame to share the Ottoman Empire. The French agency acquired the right for reporting and distribution of news in the Empire.

Despite agreements among them, the right of reporting and distribution of news in the Ottoman Empire remained an area of rivalry and competition between the international news agencies as their interests conflicted. The dispute between Havas and Reuter in Istanbul during the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-1878 was remarkable. Reuter felt the need to report from the Ottoman capital since the war was significant not only for the British public but also for European countries. The dispute caused a serious crisis between the two agencies that they resorted to arbitration further damaging their relations. Yet, the venues for cooperation were open to restoration and they were ready to change their policies to fit into the new circumstances and interests. The changing political atmosphere of Europe and occasional alliances had an impact on the cooperation of agencies as well. The vision of Reuter to enlarge its role resulted in a specific alliance between the British agency and the German Continental. They endeavoured to detach Havas from Istanbul by establishing a joint news agency, Agence de Constantinople in 1889. It was clearly extension of the competition for the Ottoman territories. Without being aware of the particular agreements, the Ottoman ruling elite knew that there was a natural competition between the agencies as well as their agents. Therefore, the Ottoman government sought to make use of this situation especially by creating rivalry between the correspondents in Istanbul.

After all, the significant question remains: to what extent did the measures, regulations and practices of the Ottoman Empire regarding the international news agencies serve the purpose in preventing “hostile, malicious, and baseless” reporting and for providing favourable news? The Ottoman government preferred to manage the necessity of communication by getting professional service from the international news agencies at the beginning. It was the most suitable, easier and cheaper way in

the eyes of the Ottoman ruling elite. However, the role and the influence of these agencies grew gradually for the Ottoman Empire to the point that the Empire became dependent on them to outreach the European public. Collaboration with Havas and Reuter did not suffice to meet the expectations of the Ottoman officials since the demands of the agencies amplified by time and paying for their services became a particular problem when the Ottoman government plunged into a severe economic crisis. At the end of the day, for the Ottoman ruling elite, Havas and Reuter were the news agencies of British Empire and France. Briefly, it was not possible to control the spread of information and news in such an era that transportation and communication largely improved. The significant point was to manage the information and distribution of the news. However, the Ottoman State lacked the ability, tool and staff to succeed this vision.

8.1. Penetration of European Hegemony and Resistance of the Ottoman State

Considering that the international news agencies were the imperial institutions, it would be sound to argue that they also served as the instrument of their respective governments in order to penetrate into the Ottoman Empire at a time of European expansion and imperialism. The stance of the Ottoman government can be read as a response to the penetration of European political, economic and cultural hegemony. The practices of Ottoman government in managing the agencies can also be seen as an extension of its strategy to resist this hegemony.

The agencies were really influential and had impact on the Ottoman domestic politics in terms of European penetration. A report of Reuter could have caused to the dismissal of a grand vizier or minister of foreign affairs in the Empire. The case of Grand Vizier Mehmet Sadık Pasha was a good example reflecting the power of news given that Sultan Abdülhamid II dismissed him upon a report of Reuter.⁸⁶⁴ Yet, it is not a testament that Britain gave any instructions to Reuter to publish such a report but the point is that the British agency had a large impact on Ottoman internal politics through its news stories.

⁸⁶⁴ The Layard Papers, MS 38937, Vol VII.

In addition to Ottoman internal affairs, the power of agencies in designing the international diplomacy and agenda was absolutely unprecedented. Both Reuter and Havas made great efforts in announcing the “Armenian Issue” in a very detailed manner, including reports on the clashes, atrocities and political developments. From the perspective of the Ottoman Empire, it can be inferred that that the European press and specifically international news agencies caused or created such a serious problem through their provoking dispatches. The same challenge was also applied for the Balkans. The reports of agencies on the clashes between Muslim and non-Muslims and the alleged repression of the non-Muslims by the Empire created severe problems for the Ottoman Empire.

Even though the reporting of the international news agencies on Ottoman economy and finance remained beyond the scope of this dissertation, it can simply be said that the news agencies also controlled all flow of information and exercised a defining influence on the Ottoman finance by their news and speculations. They were the main agents providing information on trade, stock exchange and prices between the Empire and Europe.

In the face of European penetration, the Ottoman State definitely tried to resist although it did not have strong and effective capabilities. It never became part of a formal or informal empire of an imperialist power in the context of communication network and spread of information. The Ottoman State always made a great effort to control its domains, particularly Istanbul in terms of reporting and distribution of news. It was never an object but an active subject in this process. While trying to handle the international news agencies, the efforts of Ottoman governments to put into counter propaganda activities by using these agencies highlight this activeness and reaction. The Ottoman State never gave up against the “attacks of European press” and endeavoured to response “detrimental and hostile” reporting although the outcome was not the expected one. It worked to make use of the rivalry among the European powers and the news agencies.

The resistance was not limited to control the reporting but also the infrastructure of communication networks, namely the telegraph lines. The Ottoman State always wanted to keep the telegraph lines in its hands even they were constructed mostly by France and Britain. For the Ottoman State, it meant “retaining control over a politically potent symbol of their remaining authority and aspirations

to create a modern cosmopolitan nation state fully integrated into world affairs.”⁸⁶⁵
The Ottoman State tried to become a player and competitor with The Ottoman Telegraph Administration thanks to its strategic importance in the telegraph lines.

While the Ottoman government endeavoured to handle the “hostile and detrimental reporting” of the agencies with numerous practices for the decades, it also sought for a conclusive and national solution that should be interpreted as another aspect of this resistance. In this vein, the idea of setting up a national news agency gradually emerged in the minds of Ottoman ruling elite. After examining the practices in European counterparts, the Ottoman State, in the early 1900s, noticed that forming a semi-official news agency was the most proper action to manage this issue. There were already several applications both from the Ottoman citizens and foreigners to form a national news agency until 1908. Even though the decision was taken to create a national news agency in 1906 during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, it seems that it could not be materialized because of lack of financial sources and capable staff. Consequently, the new Committee of Union of Progress government accelerated the attempts to form a national news agency in the second half of 1909 which was really a complicated process. However, breaking the hegemony of Havas and Reuter was not an easy mission at all for a modest domestic news agency, namely The Ottoman Telegraph Agency and The Ottoman National Telegraph Agency. They only served the purpose of distributing official statements and failed to meet the needs of the Ottoman government in this new modern war.⁸⁶⁶

In this context of heightened foreign domination and intervention what Sultan Abdülhamid II did during his long rule can be summarized as follows:

Painfully aware of the Ottoman Empire's transition from world power into a political entity at the fringes of Western European capitalism, he tried to hold this collapsing venture together by stimulating the glory of its past through the revival of its classical institutions like the caliphate, but just as easily adopted methods offered by modernity such as centralized education, communications

⁸⁶⁵ Dwayne R. Winseck & Robert M. Pike, *Communication and Empire: Media, Markets, and Globalization, 1860-1930* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 96.

⁸⁶⁶ Actually, the process of establishing a national or semi-official news agency was really complicated that needs a comprehensive research on the issue. I have collected several documents and sources regarding the idea of semi-official or national news agency in the Ottoman Empire. I plan to study and explain the issue in another article soon.

and even photography to foster and propagate the integrity of the Empire. Censorship was a cocoon Abdülhamid II wove around his “well-protected domains” that insulated, albeit imperfectly, the Empire and its subjects from the offensive realities of European power politics....⁸⁶⁷

8.2. Ancien Régime or Modern Practice?

It is significant that the press practices of both the Ottoman government in general and the international news agencies in particular should be discussed in the historical context. As underlined previously, the press in the Ottoman Empire in the last quarter of nineteenth and first decade of twentieth centuries has been largely identified with Sultan Abdülhamid II and defined as “the press regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II.”⁸⁶⁸ The regulations, laws and censorship have been mostly explained by the personality of Ottoman sultan given that he reportedly lived in fear of assassination and was very sceptic like a paranoid. Therefore, he was blamed for representing all possible evil and backwardness in the empire.

In total concurrence with Hanioglu, the point is not to argue that the regime of Sultan Abdülhamid II did not include several characteristics which resulted from his personality and psychology. Rather, as Hanioglu underlines, the phenomenon of censorship in this era can be understood through an analysis of the politics which was produced in the context of Ottoman society’s relations with the modernity.⁸⁶⁹ Hanioglu states:

The given [ridiculous] examples, of course, are significant in showing that the Ottoman censorship in practice was more discretionary and prohibitive compared to its contemporaries. However, the point that has to be remembered is that the censorship was modern politics in the end. Therefore, by looking at these interesting examples, it should not be overlooked that they were essentially the results of adaptations of the approaches which were already existing in Europe to the Ottoman society. In other words, the censorship of Abdülhamid II era was one of politics/policies endeavouring to reconcile the

⁸⁶⁷ Yosmaoglu, “Chasing the Printed Word”, p. 48.

⁸⁶⁸ Koloğlu, “Abdülhamid’in Basın Rejimi”, pp. 35-46.

⁸⁶⁹ Şükrü Hanioglu, “Sunuş”, in Fatmagül Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür* (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2007), p. 13. Hanioglu really makes useful contribution and gives a perspective in introducing the book of Fatmagül Demirel.

[Ottoman] society and tradition with modernity in a sense. Extremisms in the practices should not cause to ignore this aspect of the issue.⁸⁷⁰

The point here is to lay out the historical context for a sound analysis of the topic rather than discussing the level of censorship and pressure on the press in the Ottoman Empire. Besides Hanioglu, Cioeta underlines, “Ottoman censorship, viewed in the context of its time, does not seem to have been particularly harsh.” His findings show that the Ottoman censorship regime in Beirut “never approached the ideal of absolute press freedom, but at its worst it was certainly not the harshest censorship regime in Europe.”⁸⁷¹ Therefore he concludes: “The Ottoman Empire, like all states, limited to some extent the content of publications for reasons of national security, to protect public morale and order, to preserve public morality, and to protect individual reputations.”⁸⁷²

Furthermore, the studies of Goldstein on the political censorship of the press and arts in the nineteenth-century Europe are useful to see the historical context of the issue in Western world.⁸⁷³ In the nineteenth-century Europe, maintaining the political order was the ultimate goal behind the motivation of repressive press practices. Therefore, working-class movements became the leading censorship targets in most countries given that “they were perceived as the major threat as modernization progressed”.⁸⁷⁴

Goldstein next comprehensively demonstrates the situation in Europe regarding the political censorship of the press. He underlines that the European ruling elite repeatedly defined the press “as a disease or a mental poison that threatened society and therefore required strict controls.”⁸⁷⁵ As regards to practices, European authorities definitely “devoted immense amounts of time, energy, and personnel to

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

⁸⁷¹ Cioeta, “Ottoman Censorship”, pp. 180-181.

⁸⁷² Ibid., p. 180.

⁸⁷³ Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Censorship of the Arts and the Press in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989); Robert Justin Goldstein, *The War for the Public Mind : Political Censorship in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Westport, Conn. : Praeger, 2000) and Robert Justin Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage : Political Censorship of the Theater in nineteenth-century Europe* (New York : Berghahn Books, 2009).

⁸⁷⁴ Goldstein, *The War for the Public Mind*, p. 28.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., p.5.

attempting to control the press and other forms of communication.”⁸⁷⁶ Almost all European states imposed prior press censorship in the first half of the nineteenth century. Although the level of this mechanism decreased in the second half, it did not mean that freedom of press was guaranteed in Europe. Only the tools of control changed, but the mentality and ultimate goal of political power remained the same given that extensive examination and ambiguous authorization of postpublication punishment were put into practice.⁸⁷⁷ The conclusion of Goldstein with respect to the political censorship in Europe in this era is as follows:

... the significance and impact of nineteenth-century European political censorship appear to be overwhelmingly evident: measured by the tens of thousands of censorship bans, prosecutions, fines, jail terms, and suppressions, nothing is more clear than that the various restrictions on the press, drawings, songs, theater, and cinema substantially interfered with the free flow of opinions and expression of thousands of journalists, dramatists, caricaturists, and other artists and limited the choices of tens of millions of Europeans. There can be little doubt, for example, that the insipid quality of much of the nineteenth-century European stage throughout the century, as well as that of most pre-1850 European journalism, was substantially due to censorship.⁸⁷⁸

Hanioğlu in reference to the studies of Goldstein underlines that the censorship of Sultan Abdülhamid II era did not essentially differ much from the practices in Prussia and France after the period of modernity in those countries.⁸⁷⁹ In addition to Hanioglu, the research of Yosmaoğlu is very useful not only to comprehend the motivations and efforts of Sultan Abdülhamid II to control the printed words, but also to compare this era with the Committee of Union and Progress government.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 16. Meanwhile, Goldstein shows how much postpublication press prosecutions were massive in scale across Europe as follows: “In Germany, under the formally liberal 1874 press law, over 3,800 press prosecutions were brought by 1890, the notorious Anti-Socialist Law (1878–90) was used to administratively suppress over 100 periodicals and over 1,000 other publications, and hundreds of prosecutions against socialist papers continued until 1914; in Austria, there were over 2,000 prosecutions and confiscations of newspapers between 1877 and 1880 alone; in Italy, over 100 newspapers were arbitrarily suppressed during a period of political turmoil in 1898; in Russia, during the five years following the ending of prior press censorship in 1905 there were nearly 1,300 newspaper suppressions (of which over 1,000 were administratively imposed compared to less than 225 by the courts), hundreds of journalists were jailed, and almost 4,400 penalties were imposed on the press (compared to only eighty two during the previous five years); in France there were well over 3,000 press prosecutions and scores of newspapers were suppressed during the sixty years after the abolition of press censorship in 1822.”

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

⁸⁷⁹ Hanioglu, “Sunuş”, p. 17.

Considering the press censorship “as a reflection of the dominant political culture of the period, and also as an indicator of state modernization”,⁸⁸⁰ she makes the following comments regarding the similarities and discontinuities between Hamidian censorship and censorship under the Young Turks:

Abdülhamid II's obsession with controlling the printed word may have been aggravated by his personality, but it was primarily induced by his beliefs about preserving the state, and he did not differ much from his opponents, the Young Turks, in this respect... Under the CUP, however, censorship gradually lost its paternalistic character and was transformed into a more rational and impersonal mechanism under the centralized control of the state. The most significant manifestation of this transformation were the enactment of the Press Regulation and the growing authority of the Ministry of the Interior in overseeing the censorship process--an unprecedented crystallization of power in a single state bureau.⁸⁸¹

In such a historical background and context, this dissertation makes an essential point with respect to the international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire. First, the issue should be examined beyond the usual practice which examines the topic as the process of how the Ottoman government tried to control the press and the foreign agencies and how they responded to this pressure. Instead, it needs to be put in a perspective that reflects the historical circumstances, including the interpretation of modern politics of the time, which includes several aspects such as interdependency, mutual struggle, public relations, international propaganda, public opinion and international competition for news distribution. Briefly, they were the instrument of modern politics for the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman sultans in the nineteenth century increasingly and largely used the European tools in politics and governing the empire. Even, they closely followed the European examples in culture and symbolism as well. Their motivation was to prove that the Ottoman sultans resembled the European rulers and they were all part of Western society. In this respect, the role of press was not an exception in modern politics for the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman sultans, particularly Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman ruling elite strived to utilize all the advents of this modern tool, press in general and the news agencies in particular, not only for

⁸⁸⁰ Yosmaoğlu, “Chasing the Printed”, p. 47.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

diplomatic purposes but also for personal image. For Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman officials, the press and news agencies were the main instruments to tell and explain the empire to the world, especially to the European public.

The policy of Ottoman Empire was not limited only to control the content of the reports and to prevent them from publishing, but also direct the news that might have been distributed and published.⁸⁸² Put differently, managing the reports of international news agencies had two simultaneous objectives. The first was to censor and control the “hostile, detrimental and malicious” reports while the second was to design and devise the news in favour of the Ottoman Empire. The invitation of the Ottoman government for Reuter reporters to Macedonia region to examine the conflicts between Muslim and non-Muslims in order to prevent “hostile reporting against the Ottoman State” can evidently be interpreted in this context.⁸⁸³ The occasional deal in 1897 between the Ottoman government and Reuter to “defend the Ottomans regarding the incidents in Crete” stands out as another example in this respect.⁸⁸⁴ Although the reporters of Reuter were not embedded in the modern sense of the term, their officially organized visits can be read as a modern practice of the Ottoman government.

Broadly speaking, the managing of agencies can also be evaluated as a part of Ottoman public relations and public diplomacy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After outlining the “image problem” of Ottoman Empire in Europe, Davison basically explains how the Ottoman government undertook several different measures “which, viewed as a whole, might be considered a public relations campaign” in dealing with this challenge. He underlines that the Ottoman diplomats often sought to influence newspapers to publish favourable news and articles given that having good relations with the European press became highly significant for the Ottoman government.⁸⁸⁵ Therefore, the agencies can absolutely be regarded as one of the main tools in this campaign when their potential as the source of newspapers are

⁸⁸² Hanioglu, “Sunuş”, p. 19.

⁸⁸³ BOA, TFR.I.A., 13/1248, 18 B 1321/10 October 1903.

⁸⁸⁴ BOA, İMTZ.GR., 31/1224, 19 Ra 1315/16 October 1897.

⁸⁸⁵ Roderic Davison, “Ottoman Public Relations in the 19th Century: How the Sublime Porte Tried to Influence European Public Opinion”, in *Nineteenth Century Ottoman Diplomacy and Reforms* (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1997), p. 597.

taken into consideration.⁸⁸⁶ In essence, public relations and public diplomacy are quintessentially modern and Western concepts that gained currency especially in the second half of twentieth century. However, the Ottoman State evidently exerted substantial efforts to make use of this tool.⁸⁸⁷

As to concluding remarks, a comparative approach is required in order to comprehend the role and influence of the international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire with all aspects. Therefore, it is necessary to look at other cases and examples such as Russia, Japan and China but it goes beyond the scope and purpose of this dissertation.⁸⁸⁸ Comparing how the Ottoman State managed the international news agencies with its counterparts would be very useful study in order to see the issue in a historical context. It will reveal the similarities and differences in the understanding and practice while showing the uniqueness of the Ottoman State if any but it needs a particular research. The point which has been noticed in this dissertation is that the Ottoman State was delayed in creating a national news agency. The attempts to establish a domestic news agency in Russia began in the 1860s and in the late 1880s in Japan whereas the year of 1909 has been seen as the establishment of first national or domestic news agency. Furthermore, the strategic geography of the Ottoman Empire really contributed to resist in trying to keep its authority in telegraph lines.

It would be a sound expectation that this dissertation might pioneer and inspire in encouraging such researches. The topic of international news agencies in

⁸⁸⁶ Besides Davison, there is one more recent research explaining one role of Ottoman Translation Office as a public diplomacy. Kamay states that “the use of foreign press became the most useful tool to implement the public diplomacy of the [Ottoman] Foreign Ministry and to control the pulse of the public opinion in Europe”. See: Kamay, *Public Diplomacy and the Translation Office*, p. 9.

⁸⁸⁷ On the other hand, Kamay argues that the term of public diplomacy gained importance at the end of the Cold War and was firstly used in 1960s. Actually, it was not the case. Being firstly used in January 1856 by *The Times*, it had a significant place in the US foreign policy from the First World War. See: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917–1972, Public Diplomacy, World War I*, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1917-72PubDip/preface> Retrieved 3 March, 2015.; and Nicholas Cull, “‘Public Diplomacy’ Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase”, *USCPublicDiplomacy*. University of Southern California. (Accessed 26 September 2014)

⁸⁸⁸ By the way, Brummett argues that Ottoman publishing “was not comparable to contemporaneous French, English or German publishing either in scope of circulation of mass dailies and weeklies or in duration of press history”. Her main point is that the Ottoman state “experienced its revolution at a time when its political and cultural sovereignty were already irrevocably compromised by European hegemony.” However, I do believe that it is necessary to look at the European practices in order to comprehend historical context while explaining the Ottoman press, foreign press and news agencies in the Empire. See: Brummett, *Image and Imperialism* pp. 11-12.

the Ottoman Empire is a multifaceted one and could have been told in many ways, under different themes and emphasis. For instance, the reports of Reuter on the Armenian issue might have been a dissertation on its own or a comparison of the news of Reuter and Havas on the Armenian issue or conflicts in the Balkans are few examples. Yet, it is astonishing that there is no study regarding the endeavours for establishing a national news agency in the Empire.

