

T.C.
MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
SİYASET BİLİMİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ANABİLİM DALI
ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER (İNG) BİLİM DALI

**ERASING MEMORY BY TRANSFER OF PROPERTY:
THE STATE, PUBLIC ENTERPRISES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE ABANDONED PROPERTIES DURING THE
EARLY REPUBLICAN ERA**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

ALİ EMRE ELDEM

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FOREWORD

I would like to thank my thesis adviser, Assistant Professor Nurşen Gürboğa Koraltürk for her constant support and guidance and of course for her endless patience, my bachelor thesis adviser Professor Esra Danacıođlu Tamur for her help and encouragement, my dearest family members Mehmet, Ayşegül and Levent Eldem who have always given me complete financial and moral support and Duygu Yayla who has always been there for me and continued to support me despite the obstacles I have experienced. I offer my thanks to all friends for encouraging me to continue writing despite the difficulty of the subject.

ABSTRACT

The aim of the thesis is to examine the distribution process of the abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim minorities, the actors of the distribution process and the public institutions and non-governmental organizations who took a share from abandoned properties during the Early Republican Era. For this purpose, documents from Prime Ministry Republican Archives and local newspapers published in Turkey are used as primary sources.

The thesis argues that the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties by the central authority and local agents of the state to various civil society organizations served the removal of the memory and the physical traces left by the non-Muslim minorities as a part of nation building project of the Kemalist elite and the Turkification process of the society during the Early Republican Era. The transfer of the abandoned properties to the civil society organizations by the state through selling, renting or granting resulted in establishment of a dependent civil society to the state. The state, various public enterprises and the non-governmental organizations were connected to each other directly by the process of transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim minorities. As a result, the state became prime agent of the disappearance of physical traces of the non-Muslim communities from the earth and collective memory in collaboration with the civil society organizations.

Keywords: Abandoned properties, Emval-i Metruke, civil society, collective memory, transfer and distribution, non-Muslim minorities, Early Republican Era.

ÖZET

Tezin amacı, gayrimüslim azınlıklar tarafından bırakılan Emval-i Metruke'nin Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nde dağıtım süreçlerini, dağıtım sürecinin aktörlerini ve Emval-i Metruke'den pay alan kamu kurumları ile sivil toplum örgütlerini incelemektir. Bu amaçla, T.C. Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivleri'nden alınan belgeler ve Türkiye'de yayınlanan yerel gazeteler birincil kaynaklar olarak kullanılmaktadır.

Tez, merkezi otorite ve devletin yerel unsurları tarafından Emval-i Metruke'nin çeşitli sivil toplum örgütlerine devredilmesi ve dağıtılmasının, Kemalist seçkinlerin ulus inşa projesi ve toplumun Türkleştirilmesi sürecinin bir parçası olarak gayrimüslim azınlıkların hafızasının ve fiziksel izlerinin kaldırılmasına hizmet ettiğini savunmaktadır. Emval-i Metruke'nin devlet tarafından satılması, kiralanması veya hibe edilmesi yoluyla sivil toplum kuruluşlarına devredilmesi, bağımlı bir sivil toplumun kurulmasına neden olmuştur. Devlet, çeşitli kamu kuruluşları ve sivil toplum örgütleri, gayrimüslim azınlıkların bıraktığı Emval-i Metruke'nin devri ve dağıtım süreci ile birbirlerine doğrudan bağlandı. Sonuç olarak devlet, sivil toplum örgütleriyle işbirliği içinde gayrimüslim cemaatlerin fiziksel izlerinin yeryüzünden ve kolektif hafızadan kaybolmasının ana unsuru haline geldi.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Terkedilmiş mallar, Emval-i Metruke, sivil toplum, toplumsal hafıza, transfer ve dağıtım, gayrimüslim azınlıklar, Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the thesis is to examine and reveal the distribution process of the abandoned properties left by non-Muslim minorities in Anatolia, the actors of the distribution process, the public institutions and non-governmental organizations who took a share from the abandoned properties during the Early Republican Era. For this reason, documents found in the Prime Ministry Republican Archives and local newspapers published in Turkey are used as primary sources.

