

THE TRACE OF TURKISH-HUNGARIAN FRIENDSHIP: THE OPENING OF 'MACAR KARDEŞLER CADDESİ'

TÜRK-MACAR DOSTLUĞUNUN NİŞANESİ: MACAR KARDEŞLER CADDESİNİN ACILMASI

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Abstract

The inauguration of 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi (Hungarian Brothers Boulevard)' in Fatih district, Istanbul, in 1917 was an important initiative for the improvement of the neighbourhoods that suffered from fires there and a symbol of Turkish-Hungarian friendship. In light of the fact that the Hungarians, an ally in World War I, had inaugurated an avenue in Budapest named for the Ottoman Sultan of that time, the Istanbul Municipality went into action and took the decision to bestow this name on an avenue stretching from Saraçhane Park to Millet Library. This area encompassed a small portion of the quarter of the city that was largely destroyed by the Çırcır Harik (Çırcır Fire) on 23 August 1908. Although the Istanbul Municipality announced the inauguration of Macar Kardeşler Caddesi with a decision dated 28 March 1916, construction of the avenue took time and finally became a reality thanks to the Ottoman State's Consul General in Budapest, who continually kept the matter of the Municipality's decision on the agenda. Macar Kardeşler Caddesi was opened in a ceremony attended by Turkish and Hungarian officials but the Istanbul public showed little interest in the ceremony. Even though the matter was somewhat important to the local public because of the expropriation actions taking place during the rehabilitation of the burned-out areas, people were living under extraordinary wartime conditions so the issues of city improvement and Turkish-Hungarian friendship were not considered particularly urgent.

Keywords

Turkish-Hungarian Friendship
Society, Istanbul-Fatih, Çırcır Fire,
Ottoman-Hungarian Relations, First
World War

Anahtar Kelimeler

Türk-Macar Dostluk Cemiyeti,
İstanbul-Fatih, Çırcır Yangını,
Osmanlı-Macar İlişkileri, Birinci
Dünya Savaşı

Öz

İstanbul'un Fatih ilçesinde 1917 yılında açılan Macar Kardeşler Caddesi İstanbul'un yangın mahallerinin imarı için önemli bir girişim, Türk-Macar dostluğu adına da bir simge durumundadır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda müttefik olan Macarların dönemin Osmanlı padişahının ismini Budapeşte'de bir caddeye vermeleriyle harekete geçen İstanbul Belediyesi Saraçhane Parkı'ndan başlayıp Millet Kütüphanesine kadar ulaşan alanın bu isimle alınacak bir caddeye ad olmasına karar verdi. Bu alan oldukça geniş bir bölgeyi tahrip eden ve 23 Ağustos 1908'de meydana gelen Çırcır Harik mahallinin küçük bir kısmını oluşturuyordu. İstanbul Belediyesi 28 Mart 1916 tarihli kararıyla Macar Kardeşler Caddesi'nin açılacağını ilan ettiyse de caddenin imarı zaman aldı ve sonuca ulaşmada Osmanlı Devleti'nin Budapeşte Başşehbenderinin belediye başkanının aldığı kararı sürekli gündemde tutması etkili oldu. Macar Kardeşler Caddesi Türk ve Macar resmi erkânının bulunduğu bir törenle açıldı; ama İstanbullular bu merasimle çok da ilgilenmedi. Gerçi yangın yerlerinin imarı sırasında istimlak işleri nedeniyle az da olsa konunun içine çekildilerse de savaşın olağanüstü şartlarını yaşıyorlardı ve onlar için şehrin imarı ve Türk-Macar dostluğu çok da önemli değildi.

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INTRODUCTION

The process from the determination of the location of a street, which would be called 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi (Hungarian Brothers Boulevard)', in Fatih District of Istanbul to its opening ceremony in August 1917 is the subject of this article and the developments will be explained primarily by focusing on the Ottoman sources. During the First World War, when the inauguration took place, the Ottomans and the Hungarians were friends and allies, and since the end of the nineteenth century, they had been two nations that were defined as 'brothers' as the Hungarians emphatically emphasized (Duran, 2020, p. 284). The Hungarians, who gave the name of Sultan Mehmet Reşat, the Ottoman Sultan of the period, to a street in Budapest, took the first step to implement a similar practice in Istanbul with this behaviour. The Hungarians, who gave the name of Sultan Reshad (Mehmet V), then-reigning Ottoman Sultan, to a street in Budapest, took the first step in order to be implemented a similar practice in Istanbul with this behaviour. Together with the opening of 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi', a trend has emerged to give the streets of Istanbul especially names that will remind of friendly countries.¹

The opening of 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi', which is located on the line that continues until Fevzi Paşa Street and Saraçhane-Vezneciler road junction, is described only in one sentence in almost all works exploring Ottoman-Hungarian relations.² In addition, in these works emphasis is given to the Hungarians' interest in Turanism, Turcology studies and Hungary-Turkey relations during the First World War, as well as the Ottoman rule in Hungary which can be summarized as follows: Ottoman rule in Hungary began after the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and lasted for 150 years (Önen, 2005, p. 45). With the signing of the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, almost all of Hungary was freed from Ottoman sovereignty. Subsequently, Hungary became Austrian territory; but in 1848 there was a revolt in Hungary that constituted an important breaking point in Ottoman relations with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The revolt was harshly put down in a bloody manner and several rebel leaders like Lajos Kossuth sought refuge with the Ottoman State. This event went down in history as the 'Hungarian Refugee Problem' and the Ottomans' helpful attitude toward the Hungarians left quite a positive mark in the memories of Hungarians (Çolak, 2000, p. 62).

