

THE OPPOSITION IN THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL
MONARCHY PERIOD:
THE CASE OF AHMET SAMİM

by

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Abstract

Ahmet Samim was one of the three journalists assassinated after the declaration of the second constitutional monarchy. Samim, who was a fervent opponent of the Committee of Union and Progress, was also one of the founders of the *Ahrar Fırkası* (Liberal Party). This thesis analyses Samim's articles published in *Sadayı Millet* (Sound of the Nation), touching on the internal politics. Samim's articles are evaluated against a background describing the political atmosphere of the period. In this background we have chosen some subtitles: The amendments of 1909, the thought of Prince Sabahaddin, the elections of 1908 and the parliament, Grand Viziers and cabinets in the period of 1908-1910.

Samim's articles are analysed in eight subdivisions: constitutional monarchy, the military service of non-Muslims, the union of the elements, the press, the revolt in Albania, the Committee of Union and Progress, Abdülhamit and the *ancien regime*, and the minister of public works, Hallacyan Efendi. In the conclusion, after summarising Samim's opinions, his position in the political atmosphere of the second constitutional monarchy is described.

Özet

Ahmet Samim II. Meşrutiyet döneminde öldürülen üç gazeteciden biridir. Ateşli bir İttihatçı muhalifi olan Samim Ahrar Fırkası kurucularındandır. Bu tezde Samim'in *Sadayı Millet* gazetesindeki makalelerinden iç politikaya ilişkin olanlarına değindik. Ahmet Samim'in makalelerini dönemin siyasi olaylarından oluşan bir arka plan üzerinde değerlendirmeye çalıştık. Bu arka planı oluştururken seçtiğimiz konu başlıkları; 1909 Kanun-i Esasi değişiklikleri, Prens Sabahaddin düşüncesi, 1908 Seçimleri ve Parlamento, 1908-1910 Sadrazamlar/Kabineler oldu.

Ahmet Samim'in makalelerini 8 başlık altında değerlendirdik; Meşrutiyet, Gayrimüslimlerin Askerlik Hizmeti, İttihad-ı Anasır, Basın, Arnavutluk İsyanı, İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, Devr-i Sabık, Nafia Nazırı Hallacyan Efendi. Sonuç bölümünde Ahmet Samim'in görüşlerini özetledikten sonra Samim'in II. Meşrutiyet'in siyasi ortamı içerisinde nasıl bir yere oturduğunu saptamaya çalıştık.

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1. Introduction

Ahmet Samim was one of three journalists representing the opposition to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and assassinated during the second constitutional monarchy period. The aim of this thesis is to discuss the life and work of Ahmet Samim through his articles in the newspaper *Sadayı Millet* (Sound of the Nation). In the memoirs of the political actors of the second constitutional monarchy period, details are given on the assassination of Ahmet Samim, so this event will not be discussed nor will speculations be made as to who was responsible for it. Instead focus will be given to the transliteration of his articles and then to an analysis of his discourse and the main points of his attitude. The main goal of this thesis is to reveal the relation of Ahmet Samim with the spirit of 1908, in other words, with the constitutional monarchy.

10 July 1324 (23 July 1908) marked the end to the struggle for freedom with the restitution of the constitution of 1293/1876.¹ The text of a speech by Major Vehip Bey to the citizens appeared in *Hürriyet Meydanı* (public square of freedom) of Manastır Vilayeti, announcing the declaration of the *Meşrutiyet* (constitutional monarchy). In this speech, it was stated that an end had been put to the oppression of 31 years. Lovers of freedom had been saved from the dungeons. Justice, *meşveret* (consultation), equality, liberty and brotherhood were in the process of realisation. The rights of the citizens were guaranteed by the constitution, which would bring legitimate *meşveret*.²

¹ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Hürriyetin İlanı*, İstanbul: Arba, 1996, p.5

² *ibid.*, pp.8-9

On the night of 23 July 1908, with the recommendation of *Sadrizam* Sait Paşa, the *meclis-i vükela* (government) informed Sultan Abdülhamid the 2nd of the situation by an official report, and told that the number of telegraphs had reached sixty-seven. The government recommended that the sultan order the *vilayets* to organise elections of *Mebusan Meclisi*, meaning putting into effect the constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*) to prevent bloodshed and foreign intervention into domestic affairs. The Sultan declared by an imperial edict (*irade-i seniyye*) that all the demands in the official report had been accepted. This imperial edict was published in the newspapers.³

Feroz Ahmad assumed that the majority of the Young Turks was a conservative group not interested in social change. The *coup d'état* of 1908 could not be defined as a Revolution. The aim of this movement was to bring back the constitution accepted thirty two years earlier and by this mean save the state. According to Feroz Ahmad, the revolutionary aspect of this movement was seen later by the reforms leading to social changes. The solution brought by the Young Turks, similar to that of the Young Ottomans, was to limit the powers of the Sultan by establishing a constitutional government (*meşruti hükümet*) and giving equality to the minorities before the law.⁴

The concept of parliamentary regime forming the spirit of 1908 movement appeared as a reaction. The leaders of the 1908 movement had two choices in order to limit the preponderant role of the Sultan (this role had been given to him by the constitution of 1876): cancel the sultanate or erect against it a legislative organ with the same competences and power. It was sure that the second choice would be selected. As a result, it was necessary to limit the competence of the Sultan and

³ *ibid.*, pp.10-11

increase the competence of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. The second choice led the constitutional process to parliamentarism. For the intellectual elite of the *meşrutiyet*(constitutional monarchy), parliamentarism meant many different things. It was a liberal regime, a multi party regime, and a democracy at once.⁵

The Young Turks had a sacred recipe for salvation: destroy the Abdülhamid regime and establish political institutions which would prevent its return. The *Kanun-i Esasi* (constitution), the founding document of such a mechanism, had great importance for the Ottoman intellectuals as it brought a romanticism of constitution.⁶

Ottoman intellectuals attributed a preventive role to the *Kanun-i Esasi*. It formed a barrier beyond which there was no return. Usually a constitution, with its democratic/constitutional monarchist nature, is a result of a struggle against an authoritarian regime. Those who fight against authoritarian regimes, tyrannies, accept the constitution, the document of their effort. This was the common attitude of the Young Turks.⁷

According to Kansu, "the Revolution of 1908" was a late-arriving liberal revolution. It championed the demands of the bourgeois class, looking to take part in politics and policy-making process and to guarantee their rights in a legal system shaped by a constitution.⁸

Kansu says that after 1908, a coalition formed by different strata in society and different ethnic groups tried to destroy the existing state system.⁹ The goal was not

⁴ Feroz Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*(translated by Nuran Yavuz), İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1995, p.33

⁵ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, İstanbul, İletişim, 2000, pp.450-451

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 449

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 449

⁸ Aykut Kansu, "Dünden Bugüne 1908 Devrimi", *Toplumsal Tarih*, July 1998, no.55, p.4

⁹ Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, İstanbul: İletişim, 2001, p.361

only destroying the state, which had lost its legitimacy, but to replace it with a new system. Kansu claims that this new system had been envisaged.¹⁰

According to Kansu, the final goal was to declare a Republic, which meant the complete abolition of the sultanate.¹¹ Kansu says that Revolution introduced a new concept of citizenship as well as a new concept of State. The State would be evolved from a semi-feudal absolutist monarchy with subjects to a modern liberal democracy held responsible by its citizens.¹²

The Unionists, by realising the Revolution was not only trying to change the political system in a liberal way, tried to establish a new social order in which everyone was accepted as an equal before the law. The goal was to make everyone a first class citizen.¹³ One of the main principles of the Revolution of 1908 was to transform all of the people living in the country from subjects to citizens equal before the law.¹⁴ Making citizens of all the people living in the country, was an outright attempt to eradicate pre-modern judicial system of the Ottoman *ancien regime*.¹⁵

Kansu writes that the main source of inspiration for the Revolution of 1908 was the French Revolution of 1789. The "Revolution of 1908" had slogans identical to those of the French Revolution of 1789.¹⁶

According to Samim the movement of 1908 was a reform (*inkılab*) and the period of constitutional monarchy was a period of reform (*devre-i inkılab*). This reform was compared to the French Revolution of 1789. But Ottoman reform was different than the French one. It was an intervention without bloodshed, suited to the

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.363

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp.365-366

¹² *ibid.*, p.218

¹³ *ibid.*, p.220

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.360

¹⁵ Kansu, "Dünden Bugüne 1908 Devrimi", p.5

¹⁶ Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p.358

modern criteria of the 20th century. The excitement of Ahmet Samim shows us that the meaning of the movement of 1908 was more than a *coup d'etat*.

In order to reveal the spirit of 1908, Chapter Two examines the amendments of 1909. Chapter Three analyses the thought of Prince Sabahaddin. Ahmet Samim was one of the founders of *Ahrar Fırkası* (the Liberal Party), which was connected with the thought of Prince Sabahaddin, in order to analyse the relation of Ahmet Samim with the Prince's opinions, especially with the concept of decentralisation.

To evaluate the opinions of Ahmet Samim on the elections of 1908 and the discussions in the parliament, in the Chapter Four the elections and the structure of the parliament in the period of 1908-1910 are discussed.

In order to analyse the articles of Ahmet Samim, Chapter Five examines the political atmosphere of the Empire, its grand viziers and cabinets.

Before giving our analysis about Samim's articles we have written a biography of Ahmet Samim. In this chapter the main sources are an article with the title "Ahmet Samim", published in *Servet-i Fünun* (the Wealth of the Sciences) no.993, and the memoirs of Samim's friends.

Ahmet Samim's articles are analysed under eight subtitles: the constitutional monarchy, the military service of non-Muslims, the union of the elements, the press, the revolt in Albania, the Committee of Union and Progress, Abdülhamid and the *ancien regime*, and the minister of public works, Hallacyan Efendi.

In the conclusion part Samim's opinions are summarised and he is located within the Young Turk atmosphere of the second constitutional monarchy.

2. A Key in Order to Analyse the Spirit of 1908: The Amendments of 1909

In the parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) formed by the elections held at the end of 1908, a commission was formed to define amendments to the constitution of 1876. Discussion began on the suggestions of the commission, on the session of April 20 1325(1909). The amendments accepted by the *Meclis-i Mebusan* were ratified by the *Meclis-i Ayan* and sultan.¹⁷ The thirty-member commission founded for the amendment of 1909, in its first statement regarding for reasons on the amendments, showed the tendency to fortify legislation in front of execution.¹⁸

It soon became clear that it would be impossible to apply a constitutional monarchist system with the constitution of 1876. The articles of the constitution had a conforming nature for the acts of an irresponsible Sultan and his unlimited monarchist administration.¹⁹

Those who made possible the declaration of the second constitutional monarchy did not try to abolish the constitution of 1293/1876 and make a new constitution. Instead, they tried to apply a parliamentary system, make possible the participation of the people in the Sultan's competence, make the Sultan an impartial organ by making some amendments to the constitution of 1876.²⁰

The second constitutional monarchy, with the changes that were made to it, did not produce a change in the monarchist structure of the Ottoman State. The state kept its hereditary monarchist quality, but this hereditary monarchy lost its unlimited nature. The competences and privileges given to the Sultan were limited by some principles. The notion of governing in favour of nation and country within the limits

¹⁷ Recai G.Okandan, *Amme Hukukumuzun Anahatları*, İstanbul: Fakülteler Matbaası, 1971, p.286

¹⁸ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.459

¹⁹ Okandan, *Amme Hukukumuzun Anahatları*, p.285

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.286

of some legal norms called the *Kanun-i Esasi*.²¹ The article 3 of the constitution of 1876, giving to the Ottoman dynasty sovereignty without condition, was changed. The Sultan could now only govern on the condition that he takes an oath in front of the parliament on his loyalty to country and nation.²²

The group which had declared the second constitutional monarchy reorganised article 35 to prevent the return of the "nightmare of 93". According to the new form of this article, the competence of the Sultan to dissolve the parliament was limited, while the ability of the parliament to overthrow the government was expanded²³.

With the amendment of 1909, the equilibrium between Sultan and parliament was changed in favour of parliament. The parliament could easily overthrow the cabinet although the ability to dissolve the parliament of the execution (Sultan and cabinet) was limited.²⁴

During the amendments of 1909 in the name of fortifying the parliament, two famous Unionists Halil Bey and Emrullah Efendi proposed, that the power to declare war should depend on ratification by the *Meclis-i Mebusan*.²⁵

Although one of the goals of the amendments was to weaken the executive power and strengthen the legislative power, the result was more successful than had been expected. The Unionists were aware that in order to succeed in the reforms that they had been trying to realise since July 1908, it was necessary to have a powerful *Meclis-i Mebusan* to balance the conservative/reactionary power of the Palace and the *Bab-ı Ali*.²⁶

²¹ *ibid.*, p.290

²² Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, p.82

²³ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p. 458

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.460

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.460

²⁶ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, p.84

The *Kanun-i Esasi* had given large powers to the sultan, but the irresponsible Sultan would not use them. According to the amended Article 30, ministers with the political responsibility would implement the power of the Sultan. The notion of the irresponsibility of the Sultan meant non-competence. Ministers acting on behalf of the Sultan and under the control of the legislative power to which the cabinet was politically responsible would use the large powers given to the Sultan by the *Kanun-i Esasi*. It was impossible for the Sultan to use these alone. According to the amended Article 30, imperial edict (*irade-i seniyye*) showing the decision of the Sultan had to be signed by the concerned ministers and the *sadr-ı azam* (grand vizier). Imperial edicts not signed by the ministers and *sadr-ı azam* would not have legal validity. The cabinet, which executed the power of the sultan was under the control of the *Meclis-i Mebusan* and had to obtain its confidence.²⁷

According to amended Article 7 of the constitution of 1876 the sultan was given the power to appoint the *sadr-ı azam* and ratifying ministers but this did not have great importance. According to amended Article 30, the *sadr-ı azam* assigned by the Sultan had to win a vote of confidence from the parliament. As a result, the Sultan's power to assign *sadr-ı azam* was restricted. The Sultan had to assign someone who could get the vote of confidence in the parliament. Otherwise, a cabinet formed by a *sadr-ı azam* assigned by the Sultan's own initiative was always faced with the possibility to being overthrown by the *Meclis-i Mebusan*.²⁸

A cabinet, which had to obtain the vote of confidence in the *Meclis-i Mebusan* but not the Sultan's will, could impose itself on the Sultan when it was necessary. The organ that fulfilled the act of execution was not the Sultan, but the ministers. The

²⁷Okandan, *Amme Hukukumuzun Anahatları*, p.296

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.298

competence of execution was transferred from the Sultan to the cabinet. Ministers were no longer dependent on the Sultan and this executive activity was done according to the deputies' will.²⁹

According to amended Article 7 of the *Kanun-i Esasi*, the Sultan had the right to dismiss and change a cabinet with which he was in disagreement. The requirement of a vote of confidence from the parliament for the cabinet in practice made invalid this competence of the Sultan. A new cabinet or a minister assigned in order to replace a cabinet or a minister, who had the confidence of the parliament, did not have the possibility of getting the vote of confidence of the deputies and staying in power.³⁰ According to the new spirit dominating the amended *Kanun-i Esasi*, the executive power and competences given to the Sultan, in practice had been used by ministers (cabinet) politically responsible to the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. The cabinet used the power free from the intervention of the Sultan and the competence to ratify of the Sultan according to the article 30, was no more than a formality. Although the decisions of the cabinet were submitted for ratification by the Sultan, they were not the product of the Sultan's initiative. These decisions derived their power from the ministers in power and their confidence that they had in the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. According to the spirit dominating the amended *Kanun-i Esasi*, it was impossible for the Sultan to change a cabinet or a minister having the confidence of the parliament, with which he was in disagreement.³¹

With the amendments of 1909, the legislative organ was freed from the Sultan. The parliament was saved from the intervention of the Sultan on the election of the

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.299

³⁰ *ibid.*, p.301

³¹ *ibid.*, p.302

chairman and vice-chairmen. The power to elect them was given directly to the parliament.³²

Amended Article 53 gave the *Meclis-i Mebusan* the right to make bills, making it possible for the *Meclis-i Mebusan* to fulfill its legislative duties. The right to make bills had been given only to the ministers and members of *Meclis-i Ayan*.³³

According to amended Article 54, laws which had been examined and ratified by the *Meclis-i Mebusan* and the *Meclis-i Ayan*, were offered for the Sultan's ratification. The Sultan could ratify the law or send it back for reexamination. A law reexamined and accepted by a majority of 2/3 had to be ratified by the Sultan.³⁴

With the amendments made in 1909, the main functions of the state and the organs which would fulfil these functions were separated from each other. But this separation did not have a radical nature. This separation was an attempt to establish collaboration between the organs which would fulfil the main functions of the state, establishing the principle of mutual control between organs.³⁵

According to the amendments to some extent, two organs of execution (Sultan and the cabinet) could participate in legislative activities. Another competence that the executive organ had in front of the legislative institution was the fact that executive could dissolve a parliament that had lost the confidence of the nation to prevent the tyranny of this parliament.³⁶ The group making these amendments to the constitution of 1876, gave to Sultan the power to dissolve parliament, but this use depended on some well defined conditions and its abuse was blocked.³⁷ In this perspective of worry, the new conditions prevented the Sultan from exercising this power alone. A

³² *ibid.*, p.304

³³ *ibid.*, pp.306-307

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp.306-307

³⁵ *ibid.*, p.313

³⁶ *ibid.*, p.314

³⁷ *ibid.*, p.316

cabinet which would take the responsibility of dissolving was needed. The imperial edict (*irade-i seniyye*) containing the decision of dissolving had to be signed by the ministers.³⁸

In a case of disagreement between the cabinet and *Meclis-i Mebusan*, the Sultan, who had full confidence on his cabinet, had neither the possibility of defending his cabinet nor the recourse to the arbitration of the people (nation). A cabinet that had lost the confidence of the *Meclis-i Mebusan* had to resign. A new cabinet, formed after the resignation, had to get the confidence of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. If this new cabinet which had gotten the confidence of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*, had the same attitude as the previous cabinet and insisted on the point of disagreement with the *Meclis-i Mebusan* and was faced with the rejection of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*, the Sultan with the consent of the *Meclis-i Ayan* could dissolve the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. If the new *Meclis-i Mebusan*, formed by elections had insisted on the decision of the former *Meclis-i Mebusan*, the cabinet would have to accept the decision of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*.³⁹

According to Article 30 the organ of legislation had the competence to overthrow the cabinet. The ministers were responsible collectively for the policy of the government and individually for the activities of the ministries. According to Amended article 38, ministers were obliged to give explanations continually to the *Meclis-i Mebusan* and had to leave their offices in the case of non-confidence of the *Meclis-i Mebusan*. This arm of legislation against the executive branch gave to the legislative branch an active role in the execution of the executive activities and their control.⁴⁰

³⁸ *ibid.*, p.316

³⁹ *ibid.*, pp.318-319

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, pp.320-321

When we look at the amendments of 1909, it is clear that with the relations established between the institutions, a parliamentary regime was realised for the first time with the 2nd Constitutional Monarchy. The separation of power and competence between the main institutions executing the main functions of the state was realised. On the other hand, an attempt was made to establish a balance between the power and competence of these organs, which would bring a collaboration and control mechanism.⁴¹

Making the amendments did not establish a complete equilibrium in the relations of legislation and execution. To the legislative branch was given the power to overthrow the cabinet, one branch of the executive organ, but the power to dissolve the parliament given to the executive organ was limited by some conditions. It is possible to say that the system established with the amendments was the dependence on the executive organ of the legislative organ.⁴²

With the amendments of 1909, the political system became a constitutional monarchy. After that, the role of the Sultan in politics had a ceremonial nature.⁴³

According to the amendments of 1909 touching on the rights and liberties of the individuals, Article 10 and 12 of the constitution were amended. Individual liberty and immunity were fortified, and the press was saved from censorship (Article 10, 12).⁴⁴ Article 120, providing individuals the right to gather and establish associations,

⁴¹ *ibid*, p:328

⁴² *ibid*, p:330

⁴³ Kansu, "Dünden Bugüne 1908 Devrimi", p.7

⁴⁴ Tunaya, *Hürriyetin İlanı*, p.23

were added. The second paragraph of Article 113, which gave the Sultan, the right to decide on exile and banishment was removed from the constitution.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Okandan, *Amme Hukukumuzun Anahatlari*, p.331

3. The Thought of Prince Sabahaddin

Prince Sabahaddin, born in 1879 in Istanbul, was the son of Sultan Abdülmecid's daughter Seniha Sultan and Mahmud Celaleddin Paşa.⁴⁶

Damad Celaleddin Paşa, escaped to Europe in 1899, took with him his sons Sabahaddin and Lütfullah Efendi. In Paris, Prince Sabahaddin dedicated his time to study, reading H. Poincaré, Haeckel, Büchner, Fouillé, Le Play, E. Démolins. Due to his interest in the positive sciences, he delved into subject areas like naturalism and positivism.⁴⁷

When he was in Paris, in order to bring solutions to the problems of the Ottoman society, he joined the association of the *Science Sociale*. Inspired by this scientific school, he tried to prepare a reform program, which would respond the needs of the Ottoman society. In order to realise this goal he wrote many articles.⁴⁸

According to Prince Sabahaddin, it was possible to diagnose the illness of a social body and bring the means of treatment, in other words, to prepare a policy of reform based on *La Science Sociale*.⁴⁹ To prepare a reform program for a nation, it was necessary to analyse the social body of this nation in a scientific way, diagnose the causes of the illness and apply the reform program, which would correct the mistakes.⁵⁰

The *Science Sociale* literature in general, and the studies of Demolins in particular, frequently pointed to decentralisation as one of the main reasons for the alleged Anglo-Saxon superiority. Sahahaddin Bey authored his first detailed essay on the subject in late 1905, under the title "Historical Analysis of Turkish Progress"

⁴⁶ Nezahat Nureddin Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaları*, İstanbul: Fakülteler Matbaası, 1977, p.3

⁴⁷ Prens Sabahaddin, *Görüşlerim* (haz: Dr. Ahmet Zeki İzgöer), İstanbul: Buruc Yayınları, 1999, p.10

⁴⁸ Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaları*, p.10

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p.33

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p.35

(*Türk İlerlemesinin Tarihi Analizi*), Demolins' *Comment la route crée le type social* heavily influenced his argument in the essay. He maintained that a westernised Turkish elite had transformed Turkish society and lifted it to a new social stage, and that now at this stage a new generation of westernised Ottoman intellectuals could solve the Eastern Question by implementing a decentralised administrative system. Later, he claimed that "decentralisation" would also secure political unity alongside social diversity in the Ottoman Empire.⁵¹

Prince Sabahaddin, from his perspective of protecting the Ottoman state and providing the safety of its citizens, established in Paris the *Teşebbüs-i Şahsi ve Adem-i Merkeziyyet Cemiyeti* (the League of Private Initiative and Decentralisation) with his colleagues Nihat Reşad and Fazıl Bey. He wrote articles in different newspapers. Later he published the newspaper *Terakki* (Progress) between 1906-1908 in order to realise the same goal⁵² and to train a young intellectual elite in the theories of *Science Sociale*, which would then bring about a reform in the Ottoman Empire⁵³.