The thesis argues that the transfer and distribution of abandoned properties by the central authority and local agents and organs of the state to various civil society organizations such as such as *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (later its name was to be changed to *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, Child Protection Agency), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society, later its name changed to *Türk Hava Kurumu*, Turkish Aeronautical Association), various sports clubs and societies, as well as to the Republican People's Party served the removal of the memory and the physical traces left by the non-Muslim minorities as a part of nation building project of the Kemalist elite and the Turkification process of the society during the Early Republican Era. The transfer of the abandoned properties to the civil society organizations by the state through selling, renting or granting resulted in establishment of a dependent and supportive civil society to the state. The state, various public enterprises and the non-governmental organizations were connected to each other directly by the process of transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim minorities. As a result, the state became prime agent and implementer of the disappearance of physical traces of the non-Muslim communities from Turkey and collective memory in collaboration with the civil society organizations.

The main sources used in the thesis were found in the State Archives and local newspapers published throughout Anatolia. The announcements and advertisements in the local newspapers are the main sources for the tracking of the abandoned properties on a regional scale. As a primary source, the local newspapers are very important, because the land

registry cadastre archives are closed to the public and the access to these archives are very limited. Thus, these announcements and advertisements give us very valuable information. They provide nothing about who acquired these properties, but inform us about which properties were sold, rented or granted to the locals of the provinces in question.

There has been a rich collection of literature on the abandoned properties which made great contribution to the field. For instance, Akçam's and Kurt's book "Kanunların Ruhu Emval-i Metruke Kanunlarında Soykırımın İzini Sürmek" deals with the abandoned properties from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey in the light of laws and illuminates the legal background of the abandoned properties and answers how they were seized by the state and were used for its own purpose.¹

Similarly, Onaran's two-volume book "Emval-i Metrukenin Tasfiyesi" reveals the history of the economic policy that the Union and Progress government and after it the Republican Turkish governments built on the basis of the confiscation and distribution of non-Muslim property left during in the First World War. Books also pointed out that the construction of the nation-state in the 1920s was based on the economic policy of the based on Union and Progress, and in this sense there was an organic continuity between Unionist and Kemalist economic policies. It is also an analysis of how the Ottoman Empire and the republican state in the Early Republican Era early years of the Republic were 'fed' the Muslim-Turkish capital with the abandoned properties.²

Another study, Kurt's and Çeğin's book "Kıyam ve Kıtıl Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet" focuses on the Ottoman and Turkish history, the rebellion and the massacres, the intertwining of the relationship of victimization and subjugation. The study centered upon on the relationship between nationalist ideologies shaping the last period of the Ottoman Empire and the practice of political violence by reviewing it from different perspectives. The book at the beginning of the 19th and early 20th centuries, examines ethnic engineering and homogenization projects of the state at the end of the 19th and the early 20th

¹ Taner Akçam, Ümit Kurt. **Kanunların Ruhu Emval-i Metruke Kanunlarında Soykırımın İzini Sürmek**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012.

² Nevzat Onaran. **Emval-i Metrukenin Tasfiyesi I: Osmanlı'da Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi (1914-1919)**, İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2013. Nevzat Onaran. **Emval-i Metrukenin Tasfiyesi II: Cumhuriyet'te Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi**, İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2013.

centuries, are being studied on the basis of state social engineering and how the massive violence repertoires determined the disintegration from the empire. It shows us continuity between the two eras instead of rupture in the context of the transfer of abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities. Christian Gerlach's and Güven Gürkan Öztan's and Ömer Turan's articles on the book is especially vital to the understanding of the topic of the thesis.³ Gerlach's article reveals the justification of the mass violence and its relationship with the abandoned properties. The second one enlightens us about the reproduction of memories and its relationship with the remembering and forgetting process for the nation state project.⁴

The draft paper written by Zürcher, "Unionists and Kemalists: Refugees, Killers and Nation Builders",⁵ discusses the common ground that political elite of Republic of Turkey shared: that of having grown up in the Ottoman Balkans and Aegean Islands and of becoming refugees when these areas were lost in 1911-1913, as well as that of having been members of the Committee of Union and Progress that brought about the constitutional revolution of 1908 and that ruled the Ottoman Empire in its final years. The paper also reveals how their experiences in the Balkans before 1913 and in Anatolia during First World War shaped their policies in the Early Republican Era.