The belief in those days that was characterized as 'racial ties', brought the two sides much closer together. Sultan Abdülaziz's visit to Budapest while returning from a European trip and the warm welcome he received from the city's residents then is but one example of developments that strengthened the two countries' relations.³

¹ Examples of this are Kennedy Boulevard and Klodfarer (Claude Farrère) Boulevard.

² There are many works that focus on Ottoman-Hungary relations. In this regard, Melek Çolak has written many separate articles about political, social and economic relations in the time period from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. In addition, a few other works that can be mentioned: Önen, 2005; Namal, 2012; Namal (ed.), 2009. There are also masters' and doctoral theses that take up Turkey-Hungarian relations.

³ 'Sultan Abdülaziz was met by hundreds of Hungarian families and children shouting 'Long Live the Turk' in Budapest during the Sultan's visit there as he was returning from his European trip', (Türker, 2013, p. 14). For their part, the Ottoman side also strove to show sincerity toward the Hungarians.

Additionally, relations were bolstered by Hungarians' interest in the Ottoman State, their studies in the field of Turcology and their defence of the concept of Turanism, which will be touched on briefly below. This interest of the Hungarians was seen as even more binding when the two nations allied in World War One, but it would quickly dissipate once the war was over.

Turk-Hungarian Kinship and the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society

When the 1848 Hungarian rebellion was suppressed by Austria with the help of Russia, the Hungarians adopted a negative attitude toward both the Germans and the Slavs. The Hungarians saw themselves as a 'island' between these two groups and looked eastward in hopes of assuaging their isolation (Önen, 2005, p. 66.). During this same period, in 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Empire became a dual monarchy, but the Hungarians did not have parity with the Austrians (Gülboy, 2012.). The Slavs and Romanians within the nation's borders reacted negatively to these developments and the Serbs adopted Panslavism as their path to freedom (Özdoğan, 2001, p. 28).

The rise of Panslavism and even of Pangermanism, prompted the Hungarians to become more aware of their own identity by embracing the concept of Turan Union more passionately. The Hungarians intensified their philology studies as a way to establish a cultural foundation for this principle, focusing on the roots of the Hungarian language and the origins of the Hungarian homeland in faraway countries that they referred to as *Turan* (Namal, 2009, p. 126). After increasing scientific studies, primarily in philology, a political movement emerged that surpassed the regional concept of Turanism. Turanism had reached the level of defending the unity of the peoples of Turkish origin, including the Hungarians and Finns, and was manifested as a politically powerful movement in Hungary at the end of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the twentieth century, and especially during the first decade, there was an effort to pursue the dream of political union on two axes – Budapest-Tokyo and Kazan-Istanbul (Özdoğan, 2001, p. 28.). Ottomans were excited by this principle, forming the basis of relations between Ottoman Turkish and Hungarian Turcologists.

After the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908, the Hungarians' commercial ventures towards the Balkans, the establishment of the Turan Society (Hungarian East Cultural Centre) in 1910 and the unofficial Hungarian state policy called "Hungary Looks East" strengthened the friendship between them (Fodor, 2020, p. 105). The Turanism philosophy was merged with Hungary's international policy and cultural aims and the contributions of Prince Franz Joseph and Kuno Klébersberg, the undersecretary of the prime ministry, regarding this development's political dimension were significant (Fodor, 2020, p. 103.).

It would not be a mistake to say that the Turan movement did not affect Ottoman politicians as much as its Hungarian counterparts; but the magazines that attracted attention with their Turkist publications would work to inform the Ottoman public

Noteworthy in this regard are the gestures made to delegations that included Hungarian parliamentarians that came to Istanbul after the declaration of the 2nd Constitutional Monarchy. See BOA, BEO, 3594-268480, all Enclosures.

about Turan. At this point, it is necessary to emphasize the efforts of *Türk Yurdu* magazine. The magazine was the leading source informing the Ottoman public of developments related to the Turan movement in Hungary. Although the Ottoman public was sympathetic to the Hungarians, especially the Ottoman students in Hungary were always mentioned with praise in bilateral relations.⁴ In this regard, one of the related elements was the Turkish-Hungarian School opened in Budapest before the War (BOA, MF.MKT, Enclosure 1: 26 November 1913). In addition, Turkish Turanists, who did not go beyond saying that Turks and Hungarians were closely related, nevertheless recognized that the Hungarian Turanism movement was important for the Ottoman nation and applauded the initiatives of the Hungarians to organize the movement. The most noteworthy evidence of this would be the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society established in Istanbul (Namal, 2009, pp. 114-121).⁵

