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**Muslim merchants and working-class in action :
nationalism, social mobilization and boycott
movement in the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914**
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THE EMERGENCE OF THE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AS A POLITICAL WEAPON, 1908

The young constitutional regime of the Ottoman Empire experienced its first diplomatic and political crises in the first week of October 1908. Austria-Hungary announced the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which it had occupied and ruled since 1878. The Berlin Treaty had left this county to the administration of Austria-Hungary, due to the fact that the Ottoman Empire was unable to police and maintain security in Bosnia. This was jeopardizing European security. As a result, although the Great Powers guaranteed the sovereignty right of the Ottoman Empire, Bosnia and Herzegovina were left in the hands of the Habsburg Monarchy. After the promulgation of the constitution in July 1908, the Habsburgs wanted to cut the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia and Herzegovina, even though it might have been an abstract tie. The revolution entailed a process of elections in order to form the long-suspended parliament. This would construct a tangible relationship between Bosnia and Istanbul, if deputies had been elected to the Ottoman parliament. Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to prevent such a possibility.¹

The Treaty of Berlin in 1878 created a self-governing Bulgaria as a semi-independent principality which became only a vassal of the Ottoman Empire. There appeared numerous problems between the Bulgarian principality and the Ottoman Empire after 1878. Both political enti-

1 C. A. Beard and C. H. Hayes, "Record of Political Events," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, December 1908, p. 746.

ties had different political designs for Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia. Bulgarian political elites worried about losing their influence in Macedonia. Moreover, they thought that the Great Powers might decrease their pressure on the Ottoman Empire for a reform in Rumelia which might strengthen the position of the Ottomans in Balkans. Therefore, Bulgaria had similar fears as the Habsburgs after the declaration of the constitution and declared its independence on 5 October 1908.²

In the historiography on Turkey, these two acts are considered the first political shock that the Young Turks and the Ottomans encountered after the 1908 Revolution. The Young Turks believed that the political, social and ethnic questions would be solved thanks to the revolution and the re-establishment of the Ottoman parliament. Yet, this was not the case. The new regime first encountered a strike wave in August and September 1908. The Young Turks managed to cope with this social problem and were able to put an end to the strikes. However, the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the independence of Bulgaria were a crucial political challenge to “Young Turkey.” Yet, the political agenda of these states was not a surprise for the Ottoman elite and Ottoman public opinion.³ The elite’s aspirations were quite well-known to the Ottoman public. Nevertheless, Austria and Bulgaria’s acts were considered as an offense against the new order and lately gained “freedom” that the promulgation of the constitution has endowed. Immediately after the above-mentioned declarations, there appeared spontaneous demonstrations and marches in Istanbul. These spontaneous popular reactions put the Ottoman government between a rock and a hard place. The popular reactions were a perpetuation of the mobilization of Ottoman society, as it resulted from the revolution. The Ottoman government and most powerful representative of the new regime, the Committee of Union and Progress, were not

2 Hasan Ünal, “Ottoman Policy during the Bulgarian Independence Crisis 1908-9: Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria at the Outset of the Young Turk Revolution,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, October 1998, p. 135

3 There are numerous documents in the Ottoman archives regarding the aspiration of Austria-Hungary to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina. See: *Bosna Hersek ile İlgili Arşiv Belgeleri*, (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1992), pp. 72-78; 131-134; 237-240; 265-267. There are also uncountable news items and articles in the Ottoman periodicals regarding the political goals of Austria and Bulgaria; “Bosna Meselesi,” *İkdam*, 1 October 1908, p. 2; “Bulgaristan’ın İdaresi,” *Tanin*, 23 September 1908, pp. 6-7; “Berlin Muahedesinin Tekrar Tedkiki,” *Sabah*, 3 October 1908, p. 3; “Bosna’nın İlhakı,” *Sabah*, 2 October 1908, p. 3; “Bulgaristan’ın İstiklali,” *Tanin*, 1 October 1908, p. 2-3; “Devlet-i Aliye – Bulgaristan,” *İkdam*, 1 October 1908, p. 1.

in favor of a war. Particularly the Committee of Union and Progress entirely concentrated on the construction of the new regime. They were not willing to risk the newly acquired freedom for lands lost long ago. Consequently, the spontaneous reactions of the Ottoman public and the reluctance of the government and the Committee of Union and Progress to enter a war brought forth a new form of protest: the boycott.⁴

The boycott was a weapon that could satisfy the interests and demands of the social and political actors involved. Regarding the government, the boycott worked well in terms of driving mass reactions and protests to a much more reliable path. In terms of diplomacy, it was also useful in pushing Austria and Bulgaria to the wall. One of the first government statements was by Tevfik Paşa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs: in an interview published in *İkdam* he underlined the fact the government was working, asking the people to stay calm and trust their government. He advised sobriety, patience and moderation to the Ottoman public.⁵ The Committee of Union and Progress supported the boycott sincerely, since it was the best way to keep spontaneous reactions from a possible anti-constitutional political current. Other social actors such workers and merchants also participated in the movement, which gave them the opportunity to realize their own interests and pursue their own agendas. Two factors played a crucial role in the construction of a social movement throughout the empire: these were the daily press and the flourishing civil organizations, which experienced a significant boom during the heydays of the revolution. They turned the boycott into a popular movement that consisted of different political and social actors with divergent agendas.

On the day of the interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 7 October 1908, an article published in the newspaper *Servet-i Fünun* by Horasani (Ubeydullah Efendi) called the Ottomans to a boycott against

4 In this chapter I will mainly concentrate on the mobilization patterns that emerged during the Boycott Movement and in different sections of Ottoman society, as well as their agency. For more detailed information see: Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, *1908 Osmanlı Boykotu: Bir Toplumsal Hareketin Analizi*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004); Mehmet Emin Elmacı, "Bosna Hersek'in Avusturya Tarafından İlhakı ve Doğurduğu Tepkiler (1908-1912)," Unpublished MA Thesis, Ege University, 1996; Mehmet Emin Elmacı, "İzmir'de Avusturya Boykotajı," *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. XXVII, No. 161, May 1997; Erdal Yavuz, "1908 Boykotu," *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, 1978 Özel Sayısı; Roderic H. Davison, "The Ottoman Boycott of Austrian Goods," 3. *International Congress of the Social and Economic History of Turkey*, (Princeton: 1983).

5 "Hariciye Nazırı ile Mülakat," *İkdam*, No. 5162, 7 October 1908, p. 2.

Austria and Bulgaria.⁶ It was the first instance in which the term boycott was pronounced and proposed as a pattern of protest. Süleyman Kani (İrtem), then governor of Ohri, stated that the boycott was decided in a meeting for which Muslim merchants and prominent members of the Committee of Union and Progress convened in Cavit Bey's house of in Istanbul. The meeting reached and agreed upon the conclusion that it was not expedient to declare a war against Austria and Bulgaria. According to Süleyman Kani, the merchant brothers Kazım Balcı and Ziya Balcı offered a boycott against the two states. Talat Bey approved their proposition after they explained to him the content of this protest weapon.⁷ Quataert has also referred to the agency of several merchants in Salonica, who cancelled their orders from Austrian factories, as the first instance of a boycott.⁸ However, one of the first complaints about boycotting actions was about the port workers' refusal to unload Austrian goods in Salonica. Their act was seen as an outcome of the influence of the Committee of Union and Progress, which the committee disaffirmed.⁹ Therefore, it is reasonable to claim that the boycott was the result of different initiatives that probably coincided with each other.

2.1. People Take Action: Mass Actions and Public Demonstrations

As mentioned above, a popular spontaneous reaction spilled into the streets of the capital on the same evening of the day Bulgaria declared its independence. Newspapers wrote that two marching columns advanced

6 The owner of the newspaper *Servet-i Fünun*, Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, has mentioned in his memoirs published in several newspapers that Horasani was Ubeydullah Efendi. Ömer Hakan Özalp has referred to these memoirs in his introduction to the memoirs of Ubeydullah Efendi; Ömer Hakan Özalp, "Giriş: Mehmed Ubeydullah Efendi'nin Hayatı ve Eserleri," *Mehmed Ubeydullah Efendi'nin Malta Afganistan ve İran Hatıraları*, (Istanbul: 2002), pp. 49-50; for the original copies of Ahmet İhsan see: "Merhum Ubeydullah," *Uyanış (Servet-i Fünun)*, Vol. 18-82, 26 August 1937, p. 211; and *Akşam*, 25 August 1937. Since this information appeared in the Republican period, scholars such as Roderic H. Davison had different guesses regarding the identity of Horasani. Davison has thought that Horasani was Rıza Tevfik, who was very active after the promulgation of the constitution and in the Boycott Movement in Istanbul. This was a logical guess, but turned out not to be correct. Roderic H. Davison, "The Ottoman Boycott of Austrian Goods," 3. *International Congress of the Social and Economic History of Turkey*, (Princeton: 1983), p. 5.

7 Süleyman Kani İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken 1908 Jön Türk İhtilali*, (Istanbul: Temel, 1999), p. 300. Süleyman Kani İrtem and the Balcı brothers probably were friends from the Feyziye Mektebi. İrtem graduated in 1890, Kazım Balcı in 1891, and Ziya Balcı in 1892.

8 Donald Quataert, *Avrupa İktisadi Yayılımı ve Direniş*, (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1987), p. 105.

9 "Nemse Vapuru," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 October 1908, p. 4.

towards the British Embassy, who did not recognize Bulgaria's independence. Crowds convened in Sultanahmet and Fatih, and as they progressed towards Pera, where the embassy was located, their numbers increased. Thousands met before the British consul to thank Britain for not recognizing Bulgarian independence. The marching crowds sent a telegram to the ambassador who was in the embassy's summer residence in Tarabya. Afterwards, another group of protestors comprised of Greeks, Armenians and Muslims congregated in front of the British embassy on the same night. The crowd chanted "Long live the English" and "Long live the English Nation," while they were bearing Ottoman and Greek flags. The crowds thereafter continued to march on the streets and visit foreign embassies—such as those of the British, French, Russian and Greeks—who did not recognize Austria and Bulgaria's actions. The reactions would not end, and the Ottoman newspapers advised people to calm down. Newspapers with a different political stance argued without exception that such a level of mobilization might lead to national weakness.¹⁰

These kinds of warnings did not have any impact on the popular reactions. One day after the protests in front of the British Embassy, a similar demonstration was held in Beyazıt Square (where the Ministry of War was located). The gathered crowds encountered the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hakkı Bey, and stopped him in order to receive information about the last developments between the Ottoman Empire, Austria, and Bulgaria. The minister told them that the government was in charge; he wanted them to trust the existing cabinet. The protesting crowd continued its way to the headquarter of the Committee of Union and Progress and cheered the committee members. One of the prominent figures of the committee, Bahattin Bey, addressed the crowd from the headquarter's balcony and, like Hakkı Bey, recommended moderation. He also wanted them to trust the present cabinet. After he had finished his speech, the mass of protestors moved towards the Sublime Porte and expressed support for the government. The demonstrating crowds dispersed only after they had visited several foreign embassies. Although these demonstrations were defined as "patriotic" and "national," the newspapers kept their distance from crowds, as did Hakkı Bey and Bahattin Bey. The Ot-

10 "Dün Geceki Nümayişler," *Tanin*, 7 October 1908, p. 7; "Nümayişler," *İkdam*, 7 October 1908, p. 2; "Evvəlki Akşamki Nümayişler," *Millet*, 8 October 1908, p. 3; "Devlet-i Osmaniye – Bulgaristan," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 8 October 1908, p. 1; İbnü'z-Ziya, "İcmal-i Dahiliye," *İstişare*, Vol. 1, p. 236.

toman press argued that ally states such as Britain did not give credit to demonstration or protest, but only to moderation, particularly to the “famous Ottoman tranquility”; however, the ambassadors approved of and praised these demonstrations in their declarations. They also congratulated the Ottomans for convening and acting together in fraternity. In one of these protest marches, a crowd of Muslim protesters headed by Hamdi Bey visited the Ottoman theaters, where they cheered for Greece and the Greek nation in return for their sincerity and friendliness. Furthermore, in one of these theaters, the crowd intervened and wanted the orchestra to play the Greek national anthem while it listened standing. The newspapers reminded their readers of the “Incident of ‘93” (the suspension of the constitution of 1878, which put an end to the First Constitutional Period) and argued that these protests and demonstrations might prevent the government from carrying out its duties. Moreover, it was argued that rallies and actions were an outcome of fever and thrill, rather than reason and logic. Therefore, they might have consequences detrimental to the “national dignity.”¹¹ This elitist argument reminds of the mentality of Gustave Le Bon.

Spontaneous reactions did not seem to end and forced the elites to find new methods to channel popular actions into a much more secure path, compatible with the new constitutional regime. The Committee of Union and Progress intervened at that point and paved the way for organized meetings throughout the empire. The local cadres and prominent figures in the provinces played crucial roles in organizing orderly demonstrations. One of these public meetings was held in Salonica, in the Terakki Square, and officially organized by the Committee of Union and Progress. In a way, this meeting set the standard for the public meetings and demonstrations of the Boycott Movement that would take place during the Second Constitutional Period. Different representatives of different religious communities addressed the gathered crowds in their own languages. In this particular meeting, speeches were delivered in Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Wallachian, Ladino (Old Spanish), Albanian, and French. The meeting agreed on three points, and these were approved by the applause of the people in the public square. These de-

11 “Nümayişler,” *Sabah*, 8 October 1908, p. 3; “Dünkü Nümayiş,” *İkdam*, 8 October 1908, p. 4; “Vatanı Sevenlere,” *İkdam*, 8 October 1908, p. 4; “Evvelki Geceki Nümayişler,” *Tanin*, 8 October 1908, pp. 6-7; “Gece İçtimaları,” *Sabah*, 8 October 1908, p. 3; “Ne Yapmalıyız?” *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, pp. 4-5; “Payitaht’ta Nümayişler,” *İttihad*, 11 October 1908, p. 4.

cisions were published in the name of the “People of Salonica.” Therefore, the decisions, regardless of whether they had been made before or not, gained their legitimacy through the participation of the people. The meeting protested against Austria and Bulgaria, thanked the Great Powers and decided to pursue the struggle. Yet, it was also underlined that people should put an end to the street demonstrations. It was not what the Ottomans Empire needed at that moment. What it needed, according to the speeches given at the meeting, was moderation and peace.¹²

These types of organized meetings were the best way to control the mobilization of the masses and at the same time to make use of it. They were arranged and safe when compared to spontaneous street activities. Furthermore, the mobilization of crowds enhanced the legitimacy of the elites’ political designs. A worker journal published in Smyrna, *Ergatis*, stated that patriotic fliers were handed out before the meetings.¹³ These bills confirm the organized nature of the meetings. There occurred similar meetings in various urban centers of the empire, during which speeches were given in several local languages, the confidence in the Great Powers was expressed, moderation and peace were advised, and protest telegrams sent to foreign embassies. These are the most often mentioned cities where meetings were convened: Manastır, Şam, Smyrna, Halep, Kastamonu, Kala-i Sultaniye, Üsküp, Adana, Trabzon, Yafa, Konya, Erzurum, Beyrut, Aydın, and İşkodra. Beirut was one of the vibrant centers of the Boycott Movement, where the demand to cut off all ties with Austria was proposed in a meeting. One of the protestors threw down his Austrian-made fez and wore a native one during the meeting against Austria. It was reported that his action created a significant impact on the masses.¹⁴ Demonstrations were also held in Beirut as a result of rumors claiming that Austria was sending battle ships in order to breach the boycott regulations. The government sent telegrams to Beirut and informed the people there that such rumors were baseless. Therefore, there was no need for protest demonstrations.¹⁵

12 Selanik Ahalisi, “Mukarrerat,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 9 October 1908, p. 4; “Dünkü İctima-i Umumi,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 9 October 1908, pp. 3-4; “Ajans Telgrafları- Selanik,” *Musavver Gezeze*, 13 October 1908, p. 8; “Bulgaristan İstiklali ve Bosna Hersek İlhakının Vilayete Tesiratu, Osmanlı Milletinin Avrupa’ya Protestosu,” *İkdam*, 12 October 1908, pp. 3-4.

13 O Sintagmatikos, “Enas Polemos,” *Ergatis*, 18 October 1908, p. 1.

14 “Şuun-ı Dahiliye – Avusturya ve Bulgaristan’ı Protesto Etmek Üzere Vilayetde Akd Edilen Umumi İctimaat,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 October 1908, p. 4.

15 BOA. DH. MKT, 2672/55, 07.Za.1326.

A meeting of five to six thousand people was convened in the Hürriyet Square in Manastır, similar to that in Salonica. The speeches were delivered in different languages, and protest telegrams were sent directly to the ministries of foreign affairs of the Great Powers.¹⁶ The meeting in Konya was assembled thanks to the initiative of three persons: the religious scholar (*ulema*) Lokman, Mehmet Bey (the General Secretary of the Administrative Council of the province, or *Meclis-i Idare Başkanlığı*), and a journalist from local newspaper *Anadolu*. In a similar manner, it was argued in the meeting that a war against the above-mentioned states would probably turn into a disaster for the nation. To support a war was considered treason. The governor-general of Konya Province, who attended the meeting, stated that he would write to the government about how the people of Konya showed their tribute to empire and nation. As usual, the speakers addressing the people preached moderation and patience. The meeting ended with the slogans “Long live the Sublime State, England, France” and prayers for the patria, the nation, and the Committee of Union and Progress.¹⁷

On the day of the Konya meeting, the meeting held in Smyrna’s Konak Square was attended by thousands of people. Muslims, Greeks, Armenians and Jews protested against Austria and Bulgaria in unity. Çulluzade Halil Bey was elected as the president of the meeting and also wrote a telegram to be sent to the foreign embassies. The telegram was read to the assembled crowd and generated great excitement. A commission was formed to send the telegram from the post office. A band played the *Hürriyet Marşı* (Anthem of Freedom) as the commission walked to the post office. The organized nature of the meeting and the existence of a band indicate that there had been preparations for the meeting beforehand. The crowds dispersed after the anthem ended.¹⁸

The meeting in Istanbul was elaborately organized and, therefore, held somewhat later than in other towns. The ultimate goal of the meeting was to protest the above-mentioned states and to thank the Great Powers who sided with the Ottomans. The meeting and its program was announced beforehand, and people were asked to obey the rules and the order of the demonstration. Slogans such as “We want war!” were strictly banned. Ottoman newspaper articles reporting about the meeting gave historical

16 Abdülmecid Fehmi, *Manastır’ın Unutulmaz Günleri*, (Izmir: 1993), p. 22.

17 “Miting,” *Anadolu*, 11 October 1908, pp. 1-2.