Furthermore, the international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire have not been studied with a particular focus; the issue was either overlooked or regarded as part of foreign press. However, as the structure, service, mission, the role and influence of the news agencies have been really different from the newspapers, they appeal to be examined distinctively. More importantly, it is not uneasy to comprehend the issue with every aspect for a historian since it simultaneously requires knowledge in media studies in order to grasp the fine tunings of the topic.

As a final remark, it must be stated that it is impossible for any dissertation to fully cover every aspect and details on a topic which also applies to this dissertation. The role and influence of the international news agencies in the Ottoman Empire is an area that will remain for further exploration for researchers. The prospective studies and research in this course would also reveal the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the penetration of the European hegemony into the Ottoman territories from another important angle. It is hoped that this dissertation would encourage and assist such kind of researches.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TRANSLITERATION OF ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

1. The Contract between the Ottoman State and the Havas Telegraph Agency⁸⁸⁹

Bâb-ı âlî

Nezaret-i celîle-i hâriciye

Tercüme odası

Bir taraftan bâb-ı âlî namına hareket eden sadrâzam ve hariciye nazırı fehâmetlu devletlu Saffet Paşa hazretleri ve diğêr taraftan “Havas” telgraf kumpanyası namına hareket eden Mösyo Chatau beyninde mukavele-i âtiye akd olunmuştur

Birinci bend

Kumpanya ber mu’tâd icrâ edilmekde olduđu muhabere-i telgrafiye haricinde cânib-i bâb-ı âlîden teslimi tensîb olunacak telgrafları mâlik olduđu bi’l-cümle vesâit-i neşriyye ile Avrupa’ya irsâl ve iş’âr edecektir

İkinci bend

Kumpanya cânib-i bâb-ı âlîden veya süferâ-yi saltanat-ı seniyye taraflarından vurûd edecek muharrerât ve teblîğât-ı resmîyeyi Korrespondenz Havas nam gazetesine meccânen kabul ve derc eyleyeceđi gibi her hafta gazetesine irsâl olunacak bendlerin ve mektubların suret-i tahrîr ve terkîbi emrinde bâb-ı âlînin efkârını istihrâc eyleyecektir

Üçüncü bend

Kumpanya (ber mu’tâd icrâ etmekte olduđu muhabere-i telgrafiye haricinde olmak üzere) bâb-ı âlînin kendisine ta’alluku olan Avrupa mesâil-i politikasına dair taleb edeceđi ma’lûmâtı suret-i mahremânede i’tâ etmek üzere yalnız Bâb-ı âlîye mahsus bir muhabere-i telgrafiye küşâd edecektir

Dördüncü bend

⁸⁸⁹ BOA, Y.EE., 41/141, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909.

The wording of contract says that it was signed. However, there is not any signature on the document. In addition to this, the day and month of the agreement was not written in the document near the year. This part is blank with dots. Meanwhile, the date of the file including this document in the Ottoman Archives is 6 R 1327/27 April 1909. See: However, date of the contract is clearly written as 1878 in the Ottoman document. “İş bu mukavele bin sekiz yüz yetmiş sekiz senesi...”

Kumpanya Avrupa'dan memâlik-i devlet-i aliyyeye irsâl olunacak telgrafların suret-i tahrîr ve terkîbinin hükümet-i seniyyenin veya düvel-i muazzama nezdindeki süferâsının efkârını istihrâc edecektir

Beşinci bend

Kumpanya şu hizmetlere mukabil âtide muharrer fevâidden müstefîd olacaktır şöyleki

Evvela cânib-i bâb-ı âlîden kendisine abone parası olarak şehri bin beş yüz frank verilecek ve kendisi dahi telgraflarını mâbeyn-i hümâyûn-ı mülûkâneye ve vükelâ ve e'âzîm-i ricâl-i devlete gönderecektir

Sâniyen ber mu'tâd keşîde eylediği telgraflardan gönderdiği mahallere kadar hadd-i âtide para alınmayacaktır yani İstanbul'dan memâlik-i ecnebiyeye veya memâlik-i ecnebiyeden İstanbul'a çekmekte olduğu telgrafların beher gün yüz kelimesi ve memâlik-i şahane dahilinde keşîde eylemekte bulunduğu telgrafların kezâlik beher gün yüz kelimesi meccânen geçirilecektir

Her ayın nihayetinde hesabı yapılarak kumpanya iki nevi telgrafların kelimâtından meccânen nakl ettirmeğe hakkı olduğu kelimâtı ba'de't-tenzîl fazlasının ücretini te'diye edecektir

Altıncı bend

Hükümet-i seniyye kumpanyanın gerek memâlik-i ecnebiye ve gerek memâlik-i şahane ile ber mu'tâd icra etmekte olduğu muhâberât-ı telgrafiyeyi muâyene ve tevkîf ettirmek hakkını muhafaza eder

Mukavele-i hazıra iş bu şehir-i Teşrîn-i evvel-i Rûmînin birinci ve efrencînin on üçüncü gününden itibaren üç sene müddet-i mer'ıyyü'l-icrâ olacaktır şu kadarki hükümet-i seniyye ile kumpanya mukavele-i hâzırayı ilk ayın hitâmında fesh etmek hakkını mütekâbilen muhafaza ederler

İş bu mukavele bin sekiz yüz yetmiş sekiz senesi Teşrîn-i evvelinin . . . de der-sa'âdet'de iki nüsha olarak tanzîm ve nüsha olunmuştur.

2. The Contract between the Ottoman State and Reuter Telegraph Company⁸⁹⁰

Bir kıt'a mukâvelenâme lâyihası tercümesidir

Birinci mâdde – Ajans Reuter hükûmet-i seniyyenin kendüye i'tâsına lüzûm göreceği bi'l-cümle havâdisi Avrupa ve Amerika ve Hindistan'ın başluca gazeteleriyle telgraf ajanslarına ve ez cümle kendü tarafından icrâ kılınacak bi'l-cümle teblîgâtı neşr itmeğe bâ mukâvele mecbûr ve müte'ahhid olan Paris'deki Ajans Havas'a telgraf vâsıtasıyla irsâl itmeği ta'ahhüd ider

İkinci mâdde – Bâb-ı âlî dahi Ajans Reuter'in Dersa'âdet'deki vekîline ma'lûmât i'tâsıyla berâber neşr olunacak bi'l-cümle evrâk-ı diplomatikayı teblîğ itmekliği ta'ahhüd buyurur Bâb-ı âlî bu hıdmeti îfâ için hâriciye nezâret-i celîlesinde mahsûsen bir me'mûr ta'yîn eyleyecektir

Üçüncü mâdde – Bâb-ı âlî teblîğ eyleyeceği bi'l-cümle evrâk-ı resmiye ve takrîr-i diplomatika ve tekzîbnâme ve beyânnâmeleri Ajans Reuter tarafından meccânen nakl olunmasına müsâ'ade buyurur kendü telgrafnâmeleri için Dersâ'adet ile Londra beyninde yevmî “yüz”²² ve Dersa'âdet ile Bombay beyninde kezalik yevmî “yüz” kelimeyi meccânen nakl itdirecek ve eğer ba'dehu memâlik-i şâhânenin içerüleri için bir muhâbere-i telgrafiye te'sîs ider ise bunun için kezalik yevmî “yüz” kelimeyi meccânen nakl itdirecektir

Dördüncü mâdde – Ajans Reuter elhâletü hazihi Hindistan ve Çin ve Avustralya memâlikine gönderilmek üzere bir takım büyük İngiliz ve Amerika şirketlerinden aldığı telgrafnâmeleri mürsel-i ileyhlerine li ecli't-tevzî' kendü acentelerine ve “(...) telgraf kompani” hatt-ı tahtü'l-bahrîsi vasıtasıyla irsâl itmekde olduğundan hutût-ı telgrafiye-i Osmâniye muntazam sûretde işler ve ucûrât-ı nakliyeden yüzde on beş tenzîl idilür ise bu telgrafları hutût-ı Osmâniye vâsıtasıyla gönderecektir

Beşinci mâdde – Buna mukâbil Ajans Reuter hükûmet-i seniyye tarafından vukû'bulacak Londra'dan Avrupa ve Amerika memâlikinde mukîm kendü acente ve vekillerine irsâli mesârifini der'uhde ider ma'amâfih Bâb-ı âlî bu mesârif için Ajans Reuter'e senevî on beş bin frank i'âne virmeği ta'ahhüd eyler Ajans Reuter bu pâreden Bâb-ı âlî'nin me'mûr-ı mahremine bir ma'âş tahsîs eyleyecektir

Altıncı mâdde – Bâb-ı âlî Ajans Reuter'in muharrerât-ı âdiye-i telgrafiyesini tevkîf eylemek hakkını muhâfaza ider

Yedinci mâdde – Mukâvele-i hâzire üç sene müddet için mer'ıyyü'l-icrâ olacaktır tarafeyn-i müte'âhideynden biri bunu tecdîd itmek istemez ise bu üç sene müddetin inkizâsından üç mâh evvel diğerine ihbâr-ı keyfiyet eylemeğe mecbûr olup itmediği takdîrde mukâvelenin bir üç sene müddet daha düstûr-ı amel olacağı mukarrerdir işbu mukâvele iki nüsha olarak tanzîm kılınmıştır

⁸⁹⁰ (HR.TO 476/48, 9.8.1880)

3. The Secret Articles of the Draft Agreement between the Ottoman State and Reuter Agency⁸⁹¹

Bâb-ı âlî
Nezaret-i celile-i hariciye
Tercüme odası

Mevâdd-ı hafiiye

Birinci madde

Ajans Reuter dünyanın her tarafında bir hizmet-i politikıye te'sîs eylemiş olduğundan bunun bâb-ı âlînin menâfi'-i yolunda kullanılacak ve cânib-i bâbb-ı âlîden nezdine gönderilecek me'mûr-ı mahremini İngiltere'de hey'et-i vukelâ ve süferâ-yi ecnebiye ve parlamento a'zâsı ile evrâk-ı havâdis direktörlerine tanıtacaktır

Me'mûr-ı mûmâ ileyh bir gûne emniyetsizliği davet etmemek için ajans Reuter'in me'mûrîninden add olunacak ve kendisi buna istinâden hükümet-i seniyyeye ber vech-i âtî pek mühim hizmetler ibrâzına muvaffak olabilecektir şöyleki

Mesâlih-i şarkıye hakkında parlamentoda bir takım su'âller vukû'unu davet eyleyecektir

Şâyi' olan rivâyât-ı kâzibeyi tashîhan gazetelere varakalar gönderecektir

Bâb-ı âlînin i'lân ve işâ'a etmek isteyeceği vukû'ât ve mulâhazâtın her tarafa intişârı için bunları ajans Reuter'in bi'l-cümle Almanya ve Avusturya gazetelerine göndereceği litoğrafya ile basılmış varakalara derc ettirecektir

Der-sa'âdet'den gelen telgrafnameleri İngiliz gazetelerinde şerh ve îzâh edecek ve der'sa'âdet'den gönderilecek havâdisi intihâb ettirecektir

Bâb-ı âlînin menâfi'i için gazetelere derc ettireceği şeyleri ajans Reuter ma'rifetiyle bâ telgraf dünyanın her tarafında neşr ettirecektir

İkinci madde

Ajans Reuter Hind gazetelerine yalnız kendisi hizmet ettiği cihetle Hindistan'ın bi'l-cümle şehirleriyle Çin ve İran ve Avustralya'da şubeleri bulunduğundan bu memâlikdeki vesâit-i neşriyesini hükümet-i seniyyenin işinde kullanmağı ta'ahhüd eder hususan Hindistan'daki vesâit-i neşriyesinin hükümet-i seniyyeye pek büyük bir ehemmiyeti vardır

⁸⁹¹ BOA, HR.TO. 476/48, 9 August 1880. The agreement was prepared both in Ottoman and French. On the other hand, there are three different files in the Ottoman archives regarding this agreement. The first one is BOA, HR.TO., 476/48, 9 August 1880. The file includes both the Ottoman and French version of the agreement with the secret articles. Interestingly, the same agreement with different hand writings is available in another file. The date of the file is 6 R 1327/27 April 1909. However there is no any date on the original documents in both Ottoman and French. For the agreement, see: BOA, Y.EE., 41/161, 6 R 1327/27 April 1909; and for the secret articles, see: BOA, Y.EE. 41/162, 6 R 1327/27 April 190. These two files have been classified with the title of "Proposal on the designed contract with Reuter Agency" ("Ajans Reuter ile tasarlanan mukavelename layihası"). The date of 27 April 1909 is quite interesting since it was the date that Sultan Abdülhamid II was dethroned. Unfortunately, there is no explanation why the agreement was rewritten with a different handwriting.

Üçüncü madde

Ajans Reuter İngiliz ve sair devletler vükelâsının efkârını istihrâc ve her yerde acentaları olduğu cihetle bi'l-cümle memâlik-i evrak havâdisine derc edilen bendleri bâb-1 âlîye teblîğ ve iş'âr edebilir

Birde bâb-1 âlînin me'mûr-1 mahremine her hafta hariciye nezaret-i celilesine bir tahrîrât-1 mahremâne irsâl etmesine muâvenet eyleyecektir ki bu tahrîrâtın hâvî olacağı ma'lûmâtın vus'at ve sıhhatiyle beraber İngiltere'de me'mûrîn ve sairenin efkâr ve hissiyâtları ne merkezde bulunduğunu göstereceği cihetle nezaret-i müşârun ileyhâca pek büyük nef' ve fâidesi görülür

Dördüncü madde

Ajans Reuter bi'l-cümle büyük bankalara umûr-1 mâliye ve tüccâriyece ma'lûmât i'tâ ettiği cihetle bâb-1 âlînin umûr-1 idare ve maliyesince dahi fâidesi görülür

Ve'l-hâsıl şurası mukarrerdir ki ajans Reuter melfûf mukavelenameyi bi'l-imza bâb-1 âlînin dünyanın her tarafında hizmet-i neşriyesini icra ve yedindeki vesâit dairesinde hükümet-i seniyyece hıdemât-1 politikiye ibrâz etmekle der'uhde eyleyecektir

4. The Proposal for a Contract between the Ottoman State and Reuter Agency given that Reuter is the center of political speculations in London⁸⁹²

Avrupa devletleri efkâr-ı umûmiye üzerine icrâ-yı nüfûzı müceb neşriyât için senevî pek külliyyetli akçeler sarf ve hasr eyledikleri hâlde devlet-i aliyye şirket-i mezkûrenin vâsıtasıyla mesârif-i cüz'iyeye ile Avrupa'nın efkâr-ı umûmiyesini ve bi'l-mukâbele Türkiye'nin efkâr-ı umûmiyesini celb idebilecektir

Ajans Reuter şirketiyle akdi tavsiye olunan mukâvelenâmedir

Birinci bend – Ajans Reuter şirketi telgrafla cânib-i hükûmet-i seniyyeden kendine teblîğ olunacak kâffe-i havâdisât ve beyânâtı meşhûr ve mu'teber gazetelere ve Avrupa ve Amerika ve Hindistan'da bulunan telgraf şirketlerine ve husûsen kâffe-i teblîgâtını neşre bâ mukâvelenâme mecbûr olup Paris'de bulunan Ajans Havas şirketine isrâ ve îsâl eyleyecektir

İkinci bend – diğerk taraftan hükûmet-i seniyye dahi Ajans Reuter şirketinin Dersa'âdet'de bulunan vekîline neşri musammem olan havâdisât ve evrâk-ı resmiyyeyi i'tâ ve hıdmet-i mezkûreyi îfâ eylemek için bir mu'temed âdem ta'yîn ve intihâb eyleyecektir

Üçüncü bend – hükûmet-i seniyye li ecli'n-neşr şirkete teblîğ ideceği tahrîrât-ı diplomatikaya ve evrâk ve tezkîbât ve i'lânât-ı resmiyenin telgrafla meccânen Avrupa'ya keşîde olunmasına ve Dersa'âdet'den Bombay'a yevmî meccânen yüz kelimenin geçmesine ve ilerüde şirket-i mezkûre vilâyât-ı şâhânedede dahi şu'beler te'sîs ider ise bu hâlde de meccânen yevmî yüz kelimenin mürûruna müsâ'ade eyleyecektir

Dördüncü bend – Ajans Reuter şirketi Hindistan ve Çin ve Avustralya için İngiltere ve Amerika mu'teberân-ı tüccârân ve sarrâfânından husûsî telgrafnâmeler alarak bunları (...) mürsel-i aleyhlerine tevzî' olunmak üzere acentelerine irsâl eylediğinden ve mezkûr telgrafnâmeler elyevm istenen telgraf şirketinin kablosuyla keşîde kılındığından Fao Osmanlı telgraf hattı ber vech-i matlûb işledilirse şirket-i mezkûre muhâberât-ı mebhûsun anhâyı hatt-ı mezkûre vâsıtasıyla icrâ ideceğinden hâsılâtından yüzde on beşinin kendisine i'tâ olunacaktır

Beşinci bend – Avrupa ve memâlik-i sâirede bulunan acentelerine Dersa'âdet'den devlet-i aliyye hakkında Londra'ya teblîğ olunacak havâdisâtı irsâl eylemek mesârif-i şirkete âid olup şu kadar ki hükûmet-i seniyye Ajans Reuter şirketine i'âneten senevî bunun için on beş bin frank mu'ayyen bir meblağ i'tâ eyleyecektir

Altıncı bend – Ajans Reuter'in muhâberât-ı husûsiyesine âid telgrafnâmeleri hükûmet-i seniyye tevkîf idebilecektir

Yedinci bend – İşbu mukâvelenâme ahkâmı üç sene için mer'ıyyü'l-icrâ olup şu kadar ki tarafeyn-i âkideynden biri mukâvele-i mezkûrenin tezdîdini talep eylemediği takdîrde müddet-i mezbûrenin inkizâsından sekiz ay mukaddem haber virecektir virmediği hâlde işbu mukâvelenâme üç sene için daha mer'ıyyü'l-icrâ tutulacaktır

⁸⁹² BOA, Y.PRK.PT., 9/14, 7 Z 1310/24 April 1893.