The foundations of the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society were laid during discussions with a delegation that came to Istanbul in January 1916, led by Miklos Banffy. The aim of the delegation was to make social, scientific, and economic agreements in talks with its Turkish counterpart and to touch on matters such as a science institute and archaeological research. The 16-person Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society, led by Commerce Minister Ahmed Nesimi Bey and comprised of selected Ottoman statesmen, academicians and artists came to an agreement with the delegation to establish a Hungarian Science Institute in Istanbul and this was an indication that the delegation had achieved its goal (Fodor, 2020, p. 106). The Hungarians in Istanbul were quite active, as well. In fact, before the delegation arrived, a house was rented for the Hungarian Science Institute, where research on Turkish-Hungarian linguistic and Turkish artistic topics was focused, at the location of the 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi' (Hungarian Brothers Boulevard) that would be opened in August 1917. This house would later be the home of the Turk-Hungarian Friendship Society. As of the Fall of 1916, the house was taken care of by Turcolog Gyula Mézaros, who was appointed as chief of the Ethnography and Hungarian Languages Department of Darülfünun (later Istanbul University) (Çoruhlu, 1994, p. 234; Çolak, 2009, pp. 94, 97; Fodor, 2020, pp. 107, 112).

The Germans' Turkish-German Friendship Society must have been the example taken for selecting a place in Fatih District, where most of the residents were Muslims. In other words, when the Germans chose the building for the Turkish-German Friendship Society, they acted much differently than other countries that established similar organizations. Rather than put the association's dormitory in Galata or Beyoğlu where non-Muslims lived, they chose the Turkish neighbourhood Çemberlitaş to be in

⁴ It is clear that this matter was very important for the Ottoman side and it affected the Ottoman students in Hungary, who had contact with the Hungarians on almost every educational subject. The name of the Hungarian Oriental Culture Centre is continually mentioned as having had relevant contacts with the students (BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 5: 9 April 1917). Additionally, for information about Ottoman students who went to Hungary see *Servet-i Fünûn*, 1304 (15 June 1916), pp. 38-39.

⁵ It must be mentioned that at the same time an office of the Istanbul-based Turkish Association was opened in Budapest (Okay, 2012, p. 57).

amongst the Muslim community (Özkan, 1975, p. 179). By acting like the Germans in this regard and selecting a place within the borders of Fatih district, where the majority was Turkish-Muslim and which was not only historic but in the process of being rebuilt after the fires, the Hungarians earned the sympathy of the populace, making it quite a sensible decision on their part.

The fires that occurred in Istanbul and the problem of its rebuilding

The saying ‘Anatolia’s epidemics and Istanbul’s fires’ is a good way to describe the brutally destructive fires in Istanbul. Especially in the summertime, in the years when there was no modern firefighting organization, during the season for ‘frying eggplant’, fires would break out one after the other in Istanbul and cause devastating damage to the wooden structures of the city (Kıranlar, 2013, p. 156). One of these horrific fires occurred on 23 August 1908. It was known as the Çırçır fire and this disaster resulted in the burning down of between 1,500 and 2,779 houses, based on a range of calculations (Gürtunca, 2020, p. 96; Ergin, 1993, p. 1236). The fire raged within the borders of today’s Fatih district and destroyed a broad area. The ‘Macar Kardeşler Caddesi’ would be built in a small portion of this area.

In addition to building avenues, the fires had positive results in the long run, such as abandoning the wooden building style, for the reconstruction of Istanbul. One of the indications of this was that in the aftermath of the Great Fatih Fire of 1918, apartment buildings in Istanbul were built in the modern way (Kıranlar, 2015, p. 102.). And although the Çırçır fire did not bring about revolutionary changes in the concept of building techniques, it did spark the construction of sidewalks with ‘the latest technology’, in the context of those days (Ergin, 1993, p. 1254). Another collateral benefit of the fires was modern map-making for the city. In this regard, the contributions of Cemil Paşa (Topuzlu), one of the Istanbul mayors who worked hard to make Istanbul a modern city, should be cited (Topuzlu, 1994, pp. 161, 174-174). It became necessary to create a plan to make maps for the entire city, not just the fire-ravaged areas to be rebuilt. Cemil Paşa recognized this need, so in the first years of his mayoralty he was critical of the lack of up-to-date maps for Istanbul and launched an international competition for new maps of the city, announcing the project in both domestic and European newspapers. However, just a month after the announcement of the map-making competition, the First World War erupted (Topuzlu, 1994, pp. 128-129). In addition, Cemil Paşa took advantage of a debt provision created by the Balkan Wars to obtain one million gold liras that enabled him to pursue some construction projects in the city. By securing a small portion of this debt provision money, Cemil Paşa was able to fund the rebuilding of the fire-ravaged areas (Tekeli, 1985, p. 889) and with the larger portion of the rebuilding funds coming as an advance from the Ministry of Finance. The municipality also showed the anticipated value of increases to the ‘müsakkafat’ (buildings) and ‘temettü’ (dividend) taxes as collateral for this project (‘Harik Mahalleri İstimlak Bedeli’, *Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 12 February 1916, p. 2).