18 “Dünkü Nümayiş,” *İttihad*, 11 October 1908, p. 1.

examples of the futility of war in defending the Ottomans' rights. Rowdy behavior was repeatedly condemned in the newspapers and announcements. The way in which Europeans held peaceful meetings was depicted in detail, and calls for moderation appeared again and again. At last, a massive meeting was held in Sultanahmet, where thousands of people gathered. Different religious communities—such as the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews as well as foreign communities such as the Hellenes, Serbians and Montenegrins—participated in the meeting. Speeches were given in a previously announced order. Celal Bey of the Committee of Union and Progress, also the director of the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (School of Civil Administration), spoke first. After him, Mustafa Asım Efendi as a member of the *ulema*, Kozmidi Efendi of the Greek community, Halıcıyan Efendi of the Armenian community, Ishak Efendi of the Jewish community, İsmail Hakkı, another member of the Committee of Union and Progress, and the army mayor Mahmut Bey addressed the people in this order. As apparent, the identity of the speakers symbolized the Ottomanist ideal of the constitutional regime. In their speeches, the speakers argued that the Ottomans should not rise in revolt, as it was not appropriate in politics to act upon emotions rather than reason and logic. Different flags flew in the meeting square, and a Greek woman dressed in blue and white clothes joined the meeting in a car. She brought with her the Greek and the Ottoman flags side by side. This agitated the people, who chanted “Long live the Ottomans,” “Long live the Committee of Union and Progress,” and “Damn the Despots!” The meeting, which was also photographed by foreign journalists for a cinematographic exhibition, ended with the prayer by an Arab participant.¹⁹

After Istanbul, protest meetings were convened all over the Ottoman Empire. In Tekfurdağı, thousands of peasants were mobilized and streamed from their villages to the town. Şerif Bey, a member of the local branch of the Committee of Union and Progress, led the demonstration in front of the English consulate. In Kavala, eight thousand people gathered in the town center, and the benefits of a boycott against Austria and Bulgaria was announced in Turkish, Greek and Spanish. Similar meetings were held in Dedeağaç, Manastır, and again in Konya. In Trab-

19 “Bugünkü Miting,” *İkdam*, 13 October 1908, p. 3; “Dünkü Cesim İctima,” *Tanin*, 14 October 1908, p. 8; “Dünkü İctima-i Umumi,” *Sabah*, 14 October 1908, pp. 3-4; “Sultan Ahmet İctima-i Umumiyesi,” *İkdam*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; “Dünkü İctima-i Umumi,” *Millet*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; “İstanbul’da Miting,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 15 October 1908, p. 4; “Tanin Refikimizden,” *İttihad*, 18 October 1908, p. 1.

zation, it was announced to the world via telegram that the people of Trabzon—Muslims, Greeks, and Armenians—had begun a boycott. Although most of the meetings included different religious communities, the Jewish community of Istanbul separately organized a gathering against Austria and Bulgaria in the Okmeydanı. There, they declared that they would commence a boycott against these states. The Serbians also held a meeting in Istanbul. Parallel meetings organized in Cairo equally shaped the public opinion in the Ottoman Empire.²⁰

In Aydın, the Greek demonstrators began their march at the archbishop's seat and then united with other protestors in the market place, from where they walked to the municipality together. There, the mayor also joined them, and the crowd visited the British and French consulates. The crowd also marched through the town's Jewish quarter. Mithat Efendi gave two speeches in front of the consulates, and according to the Greek newspaper *Amaltheia*, many demonstrators wore local fezzes and *kalpaks*, which became popular thanks to the Boycott Movement.²¹ The demonstrations and meetings in front of the foreign embassies were a phenomenon that emerged in the initial days of the Boycott Movement. However, such visits to embassies and consulates continued even in November and December. Crowds visited the embassies in Istanbul on 20 November and 3 December.²²

Although the protest movement and the boycott occurred all over the empire, cities such as Smyrna, Beirut, Salonica and Istanbul were the liveliest centers of the demonstrations. This is why meetings were held several times in Smyrna, as a group of young men organized a similar meeting and repeated the rituals of these protest meetings, such as speeches in different languages, visiting foreign consuls, and so on. This particular meeting also repudiated the rumors regarding the clash of the Muslim and Greek communities of Smyrna. Thousands holding Ottoman and British flags convened in the Kışla Square and marched to the foreign consulates. Writers of the town's prominent newspapers addressed

20 "Avusturya Malları," *Tanin*, 16 October 1908, p. 8; "Nümayişler," *İkdam*, 15 October 1908, p. 2; "Ahiren Dedeagaç'ta Avusturyalılar..." *Sabah*, 17 October 1908, p. 4; "Konya'da," *Tanin*, 19 October 1908, p. 7; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 20 October 1908, p. 4; "Musevilerin Mitingi," *İkdam*, 20 October 1908, p. 4; "Mısır'da Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 22 October 1908, p. 4.

21 "To En Aidinio Syllaliritirion," *Amaltheia*, 16 October 1908, p. 3.

22 "Boykotaj Hakkında," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 4 December 1908, p. 6; "Miting," *İkdam*, 22 November 1908, p. 4.

the people. A very similar meeting was repeated in Beirut. In Jeddah, the crowd protested against Austria and declared that they never again would buy Austrian merchandise.²³ In Samsun, a local theater group, *Samsun Osmanlı İttihad-ı Milli Kulübü* (Samsun Ottoman National Union Club), presented a play in the city's port, in order to popularize the boycott among the lower classes. The play was a comedy about the contribution of the port workers, who were the most active social class in the Boycott Movement.²⁴ This play, staged in a public space, can be considered an example of political or street theater in the Ottoman Empire.

Several incidents that occurred during these meetings were a cause of concern for the Ottoman elite. For instance, a group of Muslims convened in Fatih and marched towards the Yıldız Palace, where Sultan Abdülhamit II resided. They called for a closure of the *meyhanes* (taverns) around Muslim quarters, a ban preventing Muslim women from walking around the city uncovered, and a ban on gambling. The crowd submitted their demands to the sultan who appeared in the window of the palace. This event, called the "Kör Ali Incident," increased the new regime leaders' apprehension concerning a possible reaction against the constitutional government. This incident later became a symbolic act in the secular historiography on Turkey. The newspapers claimed that these people had nothing to do with religion and the *ulema*, but were only illiterate people who had lost their privileges after the revolution.²⁵ The incident has been considered a forerunner of the 31 March Incident and an example of Islamic insurrection in the historiography.²⁶ Later, another protest demonstration held before the Fatih Mosque alarmed the Ottoman bureaucracy. Although the protest was organized by the Bosnians living in Istanbul, the police was ordered to stop the crowd if they had marched towards the Yıldız Palace. The government did not want such an incident to be repeated.²⁷

23 "İzmir'de Nümayiş," *Tanin*, 2 November 1908, p. 4; "İzmir'de Nümayişler," *Sabah*, 2 November 1908, p. 3; "Beyrut Muhabirimizden Aldığımız Bir Mektub," *Sabah*, 2 November 1908, p. 4; "Avusturya Emtiasına Boykotaj," *Tanin*, 31 October 1908, p. 4; "Harbi İktisadi," *Millet*, 23 October 1908, p. 3; "Nümayiş," *İttihad*, 31 October 1908, p. 4; "İstanbul'da Bulunan Sırbılar," *Anadolu*, 18 Ekim 1908, p. 2.

24 "Samsun Osmanlı İttihad-ı Milli Kulübü," *Aks-ı Sada*, 29 December 1908, p. 3.

25 "Saray-ı Hümayun Civarında," *Sabah*, 8 October 1908, p. 3.

26 For a typical example see: Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, (Ankara: İmge, 1998).

27 BOA, İradeler, İrade-i Hususi, Genel No. 908, Hususi No. 23, 19 Teşrinievvel 1324 (1 November 1908).

A similar event occurred in one of the demonstrations held in front of the embassies. A protestor by the name of Karamanlı Koçu wanted to lead the crowd towards the Galatasaray Jail in order to free a number of detainees who had been waiting for their trial for a long time. However, Karamanlı Koçu was detained by the police, and this incident was referred to as an example of how these types of street actions might constitute a threat against the public order.²⁸ Apart from spontaneous demonstrations, other types of direct actions also came onto agenda and instilled elites' fear of streets. The newspaper articles and the speeches of the prominent figures tried to control the people's mobilization, wanting them to protest, but within the limits they dictated. Most of the contemporary articles defined in detail how to participate in the boycott. The elite and the Committee of Union and Progress considered boycotts a refusal to buy certain goods. Therefore, for them to protest was to boycott—that is to say, a consumer action. However, the launching of a boycott did not bring a halt to the street demonstrations. This is why the number and scope of the organized meetings also increased, in order to control the mobilization of the people. For instance, the pro-constitutionalist satirical journal *Musavver Geveze* argued that not everyone had the right to free expression, since there were those able to understand and those who were not. As a result, not everyone on the street should be taken seriously; particularly those who were not smart enough. For *Musavver Geveze*, if a country acted according to the decisions and will of the people, it would most likely to lose.²⁹ For the Ottoman press, those who were able to understand were the parliament, the press, and the Committee of Union and Progress. This clearly reflects the elitist vision of the Second Constitutional Period.

Nevertheless, the public opinion was not defined as passive or inactive, but rather considered the owner and initiator of the Boycott Movement. The public opinion and the people were the ultimate source of the young regime's legitimacy. It was only the nation that should decide and determine what to do in a civilized manner, not the mob. According to M. Ragıb, if the Ottomans wanted to spoil Austria's game, they should use

28 "Karamanlı Koçu Namında Birisi," *İkdam*, 9 October 1908, p. 4; "Nümayişçiler," *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, p. 5.

29 "Bir Muhavere-i Siyasiye," *Musavver Geveze*, 8 October 1908, pp. 2-4; for a similar argument see also: İmza Mahfuzdur, "[Boykot] Yahud Ticaret Aforozu," *İkdam*, 14 October 1908, p. 4.

the weapon of economic war. Yet, this economic war should be executed in a moderate and peaceful way. Additional actions and demonstrations were not necessary for the national cause, and the Ottomans should fulfill their duties with moderation.³⁰

However, these organized and pre-arranged meetings were not able to put a complete end to street demonstrations. Spontaneous reactions and night-marching became rare; instead, other activities prevailed. In Beirut, a crowd prevented an Austrian ship from anchoring and forced the ship to leave the port. There appeared many posters and notices on walls, propagating the boycott. The employees of an Austrian store, Gülizar Mağazası, wanted to remove them, but were confronted with passers-by's reactions. Passers-by turned into activists of the national protest and were ready to take action if necessary. In Beirut, rumors circulated among the population, claiming that several shops have unloaded Austrian sugar from the port. A significant number of people gathered and inspected particular shops. The packages of Austrian sugar that they found in several storerooms were returned to the ships from which they had been unloaded. Beirut certainly was one of the vibrant centers of the Boycott Movement. Apart from this inspection tour looking for Austrian sugar, a group of people convened in the İttihad Square and visited the theaters and cafes with singers. There, they banned the performance of Austrian actors and singers. The newspaper *Sabah* defined these protestors as "those who exaggerate in showing their *hamiyet* (patriotism)." Another group of people in Istanbul gathered in front of the Oroz di-Back store, which rumors claimed to sell Austrian products. The store manager hung Ottoman and French flags on his shop in order to appease the crowd and convince them that it did not belong to an Austrian. A merchant in Adapazarı was also threatened by a mob for importing goods from Austria. If he was to insist on buying merchandise from Austria, he would also be boycotted.³¹

Another merchant in Kavala was equally threatened by a group of people. His shop was picketed by a crowd, and two Muslim women inside the store were pulled out by force. An official inquiry was launched re-

30 M. Ragıb, "Avusturya ve Bulgaristan Emtiasi," *Millet*, 20 October 1908, p. 4.

31 "Ticaret Aforozu," *İkdam*, 18 October 1908, p. 3; "Bir Mağaza Idarehanesinin Hareketi," *Sabah*, 21 October 1908, p. 4; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 2 January 1909, p. 3; "Avusturya Vapurlarıyla Haydarpaşa'ya," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 26 December 1908, p. 5; "Beyrut'ta Harb-i İktisadi," *Millet*, 18 October 1908, p. 4; "Nemse Bulgar Emtiasi," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 15 October 1908, p. 4.

garding the incident, yet hundreds of people gathered once more in order to protest the inquiry and marched to the government office. They wanted the governor to dismiss the commander of the gendarmerie. The gendarmerie took preventive measures, and the crowd dispersed after a short while. The governor of Kavala drew reactions by prohibiting street demonstrations and the picketing of shops. Thereupon, a mass of ten thousand convened before the government office and protested the governor. They shouted slogans such as “We don’t want the governor” and “We want to maintain the boycott.” The central government then sent the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Drama and the metropolitan district governor (*merkez kaymakamı*) of Salonica, Tahsin Bey, to Kavala.³²

A similar incident happened in Galata. Two students saw two Muslim women shopping in the Austrian Tring shop and shouted at them: “We are boycotting the Austrians, shopping in this store shows your *hamiyet-sizlik* (not having public spirit/honor).” Upon this, the women started to scream, and a crowd gathered around them. The students were detained and taken to the Aziziye police station near the Galata Bridge.

A direct action typical for Chinese boycotts mentioned in the introduction occurred in Adapazası. A grocer who continued to sell Austrian sugar despite numerous warnings was punished, in the following way: he was put into a handcart with his sugar packages and paraded through the streets of Adapazarı. People shouted at him: “Boo to those who do not boycott!”³³ In a meeting in Trabzon, it was declared in the name of the people of Trabzon that Austrian and Bulgarian merchandise would no longer be unloaded in the port. Even passengers coming on Austrian ships would not be allowed to disembark. The decisions made in the meeting were sent to the mayor of the town via a telegram. On 1 December 1908, a porter unloading an Austrian ship was attacked by a crowd. The merchandise he was carrying was not returned to the ship, as it had happened in other cases, but burnt.³⁴ The Boycott Movement became increasingly violent. Again in Trabzon, it was heard that a ship importing mushrooms from Austria had arrived, the mushrooms were burnt pub-

32 “Kavala’da,” *Sabah*, 22 November 1908, p. 3; “Kavala Hadisesi,” *Sabah*, 24 November 1908, p. 3.

33 “Dünkü Şayia,” *Sabah*, 7 January 1909, p. 3; “Avusturya Emtiasına Boykotaj,” *Sabah*, 28 December 1908.

34 Kudret Emiroğlu, “Trabzon’da Avusturya Boykotu 1908,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, No. 8, August 1994, p. 18.

licly.³⁵ Burning boycotted merchandise is a typical act of boycott movements everywhere in the world.

The picketing of Austrian shops was the most effective direct action of the Boycott Movement. The gathering of crowds before these shops increased the boycott's impact in the public sphere. People not only gathered in front of the boycotted shops, but also those that sold native Ottoman products. To wear Ottoman clothes and headgear, particularly native fezzes, became a fashion among the Ottoman population, and the mass consumption this entailed resulted in crowds in front of Ottoman shops. The gathering of people in front of Austrian shops—such as Stein, Mayer and Tring—at first resulted from curiosity. Yet, groups of people soon started to harrass customers who continued to frequent these shops. Therefore, these groups turned into picketing lines in the course of the Boycott Movement. Shops such as Stein were picketed even in Cairo, where Ottoman domination had disappeared long ago. The crowds chanted slogans against Austria and distributed leaflets in Arabic, Turkish and French, calling people to participate in the Boycott Movement.³⁶ The *Musavver Geveze* depicted the picketing of Austrian stores on the front page of one of its issues.³⁷ This illustration shows that the Ottoman Boycott was similar to other boycott movements in other parts of the world.³⁸

The most spectacular direct action of the Boycott Movement was the so-called “Fez-Tearing Feast.” This referred to people harrassing each other on the streets. Turks started to exchange Austrian-made regular fezzes with Ottoman-made ones.³⁹ Austrian manufacturers were specialized in cheaper and more basic products, which made them more vulnerable. The fez was one of the products in the making of which Austria was specialized in the 19th century, and the symbol of the Ottoman Empire and the Turks was to a great extent produced in Austria when the Boycott Movement started. The market-share of Austrian fezzes was so

35 “Avusturya Emtiası Yakılıyor,” *İttihad*, No. 58, 20 December 1908, p. 4.

36 “Boykotaj,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 23 December 1908, p. 2; “Tercüman-ı Hakikat'den,” *Anadolu*, 18 October 1908, p. 1.

37 “Avusturya Malları,” *Musavver Geveze*, 11 October 1908, p. 1.

38 Monroe Friedman, *Consumer Boycotts*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 72; Donald A. Jordan, *Chinese Boycotts versus Japanese Bombs: The Failure of China's Revolutionary Diplomacy, 1931-32*, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1991).

39 Zafer Toprak, “Fes Boykotu,” *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. III, (Istanbul: 1994), p. 297.

large that boycotters had to search for different styles and colors in order to compete with Austrian merchandise and undermine their trade in the regular red fezzes.

Ottoman fezzes were different in shape and size when compared to the famous ordinary Austrian fezzes. Some of them were white, while others came in different shapes. New types of hats which had their origins in antique Turkish culture were also invented. The *kalpaks* and *arakiyes* were such inventions. It was easy to recognize whether a fez was Austrian-made, or a new one popularized thanks to the boycott. In the course of the Boycott Movement, it became a legitimate act to take the fez from a passers-by head and tear it, particularly in the centers of the Boycott Movement, such as Smyrna. The most spectacular fez tearing happened first in Smyrna, because it was a late-comer to the Boycott Movement. The town was criticized for its lukewarm support for the boycott. Thus, the most active boycott society was formed in Smyrna, where it published the only boycott journal in the Ottoman Empire. After the boycott had gained a prominent place in the town's daily life, taking old Austrian fezzes from people's head became a popular grassroots action. The Salonian newspaper *Zaman* coined the name "Fez Tearing Feast." A group of Cretans in Smyrna also organized a collective fez-tearing demonstration, during which they altogether tore their fezzes. Similar demonstrations also happened in Beirut. The *İttihad* called the fez tearing an act of freedom of choice. The newspaper reported that it was a national movement resulting from the nation's free will. The old fezzes were thrown away. According to *İttihad*, people started to wear whatever headgear they could find, be it a *kalpak* or something else.⁴⁰ In Salonica, posters on walls and street corners called for the Ottomans to throw away their fezzes and invited them to wear a *kalpak*. These posters were signed by *hamiyetmendan ahali* (patriotic people). After these posters appeared, groups gathered at the Sefa Coffeeshop and the coffeeshops in front of the government house and tore up their fezzes. Many people in these meetings put on a *kalpak* in place of the fez.