Decentralisation

The program of the league (*Teşebbüs-i Şahsi, Meşrutiyet ve Adem-i Merkeziyyet Cemiyeti*) was established by Prince Sabahaddin and prepared, accepted and ratified by its members on July 27 1906. One copy of this program published in *Şurayı Ümmet* no.95. In this program it was declared that *vilayets* would be administered according to the principles of decentralisation (*adem-i merkeziyyet*) and *tevsi-i mezuniyyet* (enlarging the authority), municipalities and *nahiye meclisleri* (assemblies of district) formed by elections, could intervene and participate in the

⁵¹ M.Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p.83

⁵² Prens Sabahaddin, *Görüşlerim*, pp.10-11

execution of the affairs in *vilayets* and *nahiyes*. An assembly, eighty percent elected collected taxes fixed by the central government and the *vilayets* would be given to the *vilayets* to finance local needs. To maintain the union and relationship of the *vilayets* with the central government, the establishment of a *mebusan meclisi* formed by the deputies elected by the people of the *vilayets* was envisioned. According to Article 5 of the program, all citizens would have the same rights and privileges and they would be charged with the same conditions. All institutions of higher education (military schools included) would be available to all subjects (*tebaa*).⁵⁴

According to Prince Sabahaddin, the reason for the progress of the Christian citizens in agriculture, industry was decentralisation. To repair the corrupted social equilibrium of the country, the policy of decentralisation should be applied to the Turks and other Muslims.⁵⁵

Prince Sabahaddin argued that the concept of decentralisation had no relation to administrative autonomy.⁵⁶ He claimed that constitutional monarchy (*meşrutiyet*) was the establishment of all rights of control in the centre by the *meclis-i mebusan*, and that administrative decentralisation would ensure the spread of the same rights to the *vilayets* by the *vilayet umum meclisleri* (public assemblies of vilayets). The current need for permission from the centre for the needs of *vilayets*, such as constructing roads, bridges, hospitals and schools, caused great loss of time. He contended that sometimes because a road was not constructed, commercial life in a town, *sancak* or *vilayet* was paralysed. As long as the administration of centralisation

⁵³ Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaları*, pp.36-37

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, pp.71-72

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p.88

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p.160

continued, the progress of the concept of initiative in the country would be impossible. As a result the *vilayets* could not be improved and the misery of the country could not be solved.⁵⁷

Prince Sabahaddin argued that it was impossible to apply in one *vilayet*, a system applied in an other one. For example the means of subsistence in *vilayet* of Yemen, and in *vilayet* of Selanica were different. Those who would see these differences were not the officials in Istanbul but those who were living in Yemen and Selanica. Decentralisation would increase the competences of the *vali* and officials, open the *meclis-i umumiler* (public assemblies) as a result make people familiar with deciding on and controlling the spend of the taxes they were paying. Prince Sabahaddin claimed that this principle of decentralisation was based on Article 108 of *Kanun-i Esasi*.(constitution).⁵⁸ The system of administrative decentralisation was no different from spreading the right of control to the *vilayets*. He added also that this system was also expressed in Article 108 of the *Kanun-i Esasi* (constitution).⁵⁹

One month after his conference in *Varyete Tiyatrosu*, Prince Sabahaddin published two articles in *İkdam* (Perseverance) in October 5-6 1908. The objectives in the first article were

- to show that despotism was not the result of one or a few people, but was the result of means of subsistence and social deficiencies, convincing the public opinion about the concept of reforming national education;
- to show that any *unsur* (element) constituting Ottoman subjects did not have to follow the policy of autonomy or independence

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p.163

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.164

⁵⁹ Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *Prens Sabahaddin*, İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1954, p.33

- to prove to the civilised countries the injustices suffered under the ancient regime, providing the support of western public opinion which was against the Ottoman state

The main idea in this publication was to defend and fortify Ottoman unity. If this is taken in to account, it is possible to say that the program of decentralisation did not mean administrative autonomy.⁶⁰ The prince claimed that what was desired in decentralisation was to increase the competence of governors and other officials, to open *umumi meclisler* (public assemblies) as soon as possible and to give to the people the habit of controlling the spending of the taxes that they had paid.⁶¹ Parliament was not the creator of a national will defined by itself, but a highest level of a chain of control.⁶²

In a constitutional monarchy based on centralisation, the administration was in the hands of officials assigned by the centre. According to Prince Sabahaddin, in this administration the numbers of administrators (one or five hundred) would not change the result: Despotism. In a constitutional monarchy based on decentralisation, control began from the *nahiyyes* (district), reaching the center. Assemblies of *nahiyyes*, *kaza* and *vilayet* would be formed by honorable and capable men.⁶³ The Prince was an adherent of westernisation in the Empire and he sought to realise the necessary transformations in the social structure to an individualistic structure, as *Le Play* was saying.⁶⁴

Kansu tells us that Prince Sabahaddin's concept of decentralisation, which meant semi-autonome regional administrations with their budgets and elected administrators, was accepted with pleasure by the Greeks, Arabs and Armenians.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p.36

⁶¹ *ibid.*, p.37

⁶² Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001, p.295

⁶³ *ibid.*, p.295

Kansu argues that Prince Sabahaddin's ideas were nothing more than propaganda to continue the system present in the absolutist regime.⁶⁵ The concept of decentralisation of the semi-intellectuals which had influenced Prince Sabahaddin (Demolins, Tourville), was the political and social order that had existed in France before the French Revolution of 1789. Kansu was pretending that according to these authors, decentralisation represented a sublimated feudal order.⁶⁶

Private Initiative

Prince Sabahaddin argued that the Christians in the Ottoman Empire were successful in agriculture, industry and trade by being far from the intervention of the government. They had a wealth incomparable to that of Muslims.⁶⁷ While Muslims sought to become government officials, Christians, due to their private initiative, had wealth.⁶⁸ The prosperity and happiness of a nation could be improved by its progress in the field of production. In societies where private initiative was developed, personal interest was a part of common interest. In countries where private initiative was absent, the personal interest was the opposite of common interest. He claimed that the Eastern Question could be solved in favour of the Ottoman Empire by conquering economically countries which had been already conquered politically.⁶⁹

Prince Sabahaddin emphasised that instead of agriculture, industry and trade, official duty was chosen as the source of wealth for Muslims. To become rich by private initiative, it was necessary to have some qualities, such as knowledge, experience, ardour, constancy and prudence. Due to the kind of education given in the

⁶⁴ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981, p.195

⁶⁵ Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p.265

⁶⁶ Aykut Kansu, "Prens Sabahaddin'in Düşünsel Kaynakları ve Aşırı-Muhafazakar Düşüncenin İthali" *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce v:1*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001, p.157

⁶⁷ Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaları*, p.82

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p.84

school, young men were deprived of the qualities mentioned above. What was desired was becoming rich without work. Therefore official duty was the single goal of all young Muslim men.⁷⁰

In his second article published in *İkdam* (Perseverance), Prince Sabahaddin focused on the notion of private initiative. Private initiative was the struggle for life by an individual based on his own effort instead of depending on his family or on the government. Living by private effort needed many qualities that, due to the education taken in the Ottoman society, were lacking. Men looking become rich without working, sought positions as government officials.⁷¹

According to Prince Sabahaddin, without gathering the power of production in their own hands, it would be impossible for Muslims to benefit from the laws, governments even in a constitutional administration, political despotism would be replaced by economic despotism. Ottoman society would be freed not by laws, the political elite or foreign policy, but its own work.⁷²

The safety of Turkey depended on the reform on the national system of education. Education must be transformed from its theoretical nature to practical form,⁷³ from custom to initiative. The main reason for the spread of despotism was not the power of some people but the weakness of the nation in the social domain (weakness from the perspective of *Science Sociale*). Prince Sabahaddin claimed that freedom or despotism was not the product of the capacity or incapacity of the individuals. The biggest power, which would increase social capacity, was private initiative. The actual system of education was educating government officials instead of improving the capacity of private initiative. What was needed was to transform the

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p.86

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p.166

⁷¹ Tütengil, *Prens Sabahaddin*, p.37

⁷² *ibid.*, p.34

system of education in a nature improving private initiative. If it were not done, laws would not prevent the continuity of social problems and despotism. Prince Sabahaddin, arguing that the goal of school should be educating active and enterprising young men, declared that the target of national education should be turned from the tradition to an active initiative, from the past to the future.⁷⁴

According to the Prince, despotism was the product of the weakness of the educational system. Those who could not earn their own money by their own capacity, looked for salvation in their families, in the parties, and in the government. As a result, they helped despotism become entrenched. To block this, schools should be transformed into places of training for entrepreneurs and active individuals.⁷⁵ Wealth could be created by the private initiative, decentralisation would stimulate private initiative. Decentralisation would establish national control everywhere of the *vilayets* by the *vilayet umum meclisleri*. This system would broaden national trade, which would provide the fidelity of the Ottomans to the Ottoman State and unify Ottomans against external powers. Administrative decentralisation was an instrument which would fortify Ottoman unity by assuring political centralisation.⁷⁶

According to the Prince, those who had established the governing of constitutional monarchy by administrative decentralisation (as they called self-government) and made English government one of the most perfect administration by settling national sovereignty, were gentlemen with the notion of private initiative.⁷⁷

When limited resources were taken in to account, it would be seen that the unique option for increasing the wealth of the country was agriculture but not mere

⁷³ Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaları*, p.167

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp.134-135

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.168

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p.187

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p.213

than peasant agriculture.⁷⁸ The solution was to form a class of gentlemen made of entrepreneurial young bourgeois (like the Anglo-Saxons), who would guide those peasants who did not have a guide.⁷⁹

The book *İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyetine açık mektuplar: Mesleğimiz hakkında üçüncü ve son bir izah* (letter to the CUP: third and last explanation about our principles) was constituted of letters and articles written by Prince Sabahaddin in 1910-1911 in Paris. In the seventh letter, Prince Sabahaddin wrote how the peasants were oppressed in Turkey, which was a country of agriculture. It was necessary to form a class of enlightened young men like English gentlemen to direct the directionless peasants.⁸⁰

With his critique of official duty (*memuriyet*), Prince Sabahaddin set out to make the most serious critique that any Young Turk had ever made until that time. Criticising official duty and calling it as a harmful occupation was a serious matter in a society where almost all of the elite was government official. Undoubtedly the main criticisms he received came from the privileged class of the actual social order who would lose their positions if required to struggle for life in the Anglo-Saxon manner. The CUP, the majority of which constituted a group of officials who were not looking for social change, refused any doctrine which attacked official duty.⁸¹

In order to pass to a individualistic social structure, Prince Sabahaddin and his colleagues were advocated transferring the Anglo-Saxon type of education to the Empire claimed that decentralisation would reinforce this. As the Prince Sabahaddin

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p.217

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p.218

⁸⁰ Tütengil, *Prens Sabahaddin*, p.43

⁸¹ Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*, pp.292-293

would mention later, decentralisation was accepted as a factor facilitating the transition in a structure of private initiative increasing national wealth.⁸²

According to Kansu, Prince Sabahaddin's conception of private initiative was, training and educating wealthy young men and making them the agricultural bosses of the Anatolian peasants, who could not realise agricultural activity without guidance.⁸³

⁸² M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981, pp.199-200

⁸³ Kansu, "Prens.Sabahaddin'in Düşünsel Kaynakları ve Aşırı-Muhafazakar Düşüncenin İthali", p.161

4. The Elections of 1908 and the Parliament (1908-1910)

The elections of 1908 were held in a situation where a law of election was absent. These elections were made according to the provisional law of the elections of deputy (*İntihab-ı Mebusan Kanun-i Muvakkatı*) which went into effect with an imperial decree (*irade*) dated 2 August 1908. This law, which consisted of 83 articles, envisaged that elections would be held according to a system of majority and would be an indirect, two-tier electoral system. In this system, primary electors would elect the electoral delegates. These electoral delegates would then elect the deputies. Primary electors and electoral delegates had to be a minimum of twenty five-years of age and had to be taxpayers. According to this law, every *sancak* (subdivision of a province) was accepted as a constituency, and every unit of fifty thousand males would be represented by a deputy.⁸⁴ Article 71 of the constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*) of 1876 stated that every member of parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) would be the representative of the all Ottomans.⁸⁵

For the CUP, it was necessary to win the elections and get the majority in the parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) in order to secure an active position. The Committee sent officials to the provinces to establish organisations in order to establish the objectives of the movement and to have its own candidates elected. It reached an agreement with the minorities about the determination of its candidates and further reinforced its position. The election of the candidates depended on the consent of the Committee. Those who did not have the consent and the support of the Committee could be elected to parliament only with great difficulty. Most of the candidates were chosen from among self-employed persons and landowners. In spite of the role of the Committee in the elections of 1908 -perhaps for this reason- all elements (*anasır*) of

⁸⁴ Erol Tuncer, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Seçimler 1877-1999*, Ankara: TESAV Yayınları, 2002, pp.21-22

the Empire were represented in the parliament. Among the 288 deputies, there were one hundred forty seven Turks, sixty Arabs, twenty-seven Albanians, twenty-six Rum (Greek), fourteen Armenian, ten Slav and four Jewish deputies.⁸⁶

The first elections of the second constitutional monarchy were held in İstanbul in November-December 1908. The voting in İstanbul was done in 28 *Teşrin-i Sani* (November) Friday in the *Yeni Postahane* (New Post Office). Rums, Armenians, Bulgarians who accepted themselves as minorities, began to act against the Turks and made publications and organised demonstrations against the Turks especially the CUP. In the program given to the General Center (*Merkez-i Umumi*) of the CUP, Rums demanded proportional representation for minorities. On 9 November 1908, by declaring the elections in Beyoğlu (Pera) illegal (*kanunsuz*), Rums organised a protest demonstration and demanded the extension of the elections for a further eight days.⁸⁷

Due to their experience in the elections, the great majority of the Rums participated in the elections and they did not divide their votes. On the other hand, the Unionists tried to organise Turks. In reaction to this, the Rums declared that they would boycott the elections. The Patriarchate sent many letters of protest to the government.⁸⁸

To prevent the disproportionate representation of the Rums, the CUP informed the electoral delegates of the candidates for whom they had to vote. In this way, the votes of the Turks would not be dispersed. As a result, the election of the candidates depended on their agreement with the CUP. The opposition of the CUP did not assent

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p124

⁸⁶ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp.46-47

⁸⁷ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.206

⁸⁸ Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, Ankara, İmge, 2001, p.156

to this attitude, but the answer of the CUP was ready: disobey the recommendations of the CUP was to serve the interests of the Rums.⁸⁹

In the electoral period, some evenings the electoral delegates (*müntehib-i sani*) were invited to listen to the lectures of the deputy candidates and learn their programs. In these meetings there were discussions and disputes. For example in the *Serbesti* (Liberty) issue of 29 *Teşrin-i Sani* (November) 1324 no:27, Mehmet Bahaeddin in an article antitled "Müdür Bey" (Mister Director) mentioned the lecture of Miralay İsmail Hakkı Bey in Fevziye Kıraathanesi (Café Fevziye) in Şehzadebaşı by referring to the declaration of the inhabitant of Aksaray, Mehmet Burhaneddin and the inhabitant of Horhor, Mehmet. In this conference, some people who had presented themselves as having been sent by the CUP, took guarantees from some of the electoral delegates about voting on five candidates declared by them and registered this guarantee with an oath.⁹⁰

After the elections in Dersaadet (İstanbul), *Serbesti* (Liberty) proposed the elections be declared void. The argument assumed by the newspaper was the fact that the forces of the government had intervened the electoral process and that they had used their personal influence (*nüfuz*). The reasons given by *Serbesti* (Liberty) for the cancellation of the elections were that the electoral delegates had been elected from the printed lists of the CUP under its pressure. It had taken guarantees from the electoral delegates on the voting for the list of the CUP. The Pro-CUP press (for example, *Şurayı Ümmet*, the council of the people) had declared some weeks before the elections for whom it was necessary to vote and had listed the candidates of the CUP.⁹¹

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p.157

⁹⁰ Y.Doğan Çetinkaya, "İttihat ve Terakki'ye Muhalif Serbesti Gazetesi'nin Penceresinden İstanbul'da 1908 Seçimleri", *Toplumsal Tarih*, no.89, May 2001, p.15

⁹¹ *ibid.*, p.23

From September 1908, in the *sancak* (subdivision of a province) of Aydın (İzmir, the center of the *vilayet*, including Aydın, Denizli, Saruhan-Manisa and Menteşe-Balıkesir), the deputy candidates published their programs in the newspapers. For example on 22 September 1908 in *Ahenk* (harmony), the program of Milaşlı Halil Beyefendi, on 23 September in Aydın the program of Cihanzade İbrahim Ethem Bey, on 24 September the program of Doctor Mehmet Refet Bey were published. On 4 October 1908, again in *Ahenk*, an article entitled "Bir Hitab" (an adressing) by the director of the *Menba-i Füyuzan Mektebi* (school of the Source of Knowledge) Mahmut Nedim Bey, was published. In this article, Mahmut Nedim Bey declared that in the elections, Muslims had to act together because the minorities would take a common attitude in the elections.⁹²

The results of the elections showed that in İzmir, Nedim Bey's fears were justified. In spite of the effort of the CUP, Aristidi Paşa, İstefan Efendi, Pavli Korolidi Efendi, Nesim Mazliyah Efendi were elected as deputies for İzmir as well as Seyyid Bey and Mehmet Said Efendi. In the places where minorities were not active, such as in Aydın İsmail Sıdkı Bey, Abdullah Efendi, in Denizli Ahmed Muhib Efendi, Gani Bey, in Saruhan İlhami Bey, Haydar Bey, Said Bey, Şekib Bey, in Menteşe Hamza Bey and Halil Bey were elected.⁹³

After the first elections of the second constitutional monarchy there were 200-300 heterogeneous deputies ready for separation and fight. These elections were not held in a multi-party system. Therefore the group unified under the name of the CUP would show its opposition and conflicts during the vote of confidence of Kamil Paşa.⁹⁴

⁹² Efdal Sevinçli, "II. Meşrutiyet Seçimleri Öncesinde İzmir'den Bir Ses", *Tarih ve Toplum*, no.15, March 1985, p.15

⁹³ *ibid.*, p.15

⁹⁴ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.208

Ahrar Fırkası (The Liberal Party)

The *Ahrar Fırkası* (or Liberal Party) was established in September 1908 by a group of young men around Prince Sabahaddin in order to form a counter power to the CUP. The first entrepreneurs were Nurettin Fazlı Bey and Ahmet Samim Bey.⁹⁵

This party was the most serious initiative that could be accepted as a political party. It participated in the elections only in İstanbul, but did not win any deputies in İstanbul. The candidates presented together with the CUP (Kozmide Efendi, Konstantinide Efendi, Zohrab Efendi, and Hallacyan Efendi) were elected. Some deputies in the parliament (İsmail Kemal, Zohrab Efendi, and Dr. Rıza Nur) later participated in the party.⁹⁶

The main characteristics of the ideology of the *Ahrar Fırkası* were; individualism, liberalism, private initiative, and the regime that would realise all of them the decentralisation. The concept of decentralisation was seen as a threat that would disintegrate the Empire. The party was criticised for this reason. According to Tunaya, however, *Ahrar Fırkası* declared that it was against the ideology of Turkism (*Türkçülük*). He notes that the cosmopolite character of the party was remarkable.⁹⁷

Just after its defeat in the elections, *Ahrar Fırkası* saw the incidents of 31 March (*31 Mart Vakası*) as an opportunity for the elimination of Abdülhamid and the CUP and for a change in political power (*iktidar*). The adherents of the *Ahrar Fırkası* talked with the soldiers and the group of Derviş Vahdeti and they tried to not make the revolt a movement against the constitutional monarchy.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v:1, İstanbul, İletişim, 2000, p.176

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p.177

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, pp.182-183

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p.181

Due to its attitude during the incidents of 31 March, the party was withdrawn in April 1909. Some of its members were arrested and sentenced and some of its members escaped to foreign countries.

Tunaya claimed that *Ahrar Fırkası* could be called a cadre party and with a democratic structure. According to Tunaya, the party was made up of bureaucrats. According to Dr. Rıza Nur Bey, there were two reasons impeding the development of the party and the increase of the number of the members: Due to the attacks of the CUP nobody dared enroll in the party, and the separation into factions.⁹⁹

Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırka (The Moderate Liberal Party)

Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırka was the first political party established in the parliament of the second constitutional monarchy. By the time *Ahrar Fırkası* had come to an end, the deputies in the opposition elected in 1908 intended to establish a new political party. The first attempts started in October 1909.

The members of the party were generally bureaucrats. They believed in the concept of the Ottoman nation (*Osmanlı Milleti*), and demanded the equality among the ethnic elements (*anasır*) forming that nation. To realise this goal the *Meclis-i Mebusan* (parliament) had to produce the necessary laws. Contrary to other groups in opposition to the CUP this party was against the principle of decentralisation, which they believed, would disintegrate the Ottoman Empire. They declared in the program of the party that it was necessary to settle (*iskan*) the nomadic tribes and see that they attain the level of modern civilisation.¹⁰⁰

In November 1911 this party participated to the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (*Entente Liberale*).

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, p.182

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p.245

Ahali Fırkası (The People Party)

Ahali Fırkası was a party founded by deputies elected in 1908 from the list of the CUP from Gümilcine, Karesi, Trablusgarp, Bayezit, Burdur, and Erzurum. This was the second political party founded in the first parliament of the second constitutional monarchy.

The questioning (*soru*) and general questioning (*gensoru*) in the parliament in which *Ahali Fırkası* participated were the law of the police-court magistrates; the military operations in Albania; the arrest of the members of the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Fırka*) and the Socialist Party (*Sosyalist Fırka*); the cross-examination of the Minister of War, Mahmut Şevket Paşa; and the vote of non-confidence for the cabinet of Said Paşa. The *Ahali Fırkası* prepared a draft of the Press Law (*Matbuat Kanunu*), claiming that the present Press Law was in contradiction to the constitutional monarchist regime.

The *Ahali Fırkası* was a conservative party. The problem of Zionism and anti-Semitism came on the political scene for the first time. İsmail Bey of Gümilcine declared that he was an anti-Semite. He declared that the Jewish nation was a big problem for the Ottomans and the Turks, and that the Unionists were under the pressure of the Zionists in the field of finance (*maliye*) and foreign debt. This party participated in the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (Entente Liberale)* in 1911.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, pp.267-268

5. 1908-1910 Grand Viziers/Cabinets

Said Paşa resigned as *sadrizam* (grand vizier) in 5 August. The following day Kamil Paşa was assigned and was asked to form a new cabinet.¹⁰² The following day, with an announcement published in *Sabah* (Morning), the CUP declared that it was supporting the new cabinet and demanded that the people support the application of the laws and orders. With this cooperation between the CUP and the *Bab-ı Ali* (the Sublime Porte), the efforts of the Palace to monopolise the political power was blocked. As a result, the *Bab-ı Ali* took the power in its hands and the CUP continued its role of guardian of the *Meşrutiyet* (constitutional monarchy) without taking an active role in the administration of the Empire.¹⁰³

Kamil Paşa formed his cabinet thirtieth days into the second constitutional monarchy (at that time Kamil Paşa was seventy two years old and was known as "sadrizam the old" and he was qualified as one of the great viziers of the *Tanzimat* era). The first election of the second Constitutional Monarchy was held in the period of this cabinet, and the Ottoman parliament was opened. Kamil Paşa was the first and the last *sadrizam* overthrown with a vote of non confidence in the parliament.