Mevâdd-ı hafiyye

Birinci mâdde – Ajans Reuter kıt‘ât-ı kürre-i arz üzerinde vukû‘a gelen ahvâl ve husûsât-ı siyâsiyeden âgâh ve haberdâr olacak bir sûretde teşekkül itmiş bir şirket olmağla hükûmet-i seniyyenin istihsâl-i menfa‘ate çalışacaktır taraf-ı devlet-i aliyyeden Londra’da bulundurulacak telgraf vekîlinin

İngiltere heyet-i vükelâsıyla Londra’da bulunan süferâ-yı ecnebiye ve meclis-i meb‘ûsân a‘zaları ve İngiliz gazeteleri ile mu‘ârefe peydâ itmesine vâsıta ve delîl olacaktır vekîl-i mezkûr şübheyi da‘vet itmemek için sûret-i zâhirede Ajans Reuter şirketinin bir ma‘iyeti me‘mûrî gibi hareket idüp mezkûr ajansa istinâden hükûmet-i seniyyeye gâyet mühim hizmetler îfâ eyleyecektir gazetelerde devlet-i aliyye aleyhine yazılan bendlerin sehviyâtını tashîh ve hükûmet-i seniyyenin neşr ve i‘lânını arzu buyurduğu vukû‘ât ve havâdisât ve tashîhât için Ajans Reuter’in Almanya ve Avusturya ve Macaristan gazetelerine irsâl eylediği litografya ile matbû‘ Almanca evrâkı isti‘mâl eyleyecektir ve Dersa‘âdet’den vârid olan telgrafnâmeleri İngiliz gazetelerinde tavzîh ve teşrîh ve memâlik-i şâhâneye gönderilecek havâdisâtı intihâb ve tefrîk ve Devlet-i aliyyenin menfa‘atine gazetelere derc itdireceği bendlerin hülâsasını ajans vâsıtasıyla iktizâ iden memâlike tebliğ idecektir

İkinci mâdde – Hindistan’da tab‘ ve neşr olunan evrâk-ı havâdise yalnız Ajans Reuter havâdis virdiğinden Hindistan’ın bir cihetinde olduğu gibi Çin ve İran ve Avustralya’da dahi şirket-i mezkûrenin vekîl ve memûrları olup memâlik-i mezkûrede ve husûsen Hindistan’da hiçbir şirketin neşr-i havâdise hakk ve salâhiyeti olmadığı gibi gazetelerin dahi husûsî muhbirleri olmadığından hükûmet-i seniyyenin bu ektârda her ne neşr itmek arzû buyururlar ise Ajans Reuter vâsıta olacaktır

İngiltere’nin en ziyâde korkduğu cihet Hindistan’dır İngiltere heyet-i vükelâsına bir tazyîk-i ma‘nevî icrâsı kıt‘ât-ı mezkûrede efkâr-ı umûmiyenin celbiyle olup İngiltere’nin en büyük ihtirâzı şimdîye kadar dâire-i itâ‘at ve sadâkatden ayrılmamış olan Hindistan müslümanları beyninde bir heyecân zuhûrudur bu husûsda Ajans Reuter ile esâs iş üzerine uzlaşmak mümkün olabilir şöyle ki

Evvelâ Ajans Reuter şirketi Dersa‘âdet’deki vekîline hükûmet-i seniyye her ne tebliğ ider ise Hindistan’a bildirmek için İstanbul ile Bombay arasında doğrudan doğruya muhâbere idecektir

Sâniyen gerek Londra ve gerek Hindistan havâdisât-ı lâzımevi tebliğ eylemek için hükûmet-i seniyye Ajans Reuter’e mikdâr-ı kelimâtın meccânen geçmesine müsâ‘ade eyleyecektir

Sâlisen Ajans Reuter şirketi İngiltere ve Amerika’dan Hindistan’a keşîde olunacak husûsî telgrafnâmelerin Fao Osmanlı tarîkiyle geçmesine sa‘y ve gayret eyleceğinden tarîk-i mezkûr ile te‘âtî olunacak muhâberât-ı telgrafiye ücreti hâsılâtından yüzde on beşini hükûmet-i seniyye şirketine i‘tâ eyleyecektir

Üçüncü bend – Ajans Reuter şirketi İngiltere ve memâlik-i sâirede bulunan ricâl-i devletin efkârını yoklayarak ve her memleketde neşr olunan gazetelerdeki mühim bendlerin meâlini hülâsa iderek hükûmet-i seniyyeye bildirebilecek iktidârı hâiz olduğundan hükûmet-i seniyye tarafından Londra’da bulunacak vekîl her hafta mahremâne bir lâyiha tanzîm ve takdîm idebilmesiçün mu‘âvenet-i lâzımevi dirîğ itmeyecektir mezkûr lâyihalarda münderic husûsât gâyet mevsûk ve şâyân-ı i‘timâd-ı menâbi‘den ahz ve telakkî olunacağı cihetle İngiltere ahâlîsinin ve heyet-i resmiyesinin efkârına temâmıyla vukûf hâsıl itdirebilecektir

Devlet-i aliyye hakkındaki havâdisât ve neşriyâtın merkezleri elyevm İngiltere ile Almanya olup husûsen mesâil-i şarkiyeye dâir harekât-ı diplomatikaya

ale'l-âde İngiltere'den mübâşeret olunduğu âzâde-i îzâhdır binâen aleyh her ne sûretle mümkün olur ise olsun memâlik-i şâhânedan Avrupa'ya ve Avrupa'dan memâlik-i şâhâneye vâsita-i telgrafla te'âtî-i havâdisât eylemek üzere bir tarîk ve sûret bulmak hükûmet-i seniyye için vâcibât-ı umûrdandır

Avrupa'da meydân-ı intişâra çıkarılan evrâk-ı havâdisi celb eylemeğe hâcet yokdur zîrâ evrâk-ı mezkûreye derc olunan mühim ve iltizâmkârâne bendler pek az kırâet olunuyor ihbâr ve tebyîn-i vukû'âta dâir yazılan muharrerât ve havâdisât-ı telgrafîye efkâr-ı umûmiye üzerine en ziyâde te'sîr eylediğinden ihbârât-ı mezkûre bir sûret-i hekîmânede i'tâ olunursa devlete mazar olanların te'sîrini tahfif ve fâideli olanları dahi göze çaracak sûretde tavzîh ve teşhîr eyler

Hükûmet-i seniyye neşrini arzû eylediği efkâr ve icrâatını Avrupa'ya bildirmek için merkez idâresi Londra'da bulunan Ajans Reuter şirketiyle bu bâbda müzâkereye girişmelidir şirket-i mezkûre Avrupa'da bulunan şirketlerin kâffesine fâik olmağla berâber merkez idâresinin Londra'da bulunması dahi başkaca müceb-i muhsenâtdır İngiltere'de iki binden ziyâde tab' ve neşr olunan evrâk-ı havâdisin kâffesine havâdisât-ı telgrafîyeyi şirket-i mezkûre virdiğinden bu vâsita ile İngiltere ve İrlanda ve İskoçya'nın tâ en içerilerine kadar kâffe-i emsâr ve buldânına îsâl-i havâdisât idüp kürre-i arzın her cihetinde dahi müte'addid vekîl me'mûrlar bulundurarak bu sûretle de Avrupa ve Amerika ve Hindistan'la muhâbere idiyor

Cümlesinin inzârı makâm-ı akdes-i hilâfet-i uzmâya müteveccih Hindistan'da kırk milyon kadar müslüman mevcûd olduğundan şirket-i mezkûrenin mu'âvenetinden devlet-i aliyye hayliden hayli istifâde idebilir

Ajans Reuter şirketinin ideceği hîdmet hükûmet-i seniyye için müfid ve nâfi' olması memâlik-i Osmaniye'nin ahvâl ve mesâlihine mükemmelen âşinâ bir zâtın cânib-i saltanat-ı seniyyeden vekîl sûretiyle Londra'da Ajans Reuter şirketinin ma'iyetinde bulunmasına mütevakkıftır bu zât şirket-i mezkûrenin neşr olunmak üzere Dersa'âdet'e göndereceği havâdisleri intihâba dikkat ve i'tinâ ve Avrupa gazetelerine ve husûsen ingiliz evrâk-ı havâdisine tab' ve derc olunmak için ba'zı teblîgât i'tâ eyleyeceği gibi memâlik-i şâhânedan vârid olan havâdisât-ı telgrafîyeyi dahi hükûmet-i seniyyenin meslek-i siyâsiyesine muvafık bir sûretde inzâr-ı âmmeye çaracak derece tefsîr ve tevzîh eyleyecektir

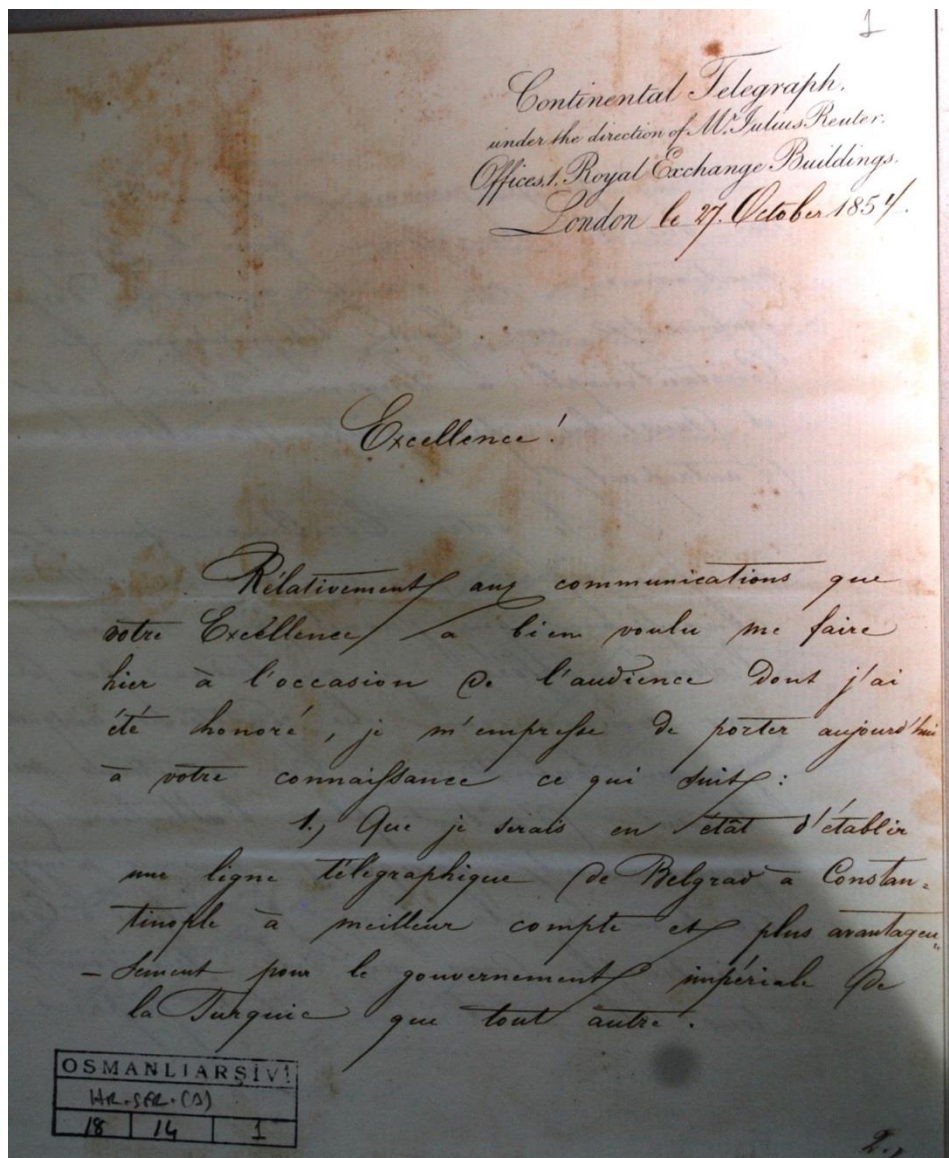
İngiltere'de gerek Avam kamarasında ve gerek meb'ûsân meclisinde mesâil-i şarkîyeye dâir beyân-ı efkâr eylemek arzusunda pek çok zevât bulunduğundan devlet-i aliyyenin politikasına muvâfık sûretde bunlara miyân-ı meclisde idâre-i kelâm itdirmek dahi mümkündür

Şark meselesi hakkında efkâr-ı umûmiyenin temâyülâtını mübeyyin ve hâricî ve dâhilî politikasınca hükûmet-i seniyyeye mu'âvenet idecek ma'lûmâtı müş'ir her hafta vekîl-i mezkûrun mahremâne bir lâyiha tanzîm ve irsâl idebilmesiçün şirket-i mezbûre iktizâ iden ma'lûmât ve îzâhâtı i'tâ ve mu'âvenet-i lâzımeği îfâ eyleyecektir

APPENDIX B

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The Letter of Baron Julius Reuter to the Ottoman government asking for the permission to establish a telegraph line in the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁹³



⁸⁹³ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 18/14, 27 October 1854.

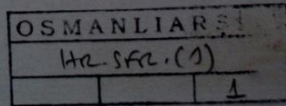
à l'avance.

En priant votre Excellence de
vouloir bien m'honorer d'une réponse le
plutôt possible, j'ai bien l'honneur
d'être avec la considération la plus
distinguée
à votre Excellence

le plus dévoué et le plus obéissant
#7

Julien Koutou,

A Son Excellence
Monsieur Musurès
Ambassadeur de S. M. l'Empereur
de la Turquie
à Londres.



2. The Proposal of The Reuter-Havas Company to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ask for privileges in 1875.⁸⁹⁴

Agence Reuter-Havas
Reuter-Telegram Company Limited
Central Office for Turkey
Constantinople, 11 octobre 1875-

1

Mon Excellence
Arif Effendi Pashian
Vice-Secrétaire d'état
Sublime Porte.

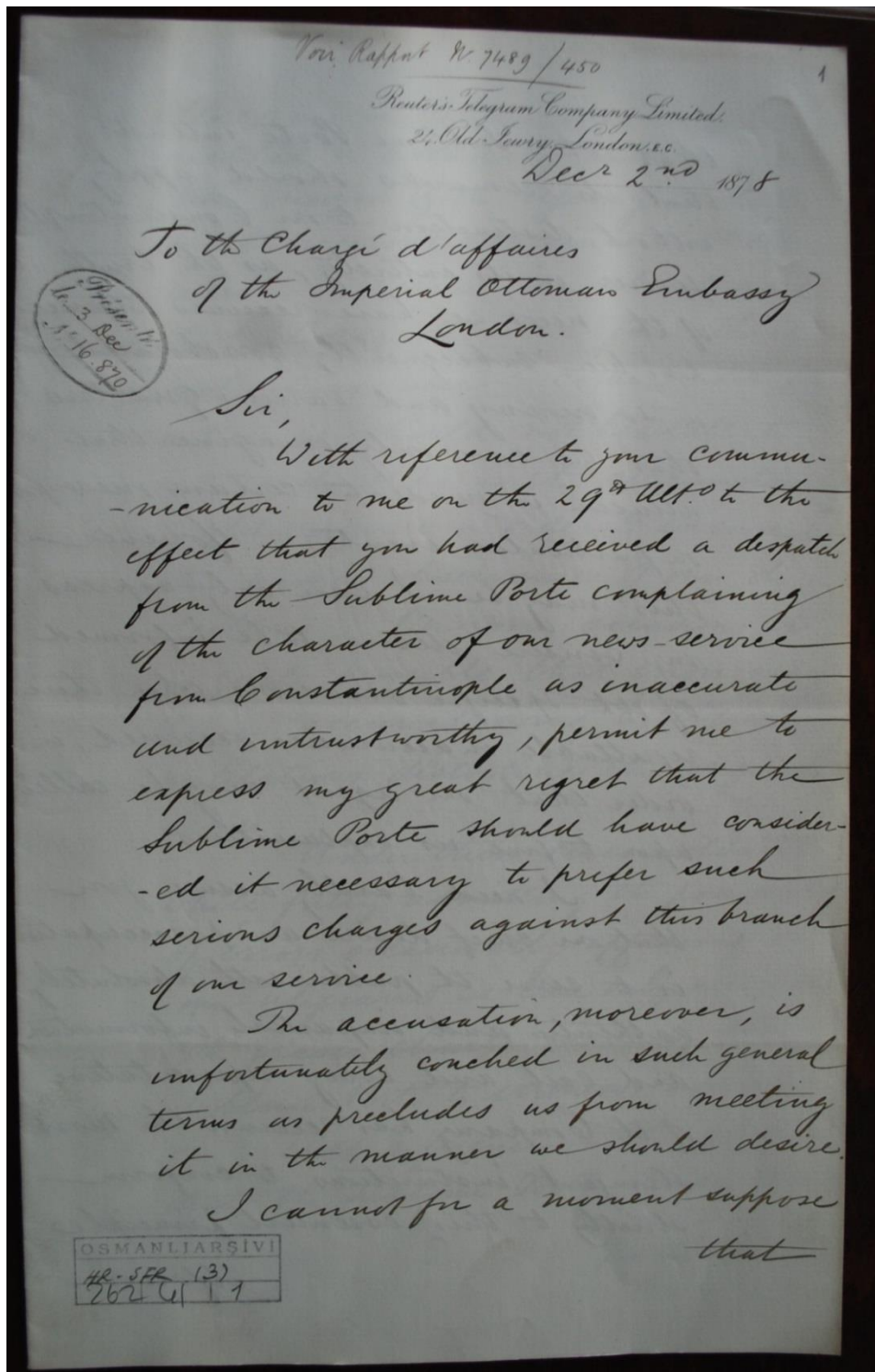
Excellence,

J'ai l'honneur de vous permettre ci-jointe
comme verbalement d'accord hier la note relative aux
concessions demandées par l'Agence. Il est inutile d'ajouter que
si vous désirez dès aujourd'hui un service dominant les opinions
et les appréciations des principaux journaux européens sur la
situation de la Turquie ou sur la récente mesure financière, j'enverrai
immédiatement des instructions à cet effet sans attendre
la réponse à vos demandes de concessions.

J'ai l'honneur d'être
Excellence
Vos très obéissant serviteur
Joseph Havas.

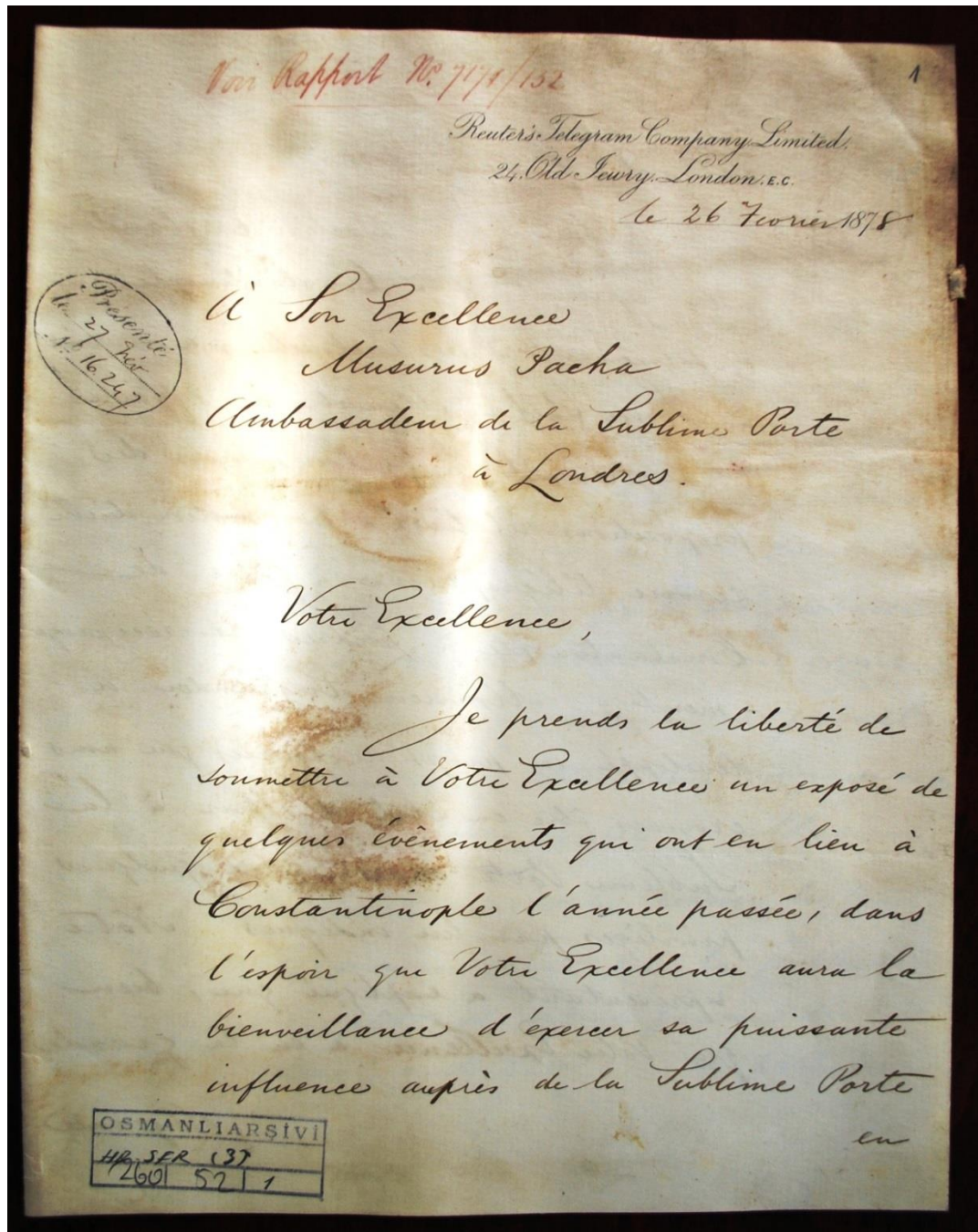
⁸⁹⁴ BOA, HR.TO., 459/93, 11 October 1875.

3. The response of Herbert Reuter, the managing director and the son of Baron Reuter, to the complaint of the Ottoman government.⁸⁹⁵



⁸⁹⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 262/41, 2 December 1878. This letter is in English.

4. The Letter of Herbert Reuter- Managing Director and the son of Paul Julius Baron de Reuter- to the Ottoman government. He offered to set up news exchange and cooperation between Istanbul and London.⁸⁹⁶



⁸⁹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3., 260/52, 26 February 1878.