The pages of newspaper such as *İttihat ve Terakki* and *Zaman*, which reported on the fez-tearing demonstrations and called for people to exchange their Austrian-made fezzes for native products, were posted on the walls as if they were posters. These incidents and this propagan-

40 "İzmir'de Çıkan İttihad Gazetesi," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 12 December 1908, p. 3.

da made fez tearing popular in Salonica. Yet, violence also occurred as fez tearing became more common. Port workers and several youngsters caused clashes on the streets when they were taking the fezzes from the heads of people passing by on the streets. For instance, when they attacked a Muslim and took the fez from his head, he discharged his revolver towards a group of people on Belediye Avenue. Fortunately, no one was shot. After these incidents, wearing a *kalpak* became widespread among the Ottoman population.⁴¹

Afterwards, port workers participated in the national meetings and boycott actions wearing the *kalpak*. The newspaper *İttihad* described the state of people walking around with various types of hats as “carnival.”⁴² In Smyrna, people reacted against the fez tearing. A Muslim officer in the province of Aydın, Ebu-el-Ahir Efendi, whose fez was taken from his head and exchanged for a felt *kulah*, brought the case before the court. The Boycott Society claimed in its journal that the action of the young man who had taken the hat off the officer’s head was a result of rising national feelings. According to *Gâve*, Ebu-el-Ahir Efendi should have tolerated the youngsters instead of going to court. The Boycott Society threatened him with a personal boycott. *Gâve* suggested that if a boycott was pronounced against him, he might no longer work as a sergeant of the municipality in the province of Aydın.⁴³

Extraordinary conditions in daily life, spectacular phenomena, and exceptional developments are significant features of social movements and protest actions. These types of spectacular actions in the context of social movements create their own symbols as well as extraordinary situations in daily life, which change the fundamental order of things. The tearing of fezzes and the preference for awkward hats produced an atmosphere of carnival, which made the boycott popular in the Ottoman public opinion.

Many memoirs narrating this period mention the 1908 Boycott Movement. Not surprisingly, almost all of these memoirs define the movement as a “Fez Boycott” and describe the fez tearing in detail. Ahmet Emin Yalman has stated in his memoirs that many Ottomans wore *kulahs* (coni-

41 “Fesler ve Kalpaklar,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 15 December 1908, p. 3.

42 Ferruh, “Fes mi Kalpak mı?” *İttihad*, 22 December 1908, pp. 2-3; “Serpuş Meselesi,” *İttihad*, 1 November 1908, pp. 1-2.

43 Boykotaj Cemiyeti Namına İmza Mahfuzdur, “Aydın Tahrirat Müdürü Ebu-el Ahir Efendiye,” *Gâve*, 18 Kanunuevvel 1324 (31 December 1908), p. 4.

cal felt hats), while many Ottomans went bare-headed in order to avoid becoming the target of a fez tearing attack.⁴⁴ Hasan Ali (Yücel), who would become a famous Minister of Education, was only a child in 1908; he wrote in his memoirs that he best liked his image in the mirror with a white *kulah* on his head. He felt himself like an *efe* (a courageous bandit of Southwest Anatolia) thanks to this white *kulah* popularized by the Boycott Movement. He felt like a volunteer ready to go to war and mentioned that those who continued to wear old red fezzes were attacked by patriotic activists. He remembers that fezzes were thrown away on the streets.⁴⁵ Hilmi Uran has referred to children on the street following those wearing a red fez and shouting: “Tear it down! Tear it down!” Many felt obliged to throw away their Austrian-made fezzes. Moreover, Uran in his memoir remembered a boycott committee visiting the Governor-General Rauf Paşa and giving him a boycott *kulah* as a gift, as the committee wanted him to adjust to Ottoman public opinion.⁴⁶ Most of the memoirs mentioning this period refer to the Boycott Movement as a well-meant but futile attempt. Their evaluation is very much related to their overall consideration of the Second Constitutional Period or the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. It was only those feast-like actions and conspicuous aspects of the boycott that they remembered of the movement.⁴⁷

Fez tearing demonstrations were also seen in other towns, such as Aydın. The Ottoman press very much supported these actions, which they considered an outcome of Ottoman patriotism. For instance, the Greek newspaper *Amaltheia* of Smyrna endorsed these street actions.⁴⁸ Yet, assaults and clashes on the streets started to change the stance of those newspapers that supported fez tearing without reservation. These ruined the order in the public space and, therefore, were now condemned.⁴⁹ The Ottoman press argued that, once the picketing lines were

44 Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Yakın Tarihte Gördüklerim ve Geçirdiklerim*, Vol. I, (?), p. 84.

45 Hasan Ali Yücel, *Geçtiğim Günlerden*, (İstanbul: 1990), p. 181. Hasan Ali Yücel also remembers that the Chinese boycott against the United States was mentioned as an example of boycotting in those days.

46 Hilmi Uran, *Hatıralarım*, (Ankara: 1956), p. 30.

47 Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, (İstanbul: 1989), p. 54; Nail Morali, *Mütarekede İzmir Önceleri ve Sonraları*, (İstanbul: 1976), p. 50; Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, (İstanbul: 1993), p. 173; Rıza Nur, *Hayat ve Hatıratım*, (İstanbul: 1967), p. 278; Ahmet Cevat Emre, *İki Neslin Tarihi*, (İstanbul: 1960), p. 115.

48 “Smirnaiki Iho,” *Amaltheia*, 21 December 1908, p. 3; “Ta Fesia,” *Amaltheia*, 23 December 1908, p. 2.

49 “Fes-Kalpak Meselesi,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 16 December 1908, p. 1.

lifted, the misery of the Austrian shops would become apparent. Many articles repeated that, in order to harm Austrian shops, one could also write articles, hang posters, and address people. Yet, obstructing by force people who entered shops, or booing and shouting at people who left the shops were said to be inappropriate. Moreover, these were also contrary to legal codes. Furthermore, traitors or advocates of *istibdat* (autocracy) might mingle with the crowd. Therefore, citizens should watch out and not risk the public order and the future of the freedom that the constitution had secured for the Ottomans. The Ottoman press called for the Ottomans to stay calm and act in accord with the “Ottoman mildness” or “Turkish solemnity” (*türklüğe mahsus vakurluk*). The Ottoman press called these aggressive acts on the streets meaningless, unnecessary and excessive and “charlatanry.” The press wanted the Ottomans to concentrate on the “economical awakening,” which could really injure Austria.⁵⁰

The moderation and sobriety that the Ottoman government and the Committee of Union and Progress called for was not maintained on the street level. There were even instances of guns being fired during the demonstrations, something that probably terrified the elites. A group of people were wandering around in Eminönü/Istanbul, making noise with drums and horns and firing their guns into the air. When they arrived at the Bahçekapı police station, they wanted to be enlisted as volunteers if a war was to break out against Austria and Bulgaria. These acts were a challenge to the calls for moderation. Similar incidents repeated themselves several times in Beirut and Jaffa where the boycott turned violent. The attacks against Austrian ships usually occurred in ports around Beirut. Apart from the ships, the Austrian post office in Jaffa was also attacked.⁵¹ The violence, assaults and picketing lines during the Boycott Movement caused fear among the elite, as it was thought that they might provoke an international intervention in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government and the Committee of Union and Progress tried to channel the protests and demonstration into a more organized and planned mobilization. The newspaper *Sabah* used a rather odd argument in order to discour-

50 “Avusturya Emtiası,” *İkdam*, 11 October 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı,” *Tanin*, 11 October 1908, pp. 3-4; “Ticaret Aforozu,” *İkdam*, 15 October 1908, p. 3; “Bir Muhavere-i Siyasiye,” *Musavver Geveze*, 8 October 1908, pp. 2-4; “Efkar-ı Umumiye,” *İttihad*, 18 October 1908, p. 1.

51 “Dün Bazı Kimseler...” *Sabah*, 16 October 1908, p. 2; “Ticaret Aforozu,” *İkdam*, 20 October 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Aleyhinde Nümayişat-ı Hasmane,” *İttihad*, 17 October 1908, p. 4; İbnü’z-Ziya, “İcmal-i Dahiliye,” *İstîşare*, Vol. I, p. 283.

age picketing actions, claiming that those who seemed to shop in Austrian stores were not real customers, but actors who wanted to trigger an Ottoman reaction and provoke them into assaulting the shops. As a result, desperate store-owners would demand compensation from the Ottoman government. Thus, *Sabah* argued that the Ottomans should stay away from Austrian shops.⁵²

As a result, the elite's complaints regarding the mass mobilization on the grassroots level indicate the autonomous character of the popular movement. When a social movement happens on the street, it does have its own momentum, and this triggered the elite's fear of the masses during the Boycott Movement. However, different segments of society had different expectations from the Boycott Movement, as did political actors such as the states and the political parties.

2.2. The Organization

There was a substantial increase in the number of civil organizations and periodicals after the 1908 Revolution, when the official control mechanisms of the Ottoman state evaporated. The Ottoman people began to establish various organizations for various goals. The Boycott Movement did not lag behind and created an organization from its expanding network. The boycott organization was an outcome of different intentions: first, an organization was the best way to control the movement and the mobilized masses. Therefore, the elite of the Ottoman Empire, particularly the Committee of Union and Progress, were all for the establishment of such an organization. Second, the activists working for the boycott needed an organization to implement their activities easier. The boycott depended on the mobilization of the masses, and an organization was a necessity for propagating its aims and activities. Thirdly, the Boycott Movement had to organize several particular social classes, such as workers and merchants, who had strategic positions in the execution of the Boycott Movement.

The first proposal for the formation of a Boycott Movement organization appeared in *Tanin*. A reader by the name of Edib wrote to the newspaper and wanted *Tanin* to publicize the names and addresses of the Austrian shops, since it was almost impossible for the Ottomans to know all

52 "Şehrimizde Avusturya Menafini..." *Sabah*, 11 October 1908, pp. 3-4.

of them. In its reply, *Tanin* argued that it was better for Ottoman merchants to form a union to this end.⁵³ The newspaper *Millet* also mentioned the need for an organization while it explained to its readers how to boycott. Accordingly, the boycott should be implemented with “prudence, firmness and absolute unity,” rather than “hurry, babbling and despotism.” Merchants should unify in order to achieve these conditions. Furthermore, *Millet* demanded the publication of the decisions that merchants made in their meetings. And it invited provincial merchants to act in accord with the capital’s boycotting merchants. These were the steps that would be pursued by the boycotters in the short term.⁵⁴ As the role played by the workers and merchants became apparent, such propositions for an organization became widespread. *Tanin* repeated its proposal for an organization and claimed that they would probably lose if they did not unite within the Boycott Movement.⁵⁵

Such a union was not formed; yet, at the end of October these suggestions still continued to appear in the newspapers.⁵⁶ A Boycott Union was probably established in the first days of November, and an anonymous manifesto written in three different languages was sent to the merchants and porters of the Black Sea Region. The manifesto was calling on them not to buy or unload Austrian merchandise. This manifesto and call were a precursor to the boycott organizations’ future activities. However, one of the earliest news items about the union dated to 12 November; it reported on the meeting of the Boycott Union Council and its decisions. This was a convention of merchants and took place in Istanbul, and their decisions were about the regulations and rules of the Boycott Movement and what merchants should do in order to prevent being boycotted. Some of the articles on the decisions were related to local issues, such as the Austrian goods in the Haydarpaşa Port, whereas others dealt with the problem of expanding the boycott into the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Decisions referred to the Society of Economic Warfare, the placards and seals of the boycott organizations, certificates for merchants, and they also proposed public conferences on boycotting issues.⁵⁷ These

53 Karilerinizden Edib, “Avusturya Malları,” *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, p. 5; “Tanin,” *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, p. 5.

54 İmza Mahfuzdur, “Boykot yahud Ticaret Aforozu,” *Millet*, 14 October 1908, p. 4.

55 “Avusturya Mallarını Almayınız,” *Tanin*, 15 October 1908, p. 7.

56 For instance: Mühendis Nevres, “Boykotaj,” *Sabah*, 23 October 1908, p. 3.

57 “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 12 November 1908, p. 2.

were the steps that the Boycott Movement took afterwards. In the same vein, *İttihat ve Terakki* reported a similar meeting of merchants and similar decisions in Salonica. A commission was constituted among the merchants, which was to regulate boycotting issues. The following newspaper comment regarding these decisions carries much weight: “The boycott, which started thanks to the raging national feelings (*galeyan-ı hissiyat*), finally went under the control of reason (*daire-i muhakeme*).”⁵⁸

A similar declaration was made by the Boycott Society of Smyrna, one day before the declarations in Istanbul and Salonica. The proclamation first announced that a boycott organization had already been established. The decisions of the Boycott Society were almost identical to those of other boycott organizations.⁵⁹ In Üsküp, a group of Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks and Jews came together in order to deal with boycott-related issues, and formed a similar commission that made similar decisions.⁶⁰ There also appeared a newspaper article regarding the meetings and organizations of merchants, which took place in various towns of the Ottoman Empire. These developments indicate that the initiative emerged from the merchant organization within the boycott network.⁶¹ The boycott organization dealt with a variety of tasks, and this is why its members invented a commission in order to handle the merchants’ transactions, the Commission of Facilities (*Teshilat Komisyonu*). The boycott regulations increased the merchants’ transaction cost, caused delays, and triggered reactions. Therefore, the boycotters founded an organization only to deal with boycott certificates and other trade- and merchant-related issues. In vibrant centers such as Smyrna, the commission had an office of its own.⁶²

Another organization that appeared during the Boycott Movement was the Boycott Society (*Boykotaj Cemiyeti*), or Society of Economic Warfare (*Harb-i İktisadi Cemiyeti*). The Boycott Union was a merchant organization that included both Ottoman and foreign merchants who cut all their ties to Austria. The Boycott Society, on the other hand, was a larger orga-

58 “Boykotaj Hakkında,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 12 November 1908, p. 3.

59 “Bu Kere Şehrimizde...” *İttihad*, 11 November 1908, p. 2.

60 “Boykotaj,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 23 December 1908, p. 2.

61 “Avusturya Emtiasının Adem-i...” *Serbesti*, 3 December 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Aleyhinde Boykotlama,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 5 January 1909, p. 5; “Yanya’da Boykotaj,” *İttihad*, 4 December 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 13 November 1908, p. 4; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 19 November 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *Tanin*, 16 December 1909, p. 3.

62 İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyeti, “Aynen Tezkeredir,” *İttihad*, 8 December 1908, pp. 2-3; “İttihad Gazetesi İdarehanesine,” *İttihad*, 1 January 1909, p. 4.

nization. It aimed to propagate and organize the boycott throughout the entire empire. At this point, there emerges a problem of terminology: The Ottoman press used the terms committee (*komite*), commission (*komişyon*), and society (*cemiyet*) interchangeably. This leads to confusion about the organizations' character. There was even a news item that used the word "society" in place of "union." Therefore, one may even think of one single organization that operated under different names. Furthermore, in small urban centers, there was actually one single organization that executed the different functions of a merchant union and a civil society organization. The subject becomes more complicated if one recognizes that there were also a varied range of words used to refer to the boycott actions, such as curse (*lanetleme*), economic warfare (*harb-i iktisadi*), cut-off (*mukataa*), and ex-communication (*aforoş*). This complicated terminology makes it difficult to evaluate regarding the structure of the boycott organizations that emerged in the different parts of the empire. However, the functioning of the Boycott Movement and the news on developments related to the boycott shows that there were two distinct organizations, particularly in the centers of the Boycott Movement: one organized the merchants and the working-class, and the other organized the Ottoman public and mobilized the masses.

Both the union and the society were active in spreading the Boycott Movement. Yet, the influence of society was even greater. Within a short time-span, the union registered many merchants and managed to obstruct the work of those merchants who were not its members. The society, however, focused its activities on spreading the Boycott Movement, organizing public meetings and conferences, hanging placards and posters, distributing leaflets, sending declarations to government offices and foreign consulates, and so on. The Boycott Society generally addressed the Ottoman population and directed the Boycott Movement. The organization posted posters and public notification on walls and street corners and informed the Ottomans about boycott issues. These public announcements hanging on walls in smaller towns were sometimes also published in local newspapers.⁶³ The Boycott Society had many branches in towns such as Edirne, Trabzon, Beirut, Nazilli, Edremit, Usturumca, Kavala, Konya, Samsun, Uşak, Gordes, and so on.

63 Boykotaj Cemiyeti Namına, "Boykotaj Cemiyeti Tarafından Verilen İlanamedir," *İttihad*, 11 November 1908, p. 2; "Vilayat- Boykotaj Cemiyeti," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 17 November 1908, p. 4.

