

## **Mehmet Dervish Kilinchkaya**

Prof. Dr., Hacettepe University, Institute of Turkish Republic History named after Atatürk,  
Turkey, Ankara, e-mail: mdervis@hacettepe.edu.tr

### **RELATIONS BETWEEN MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATURK AND UNIONISTS (during the armistice period 1918-1921)**

Turkish historiography, studies and works which evaluate the period of National Struggle is usually tend to be shaped by the Speech by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. As it is clear from the information given up to this point, following the military coup of 1913, the Committee of Union and Progress had formed a serious political and social domination (or reign) over the society and started to take some precautions in order to prevent the dissolution of the state. As a whole, the power and the prevalence of the Committee of Union and Progress are based on this foundation of organization.

We should also look at another issue which is the characteristic of the relationship between Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Committee of Union and Progress. At this point, we should go back a little and try to understand the role and place of Mustafa Kemal Pasha within all these developments since the aforementioned balance of power, he had become the key factor. Yet, it is also clear that those who sympathize with the Committee and realized the importance of being a 'citizen' via this organization have gathered around Mustafa Kemal Pasha did this not just out of desperation but rather a necessary expression of their patriotism and public spirit.

**Key words:** Turkish historiography, National Struggle, the Committee of Union, citizen, patriotism.

Мехмет Дервиш Клычкая  
Хажетепе университеті, Туркия, Анкара қ.,  
e-mail: mdervis@hacettepe.edu.tr

### **Мұстафа Кемал Ататүрк пен Унионист арасындағы байланыстар (1918-1921 жж. армиялық кезеңде)**

Ұлттық күрес кезеңін бағалайтын түрік тарихнамасы, зерттеулер мен басқа да жұмыстар, әдетте Мұстафа Кемал Ататүрктің Сөзі негізінде құралады. Осы кезеңге дейін берілген мәліметтер бойынша, 1913 жылғы әскери төңкерістен кейін Одақ және Даму Комитеті қоғамда қатаң саяси және әлеуметтік үстемдік орнатып, мемлекетті құлдыраудан сақтау мақсатында бірқатар шаралар жасай бастады. Одақ және Даму Комитетінің билігі мен басымдылығы осы фундаменталды ұйымға негізделеді.

Сонымен қатар, Мұстафа Кемал Паша мен Одақ және Даму Комитеті арасындағы өзара қарым-қатынастың өзіндік ерекшелігі болып табылатын мәселені талдау да маңызды болып табылады. Жоғарыда аталған тең күштердегі оқиғалардан бастап, мұндағы негізгі фактор болғандықтан, Мұстафа Кемал-паша тұлғасының рөлі мен маңызын ұғынуымыз керек. Комитетке оң көзқарас білдіріп, осы ұйым арқылы «азаматтың» маңызын түсінгендер Мұстафа Кемал-пашаның маңына топтасты және мұны түңілгендіктен емес, патриотизм мен қоғамдық ойды білдіру қажеттілігінен бұл әрекетке барды.

**Түйін сөздер:** Түрік тарихнамасы, Ұлттық күрес, Одақ Комитеті, азамат, патриотизм.

Мехмет Дервиш Клынкчая

Хажетепинский университет, Турция, г. Анкара,  
e-mail: mdervis@hacettepe.edu.tr

### **Взаимоотношения между Мустафа Кемалом Ататюрком и Унионистами (во время армийского периода 1918-1921 гг.)**

Турецкая историография, исследования и работы, которые оценивают период национальной борьбы, обычно имеют тенденцию формироваться Речью Мустафы Кемала Ататюрка. Как видно из информации, предоставленной до этого момента, после военного переворота 1913 года Комитет Союза и Прогресса сформировал серьезное политическое и социальное господство (или царствование) над обществом и начал принимать некоторые меры предосторожности для того, чтобы предотвратить роспуск государства. В целом, власть и преобладание Комитета Союза и Прогресса основываются на этой фундаментальной организации. Также важен для рассмотрения вопрос, который является характерной чертой взаимоотношений между Мустафой Кемалом Пашей и Комитетом Союза и Прогресса. С того момента во всех этих событиях вышеупомянутого баланса сил мы должны понять роль и значимость Мустафы Кемаль-паши, так как он являлся ключевым фактором. Те, которые благожелательно относились к Комитету и понимали важность «гражданина» через эту организацию, собрались вокруг Мустафы Кемаль-паши, и сделали они это не просто из отчаяния, а скорее всего, из необходимости выражение их патриотизма и общественного настроения.

**Ключевые слова:** турецкая историография, Национальная борьба, Комитет Союза, гражданин, патриотизм.

#### **Introduction**

In contemporary Turkish historiography, studies and works which evaluate the period of National Struggle is usually tend to be shaped by the Speech by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in which he narrates the events from the perspective of someone who actually took part in them. This immensely important work, which was written by the founder of a new nation in a particular time period when the archives and personal memoirs were not available and those who played some crucial roles have adopted different political roles, could be taken as an example of 'eclectic' writing since it also set out the basic ideological principles of the new nation. As a result of this special characteristic, the historians have used the Speech to explain the early years of the Republic.

As a result of this selective method of writing, the Speech does not give enough space to certain developments and events that took place before May 19, 1919. Without a doubt, the Speech is not a history book and therefore a through coverage of the period of National Struggle should not be expected.

For instance, one of such question is the 'Problem of Unionism', that is the relations with the Committee of Union and Progress during the initial stages of National Struggle (process of congresses) and later stages.

The Committee of Union and Progress<sup>1</sup> is the most important political organization in terms of both for the process of modernization and political socialization of Turkish nation.

Without a doubt, this conclusion is open to debate in many ways. For instance, some serious objections could be made against assumptions such as CHP (People's Republican Party) being the political organization which founded Turkish Republic or describing DP (Democrat Party) being the political party which helped masses to become aware of their own strength. Yet, when their-political parties and even all those civil and semi-civil organizations-working methods and activities are taken into consideration, this particular claim could easily be turned into a fact supported by reliable evidence. The 'style' of our political tradition still has the traces of 'unionist' approach. But, the historical importance of the Committee of Union and Progress is more than this particular characteristic. In order to understand the problem of relations between the army and politics, ruling party and the opposition and taking a stance against Western politics, it would be helpful to add 'unionist' tradition to the list of indirect factors which affected the '20<sup>th</sup> century Middle East politics. This paper attempts to understand and explain the notion of 'unionism' within the framework of related events and to show how it relates to Turkey today.

