



HISTORY STUDIES


INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HISTORY

ISSN: 1309 4173 / (Online) 1309 - 4688 (Print)


Volume: 15, Issue: 100th Anniversary of the Republic Special Issue, October 2023
www.historystudies.net

THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE LAST OTTOMAN PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO WERE ABLE TO JOIN THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE FIRST TERM IN TERMS OF REACHING THE PARLIAMENT

*Birinci Dönem Büyük Millet Meclisi'ne Dahil Olabilen Son Osmanlı Mebuslarının
Meclise Ulaşma Konusunda Yaşadıkları Sorunlar*

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yakup Yılmaz 

Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi
yakubyilmaz38@gmail.com

Makale Türü-*Article Type* : Araştırma Makalesi-Research Article
Geliş Tarihi-*Received Date* : 17.08.2023
Kabul Tarihi-*Accepted Date* : 10.10.2023
DOI Number  : 10.9737/historystudies.1345059

Atıf – Citation:

Yakup Yılmaz, "The Problems Experienced by the Last Ottoman Parliamentarians Who Were Able To Join the Grand National Assembly in the First Term in Terms of Reaching the Parliament", *History Studies*, 15/Cumhuriyetin 100. Yılı Özel Sayısı, Ekim 2023, s. 175-186.



**THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE LAST OTTOMAN
PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO WERE ABLE TO JOIN THE GRAND
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE FIRST TERM IN TERMS OF REACHING
THE PARLIAMENT**

**Birinci Dönem Büyük Millet Meclisi'ne Dahil Olabilen Son Osmanlı Mebuslarının Meclise
Ulaşma Konusunda Yaşadıkları Sorunlar**

Yakup Yılmaz*

Abstract

The defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War and the occupation of the country and its institutions, including Istanbul, by the Allied Powers hampered the work of the Parliament. This parliament, which was the last Ottoman Parliament, was an authority that showed the courage to take decisions that would positively affect the fate of the Turkish nation. So much so that it was able to take the "Misak-ı Milli" decisions, which are still actively used even in today's politics, and declare the indivisibility and unity of the homeland even under occupation.

This parliament was seen as a structure that could not be controlled by the British and it was shut down. Subsequently, the members either fled or were sent into exile. Following this event, Mustafa Kemal and his friends deemed it necessary to open a new parliament in Ankara and this new constituent assembly was able to convene on April 23, 1920. As a result of the elections held, along with the new deputies who joined the assembly, the remaining deputies from the last Ottoman parliament were asked to come to Ankara and join the assembly.

Many patriotic former Ottoman MPs who were able to escape from Istanbul, exile or imprisonment came to Ankara and started to work in the constituent assembly. The processes of their participation in the Grand National Assembly and the problems they faced are tried to be revealed in this study. The aforementioned process has been revealed by using both research works and official sources and memoirs of the period.

Keywords: Ottoman Mebusan Assembly, Grand National Assembly, , Deputy.

Öz

Osmanlı Devleti'nin Birinci Dünya Savaşından mağlup ayrılması ve İtilaf devletlerinin İstanbul da dahil olmak kaydıyla ülkeyi ve kurumları işgal etmeye başlaması, Mebusan Meclisi 'nin çalışmasını zora sokmuştur. Buna rağmen son Osmanlı Meclisi olan bu parlamento Türk Milleti'nin kaderini olumlu yönde etkileyecek kararlar alabilme cesaretini gösteren bir merciydi. Öyle ki; günümüz siyasetin de bile halen aktif olarak sığımlan Misak-ı Milli" kararlarını alıp vatanının bölünmezliğini ve birliğini işgal altındayken bile ilan edebilmiştir.

Bu meclis, İngilizler tarafından kontrol edilmeyecek bir yapıda görülmüş ve kapatılması sağlanmıştır. Ardından buradaki mebuslar ya kaçmış ya da sürgün gönderilmiştir. Bu olayın akabinde Mustafa Kemal ve arkadaşları Ankara'da yeni bir meclisin açılmasını zorunlu görmüşler ve bu yeni kurucu meclis 23 Nisan 1920'de toplanabilmiştir. Yapılan seçimler sonucu buraya katılan yeni vekillerle birlikte son Osmanlı meclisinden kalan mebusların da Ankara'ya gelip meclise katılmaları istenmiştir.

İstanbul'dan, sürgünden ya da tutsaklıktan kaçabilen birçok vatanperver eski Osmanlı mebusu çetrefilli yollar ve uğraşlar sonucunda Ankara'ya gelip kurucu meclis içerisinde çalışmaya başlamışlardır. Onların Büyük Millet Meclisine katılma süreçleri, karşılaştıkları sorunlar çalışma içerisinde ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Gerek tetkik eserler, gerek dönemin resmi kaynak ve hatıratları kullanılarak bahsi geçen süreç ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi, Büyük Millet Meclisi, Milletvekili.

* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Türkçe ve Sosyal Bilimler Eğitimi Bölümü, Samsun /TÜRKİYE, yakubyilmaz38@gmail.com ORCID: 0000-0002-3117-1625

1-Introduction

The history of Turkish Democracy has not been able to experience a calm process since the Tanzimat period when it first sprouted. Both the insistence of the Monarchy and the dominant political parties have hindered the development of the democracy process. In addition to these, the main troublesome factors were the coups and the occupations at the end of the First World War. However, despite all these, the Turkish democratic process somehow found a way of life and sprouted again from the bosom of the nation.

Before the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War, it experienced destruction with the Balkan Wars and entered the brink of a spiritual collapse. This situation of the Ottoman Empire made the European and Balkan countries who wanted to share it even more appetizing. The Ottoman Empire, which was in a difficult situation to explain, had to leave many Rumelia lands under very difficult conditions with the Balkan Wars. As a result of this process, with the influence of the members of the Committee of Union and Progress, the idea of "Turkism" started to gain strength and became more prominent in politics. Moreover, after he became the Minister of War, Enver Pasha tried to rejuvenate and reorganize the army, and started preparations for the war that was looming on the horizon. Necessary policies were carried out in order to be on the fronts centered on Germany and England, which were emerging in Europe. The Ottoman Empire decided to join the "Alliance Forces" led by Germany and Austria, an agreement that the German Emperor also found beneficial. In this way, especially great benefits could be obtained from Germany and especially the Balkan Wars.¹

One of the phenomenal events of the First World War was the defection of the battleships "Goben" and "Breslau", which constituted the German Mediterranean fleet, to the Ottoman Empire and their subsequent joining the Ottoman navy. Admiral Souchon commanded the fleet of these ships, which were named Yavuz and Midilli with their crews. This fleet bombarded Russian ports so that the Ottomans could join the war on the side of Germany as soon as possible. Thus, the Ottoman Empire was officially involved in the beginning of an irreversible war.² During this period, they had to fight on many fronts. There were defeats and victories. In a struggle for existence, there were great struggles in places such as the Caucasus, the Canal, Iraq, Yemen, Hejaz and Çanakkale. There was the Sarikamiş disaster and epic victories in Çanakkale and Iraq.³

In the years of 1912, when the footsteps of the First World War were heard and the Ottoman Empire was involved in the Balkan Wars, there were some disturbances in the Parliament. The parliamentary elections held in 1912 were one of the elections in which the most incidents occurred. As a result of these elections, İttihad ve Terakki Party (Committee of Union and Progress) MPs were elected with a large majority. Many crimes committed during the elections and negative events in domestic and foreign politics caused the opposition to strengthen. In this situation, a new election was decided, but due to the Balkan wars, the date of the election was postponed until "it was possible".⁴ At the time when the World War was approaching, the İttihat ve Terakki was getting stronger again, the recapture of Edirne had created a positive atmosphere and the voices of the opposition had been suppressed. In such an atmosphere, it was necessary to elect the parliament that would carry the state into the World War. During this period, 1/3 of the

¹ Sina Akşin (2012), "Siyasal Tarih (1908-1923)", *Yakınçağ Türkiye Tarihi*, Prepared by Sina Akşin, Bülent Tanör, Korkut Boratov, Milliyet Yayınları, İstanbul, p.50-55.

² Ozan Tuna (2014), "Amiral Souchon'un Donanma Komutanı Olması ve Rus Limanlarının Bombalanması" *OTAM*, 36, Güz, p.201-206.

³ On the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, see; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Birinci Dünya Savaşı I* (2013), T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, (Proj. Dir.) Uğur Ünal, İstanbul.

⁴ Cezmi Eraslan, Kenan Olgun (2006), *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Meşrutiyet ve Parlamento*, 3F Yayınevi, İstanbul, p.126.

country's territory and 5 million of the population had been lost. At the end of 1913, at a time of extraordinary circumstances, with the ideas of Islamism and Turkism of the İttihad ve Terakki. electoral work began and the parliament was opened in May 1914, resulting in the victory of the With this parliamentary structure, the İttihat ve Terakki ruled as the "One Party" in Turkish politics until the next election.⁵

By the end of the First World War, the suffering of the warring states and nations had become unbearable. In this situation, Germany was the first to raise the flag of surrender. Its withdrawal from the war forced the Ottoman Empire to withdraw from the war. In short, together with Germany, the Ottoman Empire accepted defeat in the Ottoman Empire and, relying on the Wilson Principles, put an end to the World War and agreed to conclude an armistice agreement. On October 30, 1918, the Armistice of Mondros was concluded with the articles dictated by the Entente states and according to this armistice, the Ottoman Empire would demobilize a large part of its army, surrender its large warships, the passage through the Straits would be free, telegraph lines would be inspected and some parts of the State could be occupied. Subsequently, with the occupation of Istanbul, the six-century-old empire was effectively on the verge of extinction.⁶