As mentioned above, Smyrna was criticized for being a late-comer to the Boycott Movement. The boycotters, workers and merchants of other towns even published protests and argued that the merchants of Smyrna were implementing the boycott only reluctantly, which was lessening the pressure on the Austrians. This is why the boycotters concentrated on organizing the merchants and influencing the public opinion. As a result, one of the most active boycott organizations appeared in this port city. Different societies were also formed to popularize the Boycott Movement among the merchants and the lower classes, such as the Society of Ottoman Perseverance (*Osmanlı Sebatkaran Cemiyeti*). Although this particular society was not active, its existence reveals the initiative to organize the boycott in Smyrna. The most spectacular venture of the Boycott Society in Smyrna was publishing an official newspaper, *Gave*. It was the only journal that emerged during the Boycott Movement and, as the journal of a popular social movement; it left its trace on the movement's ideology and discourse. *Gave* was a socialist journal and acquired its name from Persian-Islamic mythology.⁶⁴ *Gave* was the name of a blacksmith who revolted against King Dahhak, symbolizing the tradition of resistance in mythology. The journal placed itself ideologically somewhere between West and East. In a polemic with the journal *Sedad* on the question of prostitution, *Gave* argued that their socialism originated in the seeds of Western thought, processed through an oriental spirit. In this polemic, *Gave* also referred to Islam and the Turkish ancient past as a point

64 For a more detailed description and analysis of *Gave* see: Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, "Liberal, Sosyalist, İttihatçı Boykot Gazetesi: *Gave*," *Müteferrika*, No. 20, Fall 2001, pp. 261-274. It should be underlined that socialism did not appear during the Boycott Movement in other public announcements or in the discourse of the boycotters and port workers. However, Baha Tevfik published *Serbest İzmir* in Smyrna, together with Hüseyin Hilmi, who would become one of the famous leaders of early Turkish socialism. Socialism was mentioned in this newspaper. Therefore, there must have existed an ongoing discussion regarding socialism in intellectual circles in Smyrna in 1908. The strike wave of 1908 also must have contributed to the discussions on socialism. Baha Tevfik, for instance, published a critique of *Gave* in *Serbest İzmir* and argued that *Gave* did not have adequate knowledge of socialism or any other type of ideology. Moreover, the port workers and the workers in the transportation sector always had a relationship with socialist organizations and trade unions. However, further studies are needed for an overall evaluation of socialism in this period. See the following studies which mention *Gave* as a socialist periodical: A. Cerrahoğlu [Kerim Sadi], "Osmanlı Döneminde İlk Sosyalist Yayınlar," *ANT Sosyalist Teori ve Eylem Dergisi*, No. 4, August 1970, p. 83; A. Cerrahoğlu [Kerim Sadi], "Gave'ye Karşı Baha Tevfik," *ANT Sosyalist Teori ve Eylem Dergisi*, No. 5, September 1970, pp. 83-84; Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar-1 (1908-1925)*, (İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1991), p. 31.

of reference. Moreover, it was emphasized that the ideas imported from the West had to be synthesized, so that they would become compatible with the “Eastern spirit.”⁶⁵

This ideological stance of *Gave* was the forerunner to one of the branches of the Turkish Left tradition; this underlines the significance of synthesizing universal leftist values with local and native motives. *Gave* pursued this ideological position in different debates. According to the journal itself, *Gave* was in Smyrna to continue a holy war: the national economic boycott against Austria and Bulgaria.⁶⁶ Moreover, the journal contributors’ obvious disgust regarding any kind of autocracy made *Gave* a devout advocate of the Committee of Union and Progress. *Gave* never mentioned the committee without also using adjectives such as “free,” “sacred,” and the like.⁶⁷ Thus, the periodical of a popular movement supported one of the most popular political organizations supporting the boycott. However, *Gave* was not against Sultan Abdülhamid II. The journal referred to him as the “sultan of the free Ottomans” and supported his campaign to build a strong navy. The journal also praised the visit of Smyrna’s youth to the sultan in Istanbul.⁶⁸

As the position of workers within the Boycott Movement became indispensable, *Gave* increased its support for their actions. Moreover, *Gave* changed its subtitle and substituted “Political and scientific Ottoman journal of the Boycott Society published in İzmir” with “The Ottoman journal of the Boycott Society, published in İzmir to safeguard the interests of the ship-workers, boatmen, firemen, lightermen, porters, and other craftsmen and workers.” The significance and the attachment of the workers exceeded that of the merchants within the Boycott Movement. This fact increased the Boycott Society’s and its journal’s proximity to the port workers. This is why *Gave* intervened in many problems that port workers encountered during its publication.⁶⁹ The affiliation of the Boycott Society with the port workers was to continue after the 1908 Boycott,

65 “Sedad Gazetesine, “Son Cevab,” *Gave*, 18 January 1909, p. 3. Unfortunately, only one single issue of *Sedad* is available in Turkish libraries.

66 “Kısm-ı Muhavere,” *Gave*, 17 December 1909, pp. 2-3.

67 Aydın’dan İmza Mahfuzdur, “Aydın’dan Mektub,” *Gave*, 15 January 1909, p. 4; “Gave,” *Gave*, 15 January 1909, p. 4; “Gave,” *Gave*, 15 January 1909, p. 1.

68 “Gave’nin Umum Hür Osmanlılar Padişahı Sultan Hamid Hazretlerine Çektiği Telgrafname,” *Gave*, 15 January 1909, p. 4.

69 “Belediye ile Kahraman Arabacılar Beyninde Tahdis Edub Yıllardan Beri Süren İhtilafı Gave Hal Etdi,” *Gave*, 31 December 1908, p. 2.

and the boycott organization would later become an organization of port workers in 1910 and 1911.

Gave not only dealt with boycotting issues and reported news about the boycott activists, but also tried to contribute to national campaigns. The most popular national phenomenon of the Second Constitutional Period was the Charity Campaign for the Ottoman Navy. The Boycott Society also organized a campaign to strengthen the Ottoman navy and established a commission to direct this campaign. The journal published many articles to support the mobilization of the Ottoman public in the national campaign for building a strong army.⁷⁰

As a result, the boycott organizations and the publications of the Boycott Movement enhanced the mobilization of the Ottoman public. The Boycott Movement was comprised of different segments of society and, therefore, involved different social and political interests. These distinct political and social agendas had its repercussions on the Boycott Society and the Boycott Movement.

2.3. The Workers' Boycott: Oscillating between Strike and Boycott

The Boycott Movement tried to mobilize the public opinion and organize a collective refusal to buy Austrian and Bulgarian goods. However, after a short while it became obvious that a blockade of boycotted merchandise was the most effective way of boycotting. This might be maintained thanks to those merchants who cancelled their orders and those port workers who refused to unload the goods. The porters, lightermen and boatmen emerged as the most active social class in the Boycott Movement. The Austrian protests regarding the boycott generally concerned the port workers. The Austrians claimed that the Ottoman Empire was acting against the international law by not preventing the porters' actions. They argued that they could sell their products, if only they could transport them from the ports to the hinterland. Yet, port workers were not officers and held traditional rights in the ports. Therefore, it was not possible for the Ottoman government to order the port workers to resume unloading boycotted goods. They were one of the most organized groups within Ottoman society.

70 "Mebuslanımıza," *Gave*, 31 December 1908, pp. 1-2; İzmir'de Lenger-endaz Osmanlı Hafif Filosu Efradı Namına Mecidiye Kravazörü Zabitanı, "Gave Gazetesine," *Gave*, 31 December 1908, p. 2; "Gave," *Gave*, 31 December 1908, p. 2.

The port workers were also an influential social class during the first wave of strikes in the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s.⁷¹ Their struggle against the modernization of the ports was successful in the 19th century, as they managed to slow down the modernizing attempts. Their resistance was a reaction against the modernization of ports and the Port Administration, which was undermining their existence. The modernization process made lightermen, boatmen and porters obsolete.⁷² Therefore, they tried to resist through various measures in the second half of the 19th century. Port cities were the places where the Ottoman Empire's integration into the world economy took place.⁷³ The port workers worked at the heart of the economic network and occupied a strategic position in the economic transactions. The legacy of their struggle and their group's organized character in the ports endowed them with a strong position within the Boycott Movement after 1908.

The strategic place of port workers in the economy revealed itself in the first week of the Boycott Movement. Austrian ships arriving from Trieste were unable to unload their cargo in the main ports of the Ottoman Empire, such as Trabzon, Beirut, Jaffa, Kavala, and Salonica. The Austrian consulate submitted several complaints regarding the port workers at the beginning of the boycott.⁷⁴ In Salonica, the Jewish porters were offered twice their wages to unload the Austrian ships. However, neither porters nor lightermen unloaded the cargo. Similarly, the native Bulgarian port workers in the port of Salonica refused to unload seven thousand sacks of flour arriving from Varna in a Bulgarian ship. The ships of the Lloyd Company, which were frequently visiting the Ottoman ports, began to leave Ottoman ports without loading or unloading. Even these companies could not embark or disembark passengers, due to the boatmen's boycott. In Beirut, the

71 Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Osmanlı Sanayi İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923," Ed. Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), p. 30.

72 Donald Quataert, *Social Distintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908*, (New York: New York University Press, 1983).

73 Çağlar Keyder, Y. Eyüp Özveren, and Donald Quataert, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Liman Kentleri: Bazı Kurumsal ve Tarihsel Perspektifler," Çağlar Keyder, Y. Eyüp Özveren and Donald Quataert, *Doğu Akdeniz'de Liman Kentleri (1800-1914)*, (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994), pp. 121-155; Çağlar Keyder, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Arifesinde Liman Şehirleri ve Politika," *Memalik-i Osmaniye'den Avrupa Birliği'ne*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), pp. 47-70.

74 "Avusturya Vapurları," *İkdam*, 13 October 1908, p. 3; "Mavnacılar ve Salapuruyacılar..." *İkdam*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; "Sevahil-i Osmaniye'de Avusturya Lloyd Vapurları," *Sabah*, 16 Ekim 1908, pp. 2-3.

lightermen did not unload the merchandise and mailbags from an Austrian ship. The governor-general went to the port in order to convince the port workers, and it was only then the mailbags were unloaded. Another Austrian ship in the port of Jaffa was not so lucky in convincing the boatmen and had to leave the port without taking on its passengers.⁷⁵

The Armenian newspaper *Surhantak* reported that Austrian ships and vessels were arriving in and departing Samsun empty. The Austrian consulate in Samsun complained to the governor about the boatmen of Samsun, but did not achieve anything. According to *Surhantak*, the Ottoman and Armenian clubs and civil societies of Samsun declared that they would no longer import goods from Austria, Germany and Bulgaria.⁷⁶ At the beginning of the Boycott Movement, the port workers sometimes tolerated Muslim merchants who had ordered goods from Austria before the declaration of the boycott. This merchandise was considered Ottoman since its price had already been paid. It was widely claimed in the Ottoman press that a boycott of these types of goods would be detrimental to Ottoman interests. Therefore, in most of these cases the port workers allowed the merchants to unload their goods.⁷⁷ However, in most of these cases port workers probably had been persuaded by merchants or prominent figures of the respective town. For instance, the Committee of Union and Progress intervened in several instances in order to persuade the port workers. These incidents confirmed the power of the port workers and the committee's influence over them.

In November, the boycott became stricter in every sense. The tolerance for the already bought and paid for Austrian goods was a contradiction, because the sale of these goods was also boycotted. Therefore, the merchants who had been able to import their goods had difficulties in selling them. In November, the port workers almost created a barrier against Austrian goods with their blockade in the ports. Their action enforced the Boycott

75 "Nemse Vapuru," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 October 1908, p. 4; "Selanik'te İntişar Eden Yeni Asır Gazetesinden:" *İkdam*, 12 October 1908, p. 3; "7000 Çuval Dakik..." *İkdam*, 12 October 1908, p. 3; "Sevahil-i Osmaniye'de Avusturya Lloyd Vapurları," *Sabah*, 16 October 1908, pp. 2-3; "Suriye'de Boykotaj," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 November 1908, pp. 2-3; "Telgraflar," *Sabah*, 17 October 1908, p. 4; "Evvəlki Gün Beyrut Limanında..." *İkdam*, 18 October 1908, p. 3; "Suriye Sevahilinde Boykotaj," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 22 November 1908, p. 2; "İzmir, Selanik, Kavala," *İkdam*, 20 October 1908, p. 3; "Nemse Vapurları," *İttihad*, 20 October 1908, pp. 3-4.

76 "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 31 October 1908, p. 3.

77 "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 17 October 1908, p. 4; "Ticaret Aforozu," *İkdam*, 18 October 1908, p. 3; "Mavnacılar ve Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 21 October 1908, p. 4.

Movement which made Austrian goods a scarcity on the Ottoman market. The amount of Austrian merchandise in the market decreased due to their blockade. Therefore, a consumer boycott became easier for Ottoman citizens. Most of the struggle between the Austrians, the Ottoman government and the boycotters did take place around the Ottoman harbors, and the port workers appeared to be the main actors of the movement.

However, several leaders among the porters, although an exception, unloaded Austrian merchandise during the Boycott Movement. For instance, four wagons of Austrian sugar were unloaded by the chief of tobacco porters. For this act, he was accused of treason; the porters sent telegrams to the Ottoman press and argued that they had been cheated by the Austrian merchants. In another case, the steward of customs for dried fruit, Ramazan Ağa, unloaded a hundred and fifty sacks of Bulgarian cheese. He was condemned for this act and obstructed by two stewards from other docks, Mustafa Ağa and Hasan Reis, and their fellow men. Yet, these two cases were only exceptions. If Austrian merchandise had been unloaded by mistake, it would always be reloaded before its owner could move the merchandise from the customs, as it was once happened in the Sirkeci train station in Eminönü, Istanbul. Porters carried Austrian goods back to the train which had brought the merchandise to Istanbul. Their commitment to the Boycott Movement made port workers popular national figures. The Ottoman press frequently praised them in news items and articles.⁷⁸

Port workers also detected and inspected merchandise that arrived in the Ottoman ports. There were many instances in which Ottoman porters and lightermen found Austrian goods hidden among other goods belonging to countries such as Britain, Italy, or France. In one of these cases, Kürt Ali Ağa, the head of the Istanbul porters, got angry at an Italian company that had hidden Austrian goods among its own; he firmly stated that his porters would not unload the merchandise of this company, unless they fired their clerk. The porters also reloaded the cargo of the Italian company. Leon Papazyan, the owner of the Mamulat-ı Osmaniye (Ottoman Products) shop, could not convince the porters that the stove which he had imported was a German and not an Austrian product.

78 “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 15 November 1908, p. 2; “Ticaret Aforozu,” *İkdam*, 18 October 1908, p. 3; “Hamallar,” *Sabah*, 22 November 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 23 November 1908, p. 7; “Avusturya Şikayetler,” *İkdam*, 24 November 1908, p. 3; “Boykotajı İhlale Tasaddı,” *Sabah*, 29 January 1909, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *Volkan*, 11 December 1908, p. 4.

However, he was not able to persuade them. German products were usually considered by the port workers, and many Austrian products were claimed to be German. There appeared numerous discussions and spontaneous negotiations between port workers and merchants in the harbors of the Ottoman Empire regarding whether merchandise was Austrian or German. The lightermen and porters were distrustful of any merchandise bearing German labels and reluctant to unload it.

The power of porters and lightermen increased in the ports over the course of the Boycott Movement. The Tstanbul correspondent of *The Times* argued that public opinion feverishly supported the boycott and that neither the government nor the Committee of Union and Progress could put a stop to it. Ali Ağa visited several Ottoman newspapers and claimed that merchants were trying to pass off Austrian merchandise as coming from other countries. Ali Ağa complained them to the Ottoman public. A Greek steamship carrying Austrian merchandise could not unload its cargo and passengers, first in Istanbul and then in Trabzon. The ship returned to Istanbul where, again, neither passengers nor goods could be unloaded. Piles of merchandise from Austria appeared in many ports, as the port workers refused to touch them.⁷⁹

The leaders of the port workers in Samsun also visited the local newspaper *Aks-ı Sada*. Two prominent figures among the boatmen there, Rıza Kapudan and Rauf Ağa, announced in the newspaper office that they would continue to boycott in a strict manner. The newspaper presented them and their fellow porters and boatmen to its readers as “Heroes of the Boycott.”⁸⁰

The lightermen of the Trabzon port sent a telegram to the Ottoman press and reported how different transportation companies hid Austrian goods among their cargo. They declared that they would do everything to prevent Austrian merchandise from entering the Ottoman Empire.⁸¹ The

79 “Boykotaj,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 29 November 1908, p. 4; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 26 November 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *Sabah*, 28 November 1908, p. 3; “Gümrük Hamalları,” *Sabah*, 12 December 1908, pp. 3-4; “Avusturya Emtiasına Boykotaj,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 13 December 1908, p. 8.

80 “Boykotaj Kahramanları,” *Aks-ı Sada*, 24 January 1909, pp. 5-6. *Aks-ı Sada* published articles in order to support the boycotting actions of the port workers in Samsun. For instance see: “Yaşasın Kayıklarımız,” *Aks-ı Sada*, 9 March 1909, p. 4; “Arz-ı İhtiram,” *Aks-ı Sada*, 12 December 1908, p. 3.

81 Trabzon İskelesi Umum Mavnacıları, “Boykotaj,” *Tanin*, 15 December 1908, p. 3; Trabzon İskelesi Umum Mavnacıları, “Trabzon’dan Alınan Telgrafnamedir:” *İkdam*, 15 December 1908, p. 3.

newspapers, which supported the actions of the port workers and published their telegrams, still warned them not to harm international trade, which might be against Ottoman interests. Port workers were only obeying the orders of boycott organizations such as the Boycott Union. Yet, workers claimed in their telegrams that people wearing *kalpaks* had tried to deceive them by exchanging Austrian trademarks for Italian or German ones. Thirty-two lightermen signed a document warning the lightermen of other ports about these tricks.⁸² These incidents made port workers even more suspicious.

Port workers closely watched the political developments and carefully read the newspapers. They sent replies to newspapers whenever these had published allegations against them. In some cases, they demanded from editors to comment on their telegrams or events related to them. For instance, it was claimed that Ali Ağa, one of the most influential leaders of the port workers and the Boycott Movement, had started to collect money from the docks of Anadoluhisarı, Galata and Beşiktaş as well as several theater companies. He was said to collect money for the porters in order to compensate for their losses during the Boycott Movement. The port workers repudiated this allegation and wanted the Ottoman public not to believe such claims.⁸³

Port workers also formed a network between different ports. They communicated with each other effectively during the Boycott Movement. This network facilitated their mobilization and encouraged them to act. They utilized modern communication facilities, not only for building that network and a social movement, but also for congratulating each other. For instance, the porters and boatmen of Kala-i Sultaniye sent a telegram with their compliments to the chief steward of the porters and boatmen of Salonica. In this telegram, which was published in *Sabah*, the port workers of Kala-i Sultaniye considered themselves a significant part of the commercial war.⁸⁴

The popularity of the port workers grew as the Boycott Movement gained power among the Ottoman population. The sympathy they gained during the Boycott Movement revealed itself in a meeting organized for

82 “Boykotaj,” *Tanin*, 26 December 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 28 December 1908, p. 3.

83 Esnaf Lonca Odası Usta Başkanı Mehmed Ömer bin Hasan, Mehmed bin Hasan, Mustafa, “Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı...” *Sabah*, 21 January 1909, p. 4.