Keyder's book "Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar" examines how capitalist development is shaped in the Turkish history. The function of the Turkish state while the development of the bourgeoisie are followed during the Turkish political history. He also elaborates how national bourgeoisie of the Republic of Turkey was formed and fed by the state thanks to the abandoned properties.⁶

Fuat Dündar's book "İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-18)"

³ Gerlach, Christian. "İştirak ve Vurgun: Ermenilerin İmhası 1915-1923", Kurt, Ümit. Çeğin, Güney eds, **Kıyam ve Kıtıl Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet**, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul: 2015. Öztan, Güven Gürkan. Turan, Ömer. "1915 ve Devlet Akli: Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminden Günümüze İnkarcılığın Yeniden Üretim Biçimleri", Kurt, Ümit. Çeğin, Güney eds, **Kıyam ve Kıtıl Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet**, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul: 2015.

⁴ Güney Çeğin, Ümit Kurt. **Kıyam ve Kıtıl Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet**, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul: 2015.

⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher. **Unionists and Kemalists: Refugees, Killers and Nation Builders, Draft Paper**, https://www.academia.edu/22981822/Unionists_and_Kemalists_Refugees_Killers_and_Nation-builders, Access Date: 21.05.2017.

⁶ Çağlar Keyder. **Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010.

examines the immigration and resettlement policies implemented by the Committee of Union and Progress in the direction of the ideological transformation of Ottomanism towards Turkism. In his book, what ways Union and Progress in parallel with the ideological transformation from Ottomanism towards Turkism. The book reveals by means of which ways Union and Progress tried to solve the problems of refugees and how the Muslim communities were settled in accordance with a policy that excluded the non-Muslims from the framework of nation state and involved their properties confiscated.⁷ Fuat Dündar, in his book “Modern Türkiye’nin Şifresi İttihat ve Terakki’nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)”, formed with reports, books, research delegations and magazines published by the Committee of Union and Progress. The book reviewed the policy of relocation, deportation and resettlement of Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, Kurdish, Jewish, Nestorians and Syriacs and discusses how these policies were shaped and by whom. The book suggests that the Turkification and Islamization of Anatolia with reliable elements are an important aspect of the nationalism project of the Committee of Union and Progress.⁸

Sezgi Durgun’s book “Memalik-i Şahane’den Vatan’a”, shows the imagination of the motherland developed by different nationalist understandings of the Republic during its establishment.⁹ It focuses mainly on geography text books of the Early Republican Era, among how the memory is configured through erasure, while demonstrating how the ethno-cultural understanding of nationalism and assimilationist policies shape memories and imaginations on the homeland.

Ayhan Aktar’s book “Türk Milliyetçiliği, Gayrimüslimler ve Ekonomik Dönüşüm” reveals about the controversy about the Armenian deportation and the formal fortifications built around it. In one of the article, Aktar analyses the Ottoman Parliamentary records in order to enlighten the post-World War discussions about the violence and deportation during the First World War. The article on the Turkish-Greek population exchange discusses how Turkish and Greek nationalisms floundered around to make their states homogenous, how they blatantly changed people's lives, and diplomacy in this process. In another part of the

⁷ Fuat Dündar. **İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-18)**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002.

⁸ Fuat Dündar. **Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008.

⁹ Sezgi Durgun, **Memalik-i Şahane'den Vatan'a**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2011.

book related to economic life, he writes on another front of *Milli İktisat* debates. The port city and its cosmopolitan characteristics are evolving through the silk sector in Bursa and the *Şark Ticaret Yıllıkları* (Oriental Trade Annuals), as well as the way in which the cosmopolitan social fabric of the port cities transforms into a monochrome structure.¹⁰ Ayhan Aktar's another book "Varlık Vergisi ve 'Türkleştirme' Politikaları" examines the implementation of *Varlık Vergisi* not only as a tax law but also as an instrument of Turkification policy. In addition to the implementation of the *Varlık Vergisi*, it also complements the homogenization rising up step by step in this sense, like the Turkish-Greek population exchange and the 1934 Thracian Jewish events. It depicts the first wave of Turkification from Lausanne to the end of World War II.¹¹ The book also discusses the historical experience of Turkification and on what and how society is remembered, which is also very important in terms of the production of social memories.