This severe armistice also caused a great loss of blood in the politics of the İttihad Terakki. The opposition re-emerged from hiding in this situation. Subsequently, Sultan Vahdettin dissolved the parliament. Thus, the third period, called the war parliament, came to an end.⁷

According to the Basic Law (Kanu-ı Esasi), elections must be held within four months.⁸ However, due to the occupation of a significant part of the country, especially Izmir, by the Greeks, some people were against the elections. Upon this issue, the Council of Vükela supported this idea by suspending the elections. However, the congress convened in Erzurum on the national struggle in Anatolia under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal argued that the parliament should be convened as soon as possible.⁹ The planning of the Sivas congress by the (Milli Mücadele) National Struggle movement, which gained strength in Anatolia after the Erzurum congress, compelled the Istanbul government to hold elections as soon as possible and an election atmosphere was entered on October 22, 1919.¹⁰ Due to the occupation of many parts of the country, elections could be held in 15 provinces, 35 annexed provinces and 16 independent provinces. As a result of the elections, many candidates determined by the (Temsil Heyeti) Representation Committee entered the parliament as MPs¹¹

2- Dissolution of the Last Ottoman Mebusan Assembly (MP) and the fate of the parliamentarians

The parliament, which convened in the capital Istanbul after each election, convened here again under the shadow of many controversial debates. One of the most important arguments was

⁵ Fevzi Demir (2007), *Osmanlı Devleti'nde II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi ve Meclis-i Mebusan Seçimleri*, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara, p.298-326.

⁶ Cemil Öztürk, "Mondros Mütarekesi", TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/mondros-mutarekesi> (06.09.2023).

⁷ Tarık Zafer Tunaya(1989), *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler III*, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul. p.169.; Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi (Minutes of the Ottoman Assembly of Mebusan), 21 Kanunuevvel 1334, p.363-364.; İkdam, 22 Kanun-i sani, 1334, p.1.; Sabah, 22 Kanun-i sani, 1334, p.1.

⁸ On January 02, 1919, it was decided to make peace within four months and to publish it in the official gazette. See; *BOA (State Archives Presidency Ottoman Archives)*, HR.SYS. 2461/68.

⁹ İhsan Güneş (2017), *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul, s.3-7.; Sina Akşin, (1976), *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Millî Mücadele*, Cem Yayınları, İstanbul, p.442-443.

¹⁰ Taha Niyazi Karaca (2004), *Son Osmanlı Meclis-i Mebusan Seçimleri*, TTK, Ankara, p.97-177.

¹¹ Karaca (2004), *Son Osmanlı Meclis-i Mebusan Seçimleri*, p. 292-294.

Mustafa Kemal's claim that the Assembly should convene in Anatolia, otherwise it would be open to British intervention. Apart from this, Ali Rıza Pasha, who was at the head of the Istanbul government, also accepted this view, but the government did not realize it. In the end, many of the deputies who went to the parliament to be opened in Istanbul went knowing that they would be arrested. Some of them claimed that the British would not dare to do so. As a result, the general opinion was that the parliament should be opened in Istanbul.¹²

After it was decided to convene in Istanbul, the parliament of 164 deputies, including Mustafa Kemal, was opened on January 12, 1920. In the parliament, the nationalists started to work on establishing a group that they had decided on in the mainland. This group, founded by the members of "Müdafaa-i Hukuk", was called "Felah-ı Vatan". The most important aim of this group was to work in line with the decisions of the Erzurum and Sivas Congress. In this direction, they especially ensured that the document named "Misak-ı Milli" or "Ahd-i Milli" was accepted and published by the parliament on February 17. This nationalist group also declared that they would not accept any peace program other than the Misak-ı Milli.¹³

The last Ottoman Parliament thus responded to those who wanted to share their lands with the "Misak-ı milli" decisions. The effect of this response led to the decision of the Entente states to occupy Istanbul. On March 5, 1920, this situation was discussed in London and the excuses for the occupation were tried to be put forward. Subsequently, the occupation of Istanbul began on March 15-16. Many buildings were seized and weapons were placed at important points in the city.¹⁴

This occupation is interpreted in the sources as an intensification of an already existing occupation and characterized as a coup d'état. Many state institutions were raided and people were arrested. The most important and grave situation was that many politicians, journalists and other nationalists were taken from their beds and arrested. In addition, the British said that this coup was not against them and aimed to change the government. Salih Pasha, who was in charge at the time, anticipated that Damat Ferit would later form the government and considered it patriotic to stay in power, but later he could not stand it and had to resign.¹⁵

One of the main objectives of the coup carried out by the British was the elimination of the Parliament. In this direction, they raided the Assembly on March 16, 1920 and arrested some of the parliamentarians. Rauf Bey was also among these parliamentarians. Thus, the occupation directly targeted Turkish democracy and the Meclis-i Mebusan (Ottoman Parliament) suspended its session on March 18, both in protest and out of security concerns. Later, on April 11, the Sultan completely closed the Assembly. Apart from the MPs who were arrested and sent into exile, many deputies began to flee to Anatolia after Damat Ferit formed the government.¹⁶