One of the points we should remember is that almost all the important names of the Association of The Defence The National Rights of Anatolia and Rumeli and People's Republican Party which was built on its foundation were coming from the Committee of Union and Progress<sup>2</sup>.

Among the elite of Republican period, there are very few names who represent *Entente and Liberal*

*Party* or other political tendencies during the era of constitutional monarchy. In addition, for instance, until the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were not any legal political parties which could be described as ‘**centralist** and elite’ and placed themselves as the anti-thesis of Unionist approach by sounding their support for ‘Autonomous Government and Private Enterprise’ as a part of ‘on the spot governing’.

Another point is the fact that, contrary to common argument, the ‘elitist-centralist’ tendency in modern Turkish political tradition had started to grow stronger during the period of Sultan Mahmut the Second and that the traditional Ottoman administration-before the Administrative Period- did not have an extreme kind of centralist structure<sup>3</sup>. In a strange twist of life, the ‘intellectuals of modernization’ who had put an end to Ottoman dynasty have also adopted centralized government which put into motion with Sultan Mahmut the Second. It could be said that the elite of the Republic, without a doubt, have taken over this particular characteristic of the Ottoman legacy. Therefore, an analysis of the role and influence of the Committee of Union and Progress, even though its physical existence was erased from nation’s political life with 1926 trials, is still looks like a promising subject.

One of the main objectives of this study is to examine and determine how successful the Committee of Union and Progress, which repealed itself and was preparing for some new and major structural renovations, and its followers following the Armistice of Mudros. This period has been analysed by the historians from different perspectives. One of the main assumptions of this study is that a ‘leader cadre’ had undertaken the prospect of creating a ‘new Turkish nation’. It would not be far-fetched to claim that this approach, put forward by Feroz Ahmad and E.J. Zürcher<sup>4</sup>, did not receive enough attention from Turkish historians.

It is a common practice among historians to say that studying history is just not piling up praises and/or criticisms but it is difficult to say that they practice what they preach. For someone whose profession is history, past is past and each coming generation live in a world of values generated by the previous generation and try to create ‘something new’ based on those values. When this fact is overlooked, there would be serious break-up in this world of values and ‘opportunism’ would be the dominant value.

This ‘opportunism’ would be, when it is evaluated within the frame of political culture, more distinctive. For instance, the end of ‘single party system’ in Turkey in May 14, 1950 would be a striking election. In Turkish history writing,

researchers and writers of *Turkish Revolution* or the *History of Turkish Republic* tend to look at the period of 1950 and 1960 as non-existent or evaluate the revolution of May 27 in a favorable way. This kind approach just cannot be explained with their academic preoccupations since this representation of a ‘new era’ as a ‘victory won against the evil’ is something of a tradition since 1909 created by the political authorities. This kind of approach is understandable from the point of a ‘search for legitimacy’ but a permanent state of dispute with the past may cause a serious abrasion of the value system.

### **The Political Atmosphere During the Armistice**

In October 1918, when the outcome of the war was seemed inevitable, it was natural for the military and political staff who was running the war to take some necessary precautions for the period that would come after the war. Accordingly, the first step was to form a ‘transitional government’. According to Ahmetl Reşit (Rey), when Talat Pasha presented his resignation to the Sultan, he had presented a list for the next cabinet as well. When the Sultan tried to sound his objection, he was eventually convinced as a result of a one-to-one discussion and he afterwards announced his decision which would bring Ahmet İzzet Pasha to the Grand Vizier<sup>5</sup>. The Sultan had no choice but accept that imposition since he was believing that the capital Istanbul was still under ther control of the Committee and his uneasiness continued throughout his reign<sup>6</sup>.

It might be said that after the formation of new government, Talat Pasha and other leaders have begun to prepare the Committee for the new period. Now, in Ottoman political life, it was the time for new players to come up to the stage.

The fate of the Committee, whose reign and existence was formally<sup>7</sup> maintained with temporary by laws during the war, was closely connected with the outcome of the war. Before the end of the world, the domestic politics were heating up too. The General Congress scheduled for September 1918 was postponed due to the absence of Talat Pasha who was abroad and could not realized on time. Members of the Committee, with the realization that the war was lost, were aware of the fact that they have had reached a crossroad. Some of them were in favor of getting united against common enemy and others wished to follow a new path for salvation. Those two different paths have finally agreed to unite and it was decided that there will be

an emergency congress on November 1, 1918, just before noon. A total of 120 delegates that consisted of landed proprietors, MPs and well-known ex-Committee members have started to work<sup>8</sup>. Talat Pasha opened the proceedings for this last-ever meeting of the Committee with a talk and did not attend other sessions. The Committee has resolved itself and its legal existence became void.

At the end of this congress, there were now two political parties: The Renovation Party under the leadership of Şemseddin (Günaltay) Bey and Liberalist Ottoman Republic Party under the leadership of Ali Fethi (Okyar) Bey. Yet, those two parties did not last long<sup>9</sup>. On the same day, the key names in the Union and Progress government, Talat, Enver and Cemal Pashas, have fled the country.

The majority in the Assembly was in the favor of the Committee but this majority has never shaped itself into a disciplined political party and also divided into two separate political parties. The Ahmet İzzet Paşa cabinet which was formed in mid-October has been pushed away due to their neglect in fleeing of Enver, Talat and Cemal pashas who have been accused of drawing the nation into war. This development has also set forth the political intentions of the last ever Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmet Vahideddin the Fourth.

The Sultan was considering empire's entrance to the war as a 'crime' and putting the blame on the Committee of Union and Progress who had grabbed the control by staging a coup d'état. He wanted to punish those responsible and impress the intent states, especially Britain, who were discussing the terms of an armistice.

Thus, he took necessary steps towards this aim firstly by removing Ahmet İzzet Pasha government and bringing his in-law Tevfik Pasha<sup>10</sup> and increasing his influence in the Assembly. This was not just a coincidence since the legendary figure of the committee, from the days when it was still an underground organization, Ahmet Rıza Bey was also appointed to the presidency of the National Assembly in October. Since Ahmet Bey's relationship with the Committee was rather shaky after the proclamation of Second Constitutional Era this move was significant for showing the real intention of the Sultan and his determination to obtain power in his hands completely.