Nevertheless, all of these initiatives were insufficient for rebuilding the areas burned down in the fires. In addition, a major problem such as compensation for the people damaged by the fire was also faced. The matters relating to the fire victims

caused stress on the Istanbul municipality, and by extension the state, to a significant degree.⁶ For example, there were many victims of the Çırçır fire who complained about not receiving any help for months after the fire.⁷ On the other hand, the municipality was critical of the victims' indifference because soon after the fire the city assigned mapping engineers to the fire-affected areas and announced that boulevard and street construction would continue in accordance with existing plans until a comprehensive plan for the city could be formulated (İkdam, 28 August 1908, p. 2). And yet, because of the indifference of the homeowners and shop owners no progress could be made – the fire-affected victims were loath to provide the precise locations and square footage of their homes and shops. In this context, the municipality urged them to immediately contact the assigned engineers (*Alemdar*, 21 August 1911, p. 2; *Yeni Gazete*, 21 August 1911, p. 3).⁸

The Çırçır fire broke out amid the chaotic atmosphere existing in Istanbul exactly one month after the declaration of '2nd Meşrutiyet' (restoration of constitutional government) on 23 July 1908 and the rumours circulating on that day had an effect on the home and shop owners, who were uncertain of the new system and who could not discern what would happen in the coming days. Consequently, they thought it best to wait and see. Their attitudes were affected by the two varying types of rumours being spread in whispers from mouth to mouth through different channels in Istanbul at the time. On the one hand, some saw the fires as God's punishment of the 'İttihatçı' (Committee of Union and Progress/CUP) regime for straying from 'sharia' (Islamic norms) and the distress of some regarding women pursuing new rights, along with the prospect of girls being accepted into elementary and intermediate schools (Kuzucu, 2018, p. 489).

Those supporting the CUP regime, though, had a completely different view, attributing the fires to the underhanded acts of bribe-taking and corrupt officials fired from their jobs after the declaration of the 2nd Constitutional Monarchy. They believed that the Çırçır fire and subsequent incidents of arson were part of a conspiracy concocted by Sultan Abdülhamid's secret police, who were now out of favour, to bring back the despotic regime. As these two disparate whispered views fanned the flames of uncertainty among the people of Istanbul, the government and the day's newspapers continually attributed the incidents of arson following the Çırçır fire to be the work of hardened criminals freed by the general amnesty that was announced at the end of July and the ne'er-do-wells who poured into Istanbul from Anatolia after the declaration of 2nd Constitutional Monarchy (Aykut, 2016, p. 5; Kuzucu, 2018, p. 489).

⁶ For an example of news related to this subject see *Alemdar*, 21 August 1911, p. 2; *Yeni Gazete*, 21 August 1911, p. 3.

⁷ For one of the examples of many petitions with the signatures of tens of fire victims see BOA, ŞD, 842-25, Enclosure 16: 28 March 1909; DH.İD, 38-2/40, Enclosure 2: 7 October 1912. There was quite a bit of assistance provided after the fires and the names of those who helped were announced in the newspapers. For an example see *Takvim-i Vekayi*, Nr. 919 (6 September 1911) pp. 2-3.

⁸ In this regard, it is known that the Istanbul municipality paid a sizeable amount of money related to the cost of expropriation. See Ayın Nun (Osman Nuri Ergin), 1341, p. 303.

While this turmoil raged, the usual aid campaigns for fire victims mounted by Turkish and foreign goodwill organizations, together with those of friendly countries, were being implemented (Gürtunca, 2020, pp. 96-98.). In this regard, the Hungarians' initiative concerning amelioration of the damage done by the fires and the War were noteworthy. The destruction caused by the Istanbul fires and the matter of rehabilitating the Çanakkale coastal towns decimated by the Battle of Çanakkale was the focus of a project prepared by the Hungarian Architects and Engineers Association and this project garnered appreciation. The Hungarians promised that a portion of the reconstruction expenses would be borne by their entrepreneurs and capitalists (BOA, DH.UMVM, 103-13, Enclosure 5: undated). The initiative fell flat but it was significant that an ally would pay such close attention to such matters in wartime and try to provide help.

Striking a Blow For Brotherhood: 'sZoltan Mohemed Hamisz ut ve Macar Kardeşler Caddeleri'⁹

It is understood that significant progress had not been made by the time of the First World War despite the talk of the reconstruction of the fire-ravaged neighbourhoods immediately after the fire. While the repercussions of the Çanakkale victory continued, the Istanbul municipality took up the matter of rebuilding and on 28 March 1916 took the decision to name one of the streets to be built in the designated neighbourhoods of the city with a name that emphasized brotherhood with the Hungarians. According to this decision, the name 'Macar Kardeşler' would be given to one of the streets to be built during the rebuilding of 'Çırçır Harik Mahalli' (the burned-out Çırçır neighbourhood).

However, this decision was not made on the municipality's own initiative; the intervention of the Interior Minister at that time, Talat Paşa, was instrumental. Talat Paşa was aware that the Hungarians, who continually emphasized friendship with the Ottomans, had given a street in Budapest the name of the Sultan and he felt that this gesture must be reciprocated. In a note to Enver Paşa that bore Talat Paşa's signature, it was written that 'desired names will be given by the *Şehremaneti* (city hall) to three streets of the city.' And while the note was not very specific, one of the names of the three streets would definitely involve the Hungarians (BOA, DH.ŞFR, 63-270, undated); but the precise determination of that name would take time. Talat Paşa must have written this note, which amounted to reciprocity for the decision taken by the Budapest municipality in the Fall of 1915 (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 4: 12 November 1915). According to the initial information received in regard to the street in Budapest, it was to be built at a place called 'Müzeum Körit' in Budapest's busiest section where the Hungarian National Museum and the Engineering School were located (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 36: 5 December 1915.). This development, along with the positive atmosphere created by the arrival in Istanbul of the delegation led by Miklos Banffy in January 1916 (Fodor, 2020, p. 106), as well as the construction of a