Even before the Parliament was raided, the British began unlawful arrests in order to weaken the Turkish bureaucracy. Among the first arrests were Ziya Gökalp, MP for Akdağ Madeni, Hüseyin Cahit, MP for Istanbul, Süleyman Sudi, MP for Lazistan and Hüseyin Tosun, MP for

¹² Bilal Şimşir (1985), *Malta Sürgünleri*, Bilgi Yayınları, İstanbul, p.147-151

¹³ Güneş, *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, p.93-95.; *Osmanlı Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 17 Şubat 1920, V:2, p.143-146.; *Vatan*, 17 Şubat 1920, p.1.

¹⁴ Mithat Atabay (2015), *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi*, Paradigma Yayınları, Edirne, p.81-82.

¹⁵ Sina Akşin (2001), *Ana Çizgileriyle Türkiye'nin Yakın Tarihi*, İmaj Yayıncılık Ankara, p.134-135.

¹⁶ Güneş, *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, s.95-96.; Akşin, *Ana Çizgileriyle Türkiye'nin Yakın Tarihi*, p.135-137.

Karasi. In addition to these, many other bureaucrats in senior bureaucratic positions were also arrested and sent to the "Bekiraga Company", the famous exile and prison of that period.¹⁷

When the parliament was raided, the arrested deputies were sent to Malta on a ship named "Benbo". Each of them was given an exile number. Some of these deputies are as follows: Rauf Bey (Sivas), Hüseyin Cahit (Istanbul), Hasan Fehmi Bey (Sinop), Fazıl Berki Bey (Çankırı), Hüseyin Kadri Bey (Karesi), Sâlâh Cimnoz (Istanbul), Mehmet Sabri Bey (Saruhan), Süleyman Sudi Bey (Lazistan), Ubeydullah Efendi (İzmir), Rıza Hamit Bey (Bursa), Ali Cenani Bey (Antep), Hacı Abdil Bey (Speaker of the Assembly), Halil Bey (Menteşe), Celal Nuri Bey (Gallipoli), Mustafa Vasıf Bey (Sivas), Mehmet Şeref Bey (Edirne), Ahmet Faik Bey (Edirne), etc. The number of those deported to Malta together with the parliamentarians was 147, some of whom managed to escape afterwards.¹⁸

3- New Parliamentary Elections and Opening of the Grand National Assembly (BMM)

Upon the dissolution of the last Ottoman Assembly, which held its last session on March 18, 1920 and had a very short life after the British occupation of Istanbul, Mustafa Kemal Pasha thought that a new constituent assembly should be convened in Ankara with the participation of the people. Accordingly, he issued a circular on March 19, 1920, calling for elections to be held in Anatolia as soon as possible and for the opening of a parliament that would save "the integrity of the homeland and the freedom of the nation" with the participation of the people and make decisions on behalf of the nation.¹⁹

In this communiqué on the elections on behalf of the " Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ", it was decided to convene a parliament with extraordinary powers in Ankara to replace the Parliament, which had been disbanded by the occupation forces. In order to implement this decision, Mustafa Kemal Pasha notified the provinces, independent provinces and corps commands. According to this Five deputies would be elected from each province, regardless of the population. The deputies of the disbanded Last Mebusan Assembly could also come to Ankara and serve as deputies. In order to implement the elections quickly, there will be no second electoral election. Instead, similar to the 1877 elections, a group consisting of previously elected second electors, members of the administrative and municipal councils, and members of the Mudafaa-i Hukuk would elect the deputies.²⁰ The elections would be based on sanjaks and the highest local administrator of each region would be responsible for the elections. In the light of these articles, it was requested that the elections be held within 15 days at the latest on the basis of secret ballot and open counting and that the deputies elected on the basis of absolute majority should reach Ankara as soon as possible.²¹ In this way, Mustafa Kemal Pasha expressed that the existing problem of independence could be solved by a constituent assembly to be convened in Ankara with the participation of the people.²²

With the arrival of the election directive to the relevant units of the country, the election work had begun. Approximately 13 days after the circular (March 19, 1920), MPs elected from Sivas,

¹⁷ Mehmet Akif Bal (2022), "İşgalcilerin Milli Mücadele'yi Kadrosuz Bırakma Çabası: Malta Sürgünleri (1919-1921)" *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları*, 132/261, p.340-341.

¹⁸ Bilal N. Şimşir, "Malta Sürgünleri" *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/malta-surgunleri/> (09.06.22023)

¹⁹ Güneş, *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, p.109-114.

²⁰ İhsan Köse (2002) "Atatürk'ün Ankara'ya Gelişi ve TBMM'nin Açılması", *Türkler*, V:16, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara. p.38-39.; Erol Tuncer (2002), *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Seçimler*, TESAV, Ankara, p.27-28

²¹ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (2011), *Nutuk*, Berikan, Ankara, p.300.