In his book on Turkification of economy, Murat Koraltürk emphasizes the economical transformations in Early Republican Era and how the non-Muslim presence in the economy disappeared gradually during the Republic of Turkey. He examines various practices during the Early Republican Era such as the opening of the economic field to the "national", the provision of domestic capital accumulation and the homogenization of business life. In his book he discusses the Turkification of the economy and the empowerment of the new nation-state economically. While presenting the initiatives and practices which aimed at capitalizing on capital, labour and occupations, he discusses in a comprehensive way how the Turkish nation-state prepared the road to Turkification of the economy. The book also discusses the corruption about the distribution of the abandoned properties by revealing the malpractices and looting of these properties during and just after the Turkish-Greek population exchange.¹²

The articles written by Dickran Kouymijan also reveal the cultural devastation of the non-Muslims as well as how their properties were channelled to the other purposes -it will be evaluated in the chapters- later used in the Early Republican Era. These articles also emphasize the gravity of the situation for that the culture heritage of non-Muslim

¹⁰ Ayhan Aktar, *Türk Milliyetçiliği, Gayrimüslimler ve Ekonomik Dönüşüm, İletişim Yayınları*, İstanbul: 2006.

¹¹ Ayhan Aktar. *Varlık Vergisi ve "Türkleştirme" Politikaları*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2014.

¹² Murat Koraltürk, *Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2011.

communities were wiped out all over the Anatolia.¹³

Although these works have contributed to the link between abandoned properties, the state and the formation of Muslim-Turkish bourgeoisie they have not elaborated the relationship between the state, public enterprises and civil society in the context of the abandoned properties. This thesis aims to contribute to the general literature on the question of abandoned properties by focusing on the relationship between state and civil society organizations in the process of the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties.

Parallel to this aim, the thesis tries to answer a set of questions: How did the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties affect the collective memory and create an amnesia in all segments of society after the disappearance of the non-Muslim communities, why and how did the state remove the memory of non-Muslim minorities by means of distribution of the abandoned properties, what was the legal framework of the distribution process of the abandoned properties, which state institutions were involved in the distribution process, what kind of channels were used, which non-governmental organizations take a share in the distribution process, and last how did the transfer of abandoned properties shape the relationship between the state and non-governmental organizations?

The first chapter will try to answer the first two questions. The aim of the chapter is to examine erasure of the collective memory by the state during the era of Union and Progress and the Early Republican Era of Turkey, and show how formation of a dependent civil society, a nation state formation and memory erasure are considerably related to each other in the Unionist and Kemalist eras. The chapter argues that all these processes were the outcomes of the survival strategy and the securitization attempts of the Kemalist state and its elites. The state did not only rely on the brute force of its military and police forces to survive and securitize the society, but instead, it also attempted to obtain the consent of the common people, notables and intelligentsia by means of transferring and distributing the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities.

The second chapter explores the third question by focusing on the laws and legal

¹³ Dickran Kouymijan, Soykırım Ne Zaman Biter? Ermeni Vakası, **Ayrıntı Dergi** Sayı 9 Mart-Nisan 2015. Dickran Kouymijan, Kültürel Miras ve Tarihsel Belleğe Karşı İşlenen Suç: Terk Edilmiş Mülk Sorunu, **Ayrıntı Dergi** Sayı 9 Mart-Nisan 2015.

framework which arranged the transfer and distribution process of the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities. Solely, as transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties were subjects of law, this chapter focuses on the constitution, enactments and decrees in order to follow the legal dimension of the transfer. Without the examination of the legal framework of the transfer and distribution, the subject of discussion would be left incomplete. The objective of this chapter is to follow the process of transfer and distribution of abandoned properties and traces the process in laws and decrees. This chapter is divided into three subheadings covering periods of Union and Progress, Armistice and the Early Republican in order to show the continuities regarding the question of abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim communities.