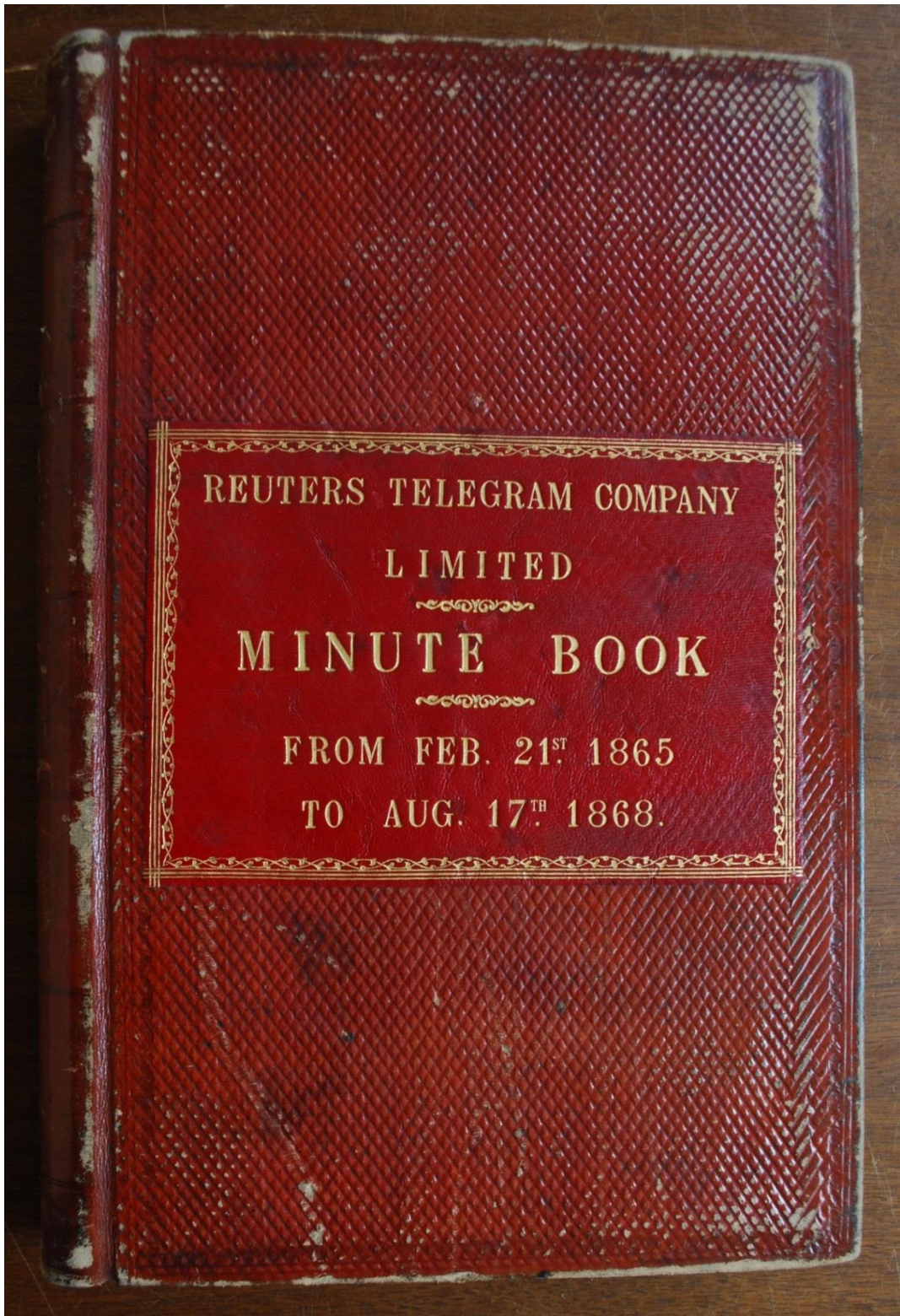
5. Censorship of the press in Istanbul: The Ottoman officials examine telegrams and despatches.⁸⁹⁷



Censorship of the press in Constantinople: examining telegrams and despatches.

⁸⁹⁷ Piers Cain, "A Glimpse of the Archives: Sigmund Engländer" *Reuters World*, May 1990. It is a reproduction of an illustration but the article does not mention the original source.

6. The Minute Book of Reuter (1865-1868)⁸⁹⁸



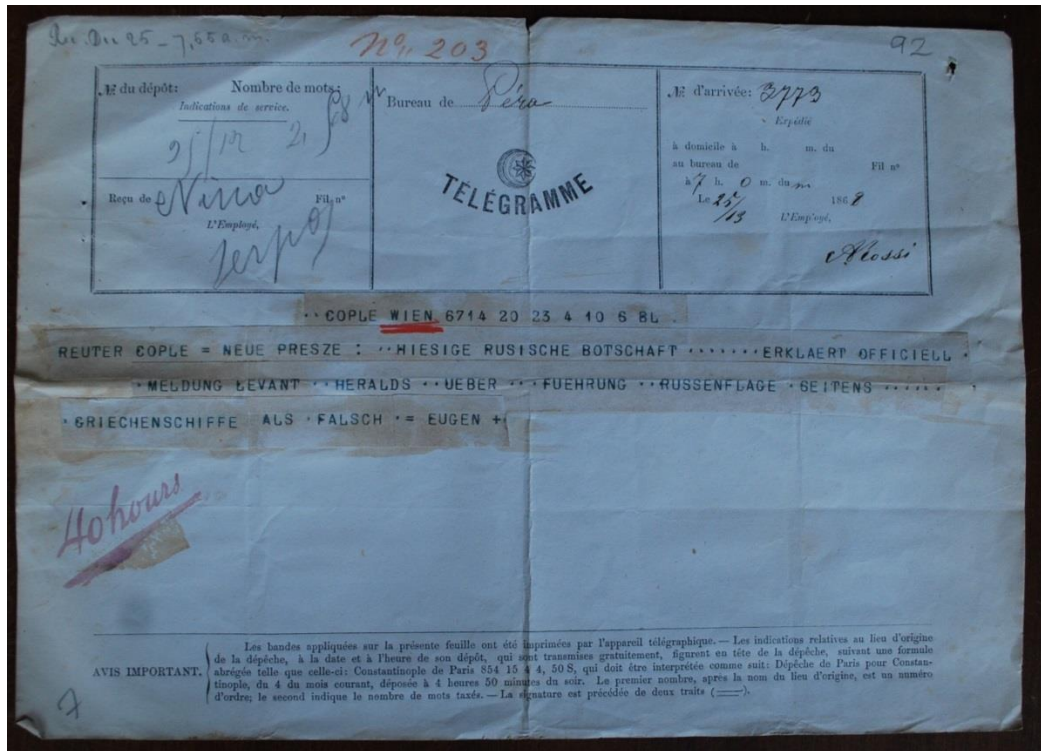
⁸⁹⁸ Reuters Archives

7. The Account Book of Reuter showing the details of "Constantinople Agency" Office in 1871.⁸⁹⁹

1871		Dr Constantinople			
		<u>Brought forward</u>	£	208	19
Jan'y	31	To Salaries of Clerks & Messengers	A.A. 32.	44	2
		Office Expenses	" 33	33	7
		Printing & Stationery	" "	7	6
				293 14	
Feb'y	8	Cash, B. Winstons	51.	7	10
	25	Sundries O.S.L. 41	St. 225	66	16 7
		Telegrams	A.A. 39	42	9 10
		Salary of Agent	" 40	25	.
		— — Clerks & Messengers	" "	44	5
		Office Expenses	" 41	11	2 6
				197 3 11	
March	8	Cash, Smith Sundries & Co.	56.	1	8 4
	31	Sundries O.S.L. 42.	St. 232	57	2 4
		Telegrams	A.A. 47.	89	3 4
		Salary of Agent	" 48	25	.
		— — Clerks & Messengers	" "	42	4
		Office Expenses	" 49.	11	13 6
		Printing & Stationery	" "	1	12
		Payments to Sub Agents	" 50	8	5 6
		Difference in Exchange	" 51.	6	.
				236 9	
April	30	Sundries O.S.L. 43	St. 238	33	15
		Telegrams	A.A. 55	19	12 4
		Salary of Agent	" 56.	25	.
		— — Clerks & Messengers	" "	42	7
		Office Expenses	" 57	6	2
		Rent, Rates, Taxes	" 58.	48	4
				175	
May	31	Sundries O.S.L. 43	St. 245	37	12 7
		Telegrams	A.A. 63.	25	5 7
		Salary of Agent	" 64.	25	.
		— — Clerks & Messengers	" "	43	3
		Office Expenses	" 65.	7	6
		Printing & Stationery	" "	1	2
				139 9 9	
				£ 1041 16 5	
			<u>Carried forward</u>	£	

⁸⁹⁹ Reuter Archives

8. The Telegram sent by Edward Virnard, Reuter agent in Istanbul, from Pera (1869)⁹⁰⁰



⁹⁰⁰ Reuters Archives, 1869.

9. Sigismund Engländer, Reuter Correspondent in Istanbul⁹⁰¹



⁹⁰¹ Reuters Archives.

10. The Havas Telegram at *The Levant Herald Daily Bulletin*, 3 January 1867.

The Levant Herald.

[DAILY BULLETIN] No 433

BELEDIVE
 K. P. HANES!
 No 7/1

Shaban 27, 1283.] CONSTANTINOPLE, THURSDAY, JAN. 3, 1867. [Déc. 22, (Old style.)

Published daily (Wednesdays and Sundays excepted) at 1 p.m., with the latest telegrams, prices of funds, and local commercial intelligence of interest, down to noon of the same day.

Distributed *gratis* to subscribers to the Journal; to non-subscribers on payment in advance, of £1 a year, 12s. for 6 months, or 7s. a quarter.

Advertisements (to be delivered at the Office not later than 11 a.m.), in English, or French, 4 pence a line; in both, 6 pence a line.

Paraissant tous les jours (excepté le Mercredi et le Dimanche) à 1 heure p. m. et contenant les derniers télégrammes, le cours des fonds et les plus intéressantes nouvelles commerciales de la place, recueillies jusqu'à midi du même jour. Est distribué *gratuitement* aux abonnés du journal et aux non-abonnés contre paiement, par anticipation, d'une £St. par an, de 12 sh. pour 6 mois et de 7 sh. pour 3 mois. Annonces (qui doivent être remises au bureau jusqu'à 11 a. m.) en Anglais, et en Français, 4 pence la ligne, et dans tous les deux 6 pence.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

(HAVAS'S TELEGRAMS.)

PARIS, Dec. 31.

At Madrid the Cortes have been dissolved, and several deputies—including the president—who subsequently met to protest, have been arrested and will, it is said, be transported to the Canary Islands.

The *Journal de St. Petersburg* and *Invalid Russe* say that since the issue between the Turks and Christians is now raised, the European Powers should observe the principle of non-intervention.

Marseilles to-day: *grain*, firm.

General Debt: London, 31½; Paris, 32.

DÉPÊCHES TÉLÉGRAPHIQUES.

AGENCE HAVAS.

PARIS, 31 décembre.

On annonce de Madrid la dissolution des Cortès. Un grand nombre de députés s'est réuni pour protester. Un certain nombre et le président ont été arrêtés; on assure qu'ils seront déportés aux Canaries.

Le *Journal de St-Petersbourg* et l'*Invalide Russe* disent que: Puis que la question est posée entre les Turcs et les Chrétiens, les puissances européennes doivent observer le principe de non-intervention.

Marseille: blés fermes.

Dettes Générales: Paris 32.—Londres 31½.

THE CRETAN NEWS.

A telegram received yesterday at the Russian legation reports the arrival of the *Grand Admiral* at the Piræus on Saturday, with 1,200 destitute Cretan women and children shipped at Selinos. The frigate also brought over a few invalided insurgents. The embarkation of these people took place under protest from Mustapha Pasha, and the Turkish naval commander, who conveyed his Highness's objections to the Russian captain is said to have expressed himself with a warmth which provoked a very short and significant answer from the commander of the frigate. We need hardly add that the other news brought by the latter vessel in no way confirms the intelligence received by the *Ismailié*.

An Athens telegram received by the Greek Legation reports the fall of the Bulgarian Ministry. The following are the names of the new Cabinet:—M. Comondouros, President of the Council; M. Tricoupi, Minister for Foreign Affairs; M. Valaorites (an Ionian), Minister of Marine; M. Kristopulos, Minister of Worship and Public Instruction.

—The question of the Adrianople railway has again been reopened, and is to occupy the Council of Public Works at its sitting of to-day.

—The Porte and the Italian Government have agreed to refer the affair of the *Principe Tommaso* to the arbitration of Lord Lyons. The difficulty may, therefore, happily be considered at an end.

—The new system of managing the official telegram works as was expected. The deciphering, which is now entrusted to a sub-director, involves great delay and, it is said, an amount of

NOUVELLES DE CRETE.

Un télégramme reçu hier par la légation de Russie annonce que la frégate *Grand Amiral* était arrivée samedi au Pyrée ayant à bord 1,200 femmes et enfants crétois indigents, qu'elle avait embarqué à Selinos. La même frégate a transporté aussi en Grèce quelques insurgés invalides. Moustapha Pacha, par l'organe du commandant d'un navire turc, aurait protesté contre l'embarquement de ces personnes. Le messenger de S. A. se serait adressé avec assez de vivacité au commandant de la frégate russe, qui lui aurait donné à son tour une réponse aussi laconique que significative.

Il va sans dire que les autres nouvelles apportées au Pyrée par le *Grand Amiral* ne confirment nullement celles qui sont arrivées ici par l'*Ismailié*.

Un télégramme arrivé hier d'Athènes à la légation hellénique annonce la chute du cabinet Bulgare.

Voici les noms des nouveaux ministres: Comondouros président du Conseil, Tricoupi ministre des affaires étrangères, Valaoritis (un Ionien) ministre de la marine, Kristopulos ministre des cultes et de l'instruction publique.

—La question du chemin de fer d'Andrianople vient d'être remise sur le tapis. Elle doit être discutée aujourd'hui par le Conseil des Travaux Publics.

—La Porte et le gouvernement italien sont tombés d'accord pour remettre l'affaire du *Principe Tommaso* à l'arbitrage de Lord Lyons. Cette difficulté peut donc être considérée comme heureusement aplanie.

—Le nouveau système concernant les télégrammes officiels des fonds fonctionne aussi mal que l'on s'y attendait. Le déchiffrement de ces dépêches, qui a été, assure-t-on, exclusivement confié, à un sous-directeur du télégraphe, causerait beaucoup de délais ainsi que beaucoup d'inconvénients personnels à Fevzi-Bey qui

LUNDI 3 SEPTEMBRE 1866

On s'abonne au bureau du Journal à Constantinople (Turc.)

22 REBIUL-AZHIR 1283 de l'hégire.

1^{re} Année N° 179

ABONNEMENTS, (Constantinople.)

Trois mois 14 fr. — Six mois 26 fr. — Un an 50 fr.

Provinces.

Trois mois 18 fr. — Six mois 32 fr. — Un an 60 fr.

Etranger.

Trois mois 22 fr. — Six mois 40 fr. — Un an 76

Adresser ce qui concerne la Rédaction et l'Administration au Directeur-Rédacteur en chef. (Affranchir.)

Les manuscrits non-insérés ne seront pas rendus.

LES ABONNEMENTS PARTENT DU 1^{er} ET DU 15 DE CHAQUE MOIS.

Un numéro, 1 piastre.

INSERTIONS

4^{ème} PAGE.—ANNONCES, 5 piastres la ligne. AVANT LES ANNONCES.—Rédaction, 6 piastres. FAITS DIVERS.—Corps de Journal, 10 piastres.

Les abonnements se paient d'avance.

Toute demande d'abonnement qui n'est pas accompagnée d'un mandat à vue sur Constantinople, est considérée comme nulle.

Administration, Rue du Journal, 63 (Turc.)

Dépêches Télégraphiques.

(Service télégraphique Havas-Bullier.)

Paris, 3 septembre (matin)

Le marquis de Montsurat a été nommé ministre des affaires étrangères en remplacement de M. Drouin de Lhuys dont la démission a été acceptée et qui a été nommé membre du Conseil privé.

M. Benedetti a été nommé Grand Croix de la Légion d'Honneur. Consolidés turcs, Londres 28 90. Paris, 27 7/8.

On annonce de Vienne l'échange des ratifications du traité de paix austro-prussien. L'empereur François Joseph a réduit sa liste de 5 millions de florins. New-York, 22 août.

Les Français ont repris Monterey. Le général impérialiste Corinas a capturé Reimsa.

(Télégrammes Havas.)

À Liverpool tout est calme. Smyrne 9 1/4. Escampé 6.

Le gouverneur du Canada a demandé des renforts. Le ministre anglais a écrit à Québec deux régiments d'infanterie et un régiment de cavalerie.

Londres, 31 août.

New York 30 août. — La proclamation du président Johnson établissant l'union avec le Texas a été reçue avec enthousiasme. Le président dit que la déclaration de la convention de Philadelphie est une deuxième déclaration de l'indépendance américaine.

CONSTANTINOPLE, le 3 septembre.

Des nouvelles de Berlin du 25 août nous annoncent que le Roi avait reçu à cette date la députation chargée de lui présenter l'adresse de la Chambre des députés en réponse au discours du Trône.

Après avoir témoigné sa satisfaction au sujet de l'unanimité avec laquelle la Diète a été votée, et avoir constaté l'existence d'un accord existant entre la couronne et la représentation nationale, le Roi, parlant du conflit survenu dans ces dernières années entre le gouvernement et la Chambre, a dit que si ce désaccord venait à se reproduire, il se verrait forcé, dans l'intérêt de la sécurité de l'Etat, d'agir de la même manière que par le passé.

En terminant, il a cependant reconnu qu'après une telle adresse, un nouveau conflit devenait impossible. « Cette adresse, a ajouté, S. M. contient tout ce que je pouvais désirer. »

Nous avons déjà dit, sur la foi de renseignements qui nous étaient parvenus de Berlin, que la réponse de la Chambre n'était qu'une paraphrase du discours de la couronne; les paroles royales viennent aujourd'hui confirmer nos renseignements.

by, trois autres membres de la gauche, les Polonais, la Saxe a fait des efforts au Chambre et aussi complet que tout conflit devient désormais impossible, on ne comprend pas les menaces dirigées contre la représentation nationale qui s'est cependant montrée si docile.

Dès le début des négociations de Nicosburg, la Saxe a fait des efforts au Chambre et aussi complet que tout conflit devient désormais impossible, on ne comprend pas les menaces dirigées contre la représentation nationale qui s'est cependant montrée si docile.

D'après nos dernières informations ces propositions ont été rejetées. M. de Bismarck insiste que la Prusse ait le commandement supérieur des troupes saxonnes et que tous les points fortifiés de la Saxe, Dresde comprise, soient occupés par les troupes prussiennes. Outre la Saxe paiera une indemnité de guerre s'élevant à 20 millions de thalers.

Une dépêche de Paris nous informe que les ratifications du traité de paix ont été échangées entre le Comte de Vienne et de Berlin et que l'Empereur François Joseph a réduit sa liste civile de cinq millions de florins.

Nouvelles Politiques

Voici le compte rendu de la séance tenue le 23 août par la Chambre des députés. — L'ordre du jour porte la discussion de l'adresse :

« M. Wierchow, rapporteur de la commission, déclara que la commission a su apprécier à tous les points de vue la gravité des circonstances. Le discours du trône étant plus cordial que jamais, on ne peut pas songer à une réponse insolente. La commission avait voulu éviter l'allusion aux différends antérieurs ; mais elle retire son projet en faveur du projet Stavenhagen-Bonin, auquel tous les partis ont adhéré. »

M. Jacoby déclare que la guerre n'a pas été faite dans l'intérêt de la liberté du peuple ; le succès a été étonnant, mais un accroissement de la puissance de la dynastie royale de Prusse n'est pas une chose dont il faille se féliciter au point de vue allemand. M. Jacoby ajoute qu'il d'indemnités est constitutionnellement indispensable.

M. Reichensperger défend le projet d'adresse de la fraction catholique.

MM Waldeck, comte Schöller et de Blakenbourg retirent leurs projets d'adresse.

M. de Blakenbourg déclare qu'il est nécessaire de montrer que sur certaines questions la Chambre est d'accord. L'amendement des Polonais est rejeté.

Le projet Stavenhagen est adopté par paragraphes et ensuite dans son ensemble à une grande majorité. Vingt-cinq députés seulement ont voté contre. Ce sont M. Jaco-

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FUGITIVE DE LA « TURQUIE. »

LE DRAME DE LA RUE DE LA PAIX (Cause Célèbre.)

Quoi ! c'était à elle qu'on osait parler d'amour ! à elle dont le mari venait à peine de mourir ! Et c'était celui qu'elle soupçonnait de cette mort... celui... Ah ! elle n'avait pas prévu ce qu'elle devait souffrir. Ils gardèrent toujours le silence, lui effrayé, elle froissée, muette.