²² Güneş, *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, p.111.

Kayseri, Kastamonu, Yozgat and Tokat started to leave for Ankara.²³ Subsequently, elections were held in most of the country in accordance with the circular. During this period, elections could not be held in some constituencies due to some reasons. In regions such as Gallipoli, Kırk Kilise and Tekfurdağı, elections could not be held due to occupation. In contrast to these regions, representatives from occupied regions such as Adana, Mersin, Kozan, Cebelbereket, Kars, Ardahan and Batum participated in the parliament. During this election period, which was characterized by extraordinary circumstances, a total of 66 MPs were elected from 66 livas.²⁴

Before the opening of the Assembly in Ankara, a place where it could carry out its activities was sought. As a result, a building that had been built as the Committee of Union and Progress Club was chosen for the assembly's convening activities. In this building, the parliament was inaugurated at 13.45 on Friday, April 23, 1920, with the participation of 115 elected members who had arrived in Ankara (Previously, the opening of the parliament was planned to be held on April 2. However, in order to make this day more sacred, the inauguration was held the following day).²⁵ Former Director of Education, Sinop Mebusu Şerif Bey, who had attended the first session of the Assembly as the oldest member, presided. In his first speech, he referred to the assembly as the "Grand National Assembly". The next day, on April 24, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was elected by the assembly as the president of the parliament.²⁶

This parliament, which was inaugurated only 12 days after the official closure of the last Ottoman Parliament, contains unprecedented features and shows how the Turkish people are committed to the National Struggle and democracy under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The First Grand National Assembly, with the title of "Constituent Assembly", led to the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and began to exercise the right to govern on behalf of the Turkish people.²⁷

4- Former Ottoman MPs who were able to join the Grand National Assembly and the problems they faced in reaching Ankara.

Elections continued in many places even after the opening of the Grand National Assembly. Some constituencies were able to complete their work very late due to the extraordinary circumstances of the country. Some MPs resigned after their election, refusing to accept office, while others were deemed to have resigned due to absenteeism. Along with the elected MPs, former Istanbul Ottoman MPs who were able to come to Ankara also participated in the work. As of June 2, the former deputies who entered the parliament were presented to the parliament from time to time, and after October, the decision on the participation of the deputies from the Istanbul Assembly of Deputies in the Grand National Assembly was abolished. However, this decision did not cover the MPs imprisoned in Malta since they were already considered as MPs.²⁸

In line with these decisions, 349 deputies elected from the electoral districts, 88 deputies from the last Ottoman parliament who were able to participate in the last Ottoman parliament, and 88 deputies from the Maltese exile and those who resigned from the parliament started to work with

²³ Güneş, *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, p.116.

²⁴ Ahmet Demirel (2014), *İlk Meclis'in Vekilleri*, İletişim Yayınları, second edition, İstanbul, p.79-98.

²⁵ Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu (1960), Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin Hukuki Statüsü ve İhtilâlcî Karakteri". *BELLETEREN*, 25, p.647.

²⁶ *Birinci Büyük Millet Meclisi* (1999), TBMM Basımevi, Ankara, p.14-15

²⁷ Mustafa Küçük (2002), "Birinci TBMM'nin Açılışı ve Anlamı", *Türkler*, V:16, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara. p.15.

²⁸ Demirel, *İlk Meclis'in Vekilleri*, p.75-77.

a capacity of 403 deputies. According to these numbers, the remaining deputies from the Ottoman parliament, which is the subject of this study, are indicated in the table below:²⁹

Table 1: Members of Parliament from the Ottoman Mebusan Assembly

Constituency	Members of Parliaments	Constituency	Members of Parliaments
Amasya	Bekir Sami Bey Ömer Lütfi Bey	Karesi	Hacim Muhittin Bey
Ankara	Hacı Atıf Bey Hilmi Bey Ömer Mümtaz Bey Rüstem Bey	Kastamonu	Besim Bey Dr. Suad Bey Yusuf Kemal Bey
Antalya	Hamdullah Suphi Bey	Kayseri	Ahmed Hilmi Bey Rifat Bey
Aydın	Cami Bey Emin Efendi	Kırşehir	Rıza Bey
Bitlis	Resul Bey Sadullah Bey	Konya	Hacı Bekir Efendi Kâzım Hüsnü Bey Memed Vehbi Efendi Musa Kâzım Efendi Ömer Vehbi Efendi
Bolu	Cevad Abbas Bey Tunalı Hilmi Bey	Kütahya	Haydar Bey Ragıp Bey
Bursa	Hasan Fehmi Bey Osman Nuri Bey	Lazistan	Osman Bey
Canik	Emin Bey	Malatya	Feyzi Efendi
Çorum	İsmet Bey	Maraş	Tahsin Bey
Dersim	Hasan Hayri Bey	Mardin	MitatBey
Elaziz	Muhittin Bey Mustafa Şükrü Efendi	Muş	Osman Kadri Bey
Ergani	Kadri Bey Rüştü Bey	Niğde	Ata Bey
Erzurum	Celâlettin Arif Bey Hüseyin Avni Bey Süleyman Necati Bey Zihni Bey	Oltu	Rüstem Bey Yasin Bey
Eskişehir	Abdullah Azmi Efendi Hacı Veli Efendi	Saruhan	İbrahim Süreyya Bey Mahmut Celâl Bey Raşid Bey