Because the *Kanun-i Esasi* (the constitution) had not been amended yet, the cabinet was not obliged to give a vote of confidence. Kamil Paşa did, however, receive a vote of confidence from the parliament.¹⁰⁴

The program of Kamil Paşa was published in the press in 16 August. The program declared that Kamil Paşa would govern the Empire appropriately to the constitution. As it was impossible to wait for the parliament to assemble to begin implementing the program, the *sadrizam* amended some anticonstitutional laws of the

¹⁰² Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, p.38.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, pp.38-39

ancien regime. The present fiscal laws would be reformed, and a rational budget drawn up for the new year. Reforms would be undertaken in all ministries, the number of government officials would be decreased (by way of retirement), and the land and navy forces would be reorganised.

As the reforms needed some funding, the tax system would be reorganised, and the resources of income would be used in a rational way. A law guaranteeing property rights would go into effect. Appropriate to the principle of equality promised by the constitutional monarchy, the obligation of military service would include all the Ottoman citizens.¹⁰⁵

The single reason for the cooperation between the CUP and Kamil Paşa was mutual political interests. The CUP, which was unable to take control openly, needed someone with a liberal mind, who would govern the state on its behalf. On the other hand, Kamil Paşa was ready to tolerate the CUP as long as it was an element keeping the equilibrium between the Palace and Kamil Paşa. But this equilibrium could not continue eternally because one's victory depended on other's defeat.¹⁰⁶

Kamil Paşa never considered the CUP as important. Even after its victory in the elections of İstanbul, he did not think that the Committee could dominate the parliament. He considered the Committee as an arm to defend him against the Sultan. In the past, the only threat to the *Bab-ı Ali* had been the Sultan. Kamil Paşa thought that the Sultan would maintain his dangerous position in the future. He did not accept the Committee could gain political power and he did not think that the Committee would be a problem after the power of the Palace had been restricted.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, pp.66-67

¹⁰⁵ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp.39-40

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p:46

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, pp.50-51

In spite of the fact that there were two Unionist ministers in the Kamil Paşa's cabinet, the relationship between Kamil Paşa and the CUP became strained rapidly. The first disagreement appeared in the first days of the parliament. The Unionists asked that the Sultan, Abdülhamid the second, to take an oath before the deputies. Kamil Paşa stated that the Sultan had already taken an oath, in 1876 when the parliament of the first constitutional monarchy had been opened. In reaction to the insistence of Halil Bey (Menteşe), Kamil Paşa said that the declaration of constitutional monarchy was the own desire of the Sultan.¹⁰⁸

Just eleven days after the opening of the parliament Hüseyin Cahit Bey (Yalçın) proposed an interpellation (*istizah, gensoru*) against Kamil Paşa. He demanded an explanation about the foreign and domestic policies. He added the problem of Crete in this package. Kamil Paşa promised that he would make a statement. On 31 December 1908, the declaration of the sadrazam was read.¹⁰⁹ The speech of Kamil Paşa ended with an ovation from the deputies, and the parliament decided to give to Kamil Paşa "confidence by waiting application (*tatbikat*)".¹¹⁰

The reason for the CUP's discontent with Kamil Paşa was the fact that during the elections Kamil Paşa had taken sides with *Ahrar Fırkası* (Liberal Party). The pro-Committee press attacked Kamil Paşa on the grounds that he had not realised the domestic reforms that he had promised, and accused him of intending to continue the despotic administration of the Palace in the *Bab-ı Ali*. In spite of these criticisms, there was no proof that the Committee had the aim of overthrowing Kamil Paşa. Talat Bey told the English ambassador that the Committee trusted in Kamil Paşa's moderate attitude and his experience and that it would do its best to keep him in power. One of the reasons why the Committee wanted to keep him in power was that Kamil Paşa had

¹⁰⁸ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.69

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p.71

liberal opinions and he was a statesman of free opinions, and respected by the people. He also was supported by the English Embassy. This support was important because, until the Balkan Wars, England was the great power most trusted by the Young Turks.¹¹¹

The cabinet of Kamil Paşa was buffeted in this six-month period and faced with the parliament in an anarchic plurality in a confused and surprised position. In this period, there was no war, but there were ethnic disorders: Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia -Herzegovina, Bulgaria declared its independence, and there was disorder in Albania.

One part of the press attacked the cabinet of Kamil Paşa. The government reacted to this by way of closing newspapers (*Hukuk-u Umumiye*). Strikes were widespread. *Tensikat* (combing out of inefficient government officials) was applied.¹¹²

The Army played an important role in the overthrow of the cabinet of Kamil Paşa in the parliament by the CUP. In February 1909, the removal from the office of the Ministers of War and Marine by Kamil Paşa was accepted by the Army as contrary to the *meşrutiyet*. It caused the spread of some rumours about the intentions of some military units in Salonica to overthrow the cabinet of Kamil Paşa. Telegraphs sent from battleships anchored on the Bosphorus in Beşiktaş were influential in the overthrow of the cabinet of Kamil Paşa the same day.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp.72-73

¹¹¹ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp.51-52

¹¹² Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.68

Without the cabinet of Kamil Paşa, the Army had great influence in the assignment of the Ministers of War and Marine in the cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa that followed.¹¹³

After Kamil Paşa left from his office, the CUP chose the experienced and potent ex-vizier Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa as *sadrizam*. Due to his success in the province (*vilayet*) of Rumelia as General Inspector, it was accepted that Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa would be a successful *sadrizam* in the confused and anarchic atmosphere of the *meşrutiyet*.¹¹⁴

The office of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, which was initiated on 14 February 1909, continued until his resignation on 12 January 1910. Three days after the founding of the cabinet, a declaration, of the nature of the program of the cabinet, was read by the *sadrizam*.

In the cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, the Ministers of War and Marine whose resignations had caused problems before, kept their places, as well as two Unionist ministers. One month after the founding of the cabinet, due to the trouble of 31 March, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa was forced to resign. The next cabinet was founded by Tevfik Paşa. With the suppression of the incidents, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa was charged to form a new cabinet.¹¹⁵

Some members of the CUP were against Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa's rise to power. In spite of the attacks, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa obtained the vote of confidence with a 191 vote against 5. The Committee provided the vote of confidence of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa against the threat of Mahmut Şevket Paşa to dissolve the parliament.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Ahmet Mehmetefendioğlu, "İttihat ve Terakki'nin 1909 Kongresi", *Toplumsal Tarih*, July 1998, no.55, p.20

¹¹⁴ Hüseyin Cahid Yalçın, *Tanıdıklarım*, İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002, p.78

¹¹⁵ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, pp.84-85

¹¹⁶ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, p.72

After the failure of the amendment of Article 67 of the *Kanun-i Esasi* (constitution) in order to place Unionist deputies in the ministries as counselors, The Unionists changed their policies and decided to put some important and capable members in the cabinet. The first (if Manyasizade Refik Bey is not taken in to account) individual participating in the cabinet as Minister of Finance (*Maliye Nazırı*) was the deputy for Salonika, Cavid Bey.¹¹⁷

In the period after the mutiny of 31 March, the civil (non-military) and liberal wing of the CUP tried to control the de facto power of Mahmud Şevket Paşa by including him in the cabinet. In the second cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, supported by the Army and the Unionists as well, they tried to bring Mahmut Şevket Paşa to the Ministry of War (*Harbiye Nezareti*). Mahmut Şevket Paşa refused this suggestion, however as Mahmut Şevket Paşa did not want a dictatorship as a member of the army faithful to the constitutional monarchy.¹¹⁸ Mahmut Şevket Paşa, who did not want to be called a dictator, played an effective role along with the Chief of General Staff (*Erkan-ı Harbiye Reisi*) of the Third Army, Ali Rıza Paşa, in the selection of the members of the cabinet. As a result, Ferid Paşa participated in the cabinet as the Minister of Internal Affairs, at the request of Mahmut Şevket Paşa.¹¹⁹

In 1909 the Unionists worked in harmony with the cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa on the radical reforms and important legal changes needed to maintain the constitutional monarchist system. They provided the participation of two important members of the civil wing to the government: in June, Cavid Bey became the Minister of Finance and in August, Talat Bey became the Minister of Internal Affairs to replace Ferid Paşa, who had been assigned at the request of Mahmut Şevket Paşa and resigned due to the pressure of the CUP. Another important change in the government

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp.73-75

¹¹⁸ Mehmetefendioğlu, "İttihat ve Terakki'nin.1909 Kongresi", p.23

occurred in September. The Minister of Public Works (*Nafia*), Gabriel Noradonkyan Efendi, known for his closeness to Mahmut Şevket Paşa, was forced to resign under pressure from the Unionists. In his place, Hallacyan Efendi, a known Unionist, was assigned with the support of the civil and liberal wing of the Committee.¹²⁰

In regards to the relationship between Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and the Unionists, it is seen that Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa had never mentioned in his speeches that he felt sympathy for the CUP. Also, prominent members of the CUP claimed that the cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa had not been a cabinet chosen by the Party. The opposition of the Unionists (not organised but increasing) defined the cabinets of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa as cabinets in the service of the Unionists.¹²¹

In December 1909, the plan to unify the Ottoman company *Hamidiye*, transporting cargo and passengers on the Euphrates with the Lynch Company, intensified the contention between the CUP and Mahmut Şevket Paşa. The pro-Unionist press pretended that the campaign of opposition against this jointventure was a German provocation. Mahmut Şevket Paşa and von Goltz Paşa were accused of planning to overthrow the pro-British CUP and establish a military regime serving German interests. Due to the discussions in the parliament caused by the Lynch incident, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa advocating a plan of unification, asked for a vote of confidence. Although Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa obtained the vote of confidence, he resigned in 28 December 1909. The resignation was accepted and the grand vizierate (*sadrâzamlık*) was offered to the ambassador of Rome Hakkı Paşa. He accepted this office after some bargaining and he became the *sadrâzam* with the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* dated 12 January 1910.¹²²

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.23

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, p.23

¹²¹ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.88

¹²² Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp.79-80

İsmail Hakkı Bey, who had given the Lynch proposal, accepted that in the resignation of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, the Unionists had been effective. The individual responsible of the General Centre (*Merkez-i Umumi*) of the Committee, Ömer Naci Bey, in a denying (*tekzib*) assumed that the news published in the European press pretending that Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa had resigned due to the pressure of the CUP, was not true. Also, he called Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to witness this issue. In his answer, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa approved Ömer Naci Bey.¹²³

Hakkı Paşa, who had replaced Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, was a candidate accepted by everybody. Compared to other *sadr azams* before him, he was much more open to the reforms and Europeanisation. Hakkı Paşa asked for full authority to form his cabinet. His first activity was to assign Mahmut Şevket Paşa as Minister of War. He expected to not let out of the control of the cabinet, the commander of Martial Law and the General Inspector of the first three army.¹²⁴

Hakkı Paşa was aware that the martial law, which had been in place a long time, was putting the constitutional monarchy in a ridiculous position. To put an end to this situation, Hakkı Paşa took Mahmut Şevket Paşa into the cabinet and in his program read in front of the parliament he promised that the martial law would be abolished, but it could not be done.¹²⁵

The first detailed and comprehensive discussion of a program in the second constitutional monarchy started with the cabinet of Hakkı Paşa. He knew that the Unionist majority in the parliament supported him. After he had read his program, he obtained the vote of confidence (184 against 34). For the first time, the opposition in the parliament showed itself quantitatively. This opposition of 34 increased as time passed. The reason for this increase was the fact that the third cabinet of the

¹²³ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, pp.93-95

¹²⁴ Ahmad, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp.92-93

constitutional monarchy was accepted as it was under the rigid control of the CUP. This issue was the most criticised one. The opposition defined the dilemma of the Committee/Party as an instrument of pressure in political life.¹²⁶

Hakkı Paşa claimed that he had obtained the power by basing it on the confidence of Party of Union and Progress, and that a cabinet acting appropriately to the program of the party would stay in power. These words prove the existence of a direct relation between Committee and the cabinet.¹²⁷

The cabinet of Hakkı Paşa, founded on 12 January 1910, had two characteristics. The first one was the increase in the number of Unionist ministers (Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Bey, and Minister of Finance, Cavid Bey, kept their places, the deputy for Baghdad İsmail Hakkı Bey became the Minister of Education and the deputy for Niğde Hayri Bey became the Minister of *Evkaf*). The second one was the participation of Mahmut Şevket Paşa in the cabinet as the Minister of War.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, p.94

¹²⁶ Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, v.3, p.102

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, p.104

¹²⁸ Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat. ve Terakki*, p.260

6. Ahmet Samim

Ahmet Samim was the son of pensioner major Tevfik Bey and the nephew of Asım Bey, the owner of the printing office of *Hilal* (crescent). He was born in Prizren in 1884. His mother died when he was three years old. He was raised by his uncle, Asım Bey. He completed his elementary education in a school in Fatih, and then continued his education at the *Mekteb-i Sultani* (Galatasaray Lycee) and Robert College. After graduation he took a position at the *Reji Müdiriyyet-i Umumiyyesi* (Administration of Tobacco Monopoly).¹²⁹

He wrote some articles in *Servet-i Fünun* (Wealth of Sciences) and proved his talent. With the declaration of the constitutional monarchy, he began working at the daily *Servet-i Fünun* and some other newspapers. Later on he joined to *Fırka-i Ahrar* and became a writer for the newspaper *Osmanlı* (Ottoman).

During the revolt of 31 March, Samim established the newspaper *Hilal* and wrote articles about the necessity of dethroning Abdülhamid. He escaped from the rifles and bayonets of the rebels and took refuge in the headquarter of the Army of *İstirdad-ı Hürriyet* (restitution of freedom).

Later on he passed the examination of the police organisation and he became employee there, but his fervent temperament forced him to leave this position.

He published a newspaper called *Cidal* (dispute), in only one volume; then the newspaper *İtilaf* (Entente); and then he became the editor-in-chief (*mesul müdür*) and editorial writer (*başyazar*) of *Sadayı Millet*, which had received permission from the government to publish. He was assassinated on the night of 9/10 June 1910.

Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın described Ahmet Samim as an idealist, daydreamer (*hülyacı*) and vivacious young man confined himself to the field of theory, not making

¹²⁹ "Ahmet Samim", *Servet-i Fünun*, no.993, 7 June 1326

political criticisms. The accusation of being an instrument of the wishes of the Patriarchate was resented by Ahmet Samim, who believed that he worked for the goal of humanity, equity and justice. Due to this anger, he went too far in his criticisms.¹³⁰

In *Hüküm Gecesi*, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu wrote that although Ahmet Samim was married and had two children he was unable to put in order his life.¹³¹

Karaosmanoğlu also said that Ahmet Samim was very meticulous about political movements, such as Turkishness, Greekness (*Rumluk*) and Armenianness (*Ermenilik*) and he did not accept news or advertisements on these subjects.¹³²

The Princess Mevhibe Celaleddin described Ahmet Samim who was one of the two best friends of Şevket Bey as a pleasant, well-spoken man.¹³³

Fazıl Ahmet Aykaç claimed that Ahmet Samim's best qualities such as being a loyal friend (*dostluk*), faithfulness, intimacy were his faults as well. He was a stubborn man who revolted against injustice. He had an incisive intelligence and a derisive attitude and sense of humour.¹³⁴

Refik Halid Karay described Samim as a joyful, joking young man with a liberal mind. He added that Samim could combine seriousness with flightiness.¹³⁵

Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil claimed Ahmet Samim, along with journalists such as Babanzade İsmail Hakkı and İsmail Müştak, had brought a fresh soul to the Turkish language.¹³⁶

Refik Halit Karay claimed that the literary school of *Fecr-i Ati* (Dawn of the New Age) had kept silent after the murder of Ahmet Samim, although he had been

¹³⁰ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2000, p.219

¹³¹ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Hüküm Gecesi*, İstanbul: İletişim, 1998, p.53

¹³² *ibid.*, p.61

¹³³ Sara Ertuğrul Korle, *Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki.../ Prenses Mevhibe Celaleddin'in Anıları*, İstanbul: Çağdaş, 1987, p.120

¹³⁴ Fazıl Ahmet Aykaç, *Kırpıntı*, İstanbul: Arba, 1991, p.61

¹³⁵ Refik Halid Karay, *Bir Ömür Boyunca*, İstanbul: İletişim, 1996, p.62

¹³⁶ Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Kırk Yıl*, İstanbul: İnkılap, 1987, p.673

their member*. Those who had encouraged Ahmet Samim to opposition were also silent.¹³⁷

After the murder of Samim, in İstanbul, articles in newspapers published in German, English, French, Greek (*Rumca*) and Armenian discussed this event and urged the government to do its job. Refik Halit Karay declared that Turkish newspapers trampled the honour of the press by taking this subject lightly. Refik Halit Karay, Şevket Bey of Cyprus (*Kıbrıslı*), Celal Sofu the lawyer and Halid Göksu had published in *İştirak* (Participation) no.17 of 13 June 1910, a letter by Ahmet Samim informing how he had been threatened by the Committee and they tried to prove that the agent (*fail*) behind this murder was the government.¹³⁸

In this letter written to Şevket Bey, Ahmet Samim claimed that the CUP had decided on his execution (*idam*) and that he would be executed. He said that he was not afraid of death and that he accepted it with religious resignation (*dindarane tevekkül*), although he did not know when this execution would take place.¹³⁹

Ahmet İhsan who had known Ahmet Samim from his childhood, told him in 1910 to stay away from politics. At the time, Ahmet Samim agreed and he consented to go to Europe to complete his studies (*tahsil*). At that time, the Ministry of Education had started sending young men to Europe. Ahmet İhsan went to the Minister of Education, Emrullah Efendi, to ask him to send Ahmet Samim to Paris to complete his education. Emrullah Efendi accepted this request and prepared Ahmet Samim's papers. On May 1910, Ahmet İhsan went to the Ministry of Education to take the letter of permission for Ahmet Samim, but Emrullah Efendi told him that it

* Ahmet Samim was one of the persons who had signed the founding declaration of the group of literature (*edebiyat topluluğu*) *Fecr-i Ati*, published in *Servet-i Fünun* on 11 February 1325 (24 February 1909), Hasan Ali Yücel, *Edebiyat Tarihimizden*, İstanbul: İletişim, 1989, p.47

¹³⁷ Karay, *Bir Ömür Boyunca*, pp.58-59

¹³⁸ *ibid*, p.59-60

¹³⁹ Tunaya, *Hürriyetin İlanı*, p.67

was impossible for Ahmet Samim to go to Europe to study. Later on Ahmet İhsan learned that Doktor Nazım, who had seen the name of Ahmet Samim on the list of the students to be sent to Paris for study, had removed it.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Ahmet İhsan (Tokgöz), *Matbuat Hatıraları*, vol. I, İstanbul: Ahmet İhsan Matbaası, 1931, pp.101-102

7. *Sadayı Millet* (the Sound of the Nation)

Sadayı Millet was a daily newspaper published in four pages and sold for ten *paras*. The owner of the newspaper was a Roum, Kozmide Efendi, the deputy for İstanbul. The first issue of this newspaper appeared on 14 October 1909. The Court Martial suspended *Sadayı Millet* on 30 November 1909. Ahmet Samim became the editorial writer of this newspaper with issue number 60, on 29 January 1910. The last issue, no.192, appeared on 10 July 1910. Its publication stopped with the assassination of Ahmet Samim.