84 Hamallar Kethüdası Raşid Sami Kapudan - Kayıkçılar Kethüdası Mustafata Kapudan, “Boykotaj,” *Sabah*, 7 December 1908, p. 3.

Crete. The meeting was against the political designs to annex Crete to Greece. The port workers' joining the meeting triggered excitement and thrilled the crowd that had gathered in the public square. The articles and commentaries in the newspapers and the popular classes's treatment of the port workers were indicators of their rising popularity.⁸⁵

This rising popularity increased their power in the ports. The Ottoman government, which was trying to come to terms with the Austrian government, forced port workers to relax the boycott. However, the port workers refused to do so until the Austrians would accept the terms dictated by the boycotters. Clearly, different social and political actors had their own agenda in the Boycott Movement. The Committee of Union and Progress and the Ottoman press in general supported the port workers' stance. The newspapers emphasized that the port workers were not employees of the state and could not be blamed if they did not want to work and earn money. They were poor and refused to earn money only because of their patriotism.⁸⁶ The official journal of the Committee of Union and Progress, *İttihat ve Terakki*, reminded its readers that it was only the stewards and foremen of the port workers who could order them to work. The official journal of the Boycott Society, *Gave*, also criticized the Ottoman government and repeated similar arguments, referring to the port workers's independence.⁸⁷ However, the foremen of the Istanbul porters, Kürd Ali Ağa, stated that it was the nation who had organized the boycott. Accordingly, the boycott could only come to an end if the Ottoman parliament endorsed the concessions that Austria would accept. Ali Ağa also asked for the approval of the parliament to be published in the Ottoman press.⁸⁸ The port workers presented themselves as the representative of the nation and the true interpreters of national interest.

The popularity and the position of the port workers in the Boycott Movement enhanced their power before the Ottoman state. Therefore, the policies of the Ottoman state had to take a path different from the

85 "Düнкü Miting," *Serbesti*, 10 January 1909, p. 4. There occurred fights among the port workers, but the Ottoman press paid attention not to harm their popularity while still criticizing their fights. "Evvelce Hamalların Müteaddid..." *Volkan*, 25 January 1909, p. 4.

86 "Boykotaj Devam Etmeli," *Serbesti*, 6 December 1908, p. 2; "Boykotaj," *Tanin*, 29 November 1908, p. 4.

87 "Boykotaj," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 10 December 1908, p. 2; "Boykotaj," *İttihad*, 8 December 1908, p. 2; "İstanbul, Köylü, *Gave*," *Gave*, 17 December 1908, p. 4.

88 Rıhtım Hamallar Kolbaşısı Ali, "Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 21 January 1909, p. 4; Rıhtım Hamallar Kolbaşısı Ali, "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 21 January 1909, p. 2.

policies it had employed against the strike wave of August and September 1908. The government considered strikes as a threat to the public order and tried to repress them by force.⁸⁹ It was more difficult for the Ottoman government to control the port workers after the Boycott Movement. It should be underlined that the government referred to the port workers' actions during the Boycott Movement as "strike," whereas the port workers themselves referred to their strike-like actions as "boycott." Sadrazam Kamil Paşa, the Minister of Internal Affairs Hilmi Paşa, and the Minister of Zaptiye (Security Forces) Sami Paşa used the words *grev* and *tatil-i eşgal* (strike) in their public statements.⁹⁰ These terms clearly point to the struggle between the government and the workers, and the significance of symbols in their negotiations. As it will be mentioned below, the port workers realized that defending their rights under the shield of the Boycott Movement was an affective guard against the government.

The struggle between the government and the port workers provoked initiatives supporting the workers. Apart from the articles published in different newspapers, several statements supporting the actions of the port workers were released. A number of these public proclamations were signed by several members of parliament, such as the MP of Gümülçine, Arif Bey, of Edirne, Rıza Tefvik, and of Karahisar-ı Sahib, Mehmed Salim. Meetings and demonstrations were also organized to encourage the boycotting activities of the porters and lightermen. Thanks to this support and public declarations, the port workers were able to maintain their firm stance for the duration of the Boycott Movement. The Minister of Security visited the porters and lightermen before the gate of the Foreign Commodity Customs (*Emtia-i Ecnebiye Gümrüğü*) and informed them that their refusal to unload Austrian merchandise was against the law. The port workers underlined that their resistance was the result of their free will. The government could not force port workers to put an end to their actions. The Administration of Customs (*Rüsumat Emaneti*)

89 Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Osmanlı Sanayi İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu, 1839-1923," Ed. Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler, 1839-1950*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), p. 46; Mesut Gülmez, "Tanzimat'tan Sonra İşçi Örgütlenmesi ve Çalışma Koşulları (1839-1919)," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. III, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985), p. 798; Şehmuz Güzel, "Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e İşçi Hareketi ve Grevler," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. III, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985), p. 803.

90 "Boykotaj ve Freie Presse Gazetesinin Meyuseti," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 12 December 1908, pp. 2-3; "Boykot Cevlamı," *İhdam*, 12 December 1908, p. 3.

had to unload and carry the paper which it had bought from Austria with the help of its own employees.⁹¹

Religious cadres also issued a public declaration and announced their support for the port workers. The teachers of the Fatih Mosque (*ders-i amm efendileri*) sent a statement to *İkdam* and argued that those who opposed the Boycott Movement were acting against the *shari'a* and patriotism (*hamiyyet*). They were praying for the porters and lightermen because of their patriotism.⁹² A group of people living in the neighborhood of Dolmabahçe collected 1,059 *kuruş* and bought Kürd Ali Ağa a watch. The porters and lightermen of Galata went to the headquarters of the Boycott Society and renewed their oath to the Boycott Movement. Their act was celebrated in a public statement signed by 600 persons.⁹³

Interestingly enough, a merchant by the name of Monsieur Solari, thanked the port workers who boycotted him. He managed to unload his merchandise with a little help of several officers, but was grateful to the port workers who had refused in a polite manner. He was quite impressed by the porters' polite manners and offered them a cash gift. This money was then donated to the Gureba Hospital, contributing to the porters' rising prestige.⁹⁴

Port workers also organized demonstrations in order to show their commitment to the Boycott Movement and spark the masses' emotions. In Smyrna, the port workers, both Muslim and Greek, paraded through the streets, waving flags and shouting slogans such as "Long live the boycott!" and "Long live the Ottomans." An Austrian ship belonging to the Lloyd Company encountered the resistance of Muslim and Greek porters. The workers began to march under the leadership of Aziz Ağa, the owner of a coffee-house, and proceeded from the Cordon to the Hunters' Club, and from the European Quarter to the Yemiş Çarşısı (Dried Fruit Bazaar). They ended up in front of the government house, but quickly dispersed to the coffee-houses across from the customs so as not to create a disturbance. Yet, a few youngsters tore the fezzes of a couple of peo-

91 "Boykotajın Hadim-i Hakikileri," *Serbesti*, 2 December 1908, p. 3; "207 Mühr ve İmza ile Varid Olan Varakadır," *İkdam*, 2 December 1908, p. 2; "Boykotaj-Hamallara Teşekkür," *Sabah*, 2 December 1908, pp. 2-3; "Boykotaj," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 26 January 1909, p. 2.

92 "Fatih Ders-i Amm Efendiler Tarafından Varid Olmuşdur," *İkdam*, 5 December 1908, p. 2.

93 "Boykotaj," *Serbesti*, 26 November 1908, p. 4; "Boykotaj," *Tanin*, 9 December 1908, p. 3.

94 İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyeti, "Kayıkçıların Cemiyeti ve Boykotaja Riayeti," *İttihad*, 24 December 1908, pp. 2-3.

ple during the demonstration.⁹⁵ The porters of Istanbul organized a similar march on the customs house of Galata. They congratulated each other for their contribution to the boycott. Carrying banners and playing drums and pipes, they visited the offices of those newspapers that supported their actions. In one of these visits, a columnist of *Sabah*, Samih Efendi, addressed the workers and promised them his newspaper's continued support. He claimed that the Ottomans could only be saved if they were as patriotic as the porters.⁹⁶

The strife between the Ottoman government and the port workers intensified towards the end of January 1909. The Sublime Porte frequently informed the Customs Administration that there was no longer a need to boycott, since the government had come to terms with the Austrians. However, the port workers's leaders declared several times that they could only end the boycott when the Boycott Society said so. Moreover, the parliament should also endorse the treaty between the two states. They also underlined that they did not demand any compensation for their actions.⁹⁷ Yet, in February 1909 the resistance of the port workers and their coordination all over the empire started to crumble. In several of the ports, Austrian goods were unloaded. In İnebolu, a ship which arriving from Samsun was able to unload its sugar cargo after the porters had briefly hesitated. They claimed that the bill of consignment was bearing the seal of the Boycott Society. However, on that very same day Austrian merchants still were unable to unload their merchandise in Istanbul. The ports of the Ottoman Empire sunk into chaos.⁹⁸ It was only on 25 February 1909 that the Grand Vizier Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa could convince the Boycott Society that to the government would sign the protocol with Austria within a day. The following day, Rıza Tevfik, one of the most influential political figures in post-revolution Istanbul, visited the port workers in the Istanbul and Galata customs houses and declared that the boycott had finally ended. The Boycott Society made a public an-

95 "Amelenin Boykotaj Hususundaki Nümayişi," *İttihad*, 8 December 1908, p. 1; "To Austriakon Atmoploion," *Ameltheia*, 18 December 1908, p. 2.

96 "Boykotaj," *Serbesti*, 6 December 1908, p. 4; "Hamallara ve Mavnacılar Teşekkür," *Sabah*, 5 December 1908, p. 3; "Gümrük Hamalları," *İkdam*, 5 December 1908, p. 2.

97 "Boykotaj," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 21 January 1909, p. 8; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 31 January 1909; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 5 February 1909, p. 3; "Boykotaj Kalktı mı?" *Sabah*, 5 February 1909, p. 4.

98 "Boykotun Hitamı," *İkdam*, 6 February 1909, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 6 February 1909, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 12 February 1909, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 24 February 1909, p. 3.

nouncement and informed the Ottomans that they had lifted up the boycott.⁹⁹

The end of the boycott also reveals the power of the port workers in the Ottoman Empire and within the Boycott Movement. The government could only put an end to the boycott after it had been able to convince the workers in the ports. The declaration was made in the customs house, before the port workers. The elite of the Ottoman Empire did not risk leaving a national movement only in the hands of workers. A day after the declaration had been issued, it was still not easy to immediately end the boycott of the port workers. The workers refused to unload Austrian sugar and were forced to do so by the police commissary Sadık Efendi. It was only then that the sugar was carried to the shops. However, the steward of the lightermen, Mustafa Ağa, tried to prevent the porters from carrying the sugar. He claimed that the Austrian companies possessed their own barges and would violate their rights in the near future. He was asked to complain to the public authorities.¹⁰⁰

After the decision of the Boycott Society and the Committee of Union and Progress to put an end to the boycott, the workers carried on with their action. Although they claimed that they continued the boycott, their action more closely resembled a strike. The Port workers fought for their class interests in the course of the Boycott Movement, which lasted approximately five months. As mentioned above, they tried to frame their interests within the Boycott Movement after their strike had been oppressed in the strike wave of August-September 1908. For the workers, it was easier to draw attention to their particularistic issues in the context of a national movement. In the second week of the Boycott Movement, they opposed the 1879 regulations which regulated their wages. Due to these regulations, their wages were based on piece work. The workers claimed that the capacity of their barges had been increased at least twice, but that their wages had remained the same. Moreover, neither the municipality nor the Port Administration thought of themselves as responsible for their problems. The port workers threatened the merchants with a strike, but were advised by the Ottoman press to be patient. Yet, as their

99 "Osmanlı Boykotaj Sendikası İstanbul Merkezinden:" *İkdam*, 27 February 1909, p. 1; "Boykotajın Refi," *İkdam*, 27 February 1909, p. 1; "Boykotajın Hitamı," *Sabah*, 27 February 1909, p. 2; "Dün Boykotaj Sendikası Tarafından Matbuamıza Tebliğ Olunmuştur:" *Sabah*, 27 February 1909, p. 2.

100 "Boykotajdan Sonra," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 28 February 1909, p. 5.

popularity rose and their power increased during the Boycott Movement, the port workers increased their wages. The newspaper *İkdam*, which supported the port workers' boycotting actions, found the new wages unfair. The port workers sent a reply to *İkdam* and argued that a twenty-percent increase was fair indeed. They mentioned that their costs had increased and that they abstained from strike-like actions which they defined as *serkeşane* (disobedient). They blamed the Port Administration and the Chamber of Commerce, which did not negotiate and come to terms with the workers. They legitimized their demands within the framework of the Boycott Movement, presenting their patriotic stance as a proof for their loyalty to their country. Yet, their demand for wages equal to those of the Dalmatian boatmen was considered illegitimate and refused by the Maritime Chamber of Commerce.¹⁰¹

Apart from their demands regarding wages, the port workers also asked for reform in their own organizations. Most of these demands were about the elimination of foremen, the stewards of the port workers who were in the higher ranks of the guild bureaucracy. Those generally were the *kahyas* and *kethüdas* and acted as a referee among the port workers, or between the state and the workers. They had the right to punish them or even ban them from work.¹⁰² These high-ranking officers in the guild organizations of the port workers took advantage of their position and rights. Their privileges paved the way for their domination over the port workers. Therefore, the port workers tried to eliminate these men based on their increased power during the Boycott Movement. For instance, the boatmen of Tophane and Mumhane gave a petition signed by many boatmen to the Sublime Porte and wanted the government to fire İmdad Efendi, the *kethüda* of the boatmen. The government ordered the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to deal with the problem.

The customs porters tried to prevent the reassignment of Şabah Kahya to the post of the stewardship of porters. They marched to the Sublime Porte and wanted the government to withdraw his appointment. Accompanied by an officer, they were sent to the municipality. On another occasion, the lightermen wrote an open letter to the Port Administra-

101 "Mavnacilar ve Tüccar," *İkdam*, 13 October 1908, p. 4; "Salapuryacı ve Mavnacı..." *Şurayı Ümmet*, 7 January 1909, p. 6; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 28 January 1909, p. 4.

102 Donald Quataert, "Selanik'teki İşçiler, 1850-1912," *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler, 1839-1950*, (Ed.) Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), pp. 113-114.

tion and complained about Davut Ağa, the *tahsildar* (tax collector), who, as they claimed, oppressed the workers. The porters of Sirkeci also submitted a petition signed by 200 persons to the municipality, asking to replace Süleyman Kahya with Ramazan bin Ömer. Their petition was accepted by the municipality.

After the boycott had ended, the lightermen of the Yağ Kapanı Dock submitted to the Grand Vizier a petition claiming that they had good reasons to carry on with the boycott. They denied the accusation that they were exploiting the Boycott Movement for their particular interests and claimed that they had repudiated Austrian offers many times. They had two distinct claims regarding the Boycott Movement: first, the boycott was the result of their own free will. Therefore, it was up to them to decide when the boycott would end. Secondly, they referred to their traditional rights and the rights they had obtained thanks to “freedom.” They legitimized their demands within the framework of the constitution and the ideals of the new regime, claiming that their rights were curtailed under the yoke of *istibdat* (autocracy). As a result, their social and economic position deteriorated in comparison to that of foreign lightermen. They had to be content with secondary jobs and left the ground to the lightermen of foreign companies. Therefore, they were merely defending the rights that the constitution had bestowed on them. Furthermore, they referred to the rights that they had acquired ever since the period of Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1444-47, 1451-81). Therefore, they not only invoked their constitutional rights, but their traditional historical rights they had inherited from the past. The lightermen’s document was signed by the prominent members of the guild and endorsed by the *tahsildar* (tax collector) of the Yağ Kapanı Dock to prove that the signatures were not forged.¹⁰³

This long argumentation reveals that the port workers were very conscious of their rights. However, Turkish historiography generally presents the protests or the reactions of the guilds and laborers as pre-modern remnants. This thesis argues that the port workers and their guild organization transformed themselves in this process and employed various kinds of argumentation in their discourses. Their network and tradition-

103 “Yağ Kapanı Mavnacıları,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 10 February 1909, p. 8; “Liman Dairesinin Nazar-ı Dikkatine,” *Serbesti*, 31 December 1908, p. 4; “Sirkeci Hamalları Kahyası,” *Sabah*, 14 January 1909, p. 4; “Dersaadet Gümrüğü Hamallarından Alınan Varaka,” *Serbesti*, 21 February 1909, p. 3.

al characteristics not only survived in the course of the 19th century, but also adapted to contemporary social and political developments.

The porters of the Istanbul customs house also entertained a dispute with the Port Administration. The workers claimed that the administration was trying to eliminate them from the port, although they had been working there for centuries. During this long history, they had paid great sums to the administration. They also asked why the administration had in fact recognized their existence and their century-long traditions before. In a public notification, they declared that they would defend with their blood their legitimate rights against the administration. Their struggle was for the livelihood of the *amele-i milliye* (national workers). However, Istanbul's port workers did not defend the rights of the Armenian porters, who had been eliminated from the ports during the 1895-96 Incidents. In 1829, during the abolition of the Janissary Corps the Muslim porters were eliminated from the ports for being their grassroots supporter. They were replaced mostly by Armenian porters who had already worked in the ports. However, after Armenian revolutionaries had seized the Ottoman Bank in Galata, the Armenian porters were replaced by Kurdish ones. During the massacres of 1895, many Armenian porters were eliminated from the customs. The remaining Armenians had left the port due to excessive taxation.¹⁰⁴ After the promulgation of the constitution, Armenian ex-porters tried to return to their posts, but the present porters did not allow them to do so. The Muslim porters defended the new regime and the constitution, but refused to admit the Armenian porters who were also victims of the *istibdad*, the ancient regime. On this account, they resisted both the municipality and the Armenian Patriarchate.¹⁰⁵

As a result, the port workers gained a strategic position in the Boycott Movement. This position and their actions, which were presented to the Ottoman public as patriotism, secured them great popularity. They tried to take advantage of this popularity to reinforce their social and economic position in the Ottoman ports. Firstly, they were successful in many cases and managed to eliminate several of the high-ranking guild members. Secondly, they tried to fortify their position in the customs house

104 Donald Quataert, "Labor Policies and Politics in the Ottoman Empire: Porters and the Sublime Porte, 1826-1896," *Humanist and Scholar: Essays in Honor of Andreas Tietze*, Ed. Heath W. Lowry and Donald Quataert, (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1993), p. 59-69.