²⁹ Fahri Çoker (1994), *Türk Parlamento Tarihi: Milli Mücadele ve TBMM I. Dönem 1919-23*, V:1, TBMM Vakfı Yayınları, Ankara, p.39-989-992. (According to this source, the number of deputies who came to Ankara from the Ottoman parliament was determined as 78, as some of the deputies could not be counted as deputies in the Grand National Assembly for different reasons).

The Problems Experienced by the Last Ottoman Parliamentarians Who Were Able To Join the Grand National Assembly in the First Term in Terms of Reaching the Parliament

Genç	Celal Bey	Siird	Halil Hulki Efendi
Hakkâri	Mazhar Müflid Bey	Sinop	Dr. Rıza Nur Bey
İçel	Ali Rıza Efendi	Sivas	Hüseyin Rauf Bev Vasıf Bey Ziya Bey
İstanbul	Ahmed Ferid Bey Ahmed Muhtar Bey Dr. Adnan Bey	Siverek	Bekir Sıtkı Bey
İzmir	Refet Bey (Paşa) Yunus Nadi Bey	Trabzon	Ali Şükrü Bey Hüsrev Bey
İzmit	Sırrı Bey	Van	Hakkı Bey Haydar Bey
Kangırı	Behçet Bey Tevfik Efendi	Yozgad	Bahri Bey İsmail Fazıl Paşa
Karahisarısahib	Mustafa Hulusi Efendi Ömer Lütfi Bey		

As can be seen from the table above, 20% of the members of parliament were from Istanbul.³⁰ With those who came from Istanbul, both the last heroic deed of the last Ottoman parliament was confirmed and the Turkish democratic life continued uninterrupted. Many of these deputies lived a life of exile, were imprisoned in Bekiraga Ward and exiled to Malta. Some of them fled to Anatolia before the British raid and took part in the National Struggle. Some of them hid in Istanbul and the surrounding regions and came to Ankara from time to time in different ways and forms and continued to serve as MPs. In addition, those who were imprisoned in Malta and could not escape were also considered as deputies by the parliament. Most of them suffered a lot of hardship in order to achieve the liberation of the homeland in a heroic way and to achieve this with the people through the National Struggle. Their struggle to come to Ankara from Istanbul was very complicated.

Former MPs who were able to escape from Istanbul through certain means were occasionally included in the Grand National Assembly and were presented. After a certain period of time, this process was discontinued. During this period, the stories of their journey from Istanbul to Ankara were especially included in the memoirs. During this period, some deputies could not escape from Istanbul and were exiled to Malta. Ali Cenani Bey, MP for Antep, and Hacı İlyas Sami Efendi could not pass to Ankara because they were captured. The exile to Malta and the transition to Ankara took place at the same time. It was stated that during the days of escape to Ankara, some deputies were forcibly taken from their bedrooms, Celalettin Arif Bey İsmail Fazıl Pasha and some other deputies hid from the British raid and spent the night around İzmit. Cami and Adnan Bey, also former MPs, had to spend the night

³⁰ Demirel, *İlk Meclis'in Vekilleri*, p.161.

in Gebze. Sivas MP Sami Bey and Antalya MP Hamdullah Suphi were able to reach Ankara on April 8, saving their lives.³¹

In the memoirs of some deputies, the difficulties and dangers of reaching Ankara are described even more clearly. Ahmet Hilmi Bey, a deputy in the last Ottoman parliament, tells in detail the story of how he and his friends traveled from Kuzguncuk to Ankara. While hiding in Kuzguncuk, he and his friends plan how they can cross to Anatolia. Accordingly, they think that there are very strict controls on trains and ferries. Finally, they decided that it would be easier to take the ferry over Mudanya. They first met with Abdullah Nuri Bey, the director of documents at the administration of sea routes. He informed them that the ferry captain would hide them during the British controls. Ahmet Hilmi Bey then found the ferry departing from the Tophane dock. Together with Ahmet Rifat Bey, MP for Kayseri, Nurullah Bey, Bahri Bey, MP for Yozgat, and Mustafa Bey, MP for Elaziz, they set off on this ferry.