Pou à peu, cependant, la physionomie de Julia s'éclaircit, elle passa la main sur son front comme pour en chasser une idée importune, elle parut prendre une résolution énergique, et se tournant vers Savari qu'elle regarda en face :

— Alors, vous m'aimez ! lui dit-elle. — Ne s'attendait pas à ce genre d'attitude. Au courroux qu'avait manifesté Julia, il croyait qu'elle allait lui ordonner de changer de conversation, de se taire ou peut-être de se retirer.

Elle reprit, au contraire, sa phrase où il l'avait laissée, elle compléta sa pensée et lui vint en aide, elle lui lançait une proposition au lieu de lui dire un adieu.

Voir le numéro de 1^{er} septembre.

Mais, remis de son premier étonnement, il voulait profiter de l'occasion qui lui était tant offerte de parler d'un amour qui lui tenait tant au cœur.

Si Julia était la femme des grandes résolutions, Savari, de son côté, savait être énergique.

Par un brusque mouvement que madame Vidal ne put prévoir, il s'empara de ses deux mains, et la regardant comme elle l'avait regardé, l'attirant vers lui pour qu'elle l'entendît mieux, il s'écria :

— Oui, je vous aime, comme je n'ai jamais aimé, comme je me croyais incapable d'aimer ! Vous êtes mon premier, mon seul amour. Si vous saviez comme je dis vrai, comme je suis malheureux loin de vous et quel est mon bonheur lorsque je vous vois ! Le premier fois que vous m'êtes apparue, il m'a semblé que je n'avais jamais vu une femme aussi belle. Oui, il n'y a pas de bonheur qui vaille la vôtre ; on trouve en vous toutes les perfections, tous les charmes, toutes les distinctions, toutes les splendeurs ! Moi qui me croyais si fort, si invulnérable, moi qui tous les étonnements et à toutes les admirations, j'ai tout de suite compris quel empire une beauté comme la vôtre pouvait exercer sur moi ; je me suis juré de ne pas vous revoir, de vous fuir ! Ah ! je n'ai pas pu, il m'a conduit ici, lui ; il s'est fait mon compagne, il m'a ordonné de vivre à vos côtés. J'ai obéi. Mais je savais ce qui m'at-

tendait, je savais qu'après de vous je perdrais le repos, la volonté, que je vous aimerais ardemment !

L'étreinte de Savari devenait trop vive, il regardait Julia d'une façon trop passionnée, elle n'eut pas le courage d'en supporter davantage, elle dégagea ses mains des siennes, elle se leva, fit deux pas en arrière, et s'accoudant sur le marbre de la cheminée.

— Je ne encourage votre amour ? demanda-t-elle.

— Non, jamais, répéta-t-il, ni par un mot, ni par un regard, et c'est ce qui m'a perdu. Ah ! si vous connaissiez ma vie, si vous saviez à quelles femmes j'ai eu affaire jusqu'à ce jour. Quelle facilité dans les relations, quelles faciles victoires ! Comme on en arrive vite à se fatiguer de toutes ces liaisons qui se ressemblent quel que soit le monde où on les contracte. Ah ! vous m'avez demandé si vous m'avez encouragé, et j'ai répondu que non. Je me rétracte. Oui, vous m'avez encouragé, ou plutôt jamais femme, à son insu, ne s'est montrée plus coquette avec moi. Vous n'avez donc pas compris que votre silence obstiné, votre tristesse invincible, votre front étroit étaient autant de provocations. Je sentais une révolte, encore sous l'empire des pensées qu'il venait d'écrire, je voulais laisser, je voulais vaincre... et je le veux encore.

Savari n'était plus l'homme que nous avons vu se débattre avec tant de calme et de

ble hongrois ne comprenait ni le ministre des finances, ni le ministre de la guerre, sera nommé et choisi exclusivement dans les rangs du parti conservateur, on désigne le bon parti comme ministre-président. La question des affaires communes serait avant tout résolue avec la coopération de ce ministre et le résultat serait soumis au représentant de l'autre moitié de l'Empire. Des partis libéraux ont élevé des doutes contre ce programme qui leur semble compromettre le succès. Ils trouvent, d'abord, étonnant que l'on ne nomme pas un ministre complet et que justement les deux postes les plus importants restent inoccupés. Ils se demandent comment il est possible que dans les pays de trop peu de considération pour que l'on puisse accorder le nom de « parti » à quelques fidèles qui leur sont attachés.

Quelque peu habitué que nous soyons à voir les choses en rose, nous ne saurions attacher une grande importance aux choses que nous venons de mentionner et dire que ces choses sont de nature à compromettre le succès du programme en question. En ce qui concerne le premier scrupule, il est facile de faire voir que Sa Majesté a le droit incontestable de laisser temporairement occuper un poste de ministre, et même dans les cas les plus graves constitutionnels, c'est une chose qui n'a rien d'extraordinaire. Le principal de ce n'est pas que la Hongrie obtienne son propre ministre des finances et de la guerre, mais bien qu'on reconnaisse son droit d'avoir une administration distincte pour ces deux ressorts. Mais ce droit est établi, par l'article III, il a été posé en 1848 de la manière la moins équivoque et dès que, d'après cet article, on nomme un ministre responsable hongrois, on reconnaît aussi ce droit solennellement, alors même que tous les ministres ne sont pas immédiatement nommés. Par conséquent, la responsabilité ne serait nullement exclue en ce qui concerne la direction des finances et de la guerre ; cette responsabilité serait alors supportée par le cabinet tout entier et, en somme, c'est le principal. Pour être franc, nous devons même reconnaître que la nomination immédiate de ministres hongrois responsables pour les finances et pour la guerre serait à peine réalisable si cette nomination ne doit être qu'une pure formalité. Effectivement, les deux questions de la guerre et des finances sont les plus vives depuis 1848 et les soi-disant affaires communes dont le règlement a été suspendu à cette époque sur milieu du tumulte des événements, se rapportent sinon exclusivement, du moins principalement aux questions de la guerre et des finances. Aussi longtemps que l'équilibre des pouvoirs des ministres hongrois respectifs n'aura pas été exactement réglé par une interprétation authentique de la Diète, les deux parties de l'Empire n'ont qu'une vaine abstraité dont personne ne peut donner une idée pratique sous une forme satisfaisante.

Quant à la formation de ce ministère avec des hommes conservateurs c'est un scrupule sans grande portée, car à partir du moment où les conservateurs composent le ministère responsable formé conformément à l'article III, il y aura rapprochement entre le parti conservateur et le parti

libéral. — Que ceux qui doivent composer le prochain ministère hongrois aient appartenu ou non jusqu'ici au parti conservateur, c'est une chose qui perd toute son importance au moment qu'ils acceptent un portefeuille. Ce sera un ministère tory, semblable à celui qui fonctionne aujourd'hui en Angleterre, et la Hongrie ne saurait refuser un constitutionnalisme meilleur que le constitutionnalisme anglais.

Par conséquent, nous verrions sans aucune crainte la vacance de deux postes de ministre et le caractère conservateur du ministère responsable. Si la formation d'un ministère hongrois responsable a lieu dans le sens de l'article III, c'est-à-dire si le ministre est hongrois et est responsable, la principale difficulté est surmontée ; il y aura bien encore des questions hongroises, mais il n'y aura plus de question hongroise.

On mande de Prague le 23 août : Les troupes prussiennes vident leur départ. Il n'y aura plus vendredi prochain à Prague un corps de 6,000 hommes désigné pour rester à Prague jusqu'à l'évacuation complète de la Bohême.

Le Journal de Dresde dit que le ministre de l'intérieur s'occupe déjà des préparatifs pour les élections au parlement allemand.

Les communications télégraphiques directes sont rétablies entre Paris et Francfort.

On mande de Padoue, 22 août, que deux mille cinq cents prisonniers, rendus par l'Autriche, sont arrivés à Udine.

On mande au Tyroler Bot du Tyrol du Sud :

« Le bruit s'est répandu de nouveau dans ces derniers jours que l'on a l'intention d'établir une lieutenance particulière pour le Tyrol italien, et cela en récompense de la conduite tout particulièrement loyale de la population des campagnes dans les derniers événements. Nous apprenons qu'il n'y aura pour la province du Tyrol qu'un seul gouverneur ayant résidence à Innsbruck, mais qu'on établira à Trente une division de la lieutenance impériale qui sera subordonnée à la lieutenance d'Innsbruck. »

Malgré l'armistice et la signature des préliminaires de paix, les Prussiens continuent à élever des fortifications aux environs de la ville de Dresde. A en juger par les indices, dit la Gazette d'Angers, on applique à cet effet le système de défense de 1813, mais en l'étendant considérablement. On en infère que la capitale saxonne est destinée à devenir une forteresse prussienne et que ce sera à la fois une des conditions de la conclusion de la paix. Et ce sera certes la plus dure pour la population.

On écrit de Nicosbourg à la Gazette autrichienne :

« En présence des bruits nombreux qui circulent au sujet de dévastations et de vexations dont les troupes prussiennes d'occupation se seraient rendues coupables dans les propriétés du comte Mansdorff. Ces communications ont été très exagérées. Le comte

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libéral, cri Vihert, rendez-vous à sept heures au Café-Anglais.

Savari, qui sortait, se retourna. Il cherchait un nouveau prétexte pour relâcher cette invitation, lorsque par hasard son regard se porta sur Julia.

Toujours appuyée contre la cheminée, un coude sur le marbre, la tête dans la main, semblant perdue dans ses réflexions, elle lui parut plus belle que jamais et il n'eut pas la force de se priver de la revoir dans la soirée.

— C'est entendu, dit-il, je me trouverai au rendez-vous.

Il était parti depuis un instant déjà et Julia continuait à garder le silence.

Vihert silencieux aussi, retiré dans un coin du salon, l'observait attentivement. On aurait dit qu'il essayait de deviner ses pensées, de lire dans son cœur et qu'il souffrait des découvertes que cette étude lui permettait de faire.

Cette souffrance devait même probablement trop vive ; car tout à coup il se leva, passa la main sur son front et s'avança vers Julia.

— Eh bien ! lui demanda-t-il brusquement. — En se redressant, le regard et dit :

— Ah ! pardou, monsieur, je ne vous savais pas là.

— Partiel ! je m'en doutais, répliqua Vihert avec une sorte d'amerce qui n'eut pu échapper. Je ne suis plus rien ici, moi, de-

12. The Advertisement of Edward Varnard, Reuter agent in Istanbul, announcing the accelerated daily telegraphic service (20 June 1866).

The Constantinople Herald.

Vol. VIII. No. 20. CONSTANTINOPLE, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 1866. [Price 6d.]

REGULAR LINE OF FIRST CLASS STEAMERS, BETWEEN LIVERPOOL AND THE LEVANT.

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For further particulars, apply to
EDWARD VARNARD, Agent,
No. 7, NEW BATH MARKET, GALLATY.

LIVERPOOL: JAMES SMITH, SON & CO. MALTA: J. B. MICALLEF, Esq. SYRA: J. B. MICALLEF, Esq. CONSTANTINOPLE: EDWARD VARNARD. ALEXANDRIA: T. F. WOLLEY. BMYNA: T. F. WOLLEY.

THE BRITISH & FOREIGN STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY. STEAM TO LIVERPOOL.

THE PRINCE NEW AND POWERFUL SORBY STEAMER KEDAH, Capt. MUIR, 2,800 tons, 300 H.P.

Has arrived, and will have immediate despatch for LIVERPOOL, touching at SMYRNA, and the other customary ports.

For freight or passage, apply to
C. and E. GRACE,
New Bazar, Pera, Constantinople, Galata.

NOTICE.

The undersigned, trustee of the property of Cavaliere VINCENZO P. GIUSTOLANO, deceased, requires those who may have claims upon the said estate to produce said claims at the office of Signor BIANCHI Zanarelli, Advocate at Galata, rue Halicarnasse No. 6, on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., so as to have their claims registered with those of the other Creditors, and proceed with the division and distribution of the said property.

A period of 60 days from this date is allowed for those residing in Constantinople, the Levant, and the coast of Africa, for Europe, 90 days, and 120 for those out of Europe, elsewhere than in the above mentioned localities.

Constantinople, June 17, 1866.
EUGENIO VIGNATI USONI.

THE RUSSIAN STEAM NAVIGATION AND TRADING COMPANY. FIBERARY.

DEPARTURES FROM CONSTANTINOPLE.

For ODESSA—Every Tuesday, in correspondence with FIDELITY and EUSON, and with the ports of the CHICKA, the Sea of Azov, and the Caucasus.

For BATAUM and PORT—Every Saturday, touching at SAMBOUR, AKHARON, and FANCOUR. In correspondence with the lines of the CAUCASUS, the CHICKA, and the Sea of Azov.

For ALEXANDRIA—Once a fortnight, every alternate Wednesday, touching at GALLATY, the DARIABALLA, MALAGRA, SYRINA, SOO, HROOD, MERRA, ALEXANDRIA, LAKARA, TRIOLO, BERTRO, St. PETERSBURG, KAPITA, JAPAN, and PORT-SAID. The steamer arrives at Alexandria every Tuesday fortnight.

Frequent departures for Marseilles & London.

Sailings of the Week:
For BATAUM and PORT—Saturday, 11/23 June.
For LONDON—in the course of the week, the "ODRESSA."

PURE BLOCK ICE.

NOTICE.

The Public is informed that the ICE-depot at No. 26, Akarastan, Galata, near the old bridge, is now open.

Persons residing at the Bosphorus who desire to have ice delivered at their houses, are requested to apply at the Office, No. 7, Pera, Constantinople.

MARINE INSURANCE.

The undersigned, having been appointed Agent to the LONDON AND ORIENTAL STEAM TRANSPORT INSURANCE OFFICE of London, established in 1816, and fully covered, hereby extends (here by the Company and deposited in the Charter of the said Office) a list of the names of the vessels insured by the Company, and further particulars apply to the Office of the Agency, 5, Courtney's Passage, Fenchurch Street.

HERBERT E. ROSE, Agent, Smyrna, 10 March, 1866.

STEAM TO LONDON. THE SWISS STEAMER PARRAGUAY, 2,500 tons burden, 500 H.P.

Will leave for LONDON on or about Friday, the 22nd inst., calling at SMYRNA and MALTA.

SPLENDID ACCOMMODATION FOR FIRST AND SECOND CLASS PASSENGERS.

Fares:
1st. Class to LONDON £15.
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This steamer carries a stewardess.

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N.B.—Passengers by this Company's Steamers are not charged additional for detention at intermediate ports.

CONSTANTINOPLE CRICKET CLUB.

By the 2nd resolution of D. M. Lofts, Esq., R. M. Judge and Colonel General's meeting will be held at the British Consulate on Monday next, the 26th inst., at 12 noon for the purpose of reorganizing a CRICKET CLUB for this season. All interested are invited to attend.

E. C. GORDON, R. E. Hon. Secy.

SUN FIRE OFFICE, LONDON. ESTABLISHED 1710.

CONSTANTINOPLE AGENCY.

The Office hereby against the risks on Buildings, Furniture, Merchandise, Manufactures, &c., in Constantinople, Smyrna, Pera, and also in the Shores of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Propontis Islands.

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Reuter's Telegram Company, Limited.

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DAILY TELEGRAPHIC SERVICE. THE PUBLIC in this Capital of hereby informed, that on a sufficient number of persons, subscribing to this useful enterprise, two DAILY TELEGRAMS will be despatched from London to Constantinople for the relative information of each subscriber. These Telegrams will contain a complete summary of COMMERCIAL NEWS, together with all important POLITICAL and FINANCIAL information of the day.

For further particulars, apply to the undersigned, at the Hotel d'Angleterre.

Pera, June 16, 1866.
EDWARD VARNARD.

TUPPER & CO'S.
MANUFACTURERS OF
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A new list of Works sent free to order by post.

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T. MORSON & SON,
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And may be obtained of all respectable Chemists and Druggists.

CHLORINE (Morson's Patent), MORSON'S ERGOSTEIN, and every description of Chemicals and all New Preparations carefully packed for shipment.

13. The Advertisement of Edward Varnard, Reuter agent in Istanbul, announcing Commercial Service at *Levant Herald* (27 March 1869).

The Levant Herald.

[DAILY BULLETIN.]

Published daily (Wednesdays and Sundays excepted) at 2 p. m., with the latest telegrams, prices of funds, and local commercial intelligence of interest, up to the hour of publication. Subscription, £1 10s. a year, 17s. for 6 months, or 10s. a quarter. Advertisements (to be delivered at the Office not later than 10 a. m.), in English or French, 4 pence a line; in both, 6 pence a line.

The weekly English edition of the Paper is published on Wednesdays in time for the outgoing mails of that day; subscription, £1 10s. a year, £1 for 6 months, or 10s. a quarter; for the provinces abroad, the postage in addition. Advertisements 6d a line. Double subscription to Bulletin and Paper, £2 a year, £1 2s. 6d. for 6 months, and 12s. for a quarter. All subscriptions and advertisements are payable in advance.

Paraissant tous les jours (excepté le Mercredi et le Dimanche) à 2 heures p. m. et contenant les derniers télégrammes, le cours des fonds, et les plus intéressantes nouvelles commerciales de la place, recueillies jusqu'à l'heure de la publication. Abonnement: £1 10s. par an, 17s. pour 6 mois, 10s. par 3 mois. Annonces (qui doivent être remises au bureau jusqu'à 8h. a. m.) en Anglais ou en Français, 4 pence la ligne, et dans tous les deux 6 pence.

L'édition anglaise hebdomadaire du journal est publiée tous les mercredis à temps pour les courriers partant ce jour: abonnement £1 10s. par an, £1 pour 6 mois et 10s. par trimestre; pour l'intérieur et l'étranger, les frais de poste en sus. Annonces 6 pence la ligne. Abonnement double au Journal et au Bulletin £2 par an, £1 2s. 6d. par semestre, et 12s. par trimestre. Les abonnements et les annonces sont payables d'avance.

Zilhidjé 14, 1285.] CONSTANTINOPLE, SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1869. [March 15, (O S.

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ILLYRIAN 5,500	SCILLAN 2800	MILAN 1,400
IRELAN 5,500	VENETIAN 2500	MANSTER 1,200
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The "EGYPTIAN"
Capt. J. G. WARDELL,
Has arrived, and will have quick despatch for LIVERPOOL, calling at the usual ports.

SUPERIOR ACCOMMODATION FOR PASSENGERS.
For further particulars apply to
EDWARD LA FONTAINE, Agent,
No. 7, Rue de la Banque, GALATA.

AGENTS,
LIVERPOOL, Messrs. J. BIRBY, Sons & Co.
CONSTANTINO, Ed. LA FONTAINE, Esq.
SMYRNA, The IMP. OTTOMAN BANK.
MALTA, S. MICHAEL EYNSAID, Esq.
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ALEXANDRIA, G. L. WAKEMAN, Esq.

FOR LONDON.
THE NEW AND POWERFUL SCREW STEAMER "MEDWAY,"
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ITINERARY.
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For ODessa.—Every Tuesday, in correspondence with NIGOLAIFF and KIBSON, and with the ports of the CRIMEA, the SEA of AZOFF, and the CAUCASUS.
For BATOUM and POPL.—Every Saturday, touching at SAMSOON, KERASSOON, and TRERIZOON. In correspondence with the lines of the CAUCASUS, the CROCKA, and the SEA of AZOFF.
For ALEXANDRIA.—Once a fortnight, every alternate Wednesday, touching at GALLIPOLE, the DARDANELLES, MACARONIA, SMYRNA, SIO, RHODES, MESSINA, ALEXANDRETTA, LATAKIA, TRIPOLI, BEYROUT, ST. JEAN D'ACRE, and KAIYTA, JAFFA, and PORT-SAÏD. The steamer arrives at Alexandria every Tuesday fortnight.

MAN sucht eine Deutsche oder Italienische Diensthote.
S'adresser an Bureau du Journal.

THE BRITISH & FOREIGN STEAM NAVIGAT. COMPANY.
THE FINE AND POWERFUL STEAMER "M A L T A,"
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has arrived and will sail for LIVERPOOL with despatch, touching at SMYRNA and MALTA.
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A PELLE DE PRINKIPO
TENU PAR M. D. LOGOTHETTI.
partir du 820 Mars est hotel a été ouvert au public; ceux qui voudront bien honorer y trouveront tout le confortable et le propriétaire ne négligera rien pour satisfaire sa nombreuse clientèle.