Constitutional Monarchy

Ahmet Samim claimed that Grand Vizier (*sadr-ı azam*) Hakkı Paşa by his statement in parliament, had declared that a state of excitement (*hal-i teheyhül*) existed in the country. While Hakkı Paşa had not wanted to mention the factors causing this state of excitement, he had given a list of precautions to be undertaken to reduce it. Ahmet Samim said that Hakkı Paşa had assumed that the reasons for this state of excitement were known by everybody and therefore had not felt the need to explain them.¹⁴¹

"We think that these reasons are not known by everybody as Hakkı Paşa supposed. In constitutional monarchist and civilised countries, where the principle of national sovereignty is present (*cari*), no subject connected to the common politics (*siyaset-i umumiyye*) can be kept secret."¹⁴² According to Ahmet Samim, every member of a nation with freedom of expression and the liberty of the press could freely express his opinion and make comments about the future of the society to

¹⁴¹ Ahmet Samim, "Hal-i Teheyhül ve Esbabı", *Sadayı Millet*, no.60, 29 January 1910

which he belonged. He credited this state of excitement to the fact that the public authority (*kamu gücü*) was supposed to be used to provide and protect the common interest. Those governing a country and a nation had to use justice (*hak*) and equity (*adl*) as their guide to be successful. "A government must behave impartially towards all individuals of the nation."¹⁴³ Samim wrote that in any case the government did not have to apply two weights two measures. "Because the government is not the government of this or that group (*zümre*), this or that class, of an association (*cemiyet*) or a party, a community, but is the government of the whole nation, the most modest individual is included."¹⁴⁴

Every individual of the nation had to be sure that he would not be attacked, whatever his political identity. Individuals wanted to have their legal and legitimate demands of the government be evaluated impartially and equitably (*adilane*). The government, which had to be impartial, did not have to force the government officials to express their political opinions and these government officials did not have to be dismissed from office and deprived of advancement (*terfi*) due to their political opinions. Government officials who had proven their qualifications should be able to keep their positions even if their political opinions were opposite those of the party in power. Only on these conditions would a constitutional monarchy be respected.¹⁴⁵

Ahmet Samim claimed that in the application of *tensikat* or decreasing the number of government officials, the principles outlined above had not been respected and this had led to the current state of excitement. These principles were invaluable for a nation which had achieved national sovereignty at the cost of much blood. He

¹⁴² "Bize kalırsa bu esbab müşarünileyhin zan itdikleri gibi herkesce tamamen malum bulunmuyor. Hakimiyyet-i milliye esası cari olan memalik-i meşrûta ve mütemeddinede siyaset-i umumiye müteallik heman hiç bir şey gizli tutulamaz.", Ahmet Samim, SM.60

¹⁴³ "Bir hükümet, efrad-ı milletin cümlesine karşı tamamen bi taraf davranmalıdır.", Ahmet Samim, SM. 60

added that the constitutional monarchy was not in the possession of any group, but of the whole nation. The honour of gaining the constitution could not be attributed to any group, and the rights given by the constitutional monarchy were the property of the whole nation. Those who did not believe in that were making a grave mistake. In order to restore calm (*sükun*) in the public opinion and to establish stability and harmony in the domestic politics, it was necessary that every individual be sure that his rights were inviolable. The nation, in no way, could accept the denial of the rules providing this guarantee.¹⁴⁶

Ahmet Samim asked that Hakkı Paşa not allow the intervention of people who did not have the official authorisation or responsibility, into governmental affairs.¹⁴⁷

Ahmet Samim wrote that the governmental practice of *tensikat* was increasing the number of disgruntled individuals in society. The injustices and inequalities in this practice had caused some problems on this subject. Hakkı Paşa had promised in his program that *tensikat*, which was the responsibility of the executive power, would be realised fairly and would be free of the intervention of the legislative power in accordance with the principle of separation of powers. Samim said it was impossible to understand why members of the legislative power had intervened in areas in which they had no authority. He concluded that this big machine, the State, was based on the principle of the division of labour and the limits of these affairs had been defined clearly. He asked why the members of the Senate and parliament had intervened in the *tensikat* of *Şehremaneti*.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ "Çünkü hükümet, şu veya bu zümrenin, bu veya şu sınıfın yani yalnız bir cemiyet veya bir fırkanın veya bir cemaatin hükümeti değil en naçiz ferdine kadar bütün milletindir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.60

¹⁴⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.60

¹⁴⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.60

¹⁴⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.60

¹⁴⁸ Ahmet Samim, "Tensikat Hakkında", *Sadayı Millet*, no.98, 8 March 1910

Samim wrote that one of the projects planned after the salvation from absolute rule had been the abolition of the foreign post offices in İstanbul and other important cities. "Foreign post offices, which do not exist in other independent countries, are like wounds, boils, in a beautiful face."¹⁴⁹

He declared that to abolish the capitulations it was necessary to reorganise the civil administration (*idare-i mülkiyye*), and to reform the law courts and the police. All of these would require time, but to abolish the foreign post offices would be simple. "To convince the Great Powers (*Düvel-i Muazzama*) it is necessary to reorganise our postal organisation (*posta teşkilatı*) and put it in a secure and trustworthy form. This could done with some good will, knowledge (*vukuf*) and effort."¹⁵⁰ The nation, and the Europeans, had reason to expect this good will, knowledge (*vukuf*) and effort from the experts of jurisprudence and patriotism (*erbab-ı ictihad ve hamiyet*), who had changed a form of rule of six hundred years, through a glorious reform (*inkılab*). The negotiations (*müzakerat*) about the postal directorate (*posta müdiriyeti*) saddened patriotic hearts.¹⁵¹

"The period (*devir*) of constitutional monarchy is a period of truth and safety (*emniyyet*). In a country governed by constitutional monarchy, the people are sure of their life, family and chastity. It is sure that no one, whoever he is, can attack one's house. Without the permission of the court or his own permission no one, not even the Grand Vizier, can enter in a house, a letter entrusted (*tevdî edilmiş*) to the post can not be opened by anybody without the decision of the law court."¹⁵² Samim described the

¹⁴⁹ "Hiç bir müstakill milletin mülkünde bulunmayan ecnebi postaları ise güzel bir simadaki yaralar, çibanlar gibi cesm-i hamiyete igrenc, çirkin görünüyorlardı.", Ahmet Samim, "Buna Ne Demeli ve Ne Diyecekler?", *Sadayı Millet*, no.172, 21 May, 1910

¹⁵⁰ "Düvel-i muazzamayı razı ve kendi postalarımızı islah etmek şayan-ı emniyyet ve itimad bir hale koymak kafi idi. Bu da bir az hüsn niyyet bir az vukuf ve gayret ile elde olunabilirdi.", Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵² "Meşrutîyyet devri doğruluk ve emniyyet devridir. Meşrutîyyet ile idare olunan bir memleketde halk can ve man ve ırzından emindir, her kim olursa olsun hiç kimsenin kendi meskenine taarruz

difference between absolute rule and constitutional monarchy. In countries governed by constitutional monarchy, the abuse of the sanctified and natural rights (*hukuk-u mukaddese ve tabiyye*) of the nation could not be accepted. In countries in possession of a constitutional monarchy and liberty, the strongest guarantee of such abuses (*su-istimal*) was the fact that the executive power (*kuvve-i icraiyye*) was under the control of the deputies. In that condition, the cabinet (*heyet-i icraiyye*) would beware of and abstain from all acts attacking the rights of the nation.¹⁵³ "For a nation in possession of human rights (*hukuk-u insaniyye*) and the right of sovereignty, the security and the secrecy of correspondence is as important and fundamental a right as civil and intellectual liberty (*hürriyet-i şahsiyye ve fikriyye*), the security of domicile, and liberty of the press."¹⁵⁴

Attacks on the right to private correspondence were not overt, like attacks on homes, civil and intellectual liberty (*hürriyet-i şahsiyye ve fikriyye*), or the freedom of press. Therefore if this right was respected, the political generosity of the politicians directing the destiny (*mukadderat*) of the country would be proven.¹⁵⁵ During the negotiations in parliament (*meclis-i mebusan*) on Wednesday and Thursday, however, it had been seen that there were doubts about ensuring the right of the security and the secrecy of letters. The negotiations (*müzakerat*) had revealed that they would have to forget the abolition of the foreign post offices for years.¹⁵⁶

"In a situation where the deputies say that the letters written by them to family in the provinces and the brochures and the books sent to them from the abroad are

edemeyeceğine, kanunun yahud kendisinin müsaadesi olmadıkça kimsenin ve hatta sadr-ı azamın bile evine giremeyeceğine; postalara tevdi ettiği bir mektubun bir mahkeme kararı olmadıkça her kim tarafından olursa olsun açılmayacağına mutmaindir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵³ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵⁴ "Hukuk-u insaniyye ve hakk-ı hakimiyetine malik hür bir millet için hürriyet-i şahsiyye ve fikriyye, masuniyet-i mesakin, serbesti-i matbuat ne kadar mühim ve esasi haklardan ise 'emniyyet ve mahfiyyet-i muhabere' de o kadar mühim ve esasi haklardandır.", Ahmet Samim, SM 172

¹⁵⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

controlled by the officials of the postal service (*posta memurları*), and that some of the letters, brochures and books are registered by the governors (*vali*), how can the efforts that we are making to abolish the foreign post offices in our country be fruitful, getting in our eyes like thorns and taking out of our hand the wealth and income (*varidat*) of hundred thousands of liras which must be ours."¹⁵⁷

Samim wrote that the opening of the letters of Süleyman Efendi to his family and his friends and the inspection of a review belonging to Rıza Nur Bey sent to him from Europe by breaking its seal (*bandrol*), was not a simple crime (*cürm-ü adi*), as supposed by the chief of the Party of Union and Progress, Halil Bey, but a political crime against the constitution and the legitimate rights of the nation (*hukuk-u meşrua-i millet*), as argued by some deputies.¹⁵⁸

Postal service officials (*posta memurları*) did not open the mail to read it, but because they were ordered to do so. Samim questioned whether the executive power had the right to give such an order and monitor the correspondence of the deputies. The constitution provided an answer to that question, and that an article had been especially added to the constitution declaring that a court order was needed to open letters.¹⁵⁹ If it was truly desired to apply the constitutional monarchy and the parliamentarism in the country and the commands (*ahkam*) of the amended constitution were to be respected, it was necessary that the cabinet not open letters, brochures and reviews without a court order.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ "Memleketimizde millet vekillerinin vilayetlerde bulunan aileleri efradına, ahbasına yazdığı mektupların ve haricden kendilerine gelen risale ve kitabların posta memurlarınca muayeneye tabi tutulduğu ve bunlardan bazıları valiler tarafından zabt olunduğu Meclis-i Mebusanda yine mebuslar tarafından resmen söylenir iken memleketimizde diken gibi gözlerimize batan ve bize aid olması lazım gelen bir servet ve varidatdan yüz binlerce lirasını elimizden alan ecnebi postalarını kaldırmak için yapacağımız teşebbüsler nasıl semeredar olabilir?", Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁵⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁶⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.172

"Opening the letters of Süleyman Sudi Efendi and the review of Rıza Nur Bey is contrary to the high commands (*ahkam-ı münife*) of our constitution; it is an open and direct attack on the legitimate rights of the nation (*hukuk-u meşrua-i millet*). In any parliament of the world, an ordinary crime (*cürm-ü adi*) can not be hidden, because such a parliament breaks and tramples down its honour, dignity and the rights of the nation (*hukuk-u millet*)."¹⁶¹

The Law of Bands (*Çeteler Kanunu*) was presented for the examination (*tedkik*) and approval (*tasvib*) of the parliament under a new name as an appendix of the decision of Martial Law (*idare-i örfiyye kararnamesi*) by the cabinet of Hakkı Paşa. During the Grand Vizierate of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa this law had been applied in some *vilayets* of Rumelia and Anatolia for a long time. Samim wrote about the appearance and spirit of this law. He said that he assumed that there must be extraordinary (*fevkalade*) reasons leading the government to edit and apply extraordinary laws. Referring to the general armed revolt that had taken place before the constitutional monarchy and how Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and Wallachian armed bands had been active in Macedonia, he said that to think that these bands had taken up arms only against the cruelty and despotism of the *ancien regime* and for the restitution of freedom (*istirdad-ı hürriyet*) and establishment of justice (*tesis-i adl*) would be childish and naive. Although the government of Abdülhamit had had a part in this issue, these bands had had the political goal of making propaganda for the division (*inkısam*) of Rumelia. Just after the meeting (*mülakat*) of Reval, which would have dealt a blow to their political independence in solving the problem of

¹⁶¹ "Süleyman Sudi Efendiye aid mektubların, Rıza Nur Beyin mecmuasının açılması Kanun-i Esasımız ahkam-ı münifesine mugayirdir; hukuk-u meşrua-i millete açık ve pek ağır bir tecavüzdür. Dünyanın hiç bir parlamentosunda böyle mühim bir cürm-ü siyasi 'ört bas' edilerek kapanılamaz. Zira böyle bir

Macedonia, the revolution (*inkılab*) had broken out and had bewildered the world. Samim added that the day following the proclamation of the constitution, the bands in the mountains of Macedonia had lay down their arms and hugged each other. Samim claimed that this peaceful atmosphere had continued for a short time before these bands had started their activities once more. He declared that Macedonia felt in revolt. Then the government had revised and applied the Law of Bands and extraordinary courts had been formed in Edirne, Salonica, Manastır, and Yanya. Many bandits had been judged and executed. The government had been moved to institute the law in the *vilayet* of Aydın due to Çakırcalı band and some other bands breaking the peace (*huzur*) and safety (*emniyyet*). Although Çakırcalı had not been captured, other bandits in this region had been executed and some bands had been annihilated. Although the government had asserted that the application had been nothing more than coercion (*kahr*) and violence, the harmony of this situation with the constitutional monarchy and the constitution had to be taken into account.¹⁶²

Ahmet Samim pointed out that just a one day before different opinions had been expounded in the parliament. Some deputies had declared that it was impossible to ensure public order in the country by means of exile and execution. Public calm (*sükun*) and safety could be assured by allowing the people to become used to the new administration (*idare*) and by solving the problem of church and land (*arazi*), which had led to the activities of the bands in Rumelia, with a result suitable to the interests of all sides.¹⁶³

Zeynel Abidin Efendi and his colleagues had argued that the decision of Martial Law was contrary to the tenets (*ahkam*) of the constitution. Other deputies had

parlamento kendi şerefini, kendi haysiyyetini ve bunlarla beraber hukuk-u milleti de bizzat kendisi ihlal etmiş ve ayakları altında çiğnemiş olur.", Ahmet Samim, SM.172

¹⁶² Ahmet Samim, "Çeteler Kanunu", *Sadayı Millet*, no.141, 20 April 1910

¹⁶³ Ahmet Samim, SM.141

warned that in the application some abuses could occur and demanded its rejection.¹⁶⁴ Talat Bey, who had defended the law in the name of the government, said that with the application of this law in Rumelia and Anatolia, good results had been achieved. The ordinary legal mechanisms (*vesait-i adiyye-i kanuniyye*) were insufficient to put down these bands.¹⁶⁵

Samim wrote that the courts and commissions established according to the peculiar articles (*mevad-ı mahsusa*) of the appendix of the decision (*kararname*) of Martial Law were contrary to the constitution. He agreed with Zohrab Efendi and Kozmide Efendi, who had said that it contained many articles which could lead to abuses (*su-i istimal*). It was impossible to establish and maintain the public order by coercion and violence. "If there is an administration which can not rely upon the principle of coercion and violence, it is the constitutional government."¹⁶⁶

Samim wrote that those who threatened the peace (*huzur*) and security (*selamet*) of the country had to be punished. The existing criminal laws (*kavanin-i cezaîyye*), judicial organisation (*teşkilat-ı adliyye*) and police (*zabıta*) were sufficient to remove all elements disturbing the public order (*asayiş*). He argued that success against the bandits in the *vilayets* of Rumelia and Aydın had to be sought in the intention (*azm*), seriousness and justice of the constitutional government, not in the exception (*fevkaladelik*) of the Law of Bands. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Bey, had assumed that Article 113 of the constitution indicated that it was possible to declare Martial Law if a revolution occurred in the countryside and that under this condition the application of the Law of Bands would not be contrary to the constitution. Samim declared that in the hands of an executive board (*heyet-i icraiyye*)

¹⁶⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.141

¹⁶⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.141

¹⁶⁶ "Kahr ve şiddet esasına istinad ettirilmeyecek bir idare varsa o da hükümet-i meşrutadır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.141

which could demand the declaration of Martial Law in the country due to some bandits in the mountains, this law could become a terrifying and inauspicious weapon.¹⁶⁷

"If we want to be rightly respectful of the principle of constitutional monarchy, we do not have to be the followers of the dubious and abnormal activities in governmental administration by always behaving as if we are frightened about extraordinary laws, extraordinary courts."¹⁶⁸

Constitutional monarchy, to Ahmet Samim meant the guarantee of equality, the separation of powers and personal surety given by the constitution.

Military Service and Non-Muslims

With the *Islahat Fermanı* (the imperial edict of reform) in 1856, non-Muslim Ottoman subjects were granted equality before the law and the males among them were asked to execute their military duty. But this project existed on paper only. The humiliating tax, *haraç* (tribute), was replaced by a system called *bedel-i askeriyye* (a tax in lieu of military service).¹⁶⁹

The problem was discussed again in 1908 after the declaration of the second constitutional monarchy. The government of Kamil Paşa proclaimed in its program, published 16 August 1908, that the *bedel-i askeriyye* would be abolished and henceforth all Ottoman citizens would be recruited. This decision had a political aspect (providing integration among the elements) and also a military one (increasing

¹⁶⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.141

¹⁶⁸ "Meşrutiyet esasına bihakkın riayetkar olmak istiyor isek böyle fevkalade kanunlar, fevkalade mahkemelerden daima mütevahhiş davranıp idare-i hükümetde muşevveş ve 'anormale' icraata tarafdar olmamalıyız.", Ahmet Samim, SM.141

¹⁶⁹ Sinan Kunalp, "İkinci Meşrutiyet Döneminde Gayrimüslimlerin Askerlik Meselesi 1908-1912", *Toplumsal Tarih*, December 1999, no.72, p.11

the number of the soldiers), but the Ministry of Finance did not share this opinion because the *bedel-i askeriyye* made an important contribution to the budget.

In October 1908, the *Meclis-i Vükela* (cabinet) prepared a *tezkere* (note) and sent it to the leaders of the communities informing them of the project of the law being prepared by the Ministry of War. According to this draft, all Ottoman male citizens, without distinction of religion or place of residence, would be obliged to undertake their military service between the ages of 20 and 45.

After this decision, while the government apparently made efforts to postpone the results of this decision, the non-Muslims indicated that they were ready to execute the obligations in order to obtain the equality they had sought for so long. They expressed this intention in the parliament, in the assemblies of clergy (*ruhban meclisleri*), and in the newspapers.

Ohannes Varteks Efendi, deputy for Erzurum, declared in parliament on July 1909 that no non-Muslim had the right to give money for the military service and to live with the blood of others. To establish equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, military service was an obligation and it was their debt.¹⁷⁰

The deputy for İstanbul, Kozmide Efendi, asked for the annulment of the *bedel-i askeriyye*. He said that to deprive a group of Ottomans of the honour of military service could not be called equality.¹⁷¹

According to Zohrab Efendi, the deputy for İstanbul, the friendship which would be established by means of military service was a thousand times more important than the budget deficits. If social peace and political stability were not provided, the future of Ottomanhood would be in danger.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Ufuk Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslümlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, İstanbul: Simurg, 2000, p.131

¹⁷¹ *ibid*, p.132

¹⁷² *ibid*, p.133

Although the government tried to slow down the pace of affairs, on 12 July 1909 the parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) accepted a draft of the decision (*karar tasarısı*) abolishing the *bedel-i askeriyye* and the draft of the decision regarding the extension of military duty to all citizens. It was envisaged that this decision would be applied in the same year. However, an interim agreement was made until the decision was made law according to which those who wanted to pay the *bedel-i askeriyye* could do so till that time.¹⁷³

The law of recruitment went into effect on 7 August 1909.¹⁷⁴ The new Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Bey, informed the provincial governments (*vilayets*) that all male Ottoman citizens had to register to perform their military service. A temporary regulation (*nizamname*) arranging the law of recruitment (*askere alma mevzuatı*) was prepared.¹⁷⁵

Ahmet Samim wrote that in a country involved in the process of renovation (*inkılab*), the function of the press was fragile. "As we have repeated many times, we are in a period of renovation (*devre-i inkılab*). We are moving from the past to the future, from darkness to luminousness, from ignorance to science, humanity... In short, we are moving from savageness to civilisation. We are living in the most glorious but also the most exceptional phase of Ottoman history."¹⁷⁶ In order to walk to the future in full safety, it was necessary to think before every step, take measures and behave prudently and wisely. A mistake in the first steps could annihilate the noble goals.

¹⁷³ Kunalp, "İkinci Meşrutiyet Döneminde Gayrimüslimlerin Askerlik Meselesi 1908-1912", p.12

¹⁷⁴ Ufuk Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslümlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, p.138

¹⁷⁵ Sinan Kunalp, "İkinci Meşrutiyet Döneminde Gayrimüslimlerin Askerlik Meselesi 1908-1912", p.14

Samim wrote that military duty was the most sacred and honourable duty given by a motherland (*vatan*) to its sons. Every individual in a nation had a debt to pay to the society to which he belonged and through the payment of these debts, the country would become prosperous. The army and the soldiers were the ones protecting the life, the chastity of a country and providing its external security. Military duty was thus sacred. In executing this duty, even death was belittled. "With the death of the soldier a country is saved, lives."¹⁷⁷

During the period of despotism (*devr-i istibdad*), the Ottoman nations had been separated from one another and at that time, the protection of the country, the chastity and the life of the motherland had been relegated to its Turkish citizens and the other citizens had been deprived of the honour of military duty.¹⁷⁸

Samim described how the constitution had given the Ottoman citizens many rights of which they had been deprived before. The Ottomans had taken back all of the rights (military duty included) usurped by the despotic rule. According to Samim the strongest, the most inflexible link of the entente and the union (*itilaf ve ittihad*) was military service. What could not be given to the Ottoman citizens by the newspapers, the admonitions, the orations, and the conferences would be given in the future by the schools: public education. Until the education system reached this degree of perfection, what was expected from the schools had to be sought in the barracks. "The barracks must be the great school of fraternity (*mekteb-i uhuvvet*); the

¹⁷⁶ "Birçok defalar tekrar ettiğimiz gibi bir devre-i İnkılab içindeyiz; maziden istikbale, karanlıktan aydınlığa, cehaletten ilme, insanlığa, hasılı vahşetden medeniyete geçiyoruz.", Ahmet Samim, "Aheng-i İttihadı Bozmayalım", *Sadayı Millet*, no.113, 23 March 1910

¹⁷⁷ "Zira askerin ölümüyle bir memleket kurtulur, yaşar.", Ahmet Samim, "Asker Kaçakları", *Sadayı Millet*, no.131, 10 April 1910

¹⁷⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.131

barracks have to connect us to each other, the barracks must make us love each other."¹⁷⁹

Saying that they had to reconstruct what had been destroyed in the past, Samim described the limits of their mission: "We have to make the children of the motherland (*vatan*) familiar and brother with each other separated and cooled by all means and ignorant activities of the past."¹⁸⁰ He claimed that the Muslim and non-Muslim children of the motherland (*vatan*) would meet in the barracks and eliminate and correct these bad opinions. "The barracks have to be a school of fraternity in a country."¹⁸¹ Noting that the life in the barracks was still very new, he wrote that the Christian and Jewish citizens who had been called into military service had hugged their Muslim comrades in arms fifteen days earlier. The scene of these soldiers waiting in Sirkeci train station to be sent to the different units of the new Ottoman army, had a scene of agreement (*sahne-i vifak*) and union. This historical event of the imposition of a sacred duty by a motherland on its children would be understood better in the future.¹⁸²

The commanders (*ümera*) were aware of the importance of military duty and were trying to make it as pleasant as possible. "The officers do not take into account, without distinction of race or religion, the Turkishness (*Türklük*), the Greekness (*Rumluk*), Bulgarianness (*Bulgarlık*), Armenianness (*Ermenilik*) of any of the soldiers and the officers treat them as friends, as brother."¹⁸³ This friendly attitude was shown not only by the commanders and officers, but the Turkish soldiers as well.