The ferry stopped when it came near the Maiden's Tower (Kızkulesi). The British checked the ship but could not find the MPs. The ferry also raised a yellow flag and continued on its way. When they arrived in Mudanya, the MPs wanted to board the train after the police control. The police commissioner in charge there refused to let them board the train and said that he would give them permission if approval was received from Ankara. The parliamentarians stayed there that night and after the permission was granted, they left for Bursa by train. Here they met with Rasim Bey, MP for Sivas and Hasan Fehmi Bey, MP for Gümüşhane. Having regained their freedom, they soon went to Ankara and began to fulfill their duties.³²

The Ottoman parliamentarians thus tried to escape secretly and reach Ankara. At many points the British were acting as outposts to catch them. Those who could not escape were captured and exiled to Malta. Thus, the MPs were divided between Ankara and Malta. In the early days, approximately 69 parliamentarians were able to come to Ankara and join the BMM. Eleven of them, including Ali Çetinkaya, Ahmet Faik, Mehmet Şeref, Ali Cenani, Celal Nuri, Cemal Pasha, Hasan Tahsin Hacı İlyas Sami and Rauf Orbay were captured and taken to Malta.³³

Those who could escape from Istanbul without being captured were gradually brought back and presented in the parliament. This practice, which was stopped after a certain period of time, was not stopped for the deputies in Malta and these former deputies were considered as deputies even if they could not come. Even proposals were made in the parliament to provide them with a salary.³⁴ The liberation process was a bit long and bureaucratic for the people there. Anticipating that this might be the case, Mustafa Kemal devised a plan two months in advance and decided to arrest the foreign officers in Anatolia. This step would later be used in a possible prisoner exchange.³⁵

This retaliation raised the hopes of the prisoners in Malta to be freed. From time to time, some exiles were released and sometimes there were cases of desertion. Apart from these, the fact that the British wanted to save their own prisoners and that they could not fully accuse the Turkish prisoners made a prisoner exchange agreement with the BMM obligatory. In such an environment, it was decided to exchange prisoners after the negotiations between British High Commissioner Rumbold and Hamit Bey on October 01, 1921. Subsequently, it was decided to

³¹ Bilal N. Şimşir (1985), *Malta Sürgünleri*, Bilgi Yayınları, Ankara, p. 188-190.

³² Ahmet Hilmi Kalaç (1960), *Kendi Kitabım*, Yeni Matbaa, p.171-173.; Hurşit Çalika (1992), *Ahmet Rifat Çalika'nın Anıları*, İstanbul.

³³ Şimşir, *Malta Sürgünleri*, p.190-192.

³⁴ Çalika, *Ahmet Rifat Çalika'nın Anıları*, p.68.; Mehmet Akif Bal (2007), *Sürgün Tükler*, Gahura Kitabevi, İstanbul, p.55.

³⁵ Şimşir, *Malta Sürgünleri*, p.175.

bring all Turkish prisoners to Inebolu.³⁶ On October 25, Rauf Orbay stated that he understood the moments of the surrender of the Turks in Malta with a communiqué. According to him:

"The next day, October 1, 1921, we were made ready to move at any moment until the evening with the notification made. It seems that the movement will only take place tomorrow. The British would not be so disorganized. On Sunday, October 2, Gat, the commander of the camp, informed us in the morning through Hüseyin Kadri Bey that our movement had been delayed "because we were waiting for a telegram from Anatolia to inform us when and to which pier the British prisoners would arrive". Here is another British inconvenience. We prepared for our departure, we packed our belongings, the restaurant was dismantled, the accounts were settled, and everyone was eagerly awaiting our departure, but what is this treatment but torture?"³⁷

According to Rauf Orbay, it is understood that the British dragged the matter out for the sake of guarantee. But in the end, 48 exiles were met by Mustafa Kemal Pasha in Inebolu and taken to Ankara.³⁸ Thus, the MPs who were in exile in Malta also reached Ankara. Thus, the number of deputies of the Assembly increased from time to time and finally, this practice ended when Cafer Tayyar Pasha³⁹, the deputy of Edirne, who had been a prisoner in Greece, joined the Assembly on April 11, 1923.



5- Conclusion

Throughout its history, the Turkish Parliament has experienced many coups, memorandums and closures. However, there has never been such a tyrannical intervention in both Turkish independence and democracy as the British occupation of Istanbul. The majority of the last Ottoman Parliament was composed of patriots who supported the national struggle. Their decision that the homeland could not be shared forced the Entente powers to use force in many parts of the country.

The acceleration of the occupation of Istanbul, the raid on the parliament, the arrest of Turkist bureaucrats and deputies were the most important consequences of this. Those who were able to escape the British pressure quickly moved to Ankara and participated in the National Struggle. The British were able to arrest more than 140 Turkish intellectuals. Among them were 11-12 members of parliament. On the other hand, 60-odd deputies were able to move from Istanbul to Ankara.

In fact, both the Turkish national struggle and democracy were more successful than this repression. Both the national struggle became more organized and legitimate with the opening of the parliament in the mainland and people started to unite more as a result of this pressure. If Rauf Orbay had listened to Mustafa Kemal Pasha beforehand, these arrests might have been less. Because he had predicted that the parliament could not function in Istanbul and that patriotic deputies would be arrested. Nevertheless, Rauf Orbay's not being afraid of the British was recorded in history as a heroic act.

³⁶ Şimşir, *Malta Sürgünleri*, p.392-395.

³⁷ Rauf Orbay (1993), *Cehennem Değirmeni 2*, Emre Yayınları, İstanbul, p. 49.

³⁸ Bilal N. Şimşir, "Malta Sürgünleri" *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*,
<https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/malta-surgunleri/> (09.06.2023)

³⁹ Derya Genç Acar, "Cafer Tayyar Eğilmez (1878-1958)" *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*,
<https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/cafer-tayyar-egilmez-1887-1958/> (15.07.2023)

As a result, the last deputies of the Ottoman Empire were divided between the island of Malta and Ankara. Those who were able to escape were able to come to Ankara by overcoming difficult controls. Those who remained in Malta were rescued with the exchange of officers who were arrested by Mustafa Kemal Pasha's foresight. This is how the National Struggle gained momentum and strength. The foundations of the new state were laid and Ankara was seen as a more serious power by international organizations and states.

Bibliography

1- Official sources and archival documents

Birinci Büyük Millet Meclisi (1999), TBMM Basımevi, Ankara.

BOA (State Archives Presidency Ottoman Archives), HR.SYS. 2461/68.

Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi (Minutes of the Ottoman Assembly of Mebusan).

Osmanlı Belgelerinde Birinci Dünya Savaşı I (2013), T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, (Proj. Dir.) Uğur Ünal, İstanbul.

2- Newspapers

İkdam

Sabah

Vatan

3- Articles, books and book chapters

Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal (2011), *Nutuk*, Berikan, Ankara.

Akşin, Sina (1976), *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Millî Mücadele*, Cem Yayınları, İstanbul.

----- (2001), *Ana Çizgileriyle Türkiye'nin Yakın Tarihi*, İmaj Yayıncılık Ankara.

----- (2012), "Siyasal Tarih (1908-1923)", *Yakınçağ Türkiye Tarihi*, Prepared by Sina Akşin, Bülent Tanör, Korkut Boratov, Milliyet Yayınları, İstanbul

Atabay, Mithat (2015), *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi*, Paradigma Yayınları, Edirne.

Bal, Mehmet Akif (2022), "İşgalcilerin Milli Mücadele'yi Kadrosuz Bırakma Çabası: Malta Sürgünleri (1919-1921)" *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları*, 132/261, p.327-368.

Bıyıklıoğlu, Tevfik (1960), "Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin Hukuki Statüsü ve İhtilâlcî Karakteri". *BELLETTEN*, 25, p.637-664.

Çalika, Hurşit (1992), *Ahmet Rifat Çalika'nın Anıları*, İstanbul.

Çoker, Fahri (1994), *Türk Parlamento Tarihi: Milli Mücadele ve TBMM I. Dönem 1919-23*, V.1, TBMM Vakfı Yayınları, Ankara.

Demir, Fevzi (2007), *Osmanlı Devleti'nde II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi ve Meclis-i Mebusan Seçimleri*, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara.

Demirel, Ahmet (2014), *İlk Meclis'in Vekilleri*, İletişim Yayınları, second edition, İstanbul.

Eraslan, Cezmi; Olgun, Kenan (2006), *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Meşrutiyet ve Parlamento*, 3F Yayınevi, İstanbul.

Genç Acar, Derya, “Cafer Tayyar Eğilmez (1878-1958)” *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/cafer-tayyar-egilmez-1887-1958/> (15.07.2023)

Güneş, İhsan (2017), *Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri*, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul.

Kalaç, Ahmet Hilmi (1960), *Kendi Kitabım*, Yeni Matbaa.

Karaca, Taha Niyazi (2004), *Son Osmanlı Meclis-i Mebusan Seçimleri*, TTK, Ankara.

Köse, İhsan (2002) “Atatürk'ün Ankara'ya Gelişi ve TBMM'nin Açılması”, *Türkler*, V:16, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara, p.33-48.

Küçük, Mustafa (2002), “Birinci TBMM'nin Açılışı ve Anlamı”, *Türkler*, V:16, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara, p.8-32.

Orbay, Rauf (1993), *Cehennem Değirmeni 2*, Emre Yayınları, İstanbul.

Öztürk, Cemil, "Mondros Mütarekesi", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/mondros-mutarekesi> (06.09.2023).

Şimşir, Bilal N. (1985), *Malta Sürgünleri*, Bilgi Yayınları, Ankara.

-----“Malta Sürgünleri” *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/malta-surgunleri/> (09.06.2023)

Tuna, Ozan (2014), “Amiral Souchon'un Donanma Komutanı Olması ve Rus Limanlarının Bombalanması” *OTAM*, 36, Güz, p,201-227.

Tunaya, Tarık Zafer (1989), *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler III*, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.

Tuncer, Erol (2002), *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Seçimler*, TESAV, Ankara.