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CONTRE LES RISQUES DE TRANSPORT MARITIME, PAR FER ET FLUVIAL.
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HERM. HELDING.
Rue de la Quarantaine, 2, Galata.

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211 & 213—Grand' Rue de Péra—211 & 213.
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REUTER'S TELEGRAM COMPANY, (Limited).
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Do. Graine de lin d'Azof disponible, et situation du marché.
Les Lundis, Prix des blés tendres du Danube 127/128.
Mercredi et Vendredi: Prix des blés durs de Rodosto 130/126.
Mardi, Jeudi, Samedi: Prix des blés tendres du Danube 127/128.
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Do. Prix du coton de Smyrne.
Do. Ventes totales du jour.
Do. Situation du marché.
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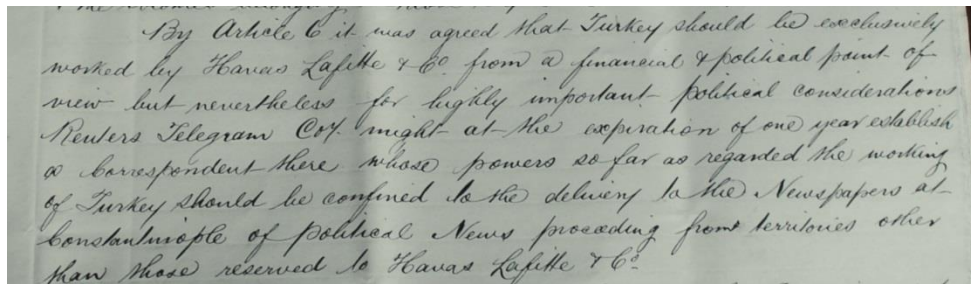
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AGENTS IN LONDON, MESSRS. G. W. WHEATLY and Co., J. and R. M. CRACKEN. The United States and Canada, EUROPEAN & AMERICAN EXPRESS.

14. The Article Six of the Treaty of 20 May 1876 regulating the share of Turkey between Reuter and Havas. It is from the Arbitration Case File.⁹⁰²



By Article 6 it was agreed that Turkey should be exclusively worked by Havas Lafitte & Co from a financial & political point of view but nevertheless for highly important political considerations Reuters Telegram Coy might at the expiration of one year establish a correspondent there whose powers so far as regarded the working of Turkey should be confined to the delivery to the Newspapers at Constantinople of political News proceeding from territories other than those reserved to Havas Lafitte & Co.

⁹⁰² R.A. LN73,1/889003.

APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Boğaziçi University, History	2006
BA	Boğaziçi University, History	2003
	Mechanical Engineering	
High School	NBS Anatolian Foreign Trade High School, Antalya	1999

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2003- Present	<i>Zaman Daily</i>	Foreign Policy Correspondent
2011	<i>The Durango Herald</i>	Visiting Journalist

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Fluent English, Intermediate French

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

1. Fellow at University of Oxford, The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (September 2015-April 2016)
2. Visiting Researcher at Reuters News Agency (London, July-August 2013) with the grant of METU Academic Research Project Fund (2013)

3. “New Media, New Challenges: Turkish - Armenian - American Journalist Exchange Program” organized by International Center For Journalism; and sponsored by US State Department (Washington and New York, 2011)

PUBLICATIONS

1. “Türkiye’de Televizyon Yayınlarının Başlaması ve Gelişimi: İTÜ TV,” (Beginning and Development of Television Broadcasting in Turkey,) *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 98, Şubat 2002:50-62.
2. “4 Aralık Tan Baskını ve Basının Bakışı,” (Raid to the *Tan* Newspaper and Perspective of the Turkish Press), *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 118, Ekim 2003: 96-99.
3. “Fethiye’de Fotoğrafçılığın Gelişimi: Kandiye Ailesi,” (Development of Photography in Fethiye: Kandiye Family,) *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 110, Şubat 2003:32-36.
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6. “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Sinemanın Teknolojik Tarihi,” (Technological Development of Cinematography in the Ottoman Empire) *naftalin*, no. 1, 2003:60-65.

CAREER SEMINAR

1. NATO Orientation Project sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Ankara (Brussels, 2011)
2. “The Impact of Digital Freedom, Social Media and Citizen Journalism on Cross-Cultural Relations” invited by 4th The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum (Doha, 2011)
3. European Union Journalism Education program organized by European Commission (Brussels, 2006)
4. Journalism Certificate Program organized by International Press Institute (IPI) and *Hürriyet* Daily (Bogazici University, 2005)

HOBBIES

Basketball, Tennis, Photography, Travel

APPENDIX D

TURKISH SUMMARY

OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NDA ULUSLARARASI HABER AJANSLARI (1854-1908)

“Eğer bilgi güç ise dünyanın telekomünikasyon sistemini yöneten dünyaya hükmeder.”⁹⁰³

Bu doktora tezi, uluslararası haber ajanslarının İstanbul'da kurulmaları ve faaliyetleriyle birlikte Osmanlı Devleti ile ilişkilerini anlatmaktadır. Haber/telgraf ajansları siyasi, ekonomik, diplomatik veya güncel gelişmeleri sistemli ve hızlı bir şekilde alıp; bunları düzenledikten sonra başta gazeteler ve televizyonlar olmak üzere ilgili müşterilere bir ücret karşılığında ulaştıran müesseselerdir. Şüphesiz haber ajanslarının rolleri ve işlevleri tarihsel süreç içerisinde değişimlere uğramıştır. Ancak internetin icadına kadar tüm dünyada haber ağlarını kontrol etmişler; özellikle gazetelerin en temel haber alma kaynağını oluşturmuşlardır.

Kitle iletişim araçlarının gelişimiyle birlikte devlet ve imparatorlukların önemli bir mücadele alanı da haberleri ve haber ağlarını kontrol etmek üzerine olmuştur. Son iki yüzyılda bu haber savaşlarının büyük ölçüde haber ajansları üzerinden verildiği söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda haber ajansları kesinlikle ülkelerin menfaatlerinin peşinde koşarken kullandıkları “milli politik araçlar” olagelmıştır. Örneğin, Reuter Haber Ajansı oynadığı rolden dolayı Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda İngiliz hükümetinin en güçlü silahı olarak tanımlanır.

Uluslararası haber ajanslarını anlayıp işlevlerini tarihsel bağlamda değerlendirebilmek için bunların ortaya çıktığı 19. yüzyıldaki siyasi ve ekonomik

⁹⁰³ Peter J. Hugill, *Global Communications Since 1844: Geopolitics and Technology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), s. 2.

gelişmelere bakmak gerekir. Her şeyden önce bu dönem tam bir Avrupa emperyalizmi ve dünyaya yayılma sürecidir. 1800'lerin başında Avrupa'nın önde gelen bazı ülkeleri dünya topraklarının yüzde 35'ini kontrol ederken bu oran 1878'de yüzde 78 ve 1914'te ise yüzde 84'e yükselmiştir. Bu oranlar Avrupa yayılmacılığın çok açık göstergeleridir ki Mann bu yüzden "Avrupalılar Marslıdır" benzetmesi yapar.

Avrupa'nın tüm dünyada nüfuzunun çok ciddi şekilde artması şüphesiz teknolojinin yardımıyla olmuştur; ulaşım ve iletişimde devrim niteliğinde gerçekleşen icatlar bu yayılmacılığın önünü açmıştır. Esasında uluslararası iletişim tarih boyunca devletler ve imparatorluklar için çok önemli role sahipti. Ancak bu rol Avrupa ülkeleri tüm dünyaya yayılırken vazgeçilmez bir ihtiyaçtı. Bu devirde bir imparatorluğun gücünün genişliği kontrol ettiği iletişim ağlarıyla yakından ilgiliydi. Bundan dolayıdır ki Headrick iletişim teknolojisi ile emperyalist yönetimlerin ele ele yürüdüğünü söyler. Uluslararası haber ajansları böyle bir tarihsel bağlamda 19. yüzyılın ortalarında doğmuştur. Fransız Havas Ajansı 1835, Alman Wolff 1849 ve İngiliz Reuter 1851'de kurulmuştur.

Avrupa'nın emperyalist güçleri yayılmalarında çok önemli role sahip olan haber ajanslarının gelişip güçlenmeleri için ciddi destekler vermişlerdir. Para yardımı ve lojistik desteğin yanında en değerli katkı telgraf hatlarına yaptıkları yatırımlar olmuştur. Çünkü telgraf haber ajanslarının olmazsa olmazıydı. Telgraf sayesinde haber ajansları uzak bölgelere hızlı şekilde haber aktarabilmişler ve buralardan Avrupa'ya haber ulaştırmışlardır. İngiltere, Fransa ve Almanya 1892 senesinde dünya telgraf hatlarının yüzde 89.6'sını kontrol ediyordu. İngiliz hakimiyeti ise çok baskındı; İngilizler dünya telgraf hatlarının üçte ikisine –yüzde 66.2- sahipti. Bundan dolayı Reuter Haber Ajansı'nın etkisinin daha fazla olduğu söylenebilir. Reuter'in kurucusu Baron Julius Reuter'in ana sloganı "Telgraf hattını takip et" idi.

Peki, uluslararası haber ajanslarının Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun başkenti İstanbul'a gelmelerinin sebebi nedir? Bu ajanslar neden İstanbul'a yerleşip ofis kurmuşlar; buradan habercilik yapmışlardır? Uluslararası haber ajanslarının Osmanlı başkentine gelmeleri için şüphesiz çok güçlü sebepleri vardır. Bunların başında siyasi veya diplomatik sebepler gösterilebilir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu artık bu dönemde "Avrupa'nın Hasta Adamı" idi; imparatorluk tam bir çöküş sürecindeydi. Böyle bir ortamda Avrupa devletleri ve Rusya ise güçler dengesini kendi lehlerine döndürmek

çabasındaydı. Kısaca “Doğu Sorunu” olarak adlandırılan bu konuda Osmanlı başkentinden haber almak ve Osmanlı gazetelerine haber dağıtmak uluslararası haber ajansları için çok önemli bir görevdi.

Siyasi ve diplomatik haberlerin yanı sıra ekonomik gelişmelerin hızlıca duyurulması haber ajanslarının ortaya çıkmasında hayati bir role sahipti. Osmanlı ekonomisi Avrupa’dan ciddi şekilde borçlanırken aynı zamanda Avrupa pazarlarıyla entegre olmaktaydı. Bir başka ifadeyle Avrupa ve Osmanlı toplumu arasında ekonomik haberlerin değişimine ihtiyaç vardır. Böyle bir ihtiyacı da uluslararası haber ajansları karşılayabilirdi.

Bu tezin çalışacağı ana sorunsal ise uluslararası haber ajanslarının, özellikle Reuter ve Havas, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda habercilik yapmaya başlamaları, gelişmeleri ve oynadıkları rollerdir. Osmanlı basını üzerinde yapılan çalışmaların çoğu Osmanlı Sarayı ile basın arasındaki ilişkileri inceler. Birçoğu Osmanlı sultanlarının, özellikle de Sultan II. Abdülhamid’in basını nasıl kontrol edip sansür uyguladığını anlatır. Oysa meseleye bu şekilde yaklaşmak konunun tüm boyutlarıyla ve özellikle de büyük fotoğrafı görmeye engeldir. Uluslararası haber ajansları bütün dünyadaki gazetelerin en önemli-hatta neredeyse tek- haber kaynaklarıdır. Ajanslar, gazetelerden çok farklı yapıya ve işlevlere sahiptir. Bundan dolayı ajanslar ayrı bir konu olarak ele alınmalıdır. Bunu yaparken bu ajansların neleri temsil ettiği tarihsel bağlam içinde değerlendirilmelidir.

Bu tezde uluslararası ajansların doğduğu ortam temel olarak anlatıldıktan sonra neden Osmanlı’nın başkentine gelip yerleştikleri sorgulandı. Ajansların nasıl faaliyete başladıkları ve nasıl çalıştıkları anlatıldıktan sonra Osmanlı Devleti’nin bu ajansları nasıl algıladığı ve değerlendirdiği irdelendi. Osmanlı Devleti ile haber ajansları arasındaki ilişkiler detaylı şekilde anlatıldıktan sonra Osmanlı Devleti’nin bunları nasıl kontrol etmeye ve kendi politikaları için kullanmaya çalıştığı analiz edildi.

Kaynaklara gelince, bu çalışmada büyük ölçüde Osmanlı Başbakanlık Arşivi kullanılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra Londra’da Reuters Haber Ajansı Arşivi’nde kapsamlı araştırmalar yapılmıştır. Yine Londra’daki British Library ve National Archives’tan değerli belgelere ulaşılmıştır. Osmanlı ve İngiliz gazeteleriyle birlikte bazı hatıratlar da mühim bilgiler sağlamıştır. Şüphesiz, bu konuda Batı literatüründe yer alan

çalışmalar dikkatle değerlendirilip özellikle tarihsel bağlamın ortaya konmasında bunlardan faydalanılmıştır.

“Tarihsel Arka Plan” başlıklı ikinci bölümde ilk olarak uluslararası haber ajanslarının doğuşu üzerinde duruldu. Bu ajanslar ait oldukları devletlerin/imparatorlukların politik nüfuzlarına göre dünyayı habercilik için paylaşmışlar; çeşitli anlaşmalar yapmışlardır. Burada ana amaç rekabetten kaçınarak işbirliği yoluyla menfaatlerini genişletmektir.. Ajanslar İstanbul’da geldiğinde Osmanlı basını ne haldeydi? Bu soruya cevap verebilmek için Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda basınının gelişimini ana hatlarıyla anlatmak gerekti. Ardından Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda telgrafın gelişimi anlatıldı; çünkü ajansların işlevini yerine getirebilmeleri için hayati aygıt telgraftı. Bu bağlamda uluslararası haber ajanslarının rüştlarini ispatladıkları Kırım Savaşı’nın Osmanlı’da telgrafın gelişmesine ciddi bir katkı verdiği belirtilmeli. Havas Kırım Savaşı’nın en önemli taraflarından Osmanlı’daki gelişmeleri takip etmek üzere 1854’te İstanbul’a bir muhabir yollamıştı; Reuter’in ise Osmanlı başkentinde bir muhabirinin bulunduğu yönelik kayıt bulunmuyor. Bundan dolayı Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda ajansların tarihini 1854 ile başlatmak yerinde olacaktır.

Peki, ajansların İstanbul’a yerleşmeleri nasıl olmuştu? Akla gelen ilk seçenek Kırım Savaşı’ndan sonra İstanbul’da kalmalarıdır; ancak böyle olmamıştır. Çünkü daha telgraf bu yıllarda hizmete girmiş ve ajanslar da yeni yeni kendilerini ispat etmeye başlamıştı. Ajansların ne zaman İstanbul’a geldiğini tespit etmenin iki yolu var. İlki Avrupa gazetelerinin İstanbul’dan yayımladıkları ajans bültenleri ve telgrafları. İkinci ise İstanbul’daki Osmanlı gazetelerinin ajans haberlerine yer vermeye başlamaları. Detayları incelemeler sonunda ajansların 1860’ların ortalarında İstanbul’a geldikleri anlaşılıyor. 1866’da Reuter ve Havas’ın muhabirlerini İstanbul’a yolladıkları görülüyor. Wolff ise 1880’lerde kendini gösteriyor. Amerikan Associated Press ajansı ise İstanbul’da büro açmıyor; ancak 1900’lü yılların başında zaman zaman muhabirini yollayarak muhtelif olaylarını takip ettiriyor.

Reuter temsilcisi Edward Virnard Osmanlı başkentine gelip faaliyetlere başlayacağını 20 Haziran 1866’da İstanbul’da yabancı dilde yayımlanan gazetelere verdiği reklamlarla duyurmuştur. İlanda Virnard düzenli olarak Londra’dan İstanbul’a haber servis edeceğini müjdelemektedir. Reuter ticari, siyasi ve finans haberlerini her gün abonelerine ulaştırmayı vaat etmiştir. Ancak Reuter’in tam olarak faaliyetle

geçebilmesi için iki sene daha beklemesi gerekmiştir; Havas ise bu yıllarda İstanbul'da ofisini açmış durumdaydı. İngiliz ajansının yine de sınırlı da olsa habercilik yaptığı anlaşılıyor.

Bu arada, Reuter'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na ilgisinin çok daha erken yıllarda başladığını vurgulamak gerek. Baron Julius Reuter'in 27 Ekim 1854'te Londra'daki Osmanlı Sefareti vasıtasıyla yaptığı başvuruda Osmanlı Devleti'ne telgraf hattı inşa etme teklifinde bulunmuştur. Mektuptan anlaşıldığına göre Baron Reuter esasında bunu bir sene öncesinde yapmış; bu kez teklifini yenilemiştir. Elbette telgraf hattı inşası ile haber ajansı faaliyetleri farklıdır; ancak bu dönemin uygulamalarına bakıldığında Reuter'in habercilik yapacağını da düşünmek yerinde olacaktır.

Üçüncü bölüm ise “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na Bir ‘Tehdit’ Olarak Haber Ajansları” başlığını taşımaktadır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda basın büyük ölçüde Sultan II. Abdülhamid ile özdeşleşmiştir. Bu yüzden Koloğlu “Abdülhamid'in Basın Rejimi” deyimini kullanır. Esasında bu tanımlama yerindedir çünkü Sultan II. Abdülhamid 33 senelik hükümdarlık yaparak Osmanlı'da basının geliştiği yılların önemli bir kısmını işgal etmektedir. Ayrıca O'nun dönemi Osmanlı'da basının gerek sayı gerekse içerik olarak geliştiği yıllardır.

Osmanlı Devleti'nin uluslararası haber ajanslarını neden tehdit ve ciddi bir sorun olarak algıladığına gelince; özellikle Avrupa basınında bu dönemde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Sultan II. Abdülhamid hakkında fazlaca olumsuz haber ve yorumlar çıkmaktadır. Sultan II. Abdülhamid ise imaja çok önem veren birisidir. Saltanatı boyunca hem şahsi hem de devletin itibarlı görünmesi için büyük bir mücadele vermiştir. Ajansların geçtiği haberlere bakıldığında bunların büyük ölçüde Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Osmanlı yöneticilerini kızdıran haber ve yorumlar olduğu görülür. Artarak süren bu haberler neticesinde Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Osmanlı yöneticilerinde bunların “şuurlu, kötü niyetli ve düşmanca” yazıldıkları kanaati oluşmuştur. Osmanlı Devleti'ni bu haberleri neden bu şekilde algıladığını anlayabilmek için ajansların servis ettiği haberleri arşivlerdeki yoğunluk ve Osmanlı'nın tepkisine göre sınıflayarak içerikleri hakkında fikir vermek gerekir. Bunları yedi alt başlık halinde incelemek mümkündür.

Uluslararası haber ajanslarının en fazla haber servis ettiği konuların başında şüphesiz Ermeni Meselesi gelmektedir. Osmanlı devlet adamlarına göre Avrupa

basını Ermeni yanlısı idi. Onların bakış açısına göre ajanslar da bu yönde haberler üretmişlerdir. Bu haberlerde öne çıkan vurgu Osmanlı Devleti'nin ve halkının sürekli olarak Ermeni halkına katliamlara varan zulümlerdir. Ermeni kadınlarına tecavüz ve Ermeni çocuklarının din değiştirmeleri için baskı bu haberler arasındadır. Tezin çalışma dönemi 1908'de bittiğinden 1915 Olayları'na dair haberler burada yer almamakta. Osmanlı'ya göre ise bu haberlerin neredeyse hepsi uydurmadır. Bu tez Ermeni Olayları ve diğer alt başlıklardaki haberlerin gerçek olup olmadığını konu edinmiyor. Sadece ajansların geçtiği haberleri ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin bunlara tepkisini fikir vermesi açısından aktarıyor.

Rahatsızlığa sebep olan diğer bir haber konusu Balkanlardaki olaylar üzerinedir. Yine Osmanlı Devleti'nin bakış açısına göre ajanslar-özellikle Reuter ve Havas- bu konuda yanlı ve yanlış haberler servis etmektedir. Haberlerde ana tema gayrimüslimlerin isyanlarını bastırmak için Osmanlı Devleti'nin aşırı şiddet kullandığı ve Osmanlı askerlerinin sivil halkı katlettiğidir. Ayrıca devletin Müslümanları korurken gayrimüslimlere sistematik ayrımcılık uyguladığı da ajansların haberlerinde yer almaktadır.