The Sultan put his plan into motion by sending a message to Grand Vizier Ahmed İzzet Paşa via Abdurrahman Şeref Bey, the Minister of Estates in Mortmain stating that the Committee oriented ministers in the cabinet should resign. Those minister

whom the Sultan did not want were Hayri effendi, Cavit and Fethi beys. But Hayri effendi had entered the cabinet upon insistence despite his illness. Cavit Bey was in the cabinet for both insistence and upon the wish of Sultan himself thus their resignation was just a matter of a signal from the top. İzzet Pasha told about the situation to Abdurrahman Şeref Bey and informed him that he would 'assign' others in their places in a few days. He also stated that it was suitable for Fethi Bey to stay since he was the president of Liberalist Ottoman People Party. On November 6, Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi was called to the Palace (Mabeyn) and upon his return he announced that the Palace «has been subjected to some vicious attacks by the journalists and it was also received a huge number of signed and unsigned letters of complaint and accusations about some members of the Committee». He was asked to come up with a solution to this problem until the following day. He also stated that he found the Sultan as threatening and imperious. Nevertheless, he was sharing the idea that Hayri Efendi, Cavit and Fethi Beys should be changed<sup>11</sup>. The Sultan had found the opposition of Grand Vizier on this matter sound at the beginning. But, two days later, it was found that the Sultan was not thinking like that at all.

On November 8, after seeing the Sultan, Rıza Bey paid a visit to the Grand Vizier Ahmet İzzet Pasha and passed the Sultan's views to him. Ahmet İzzet Pasha stated that 'two honorable members have already been changed but it was impossible to change Fethi bey and this matter was agreed upon'. Upon hearing this, Ahmet Rıza Bey explained in a tough manner that Fethi bey could not last even for a minute and there were others who should be excluded as well. The Grand Vizier got really angry and told Ali Rıza Bey that «*he understood his aim very well and although he was a well known man for his services to the nation this kind of attitude would erase his all good past deeds and one day he would be accounted for this particular action.*» His addressee changed his manner at once and stated that «*he was nothing but an intermediate, he was not a bad person, he was trying to smooth things over and firmly believing that in case of his resignation the Sultan would appoint him again to form the new government*» and left afterwards<sup>12</sup>.

On the same day, late at night, Ahmet Rıza Bey-probably after discussing the matter with the Palace- visited the Grand Vizier and passed him the news that the Sultan was insistent on discharging Vükela *Heyeti*. After seeing Ahmet Rıza Bey at the Assembly and later discussing the situation



with Rauf and Fethi Beys, İzzet Pasha reached the conclusion that Riza Bey was the responsible party who pushed the Sultan to act on this issue. Ali Riza Bey, although has been informed that under basic Ottoman law he had no authority to change the ministers, continued to act otherwise<sup>13</sup>.

Two days later, the Sultan, via Ahmet Riza Bey, had announced that Fethi Bey and even some others had to go since he did not want to be the last Sultan of the Ottoman dynasty and therefore did not wish to see anyone from the Committee in the cabinet.

Upon this directive, the cabinet has gathered and decided to resign. In their letter of resignation, they pointed out the fact that to limit the responsibilities of a Grand Vizier was not compatible with the basic Ottoman laws<sup>14</sup>. The Sultan's reply was very fierce<sup>15</sup>.

One the important point is that well known disagreement between the HİF and İTC/F. As it is known, as a result of the coup by the Committee of Union and Progress in 1913, all the activities of the opposition party were banned and all the important names of the party were sent to exile and a single party administration was established<sup>16</sup>.

Entente and Liberal Party was formed again in Istanbul at the end of 1918 under the wish of Sultan Vahideddin and the efforts of Damad /the Groom) Ferid Pasha. Sultan Abdulhamid's chief chamberlain Nuri Pasha was appointed as its chairperson. Ali Kemal Bey became its Secretary. Sultan has been informed that the Party had become active. Even though it was not in official protocol rules, the Sultan has admitted the members of the General Assembly, the Secretary and the chairperson of the Party. Sultan was trying to build up a retaining wall for the things he was planning to do in the future. He had put his trust in this party since his days as a prince and always felt sympathetic towards it. He liked the way its members behaved and acted. He embraced this political entity with both hands. The spiritual leaders and other members of the party closely felt his support; it was a mutual relation<sup>17</sup>. Yet, the Freedom and Accord Party was in a state of non-entity. It began to fill up its organization and branches after the signing of armistice.

When we put all these things together, it is easily seen that the Palace was looking for an opportunity and was not that keen on the institutions and rules of the constitutional monarchy and looking for the *absolute* power<sup>18</sup>.

We should also look at the other side of the coin.

The structure of the Committee of Union and Progress could give us some important clues as regards to how authority has been used.

### **Union and Progress: Is it a Society or a Party?**

After the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the Committee of Union and Progress has faced a very serious dilemma: was it to continue its activities as a society or to turning into a political party by changing completely? The roots of this indecisiveness went quite deep.

To start with, the society had a past as a savior. Its clubs have been spread all over the country and have merged with the masses. It was a base-like structure, it was consistent and dynamic.

The Party was consisted of people elected under the pressure from societies propaganda. MPs, at the end, were the members of the Society and the Party was perceived as an organ of the Society. Yet, this group of parliament was temporary and subject to change. There were constant break-ups among its ranks and transfers between the parties were affecting the situation in the Parliament constantly.

In a way, the Society was 'senior' or 'the chief' and the Party was 'junior' or 'underling'. This situation had created an interesting contradiction. Problems were to be solved within the Society which was outside the Parliament and this was clear from the congresses of the Committee of Union and Progress. Those were not the Party's but Society's organizations.

This situation is clearly evident in the congress of 1909.

In this congress, it was announced that the Society and the Party were separate entities.

- They both were going to have separate internal code of practices or directories.

- The Party was accepted as the group of Society in the parliament.

- It was going to have a separate local clubhouse

- Its work schedule was prepared with an internal code of practices which had 17 articles.

- It had a board of ten members and a political programme.