¹⁷⁹ "Kışlalar bizde en büyük mekteb-i ittihad olmalıdır, kışlalar bizi birbirimize tanıtdırmalı, kışlalar bizi yekdigerimize sevdirmelidir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.131

¹⁸⁰ "Mazinin, her türlü vesait ve icraat-ı cahile ile birbirinden tefrik ve tebrid ettiği şu vatan evladını yekdigerine sevdireceğiz, birbiriyle kardeş yapacağız.", Ahmet Samim, SM.113

¹⁸¹ "Kışla, bir memleketde bir mekteb-i uhuvvet olmalıdır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.113

¹⁸² Ahmet Samim, SM.113

¹⁸³ "Zabitan, bila tefrik-i cins ve mezheb, efraddan hiçbirinin Türklüğünü, Rumluğunu, Bulgarlığını, Ermeniliğini nazar-ı dikkate almayarak hepsine karşı kardaş, hepsine karşı arkadaş muamelesi gösteriyorlar.", Ahmet Samim, SM.131

He went on to say that the Empire had entered a period of renovation (*devre-i inkılab*), and that it had to be assumed that in military life there would be some difficulties as in all other areas. He claimed that the government was aware of the problems. He added that in one day, one month, or one year, it would be impossible to eliminate these problems, but that every member of the Ottoman press could propose and demand their removal.¹⁸⁴

Samim wrote that the support of the Ottoman press on the subject of the military duty had to be appreciated. But, on the other hand, he pointed out that some newspapers had published articles sabotaging this divine harmony and union. One of these newspapers was *Neologos*. Its editorial writer, Vutiras Efendi, had written that the Rum (Greek) soldiers were badly treated by their fellow soldiers. In another article, he had written that the Rum (Greek) soldiers were left hungry. Samim declared that these articles could have a negative effect on the public opinion of the Rum (Greek) community. Mösyö Vutiras' claims were unfounded. The government was aware of the problems in the barracks, and new barracks would be constructed before long. He added that until the new barracks were constructed, the Christian nations (*akvam-ı Hıristiyanıyye*) could not be excused from military duty. Samim noted that the Armenian and Jewish press had emphasised the honour of military life as well as its difficulties. While he allowed that it was legitimate for *Neologos* to look after the interests of Rum (Greek) individuals and the Rum (Greek) nation (*kavim*), he added that with such publications, *Neologos* was doing harm to the Rum community. These claims, which were not based on research, could break the desire and the ardour of the Rum (Greeks) novices in the military. Samim declared that he would accept all

¹⁸⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.113

acts attacking this effort as enmity: "All acts breaking this effort, in our opinion, are rancour (*garaz*), treachery (*hiyanet*) and crime (*cinayet*)."¹⁸⁵

After the articles about *Neologos* and its columnist Mösyö Vutiras had been published in *Sadayı Millet*, Ahmet Samim received some criticism from opposite newspapers. *Anatolikos Tahidromos* could not accept the fact that an article criticising Mösyö Vutiras had been published in *Sadayı Millet*. This newspaper started to attack *Sadayı Millet*. Samim gave some examples from these attacks. It had been said, for example, that while *Sadayı Millet* was known as a newspaper that examined with lightness all subjects connected with the interests of the Ottoman nations (*akvam-ı Osmaniyye*), it nonetheless had said very bad things about Mösyö Vutiras.¹⁸⁶

Samim replied that Mösyö Vutiras had written articles against the new Ottoman military life and disturbed the divine harmony of the fraternity (*uhuvvet*). By reporting falsely that the Rum soldiers were unable to receive their daily wages and had been treated badly, Mösyö Vutiras had excited Rum public opinion against the military duty and military life. Ahmet Samim declared that Mösyö Vutiras was not sad to be indicated as a foe to Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*).¹⁸⁷ The Greek (*Yunan*) citizenship of Mösyö Vutiras was not an issue, but his articles about the military service were above his competence. No Ottoman could accept the intervention of a foreigner, a Greek, in such a sacred problem of Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*). A journalist who was more than seventy years old had to know the effect of such articles on public opinion and Samim asked that the lies of this senile brain no longer disturb the common peace and happiness.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ "Ve bu gayreti kıracak her şey bizim nazarımızda garazdır, hiyanet ve hatta cinayettir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.113

¹⁸⁶ Ahmet Samim, "Bir Fertut Tezvir", *Sadayı Millet*, no.117, 27 March 1910

¹⁸⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.117

¹⁸⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.117

Samim wrote that in some of the letters he had received in the previous days, some Rum citizens had criticised the style (*üslub*) of the articles published in *Sadayı Millet* against Mösyö Vutiras, saying they were full of exaggerations and that *Sadayı Millet* had behaved beneath its professional principles (*meslek*). Samim reported that these criticisms amazed him.¹⁸⁹ When *Divan-ı Hab-i Örfi* (court-martial during a state of siege) had permitted the publication of *Sadayı Millet*, the principles of the newspaper had been published. He outlined the principles once more in order to remove the probability of bad effects caused on the public opinion by these unjust and wrong criticisms and provocations. One of the principles was "establishing a sincere entente (*itilaf*) among the Ottoman nations (*akvam*) which had been separated from each other by historical rancours, deep hatreds and ignorant hostilities and as a result, assuring Ottoman political integrity."¹⁹⁰

The main point of the union, he argued, was the entente and union of the elements (*itilaf ve ittihad-ı anasır*) and that this had to be the real aim of all genuine Ottomans or it would be impossible to move forward. *Sadayı Millet* would give a large part of their effort to realise this goal. "Before the *Kanun-i Esasi*, Ottomans are equal one to another on every point and right without separation of race and religion (*bilatefrik-i cins ve mezheb*) and sincere brothers and sisters."¹⁹¹ Until that day there had never been even a line against these principles in *Sadayı Millet*. He challenged those who made such claims to show their proof. With the article written about

¹⁸⁹ Ahmet Samim, "Mesleğimize Dair", *Sadayı Millet*, no.121, 31 March 1910

¹⁹⁰ "Bu ana kadar tarihi kinler, koyu nefretler ve cahilane adavetlerle bir birindenden ayrılmış ve elan böyle müteferrik yaşamakta bulunmuş olan akvam-ı Osmaniyye beyinde bir itilaf-ı samimi hasıl edüb bu sayede vahdet-i siyasiyyeyi Osmaniyyeyi cidden temin eyemekdir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.121

¹⁹¹ "Kanun-i Esasi nazarında Osmanlılar, bila tefrik-i cins ve mezheb, her hususda ve her hak karşısında yekdiglerine müsavi ve binaenaleyh samimi ve öz kardeşirler.", Ahmet Samim, SM.121

Mösyö Vutiras, *Sadayı Millet* had not deviated from these principles; on the contrary, they had drawn nearer to them.¹⁹²

Ahmet Samim repeated that barracks were a school of fraternity (*mekteb-i uhuvvet*). Until future generations were educated by real schools, there was no time to lose.¹⁹³ Mösyö Vutiras' unjust claims about military life made a bad impression on the public opinion of the Rum citizens. Keeping silent in the face of this situation would be a crime. After an investigation of the barracks, he had seen that the pretensions of Mösyö Vutiras were unjust.¹⁹⁴

Samim then declared that after he had debated with a newspaper whose name was well known (here he did not mention the name of this newspaper), he had received many letters of congratulation from the Rum (Greek) citizens. "With this letters it is understood that Ottoman unity (*İttihad-ı Osmani*) is not only an aim and a conception, but that in the near future it will become a gorgeous (*müşaşa*) and honoured (*mübeccel*) reality."¹⁹⁵

On the other hand, he noted that some Christian young men had taken refuge in foreign countries in order to avoid their military duties. Such comportment could not be attributed to all Christian citizens; there were in all nations and elements (*anasır*), such ignorant and fearful individuals who could not understand the sublimity and purity of military service. "According to the constitution all Ottomans are united (*yekvücud*) and equal (*müsavi*) and they want to profit from all of the rights granted by the constitution, then they must not sacrifice its rights and honour at any cost. Military service is a duty of honour. Those who flee from military service, are

¹⁹² Ahmet Samim, SM.121

¹⁹³ Ahmet Samim, SM.121

¹⁹⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM121

¹⁹⁵ "Şunlarla pek iyi anlaşılıyor ki ittihad-ı Osmani, Osmanlılar için yalnız bir gaye ve tasavvurdan ibaret kalmayub yakın bir atide müşaşa ve mübeccel bir hakikat suretinde tecelli edecektir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.131

avoiding the execution of the debt imposed on their shoulders of patriotism by the motherland (*vatan*) and common security (*selamet*)."¹⁹⁶

Samim attributed an important role to military service in the salvation of the Ottoman State. This sacred duty given by the motherland would provide the fraternity and equality among the children of the motherland. Military service for all citizens was the realisation of the equality given by the constitution. The barracks had to be schools of fraternity in which the children of the motherland would meet each other. He did not hesitate to qualify those who had tried to make this effort of integration difficult as enemies of the Ottomanhood.

Union of the Elements (*İttihad-ı Anasır*)

Samim wrote that from the beginning of the reform (*ihkula*) the newspapers had been underlining the concept of the union of the elements (*ittihad-ı anasır*) as an eternal repetition (*nakarat*): "The safety (*selamet*) of this country (*mülk*) and nation is in one point, in Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*), where the nations forming the Ottoman majority are agreed (*itilaf etmek*) and united in their sincerity (*samimiyyet*) and presence."¹⁹⁷ The union of the elements had to be supported with their hearts, but it did not have to stay a slogan. The security (*selamet*) or annihilation (*izmihlal*) of the motherland depended on the friendship and the fraternity of all Ottomans. "If the entente and the union are assured, we can be hopeful about our future and our life; if it is not practicable (*kabil*), our catastrophe is certain."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ "Kanun-i Esasi nazarında mademki bütün Osmanlılar yek vücud ve müsavidirler, mademki bu kanunun temin eylediği her hakdan müstefid olmak isterler, o halde askerlik hak ve şerefini hiç bir şey mukabilinde feda etmemeleri lazım gelir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.131

¹⁹⁷ "Bu mülk ve milletin selameti Osmanlı kitle-i azimesini teşkil eden muhtelif akvamın yalnız bir noktada, Osmanlılık maksad ve gayesinde, bütün samimiyyet ve mevcudiyetleriyle itilafında, ittihadındadır.", Ahmet Samim, "İttihad-ı Anasır Nasıl Olur?", *Sadayı Millet*, no.85, 23 February 1910

¹⁹⁸ "İtilaf ve ittihad temin olunursa istikbalimizden, hayatımızdan ümid-var olabiliriz; bu kabil olmazsa felaketimiz muhakkaktır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.85

This negative probability would tear apart the Ottomans sharing the same land. The *ancien regime* (*devr-i istibdad*) had led the Ottomans to such a position. Abdülhamid had tried to show that the interest of a nation had depended on the harm (*zarar*) of the other in order to prevent the establishment of friendship ties among the nations. This devilish (*iblisane*) policy had demolished the Ottoman motherland (*vatan*), allowing Abdülhamid to continue his absolute rule (*istibdat*) by means of the disorder in the country. To repair what had been lost, a period of internal and external peace and calm (*sükun*) was needed. The way to establish and maintain internal calm was to root out the thoughts of enmity (*nifak*) and separation (*iftirak*) left by the *ancien regime* (*devr-i sabık*) among the Ottoman nations. The profit of the entente of the elements (*itilaf-ı anasır*) would be the salvation (*halas*) of the motherland subjected to the external dangers. It was necessary for the Ottoman nations to understand that they were brothers and sisters; the presence of each nation and religion (*mezheb*) depended on the integrity. The entente of the elements was possible in the case of the tolerance of the each element. This idea of entente had been appropriated by everybody and the service of the press in that direction had to be praised. But, he added, in the press there were those who had begun to distance themselves from the idea of the union of the elements (*ittihad-ı anasır*) and wrote articles which could damage the country.¹⁹⁹

Ahmet Samim criticised an article called "*Balkan Entrikalarında Yunanperest Gafillerin Hisse-i Faaliyeti*" (Contribution of the pro-Greek unwaries in Balkan intrigues) written by Ahmet Hilmi by referring to a report sent by the reporter in Varna of the newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkar*. The reporter in Varna pretended that during a lavish meal (*ziyafet*) the Rum (Greek) metropolyte in Manastır had proposed to a

¹⁹⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.85

Melinkof, the chief of the branch office of the party of Doctor Danf, the determination of the frontiers of the regions of influence (*nüfuz bölgeleri*) between Greece and Bulgaria in Macedonia. The Bulgarians had told this to their king, but Tsar Ferdinand had refused this idea of sharing Macedonia.²⁰⁰ Samim declared that this news was a bad lie. He said that citing a news article sent by an unknown reporter was a mistake. He declared that *Sadayı Millet* was not the spokesman of anyone and did not serve the interests of anyone. "We have a purpose: the entente of the elements (*itilaf-ı anasır*), which is the debt of every patriotic Ottoman." A newspaper had to take into account the public opinion when printing its articles. Not doing so could have dangerous results. He asked *Tasvir-i Efkar* and the writer of this article if the accusation and imputations in an article not based on research were a service. At that time they needed publications which would help people forget the pains of the past, not those that could damage the union and the entente.²⁰¹

Samim declared that to the Ottomans Macedonia belonged. It was necessary to carve out the eyes looking with hostile glances at the lands irrigated with the blood of their ancestors. He claimed that they would resist everybody, Bulgaria, Greece or any other state with plans in Macedonia. The source of this power of resistance was the entente.²⁰²

Samim noted that a few days earlier in *Tanin*, documents showing the turmoil (*ifsadat*) caused by the Greek (*Yunan*) comities on the Rum (Greek) population of the *vilayet* of Yanya had been published. He added that *Sadayı Millet* had quoted this important news from *Tanin* because actors of such intentions disturbing the entente (*itilaf*) and the union (*ittihad*), damaging the interests of the Ottomanhood

²⁰⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.85

²⁰¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.85

Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*), had to be punished.²⁰³ According to the documents published by *Tanin* and quoted by *Sadayı Millet*, an association of intrigue against Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*) had been founded in Yanya. Well known bandits, such as Kromtiyadi, Poteci, and Nikola Tire had come under the control of this association. When these bandits had been surrounded, they had escaped to Greece, and received protection there. But it was impossible to learn about their activities in Yanya. By the time the Law of Bands (*Çeteler Kanunu*) was applied, important clues had been gathered. When it was understood that a Rum (Greek) called Papayani Baykuşı was controlling the malicious activities (*tertibat-ı fesadiyye*), he was arrested. Ahmet Samim claimed that incriminating documents (*evrak-ı fesadiyye*) had been found on the man. These documents were published by *Tanin*, but this newspaper did not divulge their source.²⁰⁴

Samim wrote that after their research into the arrest of Papayani Baykuşı and the declaration (*beyanat*) of the Minister of Internal Affairs Talat Bey, it had been seen that *Tanin*'s report was not true and that the malicious documents were the result of a perfidious conspiracy. "Here is the reality: Baykuşı is a merchant from Yanya. After gaining wealth through commerce in Romania, he returned to his motherland (*vatan*). He brought the wealth that he gained abroad to the land where he was born; he helped to the orphanages and schools."²⁰⁵ He went on to say that at the end of an unbiased and just (*adil*) investigation by the governor Babanzade Zihni Paşa, it had been understood that Baykuşı was a honorable and patriotic citizen, and that the incriminating documents had been placed in his pocket at the time of his arrest. Zihni

²⁰² Ahmet Samim, SM.85

²⁰³ Ahmet Samim, "Yaşasın İttihad... Yaşasın Adalet", *Sadayı Millet*, no.96, 6 March 1910

²⁰⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²⁰⁵ "İşte hakikat: Baykuşı ann-ı asl Yanyalı bir tacirdir; Romanyada ticaretle kesb-i servet eyledikten sonra vatanına avdet ediyor; haricde ticareti, gayretiyle topladığı serveti doğduğu toprağa getiriyor; Yanya'da eytamhanelere, mekteblere muavenetlerde bulunuyor.", Ahmet Samim, SM.96

Paşa had investigated two policemen who had arrested Baykuşi and declared Baykuşi be set free.²⁰⁶

"If in our country there is any effort against the interests of Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*) and territorial integrity, it must be annihilated."²⁰⁷ Those who were involved in such initiatives had to be punished regardless their connection (*mensubiyet*) to any element (*unsur*). "But we can not accept in any case that obedient people, loyal people, be hurt, real Ottomans be disturbed, their patriotism, Ottoman patriotism (*hamiyyet-i Osmaniyye*) be suspected."²⁰⁸

Samim wrote that in a period in which efforts were made to establish the entente and the union among the elements, the application of the Law of Bands (*Çeteler Kanunu*) would create some harm. It was necessary to amend some parts of this law, which could lead to abuse when applied by malicious (*garazkar*) and ignorant (*cahil*) government officials. If some untrue event appeared again it would be difficult to convince the European newspapers and public opinion watching the activities of the Ottoman State attentively.²⁰⁹

Tanin, which had published these documents without making any investigation, had not taken into account its bad effect on the public opinion. "Its readers, the public opinion should judge (*takdir etmek*) the way (*meslek*) of *Tanin* repeating every day the scream (*feryad*) of union, the union of the elements."²¹⁰ *Tanin*

²⁰⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²⁰⁷ "Memleketimizde Osmanlılığın menafı-i tamamiyyet-i mülkiyyesi hilafına teşebbüs varsa imha olunmalı(dır).", Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²⁰⁸ "Fakat ahali-i mutia, ahaliyi sadıkanın hiç bir suretle rencide edilmesini, hakiki Osmanlıların hiç bir suretle ize edilmesini, hamiiyetlerinden, hamiiyet-i Osmaniyyelerinden şübhe edilmesini kabul edemeyiz.", Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²⁰⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²¹⁰ "Her gün 'ittihad', 'ittihad-ı anasır' feryadını ayyuka çıkaran 'Tanin'in mesleğini kendi kariri, efkar-ı umumiyye takdir etsin", Ahmet Samim, SM.96

had to understand the responsibilities of journalism and should not behave with frivolity and superficiality while treating important and sensitive subjects.²¹¹

In another article, Samim quoted from the letter of a friend who lived in the center of the one of the important *vilayets* in Rumelia. The friend said that in the city where he had been living he had been insulted and had not been found appropriate enough to the merits (*meziyet*) such as "love of motherland, lover of freedom" because he was from İstanbul. According to the inhabitants of that city, being from İstanbul was equated with being a reactionary, for the simple fact that the revolution of 31 March (*31 Mart İhtilali*) had taken place in İstanbul. The friend said that the opinions of the inhabitants of that city were the result of the disgusting propaganda. Moreover, in some of the clubs of the CUP in some towns of the *vilayet* collections of contribution (*iane*) were taken up as a measure against a reactionary movement which could occur in İstanbul.²¹²

Samim said that for a person who had read this letter it was impossible to imagine that he would not be afraid. His reason for publishing this letter was: "Now it is useful for public opinion to understand that in some vilayets dangerous (*vahim*) and harmful (*muzır*) intrigues are being organised against the peace (*huzur*) and the public order (*asayiş*) of the country."²¹³ He added that they (*Sadayı Millet*) tried to warn the people responsible for the life and the security (*selamet*) of the country. This letter it was evidence that the people were being misled and were being incited feelings against İstanbul. Samim wrote that he did not want to believe that it was being done with the goal of interest. Those who wanted to separate one from the other the

²¹¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.96

²¹² Ahmet Samim, "Muharrikler", *Sadayı Millet*, no.139, 18 April 1910

children of the motherland for despicable and vile interests could not be present in a society, in the noble Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*).²¹⁴

Samim wrote that the people of Rumelia had done great service as well provided officers of the army in the explosion (*infilak*) of freedom (*hürriyet*) in Rumelia and to save their legitimate rights (*meşru haklar*) from the bloody fingers of Abdülhamid. "Therefore it is natural and useful that the citizens of Rumelia are so awake to all dangers connected to the essence of the constitutional monarchy."²¹⁵ On the other hand, the exaggeration and the misuse of this service could engender bad results. The good and the patriotism of the people did not have to be subsumed by the bad movements.²¹⁶

For a nation, which was in the process of reform (*inkılab*) and which had passed through a dangerous period such as 31 March, carrying its horrible memory and revenge in its heart, the excitement and provocation of public opinion could not be beneficial.²¹⁷

Samim wrote that it was natural that İstanbul would have a bad reputation because the absolute rule (*istibdat*) had been directed from İstanbul, as had the bandits and the murderers who robbed and tortured the people. However, the parties responsible this oppression (*zulm*) were not the inhabitants of İstanbul, as they had never supported the oppression of Abdülhamid.. "On the contrary, because it (the people of İstanbul) were near to Yıldız and were under its grip, we can say that the

²¹³ "Zira efkar-ı umumiyyenin bazı vilayetlerde elan memleketin huzur ve asayiş nokta-i nazarından ne kadar vahim ve muzırr entrikalar çevrilmekte olduğunu görüb anlamasında menfaat vardır.", Ahmet Samim SM.139

²¹⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²¹⁵ "Bu cihetle meşrutiyet esasına taalluk eden her türlü mehalike karşı Rumelili vatandaşlarımızın bu derece müteyakkız davranmaları hem tabii ve hem de her cihetle faidelidir.", Ahmet Samim SM.139

²¹⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²¹⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.139

large part of the pressure was put on their backs."²¹⁸ The reform (*inkılab*) had been embraced with enthusiasm by the people of İstanbul and they had not participate in the revolution of 31 March. "Under that condition and that reality, those who continuously provoke the people of the *vilayets* against the capital and its inhabitants and imagine (*tasavvur etmek*) a benefit rather than harm have to be idiots (*ahmak*), or blind and malicious (*garazkar*)."²¹⁹ Everybody was the enemy of the absolute rule (*istibdat*). The new government (*idare-i cedide*) had been established with the participation and the wish of the whole nation. It was unnecessary for them to distrust each other. "In struggling for the union, we do not have to walk to separation."²²⁰ The nation was united to protect the constitutional monarchy and ready to act as one against danger. "But for no reason at all we do not have to create danger out of our fear (*vehm*)."²²¹ The safety of the country depended on the union of the elements, on the friendship and fraternity of the Ottomans. He urged all citizens to be attentive about this subject and not to disturb the harmony of the elements.

The Press

Celebration began the day following the declaration of the constitutional monarchy (*Meşrutiyet*). There was extraordinary activity in the press as well. In the period of time leading up to the incident of 31 March, the number of reviews and newspapers had reached 350.²²² There were no censorship and no discernable control

²¹⁸ "Bilakis, burada Yıldızın pek yakınında, pençesi altında bulunduğu için diyebiliriz ki tazyikatdan en ağır kısmı kendi sırtına yükletilmişti.", Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²¹⁹ "Hal ve hakikat böyle iken vilayet ahalisini muttasıl payitaht ve sekenesi aleyhine tahrik eylemekte mazarratdan başka faide tasavvur edenlerin ya ahmak ve yahud kör ve garazkar olmaları icab eder.", Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²²⁰ "İttihad diye çırpınırken iftiraka doğru yürümeyelim.", Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²²¹ "Fakat hiç yokdan vehmimizle tehlike icad etmeyelim.", Ahmet Samim, SM.139

²²² Alpay Kabacalı, *Başlangıcından Günümüze Türkiye'de Matbaa, Basın ve Yayın*, İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 2000, p.133

over publications either. The ministers and *pashas* of the *ancien regime* were harshly criticised.