Müslüman Dünya, Asya ve Afrika bölgelerine ilişkin haberler de dikkat çekicidir. Ajansların haberlerinde geçen ortak nokta buradaki halkın Osmanlı Devleti'nden memnuniyetsizliği ve merkezi yönetimin zayıflığıdır. Diğer bir alt başlık ise "İmparatorluk Aleyhindeki İsyenlar"dır. Haberlere göre Anadolu'nun farklı yerlerinde yönetimden memnun olmayan halk devlete karşı zaman zaman isyanlar çıkarmaktadır. Osmanlı Devleti'nin ve toplumun "aşağılanması" ve "egzotik" olarak tasvir edilmesi diğer bir başlık. Osmanlıların hor ve barbar görülmesi; ayrıca kölelik konusunun ayrıntılı olarak işlenerek Osmanlı toplumun "Doğulu" olduğunun vurgulanması Osmanlı Devleti'nin rahatsız olduğu haberlerdir.

Şüphesiz Sultan II. Abdülhamid'i çileden çıkararak haber konusu ise sağlığı hakkında çıkan haberlerdir. Ajanslar bu konuda çeşitli zamanlarda birçok haber servis etmiş; özellikle Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in ruh sağlığının bozuk olduğunu ileri sürmüşlerdir. Avrupa basını da bu haberlere fazlaca yer vermiş; Osmanlı Sultanı ise bunları büyük tepkiyle karşılamıştır. Haberlerin kaynağının araştırılması için Avrupa'daki Osmanlı sefaretları aylarca adeta dedektif gibi çalışmalar yapmak zorunda kalmıştır.

Osmanlı Devleti açısından uluslararası haber ajanslarını “tehdit” kılan diğer unsur ise bunların sayıları giderek artan Osmanlı gazeteleri için ana kaynak konumuna gelmeleridir. Ajansların faaliyete girmesine kadar İstanbul’da gerek Osmanlıca gerekse yabancı dilde yayımlanan gazeteler için ana kaynak Avrupa’dan gelen gazetelerdi. Osmanlı Devleti’nin gazeteler ve toplum için “milli” bir bilgilendirme servisi yoktu. Resmi gazete *Takvim-i Vekayi* ise bu ihtiyacı gidermekten çok uzaktaydı. Tüm dünyada olup biteni telgraf vasıtasıyla aynı gün bildirebilme kapasitesi ajansları bir anda Osmanlı gazetelerinin ve toplumunun en önemli haber kaynağı haline getirdi. Yabancı dildeki gazeteler ajansların bültenlerini geniş şekilde yayımlarken Osmanlıca gazeteler de ajans haberlerine artan şekilde yer verdiler. “Efkar-ı umumiye” giderek önem kazanması sebebiyle ajansların neredeyse tek haber kaynağı olmaları ve bültenlerin “muzır” içerikleri Osmanlı Devleti için bir “tehdit” haline geldi.

Dördüncü bölüm ise “Basını İdare Etmenin Kurumsallaşması” başlığını taşıyor. Gazetelerin yavaş yavaş ortaya çıkmasıyla bunları kontrol altına almak için çıkarılan matbuat kanunnameleri genel hatlarıyla anlatıldıktan sonra basın için oluşturulan müdürlükler ayrıntılı olarak tartışılıyor. Tezin ana önermesi Osmanlı Devleti’nin bu konudaki arayışının hiç bitmediği ve günü kurtarmak için o anın ihtiyaçlarına yönelik düzenlemeler yaptığıdır. Bu yüzdendir ki matbuat müdürlüklerinin bağlı bulunduğu bakanlıklar sık sık değişmiştir. Osmanlı Devleti’nin bu konuda uzun vadeli, kalıcı ve kapsayıcı çözümler üretmediği görülmektedir.

Osmanlı Devleti’nin basını yönetmek için uğraşı ve arayışı gerçekten çok canlı bir süreçtir. Bu meseleye en çok kafa yoran ise Sultan II. Abdülhamid olmuştur. Bunda basının rolünün giderek artması ve Avrupa basınının “düşmanca” haberleri de etkili olmuştur. Sultan II. Abdülhamid bu meseleye çözüm bulabilmek için Osmanlı devlet adamlarından çok sayıda layiha talep etmiştir. Hazırlanan raporlarda genellikle Avrupa’daki matbuat müdürlüklerinin görev ve yetkileri anlatılmış; Osmanlı’daki muadilleri ile kıyaslamalar yapılmıştır. Birçok layihadan sonra 1884’te Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti tesis edilmiştir. Ancak bu müdürlüğün gerek imkanları gerekse personeli yabancı basınla baş etmeye yeterli değildir. Ayrıca uluslararası haber ajansları için ayrı bir birim de kurulmamıştır.

Osmanlı yetkilileri zamanla uluslararası haber ajanslarını idare edebilmek için ayrı uygulamalar gerektiğini fark etmişlerdir; ancak bu kurumsallaşmaya

yansımamıştır. Bu anlamda yapılan özel uygulama ajanslarla işbirliği anlaşmalarına gitmektir. Uygulamaya bütün maddeleri ile geçtikleri kesin olmasa da özellikle Reuter ve Havas tasarlanan anlaşmalar gerçekten çok kapsamlıdır. Bunda ajansların Osmanlı Devleti'nden para kazanabilmek için sundukları öneriler ve teklifler de etkili olmuştur.

Anlaşmalar özü itibariyle şu unsurları öngörmektedir: Osmanlı Devleti bu ajanslara yıllık abonelik ücreti ödeyecek ve ayrıca günlük belirli sayıda kelimenin ücretsiz olarak telgrafla gönderilmesi imtiyazı tanıyacaktır. Uluslararası haber ajansları ise özellikle Osmanlı Devleti'nin yalanladığı haberleri Avrupa gazetelerine duyuracak; mümkünse gazetelerin bunları yayımlaması için aracılık edecektir. Ajanslar “Osmanlı Devleti'nin menfaatlerini savunmayı” vaat etmişlerdir.

Beşinci bölüm ise “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ile Uluslararası Haber Ajansları Arasında Karşılıklı Bağımlılık İlişkisi” başlığını taşıyor. “Karşılıklı Bağımlılık”tan kasıt iki tarafın da birbirlerine ihtiyaç duymalarıdır. Adeta iki taraf da birbirlerinin olmazsa olmazlarıdır. Bunu biraz daha açmak gerekirse öncelikle Osmanlı Devleti'nin uluslararası haber ajanslarına bağımlılığını ortaya koymalı. Avrupa kamuoyu bu dönemde büyük ölçüde Fransız ve İngiliz gazeteleri tarafından belirleniyordu. Devir, artık propaganda devriydi. İmaja çok önem veren Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in bu propaganda mücadelesinden uzak kalması düşünülemezdi. Ancak bunun için “milli” araçlara sahip değildi. Osmanlı Devleti'ni ve kendisini Batı dünyasına anlatmak için tek seçeneğin Avrupa'nın basın organlarıydı ki şüphesiz bunların en önemlisi gazetelerin ana haber kaynağı olan haber ajanslarıydı.

Boyar Sultan II. Abdülhamid ile Osmanlı basını arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklarken şu değerlendirmeleri yapar: “Basının hayatta kalması için Saray'a duyduğu ihtiyaç kadar Sultan da basına ihtiyaç duyuyordu. Saray ile basın arasındaki ilişkiler sadece siyasi gücün sansür olarak zuhur eden siyasi baskısına dayanmıyordu. Bu ilişkinin karakteri eşitler arasındaki bir ilişki olmasa da bu bir karşılıklı yarara dayanan bir düzendi.” Boyar'un bu yorumu Osmanlı Devleti ile uluslararası haber ajansları arasındaki ilişkilere de uygulamak mümkün. Her ne kadar taraflar bu ilişki de eşit olmasa da ikisinin de birbirine ciddi ihtiyacı vardı.

Osmanlı Devleti'nin haber ajanslarına ihtiyacını gösteren önemli bir örnek var. Bâb-ı Âli ile Avrupa'daki Osmanlı sefaretleri arasında 1890'lı yıllarda uluslararası haber ajanslarına abonelik konusunda gerçekleşen yazışmalar bu konuda

değerli bir bilgiler yansıtıyor. Osmanlı Devleti 19. Yüzyılın özellikle son çeyreğinde çok ciddi bir ekonomik buhran içindeydi. Osmanlı hükümeti Fransız haber ajansı Havas'a abonelik ücretini bile ödeyemeyecek haldeydi. Hükümet bu yüzden Havas ile aboneliği sona erdirmeyi düşündü. Bâb-ı Âli bunun için Paris Sefareti ile Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti'nden mütalaa istedi. Ayrıntı gibi görünse de meselenin özünü verdiğinden bu süreci özetlemekte fayda var: Ana soru Osmanlı Devleti'nin Havas'a ödediği ücret değerinde bu ajanstan faydalanıp faydalanmadığıydı. Paris Sefareti abonelik sona ererse Havas'ın Osmanlı Devleti için çok önemli olan hizmetlerini artık yerine getirmeyeceğini bildirdi. Müzakereler aylarca sürdü. Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Müdüriyeti ve Paris Sefareti'nin görüşlerini alan Hariciye Nezareti Havas'ın çok önemli bir ajans olduğunu ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin bu hizmetlerden ciddi şekilde istifade ettiğini bildirdi. Ancak Osmanlı ekonomisi bu yıllarda iyice dibe vurmuştu. Havas'ın abonelik ücreti Osmanlı Bankası'ndan kredi olarak ödenebildi.

Öte yandan Fransız ajansı 1897'ye gelindiğinde Osmanlı Devleti'ne çok daha yüklü bir fatura çıkardı. Bu kez borç yedi-sekiz kat artmış idi. Esasında Osmanlı hükümeti 1896'da Havas ile abonelik anlaşmasını sona erdirme kararı almış; ancak Osmanlı bürokratlarının zamanında ajansa bunu bildirmeyi ihmal etmesinden dolayı anlaşma otomatik olarak yenilenmişti. Bâb-ı Âli ile Paris Sefareti arasındaki yazışmalar bu kez altı aydan fazla sürdü. Bu konuda Osmanlı arşivlerinden onlarca belge bulunuyor. Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in talimatıyla yine Havas'tan hizmet almanın zorunlu olup olmadığı müzakere edildi. Paris'ten gelen cevap hep "Ajansın hizmetleri Devlet-i Âliye için hayati derece önemli" şeklindeydi. Paris Sefareti "... mezkûr şirketin telgraf acentaları meyanında hâiz olduğu mevki'in ehemmiyetine mebnî hıdemâtından istifâde edilmesi muvâfık-ı maslahat görünüyor..." diyerek hep aboneliğe devam edilmesini istedi. Bâb-ı Âli daha uygun şartlarda anlaşma imkânının araştırılmasını istese de Havas buna yanaşmadı; 45 bin frank talebinden hiç taviz vermedi. Osmanlı diplomatları ve bürokratlarının kaleme aldığı değerlendirmeler ajansların Osmanlı Devleti için ne kadar önemli olduğuna net bir ışık tutuyor.

Şüphesiz bu iki taraflı bir ilişkiydi ve uluslararası haber ajanslarının da Osmanlı Devleti'ne ihtiyacı vardı. Bu durum Osmanlı Devleti ile haber ajanslarını karşılıklı işbirliğine ve menfaatlerini korumak için iyi ilişkiler kurmaya sevk etmiştir.

Osmanlı Devleti özellikle haber servislerine abone olarak ve ücretsiz telgraf imtiyazı tanıyarak ajansların en önemli gelir kaynağını oluştururken buna karşılık ajanslar da özellikle Avrupa basınında çıkan olumsuz ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin bakış açısına göre temelsiz, uydurma ve kötü niyetli olan haberlerin tekzip ve düzeltilmesi için bir araç olmuşlardır.

Karşılıklı Bağımlılık İlişkisi'nin uygulamalarına gelince, ilki şüphesiz Osmanlı Devleti'nin uluslararası haber ajanslarına abone olmasıydı. Abonelik iyi ilişkilerin tesisinde en önemli vasıta idi. Çünkü uluslararası haber ajansların servislerine ve bültenlerine İstanbul'daki gazeteler ve ekonomi haberleri almak isteyen iş ve finans çevreleri abone olmasına rağmen bunların ödedikleri ücretler gayet düşük kalmaktaydı. Ajansların İstanbul'da en önemli gelir kapısı yüksek abonelik ücreti ödeyebilecek Osmanlı Devleti idi. Ajanslar 1860'ların sonlarında İstanbul'da faaliyete başlamasına rağmen arşivlere göre Osmanlı Devleti'nin aboneliği 1870'li yıllarda başlıyor. Kayıtlara göre bazı yıllar abonelik görünmese de Osmanlı hükümetinin seneler boyunca Havas ve Reuter'in haber servisine abone olduğu ve bunun 1910'lara kadar devam ettiği anlaşılıyor. Osmanlı Devleti sadece bu büyük ajanslara abone olmamış bunun yanında Avrupa'da faaliyet gösteren daha küçük çaptaki haber ajanslarından istifade yoluna gitmiştir. Osmanlı yöneticileri aboneliğin ajanslara iyi ilişki kurmanın ve olumsuz haberleri önlemenin bir şartı olduğunu farkındaydı.

İkinci uygulama ise haber ajanslarının günlük belirli sayıda kelimenin telgraf hatlarından ücretsiz olarak gönderilmesine ilişkin Osmanlı Devleti'nin tanıdığı imtiyazdır. Bu çok önemli bir araçtı çünkü ajansların en önemli gideri gönderilen telgrafların faturalarıydı. Bunun için Osmanlı hükümetinin tanıyacağı ücretsiz telgraf imtiyazlarına ihtiyaçları vardı. Örneğin Havas'ın İstanbul'daki etkisini kırmak için Reuter ve Alman Wolff ajansları 1889'da Osmanlı başkentinde ortak bir ajans olarak "Agence de Constantinople"u kurma kararı almışlardı. Henüz görüşmeler devam ederken ajansın İstanbul temsilcisine bir an önce Osmanlı hükümetinden telgraf imtiyazı talep etmesi görevi verilmişti.

Osmanlı bürokratları gerek abonelik gerekse telgraf imtiyazı vasıtasıyla ajanslar ile iyi bir ilişki kurmaya çalışmış; bu araçlarla ajanslarından "muzır" yayınlarını bertaraf etmeyi planlamıştır. Abonelikte olduğu gibi telgraf imtiyazı sadece Reuter ve Havas'a sağlanmamış bunların yanında İstanbul ile Avrupa

arasında haber servisi yapan daha küçük çaptaki ajanslara da bu olanaklar tanınmıştır. Daha küçük çaptaki Avrupa ajanslarıyla çalışmak çok daha kolaydı.

Osmanlı Devleti'nin haber ajanslarıyla işbirliğine yapmak ve iyi ilişkiler kurmak için kullandığı diğer araç ise doğrudan devlet yardımları ve ajansların muhabirlerine ödenen maaşlardır. Esasında bu 19. yüzyılın ilk dönemlerinden itibaren yabancı gazetecilere uygulanan bir araçtır. Uluslararası haber ajanslarının devreye girmesiyle aynı uygulama onlar için de hayata geçmiştir. Bu uygulama çoğunlukla Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in hayata geçirdiği bir siyaset aracı gibi görülse de O'ndan önce örneklerini görmek mümkündür. Örneğin, Reuter kayıtlarına göre, 1871'de Havas Osmanlı Devleti'nden yardım almaktaydı. Osmanlı belgelerinde Reuter ve Havas muhabirleri için doğrudan ödenen maaş kayıtlarına rastlanmıyor; ancak ajanslara "Devlet-i Âliye'nin menfaatlerini muhafaza" için çeşitli vesilelerle ödemeler yapıldığı görülüyor. Doğrudan yardım ve maaş desteğinden daha çok Reuter ve Havas'a göre daha küçük çaptaki Avrupa ajanslarının yararlandığı anlaşılıyor. Bunlara ilaveten ajansların muhabirlerine Osmanlı nişanları tevdi etmek diğer bir uygulamadır. Reuter, Havas ve Wolff'un birçok muhabir ve yetkilisine Mecidiye Nişanı verilmiştir. Haber ajanslarının temsilci ve muhabirleriyle iyi ilişkiler kurmanın bir yolu da onlara birçok alanda kolaylık sağlamak ve özel muamelede bulunmaktır. Bunlar daha çok bürokratik işlemlerde kolaylık ve özel haber vermek şeklindedir.

Karşılıklı Bağımlılık İlişkisi'nde uluslararası haber ajanslarının Osmanlı Devleti'ne sağladığı imkân ve hizmetlere gelince şüphesiz ilk başta tekzip ve düzeltmelerdir. Başta Avrupa olmak üzere Osmanlı Devleti'nin ilgisinin bulunduğu coğrafyalarda Osmanlı Devleti ve Sultan II. Abdülhamid aleyhinde haberler çıkmaktaydı. Osmanlı Devleti'nin bakış açısına göre bunların neredeyse tamamına yakını "gerçek olmayan, düşmanca ve muzır" haberlerdi. Bu yüzden hızlı şekilde yalanlanıp düzeltilmesine ihtiyaç vardı. Gazetelere teker teker tekzip ve düzeltme göndermek ise hiç işlevsel bir seçenek değildi. Bu iş için en uygun aracı neredeyse bu gazetelerin hepsine haber servisi yapan uluslararası haber ajanslarıydı. Ayrıca bu hem çok daha hızlı ve etkili bir yöntemdi. Tekzip ve düzeltmeler sadece gazete haberleri için değil haber ajanslarının kendileri için de geçerliydi çünkü en fazla haber yazan ve dünyaya duyuran bizzat ajanslardı. Neticede Osmanlı Devleti

uluslararası haber ajanslarından en fazla tekzip ve düzeltme alanında istifade etmiştir; bu anlamda zamanla ciddi bir bağımlılık ortaya çıkmıştır.

“Lehte Haberler ve Propaganda” Osmanlı Devleti’nin uluslararası haber ajanslarından yararlandığı başka bir alandır. Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Osmanlı yönetici sınıfı tekzip ve düzeltmelerin yetersiz olduğunu; asıl amaca tam olarak hizmet etmediğinin farkındaydı. Sultan II. Abdülhamid basınının ve propagandanın önemini farkındaydı. Onların bakış açısına göre Osmanlı Devleti Avrupa’dan gelen “saldırılara” onların yöntemleriyle karşı koymalıydı. Bundan dolayı Osmanlı bürokratları uluslararası haber ajanslarının muhabirlerini bilgilendirmek gerektiğini fark etti. Osmanlı Devleti özellikle Ermeni Olayları ve Balkanlar’daki ayaklanmalar üzerine bilgilendirme yapmış; bu konularda olumlu haber çıkması için mücadele vermiştir.

Osmanlı bürokratları bu süreçte etrafında olup bitenleri de gözetmekteydi. Örneğin 1886 tarihli Osmanlı belgesi Osmanlı Devleti’nin bakış açısı konusunda ciddi ışık tutmaktadır. Yunanlıların Fransız haber ajansı Havas’a her gün bilgi vermek suretiyle Avrupa kamuoyu nezdinde propaganda yaptığını fark eden Osmanlı Devleti hemen benzer bir uygulamayı hayata geçirmiştir.⁹⁰⁴

“Karşılıklı Mücadelenin Araçları” başlığını taşıyan altıncı bölümde ise her ne kadar Osmanlı Devleti ve uluslararası haber ajansları arasında karşılıklı bağımlılık ilişkisinden dolayı iyi ilişkiler tesis ederek birbirlerinden istifade etme yollarına gitse de menfaatler çakıştığı zaman kaçınılmaz bir mücadelenin de yaşandığı anlatılıyor. İki taraf da menfaatlerinin peşindeydi. Her zaman iyi ilişki kurmaya imkân yoktu. Netice uluslararası haber ajansları Osmanlı Devleti’nin sahip olduğu milli bir araç değildi; aksine bu ajanslar İngiltere, Fransa ve Almanya’nın desteklediği ve bu devletlerle yakın ilişki içinde olan müesseselerdi. Burada Osmanlı Devleti’nin tek taraflı bir mücadelesinden ziyade karşılıklı mücadeleden bahsetmek gerekir. Çünkü haber ajansları bu süreçte aktif bir öğedirler ve Osmanlı Devleti’nden gelen baskı ve

⁹⁰⁴ BOA, İMTZ.(01)., 18/669, 19 Ş 1303/23 May 1886.