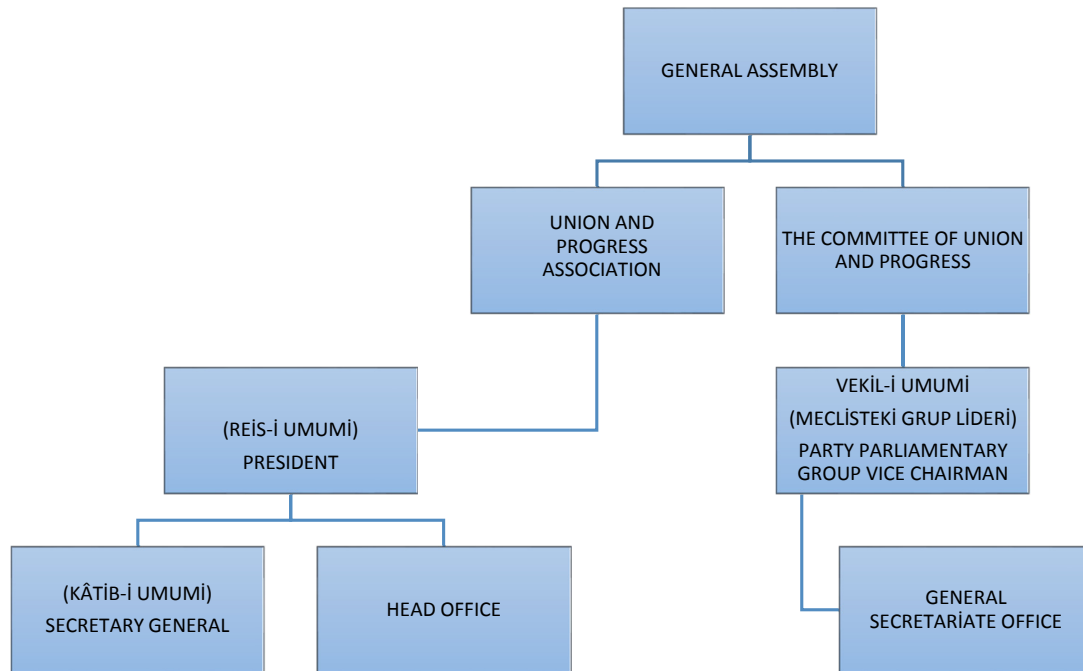
The society was different than the Party:

- It had its own regulations and a code of practices

- The club is the main unit of the Society which would function in the areas of social, cultural and cooperation

- It was no longer mandatory to be registered in order to visit or work in those clubs.

- The clubs were to be set up in districts and towns. They were under the authority and control of the Local Committee Center and those, in turn, were connected to General Center Committee



- The utmost administrative unit was General Center Committee.

-The most important executive organ of the Society was the General Committee and it elects the General Center Committee.

- The connection between the Society and the Party would be provided by this board elected by the General Committee.

Comparatively, the structure of the organization after the congress in 1913 is a more integrated unit. It was schematically composed as follows:

The ordinary members of the General Assembly are as follows:

Those who come from the Society: Chair Person, Secretary General, Members of the Headquarter

Those who come from the Party: General Delegate, Members of the Central Committee

The second level of the organization from the top is the **Centres of Local Delegations**. Those delegations:

- were to set up by an Authorised Secretary in every district. They were elected by the district congresses.

- The connection between the headquarter and the centres of delegations has been provided by deputies

- There was an appendage organization for every district. There was a «representative» for every town. In every big town there were intelligencers for each and every neighbourhood.

- There was a first intelligencer who coordinated all other intelligencers.

When the fact that the Committee of Union and Progress, especially after 1913, had been organized itself according to that specific model mentioned above, we could have a realistic idea of its extent of prevalence.

The Society, in order to become the real authority, had also tried to influence and control the masses. In order to achieve this aim, a model which would cover all parts of the society had been developed. The Law of Communities had been developed for controlling those activities. The subsidiary organs which have been set up towards this aim are as follows:

A. Those with Cultural Qualities

1. Turkish Associations
2. Communities of Information for the Villages
3. Association of Ottoman Education
4. Association of National Education
5. Association of Towards The People

B. Associations for Artisans and Craftsman

1. Association of Hamals (carriers)
2. Association of Artisans
3. Association of Tinsmiths
4. Association of Ottoman Printers
5. Association for the Defence of Women's Rights
6. İslamic Association to The Employment of Women

Likewise, the administration of some already existing associations have been taken in order to increase their influence and efficiency within the society. Those associations under the control of the Committee of Union and Progress were

- The Red Crescent Association
- The Association of the Navy
- The Muslim Association of Baku

In order to fully understand the Committee of Union and Progress' social effectiveness, one more point should be remembered as well. When the condition in which the country was in during that particular period, it could be said that there were distinctive organizations that all shared different responsibilities.

- Special Organization
- The Association of National Defence
- The Association of Turkish Power
- The Association of Ottoman Power,
- The League of Youth

We have to give a little bit more attention to some of those structures as related to our main topic of interest. The Committee of Union and Progress was representing the survival instinct of a society which was disintegrating rapidly. Therefore, there have been some attempts via various paramilitary groups which have been created after the coup of 1913. Among the organizations and institutions listed above the Special Organization is, without a doubt, the most important one.

### **The Special Organization<sup>19</sup>**

The idea behind its formation belongs to Enver Pasha. At this point, it would be useful to remind the reader that this organization was both undertaking various operations and making propaganda and this paper would not go into its details except from the following excerpt: «*in order to increase the importance of our government in Europe, to increase the political importance of our government in Europe and failed to general plans were to be destructed of this agreements and the plans set before the World War, and so that under the order of your high Ministry, (meant The Ministry of Defense), The Department of Eastern Affairs was formed...*»<sup>20</sup>. Since the beginning of its formation, this organization was under the control of the Committee of Union and Progress. Likewise, the organization had used many names from the circles of literature, bureaucracy and university<sup>21</sup>. It would be helpful to remember the names of some well-known figures in the Special Organization. Their work during the years of the War of Independence

is important as to its relation to the problem we are dealing with in this paper.

The Special Organization was primarily consisted of four divisions

1. The Thrace Division (chief Arif Bey)
2. The Caucasus Division (chief Captain Rıza Bey)
3. Africa and Tripoli division (chiefs Hüseyin Tosun and Ali Başhamba Beys)
4. Eastern Region (centered around the city of Erzurum, chief Bahaeddin Şakir Bey)<sup>22</sup>

The organization, apart from having a widespread departmental and divisional structure as shown above, also had a serious press support as well. It was almost without a rival until the few months before the end of the war mostly due to a heavy censorship that was imposed during the war. There is one more point to be mentioned at this point. Although there is no sufficient and detailed data concerning the work of The Committee of Union and Progress' propaganda efforts and its results there are certain signs indicate that some of the activities carried by anti-entente groups have created a certain disturbance especially among the British forces<sup>23</sup>. When we looked at the nation-wide organization after 1918, it would be easy to guess that the Special Organization had gathered its forces in Trabzon and Erzurum.