105 "Gümrük Hamalları," *İkdam*, 10 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 9 February 1909, p. 4; "Ermeni Hamallarının Avdeti," *İkdam*, 10 November 1908, p. 3.

against foreign lightermen or porters. They demanded wages equal to theirs for the same work load. They rejected temporal and provisional offers of foreign companies and tried to achieve structural change.

To this end, the port workers made use of the Boycott Movement. Their traditional network between the Ottoman ports facilitated their mobilization process. Their organization functioned well in their fragile relationship with the Ottoman state, the foreign consulates, foreign companies, the Port Administration, the Committee of Union and Progress, and the merchants. They were well aware of their organizational and economic interests, as was the case in the 1908 strike wave.¹⁰⁶ They utilized various means to achieve their goals. Port workers in the different ports of the Ottoman Empire had a positive relationship to the local newspapers. This relationship contributed to their popularity and strengthened the legitimacy of their sectional demands. Their good relationship with the Committee of Union and Progress also was a crucial element in their rising power. They constituted the street force of the Unionists during the Second Constitutional Period. However, they should not be considered servants of the committee. Süleyman Kani İrtem has asserted that it was Ferit Bey who ensured the relationship between the porters and the committee in 1908 and during the Boycott Movement. According to İrtem, Ferit Bey¹⁰⁷ stated at the outset of the boycott that the port workers should receive economic support in order to guarantee their loyalty. He wanted to save money for the workers through the Boycott Fund. The Boycott Society issued “Certificates of Boycott” and sold them to merchants. These certificates released them from the boycott. İrtem has claimed that Ferit Bey, as a member of the Committee of Union and Progress, took money for the workers.¹⁰⁸

Although they had a strong network, widespread public support and political relationships, the port workers were not able to realize all their aspirations, particularly the economic ones. Thus, just after the end of the boy-

106 Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “1908 Grevleri,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, Fall, No. 78, 1998, p. 196.

107 Ferit Bey who would take the surname “Hamal” (porter) in the Republican Era was a *kethüda* of porters and a *katib-i mesul* (responsible scribe) in the Committee of Union and Progress. He was also sent into exile (1919-1920) on Malta after the Armistice of Mudros and Istanbul’s occupation by the Allied Forces. On Malta, he was among many other prominent political figures of the Committee of Union and Progress. In 1942, he became a member of the *Varlık Vergisi Tespit Komisyonu* (Wealth Tax Estimation Commission).

108 Süleyman Kani İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken 1908 Jön Türk İhtilali*, (İstanbul: Temel, 1999), pp. 303-303.

cott, in early March 1909, they went on strike. The lightermen announced that they would strike in order to resist those Austrian, Russian and Italian companies who used their own barges and undermined their own monopoly. Upon this declaration, a meeting was convened by the Maritime Chamber of Commerce, which also involved the representatives of shipping agencies. A commission was formed in order to deal with the issue, and it was decided to send a memorandum to the Minister of Commerce and Public Works, Gabriel Efendi. Meanwhile, the unity between the port workers started to crumble after the Boycott Movement had ended. A fight took place between the porters of the Yemiş Dock and the Çardak Dock. Many were wounded in this altercation. The Ottoman press, who had supported the workers for five months, considered the workers' new decision dangerous. The lightermen gave to the foreign companies a week-long ultimatum to leave their barges under their control. Otherwise, they would go on strike. However, they did not mention the word "strike," but instead used the term "boycott." The foreign agents replied with a threat of their own. They would boycott the Istanbul port, if the workers started a strike. The port workers repeated their demands and argued that their only desire was to be treated equal to foreign lightermen. They gained a partial success in this process and came to an agreement with the Russian and Italian companies.¹⁰⁹ The Port Administration and the Ottoman government attempted to limit the number of port workers and thereby weaken their power in the ports. However, the port workers argued that such schemes were contrary to the principles of free trade and sent a protest to the government and the Ministry of Public Works, containing 1,400 signatures. The government sent soldiers to the customs house, but did not attack the workers because of their peaceful demonstrations.¹¹⁰ The workers' popularity made the authorities unable to suppress them.

2.4. Merchants during the Boycott: The Weakest Link

Ottoman merchants were considered a significant social element in the Boycott Movement, since it was they who imported Austrian merchandise into Ottoman domains. Besides, they were a vital component of the

109 "Mavnacıların Grevi," *Sabah*, 5 March 1909, p. 3; "Hamalların Gavgası," *Sabah*, 6 March 1909, p. 3; "İstanbul Limanı," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 8 March 1909, pp. 3-4; "Boykotaja Karşı Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 9 March 1909, s. 3; "Mavnacılar," *Serbesti*, 12 March 1909, p. 2.

110 "Hamalların Boykotajı," *Serbesti*, 20 March 1909, p. 3.

Ottoman economy. One of the ultimate goals of the Boycott Movement was to reinvigorate the national economy. Therefore, the boycotters asked them to stop importing boycotted items and instead to try to produce them within the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the genuine boycott (*hakiki boykot*)—that is, the development of the native Ottoman industry and economy—might materialize. It was thought that, if the merchants gave their support, the boycott's impact on Austria and Bulgaria would emerge more rapidly. Then the actions of the port workers and the consumers would become unnecessary.

However, the Ottoman merchants, both Muslim and non-Muslim, were the weakest link of the Boycott Movement. A merchant who had business with Austrian companies would probably have lost due to the boycott. On the other hand, a boycott was probably beneficial for a merchant who imported goods from a competitor country. Therefore, during the Boycott Movement, boycotters and boycott organizations had to force Ottoman merchants to act in accord with the movement. Merchants who had good relations with the Committee of Union and Progress and social links to national organizations were for the boycott. There appeared initiatives, public announcements and organizations of Ottoman merchants in order to transform the boycott into a widespread movement. They expected a fortune from their relationship with the national political cadres and their engagement with the national movement. However, those who did not have direct links to the Committee of Union and Progress and the boycott organizations were not particularly eager to adhere to the boycotting rules, unless the Boycott Movement provided an economic opportunity. This is why the boycotters were obliged to watch and compel the merchants to obey the boycott regulations. Merchants would support the national economic policies and boycotting activities, if they planned to invest within the framework of national economy policies. Yet, others were trying to circumvent the boycott rules if they earned from the trade with Austria. Both Muslims and non-Muslims were involved in the definition of the national economy and the Ottoman merchant class. It was only after 1913 that Muslim merchants took advantage of the elimination of non-Muslims from the economy and acted as a whole.

There were many merchants who tried to circumvent the Boycott Movement. The boycott was not only against Austrian merchandise, but also against Austrian services. The most significant Austrian service that the Ottoman merchants used was shipping services. Many Ottoman

merchants were hard-hit by the port workers' boycott against Austrian ship companies. Ottoman merchants were advised to use Ottoman ships for import and export. However, the capacity of the Ottoman shipping fleet was not enough to fill the gap. Merchants who had difficulties finding cheap transportation broke the boycott regulations. Yet, the Boycott Union, which had been established in order to organize the merchant class within the Boycott Movement, became influential in a very short time span and made progress in enrolling merchants.

As mentioned above, the Austrian merchandise which had already been bought by Ottoman merchants was considered Ottoman at the very beginning of the Boycott Movement. The boycotters allowed merchants to import Austrian goods for a certain period of time, as long as they had been ordered before the promulgation of the boycott. The announcement of the boycott caused apprehension among the merchant class, and one merchant in Salonica wrote to the journal *Bağçe* to ask what he was to do with his Austrian merchandise. For him, to boycott these goods was to boycott the Ottomans themselves. According to the journal, Ottomans could only buy those goods if the Ottoman merchants could guarantee that they would no longer import anything from Austria or Bulgaria. This reply reveals the lack of confidence between the boycotters and the merchants. There were news and rumors of merchants who continued to bring goods from Austria under different titles. Therefore, *Bağçe* wanted merchants to put an end to their complaints and do not bother the Ottoman public opinion.¹¹¹ To consider the already bought Austrian goods as Ottoman was a theoretical solution to the problems of the Ottoman merchants. The mobilization of the Ottoman public was organized against this merchandise, and recognizing legitimate Austrian goods was practically impossible. The "Fez Tearing Feast" was proof to this odd solution: the already bought "Ottoman" fezzes were publicly torn on the streets. These kinds of actions were not considered ruining Ottoman property.

One of the earliest boycotting calls of merchants was made by a few big trading houses in Istanbul. This announcement was followed by a public notification of several merchants in Salonica who declared that they had already canceled their orders from Austrian factories. They also posted their declaration on the streets of Salonica. The text of this announcement and call for a total boycott of Austrian and Bulgarian merchandise

111 "Tüccarımıza," *Bağçe*, 27 October 1908, back Cover.

was also published in the newspapers.¹¹² A group of prominent Muslim and Armenian residents of Karahisab-ı Sahib (Afyon) sent an open letter to *İttihat* and announced that they would boycott even those who would break the boycott.¹¹³ The *attar* (essential oil or perfume) traders of Konya convened in the Şeref Hotel and discussed the future of their profession. They decided to participate properly in the economic war against Austria and claimed that there were many Austrian goods among the merchandise coming from Smyrna. Merchants were advised to import from Britain in order to prevent cheating.¹¹⁴

The Ottoman press wanted Ottoman merchants to join the merchants who worked for the boycott. With most of the merchandise it was very difficult for the Ottoman people to understand which commodity was Austrian and which was not. Therefore, it was the merchants' duty to indicate the goods to be boycotted. They were also invited to inform on each other and point to those who stored Austrian merchandise in their warerooms.¹¹⁵ The newspaper *Tanin* recommended merchants to establish an organization in order to regulate the boycott in the economic sphere. The Boycott Union was the result of such an initiative. Like the merchants of Istanbul, the tradesmen in Salonica, Kastamonu and Beirut cancelled their orders. After a couple of weeks, the Austrian press claimed that the first excitement of the Boycott Movement had calmed down. These claims were met with several telegraphs of Ottoman merchants from various towns, which stated that they would never buy from Austria again. These reactions were to indicate that the boycott was in progress and to stimulate a new impetus for the boycott among the Ottoman public.¹¹⁶ The *Muhabbet-i Milliye Ticaret Komisyonu* (Love of the Na-

112 "Selanik Tüccarlarının Teşebbüsü," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 October 1908, p. 4.

113 İslam ve Ermeni Muteberanından Yirmi Yedi Zatın İmza ve Mühürlerini Havidır, "Karahisar-ı Sahib'den Aldığımız Mektubdur," *İttihat*, 14 November 1908, p. 3.

114 "Bir Numune-i Hamiyet," *Anadolu*, 7 December 1908, p. 2.

115 "Avusturya Emtiası," *İkdam*, 8 October 1908, p. 4; "Avusturya Emtiasını Almayınız," *Tanin*, 9 October 1908, p. 7; Karilerinizden Edib, "Avusturya Malları," *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, p. 5; "Tanin," *Tanin*, 10 October 1908, p. 5; "Şeker Siparişleri," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 15 October 1908, p. 4; "Rica-i Mahsus," *Anadolu*, 11 October 1908, p. 1.

116 "Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı," *İkdam*, 10 October 1908, p. 4; "Selanik'de Avusturya Emtiasının..." *İkdam*, 16 October 1908, p. 4; "Kastamonu Tacirlerinin İstanbul'daki..." *İkdam*, 16 October 1908, p. 4; Beyrut Heyet-i Ticariye-i Osmaniyesi, "Avusturya Malları," *Tanin*, 22 October 1908, p. 7; "Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı-Derne'den Telgraf," *Tanin*, 28 October 1908, p. 8; "İşkodra Tacirlerinin Hamiyeti," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 6 December 1908, p. 2; "Anadolu," *Anadolu*, 14 October 1908, p. 1.

tion Trade Commission) in Trabzon announced on 12 October that they would not buy from boycotted countries and transport with their shipping companies. Like the merchants of Konya and Trabzon, the notables and tradesmen of Bodrum convened a similar meeting. The meeting ended with the same conclusion: the boycott of the two countries.¹¹⁷

The merchants who organized themselves within the framework of the Boycott Movement continued their meetings, and this might have evolved into meetings of the Boycott Union. However, the devotion of the merchants to the boycott was quite different from the devotion of the port workers. In one of their meetings in the Merchants' Club, the Salonica merchants debated how they could contribute to the expansion of the boycott. They sought much more developed ways to restrain corruption and the tricks of businessmen. Yet, they criticized the blockade of an Italian company by the port workers. As mentioned above, the port workers boycotted an Italian company because of the Austrian goods hidden among their cargo. In the meeting, the merchants stated that this was the outcome of their inciting patriotism and decided to warn the port workers.¹¹⁸ Two different social classes within the Boycott Movement had different perceptions of boycotting. Merchants who imported goods from countries other than Austria and Bulgaria promoted the movement. For instance, Petro Papasoglu announced in the newspaper *İttihad* that he had started to import fezzes from Belgium only to compete with the Austrians. He wanted the Ottomans not to confuse them with the Austrian ones and underlined the fact that he did not confront any difficulty in the customs. This last fact proves that his products were legitimate and deserved to be consumed.¹¹⁹

Prices started to increase in the market after the promulgation of the boycott, particularly of basic consumer goods such as sugar. It was claimed that the rise was the outcome of the boycott which had caused scarcity in the market as well as the consequence of the merchants' greed who had stocked goods in order to sell them more expensively. The second claim was another way of profiting from the boycott. The most significant import item from Austria was sugar. Its prices increased by at

117 "Trabzon Vilayeti Muhabbet-i Milliye Ticaret Komisyonunun Şayan-ı Takdir Bir Kararı," *İttihad*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; Bodrum Ahali-i Osmaniyesi Namina Hayim Galante, Mihail Trandafios, Edhem, "İzmir İttihad Gazetesi Idarehanesine," *İttihad*, 20 October 1908, p. 4.

118 "Boykotaj," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 29 November 1908, pp. 2-3.

119 Corci Petro Papasoglu, "Varaka," *İttihad*, 19 October 1908, p. 4.

least 15 percent after the emergence of the boycott. The Ottoman press accused the merchants of not being patriotic when a national movement was taking place and expressed that they were expecting nationalist traders to decrease their prices in order to support the poor, particularly for the approaching *Ramadan* feast. According to the Ottoman press, those merchants were identical with the Austrians and deserved to be boycotted. It was claimed that there were only fifteen merchants who imported sugar from Austria. Ten of them were non-Muslims, and only one Muslim out of fifteen tried to seek an alternative to Austrian goods. The press called on the merchants to unite and not to increase prices, but to boycott the Austrians.¹²⁰

Therefore, the Ottoman press had reservations when it came to the Ottoman merchants. *Aks-ı Sada*, a newspaper in Samsun, compared them to the port workers and argued that the merchants did not entirely adhere to the Boycott Movement. According to the newspaper, the merchants were storing goods, thereby increasing the prices on the market. Moreover, they did not try to import goods from other places in order to decrease prices. *Aks-ı Sada* argued that people were infuriated about this situation, and there were rumors of attacks on shops that were said to be full of Austrian goods. This statement was like a threat to the merchants of the town.¹²¹ The influence of the press on society increased in the course of the Boycott Movement. For instance, *Aks-ı Sada* continued to complain regarding the merchants who were nothing but speculators. The newspaper claimed in one of its issues that there were merchants in Samsun who had imported goods from Austria and hid them in their shops, and that the newspaper knew their names and addresses. Such news coverage made several of the merchants anxious and forced them to make a public statement about their merchandise. A native merchant, Kefelizade Asım, wrote to *Aks-ı Sada* and confessed that he had imported and had been able to unload Austrian merchandise. He claimed that he had paid its price before the boycott and had done everything he could to return the goods to the producer. He promised the Ottomans that he would donate the money that he would earn through these goods to Ottoman educational institutions. Although he asserted that he did not vio-

120 “(İstanbul) Gazetesinden Boykotajdan,” *Sabah*, 23 October 1908, p. 3; “Yerli Elbiseciler,” *Sabah*, 25 October 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Malı Almamağa...” *İttihad*, 22 October 1908, p. 4; “Boykotaj Münasebetsizlikleri,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 10 November 1908, p. 3.

121 “Nemse ve Bulgarya Malları Bir Tehlike,” *Aks-ı Sada*, 24 November 1908, p. 4.

late the boycott rules, he felt himself obliged to spend money for the public good.¹²² For him, it was the only way to preserve his legitimacy.

Similar to Kefelizade Asım, Hacı Mustafa and Hüsnü Efendi visited the office of the newspaper *İttihad* and confessed that they had imported sugar from Austria. They too argued they had ordered the sugar before the boycott. They were fortunate to be able to convince the journalists. Kemal Caferi Bey, whose name was publicized as that of a traitor, also confessed that he had 278 sacks of sugar in his shop. He also asserted that these had been imported before the announcement of the boycott. These confessions reveal that the Boycott Movement and the threats of inspection had their impact on the merchant class. Kemal Caferi Bey promised not to import Austrian goods again. Thereupon, his sugar was seized by the boycotters and he was saved by enrolling in the Boycott Union. He donated eight sacks to the hospital in order to repair his ruined public image.¹²³

These merchants were not alone or exceptional. There were many Ottoman merchants who found themselves between a rock and a hard place. The owner of the Kramer beerhouse was mentioned as traitor. After he had been denounced as an unpatriotic Ottoman, Kramer announced that he was ready to fulfill all the obligations that the Boycott Society would dictate. He would even break off old relationships. Kramer signed a commitment letter for the Boycott Society, and *İttihad* advised him to post the advertisements of the Boycott Society on his window in order to protect him from boycotting activities. As a result, a tradesman who had a long-standing relationship with Austrian firms was obliged to cut all ties. Another company, Arara ve Mahdumları, also rescued itself by joining the Boycott Society. Meanwhile, there appeared rumors that might have emerged as a result of competition. It was claimed that the Papa Dimitriyu brothers were importing Austrian goods. However, the Dimitriyu brothers had a good relationship to the boycotters. Thus, it was immediately announced to the Ottoman public that the Dimitriyu brothers were reliable and trustworthy. Hayim Franko utilized his affiliation with the Boycott Movement as an opportunity for advertisement,

122 Şayak Tüccarlarından Kefelizade Asım, "Aynen Varaka," *Aks-ı Sada*, 26 December 1908, p. 3.