In this atmosphere, the parliament and the senate were convened. On 6 February 1909, a draft of a law on the press and printing houses was sent to the parliament. Due to the rumours about the limitation of the liberty of the press, a meeting was organised in the court of the mosque of Sultan Ahmet. After the meeting, a representative committee went to the *Meclis-i Mebusan* and talked with Ahmet Rıza Bey, the head (*reis*) of the parliament.²²³ With amendments of the *Kanun-i Esasi* (the constitution), a sentence forbidding censorship was added to Article 12 declaring that the press was free within the limits of the laws: "For no reason can it be inspected (*teftiş*) or examined (*muayene*)."²²⁴

These drafts became law on 16 July 1909 during the grand vizierate of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa. The law of press (*Matbuat Kanunu*), prepared by taking as its model the French Law of Press of 1881, did not envisage censorship. But newspapers publishing information deemed harmful to the State or inciting revolt could be closed down until the related lawsuit reached an end.²²⁵

Samim wrote that the freedom of expression and of the press were the main rights (*hak*) given to the nation by the *Meşrutiyet*, and formed its cornerstones, as did justice (*adalet*). In a country under the administration of *Meşrutiyet*, an individual had freedom of expression and the liberty of writing what he had expressed. "The *meşrutiyet* is the period of truth (*devr-i hakikat*), the period of freedom (*devr-i hürriyet*)."²²⁶ In a country, which had attained freedom of the press, the importance of

²²³ Alpaz Kabacalı, *Başlangıçtan Günümüze Türkiye'de Basın Sansürü*, İstanbul: Gazeteciler Cemiyeti, 1990, p.83

²²⁴ *ibid.*, p.83

²²⁵ *ibid.*, p.85

²²⁶ "Meşrutiyet, devr-i hakikiyyetdir, devr-i hürriyetdir.", Ahmet Samim, "Devr-i Meşrutiyet Devr-i Hakikatdır" *Sadayı Millet*, no.72, 10 February 1910

the duty (*vazife*) of the journalist was great. His responsibility was moral rather than material. The journalist did not have to fear material responsibility, the law courts, or imprisonment, but moral responsibility, as serious as the seriousness of his duty. He had to face the motherland (*vatan*) and its citizens, humanity and his conscience. "For an editor or a journalist aware of the sacredness (*kudsiyet*) of his duty, material responsibility can have no importance; patriotic interests (*menafi-i vataniyye*) are first (*akdem*) before all." In the name of the prosperity (*ikbal*) and the safety (*selamet*) of the motherland (*vatan*), of the permanency and the salvation (*halas*) of liberty (*hürriyet*) and justice (*adalet*) everything, wealth, children, wife and life could be sacrificed. Compared to the fear of moral responsibility, material responsibility was unimportant. Moral responsibility had to be the unique (*yegane*) norm of editors, and journalists.²²⁷

Nobody could keep the press from informing the people. In proportion with the power and the liberty enjoyed by the press was given a serious duty toward the motherland (*vatan*). "Because it directs/manages opinions; it prepares directly the power called public opinion. It conducts. Perhaps public opinion consists of the press..."²²⁸ A power influencing of public opinion would influence the destiny of the nation. The press addressed the thoughts (*efkar*) and, as a result, the press was the master of minds (*hakim-i ezhan*) and consciences (*vicdan*). The press, conducting public opinion thus could direct it to the good or to the bad. Its duty (*vazife*) was to publish in respect of the national interests (*menafi-i milliye*), taking into account its moral responsibility.²²⁹

²²⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.113

²²⁸ "Çünkü efkarı idare ediyor; efkar-ı umumiyye denilen kuvveti doğrudan doğruya o tehiyye ediyor; o sevk ediyor; belki efkar-ı umumiyye bütün manasıyla matbuatdan ibaret kalıyor..." , Ahmet Samim, SM.72

²²⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.72

In countries governed by the constitutional monarchy, the press was free and could be restricted only by the law. The role of the press was to enlighten and warn the public through its debates (*münakaşat*). "In all civilised and progressive countries its sound, reflected in the articles, is reciprocated by a respect, a kindness (*hiss-i teveccüh*), a holy tolerance (*müsamaha-i takdiskar*), the incapable and desperate minds are calmed with its pure (*zülal*) information, pure warning (*ihtar*) and communication (*tebliğ*). The government seeks a way useful to its opinions (*ictihad*) and policies (*muamelat*)..."²³⁰ The press was a sacred (*mukaddes*) and honored child of civilisation and progress.

As guardian of the general conditions (*ahval-i umumiye*), the press was to minutely examine all subjects and report its conclusions to the people. There was no subject beyond the scrutiny of the press. "About all issues concerning the life, destiny, safety (*selamet*) and annihilation (*izmihlal*) of the nation, the press has the right of judgement (*hakk-ı rey*) and scrutiny (*mütalaa*)."²³¹

In the ancien regime (*devr-i sabık*), Abdülhamid, who had been truly aware of the power of the press, had directed the most important part of his oppression and tyranny towards it. In order to block the movement to the freedom (*hürriyet*), justice, fraternity, the birth of the *meşrutiyet* (the constitutional monarchy), and intellectual awakening, it had been necessary to attack and kill the thought (*fikir*), the pencil (*kalem*) and the mind (*dimağ*). The period of constitutional monarchy (*devr-i meşrutiyet*) was very different. "As the press has its freedom and liberty, it is obliged

²³⁰ "Bütün medenî, müterakki memleketlerde bunun yazılarla, makalelerle aks eden sadasına karşı bir ihtiram, bir hiss-i teveccüh, bir müsamaha-i takdiskar ile mukabele edilir, aciz ve bi-kes dimağlar onun zülal malumatıyla, zülal ihtar ve tebliğiyle teskin ihtiyac eder, hükümet onun izleriyle ictihadına ve muamelatına yarayacak bir yol, bir hedef arar...", Ahmet Samim, "Haysaiyyet-i Matbuat", *Sadayı Millet*, no.160, 9 May 1910

²³¹ "Milletin hayat ve mukadderatına, selamet ve izmihlaline taalluk eden her meselede matbuatın hakk-ı rey ve mütalaaşı vardır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.72

to warn and to enlighten the public about all subjects."²³² On all issues, the press would offer its positive and negative criticisms to the government and, to warn it against making mistakes. The press had to represent the virtues and the shortcomings of the nation to which it belonged, and to defend the virtues and, the greatness of Ottomanhood (*Osmanlılık*). But when the press mentioned the faults of the Ottoman society, it was believed that the press had made a mistake. The press was even accused of being a traitor by some people. Samim, however, dismissed these people as being of no importance, as they were unable to understand the function of the press.²³³

Unfortunately, the press was not respected or revered and had not earned a place in the hearts of the nation. Sometimes constitutional monarchists (*meşrutiyetperver*) and serious writers (*kalemler*) became confused in the face of attacks on the press.²³⁴

It was impossible to not regret acts of those who did not know the limits of the law and the government. "Those who live and must live in the form of a society (*heyet-i ictimaiyye*) have put down the power of threat and intimidation (*ihafe*) with the arms, and the language of some of them to the power of the government as represented in the form of the law and discipline (*inzibat*). Looking for a living out of it means leading for a life of rebellion and guilt."²³⁵

²³² "Matbuat hürriyet ve serbestisine tamamen malik bulunacağından efkar-ı umumiyyeyi her hususda ikaz ve tenvir etmeğe mecburdur.", Ahmet Samim, SM.72

²³³ Ahmet Samim, SM.72

²³⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.160

²³⁵ "Bir heyet-i ictimaiyye halinde yaşayan ve böyle yaşamaya mecbur olan kimseler bazılarının, silahlarının, lisanlarının tehdid ve ihafeye aid kuvvetlerini hükümetin kanun, inzibat suretinde tecelli eden kuvvetine terk etmeyi tekeffül etmişler demektir. Bunun haricinde yaşamak istemek asi ve mücrim olmayı istemek demektir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.160

National sovereignty (*hakimiyet-i milliye*) did not mean people punished, frightened, threatened and attacked those who had violated their rights, without taking into account the law and the government.²³⁶

National sovereignty meant entrusting (*tevdi*) the right of control and the legislative power to the deputies elected by indirect elections and leaving the executive power to ministers who held their positions with the confidence of parliament.²³⁷ Nations looking to attain progress (*terakkiyat*) and evolution (*tekamülât*) had to obey the judgements (*ahkam*) of the laws entrusted to the executive power, the courts, and the police (*zabita*). Samim wrote that he hoped the government would punish those who had attacked journalists, and that those guilty of interfering in the honour and the liberty of the press would be imprisoned.²³⁸

The press was one of the powers providing and preserving the life of the constitutional monarchy. Attacking the press was the same as attacking the powers of the constitutional monarchy. Those who complained about the press had to have recourse to the laws of the government, which was a sacred (*mukaddes*) and honoured power, like the press. "No one from the people (*ahali*) can attack it directly. He who does, is a sinner (*günahkar*), a criminal (*mücrim*), a violator of law (*kanunşiken*)."²³⁹

²³⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.160

²³⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.160

²³⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.160

²³⁹ "Ahaliden hiç bir kimse toğrudan toğriya ona tecavüz edemez, ederse günah-kar olur, kanunşiken olur", Ahmet Samim, SM.160

The Revolt in Albania

In March 1910 a revolt broke out in the region of İpek-Yakova, spreading to the Albanian provinces of Priştine, Firzuvik, Kaçanik and İşkodra). The Albanians, who which had been calmed and pampered by money distributed to the local lords, revolted against the recruitment and the tax *okturuva*. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur writes that to ignore the possibility of such a revolt and to fail to determine its causes and not to examine and correct its administrative mistakes was a suicide for Ottoman government. During the March and April, there were few military units in the region and the rebels captured a number of *sancak* centres and railroads. The Albanians held the straits of Kaçanik and as well as their upper side. At the end of April and in May, however, the army managed to gain the control. In May and June, in the *vilayet* of Kosovo, the army disarmed the Albanians and the government began attempts to recruit Albanians regularly.²⁴⁰

In six articles touching on the revolt of Albania, Ahmet Samim discussed the growth of the revolt. He gave the reasons for the revolt, and he directed his criticisms and recommendations to the government about how the suppression of the revolt had been conducted. He mentioned possible solutions to the problem, and finally described the international importance of Albania.

Ahmet Samim argued that the problem in Albania did not have to be exaggerated. The important points made in the statements of the Albanian deputies had to be taken into account by the government. The deputies proposed that the

²⁴⁰ Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol.1, İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940, pp.318-319

Albanians deprived of civilisation did not have to be terrified by the violence of the incompetent governor of Kosovo. A military company had been sent by the government as a precaution. "The treatment of the people with fairness and moderation and the news received in the last days about the restoration of calm and public order show that this aspect has been taken into account by the executive power."²⁴¹

Samim said that this latest development showed that the turmoil in Albania had become acute (*gergin*). Every Ottoman was saddened by the bloodshed. "Because today, those who lead the military force built up in Albania, are not soldiers of an army of the enemy; but are our brothers, coreligionists (*dindas*), in short our dear (*sevgili*) citizens."²⁴²

In a period when peace (*sulh*), public order (*asayiş*), calm (*sükun*) and progress were needed, seeing their soldiers and their money spent on the mutual slaughter of the two children of the motherland hurt hearts. Between Prizren and Firzuvik, thirty thousand rebels opened fire on Ottoman soldiers going to Prizren, with the result that three soldiers were dead, and one officer and ten soldiers were wounded.²⁴³

Samim wrote that the latest news showed that the regrettable events (*üzücü olaylar*) had expanded. According to news sent from the region and newspapers published in Salonica, the numbers of rebels had reached sixty thousand. He claimed that many men from both sides had been killed and strategically important points had

²⁴¹ "...ahaliye karşı yine insaf ve itidal ile hareketi ve bir kaç günden beri istikrar-ı sükun ve asayişe dair alınan iyi haberler bu cihetin de kuvve-i icraiyyece zaten nazar-ı dikkate alınmış olduğunu gösterir.", Ahmet Samim, "İdare-i Örfiyye ve Arnavudluk Meselesi", Saday-ı Millet, no.133, 12 April 1910

been occupied by the Albanians. "Trains, posts are stopped, telegraph lines are destroyed."²⁴⁴ Samim had no doubt that intense encounters would continue between the Albanians as the military unit under the control of Şevket Turgut Paşa moved along the narrows of Kaçanik, which were under the control of the Albanians.

Telegraph lines had been cut down throughout the region, rendering the government unable to receive the necessary information. Samim wrote that it was impossible to estimate to what end the region was going. The European press, which had access to better information from the region, reported that the situation in northern Albania could not be suppressed as easily as the Ottomans supposed and desired. He claimed that he was sorry (*müteessir*) that the internal problems had surfaced during a period when to establish a constitutional government (*hükümet-i meşrûta*) which would repair the damage (*tahribat*) of the absolute rule (*istibdat*). "Although we need long years of peace and calm (*sükun*) to improve (*imar*) and reform the country, we can not be saved from collisions, rebellions, rebels."²⁴⁵

Ahmet Samim claimed that from the telegraphs received from northern Albania, it had been learned that all of the rebels had relinquished their arms and returned home. He assumed that this news would make the Ottomans happy. The chiefs of the notables in the region of revolt had assured the government and this news had good effects on the public opinion.²⁴⁶

²⁴² "Zira bugün Arnavudlukda tahşid olunan kuva-i askeriyye karşısında bulunanlar düşman ordusuna mensub efrad değil; fakat bizim kardaşlarımız, dindaşlarımız, elhasıl sevgili vatandaşlarımızdır.", Ahmet Samim, "Arnavudluk Ahvali", *Sadayı Millet* no.147, 26 April 1910

²⁴³ Ahmet Samim, SM.147

²⁴⁴ "Trenler, postalar tevkif olunuyor; hutut-u telgrafiyye tahrib olunmuş." Ahmet Samim, "Arnavudlukda", *Sadayı Millet* no.151, 30 April 1910

²⁴⁵ "Memleketin imar ve ıslahı için medid sulh ve sükun senelerine ihtiyacımız olduğu halde sadmelerden, ihtilallerden, ihtilalcilerden bir türlü kurtulamıyoruz.", Ahmet Samim, SM.151

²⁴⁶ Ahmet Samim, "Sükuna Doğru", *Sadayı Millet*, no.166, 15 May 1910

Reasons

Ahmet Samim was convinced that the incidents in Albania were the result of the inattentiveness of the officials towards some hereditary (*irsi*), customary (*itiyadi*) psychological events (*hadisat-ı ruhiyye*). "To act without taking into account the psychology and needs, customs and morality of a nation can cause such bloody, dubious, dangerous events, scenes."²⁴⁷ The sudden flare up of the Albanians, who had served the Ottoman State with fidelity and bravery (*şecaat*) for centuries, had been the ignorance (*adem-i vukuf*) of the governor of Kosovo.²⁴⁸ The government, which had been unable to predict this rebellion made a mistake. Signs of revolt had been seen in Albania but no reform had been undertaken there. To the deputies who had assumed that the signs of this revolt had been seen for one year and that no reform had been done there, the Grand Vizier answered that they could not be responsible for a period in which he had not been in office. Ahmet Samim argued that while it was a problem of the period of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, some Ministers of the cabinet of Hakkı Paşa had had the same positions in the cabinet of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa. He asked whether the Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Bey, had received reports from the governors in Albania about the local problems and their proposals for solutions. From the explanation given by the Grand Vizier, it was seen that the answer was nothing. He assumed that if the Ministry of Internal Affairs had received detailed information from the governor of Kosovo and had followed event as they developed in Albania, the statement of the cabinet about this problem would not be so dubious or confused.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁷ "Bir kavmin ruh ve ihtiyacı, itiyadat ve ahlakı düşünülmezsizin hareket etmek böyle kanlı, muşevveş, tehlikeli vakayie, sahnelerle sebebiyet verir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.147

²⁴⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.147

²⁴⁹ Ahmet Samim, "Hükümetin İzahatından Ne Anlaşıldı", *Sadayı Millet*, no.157, 6 May 1910

Samim wrote that the government rejected the notion that this revolt had been a reactionary movement against the constitutional monarchy. Imputing the enmity of freedom to the Albanians sworn to destroy the absolute rule of Abdülhamid by obeying the summons of the CUP would be laughable, shameful and ungrateful.²⁵⁰

Hakkı Paşa explained that one of the reasons for this revolt, had been the provocation of usurpers (*mütegalibe*), the remnants of the *ancien regime*, who had been protected during the *ancien regime* and their crimes had been tolerated. Ahmet Samim accepted that these usurpers had been a visible element in this revolt, but on the other hand he assumed there would have had to have been a suitable atmosphere for the revolt of thousands of people in the interests of some usurpers. The reasons for this discontent could not be ignorance alone. The roots of the revolt had to be investigated and removed.²⁵¹

Due to the region of Albania being unsuitable for agriculture, the land could not sustain the population living on it. The Albanians were thus forced to go to work in İstanbul, Salonica and in other countries. As their minds had not been enlightened like those of the other Ottoman nations, they had to work hard.²⁵² Since the Albania had joined the Ottoman Empire, the State had not done anything to ameliorate the social and economic conditions. It had opened no schools or *medressehs* (theological schools attached to a mosque), or tried to diffuse and generalise (*umumileştirme*) Turkish the official language of the State. It had not constructed roads or railroads, and had not endeavoured for the progress of the country or looked for solutions to famine and misery. The Albanians who had gone to work in Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece, had seen the progress and compared it to the underdevelopment of their own country. When the Third Army asked *Yıldız* (Palace)

²⁵⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁵¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.157

to restore the constitutional monarchy, the Albanians, gathered in Firzovik, declared that they were fed up with the misery and that they wanted constitutional monarchy.²⁵³

During the incident of 31 March, when the Third Army had intervened to save the constitutional monarchy, the Albanians had come to İstanbul to help them. Samim claimed that with the dethronement (*hal*) of Abdülhamid, who had been able to block the reforms, the Albanians had become hopeful when the Minister of Public Works (*Nafia*), Hallacyan Efendi had taken a tour of Rumelia and talked about public works efforts.²⁵⁴

But Hallacyan Efendi had not repaired even one kilometre of road or constructed a bridge in İstanbul or in the provinces. Samim added that the governor sent to Kosovo had explained the *okturuva* tax on chickens in order to build sidewalks and theatres in Skobje (*Üsküb*). "The people, who could not find a road and became covered in mud with their animals when going to the cities from the villages, did not understand anything about the sidewalks and theaters which would be constructed in the cities, they started to regard the activities of the governor as strange."²⁵⁵

The postponement of the construction of the Manastır-Avlonya railroad, badly needed by the Albanians, with the excuse of lack of money angered them. They held the CUP, which had promised reforms, responsible. With the incitement of some usurpers, suffered materially (*maddeten*) due to the declaration of the constitutional

²⁵² Ahmet Samim, "Arnavudluk Meselesi", *Sadayı Millet*, no.168, 17 May 1910

²⁵³ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

²⁵⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

²⁵⁵ "Civar köylerden şehirlere gelmek için yol bulamayan ve hayvanları ile çamurlara batan halk şehirlerde yapılacak kaldırımlardan, tiyatrolardan bir şey anlayamadı, valinin icraatını garib görmeye başladı.", Ahmet Samim, SM.168

monarchy, the Albanians chose the option preferred by harsh and ignorant nations: rebellion.²⁵⁶

If, at the period of peace and public order following the declaration of the constitutional monarchy, the most urgent reforms (constructing roads, repairing *medressehs*) had begun, these deplorable events could have been avoided.²⁵⁷

Government

Samim wrote that a government with different customs and needs in every part of the country, had to choose its governors attentively. Governors, such as the one in Kosovo, who did not take into account the real needs, past, historical traditions of the region in which he was posted, it would be impossible to govern a country. "As a result, the country goes through these kinds of dangerous, bloody moments, pages."²⁵⁸

He asked the government to consider that those who had taken up arms were the children of the same motherland. He wondered if it was possible to approach to both sides moderately, without resorting to violence, which did not always give positive results. Force and violence could assuage a revolt temporarily, but later this hate and rancour would return in a more intense form.²⁵⁹

The government should take measures to resolve this problem without violence. He told the Albanian citizens to show more temperance (*itidal*) and calm (*sükun*).²⁶⁰

Samim wrote that the government had to explain and make properly clear the character and the reality of the revolt, adding that the reports in the Ottoman press

²⁵⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

²⁵⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

²⁵⁸ "Ve neticesinde memleket böyle tehlikeli, hunin dakikaları, sahneleri yaşar.", Ahmet Samim,, SM.147

²⁵⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.147

²⁶⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.147

about northern Albania had shown that the public opinion had not been satisfied.²⁶¹ While the government had issued an explanation about the regrettable events (*vakayi müessife*) in northern Albania, the statement of Hakkı Paşa had not explained the character of the problem or convinced the public opinion. A government aware of its duties and responsibilities would present parliament with more definitive, more explicit information documenting the problem in Albania. "The press and public opinion have not yet received the explanation that they have the right to expect about this problem that they have followed with curiosity and worry, and they have not penetrated the essence of the affair."²⁶²

Samim wrote that from the explanation of Grand Vizier Hakkı Paşa, it was seen that the government did not understand why it was faced with such a revolt (*kıyam*). While the incidents in Albania could not be accepted as a civil war, but they should not be treated as lightly as a battle with an armed band (*çete müsademesi*).²⁶³

The problem was not as unimportant as the government believed. It was not a war (*muharebe*), but it was not a fight (*müsademe*) either. The government could not be criticised for reacting with violence against rebels who had attacked its soldiers. Samim said the government, which had not acted prudently (*durendişane*). "Those who have in their own the halter of the destiny (*zıمام-ı muktedirat*) of a country and a society of some millions, are obliged to foresee everything and to discover and guess everything before it appears."²⁶⁴

Grand Vizier Hakkı Paşa claimed that after the military operation, they would start to make reforms and improvements (*imarât*) in Albania by assigning a separate

²⁶¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.151

²⁶² "Matbuat ve efkar-ı umumiyye kemal-i merak ile takib etdiği bu meseleye dair istemekde pek haklı olduğu izahatı hükümetden henüz almamış ve işin gine ruhuna nüfuz edememiştir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁶³ Ahmet Samim, SM. 151

budget. Samim asked why these changes had not been made before the appearance of the revolt. He asked why nothing was done in other obedient provinces (*vilayets*) in peace.²⁶⁵

By not sending a commission to investigate the situation, the government had acted against its own interests. The government was accused of creating and imputing unnecessary taxes beyond the endurance of the people of Albania. By sending a commission of investigation to the region, the government would be saved the criticisms and could define on which principles the reform program had to be made.²⁶⁶

Solution

Ahmet Samim stated that whatever its causes, the event in Albania was an armed revolution (*ihtilal*), a revolt. He was sure that the government would put down this revolution with quick, severe measures. Once the problem reached that point, it would be impossible to go back and the brothers of the motherland would kill each other.²⁶⁷

The government should take into account the necessity of compassion (*şefkat*) and justice, as well as violence (*şiddet*). Samim referred to a leading article in *Yeni Gazete* (New Newspaper) that declared that violence alone could not treat this disease. Samim acknowledged that while it was normal for the government to respond with arms, it had to use wisdom, discernment, patience and compassion to gain back those who had joined to the revolt. In times of revolution, ignorant people were

²⁶⁴ "Bir memleketin ve şu kadar milyonluk heyet-i ictimaiyyenin zımm-ı muktediratını ellerinde tutanlar her şeyi evvelden görmek ve her şeyi zuhurundan mukaddem keşf ve tahmin edebilmek vazifesiyle mükellefdirler.", Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁶⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁶⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁶⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.151

inclined (*elverişli*) to excitement; therefore, it was necessary to abstain from policies (*icraat*) which could cause agitation, excitement, fear and terror.²⁶⁸

The government had to investigate the underlying reasons of this revolt (*ihtilal*). If the official reasons declared until that moment were examined one by one, it would be seen that they were not the real reasons causing this grave end (*akıbet-i vahime*). To satisfy the press and public opinion, the government had to make clear the dark and unknown points.²⁶⁹

Ahmet Samim claimed that Diran Kelekyan Efendi had assumed in his remark of one day before that the existing information was insufficient to identify the social illness in İpek and Priştine. Kelekyan had written one year before that it was impossible to administer all *vilayets* in the same way. Some places in Albania could be administered with a system appropriate to the local conditions for a temporary period. Those who knew the region of İpek were aware that it needed a period of evolution. Samim was in agreement with Kelekyan. He wrote that if the inaptitude and ignorance of the governor of Kosovo were taken into account, it would be seen that the revolt had many causes other than the taxation of beards and moustaches, or the tax of egg. Learning the facts was the duty of the nation and teaching it was the duty of the government.²⁷⁰

According to Samim the government had not acted reasonably in refusing the proposal of sending a commission of deputies to Albania to investigate matters there. The investigative commission would not have hindered the military operation in Albania. It would have served to clarify an event whose underlying reasons could not be understood by the government. "In a country where it is said that national

²⁶⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.151

²⁶⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.151

²⁷⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.151

sovereignty is present, the right of control of the parliament representing this sovereignty has to be extensive in this proportion."²⁷¹

The International Importance of Albania

Ahmet Samim wrote that the problem of Albania could not be dismissed unimportant. It was not an accidental encounter of an armed band with a military unit. "The government is faced with a revolt, a revolution. And it comes into existence in a place whose political importance is much greater than is thought and calculated."²⁷² He claimed that in order to understand the importance of the event and the place it was sufficient to look at the map of Rumelia.