The Society of Turkish Power was one of the powers which supported the efficiency of The Committee of Union and Progress nation-wide. It was a youth oriented formation<sup>24</sup> and founded in June 1913. This society had shown a tremendous progress and development within a year by opening branches in 26 centres including Edirne, Tekfur Dağı (Tekirdağ), Bursa, Kütahya, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Konya Ankara, Samsun Erzurum, Antep, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Urfa, and Adana<sup>25</sup>. Although these centres with strong back-ups coincided with those centers in which the Committee of Union and Progress was more powerful, it is not easy to call it just a mere coincide.

On the other hand, we also should mention another paramilitary youth association which was founded as the *Ottoman Power Association*<sup>26</sup> but later left its place to *Youth Associations*<sup>27</sup>. When they first formed, they were mandatory in state controlled schools and optional in private schools, and their aim was 'to prepare the young member of the country for defending the nation both physically and morally and preserve his patriotism until the end of his life.' As a matter of fact, we could talk about an effort, under the stern war conditions of 1916, and anxiousness to create an auxiliary power.

The Youth Associations were formed in order to serve this particular purpose.. Yet, it should be remembered that the number of branches of those Youth Associations reached to 706 in 44 cities<sup>28</sup>.

As it is clear from the information given up to this point, following the military coup of 1913, the Committee of Union and Progress had formed a serious political and social domination (or reign) over the society and started to take some precautions in order to prevent the dissolution of the state. As a whole, the power and the prevalence of the Committee of Union and Progress are based on this foundation of organization.

On this point, we should also look at another issue which is the characteristic of the relationship between Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Committee of Union and Progress.

As it is widely known, Mustafa Kemal Pasha had grown up within the circle of late-period of young Ottoman officers and this means that he was acquainted with the libertarian ideas from almost the very beginning of his military career. His acceptance to the Committee of Union and Progress had occurred in that particular period<sup>29</sup>.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha was always an influential member in the Committee but he never worked with its leaders. Yet, it was claimed that he was close to Cemal Pasha who was a member of the trio who actually held the power after the coup of 1913. In one way or other, Mustafa Kemal Pasha who, as a military commander who became a well-known name especially after the Battle of Dardanelles, was considered as a «trustable and dependent» officer with no particularly strong political ambitions by the Committee of Union and Progress with whom he had maintained a moderate relationship. During the «hunt for members of the Committee» after the armistice in Istanbul and Anatolia, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was among the «trustable and dependent» on the lists of both the Palace and the Organization<sup>30</sup>.

We also have to mention another development that emerged in the following days. On the meeting that took place on November 4, upon the proposition of Fuat Bey, the General Assembly had decided to open an inquisition to send the cabinets of Said Halim and Talat Pasha to *The Divân-ı Âli* (High Court). According to the Ottoman Constitution, the first investigation of the members of the Cabinet was referred to the Fifth Bureau of the Assembly<sup>31</sup>.

Matters and issues to be questioned were «untimely decision for entering a war, misinforming the General assembly on this matter, rejecting the peace offers from entente states and drawing the

*country into a war by taking sides with Germany, mismanaging the war, to run the country with directives contrary to the Constitution, providing misinformation on the current state of war, to apply censureship without any legal basis and to create an administrative crisis in the country»<sup>32</sup>.*

This decision which was taken by the Unionist majority at the General Assembly is important and interesting for showing the difference a party and a Committee. But, the really important point here is that the members of the Unionist cabinet were accused by the Unionist members of the Great Assembly. Although it could be evaluated as an effort to take the initiative back after the leaders of the Committee (Talat, Cemal, Enver, Bahaeddin and Şakir) escaped abroad and the self-dissolvement of the Committee. This situation had weakened the power of A. İzzet Pasha government and provided a much better opportunity to the Sultan to undertake those moves which we have mentioned above.

But, it should also be said that after Tevfik Pasha Cabinet came to the power and the emergence of a serious opposition against the Committee, the conditions for those members who have stayed in the country must have had the responsibility of the war more deeply than ever.

Another development showed that problem could not easily be solved by an inquest of the Assembly was the plea given by Ahmet Rıza Bey, the Speaker of the Senate, requesting that the inquiry should be carried out by legal authorities<sup>33</sup>.

Tevfik Pasha heard about the developments and plans which would throw out the government and after counselling with the Sultan, he unexpectedly read the decree of the Sultan on 23th of December which would close down the Assembly and its authority to control the government<sup>34</sup>.

After a short period of time, Tevfik Pasha left his post as Grand Vizier and the first cabinet by Ferit the Groom was established. This constitutes the zenith of the ongoing struggle between the Sultan and the Committee since it was now obvious that the Sultan was on the side with the Freedom and Union Party and running a revenge oriented policy against the Committee.

As it is, one of the first decisions taken by Ferit the Groom was to arrest some members of the Committee for involving with various rake offs and supporting the deportation of the Armenians and send them to highest military court by insisting on a certain punishment<sup>35</sup>. The policies of the cabinet run by Ferit the Groom was seen, at least at the beginning, in accordance with the groundwork which was laid by the previous Tevfik Pasha



government. Yet, a close inspection of the policies run by the Grand Vizier would show us that it is even more than just an effort to «save the country by putting all the blame on the Committee» but simply a «revenge campaign towards the Committee». Although, in time, it was seen that this first cabinet by Ferit the Groom was not an ELP cabinet<sup>36</sup> the evidence that showed it as a revenge movement is fairly strong<sup>37</sup>.

On the other hand, the English seemed afraid of a possible organization with anti-imperialist aims by the Revolutionary Association of Islamic Union<sup>38</sup>.

A significant increase in arrests started after March 1919, the sudden and unexpected execution of the mayor of Boğazlıyan, Kemall Bey and serious protests which were almost certainly organized by the Committee who was still a considerable force within the governmental circles were all pointing out to the fact that a severe struggle was going on in order to gain control of the power in a country with an uncertain future<sup>39</sup>. There was only one way to go for the members of the Committee: to remove Ferit the Groom from the power at once by organizing a plan which would target the sultan if it was necessary. It was now clear that the condition was ripe for an action.

At this point, we should go back a little and try to understand the role and place of Mustafa Kemal Pasha within all these developments since the aforementioned balance of power, he had become the key factor.