⁹ Written thusly in Latin letters. Source from which it was taken: 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi', *Türk Yurdu*, year 6, vol. 13/1 (30 August 1333/1917), p. 3565.

hospital in Çapa district of Istanbul by the Hungarian Red Cross, must have had an impact on the decision to give a street the name 'Macar Kardeşler (Hungarian Brothers)' (*Tanin*, 11 April 1916, p. 3; *Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 11 April 1916, p. 2; *Türk Yurdu*, year 1, vol. 1/2 (6 April 1916), p. 2982).

Those who arrived at this decision also considered the reaction of the Austrian side, the main element of the allied Austro-Hungarian Empire (Austria-Hungary or the Dual Monarchy). An indication of this concern about the necessity 'to take such actions for other nations' mentioned in the 28 March 1916 decision, stemmed from the uncertainty regarding how Austria would react. It was well known that Austria would frown upon any indication of Hungarian nationalism being reflected in the name, even if not overtly done so. Consequently, although the name would reflect the undeniable ties between Hungarians and Turks and strengthen their racial kinship and common historical union, the names of well-known Hungarian nationalists like Hunyadi Janos, Gyula Andrassy, Lajos Kossuth, Ferenc Rakoczi and Thököly Imre were to be avoided. In other words, there would be no mention in the name of individuals known for their nationalistic and political opposition to the Dual Monarchy among the Hungarians considered regarding the street's name (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 7: undated). Nevertheless, the name would have a positive effect on the Hungarian side. This nettlesome matter was handled by coming up with the name 'Macar Kardeşler (Hungarian Brothers)', which was a bit odd but appropriate, in an effort to preclude a negative reaction by the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, despite the fact that the Hungarians had already named a street for the Ottoman Sultan (BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 5: 9 April 1917).

The name that the municipality chose also reflected the changing understanding related to the choice of boulevard and street names. At the time, the city's administration was going through a significant transition vis-à-vis naming boulevards and streets with the names of those important people who were 'sources of pride' for the nation and changing street names that bore the names of individuals who were out of favour. The views of the Directorate of the 'Müze-yi Hümayun' (Imperial Museum) and the 'Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni' (Ottoman Historical Society) were solicited regarding the assigning of new names. With this in mind, the municipality deemed it appropriate to assign the name 'Turan' to the major boulevard in the burned-out areas and 'Macar Kardeşler Boulevard' to one of its appendage roads.

After the name was assigned, the matter of where in the Çırçır fire area the boulevard would be built arose. Initially, it was thought that a location in the Aksaray and İshak Paşa neighbourhoods would be cordoned off. Since the arrangement and construction aspects of the burned-out areas in these two sections could not be completed, it was decided by the municipality to name the area starting from the corner of Tayyare Monument and Feyzullah Efendi Madrasa at the end of the thirty and fifty-meter streets coming from Zeyrek, Şehzadebaşı and Yenikapı Station and continuing to Köprülü Avenue with the name 'Macar Kardeşler' (BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 3: 28 March 1916). It should be noted that a tramway would pass through a 30-meter section of the boulevard that was planned for construction at that time

(*Tanin*, 19 August 1917, p. 2). This area was one of the places where the post-'2nd Constitutional Monarchy' concept of wider boulevards was to be implemented (Ayın Nun (Ergin), 1341, p. 303.).

Once the name and site were determined, Ahmet Hikmet (Müftüoğlu), the Consul General in Budapest, was informed and he quickly passed this news along to Hungarian Prime Minister Count István Tisza. Ahmet Hikmet was aware of all the related developments from the start. In addition, he had kept the Ottoman side abreast of developments regarding preparations for 'Mehmet Sultan' or 'Sultan Mehmed-i Hamis Caddesi (Sultan Mehmet V Boulevard)', as the names are reflected in Ottoman sources, in Budapest (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 13: 25 April 1916).

The Consul General was on top of the subject and following it closely. And it wasn't so much the Turkish side that praised him for this, rather, it was the Hungarian Prime Minister whom he informed about the Istanbul municipality's decision. In a letter of thanks that Prime Minister Count István Tisza wrote, the Ottoman State's Budapest Consul General Ahmet Hikmet was singled out for praise. However, the Prime Minister's attitude was not well received in Istanbul and this dissatisfaction is reflected in a note bearing the signature of the period's Interior Minister, Talat Paşa (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 11: 13 May 1916). Yet, when the details are examined one sees that this was a disservice to Budapest Consul General Ahmet Hikmet. At the time when neither side had taken any action, he wrote on 22 December 1914 that the Hungarians would be quite pleased with even the slightest positive gesture toward them and, again in 1914, he wrote that a decision to 'give the name *Macar Kardeşler* to a boulevard in Istanbul' would be something the Hungarians would never forget. So the name 'Macar Kardeşler' was first proposed by Ahmet Hikmet and also for the first time it was mentioned in an official document as the name that would be given to the boulevard (BOA, BEO, 4388-329072, Enclosure 2: 5 December 1915; DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 3: 28 March 1916). As will be seen, a year later the Hungarians went into action and began preparations concerning 'sZoltan Mohemed Hamisz ut' boulevard in Budapest.