123 "Hala Avusturya Şekeri Gelecek mi?" *İttihad*, 4 November 1908, pp. 1-2; "Şeker Meselesi," *İttihad*, 5 November 1908, p. 3; Imza Mahfuzdur, "İttihat ve Terakki Gazetesi Idarehanesine," *İttihad*, 5 December 1908, p. 3.

proclaiming that he had only British and Italian goods in his store. The certificate of the Boycott Society on the door of his shop was also proving his patriotism. Therefore, consumers had every reason to buy from him. A group of merchants from Aydın also wanted the merchants of Smyrna to prove their loyalty to the boycott if they wanted to continue their business in their town.¹²⁴ Israil Salomon was accused of importing Austrian goods. He refuted the allegations and claimed that his merchandise had been approved by the Administration of Customs. They were of German and not of Austrian origin. He underlined that he was a “truly Ottoman” (*cidden ve hakikatten Osmanlı*) merchant. His goods had been inspected by the merchants’ commission. The accusations were a result of illiteracy, but his honor was under suspicion. He promised to burn all of his merchandise before the Administration of Customs, if someone could prove that they were of Austrian origin. Moreover, he assured that he would donate 1,000 Lira for the public good.¹²⁵

Several other merchants informed the Ottoman public about cheating traders. These denouncements were made in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the boycott and might have been to advertise their names and trademarks. For instance, the owners of the Luovre Store announced that the glassware generally thought to be Italian actually came from Austria. Their act was appreciated by the Ottoman press. Likewise, the İpekçi Brothers proclaimed that Austrian manufacturers were proposing to send merchandise via the Austrian postal service, as if they were samples. The İpekçi Brothers warned Ottomans to be distrustful of these kinds of tricks. Their behavior presented an ideal role model.¹²⁶ However, lack of confidence between the merchants and the boycotters resulted in a number of inspection initiatives. One of these initiatives was launched by the *Bosna Hersek Cemiyet-i Hayriye-i Osmaniyesi* (Society of Bosnians), another in the Anatolian provinces, including Bursa. They awarded a prize to those who informed them of the addresses, trademarks, and methods of merchants who brought Austrian goods into the Ottoman Empire.

124 İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyeti, “Şahadetname,” *İttihad*, 9 December 1908, pp. 3-4; “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyeti’nden,” *İttihad*, 15 December 1908, p. 3; Hayim Franko, “İttihad Ceridesi İdarehanesine,” *İttihad*, 16 December 1908, pp. 3-4; “Aydın’dan Yirmi İki Muteber...” *İttihad*, 27 December 1908, p. 2.

125 Osmanlı Tüccarından Israil ve Salomon, “Avusturya Hukuk-ı Meşruhe-i Milliyemize...” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 1 December 1908, p. 4.

126 “Şayan-ı Takdir Bir Eser-i Hamiyet,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 23 November 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj ve Fraye Press,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 27 November 1908, p. 2.

The society also was to meet the expenses for denouncing their names to the Ottoman public.¹²⁷ The controlling mechanisms expanded as the boycott progressed, and merchants accused each other of raising prices or importing boycotted goods. Moreover, as mentioned above, the merchants of different towns blamed each other. Similar to the merchants of Aydın, a group of merchants in Kavala sent a telegram to the Ottoman press, claiming that the tradesmen of Smyrna were indifferent to the Boycott Movement. This is why Smyrna became one of the centers on which boycotters started to concentrate.¹²⁸

Merchants from different provinces announced during the Boycott Movement that they would no longer work with the Austrians even two or three months after its beginning. This might have been a contradiction since it meant that they did have continued relationships before their announcements. Yet, these public notifications were made to indicate that the boycott was still ongoing. Merchants usually convened a meeting and decided to issue a declaration signed by each participant. These kinds of news and declarations created the impression that the boycott was expanding throughout the empire.¹²⁹

The Boycott Movement tried very hard to organize the merchants within the boycott. The boycott's ultimate goal was the flourishing of the national economy, which was defined as "genuine boycott." However, there occurred numerous clashes between boycotters and merchants. In many towns, the port workers refused to work for those merchants who were claimed to bring Austrian goods and whose shops had been attacked by activists. For instance, in January 1909 many incidents occurred between boycotters and merchants. In these incidents, merchants were attacked by groups of people, and their merchandise was returned to customs. Merchants who resided in those towns where the port workers were not very powerful were luckier. Towns such as Babaeski and

127 Bosna Hersek Cemiyet-i Hayriye-i Osmaniyesi, "Bursa'daki Bosnalılardan Alınan Telgrafnamenin Suretidir," *İkdam*, 12 November 1908, p. 2.

128 "Avusturya Eşyası," *Serbesti*, 17 November 1908, p. 2; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 19 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 20 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Tanin*, 16 December 1908, p. 3.

129 "Karahisar'da Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 13 November 1908, p. 4; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 13 November 1908, p. 4; "Boykotaj," *Tanin*, 22 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *İkdam*, 22 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Serbesti*, 23 November 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 22 November 1908, p. 6; "Harb-i İktisadinin Bir..." *İkdam*, 13 December 1908, pp. 4-5; "Avusturya'da Bir Milyon Lira Zarar!" *Sabah*, 14 November 1908, p. 3; "Avusturya Aleyhinde Boykotlama," *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 5 January 1909, p. 5.

Tekfurdağı were such places. The merchandise that came via train was transported to the towns of the interior by cars.¹³⁰

Thus, the merchants, who were considered the most crucial element of the national economy, did not dedicate themselves to the Boycott Movement as a social class in its entirety. This was so because social classes do not act *en bloc* and have several distinct categories within themselves, based on societal, cultural, ethnic, religious and regional differences. Therefore, those merchants who had well-established relationships with Austrian business circles were reluctant to act in accordance with the Boycott Movement. Merchants who felt safe or free of risk did not hesitate to trade with the Austrians. However, merchants who were engaged in the national movement and sought their fortune through it remained loyal and worked hard for the expansion of the Boycott Movement. Very soon, different merchant communities would begin to act more collectively after a fierce clash between different religious communities had occurred.

2.5. The Popularization of the National Economy

One of the crucial aspects of the era after the 1908 Revolution was the rise of the idea of the National Economy and the prelude to concrete national economy policies. Thus, the emergence of the emphasis “national economy” in an economic warfare in the beginning of this period is meaningful. As it is widely accepted by the historiography on this era, the thoughts and political currents of National Economy were legitimized and became influential in this period. It is apparent that an economic activity such as a boycott should have a significant impact on these thoughts and policies and, *vice versa*, would have been influenced by them.

Therefore, it is not a coincidence to detect the nucleus of the national economy thesis and policies in a social movement that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. As a popular movement, the boycott influenced all sections of Ottoman society, and different symbolic, ideological and political demands related to the national economy ap-

130 Rüsümât Memurlarından Hakkı, “Hamîyet Namı Tahtında İhtikar-ı Denaetkarane,” *Musavver Geveze*, 16 October 1908, p. 2; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 3 December 1908, p. 2; “Selânik Tüccarından ve...” *İkdam*, 11 December 1908, p. 3; “Beyrut’da Boykotaj,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 8 January 1909, p. 5; “Sen Petersburg 24 Kanunisani 1909,” *Sabah*, 27 January 1909, p. 4; “Boykotaj,” *İkdam*, 21 February 1909, p. 3.

peared in the public sphere. One of the controversial issues of the 1908 Boycott occupying the minds of the boycotters was the durability of the Boycott Movement. The boycotters reckoned that their movement had to end someday and, therefore, it was inevitable to improve the native industry, in order to rescue the empire from economic dependence. They addressed not only Ottoman consumers to buy native and “national” commodities, but also “national” merchants to invest in the industry. Although protectionism and building a national industry through high tariffs was not discussed, the Boycott Movement paved the way for the argument that the Ottomans should produce their own commodities in order to replace foreign ones. To keep Ottoman money within the empire appeared to be an alternative policy. Therefore, the Ottoman press suggested building factories and finally a national economy.

One may classify the thoughts regarding the national economy that appeared during the Boycott Movement in two different categories. First, there was the tendency to stop buying or even using Austrian goods. It was argued that they should be substituted by native equivalents, whatever the ultimate consequences. According to this attitude, Ottomans had to prefer their own goods, even if their quality was poor and their price high. They recommended and encouraged Ottomans to buy Ottoman goods, claiming that people would get used to wearing the native *külahs* instead of Austrian fezzes, even if this type of headgear might seem strange at first. If sugar was scarce in the empire, then Ottomans should replace it with honey or molasses. Thankfully, the production within the empire sufficed for Ottoman consumption according to this particular point of view. On behalf of their *hamiyyet* (patriotism, public spirit), Ottomans should tolerate untidy clothes and inferior goods. Otherwise, the Austrians might easily mislead and deceive the Ottomans by resorting to political and economic tricks.¹³¹ Yet, this tendency was not widespread and can only be detected in the emotional articles written to mobilize the populace. To buy foreign goods was to finance the bullets of the enemies used against the Ottomans. It was a Greek journal of Smyrna, *Amaltheia*, which strongly supported this position. It argued that even

131 Sp. Th. Foros, “Boykotaz,” *Amaltheia*, 23 December 1908, p. 1; “Boykotaj ve Serpuş-i Milli,” *Serbesti*, 1 December 1908, p. 1; “Boykotaj Hakkında,” *İkdam*, 23 October 1908, p. 3; Mehmed Cavid, “Fes Fabrikaları,” *İkdam*, 26 October 1908, p. 2; Seniha Nezahet, “Avusturya ve Bulgar Mallarını Almayalım,” *Millet*, 11 October 1908, p. 3; “Anadolu,” *Anadolu*, 14 October 1908, p. 1; “Avusturya, Bulgar, Alman Mahı Kullanmayalım!” *Millet*, 9 October 1908, p. 3.

buying from friendly countries (such as England and France) was not sufficient for the boycott. The ultimate goal should be the development of the domestic industry.¹³²

The second was a much more moderate stance. The advocates of this tendency also wanted the Ottomans to produce their own goods, but with a reservation: they objected to the use of rudimentary and inconvenient commodities considered inappropriate for Ottomans. Therefore, the Ottomans should find native substitutes for the boycotted merchandise or produce these goods domestically. However, the manufacture of these native equivalents, or the invention of national commodities was not possible in the short term. Therefore, French and English sugar could be bought, even if much more expensive. Russia was also referred to as an important alternative country from where merchants could import sugar. Merchants began to import goods such as cotton, sugar, and matches from Russia, and this development pleased the boycotters.¹³³ This classification is presented here to facilitate an understanding of the different attitudes that emerged over the course of the Boycott Movement. There never appeared a conscious debate with two sides and advocates in the public sphere; these were only two different attitudes and suggestions related with the national economy at the time.

The demand for the development of a domestic economy and Ottoman industry can be defined as a transition period. These goals had always existed in Ottoman economic thought, even before the 1908 Revolution. Furthermore, there had been preliminary attempts to create an industry in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, although they did not culminate in an industrialization process.¹³⁴ The motto of classical liberalism, *laissez faire laissez passer*, maintained its hegemony in the economic thought of the Ottomans. Yet, after the 1908 Revolution, during the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress, *étatism* and protectionism started to gain favor among the elite and the population. The 1908 Boycott

132 "Patriotikâi Ekdiloseis," *Amaltheia*, 13 October 1908, p. 3.

133 "Ticaret Aforozu," *İkdam*, 15 October 1908, p. 3; "Avusturya Malı Almayınız," *Tanin*, 18 October 1908, p. 5; Mühendis Nevres, Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 24 October 1908, p. 3; "Avusturya Şekerleri," *Sabah*, 5 November 1908, p. 4; "Bazı Vatandaşlarımızın..." *İttihat ve Terakki*, 15 October 1908, p. 4; "İki Kişi Arasında," *Musavver Geveze*, 10 October 1908, p. 6; "Rus Emtiası," *İttihat ve Terakki*, 10 November 1908, p. 3; "Haftalık Notlar, Siyasi," *Bağçe*, 30 November 1908, p. 2; "Yine Avusturya ve Bulgar Malları," *İttihad*, 19 October 1908, p. 3.

134 Zafer Toprak, "Tanzimat'ta Osmanlı Sanayii," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. V, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985), pp. 1345-1347.

Movement emerges as a significant link in between these two eras, and as a crucial transition period.

However, it was frequently underlined that commerce was free and that all should respect it as such. Moreover, the state should not intervene in the Boycott Movement and the economy. A demand for protectionism through high tariffs was exceptional. On the other hand, the Ottomans began to think about the development of the Ottoman economy, as it was widely accepted at the time of the Boycott Movement that it was hard to compete with the European economic powers via economic means. At this point, various non-economic methods entered the scene. Emphasis was put on the mobilization and education of the Ottoman public. The Boycott Movement provided an opportunity for this cause. Thanks to the 1908 Ottoman Boycott, debates about the national economy, which previously had been confined to textbooks, became widespread in the public sphere.

Therefore, in order to deal a blow to Austrian commerce, the Ottomans began to think about producing the previously imported goods within the empire.¹³⁵ Rather than damaging Austrian commerce in the short run, manufacturing commodities in domestic industries was praised as “genuine boycott” by the boycotters and the Ottoman press. Moreover, the need for governmental encouragement, support and help for the Ottoman economy became a popular issue in the debates on the national economy. A Greek journal of Smyrna, *Amaltheia* wanted the government to be active in creating and consolidating national industries. It called on the citizens to encourage and even force the government.¹³⁶ The economic patriotism that the boycott brought on the agenda and that popularized domestic products was considered an opportunity. Faruki Ömer claimed that such an opportunity did not happen every day, and it was up to the Ottomans to take advantage of it.¹³⁷ Historiography on Turkey takes World War I into account as a significant occasion for the national

135 For instance see: Ahmed Rasim, “Fes-Aforoz,” *Sabah*, 17 October 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Emtiası,” *İhdam*, 11 October 1908, p. 3; “Enzar-ı Dikkate,” *Anadolu*, 11 November 1908, p. 3; “Avusturya Mallarını Almayınız,” *Tanin*, 18 October 1908, p. 5; “Boykotaj ve Serpuş-ı Milli,” *Serbesti*, 1 December 1908, p. 1; “Avusturya Şekerleri,” *Sabah*, 5 November 1908, p. 4; “Avusturya Mallarını Almayınız,” *Tanin*, 20 October 1908, p. 7; “Boykotaj Hakkında,” *İhdam*, 23 October 1908, p. 3; “Boykotaj,” *İhdam*, 1 November 1908, p. 3.

136 Alkis J. Panayotopoulos, “On the Economic Activities on the Anatolian Greeks mid 19th Century to Early 20th” *Deltio Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon*, No. 4, Athens, 1983, p. 117.

137 Faruki Ömer, “Fırsattan İstifade,” *Volkan*, 27 December 1908, p. 2.

economy to come into existence. Yet, the boycott movements starting in 1908 were also a crucial political and cultural incentive for the merchants and tradesmen to contribute to the national economy.¹³⁸

The boycotters and the Ottoman elite attributed little significance to direct state investment. For them, it was not the lack of capital that caused the under-development of the domestic industry, but rather the inconvenient political and social circumstances, the lack of entrepreneurial spirit and scientific know-how and skill in society. Thus, during the boycotts of the Second Constitutional Period the Ottoman press addressed the wealthy and wanted them to invest.¹³⁹ The newspaper *Anadolu*, published in Konya, in its articles on the boycott expounded on the need to build factories. The articles on the economic condition of the province, written by a reporter of the journal who had toured throughout Anatolia, emphasized the need for mechanization and industrialization. For him, the production of the world-famous Uşak carpets was heavily impaired because of counterfeit and speculation. Development of trade and industry was considered sufficient to remedy the situation. *Anadolu* was also concerned with the finance aspect of industry, claiming that an economy without finance was nothing but “shooting without powder,” or “navigation without stream or wind.” For *Anadolu*, the financiers should be “honorable,” “high-esteemed” and “virtuous” persons. Muslim identity was not counted among the characteristics of a financier, since the atmosphere of fraternity among religious communities was still strong. The emphasis on Muslim identity would become crucial only after 1910. The Ottoman Bank was illustrated as a negative example, while the newly-established Konya Banks were cited as productive initiatives for the national economy.¹⁴⁰

Although exceptional, the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Austria was evaluated in terms of dependency and exploitation. The journal *Musavver Geveze* argued that 50 percent of the goods that were imported from Austria were in fact Ottoman products. It claimed that Europeans bought goods such as wool and cotton which the Ottomans de-

138 Two scholars have also mentioned the boycott as an incentive for Ottoman entrepreneurs to invest in their own country. Ali Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*, (İstanbul: Dergah, 1990), p. 20; Hasan Kayalı, *Jön Türkler ve Araplar*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998), p. 72.

139 “Avusturya Ticaretine Karşı-Anadolu,” *Anadolu*, 14 October 1908, p. 1.

140 “Harb-i İktisadi, Avusturya Macaristan Emtiası,” *Anadolu*, 18 October 1908, p. 1; “Seyyar Muhabirimizden,” *Anadolu*, 16 November 1908, pp. 2-3; “Konya Bankalarımız,” *Anadolu*, 19 November 1908, pp. 2-3.

spised. Therefore, the Austrians bought them for nothing. Yet, they processed and refined them, only to sell them back to the Ottomans, at inflated prices. Since the Ottomans were unable to produce and meet their needs, they were obliged to buy from foreigners.¹⁴¹ This line of argument would have an important place in Turkish political thought and intellectual history.

There appeared articles in the Ottoman press which addressed the youth and advised them to work for the construction of factories, even if they did not have sufficient capital. Famous foreign companies and success stories that had started with a small amount of capital were given as examples. The under-development of the domestic industry was also the result of the populace's unfounded dependence on foreign goods. The newspapers argued that, if the Ottomans preferred native goods, then both existing and newly-established factories would develop rapidly. The argument that the Austrian Lloyd Maritime Company prospered thanks to the Ottoman ports, passengers and money was overstated. Preferring Ottoman merchants, establishing Ottoman businesses, encouraging Muslim entrepreneurs, tolerating temporary shortages, and keeping money within the empire became current issues during the boycott. As a result of the Boycott Movement, an Austrian shop in Tünel/Istanbul was closed according to the Ottoman press. The newspapers called on the Ottomans to continue their boycott and open an Ottoman shop in place of the Austrian one. This was pointed out as a possible future course and natural outcome of people's patriotism.¹⁴² A group of fifty young Ottomans convened a meeting and formed an organization called *İktisadiyun Fırkası* (Economy Party) in Smyrna. They held a meeting in Karantina and shot a group photograph of themselves wearing white fezzes. The photograph was also printed as a postcard for propagating the boycott in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴³

141 "Muhavere-i İktisadiye," *Musavver Geveze*, 12 October 1908, pp. 7-8; see also: M. Ragıp, "Avusturya ve Bulgaristan Emtiası," *Millet*, 20 October 1908, p. 4.