As it is known, Mustafa Kemal Pasha had attempted to become a member in a soon to be formed government after the armistice in Istanbul and upon his arrival there he also had taken some serious steps towards that end<sup>40</sup>. Although ultimately failed in his attempts, he nevertheless succeeded in maintaining a balanced relationship with the Sultan and the Palace<sup>41</sup>. We have more than enough documents concerning the relationship between Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Committee. But, for various reasons, his relationship with its leaders was far from perfect. Besides, due to his involvement with the hanging of Yakup Cemil during the war, he was not liked by Enver Pasha but still could not be ignored due to his outstanding success during the campaign in the Dardanelles.

On November 1918, when Mustafa Kemal Pasha arrived in Istanbul, almost all the obstacles that prevented his promotion within the army ranks seemed to have disappeared. What is more, his close affiliation with then heir apparent Vahidettin which was formed during a trip to Germany in the Summer of 1918, had helped him greatly when Vahidettin

took the power later on and he had become one of the high ranked and trustworthy officials<sup>42</sup>.

Ahmet İzzet Pasha's narration of an event which probably took place December 1918 gives us some clues. In his diaries, we see the following statement below:

*«A young man from the high levels of society whom I loved dearly brought a person who was one of the secret leaders of the Committee to my house two months later after my resignation from the post during that campaign of arrests carried out by the government. This man complained at some length about the government which was powerless and weary but in spite of that still trying to arrest innocent people. He also explained in length to me that all his comrades were willing to fight to save the country from that dire situation which they have created with their own mistakes. He also added that they have great trust and faith in me that they wanted me to become the president and intended to give me all their savings to be spent towards that goal...»<sup>43</sup>. A. İzzet Pasha had rejected this offer for a variety of reasons but that event in question provides us a good clue for the intention of the Committee.*

Mustafa Kemal Pasha's visit to prisoners who were held at Bekirağa Squadron and his ongoing relation with those who were known for their proximity to the Committee also helps us to evaluate the matter in a more detailed way.

As a matter of fact, right after his reaching to Anatolia, starting with Samsun, he came into contact with civil groups in every place during his long trip. Although it is not possible to identify all the people Mustafa Kemal Pasha had come into contact with we have enough information on this subject to form an opinion.

The first of these is the balance between the founders of the *Defending the National Rights of the Eastern Provinces Society's Branch of Erzurum*, and *Association Defence of National Rights of Trabzon*, both important organizations whom to regulate the Erzurum Congress, and the Unionists weight in this constitute<sup>44</sup>.

The second one is the political tendencies of the delegates of the Erzurum and Sivas Congresses and the developments that took place in those events<sup>45</sup>.

The third point is the political tendencies of the key Representatives of the member of Congresses<sup>46</sup>.

Finally, we should find an answer to the question of how the vitally important Congress of Sivas became a success.

Since the participation was low for the Congress of Sivas, it raised some suspicion as to its claim of being a representative meeting for the whole

nation<sup>47</sup>. Even Mustafa Kemal Pasha, as being the chairman of the Representative Committee, found the situation worrisome. But the wrist wrestling between the central government in İstanbul and the Representative Committee Congress of Sivas and the eventual resignation of Ferit the Groom's government as a result was a political success which was to become a turning point for the War of Independence.

Giving up the preparations for an organization of General Anatolian Congress in the following days also signifies the effect of this success. It could even be said that the reason behind the success of national forces was based on their control over the communication lines. At this point, we should also remind a little detail. Talat Pasha, one of the foremost names in 'progressive' movement had become Grand Vizier after serving as a minister both for Communication Department and the Ministry of Interior during the Second Constitutional era. The importance of communication department came up to surface during the reign of Ferit the Groom government but it had taken some time to realize its full potential.

Maybe the best evidence to show this connection is the organization which was set up to smuggle weapons into Anatolia. Many of the names among the devotees of the Special Organization mentioned above have taken duties in İstanbul organization of «*Karakol Djemiyeti*» and *Defence of National Rights*.

## Conclusion

The National Resistance is without a doubt constitutes one of the historical milestones that paved the way to new Turkish Republic. During the

process of changing powers between the legitimate but rapidly deteriorating government of İstanbul and the nationalist under the command of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Committee of Union and Progress had played an important role with its widespread representative abilities and cumulative political experience. All semi-civil social powers who have maintained open and strong relations with the Committee have sided with Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the reason behind this was not only his charisma as a leader but also the decision of the leaders of the Committee who made a choice in accordance with the latest situation and developments. In this choice, an element of imperativeness might be asserted. Yet, it is also clear that those who sympathize with the Committee and realized the importance of being a 'citizen' via this organization have gathered around Mustafa Kemal Pasha did this not just out of desperation but rather a necessary expression of their patriotism and public spirit. This kind of action is also in harmony with an ideology which the Committee was trying to make a dominant way of thinking in the country.

The activities at abroad by the leaders of the Committee and the preparations by some of their supporters in the country brought forward all the signs of a 'clash of powers'. It could be said that this tension between the 'Kemalists' and the 'Unionists' had pushed these two camps apart to the point of a final decision.

The clash of power between Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the ex-leaders of the Committee is another matter of discussion and his attitude on this matter became clear after the Battle of Sakarya:

«I cannot invite the people under Union and Progress' flag»<sup>48</sup>.

## Notes

1. The reason behind the choice of this term is that there has always been a 'committed' side of the Unionism which was not clearly apparent. Both the memoirs of various Unionists and the views of its opponents point towards this 'committed.' aspect of the Unionists. In order to reflect this dual structure we opted to use both 'Committee' and 'Party' interchangeably. When the term 'Party' is used, it is rather to describe the group and its open political activities of the Union and Progress Party. Yet, we have to emphasise one more fact: the members of the Union and Progress never accepted this during the trials that were held after the armistice. See.: Osman Selim Kocamanoglu, *İttihat-Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması (1918-1919)*, İstanbul-1998 and many others. From here after the acronym CUAP will be used for the term Comitee throughout the article UPC/P.

2. The founder of the modern Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, stresses on this point in 1923 as follows: «many of us used to be the members of that particular association... after its demise (that is November 2, 1918)... all of them went to join the Association of Defence The National Rights of Anatolian and Rumeli», See.: Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, Ed. :Nimet Arsan, C. III, Ankara-1989(4) s.85-86. Also : Taha Parla, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Kültürün Resmî Kaynakları*, Vol.II, İstanbul-1997(2), p. 126.