The Turkish side had to reciprocate for this gesture by ally Hungary and, as described above, and the Istanbul municipality, with prodding by Talat Paşa, took the decision of 28 March 1916. Officials wanted this matter to be announced in the press but, for some reason, it was deemed more appropriate to have the announcement made 'unofficially' (BOA, HR.ID, 173-4, Enclosure 34: 21 November 1915; HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 21: 13 December 1915; HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 28: 9 December 1915). Contrary to expectations, the matter was not reflected in the Ottoman press to the degree desired.¹⁰ Only *Türk Yurdu* magazine wrote, after satisfaction was expressed about the opening of the hospital at Çapa, in its 6 April 1916 issue that:

'When a boulevard in Peşte (Budapest) was named 'Mehmet Sultan' in honour of our ruler, our municipality reciprocated in a brotherly manner but naming one of the widest boulevards in Fatih, Istanbul, as 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi (Hungarian Brothers

¹⁰ This judgement was arrived at based on newspaper articles that are available to us today.

Boulevard)'. ('*Türk-Macar Kardeşler*', *Türk Yurdu*, year: 1, vol. 1/2, (6 April 1916), p. 2982)

The attitude of the Ottoman press was interesting because, as the result of being allies in the War, there was a tendency to put even the smallest development in the newspaper columns. The situation became more pronounced in the aftermath of the victory in the Battle of Çanakkale. However, official offices, and especially the municipality, soon forgot about the matter of building boulevard in Istanbul (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 11: 13 May 1916). In fact, the municipality began work in March of 1916 but the İstanbul City Building and Beautification Commission, charged with carrying out the Istanbul building program within the municipal framework, was forgotten about a few months later (*Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 27 March 1916, p. 2; *Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 13 April 1916, p. 2).

Nevertheless, shortly after the decision was made, the Istanbul municipality had the plans for the boulevard drawn up, signs to be hung on both sides were prepared and senior offices were informed about the official ceremony that would be conducted (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 11: 13 May 1916). A month later similar information was shared (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 42: 2 April 1916) but the decisions remained only on paper for months more, were given short-shrift by the Interior and Foreign Ministries and it became apparent that the Istanbul municipality was also diffident about the matter. Let alone the Building Commission's work, it was all but forgotten that it was the Hungarians who had taken the first step in the naming process. It seemed as though it was thought that after the decision was made to build 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi', there had been an error in opening the boulevard in Budapest.¹¹ Into this confusion stepped Budapest Consul General Ahmet Hikmet to revive the project. He explained that he had informed the Hungarian government that a boulevard with that name would be inaugurated in Istanbul and he even had maps drawn up to show the street's location. He also, though, expressed his dismay he felt that the project had not gone beyond 'putting a tag name on it.' The boulevard project had to be done as soon as possible as a manifestation of Turkish-Hungarian friendship (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 5: 9 April 1917) since the Hungarians had given the Sultan's name to a boulevard in Budapest, they were meeting the expenses of about 400 Ottoman students in their country¹² and had assumed the costs of maintaining the Gül Baba Türbe (Mausoleum), an historic and religious monument in Budapest (BOA, HR.İD, 173-4, Enclosure 7: undated).

Ahmet Hikmet's warnings had the effect of sparking particularly the Interior Ministry into action, along with motivating other state institutions. As the Consul General pointed out, the building plan had been made and maps prepared but only street signs were to be hung. Another development that spurred the government to move on the project was the arrival in Istanbul of Hungarian officials who made it known that they were not pleased with the lack of progress (BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63,

¹¹ For an example see BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 5, 19 April 1917.

¹² One of the organizations that supported Turkish students in Budapest was the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society. *Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 20 August 1917, p. 2.

Enclosure 22: 26 April 1917). Suddenly, based on these developments, things began to move and a plan was prepared for ‘Macar Kardeşler Caddesi’'s opening, to be attended by a large number of VIPs. It is important to remember at this point, though, that news regarding the boulevard, which was to be inaugurated on Sunday, 20 August, was being followed by the Ottoman public by means of newspaper articles that carried essentially the same information (*Tanin*, 19 August 1333/1917, p. 2). But there was no mention in the inauguration program about whether or not the people of Istanbul could participate in the opening.

The Inauguration of ‘Macar Kardeşler Caddesi’

With regard to the opening of ‘Macar Kardeşler Caddesi’ on 20 August 1917, as has been mentioned above, there was quite a bit of writing done about the project but the actual construction of the boulevard was forgotten for a time. Together with the warnings of the Ottoman State’s Consul General in Budapest, the arrival in Istanbul of the Hungarian notables served to accelerate the project’s inauguration. In addition, just a few days prior to the opening, some senior Turkish journalists went to Budapest and were warmly received there. This development must have been noticed by the Turkish side (Çiftçioğlu-Veresova, 2021, pp. 316-319). The aspect that made the trip interesting was that even though the purpose of the trip was not to discuss the boulevard, the name ‘Macar Kardeşler’ came up in conversations (*Tanin*, 13 August 1917, p. 4).