"Today, the country must be free from internal troubles and agitations in order to be united as one against the eyes opened from the strong exterior, the predatory paws ready to attack."²⁷³

In order to understand the political desires and national aims of the neighbours of the Ottoman state, it was sufficient to look at the history of the Eastern Question. He claimed that if principles adopted and the methods pursued by the Slavic newspapers published in Russia and Bulgaria about the Albanians were taken into account, the most precious diamond of the Ottoman crown, it would be seen the reality and the importance of what he said above. Russian newspapers, especially *Nuvye Vremiya*, had showed their false friendship during the uprising in Albania. "According to the opinion and inculcation (*telkinler*) of *Nuvye Vremiya* and its colleagues, in order to discipline the event of Albania and repress the revolt and

²⁷¹ "Hakimiyet-i milliyenin mevcut olduğu söylenen bir memleketde bu hakimiyeti temsil eden meclis-i mebusanın hakk-ı murakabesi o nisbetde vasi olmak iktiza eder.", Ahmet Samim, SM.157

²⁷² "Hükümet bir isyan, ihtilal karşısında bulunuyor. Ve öyle bir mevkide tahaddüs ediyor ki ehemmiyet-i siyasiyesi zan ve tahmin etildiğinden pek fazladır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.151

rebellion, which had appeared due to administrative imprudence, and to stop such an event from happening, there is no other solution than sending an army of two hundred thousand men with their battery and machine guns and burning and demolishing everywhere the sign of revolt have been seen, then taking the arms of the Albanians."²⁷⁴

Ahmet Samim claimed that French newspapers (*ceraid*) protecting the Slavic interest, had followed the same principle and had used the same vocabulary (*lisan*). He argued that if this Slavic project were applied, Russian desires and Slav interests would be facilitated. "The eradication of Albania, which is the strongest Ottoman fortification in Rumelia against the different movements in Macedonia, was seriously suitable for the foreign interests."²⁷⁵

"Today, in order to turn the arms on the enemies, it is time to hug each other and forget what was happened. If we can remove the conflicts between us, perhaps we can get through the external difficulties without bloodshed."²⁷⁶

According to Samim, the Albanians made up the greatest block of support (*istinadgah*) of the Ottoman sovereignty in Rumelia. During in the ancien regime, the Albanians had constituted a strong impediment to the solving of the problem of Macedonia to the detriment of the Ottoman State and to the advantage of the Slavic States. A Great Power (*devlet-i muazzama*) which had the aim of going down to

²⁷³ "Memleket bugün kuvvetli haricden açılmış gözlere, üzerine atılmaya müheyya bulunan yırtıcı pençelere karşı muttahir bulunmak için gavail ve ihtilacat-ı dahiliyyeden azade bulunmalıdır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.166

²⁷⁴ "Nuvye Vremiya ve rüfekasının fikirlerine, ilkaatına göre Arnavudluk ahvalini ıslah ve idari tedbirsizliklerden dolayı tahaddüs eden kıyam ve isyanı tenkil eylemek ve bu kabil ahvalin zuhuruna suret-i katiyyede mani olabilmek için mükemmel bataryaları ve mitralyözleri ile iki yüz bin kişilik bir ordu sevk eylemekden ve alaim-i isyan görülen her yeri başdan başa yakdıktan sonra bütün Arnavudların da silahlarını toplamakdan başka hiç bir şey olamayacakdı.", Ahmet Samim, SM.166

²⁷⁵ "Makedonyadaki muhtelif cereyanlara karşı Rumelideki en kuvvetli bir Osmanlı istihkamı olan Arnavudluğun ezilmesi menafi-i hariciyyeye cidden pek muvafıkdı.", Ahmet Samim, SM.166

²⁷⁶ "Bugün silahları düşmanlara doğru tevcih için artık kucaklaşmak ve olanı biteni unutmak zamanı gelmiş demektir. Biz kendi aramızdaki ihtilafatı bertaraf edecek olursak müşkilat-ı hariciyyenin de belki sefk-idimai mucib olmadan öntünü almış oluruz.", Ahmet Samim, SM.166

Salonica, could not do so without defeating the Albanians. The deplorable events in Albania had caused the awakening of Serbian, Bulgarian and Russian fancies about Albania and the Serbian, Bulgarian and Russian newspapers relished the punishment (*tedib*) and repression (*tenkil*) of the Albanians.²⁷⁷

The inattentiveness of the government officials towards the local needs of the people of Albania had led to the revolt. The opinions of the persons who knew the local conditions and had investigated the phases and the details of this problem were neglected and the domestic and international importance of this problem was disregarded. The government sought to solve this problem on the theoretical basis (*nazariyyat*).²⁷⁸ A government so many customs, needs in every part of the country, had to choose attentively its governors. More information about Albania was necessary to diagnose the social illness in that region. Emphasising the international importance of Albania for the Ottoman State as the strongest Ottoman fortification in Rumelia Samim concluded that the destruction of Albania would facilitate the realisation of Slavic interests in Macedonia.

The Committee of Union and Progress

The following pages contain a discussion about Ahmet Samim's opinions about the CUP and then his criticisms about the intervention of the Committee into the politics, and his criticisms of the role of refuge played by the Committee. These are followed by an examination of Ahmet Samim's statements about the PUP and its violation of the principle of separation of powers.

²⁷⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

²⁷⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.168

"Those who know the dignity and honour of humanity, the value of freedom, will be forever thankful, grateful to this Committee which has saved the nation from the most grievous slavery and has retaken its honour."²⁷⁹

"Those who are the enemy of the existence of the CUP are those who can not understand the national interests; therefore we have never been a supporter of the fall down of this committee and we will not be either. The CUP is a national power in the country; the CUP is the son of the constitutional monarchy, the child of freedom."²⁸⁰

Ahmet Samim said that the Greeks (*Rum*), Armenians and Bulgarians in the country had important and abundant (*vasi*) committees (*cemiyyetler*) and political parties and that the CUP was an Ottoman committee. Committees established and constituted by other elements worked for the awakening and political training of the nation to which they belonged. The CUP had to walk towards such a national objective and serve the enlightenment of the minds and conscience of the people, the nation.²⁸¹ "Today there is a need for committees, parties in order to give a good political education to the Ottoman nation. The CUP can undertake this duty and can execute it with full success because it is our most powerful committee and because of its perfect organisation."²⁸²

Ahmet Samim asked his opponents (*muarrızlar*) to see him as an adversary (*muhalif*) but not as an enemy. He said his opposition (*muhalefet*) had no covert or

²⁷⁹ "İnsanlığın kadr ve haysiyyetini, hürriyetin kıymetini bilenler milleti esaretlerin en eliminden halas ve ona namusunu istirdad eden bu Cemiyetin ilalebed şükr-güzarı, minnetdarıdır.", Ahmet Samim, "Rumeli'ye", *Sadayı Millet* no.169, 18 May 1910

²⁸⁰ "İttihad ve Terakki'nin düşman-ı mevcudiyeti olanlar menafi-i milliyeyi takdir edemeyenlerdir; bunun için bu Cemiyet'in hiç bir zaman inhidamına tarafdar olmadık ve olmayacağız da. İttihad ve Terakki memlekette bir kuvve-i milliyedir; İttihad ve Terakki zade-i meşrutıyyet, tıfl-ı hürriyetdir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁸¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁸² "Bugün Osmanlı milletine iyi bir terbiyye-i siyasiyye vermek için cemiyyetlere, fırkalara ihtiyaç var. Bu vazifeyi İttihad ve Terakki bizdeki cemiyyat-ı mevcudenin en kuvvetlisi ve teşkilatı itibariyle

more humble goal than good will (*hüsn niyet*).²⁸³ "It is seen that these oppositions are done only against unnecessary and even sinister and harmful rowdiness, unlawfulness, and illegality"²⁸⁴

"Consequently, today we want and request that the CUP, which has a place and role in the country, drive the people toward the object of freedom, inspire truly the meaning of freedom in the people, but not limit personal liberty or oppress consciences."²⁸⁵

Intervention of the Committee in Politics

Ahmet Samim claimed that from the beginning of the revolution (*inkılab*), the greatest subject of conflict between the CUP and its opponents was the intervention of the Committee in governmental affairs. The point of the birth of this problem was the request of one member of the Committee by Abdülhamit (with the consent of the Committee) to overthrow the Grand Vizier Kamil Paşa. After the reflection of this event in the press, severe disputes broke out between the Committee and its opponents. The intervention of the Committee into the affairs of the government, which had the majority in parliament, could create dangerous results. He added that among the people who were trying to eliminate this danger (he meant the opponents of the CUP), there were good-willed, patriotic persons as well as double-dealers

en mükemmeli olmak haysiyyetle deruhde ve kemal-i muvaffakiyyetle icra edebilir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁸³ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁸⁴ "Görülüyor ki bu muhalefetler de ancak bilüzum ve hatta meşum ve muzırr taşkınlıklara, yolsuzluklara, kanunsuzluklara karşı yapılıyor.", Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁸⁵ "Binaenaleyh bugün memleketimizde bir mevkii, bir rolü olan İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin biz halkı hürriyet-i şahsiyyeyi tahdide ve vicdanlar üzerinde icra-i tazyikata değil, gaye-i hürriyete sevk etmesini, ahaliye mana-i hürriyeti bihakkın telkin eylemesini arzu ve temenni eyliyoruz.", Ahmet Samim, "Yine Tehdid Politikası", *Sadayı Millet*, no.93, 3 March 1910

looking for their own interests. He claimed that due to some self-serving, denouncers (*jurnalci*) it would not be true to call all of them as self-serving.²⁸⁶

According to Ahmet Samim, those who advocated that the Committee not have to intervene in governmental affairs assumed that the constitutional monarchist freedom (*hürriyet-i meşrutîyye*) had been established. On the other hand, these people did not want the Committee be dissolved as they believed the Committee should spend its time observing Abdülhamit and his accomplices like the executioner of the new administration. Samim wrote that the CUP was responsible for what happened of the incident on 31 March, which had not done its job. Although in the Grand Vizierate there had been a member of the CUP and members of the CUP had occupied high positions, the Committee had not been informed about this perfidious arrangement. After the suppression of the revolt of 31 March, public opinion and the press thought that the Committee had decided not to intervene in governmental affairs. About the resignation of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, the foreign press had written that this resignation had been realised with the influence of the Committee.²⁸⁷

Ahmet Samim claimed that the CUP continued to intervene secretly to the politics. Public opinion disapproved people who had the title of responsible delegate (*murahhas-ı mesul*) intervene in political problems. He asked the Committee, which was made up from members from the majority in parliament, to define to whom they were responsible when they were using their delegated power and what their duties and roles were. He felt that such an explanation would put an end to finish the hesitation about the intervention of the Committee in politics.²⁸⁸

Samim reminded his readers that after the suppression of 31 March revolt, the CUP had declared in the newspapers that it would not have open or secret contact and

²⁸⁶ Ahmet Samim, "İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti", *Sadayı Millet*, no.69, 7 February 1910

²⁸⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.69

responsibility on the destiny of the country, but instead would open libraries and hospitals in order to raise the culture and knowledge of the motherland. This attitude had been appreciated by him as well as by the public. However within a short period, the Committee, which had taken the title of saviour of the motherland, had begun to slip into decadence, from which there could be no return.²⁸⁹

Ahmet Samim published a letter written by a delegate of *Fırka-i İbad*, Muhlis Sabahaddin, sent to Salonica by the party, to the presidency (*riyaset*) of *Demokrat Fırka*, on 23 April 1325 (6 May 1910) in Salonica. In this letter, Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey described the difficulties that he had living in Salonica. He had gone to the Bulgarian Democrat Clubs and told them that it was necessary to establish a *Makedonya Demokrat Fırkası* (Democrat Party of Macedonia) gathering all democrat clubs of different elements (*muhtelif unsurlar*). The Bulgarians had accepted this proposal and declared that they would change their name from *Milli Fedaratif Fırkası Bulgar Şubesi* (the National Federative Party Bulgarian Section) to *Osmanlı Fedaratif Fırkası Bulgar Şubesi* (the Ottoman Federative Party Bulgarian Section) and that they would help *Demokrat Fırka* as best they could. After that the catastrophe started.²⁹⁰

One night, Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey was attacked by two men, who, while beating him, told "Why you are interested in these subjects" (*böyle şeylerle uğraşır mısın*). Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey shouted and some policemen from a nearby police station came. They seized one of the attackers. It was found that the attacker, a custom's guard (*gümrük kolcusu*) named Hüseyin Efendi, had one revolver, thirty-two bullets and one knife. Hüseyin Efendi was jailed and Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey was escorted home. The next morning Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey went to the governor and

²⁸⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.69

²⁸⁹ Ahmet Samim, "Cemiyet Siyasiyyat ile Meşgul Değil", *Sadayı Millet*, no.91, 1 March 1910

reported the incident. The governor ordered the chief of police to find the responsible parties. Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey told that he had written nothing to the presidency (*riyaset*) of *Demokrat Fırka* because he had trusted the seriousness of the government. A few days later when Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey went to the governor to learn the results of the investigation, the governor told him that he had to give up establishing a party, that there was only a way which could lead the country to safety and the Honoured Committee (*cemiyet-i muhtereme*) was walking this way, that the incident of 31 March had been due to these quarrels (*çekişmeler*) of the party and the government would not accept any responsibility for it. Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey answered that it was possible to walk in that way as the two parties involved and he rejected the suggestion of the governor. Muhlis Sabahaddin Bey, who had lost his trust in government, made his own research, and the results of which he reported. "The next morning the criminal was set free on the word of Doctor Nazım Bey (the responsible delegate of the CUP). Therefore I have seen that informing it to you is suitable and I have written. Perhaps your humble servant (*bendeniz*) also will come to İstanbul temporarily for this matter on Sunday or Monday."²⁹¹

Ahmet Samim wrote that not finding the people who had planned this attack against a delegate of a party established in accordance with the law in Salonica, was saddening and unbelievable. He asked in which role Doctor Nazım Bey had intervened in a case connected to civil and public law (*hukuk-u medeniyye ve umumiyye*) and how he could set free a man who had been seized in the case of witnessed crime, under his own protection (*himaye*) and guarantee.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Ahmet Samim, "Şekavet-i Siyasiyye", *Sadayı Millet*, no.162, 11 May 1910

²⁹¹ "Cani ertesi sabah Doktor Nazım Bey'in [İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti murahhas-ı mesulü] kefaletiyle tahliye edilmiştir. Bunun üzerine meseleyi sizlere bildirmeyi muvafık görerek yazdım. Belki bendeniz de pazar yahud pazartesi bilhassa bu iş için muvakkaten İstanbul'a geleceğim.", Ahmet Samim, SM.162

²⁹² Ahmet Samim, SM.162

Ahmet Samim asked how the governor could propose that a political party, whose legal presence had been ratified by the government, should not be founded.²⁹³ He claimed that these secret organisations attacked the political parties and newspapers founded by Muslim elements. To remove this state (*hal*), which was against the basis of the constitutional monarchy and legal commands (*ahkam-ı kanuniyye*) and whose results could be harmful (*muzırr*) and grave (*vahim*), was the most important and primary duty facing the government.²⁹⁴

"In a period in which those responsible for the minor events and mere words connected with the public order and the constitutional monarchy have surrendered to the Court Martial, in Salonica a delegate of a political party, the legal presence of which has been officially sanctioned, is attacked by armed people ten metres from the police station and he saves his life with difficulty. The attacker, a custom's guard, in other words a government employee is set free two days later with the guarantee of a person who has the title of the responsible delegate of the CUP! The governor shows that he is far from the requirements of neutrality of official purity and the perception of his official duty by his strange and law-breaking statement given to the person who has been attacked."²⁹⁵

Ahmet Samim declared that he would be watching how the Grand Vizier would react to this law breaking and public order breaking event. "This attack forms a serious crime removing the civil and political liberty ensured to all Ottomans by our

²⁹³ Ahmet Samim, SM.162

²⁹⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.162

²⁹⁵ "Asayiş ve meşrutıyyete taalluk eden bu ufak vukuat ve kavliyyat mürtekeblerinin her tarafda Divan-ı Harblere teslim olunduğu bir esnada Selanik şehrinin ortasında ve polis karakoluna beş on metre bir mesafede mevcudiyet-i kanuniyyesi resmen musaddak bir fırka-i siyasiye Murahhası başdan ayağa kadar müsellağ adamlar tarafından düçar-ı tecavüz olduğu ve canını pek güçlülkle kurtarabildiği halde gümrük kolcusu yani hükümet memuru olan mütecasir iki gün sonra İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyyeti Murahhas-ı mesulü ünvanını taşıyan bir zatın kefaleti altında tahliye olunuyor! Vali düçar-ı tecavüz olan zata vaki olan pek garib ve pek kanunşikenane beyanatı ile saffet-i resmiyyesinin icabatından olan bitarafılıkdan ve vezaif-i memuresini idrakden pek uzak olduğunu gösteriyor.", Ahmet Samim, SM.162

Constitution. Due to this character it is an attack to the constitutional monarchy."²⁹⁶ He said it was necessary (*elzem*) to surrender the custom's guard and his accomplices to the Court Martial, according to the Law of Bands (*Çeteler Kanunu*) the good effects of which had been declared by the government. He assumed that the method (*hatt-ı hareket*) which would be followed by the government about this problem would show the neutrality of the cabinet and its degree of merit (*derece-i liyakat*) of the title constitutional government.²⁹⁷

Samim claimed that due to an article titled "Şekavet-i Siyasiyye" (Political Brigandage) that they (*Sadayı Millet*) had written, the newspaper *Rumeli* published in Salonica, had attacked *Sadayı Millet*. While he said that these accusations (*ithamat*) did not have any importance for them (*Sadayı Millet*), said he would give a last and open answer to the questions directed to them. In its attack against *Sadayı Millet*, *Rumeli* had mentioned the honoured service (*mübeccel hıdemat*) of the CUP in the establishment of the constitutional monarchy. Samim allowed that nobody could deny or despise the service of the CUP. Appreciating the victory of the CUP was the debt of gratitude (*şükran*) of every patriotic Ottoman.²⁹⁸

Ahmet Samim declared that those who had missed freedom, justice and humanness like them and had shed bloody tears at the decadence and decline of Ottomanhood under the absolute rule could not be the enemy of the CUP, as the columnist of *Rumeli* had imagined. The newspaper *Rumeli* had supposed that the aim of *Sadayı Millet* was to blacken the name of the CUP and eradicate it.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ "Bu tecavüz Kanun-i Esasimizin bütün Osmanlılara bahş ve temin ettiği hürriyet-i medeniyye ve siyasiyyeyi fiilen izale etmek gibi ağır bir cürm teşkil eder. Ve bu mahiyetinden dolayı meşrutiyete de tecavüzdür.", Ahmet Samim, SM.162

²⁹⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.162

²⁹⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

²⁹⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

Ahmet Samim said that those who had been touched (*mütessir*) by the article "Şakavet-i Siyasiyye" (Political Brigandage) had to appreciate his (Ahmet Samim) connection to law and justice (*hak*).³⁰⁰ He said that while he did not know the member of *Fırka-i İbad* (Democrat Party) mentioned in the article, he would be against oppression (*tahakküm*) and mastery (*tagallüb*) wherever it came from as he hated the absolute rule of Abdülhamid.³⁰¹

The Committee as Refuge

Ahmet Samim said that after the revolution (*inkılab*), those who had seen the disappearance of the influence and power of *Yıldız* (Palace) had sought refuge for themselves. As the last solution these people had recourse to the Committee. According to Ahmet Samim, these people had to be refused by the Committee, but they had become able to influence to the heart and spirit of the Committee.³⁰² Those who had looked after their own interests at the doors of *Yıldız* (Palace) were now protected by the CUP. On the other hand, the Committee had a policy of intolerance towards everything beyond its thought and perception.³⁰³

He said one characteristic of the CUP which could be considered Machiavelistic was its concealment of the faults of everyone who took refuge behind its tyranny and its nullification of everybody outside the Committee or who had left it.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

³⁰¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.169

³⁰² Ahmet Samim, SM.69

³⁰³ Ahmet Samim, SM.91

³⁰⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.91

The Party of Union and Progress

Ahmet Samim wrote about the book *Meclis-i Mebusan'da Firkalar* (Parties in Parliament), written by Doctor Rıza Nur Bey, deputy for Sinop. In this book Doctor Rıza Nur Bey touched on the meaning of the party, the place and the function of the political parties in the constitutional government and the parliament, how parties were formed, and he declared his opinions on the meaning of freedom and the purpose of the constitutional monarchy. At the end of the book, Rıza Nur Bey talked of the political parties in *Meclis-i Mebusan*. He described the Party of Union and Progress as a crowd of people (*mahşer yeri*) where opinions were gathered. He claimed that in the party, which had had 170 deputies in 1909, the power had been monopolised, the tyranny reigned in the party and many members of the party had to let it. Ahmet Samim wrote that the most important part of the book was when Rıza Nur Bey discussed his opinions about the problem of the separation of the Committee and Party of Union and Progress. He said that in the foreign press it was alleged that the CUP was intervening in the legislative and executive powers. According to Rıza Nur Bey, although the CUP had declared that it would stay away from politics, it had established moral control over the deputies.³⁰⁵

Ahmet Samim wrote that at that time there were two parties in the parliament other than the PUP, *Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırka* and *Ahali Fırkası*. The majority of the members of these two parties were deputies who had left the PUP out of boredom the interregnum and disarray of the party in order to work in the direction of their own liberty and conscience. The PUP had not approved this movement. The party had tried to control all opinions and consciences. The doubts and hesitations of

³⁰⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.91

the PUP had increased with the founding of the *Ahali Fırkası*, which had a liberal program.