3. «The centralist approach of the Ottoman administration was different from our understanding of the term today. The core of the system was that it considered all the people within its administrative system as servant (kul)and the heaviness of the sanctions. In short, it was impossible to escape from the wrath of the center. But the often forgotten point is that in many cases there were no direct and detailed orders for the administrative staff and local authorities in some regions were given generous power» See: Şerif

Mardin, «Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e İktisadî Düşüncenin Gelişmesi 1838-1918», Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi, vol. 3, p. 618.

4. Feroz Ahmad, İttihatçılıktan Kemalizm'e, Translated by Fatmagül Bertay, İstanbul-1985 and Erik Jan Zürcher, Milli Mücadele'de İttihatçılık, trans. : Nüzhet Salıhoğlu, İstanbul-1987.

5. See.: Canlı Tarihler, Ahmet Reşit Rey (H. Nâzım), Gördüklerim Yaptıklarım (1890-1922), Vol. III İstanbul-1945, p. 264-265.

6. As an example for those who were close to the Sultan and stresses this on this point, see: A.R. Rey, ibid., p. 269.

7. What we are trying to explain here is that the «Kanun-u Muvakkat» (Provisional Law ) were issued without the consent of Mebusan Meclisi (Ottoman Assembly). Although it is in accordance with the law, it has always been a matter of discussion as regards to the functionality of the system and the tendency.

8. Celal Bayar, Ben de Yazdım, Vol. I, İstanbul-1965, p. 109 vd.

9. Further information on this last congress of CUAP and the follow-up party see: Tark Zafer Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, V. I, İstanbul-1984, p. 287 and others. See For Ottoman Libertarian People Party : T.Z. Tunaya, ibid., Vol. II, p.71 and others. Both parties have been closed down by the same government in May 1919.

10. The real reason of bad blood between the Sultan and Ahmet İzzet Paşa was his exclusion from the list of participants who would negotiate the terms of peace as the representatives of his nephew. Grand Vizier's approach was disappointing for the Sultan who thought that he could handle him without any trouble.

Ahmet İzzet Paşa , Feryadım, Ed.: Süheyl İzzet Furgaç-Yüksel Kanar , Vol. II, İstanbul-1993, p. 25. Karş. : M. Tayip Gökbilgin, Milli Mücadele Başlarken, Vol. I, Ankara-1959, p.7 and others.

11. A.İzzet Paşa, ibid., s.31.

12. A. İzzet Paşa, ibid., p.31-32.

13. A.İzzet Paşa, ibid., p. 33.

14. C. Bayar, ibid., Vol. IV , p. 202-203.

15. For the text of his resignation letter see: A. İzzet Paşa, a.g.e., pp. 293-294; for Sultan's reaction see: Ali Fuat Türk geldi, Görüp İştiklerim, Ankara-1987(2), p.160 and others.

16. T.Z. Tunaya, ibid., Vol. I, s. 280-289.

17. C. Bayar, ibid, Vol. 5, İstanbul-1997(2), p. 200-201.

18. It is possible to cite Mustafa Kemal Pasha's contribution in forming this attitude. Bu tavırın oluşmasında Mustafa Kemal Paşa'nın da katkıda bulunduğu söylenebilir. See.: Atatürk'ün Anıları, Ed.: İsmet Görgülü, Ankara-1997, p. 93 and others.

19. Among the important research and memoirs on the Special Organization are: Ergun Hiçyılmaz, Belgelerle Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa ve Casusluk Örgütleri, İstanbul-1979; Cemal Kutay, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa ve Hayber'de Türk Cengi, İstanbul-1962 ; Hüsamettin Ertürk, İki Devrin Perde Arkası, Yay. Haz.: Samih Nafiz Tansu, İstanbul-1964; Philip H. Stoddard, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa : Osmanlı Hükümeti ve Araplar 1911-1918, trs by.: Tansel Demirel , İstanbul-1993.

20. See for details : Erdal Aydoğan, İttihat ve Terakki Fırkasının Vilayat-ı Şarkîye Politikası (1918-1918), unpublished PhD dissertation, Erzurum-2003, Especially p. 64 -67.

21. A-Founding members: Süleyman Askeri (Later Halil Paşa, Cevat Paşa ),Atf (Kamçıl)(Yarbay),Aziz Bey (Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdür Muavini)Dr. Nazım ; Guards: Yakup Cemil,Rüsuhi Bey (later Atatürk's first aid-de-camp),Hüsamettin (Ertürk), Eşref and Sami Kuşçubaşı Brothers, Ömer Naci, Captain Rıza, Nuri Paşa (Mataracı), Eyüp Sabri (Akgöl) Bey, Hakkı Bey of Sapancı, Mümtaz Bey of Izmit.

22. These names could be multiplied easily but we wanted to be selective in order to provide a broad perspective to give an idea to the reader and did limit ourselves with the names quoted by T. Z. Tunaya. See.: T.Z.Tunaya, ibid., Vol. III, p. 275 and others. For further details, see.: H. Ertürk, ibid., p. 111 and others. Especially E. Aydoğan, ibid., p. 69 and others.

23. On this subject, see. : P. Stoddard, ibid., p. 23 and more. Another study on this subject: Zafer Toprak, «İslâm İhtilâl Cemiyetleri İttihadi (İttihad-i Selamet-i İslâm) ve Panislamizm», Türk Arap İlişkileri: Geçmişte, Bugün ve Gelecekte, Ankara-1979, pp. 174-181 Also, Keza; Z. Toprak, «Bölşevik İttihatçılar ve İslam Kominterni – İslam İhtilâl Cemiyetleri İttihadi, İttihad-ı Selamet-i İslam.», Toplumsal Tarih, issue 43, July 1997, pp. 6-13.

24. Founders of the society are : The guard of İstanbul Ahmet Cemal Bey (The Chief), Atf Bey, Falih Rıfki (Atay), Dr. Tevfik Rüştü (Aras), Ethem Nejat Bey, Basri Bey and Kuzucuoğlu Tahsin Bey. See.: T.Z. Tunaya, a.g.e., p.465.

25. Yusuf Sarımay, Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi ve Türk Ocakları (1912-1913), H.Ü. Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü, unpublished doctoral dissertation, p. 140.

26. The founders: Enver Pasha, Dr. Nazım, Dr. Rüsuhi, Eyüp Sabri, MP from Burdur Atf Bey, Sudi Bey and Ziya Gökalp. see.: T.Z.T., a.g.e., p.465. For the details on organization structure of the society see: Mehmet Kabasakal, Türkiye'de Siyasal Parti Örgütlenmesi, 1908-1960, İstanbul-1991, p.72, d.n. 189.