The inauguration of the boulevard was conducted in accordance with protocol rules. Everything about the ceremony was planned. For example, invited guests were able to rest in a tent set up in ‘Fatih Park’ by the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society before the start of the ceremony (*Sabah*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3). On the other hand, no mention of the public’s reaction to the opening ceremony has been found in the press and neither was there mention of ordinary citizens participating in the inauguration.

The site of the ceremony was the 30-meter-wide boulevard, from where it started right at the end of Şehzadebaşı Park and extended toward Fatih up to the point where today’s Millet Library (today’s *Millet Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi*/Millet Manuscript Library) and the Feyzullah Ağa Madrasa within it are located (BOA, DH.KMS, 35-63, Enclosure 20: 9 September 1917). Attendees at the ceremony included Commerce and Agriculture Minister Mustafa Şeref Bey, on behalf of Austrian Ambassador Marki Pallavicini undersecretary of embassy Chekonic, deputy mayor Sezai, Firefighter Commander Széchenyi, along with leaders of the CUP like Bahattin Şakir, Dr. Nazım and the former ambassador in Athens Muhtar. Notables from the Turkish-Hungarian Friendship Society were in attendance, as well. It should be noted that also among the invitees were just about all of the senior directors of the municipality (*Tesvir-i Efkâr*, 20 August 1917, p. 2; *Sabah*, 19 August 1917, p. 2; *Sabah*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3; *Tanin*, 21 August 1917, p. 2; *İkdam*, 21 August 1917, p. 1.).

Sezai, deputy mayor, began the opening ceremony by cutting a ribbon with the colours of Hungary and the Ottoman State. Unlike our ceremonies today, where the most senior officials hold forth, Sezai, who cut the ribbon, took note of the boulevard in Budapest opened with the name of the Sultan. He mentioned, as well, the ‘racial brotherhood’ between the two nations and the ‘brotherhood-in-arms in the World

War', both of which had been further bolstered by the inauguration of 'this road' (*Tanin*, 21 August 1917, p. 2; *Sabah*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3). Commerce and Agriculture Minister Mustafa Şeref, who spoke later, thanked the municipality for placing this boulevard at such an important spot in Istanbul. He also emphasized that Turkish and Hungarian relations were developing day by day and he mentioned the Turkish students who had gone to study in Hungary. In conclusion, he made reference to the cooperation on the battlefield, calling to mind 'the historical ties between the Turks and the Hungarians' (*Sabah*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3). After the speeches by the mayor's representative and the Minister, the national anthem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the 'Marş-ı Sultani (Imperial Anthem)' were played. Next, everyone walked the length of the boulevard and Hungarian Trade Attaché Elles gave a speech, first in Turkish and then in Hungarian. The fact that his words were different from the other speakers did not go unnoticed. Elles spoke about the struggle against a common enemy during World War One and he characterized the opening of the boulevard in Istanbul as a celebratory day for the Hungarians, thanking the Istanbul municipality for inaugurating 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi' (*Türk Yurdu*, year: 6, vol. 13/1, 30 August 1917, p. 3566; *Tanin*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3). Using similar language in his Hungarian remarks, Elles concluded by saying 'Long Live Our Turkish Brethren.' and the ceremony came to an end. Afterwards, the attendees, including senior political and military officials, ate some offerings from a buffet set up at the Fatih municipal building (*Tanin*, 21 August 1917, pp. 2-3; *İkdam*, 21 August 1917, p. 1).

CONCLUSION

'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi (Hungarian Brothers Boulevard)', one of the busy boulevards in Istanbul's Fatih district, was opened in 1917 as a symbol of Ottoman-Hungarian friendship. During the War, both at the front and in the rear, almost every positive development was used in an effort to bolster relations between the allies and, in this regard, the Çanakkale Victory had particular importance. Immediately after the victory, the Hungarians gave the name of the Ottoman Sultan to one of their boulevards, prompting the Ottoman side to cement this friendship with an appropriate name, as well.

Although the boulevard's opening was held with the participation of a good number of both Hungarian and Ottoman government notables, the event did not draw the attention of the people of Istanbul, who were living under difficult wartime conditions, and so it did not leave a lasting impression on their memories. The fact that the municipality, and especially the press, did not endeavour at all to enlighten the public about the event had quite a negative impact. The Istanbul populace was kept unaware of the many written exchanges about the boulevard's name and location and had no knowledge of the inauguration, which was arranged hurriedly. Consequently, this must be one of the reasons why today's Istanbul populace is unaware of the reasons for the name of the boulevard that thousands of them traverse each day on foot and in their cars. Similarly, the people of Istanbul today have no knowledge of the destructive and unforgettable fires that destroyed the city's historic wooden fabric. The erasure of themes related to friendship and, in particular, the fires in the communal

consciousness could make one think that historical awareness has not been sufficiently formulated. Even if one were to excuse this loss of awareness as the consequence of the increase in Hungarian friendship based on the War and its sudden evaporation at the end of the conflict, it remains difficult to pinpoint the reason for the significant loss of any consciousness about the fires.