Ahmet Samim claimed that electoral delegates sent telegraphs of reaction to the deputies who had resigned from the PUP. This had been an attempt to subject the deputies to a slavery of conscience. The Committee pretended that the deputies were tied to the CUP by an oath of loyalty and that they could leave the Committee or its program under the condition of resignation and that this condition was desired by the nation and that those who spoke in the name of the nation were electoral delegates. Ahmet Samim assumed that if the electoral system were not changed and direct elections were not instituted, the nation would continue to be captive to the electoral delegates under the control of the CUP.³⁰⁶

Samim wrote that it was *Tanin* which had declared that the CUP would leave politics to its party in the parliament and it would work for the progress of education in the country. He alleged that the telegraphs sent to the deputies who had left the PUP to work with a different program and party, had been issued by the provocation of the CUP and its clubs. He suspected that the CUP had tried to create fear on the deputies and make them the subjects of their arbitrary power. Samim said he disagreed with the establishment of moral control of the clubs of the CUP and the electoral delegates on the deputies. "It limits the liberty and freedom of the members of the legislative power who must be free and independent. It makes the parliament the prisoner and slave of external influence."³⁰⁷

According to Samim, the most reasonable thing that could be asked was the fact that if the deputies had the right of leaving the program that they had promised to

³⁰⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.91

their electors to pursue and apply it. He said a deputy should not leave the program which had gotten him elected. But after the elections a deputy could see that a program that he had promised to follow would bring harm to the country and then he give it up. For this reason such a deputy did not have to be criticised. The electors did not assign deputies by a *mandat impératif*. Samim claimed that this kind of resignation was normal in Europe. His first examples was from France. The former Prime Minister Clemenceau had resigned from the Radical Socialist Party because he did not agree with the alliance (*ittifak*) of his party with the *Socialistes Unifiés* (united socialists). Samim claimed that nobody from the Radical Socialist Party had asked Clemenceau to resign from his senatorship for leaving the party. The second example was from England. Winston Churchill, elected by the Conservative Party, had left his party and joined the Liberals. Churchill had not made any explanation to his electors and they did not ask for one either. Samim told that these two examples from two civilised countries were the realities explaining the situation. He asked his opponents to give some examples proving their argument.³⁰⁸

Ahmet Samim said that in the elections in İstanbul, where he was a primary elector, the deputies elected were all deputies of the CUP. The electoral delegates determined before the elections had been informed to the primary electors. He claimed that the people of İstanbul had not give their votes to the deputies with the condition of ratifying all the orders and affairs of the Committee, even if they were against their personal opinions and conscience. He argued that the deputies were not the deputies of the electoral delegates but, those of the nation in general, and that the electoral delegates could not subject the deputies to slavery of conscience (*esaret-i*

³⁰⁷ "Bu vicdanen hür ve serbest olunmaları icab eden kuvve-i teşriye azasının serbesti ve hürriyetini tahdid eder; mebusanı harici tesirlerin esir ve zebunu bırakır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.93

³⁰⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.93

vicdaniyye) as the deputies had sworn to protect the constitution, which forbade them to implement such a despotism.³⁰⁹

"The principle one of the fundamental basis (*ekanim-i esasiyye*) of freedom is to respect freedom, the freedom of everybody."³¹⁰

In the elections, Samim continued, the program of the CUP had not had any influence. What was influential was the guarantee of the CUP for the deputies, which consisted of making guarantees about the fidelity and loyalty of the deputy to the constitutional monarchy.³¹¹

The programs of the *Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırka* and *Ahali Fırkası* were not against the orders (*emirler*) and decrees (*hükümler*) of the constitutional monarchy. From the perspective of liberty of expression, they were above the program of the PUP. He added that from the deputies who had established these parties, nothing more than this could be asked; no one had the right to ask anything else.³¹²

Samim wrote that the newspaper *Tanin* had assumed that the telegraphs had been the reaction of the deceived electoral delegates to the deputies who had left the program that for which the electoral delegates had voted. Ahmet Samim assumed that the deputies had not taken an oath for an eternal fidelity to the CUP, but they had taken an oath of the fidelity to the constitutional monarchy, and to freedom (*hürriyet*).³¹³

³⁰⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.91

³¹⁰ "Hürriyetin ekanim-i esasiyyesinden başlıcası herkesin hürriyetine, hürriyet-i vicdaniyyesine tamamen riayetkar olmakdan ibaretdir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.91

³¹¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.93

³¹² Ahmet Samim, SM.93

³¹³ Ahmet Samim, SM.93

Samim said that the telegraphs that had been sent were those of the government officials who had obeyed the directive that they had received. He added that the total of the telegraphs sent from one election district made up ten percent of the total of the electoral delegates in that election district.³¹⁴

Ahmet Samim repeated the slogan of the *Hareket Ordusu*, which had given for

The Separation of Powers

Ahmet Samim said that when relations between Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and the PUP became strained due to problems of Lynch and Adana, it had been heard that the PUP had called a meeting to vote for the new Grand Vizier and İbrahim Hakkı Paşa had won the majority of the votes. The PUP asked the Sultan to appoint Hakkı Paşa to the Grand Vizierate. Samim claimed that few days earlier an article written by a member of *Ahali Fırkası*, Mustafa Sabri, deputy for Tokat, had proved that rumour true. Mustafa Sabri had written that a group consisting of the most important members of the PUP had gone to the Palace and submitted the names of two candidates to the Sultan who had received the majority of the votes (Hakkı Paşa, 48 votes; Said Paşa, 39 votes). Shortly after, a second submittal (*arz*) was made, in which it was said that it would be more suitable to assign Hakkı Paşa to the Grand Vizierate.³¹⁶

Ahmet Samim declared that these kinds of acts were against the main principle of the constitutional monarchy: the separation of powers (*tefrik-i kuva*). "It is necessary to have full respect for the Law of the Sultan (*hukuk-i padişahi*), who is in

³¹⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.93

³¹⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.93

³¹⁶ Ahmet Samim, "Bizde Parlamentarizm Nasıl Tecelli Ediyor", *Sadayı Millet*, no.97, 7 March 1910

the head of the executive power and in such affairs has independence as required in accordance with the constitution."³¹⁷

Ahmet Samim wrote that in the parliamentary countries, a party which had the majority in the parliament did not choose two candidates and request that one of them be appointed to the Grand Vizierate. The behaviour of PUP during the crisis of ministers (*buhran-ı vükela*) was contrary to the principle of the separation of powers, the main principle of the constitutional monarchy and the essential rule of parliamentarism.³¹⁸

Samim pointed out that until that time he had said repeatedly many times that they (the Ottomans) were inexperienced (*acemi*) in the parliamentary system and it would be better to examine (*tedkik etmek*) and apply (*tatbik etmek*) the rules and principles of the civilised countries which had been established by the practice hundreds of years earlier. Instead of applying these tested rules, creating new and strange methods could bring problems.³¹⁹

Ahmet Samim said repeatedly that he was not an enemy of the Committee, but only an opponent (*muhalif*). He was thankful to the CUP for its service in the restitution of the constitutional monarchy. What he was against was the intervention into politics of irresponsible delegates and Committee members who had no official responsibility. He also criticised the PUP's violation of the principle of the separation of powers in the assignment of the Grand Vizier. Samim urged the PUP to apply the rules of parliamentarism.

³¹⁷ "Kuvve-i icraiyye riyasetinde bulunan ve Kanun-i Esasi mucibince bu kabil umurda haiz istiklal tam olan hukuk-i padişahiye riayet-i kamile.", Ahmet Samim, SM.97

³¹⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.97

³¹⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.97

Abdülhamid and Ancien Regime

Ahmet Samim claimed that newspapers published in İstanbul had mentioned the subject of general amnesty. It was said that the people, who had had relations with 31 March and the *ancien regime* and had been exiled, would be pardoned as a part of the celebration of the anniversary of 10 July. He said this issue of general amnesty had had unpleasant effects on the public opinion.³²⁰

Samim said that if they had not lived through the reactionary trouble of 31 March, it might have been possible for people to forget in the two years lived after the revolution (*inkılab*), the desire for revenge created in the hearts of men by the absolute rule of Abdülhamid. Ahmet Samim claimed that the advantage of 31 March was to repel a Red Sultan (*Kızıl Sultan*) who had not been suited to the title of sovereign of the constitutional government (*hükümet-i meşrûta hükümdarı*) and caliph.³²¹

He wrote that just after the suppression of the reactionary movement of 31 March, everybody suspected of having relations with the *ancien regime* had been banished from İstanbul.³²² After this elimination (*tasfiye*), calm (*sükun*) and peace (*huzur*) had been reestablished. Many of the people who had been exiled had sent petitions to the *Hareket Ordusu*, Grand Vizierate and Parliament protesting their innocence. Samim allowed that the majority of these people could be right in their complaints as they had been exiled and banished without fair trial.³²³ "Consequently although a general amnesty is declared about these people, a separate and serious investigation must be conducted for each one of them and then each one of them has

³²⁰ Ahmet Samim, "Afv-ı Umumi, *Sadayı Millet*, no.142, 21 April 1910

³²¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.142

³²² Ahmet Samim, SM.142

³²³ Ahmet Samim, SM.142

to be sent to a court relevant to his crime -if it exists- and a trial must be held."³²⁴ Samim commented that to live a happy (*mesud*) life of exile on Rhodes, Sakız and Midilli was light punishment for those responsible for the assassinations during the *ancien regime*. Those who had been exiled had to be judged again and those who were responsible for crimes had to be punished with major sentences.³²⁵

Samim argued that the reports (*jurnaller*) of the denouncers were documents of the crimes of the *ancien regime*. He added that the government had decided it was content with the classification (*tasnif*), arranging (*tanzim*) and conservation(*muhafaza*) of these reports (*jurnaller*), which were then sent to the examination (*tedkik*) and inspection (*teftiş*) of a trustworthy (*emin*) commission. "If I am not wrong, those who have been appointed to the report commission (*jurnal komisyonu*) have taken an oath that they will not let out anything to the outside about these secrets."³²⁶

Despite this oath, some of these reports had been published in the newspapers. Accusations of "*eski jurnalci*" (ex-denouncer), "*jurnalleri var*" (he has reports) had begun to circulate and those who were in opposition could not escape them. This discussion had been taken into the salons of parliament and efforts were being made to blacken the names of the deputies. Şefik el Müeyyed Bey, member of *Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırka*, was accused of being denouncer. Ahmet Samim said no member of the opposition could save himself from these accusations, but Şefik Bey had been touched by these accusations and asked his reports be published. Two

³²⁴ "Binaenaleyh bunlar hakkında bir afv-ı umumî ilanı lazım gelse bile her biri için ayrı ayrı ve pek ciddi tahkikatda bulunmak ve bilahire her biri tebeyyun edecek cürmüne göre-eğer varsa- yine bir mahkemeye tevdi olunmak ve muhakemeleri icra etdirilmek lazım gelir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.142

³²⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.142

³²⁶ "Jurnal komisyonuna memur edilenler bu esrardan harice hiç bir şey tevdi etmemeye, hatırımızda kaldığına göre din ve namus üzerine yemin etdiler.", Ahmet Samim, "Jurnaller Muharebesi", *Sadayı Millet*, no.163, 12 May 1910

parties in the parliament intended to procure a decision for the publication of the reports.³²⁷

Samim emphasised that in the commission appointed to the investigation of the reports it was necessary that reliable and neutral persons from the opposition take part.³²⁸

Samim declared that it was not a right and courageous to use these reports as weapons. He claimed that if the negotiations (*müzakerat*) of the opposition in the parliament were examined it would be seen that the minority had accused and criticised the majority of using the reports against the opposition and public opinion.³²⁹ Someone had to put an end to this comedy of reports (*jurnaller komedisi*). The honour and honesty of everybody involved were threatened by these reports. The accounts belonging to the *ancien regime* had to be examined and eliminated.³³⁰ Everybody had the desire to eliminate the problems of the *ancien regime* and then talk in a humane and brave way. In that way, it would be possible to clarify and prove who were these denouncers and servants of the *ancien regime*. He added that those who would suffer from this elimination were the slanderers who had used this evil weapon and made accusations.³³¹

"We are sure that the majority of those who have used this sword will chop off their own fingers, their arms."³³²

Ahmet Samim claimed that public opinion, the Senate (*meclis-i ayan*), and parliament (*meclis-i mebusan*) demanded that the government to publish these reports as soon as possible. Samim wondered how the government would answer. He claimed

³²⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.163

³²⁸ Ahmet Samim, SM.163

³²⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.163

³³⁰ Ahmet Samim, "Yine Jurnaller Davası", *Sadayı Millet*, no.165, 14 May 1910

³³¹ Ahmet Samim, SM.163

that the government could convince the Senate to not publish the reports. He assumed that to maintain the trust that it had gained with this request, the Senate had to insist on his intention (*niyet*).³³³

Ahmet Samim claimed that it was wrong to appropriate reports only to the senators and deputies. He claimed that some Ministers in the cabinet had executed special missions during the Hamidian era and they had been present in the Exceptional Courts of *Yıldız (Yıldız Mahakim-i Fevkaladesi)*. He added that the official document of former Grand Vizier Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa which could be accepted as a report (*jurnal*) could be found in the memoirs of Niyazi Bey.³³⁴

"It is not necessary that all of those who executed important duties in the ancien regime are deprived of honesty and patriotism...But while once this problem of elimination is under question in that way, with the senators and deputies -in respect to the rule of equality- ministers, government officials, governors, journalists, in short whole nation have to get rid of suspicions, calumnies, slanders by participating to it."³³⁵ Ahmet Samim claimed that everybody had to face this suffering and after some troubling hours everybody would have nothing to be ashamed of and they would not have to get bored in front of the accusations.³³⁶

Ahmet Samim was for the necessity of rejudging all people exiled after the suppression of the reactionary movement of 31 March. The elimination of the problem of reports (*jurnaller*) was an other aspect of Ahmet Samim's opinion of solving the problem of the *ancien regime*.

³³² "Biz eminiz ki bu kılıcı kullananlardan pek çoğu evvela yine kendi parmaklarını, kendi kollarını doğrayacaklardır.", Ahmet Samim, SM.165

³³³ Ahmet Samim, SM.165

³³⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.165

³³⁵ "1Devr-i sabıkda vezaif-i mühimme ifa etmiş olan herkesin namus ve hamiyetden mahrum bulunması lazım gelmez...Fakat madem ki bu tasfiye meselesi bir kere böyle mevzu-u bahs oldu, ayan ve mebusan ile beraber -kaide-i müsavata riayeten- buna vükela, memurin, valiler, mutasarrıflar, gazeteciler, hasılı bütün millet iştirak ederek şübhelerden, bühtanlardan, iftiralardan temizlenmelidir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.165

The Ministry of Public Works and Hallacyan Efendi

Hallacyan Efendi replaced the minister of the public works, Noradonkyan Efendi. Hallacyan Efendi was not a member of any Armenian committee and he was loyal to the ideal of Ottomanhood. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın claimed that Hallacyan Efendi was very happy with the power of the post of minister (*vükelalık*) and he did not feel the need to conceal his pleasure.³³⁷

Ahmet Samim criticised Hallacyan Efendi's inactivity comparing him to the former minister of Public Works, Noradonkyan Efendi, and deducing that Noradonkyan Efendi had done his best in eleven months of office, but that Hallacyan Efendi had done nothing in his six months in office.³³⁸

Samim wrote that the most important needs of a country were those under the jurisdiction of public works. Turkey had no bridges, railroads, ports or canals and they should have been constructed by then. The Minister of Public Works thus had to be an experienced person with the technical knowledge needed job. Hallacyan Efendi had studied law at European Universities and before the Revolution he had worked as councillor of law in the *Düyun-u Umumiyye* (Public Debts). Ahmet Samim claimed that the empire had entered in a period of activity in which they did not have time to loose. An ineffective minister could not be allowed to keep his office due to his membership in a political party.³³⁹

The deputy for Dersim, Lütfi Fikri Bey, asked for an explanation about the procedures (*muamelat*) of the Ministry of Public Works as a deputy of a sovereign nation. Samim reported that the statement (*takrir*) of interpellation (*istizah*) of Lütfi

³³⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.165

³³⁷ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Tanıdıklarım*, pp. 155-156

³³⁸ Ahmet Samim, "Nafia Nezaretinde", *Sadayı Millet* no.74, 12 February 1910

³³⁹ Ahmet Samim, SM.74

Fikri Bey had been accepted after long discussions in the parliament. The proposal (*teklif*) of Lütfi Fikri Bey was criticised and seen as unclear. Samim declared that in the first two years of the constitutional monarchy many proposals of interpellation of the party in the majority that had had more unclear reasons than the proposal of Lütfi Fikri Bey had been accepted. He said he shared the opinion of Rıza Nur Bey, who had assumed that the party in majority suspected and even hated any interpellation made by the minority. Such partisanship was dangerous, Samim warned. It could break (*ihlal etmek*) or annihilate (*imha etmek*) the right of control of the nation. It was necessary to respect the rights of the minority, as this would prevent the submission and slavery of the reality to the influence (*nüfuz*) of the majority.³⁴⁰

Lütfi Fikri Bey's document questioned why the project arranged for the roads had not been applied, what the reasons for the renunciation of the initiatives of the ports of Dedeağaç and Samsun were, and why the railroads had not been constructed. Samim reported that Hallacyan Efendi's replies were dubious.³⁴¹ The minister had declared from the podium (*kürsü*) of the parliament that he was a minister of a constitutional monarchy (*meşrutiyet nazırı*) and that a minister would answer only if he chose. Samim stated that a minister of a constitutional monarchy was obliged to answer when a deputy representing the nation asked. The position of Hallacyan Efendi was to be a servant of the nation.³⁴² "The nation does not expect such a reply from its servants; your position is nothing more than of a servant of the nation."³⁴³

Hallacyan Efendi accused the press, which had published articles critical of him, of maliciousness (*garazkarlık*) and perfidy (*hainlik*). Samim replied that the country expected service from Hallacyan Efendi. When the press did not see this

³⁴⁰ Ahmet Samim, "'Meşruttiyyet Nazırı' Hallacyan Efendi", *Sadayı Millet* no.100, 10 March 1910

³⁴¹ Ahmet Samim, "İstizahdan Sonra", *Sadayı Millet* no.120, 30 March 1910

³⁴² Ahmet Samim, SM.100

service, it was free to write what it wanted. In a country governed by a constitutional monarchy, the first inspector was the legislative power and the second was the press.³⁴⁴

Despite the interpellation given by Lütfi Fikri Bey, Hallacyan Efendi was allowed to keep his position. In this vote 65 deputies gave votes of non-confidence and 129 deputies gave votes of confidence. 67 deputies had declined to participate. Samim assumed that refusing to vote had a meaning similar to a vote of non-confidence.³⁴⁵

Samim declared that Hallacyan Efendi had kept his position due to the ambitions of his supporters and the PUP. Hallacyan Efendi had not given answers to the questions of Lütfi Fikri Bey. If a deputy of the PUP had asked the same questions, a minister who did not reply would not have been able to keep his position.³⁴⁶

Ahmet Samim claimed that all affairs executed in the Ministry of the Public Works had been done by the former minister Noradonkyan Efendi and by Raif Paşa, who had acted as proxy to the Ministry for a short period.³⁴⁷

³⁴³ "Millet kendi hizmetkarlarından böyle mukabele beklemez; millete karşı mevkiniz hizmetkarlıktan başka bir şey değildir.", Ahmet Samim, SM.100

³⁴⁴ Ahmet Samim, SM.100

³⁴⁵ Ahmet Samim, SM.120

³⁴⁶ Ahmet Samim, SM.120

³⁴⁷ Ahmet Samim, SM.120

Summary and Conclusion

In this conclusion a summary of Ahmet Samim's opinions will be given and he will be placed within the ideological atmosphere of the period in which he lived.

Ahmet Samim was loyal to the concepts of justice (*hak*) and equity (*adl*) of the constitutional monarchy and he advocated the concept of the separation of powers. He considered the period of the constitutional monarchy to be one of safety. He claimed that in a country governed by constitutional monarchy, the people were sure of their life, family and chastity. To protect the rights of the Ottomans, the constitution and the existing laws were sufficient and exceptional laws and courts were redundant and dangerous.

According to Samim, the most important factor, which would provide the union of the elements was military service. It was the most sacred and honourable duty given by a motherland to its sons. Samim felt sure that the Ottoman nations, which had been separated from one another, would get to know each other in the barracks and would protect the life and chastity of the motherland together. The most inflexible and strongest link of the entente and the union of the elements was military service. The barracks had to be the Empire's school of fraternity. What would be given in the future by the schools had to be sought in the barracks. Samim warned that since life in the barracks was new, problems could arise. He argued that every member of the Ottoman press could propose the removal of these problems. On the other hand, Samim was against all initiatives that might disturb the harmony of military life. Any acts threatening the effort of integration through military service he viewed as acts of enmity.

Ahmet Samim was for the entente of the elements, and argued that that this should not remain just a slogan. The entente and the union of the elements were the

guarantee of the security and the future of the Ottoman Empire. Entente was the salvation of the Ottomanhood. To pursue the ideal of this entente was the duty of every patriotic Ottoman. He added that the newspapers had to avoid publishing news that could disturb the union of the elements.

Declaring that in a country governed by constitutional monarchy, the press had great importance, Samim said that the responsibility of journalists was moral rather than material. Patriotic interests were first before all. According to Samim, nobody could keep the press from informing the people. In countries governed by constitutional monarchies, the press was free and could be restricted only by law. The press was one of the powers providing and preserving the life of the constitutional monarchy. Attacking the press was the same as attacking the powers of the constitutional monarchy.

Another issue that Samim wrote about was the armed revolt in Albania. He noted that Albania was the strongest Ottoman fortification in Macedonia. An armed revolt, the reason for which was the inability of the government, could threaten Ottoman sovereignty in Macedonia. The destruction of Albania would facilitate the realisation of Slavic plans to share and invade Macedonia.

Samim also criticised the CUP's intervention into politics. The Committee, which did not have any official responsibility or authority, had declared after the suppression of the revolt of 31 March that it would not intervene in governmental affairs, but instead would work to open libraries and hospitals. Samim, stating that while he was an opponent of the CUP he was not its enemy, said that there was need of committees such as the CUP to give political education to the Ottoman nation.

Ahmet Samim was against the *ancien regime* and the despotism of Abdülhamid. He declared that they had to eliminate the accounts of the *ancien regime*

and to rejudge all people who had been exiled after the suppression of the revolt of 31 March.

Aware of the impatient atmosphere of the second constitutional monarchy, Samim railed against the pace of public works. His main point of criticism was the inactivity of Hallacyan Efendi as minister of public works.

The Young Turks, who brought about the second constitutional monarchy, had some common points: opposition to absolute and despotic rule, putting into effect the constitution, and justice for all nations of the Empire. The basic principles of Young Turk thought were the concepts of "Ottoman Nation", "Ottoman motherland", and "Ottomanhood" based on the concept of the fraternity of the Ottomans. They sought to give political rights and justice to the people, Muslim or non-Muslim, by establishing a modern administration.³⁴⁸ These political and private rights would be guaranteed in a parliamentary and constitutional monarchist system. The real goal was to provide the permanency (*beka*) of the State.

Ahmet Samim was loyal to these principles of the Young Turks. We can call him a Young Turk. The answer given by Ahmet Samim to the principal question of the intellectuals of the constitutional monarchy, "how this State can be saved", was to respect the constitution amended in 1909 and the union of the elements.

³⁴⁸ Bülent Tanör, *Osmanlı-Türk Anayasal Gelişmeleri*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004, p.169

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