27. For the Youth Association and their founders which were set up under the authority of German Field Marshall Von Hoff's Public Supervising, see: T.Z. Tunaya, ibid, p.460.

28. See, Zafer Toprak, «İttihat ve Terakki'nin Paramiliter Gençlik Örgütleri», B.Ü. Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi, Vol. 7, İstanbul-1979, s. 95-113.

29. For the details, see: Kâzım Nami Duru, İttihat ve Terakki Hatıralarım, İstanbul-1957, p. 12 and others. ; Enver Behnan Şapolyo, Kemal Atatürk ve Milli Mücadele Tarihi, İstanbul-1958(3), p. 90 and others.

30. See.: Sina Akşin, İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele, İstanbul-1983, p.71.

31. BOA, BEO, Kısım : Mütenevvia, Dosya : 23, Gömlek 8, See, Appendix I

32. O. S. Kocahanoğlu, ibid., s. 51 vd.

33. BOA, BEO, Kısım : Mütenevvia, Dosya 23, Gömlek 8, See App. I.

34. T. Gökbilgin , ibid., p.20 vd.
35. This approach which was favoured especially by various Ferit the Groom cabinets during the armistice and supported by the Sultan himself has formed the basis of a campaign against Turkishness even today. The myth of Armenian genocide has become 'some problem' in time and deserves to be analysed even only for this aspect.
36. See : Refik Halit Karay, *Minelbab İlel Mihrab*, İstanbul 1965, in many places.
37. Compare: Refik Halit Karay, *Bir Ömür Boyunca*, İstanbul, 1990.
38. Z. Toprak, ibid., p.6-7.
39. A. Reşit Rey, *Canlı Tarihler*, Vol. III, İstanbul 1945, p. 266-267.
40. See for the explanation of Mustafa Kemal Pasha (Atatürk): Falih Rıfki Atay, *Atatürk'ün Hatıraları 1914-1919*, Ankara-1965, especially p. 88 and more, a Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz*, İstanbul-1969, p.7-20. Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları*, İstanbul-1953, s.36-41. More interestingly, Ministers of Defence as Ömer Yaver Paşa, Şevket Turgut and Şakir Pasha accepted naturally, this situation. See : N.H. Uluğ, ibid, p.28-30 and 44-47. We must remember that such as members of Damat Ferit Pasha's cabinet. See: R. H. Karay, *Minelbab İlel Mihrab*, p.73. See: N.H. Uluğ, ibid., p. 28-30 ve 44-47.
41. F.R. Atay, ibid, p. 80 vd.
42. Murat Bardakçı, *Şahbaba*, İstanbul-1998, p. 85-89.
43. A. İzzet Paşa , ibid., p. 59-60.
44. Faik Ahmet Barutçu, *Siyasi Hatıralar*, Vol. I, Ed. By Mustafa Everdi, Ankara-2001, p.145-147. Also : Cevat Dursunoğlu, *Milli Mücadele'de Erzurum*, Ankara-1946, p.17.
45. See: Appendixes II and III
46. ibid
47. See For detailed diagrams. Military History and Strategic Studies Department [ATASE], Atatürk's Special Archives,, Kl. 1, Ds. 335/3-1, Fh. 70. ATASE, A. Ö. A., Kl. 1, Ds. 335/3-1, Fh. 70-1. Especially thanks to my valuable colleague Oğuz Aytepe, who informed and allowed me for using to these documents.
48. Atatürk Özel Arşivinden Seçmeler, Vol. II. Edited By Nurşen Gök, Ankara-1992, p. 73.

#### References

- Ahmet İzzet Paşa (1993). *Feryadım*, Ed.: Süheyl İzzet Furgaç-Yüksel Kanar, Vol. II, İstanbul.
- Ali Fuat Cebesoy (1953). *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları*, İstanbul.
- Atatürk Özel Arşivinden Seçmeler (1992). Vol. II. Edited By Nurşen Gök, Ankara-1992
- Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, Ed.: Nimet Arsan, C. III, Ankara-1989(4).
- Canlı Tarihler, Ahmet Reşit Rey (H. Nâzım) (1945). *Gördüklerimiz Yaptıklarımız (1890-1922)*, Vol. III İstanbul, p.264-265.
- Cemal Kutay (1962). *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa ve Hayber'de Türk Cengi*, İstanbul.
- Cevat Dursunoğlu (1946). *Milli Mücadele'de Erzurum*. Ankara.
- Enver Behnan Şapolyo (1958). *Kemal Atatürk ve Milli Mücadele Tarihi*, İstanbul.
- Erdal Aydoğan (2003) *İttihat ve Terakki Fırkasının Vilayat-ı Şarkıye Politikası (1918-1918)*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Erzurum.
- Ergun Hiçyılmaz (1979). *Belgelerle Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa ve Casusluk Örgütleri*, İstanbul.
- Faik Ahmet Barutçu (2001). *Siyasi Hatıralar*, Vol. I, Ed. By Mustafa Everdi, Ankara.
- Hüsamettin Ertürk (1964). *İki Devrin Perde Arkası*, Yay. Haz.: Samih Nafiz Tansu, İstanbul. Philip H. Stoddard (1993). *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa: Osmanlı Hükümeti ve Araplar 1911-1918*, trs by.: Tansel Demirel, İstanbul.
- Kâzım Nami Duru (1957). *İttihat ve Terakki Hatıralarım*, İstanbul.
- M. Tayip Gökbilgin (1959). *Milli Mücadele Başlarken*, Vol. I, Ankara.
- Mehmet Kabasakal (1991). *Türkiye'de Siyasal Parti Örgütlenmesi, 1908-1960*, İstanbul.
- Military History and Strategic Studies Department [ATASE], Atatürk's Special Archives
- Osman Selim Kocamanoğlu (1988). *İttihat-Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması (1918-1919)*, İstanbul.
- Refik Halit Karay (1965). *Minelbab İlel Mihrab*, İstanbul.
- Refik Halit Karay (1990). *Bir Ömür Boyunca*, İstanbul.
- Sina Akşin (1983). *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele*, İstanbul.
- Taha Parla (1997). *Türkiye'de Siyasal Kültürün Resmî Kaynakları*, Vol.II, İstanbul.
- Zafer Toprak (1979). «İttihat ve Terakki'nin Paramiliter Gençlik Örgütleri», B.Ü. Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi, Vol.7.