142 Selanikli Tefrik, "Memalik-i Osmaniyenin İstikbal-i İktisadiyesi," *Sabah*, 23 December 1908, p. 1; "Avusturya Emtiası," *İkdam*, 11 October 1908, p. 3; İbrahim Fatih, "Harb-i İktisadiye- Muvaffakiyetler," *Serbesti*, 7 December 1908, p. 3; Mühendis Nevres, "Boykotaj," *Sabah*, 24 October 1908, p. 3; "Avusturya Emtiasını Almayalım," *Millet*, 10 October 1908, p. 4; "Ticaret Afarozu," *İkdam*, 17 October 1908, p. 3; "Hakiki Boykot," *İkdam*, 6 December 1908, p. 2; "Hakiki Boykot," *İkdam*, 9 December 1908, p. 3; "Boykotaj Yapanlara Müjde," *İkdam*, 1 December 1908, p. 3; "Yine Avusturya ve Bulgar Malları," *İttihad*, 19 October 1908, p. 3; İzmir Osmanlı Kibrit Şirketi Namına Kırkor Köleyan, "İttihad Gazetesi Müdüriyetine," *İttihad*, 26 November 1908, p. 4.

143 "Şehrimizde Avusturya Emtiası Almamak..." *İttihad*, 24 October 1908, p. 4.

A couple of days after the announcement of the boycott, people gathering around foreign shops and town centers as well as the appearance of various types of headgear made the boycott more visible and concrete in the public sphere. The first concrete evidence recommending the use of native products was an open letter published in *Sabah* and sent by the *Menfaat-i Millet Cemiyeti* (Committee for the Benefit of the Nation). In this letter, Ottoman goods were defined as “holy,” even if they were primitive. On the same day, *Anadolu* called on the people of Konya to buy Ottoman goods, if they were patriotic enough to do so.¹⁴⁴ In many articles and news items, Ottoman merchandise were described as “sacred,” and “pure,” whereas Austrian goods were mentioned as “rotten,” “inferior,” and “corrupt.”¹⁴⁵ The Smyrniot Greek journal *Ergatis* defined Austrian stores as “damned places.”¹⁴⁶

The alternative types of headgear that appeared in place of the fez became the symbol of the Boycott Movement and the national economy. The Austrian-made fez was first replaced by a fez made in Feshane or Hereke, the fez factories of the Ottoman Empire. Yet, as mentioned above, there appeared different hats on the streets, such as the *arakıyye*, the *keçe külah*, the white fez, and the *kalpak*. Many state officers announced in the newspapers that they had started to wear a *kalpak* instead of a fez. Postcards were sent to offices of the central administration, advising them to wear the new *serpuş-ı milli* (national headgears) in the parliament’s opening ceremony. The Ottoman government also approved of the *kalpak* as an alternative to the fez and allowed the officers to choose one or the other.¹⁴⁷ Following the government’s permission regarding the choice of headgear, there was a public debate on the headgear of the bureaucrats, and the state imposed new dress regulations on its officers. The *kalpak* became mandatory for policemen.¹⁴⁸ *Amaltheia* claimed that the

144 Menfaat-i Millet Cemiyeti, “Dün (Avusturya Mallarını Almayalım) Sürnamesiyle...” *Sabah*, 11 October 1908, pp. 3-4; “Rica-i Mahsus,” *Anadolu*, 11 October 1908, p. 1.

145 *Boşboğaz* published a poem which used this terminology; “Fes-Kalpak,” *Boşboğaz*, 14 December 1908, pp. 2-3.

146 “Kato i Avstria,” *Ergatis*, 18 October 1908, p. 2.

147 BOA. DH. I-UM. 19-3/1-60.

148 “Fes-Kalpak,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 13 December 1908, pp. 3-4; “Kalpak İktisası,” *Gave*, 17 December 1908, p. 4; “Rüsumat Emaneti Evrak...” *İkdam*, 8 December 1908, p. 3; “Dün Bazı Devair-i...” *Sabah*, 13 December 1908, p. 3; “Kalpak,” *İkdam*, 14 December 1908, p. 3; “Kalpak Giymek Mecburi Değildir,” *İkdam*, 16 December 1908, p. 3; “Kaypak İksası,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 16 December 1908, p. 4; “Kalpak,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 21 December 1908, p. 4; “Polis Kalpakları,” *İkdam*, 12 November 1908, p. 3; “Polis Kalpakları,” *İkdam*, 13

Greeks had already exchanged the fez for the new hats. Even the Greeks in the provinces had started to wear the *kalpak* according to *Amaltheia*.¹⁴⁹

These debates and official change to the dress code clearly demonstrates the effect of the boycott and the motivation it created among the masses. *Tanin* welcomed these new developments with the sentence “New Fezzes for New Turks.”¹⁵⁰ The proposition of using new hats was also a way of competing with foreign economic powers. The Ottoman press claimed that the Austrians knew nothing about the *kalpak* and the *keçe kûlah*. However, the Ottomans were accustomed to these hats which had existed in Anatolia for centuries. And this fact was to facilitate their production. It was also easy for merchants and artisans to give these hats a national character. The Ottomans were at an advantage in terms of the market competition related to these new hats.¹⁵¹ This is why the new headgear was greeted by the journal *Musavver Geveze* with the following sentence: “Against the red fezzes of the *istibdat* (autocracy), the new era of liberty has the white fezzes.”¹⁵²

Edhem Nejat proposed the invention of a “national headgear” in the form of the *kalpak*. The main problem was to compete with the Austrians. Therefore, it was one or the other, and the Ottomans should find for themselves a hat that would facilitate their economic development. Ancient types of headgear, such as the *arakiyye* and the *kûlah*, might easily be adapted to become the national hat. Therefore, it was not a coincidence that the term *icat* (invention) entered the vocabulary of the Ottoman elite in this regard. Similar to Edhem Nejat, Ahmet Rasim in his articles on the history of the fez also referred to the notion of invention during the Boycott Movement. For him, it was easy to invent a headgear

November 1908, p. 4; “Serpuş Meselesi,” *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 5 January 1909, pp. 5-6; “Polis Kalpakları,” *İkdam*, 26 November 1908, p. 2; “Polislerin Kalpakları,” *Sabah*, 20 February 1909, p. 3.

149 “Smirnaiki lho,” *Amaltheia*, 21 December 1908, p. 3.

150 “Yeni Fesler,” *Tanin*, 12 October 1908, p. 7.

151 “Gerçi Memleketimizde Fes...” *Sabah*, 12 October 1908, p. 3; “Kırşehir’den Matbuamıza Keşide Edilen Telgrafnamenin Suretidir,” *İkdam*, 16 October 1908, p. 4; “Gümülcine Ahalisi Avusturya,” *İkdam*, 16 October 1908, p. 4; “Akhisar’dan Aldığımız Mektubda Yazılıyor,” *Tanin*, 16 October 1908, p. 8; “Beyaz Fesler,” *İkdam*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; “Fesler Hakkında İzmir’de Nümayış,” *Sabah*, 11 December 1908, p. 2; “Beirut Muhabirimizden Aldığımız Bir Mektub,” *Sabah*, 2 November 1908, p. 4; “Harb-i İktisadi,” *Millet*, 23 October 1908, p. 3; “Mısır’da Boykotaj ve Beyaz Fesler,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 3 November 1908, pp. 2-3; “Anadolu,” *Anadolu*, 14 October 1908, p. 1.

152 A. Mazhar, “Ramazan Mektubu,” *Musavver Geveze*, 14 October 1908, pp. 5-6.

compatible with Ottoman taste. The newly-emerging hats were the signs of this search. Mühendis (engineer) Nevres underlined the significance of the invention of a national headgear in writing an analysis of the development of the Ottoman national economy.¹⁵³

It should be noted that the fez went hand in hand with the notion of invention in the course of Ottoman history. The fez is a typical example of the “invention of tradition” in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵⁴ It was adopted as official headgear in 1823 by Sultan Mahmud II, and it turned out to become the symbol of “Turkishness” all over the world. It was introduced to the Ottoman Empire as a requirement of modernity, but ironically enough, abolished in the Republican Era, again as a necessity of modernity. The alternative hats that appeared during the Boycott Movement were ancient types of headgear which had almost disappeared from daily life in the Ottoman Empire. The Boycott Movement created “new necessities which were handled by the old models.”¹⁵⁵

However, the fez and the headgears were not the only merchandise with which the boycotters dealt. The Ottoman press and the boycott organization tried to alert the Ottoman public regarding other Austrian goods as well. The Ottomans were informed about different Austrian-made products, such as swords and medical equipment. Detailed information about the Ottoman factories appeared in the Ottoman press. For instance, it was reported from Manisa that half of the population was already wearing the *kalpak* or *keçe külah*, and that a local firm, the *Manisa Mensucat-ı Dahiliye Şirketi*, was producing better fabrics than its European counterparts. Initiatives to establish businesses and factories started to appear frequently in the Ottoman Press. A revived Konya Vermicelli factory proposed to provide rice for the troops stationed in Konya, rather than importing them from Trieste. A group including *ulema* and merchants announced that they were thinking of building a factory in Konya. The existing factories, such as the one at Hereke, also wanted to

153 Edhem Nejat, “Fes ve Kalpak,” *Sabah*, 7 November 1908, pp. 3-4; Ahmed Rasim, “Fes-Aforoz,” *Sabah*, 17 October 1908, p. 3; Ahmed Rasim, “İstişare Mecmua-i muhteremine sine Takdime-i Nacizanemdir: Fes Hakkında,” *İstişare*, Vol. 1, pp. 273-277; Ahmed Rasim, “Fes Hakkında,” *İstişare*, Vol. 1, pp. 316-320; Mühendis Nevres, “Boykotaj,” *Sabah*, 24 October 1908, p. 3.

154 Selim Deringil, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda ‘Gelenğin İcadı,’ ‘Muhayyel Cemaat,’ Pan-İslamizm,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 54-55, (Summer/Fall), (İstanbul, 1991), pp. 47-65.

155 Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” *The Invention of Tradition*, Ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 5.

take advantage of the atmosphere created by the boycott and increased the number of its advertisements in the newspapers.¹⁵⁶ The atmosphere created by the Boycott Movement paved the way for the initiatives regarding investments. To this end, an organization called *Mamulat-ı Dahiliye Teavün Cemiyeti* (Domestic Products Aid Society) was founded in Smyrna. The ultimate goal of the organization was to encourage this atmosphere.¹⁵⁷ The *Osmanlı Kibrit Şirketi* (Ottoman Match Company) was also established in Smyrna, with the aim to relieve the Ottoman Empire from its dependency on foreigners. The necessary machinery and equipment were ordered on 26 November 1908, and it was announced that its construction would finish within one month. The company also declared that it would donate 4 percent of its revenue to the Committee of Union and Progress.¹⁵⁸

The advertisements and the content of the announcements started to change with the 1908 Boycott. The Ottoman companies underlined that they were selling the products of the motherland. They emphasized that they were national businesses and could protect consumers from the tricks of foreigners. Foreign businesses also made public proclamations in order to distinguish themselves from the Austrians. Several of these foreign companies declared their nationality and hung their national flags over their windows. For instance, the Olympus Palace in Salonica published an announcement that covered the entire back cover of the journal *Bağçe* and stated that they were not selling Austrian beer. The advertisements of the Hereke Factory and shops that sold Hereke products appeared on the pages of the Ottoman newspapers and journals.¹⁵⁹ Being

156 “Boykotaj ve Kılınclar,” *Sabah*, 30 November 1908, p 1; Plevne Tarih-i Harbi Müellifi Miralay Mahmud Talat, “Kılınclarımız,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 22 December 1908, p. 4; “Bir İhtar-ı Sıhhat-ı Vatanperverane,” *Millet*, 20 October 1908, p. 4; “Fesler-Arakıyyeler,” *İkdam*, 12 October 1908, p. 3; “Fes Fabrikası,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 11 October 1908, p. 4; “Fes Fabrikası,” *Sabah*, 16 October 1908, p. 4; “Tebrik,” *Anadolu*, 31 January 1909, p. 3; “Konya Makaronya Fabrikası,” *Anadolu*, 16 November 1908, p. 3; “Manisa Mensucat-ı Dahiliye Şirket,” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 24 November 1908, p. 4; “Manisa’da [Boykotaj] Ehemmiyet...” *İttihat ve Terakki*, 24 November 1908, p. 4; “Hereke Fabrikası Müdür-i Mesulüne,” *İttihad*, 24 October 1908, p. 4.

157 “Mamulat-ı Dahiliye Teavün Cemiyeti,” *İttihad*, 2 January 1909, p. 4.

158 İzmir Osmanlı Kibrit Şirketi Namına Kırkor Köleyan, “İttihad Gazetesi Müdüriyetine,” *İttihad*, 26 November 1908, p. 4.

159 “Olimpos Palas Müsteciri,” *Bağçe*, 17 November 1908, back cover; “İlan: Hereke Fabrika-i Hümayunu Fesleri,” *Sabah*, 12 October 1908, p. 4; “İlan- Osmanlı Vatandaşlarına Müjde,” *Tanin*, 19 October 1908, p. 8; “Karlıman Mağazası Hakkında Bir İki Söz,” *Tanin*, 21 October 1908, p. 8; “Mustafa Şamlı ve Mahdumları,” “İlanlar- Mağazamızda İtalyan

Ottoman became fashionable, and this paved the way for the rise of the national economy.

The Boycott Movement and the Ottoman press did not content themselves with demanding the substitution of Austrian goods and the establishment of factories, but also aimed to develop Ottoman businesses and organizations in the service sector. Postal services were the main subject of the debate, since Austria had a significant share in this service. The Boycott Society warned the Ottoman people and merchants not to use the Austrian postal services. It was declared that those who continued to send or receive their parcels via the Austrian postal services would be exposed to the Ottoman public.¹⁶⁰ However, the increase in the demand for Ottoman postal services caused problems since the national service was not sufficient. Yet, the demand continued to increase during the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. People sent complaints regarding the problems they faced in using the Ottoman postal services. As a result, the government appointed additional personnel to Mersin. Similar demands for the development of the Ottoman Post Office came from Samsun.¹⁶¹ These complaints indicate the Boycott Movement's impact on the emergence of a national economy in the Ottoman Empire.

During the Boycott Movement, the Ottoman government tried to limit and then put an end to the boycott actions. The mobilization of the masses on the streets and the actions of the port workers infuriated the political elite. However, they were also using the movement to ensure a compromise with the Austrians. The Austrians were pressing the Ottoman

Fabrikasının..." *Tanin*, 22 October 1908, p. 8; "Bayram Hediyesi İçin Halis Yeri," *Tanin*, 24 October 1908, p. 8; "Vatan Malları," *Tanin*, 12 December 1908, p. 4; "İlan-ı Mühim: Hereke Fabrikası Fesleri," *Serbesti*, 16 March 1909, p. 4; "İlan," *Millet*, 25 October 1908, p. 4; "Harb-i İktisadi," *Millet*, 22 October 1908, p. 4; "Hamiyetli Vatandaşlarımızdan Ricamız," *Musavver Geveze*, 11 October 1908, p. 2; "Avusturya Mağazaları," *Musavver Geveze*, 11 October 1908, p. 6; "İlan: Hereke Fabrika-i Hümayunu Fesleri," *Sabah*, 12 October 1908, p. 4; "Patriotikai Ekdiloseis," *Amaltheia*, 13 October 1908, p. 3.

160 "Emborikos Apokleismos," *Amaltheia*, 17 December 1908, p. 3.

161 "Halkın Avusturya Postahanelerine..." *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 25 November 1908, p. 7; "Avusturya Postahanesi," *İkdam*, 29 November 1908, p. 2; "Ecnebi Postahaneleri," *İttihad ve Terakki*, 3 December 1908, p. 1; Mercan Mahallesi Sakinlerinden Telgraf Nezaretine Mensub: Hamdi, "Ceride-i Feridelerinin İlk..." *Sabah*, 11 October 1908, pp. 3-4; Mülga Meclis-i Maliye Azasından Bedri, "Avusturya Postaları ve Vazife-i Hamiyet," *Millet*, 14 October 1908, p. 4; "Avusturya Postaları," *Tanin*, 15 October 1908, p. 7; "Ecnebi Postahaneler," *İttihad ve Terakki*, 14 December 1908, p. 2; Ahmed Reşid, "Memleketimizde Ecnebi Postahaneleri," *İstisare*, 14 January 1909, pp. 721-728; İbnü-z-Ziya, "Memleketimizde Ecnebi Postahaneleri," *İstisare*, 20 January 1909, pp. 769-774; "Posta Nezaretine, Samsun Postahanesi Memurini Gayri Kafidir," *Aks-ı Sada*, 6 February 1909, p. 4.

government to stop the boycott in order to come to terms diplomatically. The boycotters, on the other hand, demanded a final concession between the two states, which would be ratified by the Ottoman parliament. Yet, on the day of the signing the agreement between Austria and the Ottoman Empire, Rıza Tevfik, one of the prominent political figures then, announced the end of the boycott in the ports on 26 February 1909. The following day, the press announced this declaration to the public. The Boycott Union also stated that the boycott had ended without the ratification of the parliament. The protocol was approved on 5 April 1909. The port workers tried to prolong the Boycott Movement, but their strike-like actions also halted in March 1909. The boycott finally ended, only to re-emerge again in autumn of 1909, for a short while, against Greece. The Cretan Question triggered a reaction among the Muslim population, and the 1908 experience had taught them about an effective means for their cause. Yet, a strong Boycott Movement against the Greeks and especially against non-Muslims emerged only after 1910. Then, the Ottomanist Boycott Movement transformed itself into an effective tool used for the elimination of Christians from the Ottoman Empire. The events and processes after 1910 are the subject of the following chapters.