Yet, the large and small fires that caused damage and affected the city's building plan were a major concern of the Istanbul municipality in the first quarter of the 20th century. The location of 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi' was the place where the Çırçır fire broke out and devastated a wide area in August 1908. The opening of the boulevard, which was built according to the modernization architectural understanding for Istanbul adopted by the '2nd Constitutional Monarchy' administration, was accomplished at a time when bilateral political and cultural relations were at their most intense. In addition, the 'Macar Dostluk Yurdu (Hungarian Friendship Hostel)' building in the area of the city which had the highest rents during the War years and 'Armistice Istanbul' (occupied Istanbul) period, was leased in one of the buildings on this boulevard.

Over the years the changes around 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi' have created a completely different silhouette, which may be the reason for the lapse in the memories of Istanbul's populace. The tram that ran along this boulevard in 1917 was moved to another location so the boulevard was left solely to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. After 1950, the boulevard and its surroundings would experience changes brought on by new building in Istanbul. But the boulevard's route from the edge of Saraçhane Park, which did not change at all, to Millet Library remained intact.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi (Hungarian Brothers Avenue)', one of the busiest streets in Istanbul's Fatih district, was opened on 20 August 1917 in a ceremony attended by Ottoman and Hungarian notables. Two factors that played a role in the opening of the avenue were the improvement of Istanbul and the fact that the Hungarians had named an avenue in Budapest for the Ottoman Sultan of the time, Mehmet Reşat. The avenue opened in Budapest in 1915 was cited in Ottoman sources as 'Mehmet Sultan', 'Sultan Mehmed-i Hamis Caddesi' and 'sZoltan Mohemed Hamiz ut'. The Hungarians' interest in Turks, heightened by their understanding of 'Turan', was reciprocated with sincerity by the Turkish side. The Turkish public learned about Hungary, which was an ally during the years of World War I, from the students who went there to study. The effect of the Ottoman press informing the public about the 'racial link' to the Hungarians should not be forgotten either.

The Hungarians took the decision regarding the avenue in Budapest at the time when the naval battles of the Çanakkale War ended in victory. This gesture by the Hungarians was well-received by the Ottoman side and a response came quickly. Through the impetus of Talat Paşa, the Interior Minister in those days, the decision was taken to open an avenue bearing a name that would call to mind Turkish-Hungarian friendship. On 28 March 1916, the Istanbul Municipality announced a decision related to this development. The site for the construction of the avenue was determined even

before a name was decided upon and consisted of a small portion of the area burned-out in the Çırçır fire that occurred on 23 August 1908. According to the related decision, the avenue would begin at the corner of Tayyare Monument and Feyzullah Efendi Madrasa, at the end of the thirty and fifty-meter avenues coming from Zeyrek and Şehzadebaşı and the one from Yenikapı Station, and extend as far as Köprülü Avenue.

It was known that the traditional wooden structure style and Istanbul's narrow streets had contributed to the destruction caused by the fires that broke out before and after the aforementioned Çırçır Fire. The construction of 'Macar Kardeşler Caddesi', built for the sake of improving the burned-out areas of Istanbul, was a small but important step in this regard. Although thought was given to rehabilitation of the area right after the Çırçır Fire, it was understood that the city did not have an urban plan in the modern sense. The issue of making an urban plan brought up a completely different problem with regard to the payments to be made to the Istanbul populace that suffered from the fires. There were many people among those who suffered from the fires who were reluctant to give the municipality information about their possessions and the related rumours had a significant effect in creating pessimism about the future among the public. As a solution for this problem was being dealt with, there was still the matter of naming the avenue. The name would be related to the Hungarians but it was also necessary to be sensitive to the reaction this might prompt from the Austrian side of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. With this in mind, the names of leading Hungarian nationalists opposed to Austria, in particular, would not be considered, so ultimately the name 'Macar Kardeşler' was agreed to and this pleased both sides.

The work related to the avenue began with a burst of activity but later completely died down. Yet, it was known that nearly all the preparations had been completed and that only the matter of hanging the street signs for the avenue remained. The Ottoman State had forgotten about the issue but the Ottoman State's Consul General in Budapest, Ahmet Hikmet, kept it on the agenda and the dormant work was revitalized. It was known, as well, that the Hungarian delegation that had come to Istanbul was not pleased by the delay. This being the case, the Istanbul Municipality resumed related activity, making the final preparations for the avenue. Senior Hungarian and Turkish officials attended the opening of the avenue on 20 August 1917 and at the ceremony speeches were made emphasizing the alliance. The ceremony participants then walked the entire length of the avenue from start to finish, which is how the ceremony ended. However, the opening of Macar Kardeşler Caddesi did not get the expected coverage in the Istanbul press and newspapers published the news almost without any variation.

Makale Bilgileri

<i>Etik Kurul Kararı:</i>	Etik Kurul Kararından muaftır.
<i>Katılımcı Rızası:</i>	Katılımcı yok.
<i>Mali Destek:</i>	Çalışma için herhangi bir kurum ve projeden mali destek alınmamıştır.
<i>Çıkar Çatışması:</i>	Çalışmada kişiler ve kurumlar arası çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.
<i>Telif Hakları:</i>	Çalışmada kullanılan görsellerle ilgili telif hakkı sahiplerinden gerekli izinler alınmıştır.

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 HR.İD (Hariciye İdare/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chancellery)
 MF.MKT (Maarif Nezareti, Mektubi Kalem/Ministry of Education, Section of Registry)
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