Ahvâl-i hâzireden dolayı kendülerini inzâr-ı ecânibde haklı göstermek üzre Yunanlıların Havas vesâir telgraf kumpanyaları vâsıtasıyla Avrupa’ya ba’zı neşriyât ve işâ’âtda bulunmaları tabî’î olmasıyla bizim dahi menâfi’imize hîdmet için bu vâsıtalar ile neşriyâtda bulunmaklığımız muvâfık-ı hâl ve maslahat olacağından kariben hüsn-i sûretle netîce-pezir olması eltâf-ı subhâniyeden mes’ûl ve müsted’â bulunan mesele-i hâzirenin hitâmına kadar devletce bu yolda bir meslek ittihâziyle vukû’ât-ı harbiyeye ve esbâb-ı mücibesine dâir hergün matbû’ât idâre-i behiyyesi ma’rifetiyle Avrupa’ya telgraflar keşîdesiyle her ahşam bir jurnalının arz-ı atebe-i ulyâ kılınması...

kontrol altına alma yollarına karşı sahip oldukları araçlar vasıtasıyla karşı koymuşlar; bu baskıları aşmanın yollarını denemişlerdir.

Öncelikle haber ajanslarının şantaj ve tehditlerini anlatmak gerekir. “Ajansların tehdit ve şantajları” ifadesi ilk bakışta Osmanlı Devleti’nin resmi hikâyesi gibi algılanabilir; söylem olarak da bu resmi pozisyona yakın durmaktadır. Ancak Osmanlı yöneticilerinin yazışmaları ve bunların bağlamı incelendiği zaman haber ajanslarının gerektiğinde bu tür araçlara hiç çekinmeden başvurduğu görülecektir. Osmanlı yazışmalarının içeriği haber ajanslarını suçlamak yerine; sorunu anlamak ve çözüm üretmek üzerinedir. Ayrıca yine Osmanlı sefirlerinin ve diplomatlarının anlattıklarına göre haber ajanslarının yetkilileri açıkça tehdit ve şantajda bulunmuşlardır. Bu kişilerin iç yazışmalarda durumu nakletmekten başka bir niyeti olmadığı kanaati ortaya çıkmaktadır. Haber ajanslarının sadece Osmanlı Devleti’ni değil; başta Rusya olmak üzere başka ülkeleri de maddi menfaat sağlamak için tehdit ettiği görülür. Bunları anlatan çalışmalar bulunmaktadır.⁹⁰⁵

Uluslararası haber ajansları neticede maddi menfaatini gözeten ve bunu arttırmaya çalışan ticari işletmelerdi. Osmanlı Devleti ilk başta abonelik yoluyla ajanslara para aktarırken abonelik ücreti de giderek artmıştır. Zaman içinde ajanslar aboneliği “meşru bir hak” olarak görmeye başlamışlar ve Osmanlı Devleti’nin mutlaka haber bültenlerine abone olması gerektiğini düşünmüşlerdir. Şüphesiz bu durumda Osmanlı Devleti’nin yaşadığı siyasi buhranın da büyük etkisi vardır. Bu konuda birkaç örnek vermekte fayda var. 1893’te Avrupa gazetelerinde çıkan haberlerde Kayseri’de Müslümanlar ile Ermeniler arasında olaylar çıktığını belirtilirken bölgedeki Türk ve Kürt halkının Ermenileri öldürdüğü iddia edilmektedir. Osmanlı hükümeti bu haberleri Havas vasıtasıyla tekzip etmek istediğinde Fransız haber ajansı buna olumsuz cevap vermiştir. *Matbuat-ı Hariciye Müdürü* Abdullah Macid Bey’in bildirdiğine göre Havas’n İstanbul’daki temsilcileri yazılı ve sözlü olarak defaatle Osmanlı Devleti’nin Havas’a abone olmadığını ve artık Osmanlı hükümetinden gelecek tekzipleri duyurmayaacağını bildirmiştir.⁹⁰⁶

⁹⁰⁵ James William Long, “Russian Manipulation of the French Press, 1904-1906”, *Slavic Review* Vol. 31, No. 2 (1972), s. 343-354; Gabriel Francis Geisler Mesevage, “Havas and the Foreign Loan Market, 1889 to 1921,” *Centre for Finance and Development*, Student Working Paper Series, No. 02, 2013; Vincent Bignon and Marc Flandreau, “The Economics of Badmouthing: Libel Law and the Underworld of the Financial Press in France before World War I”, *Journal of Economic History*, September 2011, v. 71, iss. 3, s. 616-53.

⁹⁰⁶ BOA, İ.H.R., 341/1310, 23 Za 1310/8 or 9 June 1893.

1895 yılında ise Havas'ın Osmanlı Devleti aleyhinde haberleri devam etmektedir. Havas yetkilileri Paris'teki Osmanlı diplomatlarına bu "muzır" yayınların sebebinin Osmanlı hükümetinin abonelik ücretini henüz ödememesi olduğunu açıkça söylemiştir.⁹⁰⁷ Osmanlı Devleti ise artık ajansların tehditlerinden bunalmış; giderek yükselen abonelik ücretini ödeyemeyecek duruma gelmiştir. Artık Osmanlı Devleti ajanslara ödenen yüksek ücretler karşılığında bu kurumlardan o derecede istifade edilip edilmediğini sorgulamaktadır. Bu araştırma ve sorgulamalar aylar boyunca sürmüştü; İstanbul'daki bürokratlar aboneliğin sonlandırılması yönünde görüş bildirirken Paris'teki Osmanlı Sefareti ise buna karşı çıkmaktadır. 1897 yılında Paris'ten gelen rapora göre Havas bu gelişmelerden haberdardır. Havas yetkilileri Osmanlı diplomatlarına açıkça aboneliğin sona ermesi durumunda artık Osmanlı Devleti'nin menfaatlerini gözetmelerinin imkânsız olduğunu ve bağımsız habercilik yapmaya başlayacaklarına işaret etmişlerdir.⁹⁰⁸

Uluslararası haber ajansların "muzır" neşriyatlarına ısrarla devam etmelerine Osmanlı Devleti'nin cevabı ise giderek artan baskı ve sansür olmuştur. Esasında sansür basının ilk ortaya çıkmaya başladığı dönemlerden itibaren derecesi farklı da olsa uygulamadaydı. Sultan II. Abdülhamid ise sansürü sistemli hale getirmiştir. Yeni iletişim kanallarının-telgraf ve ajanslar- devreye girmesiyle sansürden bunlar için de devreye girmiştir. Sansürün kademeli olarak arttığını vurgulamak gerekir. Mehmed Said Paşa'nın 1880 tarihli layihasında görüleceği üzere Osmanlı yönetici sınıfına göre haber ajansları şuurlu olarak "temelsiz ve kötü niyetli" haberler üretmekteydi.⁹⁰⁹ Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Osmanlı idarecileri tüm ikazlara rağmen ajanslar Avrupa'ya "muzır" haberler servis ettikçe telgraf yollarını sınırlamak yoluna

⁹⁰⁷ BOA, Y.A.HUS., 322/10, 19 N 1312/16 March 1895.

...Ajans Havas telgraf şirketinin bu vechile hakkımızda neşriyât-ı gayr-ı marziyede bulunması abonman bedelinin henüz i'tâ olunmamış olmasından münba'is olduğuna dâir hâriciye nezâret-i celîlesinin tezkeresi melfûflarıyla ma'ân arz ve takdîm kılınmış ve mezkûr abonman bedelinin sür'at-i tesviyesi mâliye nezâret-i celîlesine te'kiden iş'âr edilmiştir.

⁹⁰⁸ BOA, BEO., 1145/85844, 26 C 1313 /22 Kasım 1897.

... mezkûr mukavelenamenin fesh edilmesine mebnî şirket-i mezkûrenin hükümet-i seniyyeye karşı karîben serbestî-i hareketini kâmilten iktisâb eyleyeceği müdür-i mûmâ ileyh tarafından beyan ve ihtâr edilip bundan maksat hükümet-i seniyyeyi tahsisât i'tâsına devama icbâr etmek kazıyyesi olduğu der-kâr isede müdür-i mûmâ ileyhın hükümet-i seniyyeye karşı hasmâne bir meslek ittihâz etmesi menâfi'-i saltanat-ı seniyyece müceb-i mazarrat eyleyeceğinden...

⁹⁰⁹ BOA, Y.A., RES., 7/50, 9 L 1297/14 September 1880.

gidildi. Ajanslar telgraflarını Osmanlı Telgraf İdaresi yoluyla göndereceğinden ilk etapta bu iyi bir çözüm gibi görüldü. Ancak ajanslar bu engeli kısa sürede aşmayı başardı. Bulgaristan artık Osmanlı hâkimiyeti altında değildi ve Bulgar telgraf bürolarından ajanslar istedikleri haberleri yollayabilirdi. Haberler at ile veya vapurla Varna'ya gönderiliyor; buradan Avrupa'daki merkezlere servis ediliyordu. Osmanlı hükümeti tüm çaba ve tehditlere karşı ajansların bu yolla haber göndermesine engel olmadı. Haberin çıkış noktası olarak, mahrece İstanbul yazılması ise Sultan II. Abdülhamid'i çileden çıkardı.

Uluslararası haber ajansları artık İstanbul'daki Osmanlı gazeteleri için de önemli bir haber kaynağıydı. Gazeteler özellikle dış haberleri ajansların bültenlerinden alarak okuyucularına duyuruyordu. Kamuoyu- *efkâr-ı umûmiyye*-olgununun giderek önem kazanması ve ajansların içeride servis ettiği haberlerin de “muzır” olması sebebiyle hemen bunlara da sansür getirildi. Ajanslara Osmanlı Telgraf İdaresi vasıtasıyla alınmamış-sansürden geçmemiş- hiçbir telgrafın servis edilmemesi talimatı verildi. Ancak bunu tam olarak engellemek mümkün olmadı. Ajanslar kıraathane, bar ve muhtelif gibi kamuya açık eğlence mekânlarında bültenleri servis etmekten geri durmadı.

Osmanlı Devleti ajansları kontrol etmenin bir yolunun da onları korkutmak ve gözdağı vermektan geçtiğini düşündü. “Muhabirlerin ve Kaynaklarını Kovalama: Soruşturma ve Tehditler” ara başlığı bu meseleyi anlatıyor. Osmanlı Devleti'ne büyük rahatsızlık veren haberler servis edildiğinde ajansların İstanbul'daki muhabirleri Hariciye Nezareti'ne veya Avrupa başkentlerindeki temsilcileri Osmanlı sefaretlerine çağrılarak sorgulandı; haberlerinin kaynağı soruldu. Ancak neredeyse tamamında ajanslar gerek basın özgürlüğünü gerekse farklı argümanlarla bu baskılardan kurtulmaya çalıştılar. Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in sağlığıyla ilgili çıkan haberler ise Osmanlı diplomatlarını en fazla uğraştıran haberler oldu.

Osmanlı Devleti muhabirlerin ve kaynaklarının peşinde koşarken çoğu kez onları “sınır dışı” etmekle tehdit etmiştir. Ajans temsilcileri ve muhabirleri ikaz edilirken genelde “Muzır neşriyatın tekerrüründe sınır dışı edileceği” bildirilmiştir. Bazı sınır dışı kararlarının alındığı da olmuştur. Ancak bu konuda Osmanlı yönetici sınıfı arasında görüş ayrılıkları yaşanmıştır. Hariciye Nezareti bu konuda daha liberal bir duruş sergileyerek sınır dışı kararlarına karşı çıkmıştır. Hariciye Nezareti sınır dışı etmenin gerçek anlamda bir işe yaramayacağını; bu yönde karar almak için o

haberlerin ajanslar tarafından yazıldığıının ispat edilmesi gerektiğini; aksi durumda yabancı sefaretlerin devreye girerek şikayette bulunacaklarını vurgulamıştır. Nezaret ayrıca muhabirler sınır dışı edilse bile “muzır” haberlerin sona ermeyeceğini; aksine bu tür haberlerin giderek artacağı yönünde görüş bildirmiştir.⁹¹⁰ Bu tez kapsamında yapılan araştırmalarda sadece I. Dünya Savaşı esnasında üzerinde Osmanlı Devleti’nin askeri bilgileri bulunan bir muhabir sınır dışı edilmiştir. Osmanlı Telgraf İdaresi memurlarına rüşvet teklif ederek telgrafların içeriğini öğrenmeye çalışan Havas elemanı ise Sofya’da Bulgar mahkemesi tarafından hapse atılmış; kefaretle de serbest bırakılmıştır.

Osmanlı Devleti’nin olumsuz haberler karşısında elindeki diğer araç ise aboneliğin ve doğrudan yardımların kesilmesidir. Bu da büyük ölçüde tehdit olarak kalmış; ancak zaman zaman aboneliğin kesilmesi, ücretsiz telgraf imtiyazının sonlandırılması ve ajans muhabirlerine ödenen maaşların kesildiği olmuştur. Osmanlı hükümetinden doğrudan yardım alan muhabirler ise genelde Reuter ve Havas dışındaki nispeten daha küçük çaptaki Avrupa haber ajansları olmuştur.

Yedinci Bölüm ise “Haberler için Savaş: Ajansların ve İmparatorlukların Rekabeti” başlığını taşıyor. Uluslararası haber ajansları 19. Yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren kendi aralarında işbirliği anlaşmaları yapmış ve dünyayı kendi imparatorluklarının nüfuz alanına göre paylaşmıştır. Dünyanın bir çok noktası Reuter ve Havas arasında paylaşılırken Wolff da bazı bölgeleri almıştır. Anlaşmalarda “Türkiye” olarak geçen Osmanlı Devleti de bu anlaşmalara konu olmuştur. Bunların en kapsamlı 20 Mayıs 1876 tarihli anlaşmadır. Buna göre Türkiye, ekonomik ve siyasi haberler için Havas’a bırakılırken Reuter çok yüksek siyasi göz önüne alarak gerektiğinde İstanbul’da muhabir bulundurma hakkını elde etmiştir.⁹¹¹ Ancak 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı sebebiyle İstanbul’a gelen Reuter temsilcisi Sigismund Engländer bu anlaşmaya çeşitli argümanlar öne sürerek uymamıştır. Engländer sıradan bir temsilci değil, Reuter’in kurucusundan sonra en önemli kişiydi. Sosyal

⁹¹⁰ BOA, A. }MTZ.(04)., 38/47, 24 R 1314/2 October 1896.

... nezd-i âlî’-i âsafânelerinde dahi mustağni’-i tarif olduğu üzere memâlik-i şahanede ve hükümet-i seniyye aleyhinde neşriyât-ı muzır ve kâzibe bulunan bu gibi muhbirlerin tart ve teb’idlerine saltanat-ı seniyyece hakk u salahiyet derkâr ise de bunlar hakkında bu yolda mu’âmele icrası sebeb-i teb’idleri olacak âsârın kendi tarafından tertib ve tahrir olunduğunun maddeten subutuna ta’lîki icâb-ı maslahattan olup aks-i hal ise birçok şikâyet ve sadâ’ı müstelzim olacağına ve bu suretle dahi teb’id olunacakların gidecekleri yerlerde burada mütecâsir-i tahriri oldukları şeylerden kat kat ziyade neşriyât-ı bed-hâhâne ve muzırraya ibtidâr edecekleri bedihî bulunmasına nazaran...

⁹¹¹ R.A. 1/8818001.

ilişkilerdeki başarısı sayesinde İstanbul'da diplomatik çevrelere kısa sürede kendini kanıtlamış; önemli haber kaynaklarına sahip olmuştur. İngiltere bir adım daha ileri giderek İstanbul'da haber servisine de başlamıştır. Havas'ın ısrarlı ikazlarına rağmen bu durum devam edince Fransız ajansı Tahkim'e başvurmuş ve davayı kazanmıştır. Ancak buna rağmen İngiltere İstanbul'da çalışmaya devam etmiştir.

Uluslararası haber ajanslarının muhabirleri İstanbul'da da telgrafları hızlı almak ve hızlı servis etmek için yoğun bir rekabete girmiştir. Çünkü aboneler için bilgiye daha erken ulaşmak en önemli noktaydı. Özellikle ekonomi haberlerinden erken haberdar olmak büyük bir avantajdı. Bundan dolayı ajansların zaman zaman Osmanlı Telgraf İdaresi'ni suçladığı ve rakiplerine öncelik vermekle itham ettikleri görülür.

Değişen siyasi koşullar ve uluslararası güç dengeleri ajanslar arasındaki rekabet ve işbirliğini de etkilemiştir. Reuter 1880'lerin sonunda Alman Wolff ile işbirliğine giderek Havas'ı İstanbul'daki etkisini kırmaya girişmiştir. Yoğun istişarelerin ardından 1889 sonunda bu anlamda "Agence de Constantinople" kurulmuştur. Ajansın İstanbul'daki temsilcisi Grosser vefat edince yerine geçen eşi Anna Rile anılarında bu ajansın Osmanlı Devleti'ndeki Fransız etkisini kırmak için olduğunu açıkça anlatır.

Ajansların kendi imparatorlukları için siyasi rollerine gelince bu esasında bir çok çalışmada detaylıca anlatılmıştır. Reuters "İngiliz İmparatorluğu'nun Ajansı" olarak bir emperyal araç olarak tanımlanmıştır. Fransız Havas ve Alman Wolff de bu bağlamda değerlendirilir. Bunları günümüzdeki resmi haber ajansları olarak değerlendirmemek gerekir; ancak ülkeleriyle aralarında ciddi ilişki ve işbirliğinin olduğunu da söylemeli. Bu durum Osmanlı örneğinde de açıkça görülmektedir. Reuter'in İstanbul temsilcisi İngiltere'nin İstanbul Sefiri Layard'a yazdığı mektuplar buna çok yerinde bir örnektir. İngiltere Osmanlı bürokrasisinden ve yabancı sefaretlerden aldığı haberleri hemen Layard'a bildirmiş; İngiliz Sefir de buna karşılık İngiltere'nin kaynaklarına maaş ödemiştir. Bu yazışmalar mevcut literatüre ciddi katkı yapmaya adaydır. Reuter temsilcisi İngiltere adate İngiliz Sefir'in casusu gibi çalışmıştır. Osmanlı bürokrasisine o kadar hakim olmuştur ki iki üç kişinin bildiği gizli layihalara bile para karşılığı ulaşabilmiştir.

Havas ile Fransa arasındaki ilişki de bundan geri değildir. Çok fazla örnek olmasa da Havas'ın İstanbul'da Fransa'nın menfaatine çalıştığı açıkça görülmektedir. Reuter ile Wolff Havas'ın İstanbul'daki etkisini kırmak için 1889'da Havas'a "Agence de Constantinople"u kurunca İstanbul'daki Fransa Sefir telaşla durumu Paris'e bildirmiş; Fransız Dışişleri Bakanlığı bizzat devreye girerek Havas'a İstanbul'dan ayrılmamasını ve faaliyetlerini sürdürmesini istemiştir.

Sonuca gelince, uluslararası haber ajansları emperyal güçlerin bir aracıdır. İstanbul'daki faaliyetlerini de Osmanlı Devleti'ne siyasi ve ekonomik anlamda nüfuz kurma teşebbüsü olarak görmelidir. Bu yayılcı politika karşısında ise Osmanlı Devleti gayet aktif bir siyaset izlemiş; kesinlikle bir obje değil özne olmuştur. Uygulamaların ise işe yaradığını ve başarılı olduğunu söylemek ise mümkün değildir. Osmanlı Devleti'nin ajansları idare etme süreci daha çok zararın büyümesine engel olmak ve kontrol altına çalışmak şeklinde cereyan etmiştir.

Bununla birlikte Osmanlı Devleti'nin ajansları idare etme araçları tarihsel bağlamı içinde değerlendirilmelidir. Bu konudaki tartışmalar Osmanlı Devleti'nin ne kadar sansür ve baskı uyguladığı üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır. Oysa aynı dönemde başta Avrupa olmak üzere farklı bölgelere bakıldığında bunun modern bir siyasetin parçası olduğu görülür. Ajansları idare süreci de modern bir siyaset olarak değerlendirilmelidir. Osmanlı Devleti'nin bu konudaki siyaseti sadece yasaklamak üzerine değil; Avrupa'nın araçlarıyla karşı cevap vermeyi de içermektedir. Bu anlamda politikalar sadece yazdırmamayı değil; nelerin nasıl yazılması gerektiğini de içermektedir.

APPENDIX E

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Yanatma

Adı : Servet

Bölümü : Tarih

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : The International News Agencies in the Ottoman Empire (1854-1908)

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: