

# Mustafa Bey of Radoviş (1843-1893): Bureaucrat, Journalist and Deputy of Salonica to the First Ottoman Parliament<sup>1</sup>

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Mustafa Bey, or “Mustafa bin Mollazâde Hüsrev Radovişî,” as his official seal reads, is not a well-known personality in present-day Ottoman historiography.<sup>2</sup> However he used to be quite well known in Salonica in the 1870s and 1880s. He was the publisher of the weekly newspaper *Rumeli* and, then, *Zamân*. These papers were rather independent publications, relatively critical of the Ottoman administration between 1873 and 1876 and becoming, to a certain extent, a voice of independent Muslim opinion in this major provincial port city. While serving as deputy to the first Ottoman parliament, Mustafa Bey emerged as an outspoken critic of government encroachments on constitutional rights and was forcibly deported to Salonica following the closure of parliament. During the autocracy of Abdülhamid II, Mustafa Bey became a member of the educational bureaucracy and functioned as the Director of Education in the provinces of Salonica and the Archipelago. Before his death in Istanbul, he was the head of the Department of Secondary Schools at the Ministry of Public Education. Mustafa Bey is an ancestor of the well-known Turkish journalist and author Şevket Rado.

## *Early Life*

Our knowledge about the life of Mustafa Bey of Radoviş is limited to three sources, namely the Registers of Services of Government Employees (*Sicill-i Abvâl*), located at the Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives, the *Sicill-i Osmânî*, the

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the staff of the Atatürk Kütüphanesi in Istanbul for providing me with the digital copies of the available *Rumeli* and *Zamân* collections. My thanks also go to the ISAM and Süleymaniye libraries for allowing me to use their rich book collections. I am also grateful to the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi for giving me access to the *Sicill-i Abvâl* registers.

<sup>2</sup> I discussed Mustafa Bey of Radoviş on three occasions, mainly as the provincial director of education who sent detailed reports concerning the educational situation in the rural areas of Salonica. See Akşin Somel, *Das Grundschulwesen in den Provinzen des Osmanischen Reiches während der Herrschaftsperiode Abdülhamids II (1876-1908)* (Egelsbach; Frankfurt; St.Peter Port: Hänsel-Hohenhausen, 1995), 136; idem, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: E.J.Brill, 2001), 169-172; idem, “Maarif Müdürü Radovişli Mustafa Bey’in Raporları ve Müslim ve Gayrimüslim Eğitimi: II.Abdülhamid Devri Selânik Taşrasında Maarif Meselesi (1885-1886),” *Tarih ve Toplum. Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 2 (2005), 113-147.

Ottoman biographies compiled by Mehmed Süreyya, and the *salnâmes*, i.e. official yearbooks.<sup>3</sup> These sources inform us that Mustafa Bey was born in Radovište, present-day Macedonia, in 1259/1843 to Radovišli Hüsrev Bey. His father was a local financial official, responsible for the collection of the tithes (*kaza âşâr memuriyeti*). The *Sicill-i Ahvâl* reports that Mustafa continued his education at the local *Seba Ali Efendi Medresesi*, the only madrasa of Radovište.<sup>4</sup> He studied Islamic sciences until the level of Monla Câmi's *el-Kâfiye*, a well-known treatise on Arabic grammar for students with an intermediate-level of Arabic proficiency.<sup>5</sup> It appears that he left madrasa education and became a clerk at local courts. Between 1278/1862 and 1286/1869 Mustafa acted as a secretary (*kitâbet*) at the courts of local *kaza*- and *sancak*-centers such as Štib (İştîp), Shkodër (İşkodra) and finally Skopje (Üsküp).<sup>6</sup> Having a madrasa-background, we may assume that it was only natural for Mustafa to work at Islamic *kadı*-courts.

### *Mustafa Bey as a Civil Servant in Salonica, the Archipelago and Istanbul*

This more or less Islamic career seems to have changed around 1287/1870, when Mustafa moved to Salonica and entered government civil service.<sup>7</sup> He first acted as a document drafter (*müsevvid*) at the Secretary of the Government of Salonica (*Selânik Mektubî-i Vilâyet Kalemî*), but apparently Mustafa was able to prove himself, and within two years he rose to the position of chief clerk (*mümeyyiz*) at the same office (1872).<sup>8</sup> In addition to being a chief clerk, we see Mustafa Bey from 1873 onwards as a member of the "Provincial Educational Commission" (*Vilâyet Maârif Komisyonu*), a service which lasted at least until 1875.<sup>9</sup> This membership of a provincial educational council might have been Mustafa Bey's first encounter with educational issues, with which he would later become closely involved. He seems to have continued his position of chief clerk at the Government of Salo-

<sup>3</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi [BOA] Sicill-i Ahval Defteri I/I, Sıra No.60760, p.54; Mehmed Süreyya: *Sicill-i Osmanî*, 6 vols. Ed.by Nuri Akbayer (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 4:1145; official yearbooks of the state (*Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye*) as well as official yearbooks of the province of Salonica (*Selânik Vilâyeti Salnâmesi*).

<sup>4</sup> Somel, Maarif Müdürü, 116; Ş.Sâmi, "Râdovište," in idem, *Kamûs al-Âlâm*. Vol. III (Istanbul: Mihran Matbaası, 1308), 2240.

<sup>5</sup> Somel, "Maarif Müdürü," 116; Hulusi Kılıç, "El-Kâfiye," in: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1988ff) [henceforth *TDVİA*] (2001), 24:153-154; Cevat İzgi: *Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim*. 2 vols. (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1997), 70-71.

<sup>6</sup> Somel, "Maarif Müdürü," 116.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> See *Selânik Vilâyeti Salnâmesi 1291. Def'a 4* (Selânik: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1291), 36; *Salnâme-i Selânik. Sene 1293. Def'a 6* (Selânik: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1293), 33. About provincial educational councils, see Somel, *Modernization*, 92-105.

nica when Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861-1876) was deposed and the pro-Young Ottoman Prince Murad acceded the throne (May 31, 1876).<sup>10</sup> In February 1877 Mustafa Bey was promoted to the Second Grade Class Two (*rütbe-i sâniye sınıf-i sâlis*) of the Ottoman bureaucratic rank order.<sup>11</sup>

When Grand Vizier Midhat Pasha proceeded with the opening of the First Ottoman Parliament, Mustafa Bey became one of the eleven Salonican deputies to the parliament.<sup>12</sup> However, Mustafa rejected his election (February 1877).<sup>13</sup> Although there is no source explaining this rejection, we know for certain that Mustafa Bey was a sympathizer of the Young Ottomans (see below), and possibly also of Midhat Pasha. The sudden dismissal of Midhat Pasha from the grand vezirate and his banishment to Italy might have created a major shock to his sympathizers such as Mustafa Bey. The subsequent opening of parliament may have appeared to be mere window-dressing, with no real political significance. If this conjecture is correct, it could explain why Mustafa Bey rejected his election to parliament. However, when new elections were made for the second parliamentary period and Mustafa Bey was elected for a second time, he accepted his nomination and joined the parliament.<sup>14</sup> As we will see below in more detail, Mustafa Bey became one of the main voices of parliamentary opposition. When parliament was closed down on February 13, 1878, Mustafa Bey and a few other well-known oppositional figures were forcibly sent back to their home provinces. We learn from the *Sicill-i Abvâl* report that following his return to Salonica, Mustafa Bey began to act first as the Director of the Archive of the Government of Salonica (*vilâyet evrâk müdürlüğü*), and shortly afterward to resume his former position of chief clerk (*mümeyyiz*) of the the same office. The *Sicill-i Abvâl* report ends in 1295/1879, observing that there had been no complaints about Mustafa Bey and that he was never taken into custody. In addition, the governor of Salonica, the future grand vizier Halil Rifat Pasha, praised him as a capable official.<sup>15</sup>

The continuation of Mustafa Bey's official story can be traced from the limited information provided by the *Sicill-i Osmanî*, official yearbooks and the three re-

<sup>10</sup> *Selânik* 1291, 36; *Selânik Vilâyeti Salnâmesi* 1292. *Def'a* 5 (Selânik: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1292), 34; *Selânik* 1293, 34.

<sup>11</sup> *Zamân*, no. 189 (21 Muharrem 1294/February 5, 1877); *Selânik Vilâyeti Salnâme* [si] *Sene* 1294. *Def'a* 7 (Selânik: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1294), 34.

<sup>12</sup> For the number of deputies representing Salonica, see Robert Devereux, *The First Ottoman Constitutional Period. A Study of the Midhat Constitution and Parliament* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963), 264.

<sup>13</sup> Somel, "Maarif Müdürü," 116; *Zamân*, no. 192 (12 Safer 1294/February 26, 1877). Also see Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 267 no. 46.

<sup>14</sup> Somel, "Maarif Müdürü," 116; *Zamân*, no. 226 (21 Şevval 1294/October 29, 1877) and no. 227 (28 Şevval 1294/November 5, 1877); *Salnâme* [-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye]. *Sene* 1295. *Def'a* 33 (n.d), 103.

<sup>15</sup> Somel, "Maarif Müdürü," 116.

ports he submitted to the Ministry of Public Education.<sup>16</sup> Despite the positive opinion conveyed by the above-mentioned *Sicill-i Ahrvâl* report, it is very probable that the regime of Abdülhamid II distrusted him due to the role he played in parliament. Looking at the state official yearbooks, it is conspicuous that his name is never mentioned in connection with any government office in Salonica between 1881 and 1884.<sup>17</sup> It seems that Mustafa Bey remained unemployed for at least three years. After 1884, however, he reappears on the official scene as the director of education of the province of Salonica.<sup>18</sup> He kept this position for no more than one year, as we observe him then transferred to the province of the Archipelago, again in the position of director of education of.<sup>19</sup> This transfer from a major port city such as Salonica to the peripheral town of Chios appears to be a sort of banishment. Mustafa Bey acted as director of education in this province between 1885 and June 1888.<sup>20</sup> During his time in Chios, Mustafa Bey sent a series of detailed reports to the Ministry of Public Education in Istanbul in which he described the educational situation in the province of Salonica, outlined his activities and deeds to promote instruction among the local Muslim population, and warned about the “dangerous” political influences of foreign educational institutions as well as native non-Muslim schools among the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects.<sup>21</sup> It is striking that these reports mostly dealt with the educational conditions in Salonica, whereas their author resided in Chios and did not discuss the region of his assignment. It might be that by sending these reports Mustafa Bey was trying to draw the attention of the ministry to the situation in Salonica, and at the same time to ensure his return from Chios to Salonica as director of education. He apparently was rather unhappy to remain in the region; we learn from Namık Kemal, the well-known Young Ottoman administrator (*mutasarrıf*) of the sub-province (*sancak*) of Chios, that Mustafa Bey was promoted, probably around

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed discussion of Mustafa Bey’s educational reports, see Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Maarif Müdürü.”

<sup>17</sup> *Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Otuzyedinci def’a* ([Istanbul]: Mahmûd Bey Matbaası, 1299); *1300 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Osmâniyye. Otuzsekizinci sene* (Konstantiniyye: Matbaa-i Ebüzziya, 1299); *1301 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Otuzdokuzuncu def’a* ([Istanbul]: Matbaa-i Osmâniyye, 1301); *1302 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkıncı def’a* ([Istanbul: Matbaa-i Osmâniyye, 1302]).

<sup>18</sup> *1303 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkıbirinci def’a* (Dersaadet: Mahmûd Bey Matbaası, 1303), 426.

<sup>19</sup> *1304 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkikinci def’a* ([Istanbul]: Mahmûd Bey Matbaası, 1304), 402.

<sup>20</sup> *1305 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırküçüncü def’a* (Dersaadet: Mahmûd Bey Matbaası, 1305), 310; *1306 Sene-i Hicriyesine Mabsûs Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye* (n.d.), 618; Somel, “Maarif Müdürü,” 138; Fevziye Abdullah Tansel (ed.), *Nâmık Kemal’in Husûsî Mektupları IV. VII-VIII. Rodos ve Sakız Mektupları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), 560-561.

<sup>21</sup> For the details of these reports, see Somel, “Maarif Müdürü,” 118-131.

June 1888, to the office of the Chief Secretary (*mektûbcu*) of the Archipelago province, but was still unhappy and applied for the same position in İzmir.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, in 1889, Mustafa Bey was able to leave Chios; the Ministry of Public Education transferred him from Chios directly to the ministerial bureaucracy in Istanbul. It is noticeable that his new position within the ministry was a rather modest one; Mustafa Bey became Chief Secretary (*başkâtib*) of the Administration of Primary Schools (*Mekâtib-i İbtidâiyye İdâresi*).<sup>23</sup> He remained in this position for around two years. During this period Mustafa Bey apparently found the favour of the Hamidian regime; on June 6, 1890/ 17 Shawwal 1307 he was decorated with the *Osmânî*-medal, third rank.<sup>24</sup> It is possible that he was protected by Münif Pasha, at that time Minister of Public Education.<sup>25</sup> When a new department was founded in 1891 within the ministry, i.e. the Administration of Secondary Schools (*Mekâtib-i İdâdiyye İdâresi*), Mustafa Bey became its director.<sup>26</sup> These promotions and the increasing responsibilities within the Ministry of Education are indicative of Mustafa Bey's rising star as a bureaucrat, and in fact of his coming to terms with the autocratic regime of Abdülhamid II. However, he died on 15 Zilkade 1310/May 31, 1893, around the age of fifty.<sup>27</sup>

### *The Journalist Mustafa Bey*

The bureaucratic story of Mustafa Bey shows us a rather colourless clerk who first worked at the Islamic courts of minor provincial towns in the province of Salonica, then shifted to the civil service at the provincial capital, and finally lived the last years of his life as a medium- to high-level functionary at the Ministry of Education in Istanbul. However, only the fact that he was elected twice to the Ottoman parliament reveals that he was a notable public figure in the province of Salonica. Indeed, Mustafa Bey was the founder of the weekly newspaper *Rumeli*. He remained its publisher from its first publication on February 24, 1873 until June 27, 1876. Meanwhile *Rumeli* was renamed *Zamân* in September 1874. Following Mustafa Bey's resignation from the editorship, *Zamân* continued to appear

<sup>22</sup> Letter of Namık Kemal to Menemenli Rifat Bey, dated July 12, 1888, in Tansel, *Namık Kemal*, 560-561.

<sup>23</sup> *1307 Sabnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkbeşinci def'a* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1307), 348; *Sicill-i Osmânî*, 4:1145.

<sup>24</sup> *1308 Sabnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkaltıncı sene* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1308), 350.

<sup>25</sup> About the life and deeds of Münif Pasha (1830?-1910), one of the enlightened bureaucrats of the late Tanzimat and early Hamidian periods, see Ali Budak, *Batılılaşma Sürecinde Çok Yönlü Bir Osmanlı Aydını: Münif Paşa* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> *1310 Sabnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırksevizinci sene* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1310), 384; *Sicill-i Osmânî* 4:1145.

<sup>27</sup> *Sicill-i Osmânî*, 4:1145.

until 1880. It appears that during his editorship, a major part of the newspaper articles were authored by Mustafa Bey himself.<sup>28</sup>

*Rumeli* and then *Zamân* have still not received the scholarly attention they actually deserve.<sup>29</sup> They are either regarded wrongly as a local official newspaper,<sup>30</sup> or described as a paper where small bits of encyclopedic knowledge about everything are represented together with occasional letters from readers.<sup>31</sup> In fact, *Rumeli* is among the earliest private Ottoman-Turkish language newspapers which appeared outside Istanbul and within the Ottoman borders in the strict sense.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the fact that the weekly paper was printed at the printing house of the provincial administration (*Selânik vilâyeti matbaası*), Mustafa Bey insisted on the independent character of his newspaper. In the very first issue of *Rumeli* he underlines the importance of the journalistic profession.<sup>33</sup> In the article titled “Talk About Blessing” (*Tabdîs-i Nîmet*) it is stressed that journalism promotes “the light of education,”<sup>34</sup> while “in civilized countries exchange of ideas is realized through newspapers.”<sup>35</sup> At this point Mustafa Bey refers to the prominent Young Ottoman author Namık Kemal’s statement that “the flash of truth emanates from the clash of ideas.”<sup>36</sup> According to the editor, the clash of ideas is realized through the newspapers. The article then underlines the necessity for the newspapers to be financially independent, unlike others which are subsidized by the state. If certain obstacles could be overcome, the number of independent newspapers certainly would increase within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup> By pointing to other independent provincial newspapers such as the Bosnian *Gülşen-i Sarây* and the Smyrniote *Devir*,

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. According to the *Eski Harfli Türkçe Süreli Yayınlar Toplu Kataloğu* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1987), 304, *Rumeli* kept its name until issue no. 77. From no. 78 onwards the name of this newspaper was changed to *Zamân*.

<sup>29</sup> In Turkey the collections of *Rumeli* and *Zamân* are located at Atatürk Kütüphanesi and Hakkı Tarık Us Kütüphanesi in Istanbul and at the National Library in Ankara. However, none of these collections is complete.

<sup>30</sup> Hıfzı Topuz, relying on Orhan Koloğlu’s *Osmanlı’dan Günümüze Türkiye’de Basın* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1994), states that *Rumeli* appeared in Bitola (Manastır), which is obviously a mistake. See Hıfzı Topuz: *II. Mahmut’tan Holdinglere Türk Basın Tarihi*. Second Edition (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2003), 33-34.

<sup>31</sup> Meropi Anastassiadou: *Salonique, 1830-1912. Une ville ottomane à l’âge des Réformes* (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill), 37.

<sup>32</sup> The earliest private Ottoman-Turkish provincial newspaper appears to have been the *Gülşen-i Saray*, published by Mehmed Şakir in Sarajevo (1286/1870). This was followed by the *Devir* (İzmir), published by Mehmed Sâlim and Yanko Resmî. The first issue appeared on 3 Receb 1289/September 6, 1872. Another private Ottoman-Turkish newspaper, *İzmir*, appeared from 1877 onwards. See *Eski Harfli Türkçe Süreli Yayınlar Toplu Kataloğu*, 53,82,129.

<sup>33</sup> “Gazetecilik bir büyük vazife oldığı.” *Rumeli*, no. 1 (26 Zilhicce 1289/February 24, 1873), 1.

<sup>34</sup> “Gazete envâr-ı maârifin nâşiri[dir].” Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> “Düvel-i mütemeddinede gazetelerle müdâvele-i efkâr olunur.” Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> “Asrımızın edîb-i meşhûrî Kemâl Bey’in dediği gibi ‘bârîka-i bakîkat müsâdeme-i efkârdan çıkar.’” Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> “Bazı esbâb-ı mânia bertaraf edilmiş olsa dâba nice gazetelerin çıkacağı şübbesizdir.” Ibid.

Mustafa Bey indicates that there had been a growing interest among people in the provinces to read private newspapers – a development which, according to Mustafa Bey, was not valid for official newspapers.<sup>38</sup>

Mustafa Bey seems to have seen *Rumeli* as a kind of bulletin aimed at creating a patriotic consciousness about issues related to Salonica as well as the empire as a whole.<sup>39</sup> The editorial text mostly consists of topics such as economy and trade, of the need for educational investment, ethics, military service, law and justice, provincial administration, municipality, etc.

As stated above, Mustafa Bey strongly emphasized the necessity for newspapers to be independent from state authority or official financial support. At this point it is legitimate to ask how Mustafa Bey could manage to found *Rumeli/ Zamân* and succeed in sustaining its publication for years. Though the newspaper was printed at the provincial administration's printing house, this favourable condition itself certainly would not have made it financially feasible for Mustafa Bey to issue *Rumeli/ Zamân* on his own. In other words, it is clear that there must have been stable financial backing for Mustafa Bey's newspaper venture. An indirect clue for the existence of such a backing might also be sensed in Mustafa Bey's self-confident manner and language when, by implication, he attributes *Rumeli/ Zamân* the function of being a patriotic voice of the Salonican civil population. This was an attitude that a non-governmental publisher would not have so easily dared to express without feeling confident of the powerful support of a certain segment of the local population.

There is no document or direct evidence available that would inform us about the nature of this probable support which Mustafa Bey apparently enjoyed during the publication of *Rumeli/ Zamân*. However, it is possible to make an assumption based on some traces of information. For example, we are informed that Mustafa Bey, while being in the office of the director of education of the province Salonica, was extremely helpful in the process of founding the Muslim private school *Feyz-i Sibyân Mektebi* ("School for the Enlightenment of Children") in 1885. The founders of the school were Mustafa Tevfik Bey, a local civil servant, and his brothers. The involvement of our Mustafa Bey in the establishment of this school included providing free timber for the construction of the school building as well as donating 200 gold *mecidiyes* for other construction expenses, all of this support provided from the funds of the educational administration of Salonica province. During the construction of *Feyz-i Sibyân Mektebi*, Mustafa Bey was also a member

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> This aim is clearly expressed in a reply to a reader's letter in *Rumeli* no. 4 (18 Muharrem 1290/March 18, 1873), 2, where Mustafa Bey states that "the service our paper will offer consists of awakening the patriots and arousing and encouraging public-spirited people [for patriotic action] through warning them (*gazetemizin edeceği hizmet ehl-i vatanı ikaz ve erbâb-ı hamîyyet ve himmeti tabrik ve teşvik yolunda ihtârdan ibâretdir*).

of the school board.<sup>40</sup> It is important to note that *Feyz-i Sıbyân Mektebi* was set up by members of the *Karakaş*-sect, part of the Cryptojewish *Dönme* (“Convert”) community of Salonica.<sup>41</sup> In addition, it has also been claimed that Mustafa Bey supported Şemsi Efendi, member of the *Kapanıcı*-group within the *Dönme* community, at the founding of the *Mekteb-i Sıbyâniye-i Osmâniye* (“Ottoman Primary School”) in 1872, when Mustafa Bey supposedly held the office of director of education of Salonica province.<sup>42</sup> However, this piece of information appears to be unreliable since Mustafa Bey did not act as director of education in the 1870s and also because at that time Mustafa Bey would not have had the power and/or the resources to support the foundation of a private school. Notwithstanding the degree of reliability of these bits of information, one does have an overall impression that Mustafa Bey maintained a close relationship with the *Dönme* community of Salonica.

The *Dönmes* were converts from the Jewish Sabbatean movement to Islam after 1666, and despite being nominally Muslims, they retained their communal identity until the early twentieth century. In the course of the Tanzimat-modernization the *Dönme* community of Salonica emerged as a wealthy Muslim merchant social stratum that had close commercial ties with Europe and pursued a cosmopolitan way of life.<sup>43</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century, Salonican *Dönmes* became famous for founding modern private Muslim schools both in Salonica and in Istanbul. In these schools a combination of Islamic education, modern instruction and professional training were offered.<sup>44</sup> As will be seen in the following passages discussing *Rumeli/ Zamân* we encounter a similar combination emphasizing Islamic values together with a discourse of modernization and frequent calls for the development of private commercial initiatives to compete with

<sup>40</sup> Mert Sandalcı, *Feyz-i Sıbyân’dan Işık’a. Fezziye Mektepleri Tarihi* (Istanbul: Fezziye Mektepleri Vakfı, 2005), 40, 41.

<sup>41</sup> Özcan Mert, “Atatürk’ün İlk Öğretmeni Şemsi Efendi (1852-1917),” *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 7.20 (1991), 337.

<sup>42</sup> İsmail Eren, “Atatürk’ün İlk Hocası Şemsi Efendi” in *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, 5.26 (1969), 5-7; Faik Reşit Unat, “Atatürk’ün İlk Öğretmeni Şemsi Efendi ve Okulu,” in *Eğitim* I-36 (1963), 40; Mert, 337. All these authors base their information on Osman Şevki, *Yeni Usûl Talim-i Kıraat. Kemâlât-ı Millîye. VI.Kısım* (Selanik, 1330), 209-217, where a detailed biography of Şemsi Efendi was published.

<sup>43</sup> Marc Baer, “Globalization, Cosmopolitanism, and the Dönme in Ottoman Salonica and Turkish Istanbul,” in *Journal of World History* 18.2 (2007), 5-6.

<sup>44</sup> See Osman Ergin, *İstanbul Mektepleri ve İlim, Terbiye ve San’at Müesseseleri Dolayısıyla Türkiye Maarif Tarihi*. Second edition. 2 vols. (Istanbul: Eser Kültür, 1977), 470-472; Mehmet Ö.Alkan, *İmparatorluk’tan Cumhuriyet’e Selânik’ten İstanbul’a Terakki Vakfı ve Terakki Okulları* (Istanbul: Boyut Yayın Grubu, 2003), 59-79; Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Autonomous Dynamics of Cultural Modernization at the Provincial Level: Muslim Private Educational Initiatives in the Ottoman Provinces (1856-1908)” (unpublished paper presented at the conference *The Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century: Aspects of Reform and Change*, University of Haifa, June 11-13, 2007), 11-16.



the foreign economic presence. In a sense, *Rumeli/ Zamân* could be considered to be a newspaper representing the interests of the Muslim middle class of Salonica. On the basis of these arguments, one may assume that Mustafa Bey was supported by at least a segment of the *Dönme* community in Salonica to publish a newspaper which would reflect the modernist and commercial outlook of the Muslim *Dönme* middle class of this port city.

The first issue of *Rumeli* includes an article about the province of Salonica, its geography and natural as well as human resources. The main idea is that Salonica has major economic potential thanks to its harbor as well as the railway line to Skopje, which was still under construction and in the near future would provide immense commercial wealth to the local inhabitants. Here, Mustafa Bey warns the readership of the danger of the domination of foreign capital in Salonica at the expense of the local population and urges Salonicans to be more active in the economic life of the town.<sup>45</sup>

The subject of the editorial text in the following issue of *Rumeli* is the importance of education. In the introductory section, the author states the necessity of education both in terms of material progress and preservation of the fatherland<sup>46</sup> and also as a means of religious fulfillment. Then Mustafa Bey discusses Ottoman history, claiming that the early Ottoman expansion and military successes were made possible by high moral qualities as well as education.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the empire's decline is attributed to the abandonment of the path of progress, which resulted in negligence and decadence,<sup>48</sup> while the neighboring nations invested in education, sciences and industry. Here, the author appears to be optimistic, stating that if the Ottomans worked hard for education and the sciences they would be able to surpass within fifty years the European achievements of the last one hundred years. At this point Mustafa Bey turns to the issue of Ottoman Christian citizens, showing them as an example of hard work, who without government support were able to establish schools.<sup>49</sup> The Muslims, however, despite the encouragements of their religion, do not strive enough for education, according to the author.<sup>50</sup> Finally Mustafa Bey strongly recommends his Muslim fellow citi-

<sup>45</sup> “Bizim için birinci derecede nazar-ı dikkate alınması elzem olan şey memleketimizin mevkiî bâiz olub karîben göstereceği ticâret ve serveti yalnız ecârib ellerinde görmemek ve kendi elimize almak üzere mevkuşûn aleyhi bulunan esbâb ü vesâile şimdiden mürâcaat ve istihsâlîne itinâ ve dikkat idüğü rehîn-i rütbe-i bedâbetdir.” Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> “Vatanlarının servet ü mamûriyet ve selâmetini maârifle istihsâl.” See *Rumeli*, no. 2 (4 Muharrem 1290/March 4, 1873), 1.

<sup>47</sup> “Bu muvaffakiyet adedlerinde kesret değil belki maârifleriyle mekârim-i ahlâklarının netâyic-i memdûbasıdır.” Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> “Tavır-ı terakkîden yüz çevirdiğimiz vakitleri elbette devr-i ihmâl ve sefâbat görmek tabî'idir.” Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> “Bakınız Hristiyan vatandaşlarımız sa'y ü bîmmetleri semeresiyle bize müsâbakat etdiler. Devlete bâr olmaksızın kendүүлüklerinden mektebler yaptılar.” Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> “Biz ki İslâmız maârifle terakkîyi maârifî sa'yle tahsîli bize Şeriat-ı Mutabbara emr eder. Ulûv-i bîmmet en ziyâde bize yakışur iken hakkıyla çalışmıyoruz.” Ibid.

zens to invest in education, since “only through education will we be able to learn how to exploit the natural resources of our fatherland.”<sup>51</sup>

The next issue of *Rumeli* concentrates on the importance of morality (*ablâk*) in society. Mustafa Bey argues that proper morality (*hüsnü ablâk*) is one of the major foundations of civilized societies. Therefore, governments have always made an effort to preserve justice and proper morality.<sup>52</sup> Since individuals with proper morality treat each other equitably, the fortunate members of such a civilized population prefer to serve the progress of society rather than their personal interests. Acting in this manner, they do not think of anything else than serving the prosperity, safety and felicity of the fatherland and society.<sup>53</sup> The author claims that proper morality leads people to work hard, and as a consequence the most civilized and happiest societies are those where proper morality predominates. Among other qualities attributed to proper morality, Mustafa Bey cites harmony (*ittifâk*), unity (*ittihâd*), obedience (*itâat*), submission (*inkıyâd*), effort and zeal (*sa'y ü gayret*) and endeavor (*ictihâd*). The successes of the early Islamic and later Ottoman conquests were the result of proper morality, which helped to strengthen social ties. On the other hand, the oppressive rule of those cursed tyrants such as Hulegu and Tamerlane did not last long. Their lack of morals was destructive both to their government and to their society.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, the neglect of later Ottoman governments to promote proper morality led to the catastrophes inflicted by the Janissaries.<sup>55</sup> At the present time, Mustafa Bey continues, the Muslims of Central Asia are losing their freedom and their rights as a consequence of Russian occupation. According to the author, ignorance and bad morals had created discord among the Asian Muslims, which weakened their ability to resist successfully.<sup>56</sup> Mustafa Bey concludes this article by underlining that the future and stability of nations depend on proper morals, which is also true for the Ottoman Empire. According to him the

<sup>51</sup> “Vatanımızın servet-i tabî’yesinden istifâde esbâbını arayalım öğrenelim. Meydâna çıkaralım. Bu da maârifle olur.” Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> “Hüsnü ablâk cemiyet-i medeniyenin a’zam esbâbından olduğu cibetle yeyüzünde nevbet nevbet zuhûr eden hükûmetler adâletle hüsnü ablâkın muhâfazasına itinâ eylemişlerdir.” See *Rumeli*, no. 3 (11 Muharrem 1290/March 11, 1873), 1.

<sup>53</sup> “Hüznü ablâk efrâdı yekdiğeriyle olan muâmelâtında adâletle temin ettiği için cemiyet içinde yaşayan baltıyârlar beyet-i medeniyelerinin terakkîyâtı hizmetini münferiden şâhıslarına râci olan menfaate tercih ederek vatan ve cemiyetin mamûriyet ve selâmet ve saâdetinden özge efkâra düşümezler.” Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> “Hülagû ve Timur gibi târîhlerde nefrîn ile yâd olunan zaleme bu âlem-i insânîyette neler yaptılar. Anlar bir seyl-i belâ gibi dünyâyı istilâ etmişler iken fesâd-ı ablâkları çok sürmeyüb cemiyet ve hükûmetlerini berbâd ve perişân etmiş.” Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> “Ve bu Devlet-i Osmâniyede Yeniçeriler yüzünden zuhûra gelen fâcialar dabî hüsnü ablâkın muhâfazasında vaktiyle mübâlât olunamamasından bâsil olmuştur.” Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> “Eylevm vukuâtını teessifle gazetemize yazmakta olduğumuz Asya Müslimanlarını Rusya pençesine düşüren ve hukuk-i hürriyetlerini mahv ü harab eden cebâletle sû-i ablâk değil midir. Bunlar Rusya’nın kuvvetine mukavemet edebilecek kudret-i sabîbeye mâlik iken aralarında olan ittifâksızlık gayretsizlik gözleri önünde firâde firâde mülk ü milletlerinin ezilüb mahv olmasını intâc ediyor.” Ibid.

development of education in recent years had strengthened proper morality within the empire. However, more remained to be done.

Mustafa Bey wrote similar editorials to warn society of potential dangers threatening the Ottomans and the Muslims in particular. A crucial portion of the pages of *Rumeli* and *Zamân* were devoted to events and developments taking place in Istanbul, in other Ottoman provinces and also in foreign countries. His sources for such news were newspapers from Istanbul such as *İbret*, *Basîret*, *Vakit*, *Şems*, *Ruznâme*, *Hâdika* and *Phare de Bosphore*. This means that these media reached Salonica within days of their publication in the capital. Since the Istanbul papers themselves were mostly dependent on British and French newspapers, it would be difficult to talk about “close currentness” of the news published in Mustafa Bey’s paper. It can be said that the news reports from Istanbul were probably the most current. These consisted mostly either of official news (public announcements from ministries or promotions) or news on developments in the press life of the capital (news on publishers such as Ahmed Midhat Efendi or Teodor Kasap Efendi). News from the provinces were about diverse topics such as an earthquake in Beirut, the foundation of new schools in İzmir, construction of the railway track between Bursa and Mudanya, etc.

As for international news, it should be noted that Mustafa Bey seems to have been particularly interested in developments related to Muslims living outside the Ottoman borders. A significant portion of the issues of *Rumeli/ Zamân*, published under the editorship of Mustafa Bey, reported on the conditions of Muslims under non-Muslim rule. One of the countries that *Rumeli/ Zamân* focused on was Russia. An article titled “Asya” in the first issue of *Rumeli* discusses in detail Russian expansion in Central Asia, the military operations of General Kaufmann (*Jeneral Kafmân*) and the Russo-British negotiations concerning Afghanistan.<sup>57</sup> The next issue contains three separate news items about Russia. An article titled “Iran” reports that the Shah of Persia is planning to sign an alliance with Russia. However rumours have been heard that Russia aims to annex the northeastern Iranian province of Khorasan. The article concludes with the recommendation that the Shah ought to read the “Testament of Tsar Peter” (*Petronun vasiyeti*), where the Tsar allegedly urges his successors to conquer Asia.<sup>58</sup> Just below this article is another article titled “İngiltere,” which actually is again about Russia. The report states that Lord Chandler (*Lord Çanler*), as a representative (*vekâlet*) of the Queen, stated in the opening speech of the British parliament that the most important problem for Britain was Russian expansion in Central Asia and the Russian threat to Afghanistan.<sup>59</sup> This text is followed by another piece, titled “Asya,” which describes how the Russians were transferring artillery weapons and additional mili-

<sup>57</sup> “Asya,” in *Rumeli*, no. 1 (26 Zilhicce 1289/February 24, 1873), 3.

<sup>58</sup> “İran,” in *Rumeli*, no. 2 (4 Muharem 1290/March 4, 1873), 4.

<sup>59</sup> “İngiltere,” Ibid.

tary units from Caucasia to Central Asia. The same article also contains information about Count Shuvalov's visit to Britain in order to discuss Russian policies in Asia with the British authorities.<sup>60</sup> Articles of a similar vein, which included the struggle of the Muslims of Sinkiang against Chinese imperial power or the resistance of the Achenese and Javanese against Dutch colonial rule, continued in other issues of *Rumeli/ Zamân*.<sup>61</sup>

News concerning Muslims in Asia was nearly always based on articles published in *Basîret*. *Basîret* was an influential paper representing conservative Muslim opinion in Istanbul. In the 1870s this newspaper issued articles propagating the cause of solidarity and union among the world's Muslims against the colonial powers, which was labeled *İttihâd-ı İslâm* ("Union of Islam," after 1875 "Panislamism" in Western languages).<sup>62</sup> Mustafa Bey published a series of articles from *Basîret* concerning Panislamism and also regarding the international importance of the office of caliph for the cause of union of Muslims around the world.<sup>63</sup>

While discussing *Rumeli/ Zamân*'s reporting of international news, the question about Mustafa Bey's foreign language proficiency should be raised. It can be said that Mustafa Bey, in addition to Turkish, received some intermediate-level classical Arabic training and knew – perhaps – some degree of colloquial Bulgarian. But what about his proficiency in modern European languages? As stated above, one of the news sources for articles in *Rumeli/ Zamân* was the *Phare de Bosphore*, the Istanbul French-language press organ of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>64</sup> It is probable that Mustafa Bey had at least passive reading skills in French; while Mustafa Bey was deputy in the Ottoman parliament in late 1877, we encounter incidentally in the minutes of the parliamentary debates a statement of where he

<sup>60</sup> "Asya," Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> In *Rumeli* articles on Russia can be found in no. 3 (11 Muharrem 1290/March 11, 1873); no. 7 (9 Safer 1290/April 8, 1873); no. 14 (29 Rebiyülevvel 1290/May 27, 1873); no. 22 (26 Cemâziyülevvel 1290/July 22, 1873); no. 24 (10 Cemâziyülâhir 1290/August 5, 1873); no. 33 (14 Şaban 1290/October 7, 1873). On the issue of Sinkiang *Rumeli* includes articles in no. 4 (18 Muharrem 1290/March 18, 1873); no. 13 (22 Rebiyülevvel 1290/May 20, 1873); no. 19 (4 Cemâziyülevvel 1290/June 30, 1873); no. 22 (26 Cemâziyülevvel 1290/July 22, 1873); no. 25 (17 Cemâziyülâhir 1290/August 12, 1873); no. 34 (21 Şaban 1290/October 14, 1873). On the Muslims in the Dutch East Indies *Rumeli* contains texts in no. 18 (27 Rebiyülâhir 1290/June 24, 1873); no. 21 (18 Cemâziyülevvel/July 14, 1873); no. 31 (30 Receb 1290/September 23, 1873).

<sup>62</sup> Roderic Davison: *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (New York: Gordian Press, 1973), 275-277; Şerif Mardin: *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu*. Transl. by Mümtaz'er Türköne, Fahri Unan and İrfan Erdoğan (Istanbul: İletişim, 1996), 73; Mümtaz'er Türköne: *Bir Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslâmcılığın Doğuşu* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1991), 198-199, 208-234. About the publisher of the *Basîret* newspaper, see Basiretçi Ali Efendi: *İstanbul'da Yarım Asırlık Vekayi-i Mübimme*. Edited by Nuri Sağlam (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1997).

<sup>63</sup> In *Rumeli* the issues no. 19 (4 Cemâziyülevvel 1290/June 30, 1873) and no. 34 (21 Şaban 1290/October 14, 1873) include articles on Panislamism.

<sup>64</sup> About *Phare de Bosphore*, see Topuz, *Türk Basın Tarihi*, 39.

cites an article from *La Turquie*,<sup>65</sup> another French-language newspaper based in Istanbul.<sup>66</sup>

Another noteworthy function *Rumeli/ Zamân* fulfilled as a paper was to act as the voice of the local people. This can be seen clearly in a case where *Rumeli* entered into a conflict with the administration of Salonica. This affair emerged from a judicial case among certain Orthodox individuals of the district of Görice (present-day Korçë, Albania). According to the record, a minor orphan girl, Konstantia, encouraged by a certain Nikola, made a legal petition to the local judicial commission to have an inherited piece of land handed over to her direct disposal from her legal guardian Yovan, who was also her uncle. When this petition was approved by the commission, Yovan, her guardian, considered this transaction to be unlawful and dangerous, and applied to the Court of Appeal of Salonica to stop this process. However, his application was rejected by the court. Thereupon Yovan published a long letter in *Rumeli* where he reported his grievances.<sup>67</sup> The publication of Yovan's letter in *Rumeli* apparently created a strong negative reaction among the members of the Court of Appeal, who published a declaration in the local official paper *Selânik*. In this declaration the court members accused *Rumeli* of interfering in affairs which were not the business of the paper.<sup>68</sup> Mustafa Bey's reply to this attack is noteworthy as to how it displays *Rumeli*'s independence from the provincial administration. Mustafa Bey emphatically stated that "the function of a newspaper is to be the interpreter of the opinions of the nation."<sup>69</sup> According to him "newspapers have to provide service to the country, to the nation, to society, to civilization and to education. They do not respect arbitrary authority but rather the rights of the nation. Newspapers do not allow the suppression of the rights of the nation."<sup>70</sup> According to the editor of *Rumeli*, newspapers have the right to demand from the government the administration of justice. They are the voice of the people against injustice.<sup>71</sup> By making these statements, Mustafa Bey underlined the civilian character of the paper and even its ability to oppose illegitimate actions of the administration and the judicial apparatus.

This rather independent journalistic attitude of *Rumeli* can be observed particularly in its first twenty issues. It is possible that the increasing pressures on the

<sup>65</sup> About *La Turquie*, see Topuz, *Türk Basın Tarihi*, 38, 60.

<sup>66</sup> Hakkı Tanık Us (ed.), *Meclis-i Meb'usan 1293=1877*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Vakıf, 1939-1954), 2:40-41.

<sup>67</sup> *Rumeli* no. 6 (3 Safer 1290/April 2, 1873), 3-4.

<sup>68</sup> *Rumeli*, no. 7 (9 Safer 1290/April 8, 1873), 1.

<sup>69</sup> "Gazete ne demek olduğunu henüz anlamadık. Yabud anlaşılacak istenilmiyor. Bir daba söyleyelim gazete milletin tercümân-ı efkârıdır" In "Şaşılabacak Şey," *Rumeli* no. 8 (16 Safer 1290/April 15, 1873), 1.

<sup>70</sup> "Hidmet-i mülke millete cemiyyete medeniyyete marifete ve kezâ keyfe değil milletin hukukunu gözedir ezdirmez." Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> "Hükümetden ibhak-ı bakki taleb eder. Bâb-ı devletden adâlet ister...Velhasıl haksızlığa karşı durub bağırır çağırır" Ibid.

press after mid-1873 also left its mark on *Rumeli/ Zamân*. We can see this in the changing quality of Mustafa Bey's editorials. While he previously confronted local authorities about a variety of problems such as the inefficiency of the administration, the police or the judiciary, later editorials concentrate on issues that did not provoke the local government, such as education or economics. Nevertheless, these papers continued to publish numerous letters from places in the province of Salonica as well as from other towns in the Balkans or the Archipelago which reflected the grievances of the local population, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. It would have been very interesting to see the reaction of *Zamân* to the incident of the murder of the French and German consuls by an angry Muslim crowd on May 6, 1876.<sup>72</sup> However, the collections available to the researchers do not contain issue no. 158 of the paper, which would have corresponded to May 9, 1876. We learn from a government announcement published in issue no. 159 that the newspaper was closed down by the government for two weeks for "publishing information contrary to reality" and "containing comments exceeding the limits of the function [of a newspaper]."<sup>73</sup>

### *Mustafa Bey as a Politician in the First Ottoman Parliament*

With the Balkan crisis turning into an international issue, the government of Midhat Pasha considered it imperative to convene parliament as soon as possible. Due to the impossibility of carrying out free elections at the imperial level in a short time, a provisional measure was the implementation of the "Provisional Electoral Regulation" (October 28, 1876). This regulation authorized provincial councils at the levels of *kaza*, *sancak* and *vilâyet* to elect deputies for parliament. According to the regulation, members of the local councils were given the freedom to propose possible names for parliament, which would then be counted at the provincial level, with those names that appeared in the majority becoming deputies.<sup>74</sup> In the case of Salonica, however, the governor, Eşref Mustafa Pasha, apparently did not allow members of the local councils to proceed with the elections, but himself appointed three of the Muslim deputies while requiring heads of the non-Muslim communities to proceed likewise.<sup>75</sup> This fact is interesting, as it thus appears that Mustafa Bey was one of the three Muslim deputies appointed by Eşref Mustafa Pa-

<sup>72</sup> For the details of this incident, see Mark Mazower: *Salonica. City of Ghosts. Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004), 170-175.

<sup>73</sup> "Zamân gazetesinin bu hafta çıkan 158 numarolu nüshası hakikat-ı hâle münâfi bazı şeyleri ve dâire-i vazîfesi bâricinde mütâaleaları hâvi oldığı." In *Zamân* no. 159 (21 Rebiyülâhir 1293/May 16, 1876), 1.

<sup>74</sup> For details concerning the electoral procedures, see Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 124-126.

<sup>75</sup> Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 127. For a list of the governors of Salonica, see Sinan Kunalp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricâli (1839-1922). Prosopografik Rehber* (Istanbul: Isis, 1999), 37-38.

sha. This indicates that Mustafa Bey was held in some esteem by the governor. As stated above, Mustafa Bey was promoted in February 1877 to Second Grade Class Two of the Ottoman bureaucratic rank order, which also would not have been possible without the support of the governor. However, as discussed earlier, Mustafa Bey turned down this appointment to the first parliamentary period.

We do not know why Mustafa Bey decided to accept his second nomination to parliament in October 1877. It could be assumed that he felt he could serve his province and also the Ottoman Empire better while present in the assembly. Undoubtedly the disastrous development of the Russo-Ottoman War affected Balkan towns such as Salonica to a major degree. The city was flooded by refugees, which created a humanitarian crisis.<sup>76</sup> In addition to the refugee crisis, martial law was declared in Salonica. Perhaps Mustafa Bey had learned that the first parliamentary period was much more than window-dressing, and that substantial issues could be raised during the debates at the sessions.<sup>77</sup> What we know is that Mustafa Bey took part in the second parliamentary period, which began on December 13, 1877 and ended on February 13, 1878.

Following the opening of the second parliamentary period, Mustafa Bey was elected one of the four secretaries of the assembly (December 22).<sup>78</sup> According to Devereux, the main functions of the secretaries were as follows:

The principal duty of the secretaries was to aid the presiding officer, helping him on such matters as voting and ascertaining whether a quorum was present, etc. The regulations specifically made them responsible for maintaining the register of deputies who had indicated a desire to speak on a certain topic, for editing the minutes, and for reading at each sitting the minutes of the preceding sitting. Then, once the minutes had been approved by the Chamber, at least two of the secretaries had to sign them. [...] the secretaries, like the president, were *ex officio* members of any delegation named by the Chamber.<sup>79</sup>

Shortly after his election to secretary of the assembly, we see Mustafa Bey emerging as one of the main political figures who were highly critical toward the government. One routine procedure following the opening of the Ottoman parliament was the preparation of an official text expressing the gratitude of the parliament in reply to the sultan's opening speech. During the debate over the content of the reply text, certain deputies, Mustafa Bey among them, expressed the view that grievances concerning the misconduct of war should also be included in the text, which would reflect the discontent of the parliament about the government.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> *Zamân* no. 200 (9 Ramazân 1294/September 17, 1877) and the following issues.

<sup>77</sup> Concerning the unexpectedly oppositional spirit during the first session of parliament, see Hakkı Tank Us (ed.), *Meclis-i Meb'usan*, 1:156-157, 201-208, 212-222, 226-228, 235-242, 258, 286-288, 295, 338-339, 342-344; Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 150-152.

<sup>78</sup> Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 164.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> The debate took place on December 31, 1877. See Hakkı Tank Us (ed.), *Meclis-i Meb'usan*, 2:35-37.

On January 2, 1878 Mustafa Bey triggered a debate over the situation on the Balkan front, drawing attention to the military operations of Romanians and Serbs deep in Ottoman lands and the danger of banditry in Macedonia. While underlining the need to protect the Muslim civilian population in the region, Mustafa Bey requested parliament to summon the Minister of War (*Serasker*) to the assembly and question him about the security measures for the protection of the population as well as about the military precautions taken at the Balkan and Anatolian fronts.<sup>81</sup> When on the same day a telegram reached the assembly, sent by the Muslim nobility of Skopje and containing information about the Serbian army's move toward the south, Mustafa Bey denounced the government ministers for being unable to use the ironclads of the Ottoman navy to transfer sufficient numbers of troops and artillery to the front. He again insisted on the need to summon the Minister of War to the assembly to question him.<sup>82</sup> When Russian troops occupied Edirne and refused Ottoman initiatives for a cease-fire, Mustafa Bey on January 31, 1878 submitted a proposal to parliament to invite government ministers to discuss the present war situation as well as the issue of defending the capital against a possible Russian invasion. This proposal underlined the fact that Russian troops were moving from Edirne toward Istanbul, and thus it was incumbent upon the parliament and the government to enact measures to defend the city against the enemy. It was also stated that it would be possible to raise from Istanbul an army of nearly two-hundred-thousand men, including the Balkan refugees, to protect the rights of the state and as well as the honour of the *millet*. Mustafa Bey's proposal was accepted by a majority of the deputies.<sup>83</sup>

On February 2, 1878, Mustafa Bey expressed his concern over the application of martial law in Salonica and claimed that the court martial in that city was involved in activities which were contrary to the interests of the state. He also underlined that the declaration of martial law by the Sublime Porte was itself legally questionable, since no legal justification document was submitted to parliament. Mustafa Bey's statements opened a major debate in parliament, where it became apparent that the existing ruling concerning martial law was invalid, since it had not been previously approved by parliament. Finally the majority of the assembly agreed to demand from the Sublime Porte a legal explanation concerning the application of martial law in Istanbul and Salonica.<sup>84</sup>

When a proposal was submitted on February 4 to set up a court martial with the aim to try those military commanders responsible for the defeats during the warfare together with the former Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha, considered

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 283-286.



to be responsible for the outbreak of the Russo-Ottoman War, Mustafa Bey was one of the deputies who strongly supported this proposal.<sup>85</sup> Another issue addressed by Mustafa Bey was the opening of a parliamentary inquiry concerning the war conduct of Rauf Paşa, the Minister of War. On February 11, 1878, Mustafa Bey presented a request to cross-examine Rauf Pasha at the assembly on the grounds of his failure to coordinate the Ottoman armies, the impropriety of the orders issued by him leading to the defeat and retreat of the Ottoman troops as well as the massacres committed by Russian troops upon the Muslim civil population due to wrong decisions again taken by Rauf Pasha.<sup>86</sup> As Devereux reports, Rauf Pasha was a favourite of the sultan, and the accusations directed at the Minister of War were probably perceived by Abdülhamid as an indirect attack against him.<sup>87</sup> During the second session on the same day, Mustafa Bey announced a telegram concerning the military situation, dated February 7 and sent by Süleyman Hüsnü Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Ottoman Balkan armies. The author of the telegram, addressing the palace, the cabinet, the Ministry of War as well as the Ministry of the Navy, reported in a worried tone about the Russian move toward the Aegean Sea and the Dardanelles and accused the government for not utilizing the battleships, lying idly in Istanbul, to transport troops to counter the Russians in Thrace. After stating that he, as a commander, did not have the power to deliver his troops, being “his religious brethren and compatriots” (*din ve vatan kardeşlerim*) passively into the hands of the enemy, Süleyman Pasha threatened to resign his command if battleships were not sent to the front within two days. This rather desperate-sounding telegram made a deep impact on the deputies. Mustafa Bey and other deputies demanded to summon Mehmed Said Pasha, the Minister of the Navy as well as the Minister of War to parliament to explain the content of this telegram.<sup>88</sup>

Mustafa Bey was among those deputies who appeared most vocal in their criticism of and opposition to the government.<sup>89</sup> This group of deputies, through their activities and criticisms, rebelled against the Constitution of 1876, according to which the parliament was designed to be no more than an advisory assembly to the government and to hold no significant political authority. However, these deputies were highly conscious of their role as representatives of Ottoman society, and thus acted accordingly. Consequently, they felt it their right to accuse members of the government concerning the conduct of warfare and to demand a po-

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 296-300.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 376-381.

<sup>87</sup> Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 240-241.

<sup>88</sup> Hakkı Tarık Us (ed.), *Meclis-i Meb'usan*, 2:389-391.

<sup>89</sup> These deputies included Abdürrahim Bedran Efendi (Syria), Emin Efendi (Aydın), Halil Ganem Efendi (Syria), Manuk Efendi (Aleppo), Mustafa Bey (Janina), Nâfi Efendi (Aleppo), Râsim Bey (Edirne), Yenişehirizâde Ahmed Efendi (Aydın), and Yusuf Ziyâ Efendi (Jerusalem). See *ibid.*, 410-412.

litical explanation.<sup>90</sup> The increasing sovereign attitude of the parliament as a body was one reason among others leading to its closure by Abdülhamid II on February 13, 1878.<sup>91</sup> It should be noted that the sultan did not consider merely closing parliament to be a sufficient measure; those deputies who were the most outspoken in their criticism and incited parliamentary debate, including Mustafa Bey, were regarded too dangerous to be allowed to remain in the capital. Consequently, ten deputies, including Mustafa Bey, were forcibly deported from the capital to their home provinces.<sup>92</sup>

### *Concluding Remarks*

Mustafa Bey of Radoviş was a member of the first generation of Ottomans born following the declaration of the Edict of Gülhane in 1839. This first generation, to which the Young Ottomans also belong, mostly did not receive a modern formal education. With the exception of his intermediate level religious medrese education, Mustafa Bey should be considered an autodidact. In other words, this early Tanzimat-generation grew up under the strong influence of traditional and Islamic values, while at the same time experiencing the modernist changes the empire was going through. Considering that Mustafa Bey came from a small town in the Ottoman periphery and lacked a strong family basis, it is rather remarkable how he was able to establish himself in Salonica and publish an independent newspaper. The fact that he was twice elected as a deputy for Salonica during the First Constitutional Period is proof of his importance as a public figure in Salonica.

Looking at Mustafa Bey's journalistic activities and the ideas he expressed in *Rumeli/ Zâmân*, the following statements can be made about his thoughts during the period between 1873 and 1876. Above all, Mustafa Bey considered himself to be a professional journalist. He never grew tired of emphasizing the importance of journalism for Ottoman society. For him journalism was important because he saw a close connection between proper journalism and patriotism.

At this point we may be able to establish an intellectual relationship between Mustafa Bey and the Young Ottomans. It is known that the Young Ottoman movement emerged together with independent oppositional journalism. This journalism, initiated by İbrahim Şinasi (1826-1871) and continued by Namık Kemal (1840-1888), constituted a proto-nationalist reaction with strong Islamist features against the Ottomanist policies of Âli Pasha and Fuad Pasha. The Young Ot-

<sup>90</sup> Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 208; Stanford J. Shaw & Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 187.

<sup>91</sup> Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 234-240.

<sup>92</sup> Hakkı Tark Us, *Meclis-i Meb'usan*, 2:410-412.

tomans were worried about the social and political disadvantages for the Ottoman Muslims brought about by the legal equality between Muslims and non-Muslims since 1856. The Young Ottoman intellectuals also considered the contemporary government to be too lenient to diplomatic pressures from the European powers and lacking any zeal for protecting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The administration of Âlî Pasha, in addition, had strong autocratic features which did not tolerate political opposition. Under these conditions, Young Ottoman journalism displayed features of Islamism and patriotism while giving importance to developing public opinion among Muslims and making demands for popular political participation.<sup>93</sup>

We can say for sure that Mustafa Bey admired Namık Kemal as a journalist. In the very first editorial of *Rumeli* his name is mentioned as a source of inspiration. The missions Mustafa Bey attributed to journalism such as to be a forum for the clash of different opinions to reach the truth, to create a critical public opinion, to educate the population, to stir patriotic sentiments among the people, to remain independent from political authority, to represent public grievances and to search for justice – all these can be also seen in the Young Ottoman style of journalism. In addition, Mustafa Bey's occasional manifestations of sensitivity concerning the declining role of Muslims in Ottoman socio-economic life was quite close to Namık Kemal's Islamist sentiments. Also, the rather Panislamistic news taken from the conservative *Basîret* seem to be akin to Namık Kemal's vision of a Panislamist union among the world's Muslims. Therefore one could claim that *Rumeli/ Zamân* under the editorship of Mustafa Bey were to a certain extent the provincial versions of Namık Kemal's *İbret*. Considering that *Rumeli/ Zamân* served as forums for popular grievances, and that Mustafa Bey tried to preserve an independent attitude vis-à-vis the administration, one may understand the popularity of these papers, which were apparently read throughout the Balkans.

It is possible that Mustafa Bey received substantial financial backing from a segment of the *Dönme*-community of Salonica for the publication of *Rumeli/ Zamân*. If true, this could also explain *Rumeli/ Zamân*'s self-confidence in considering itself as the voice of the provincial civil population. The *Dönme*-community constituted an important Muslim segment within the city of Salonica, emerging as a commercial middle class that was entering into economic competition with non-Muslim as well as foreign merchants. And *Rumeli/ Zamân* strongly propagated the development of private Muslim economic initiatives.

It is noticeable that Mustafa Bey shared a political trajectory comparable to that of most of the other Young Ottomans. Despite the fact that *Rumeli/ Zamân* began to appear a few years after the death of Fuad Pasha and Âlî Pasha, Mustafa Bey shared the Young Ottoman distance toward the bureaucratic hegemony of

<sup>93</sup> Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı*, 24-26, 32-38, 304-305, 315-347, 361-368; Türköne, *Siyasî İdeoloji Olarak*, 63, 67, 68, 71, 86, 96-97.

the Sublime Porte. Like the main Young Ottoman figures, Mustafa Bey was engaged in journalistic activity with the aim of creating critical public opinion vis-à-vis the administration. When Sultan Abdülaziz was deposed and a prospect of a constitutional regime emerged on the horizon, *Rumeli/ Zamân* was quite enthusiastic about this possibility. And as discussed previously, Mustafa Bey was one of the chief oppositional figures in the parliament. However, like some of the Young Ottomans, he eventually came to terms with the autocratic regime of Abdülhamid II. Following his deportation to Salonica, Mustafa Bey was banned from holding official positions for a few years. Later, he served as director of education in Salonica and in the Archipelago province. A similar fate can also be observed for Young Ottomans such as Namık Kemal, Ziya Pasha, Süleyman Hüsnü Pasha, Bereketzâde İsmail Hakkı, etc., who were sent to provincial posts from 1877 onwards.<sup>94</sup> Finally, Mustafa Bey apparently gained the confidence of the Hamidian regime and succeeded in moving to Istanbul; prior to his death he had been promoted to the “First Rank Second Degree” (*Ülâ-i Sâni*) bureaucratic rank.<sup>95</sup> Looking at the Young Ottomans, we see that names like Ahmed Midhat Efendi, Ebüzziyâ Tevfik, even Ziya Pasha and Namık Kemal cooperated with the Hamidian regime.<sup>96</sup> One could argue that the catastrophic Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, which brought the empire to the brink of collapse, eliminated the previous optimism in regard to the constitutional political future of the empire, possibly leading to a “rude awakening” to the basic developmental and infrastructural needs of the empire. Cooperation with the autocracy was probably seen as justified by the necessity of “saving the empire.”

A final observation should be made about the quality of *Rumeli/ Zamân* as possible sources for the social history of the city of Salonica as well as the local towns of the province. From the beginning of its appearance onwards, *Rumeli* and then *Zamân* regularly published readers' letters (*varaka*) from Salonica, from the district towns of the province of Salonica as well as from more distant towns of other Balkan provinces. These letters contain a variety of topics such as judicial cases, complaints about schools, conditions of the medreses, theater performances, the functioning of the newly built railroad between Salonica and Skopje, the working of the municipalities and the local administrative councils, agricultural conditions, forestry, etc. These were printed on the second and third pages of the newspaper. Some letters are long enough to form continuous series of articles. Despite expected differences in the quality of the information contained in

<sup>94</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: Mc Gill University Press, 1964), 250.

<sup>95</sup> *1311 Salnâme-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye. Kırkdokuzuncu sene* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1310), 402.

<sup>96</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu*, 90-91; M.Orhan Okay, “Ahmed Midhat Efendi,” in: *TDVİA*, 2:100-103; Ziyad Ebüzziya, “Ebüzziya Mehmed Tevfik,” in: *TDV İA*, 10:374-376.

them, it can be said that quite a few of these readers' letters constitute a new source for the study of the social history of Salonica and its surroundings for the period between 1873 and 1878. Considering the rather independent character of *Rumeli/ Zamân*, these letters form a source which possibly reflects the authentic thoughts and feelings of a literate and non-official group of provincial people, mostly Muslims but sometimes also non-Muslims. However, due to their letter format these texts have their specific limitations in terms of the amount of information, and therefore could be consulted mainly as an auxiliary to more comprehensive historical projects.