The third and fourth chapters will discuss which state institutions were involved in the distribution process and what kind of channels were used which non-governmental organizations take a share in the distribution process. The third chapter will start with examination of the decrees issued by the Turkish cabinet of ministers. Their examination would enlighten us about how the transfer and distribution were directly managed by the central government. The type, region and disposal -sale, rent or grant- of these abandoned properties are evaluated thoroughly in this chapter. The motives behind this transfer and distribution is also addressed in this chapter to show how the traces of non-Muslims were removed and the abandoned properties were transferred to the Turks. The examples related to the transfer of the abandoned properties are examined and commented on.

In this chapter, data from archival documents on nearly 500 distributed lands and properties between 1924-1944 are analysed. These data reveal a different example, because these real estates were given by the highest state authority and signed by the president and the council of ministers which makes these documents significantly important. In other words, the state and the government from the top were very much involved in the process of transfer and distribution of the possessions that once belonged to the non-Muslim communities.

In order to understand and recognize the full picture of the confiscation and transfer of the abandoned properties, it is crucial to analyse the starting point of the cycle. The chapter will discuss the process of distribution by various state departments. After having been seized

by the government, the confiscated properties were divided among the departments of the state, especially between the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance and then given to the various departments of the state. Then, these departments went on to subsidizing semi-official non-governmental organizations such as *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (later its name was to be changed to *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, Child Protection Agency), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society, later its name changed to *Türk Hava Kurumu*, Turkish Aeronautical Association), various sports clubs and societies, as well as to the Republican People's Party.

The last chapter is of great importance since it is both complementary to the other chapters, especially the third chapter. The advertisements used in this chapter are at least as important as the documents from the state archives used in the third chapter, showing how the local governments distributed the abandoned properties via local newspapers. In this chapter it will be shown that: In the last years of the Ottoman Empire and in the early Republican period, the abandoned properties seized by the state treasury were sold. In some cases, the state continued to monopolize some properties, in other cases just rented the properties for a certain period. On the other hand, some of the abandoned properties were granted to the people and institutions without any compensation.

The local newspapers archived in the Beyazıt State Library which were published in the provinces during the era between 1928-1940 were reviewed. In order to reach more local newspapers, the resources in the National Library in Ankara have also been researched but their archive showed less promising results than the Beyazıt State Library. Certainly, this thesis does not claim that all the local newspapers published in the period in question were reviewed; but a large variety of newspapers have been studied.

CHAPTER ONE

ERASURE OF MEMORY BY THE DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSFER OF NON-MUSLIM PROPERTIES

Memory is an important aspect of constructing the individual's as well as the communities', set of values, traditions and remembrances. The meaning of the word "memory", according to the dictionaries is "the power or process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned and retained especially through associative mechanisms"¹⁴ and "the ability to remember information, experiences, and people"¹⁵. The expression of "associative mechanisms" refers to various sources such as people, self-experiences and also the space.

According to Baven, "Memories clearly remain within people's heads, or are discussed and written down as history. The built environment is merely a prompt, a corporeal reminder of the events involved in its construction, use and destruction. The meanings and memories we bring to the stones are created by human agency and remain there. These memories are, of course, contested and they change over time. It is a process that is always unfolding and remains ever unfinished."¹⁶ The built environment is not value-free, instead all the values, traditions and remembrances embedded within it as well as what the society perceives from it.

Renan in his lecture "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? (What is a Nation, 1882)" states what became one of the most prominent and lasting thoughts of his lecture. "Forgetting, I would even say historical error, is an essential factor in the creation of a nation and it is for this reason that the progress of historical studies often poses a threat to nationality. Historical inquiry, in effect, throws light on the violent acts that have taken place at the origin of every political formation, even those that have been the most benevolent in their consequences. Unity is always brutally established. The reunion of northern and southern France was the result of a campaign of terror and extermination that continued for nearly a century... If one is to follow certain political theorists, a nation is above all else a dynasty representing an ancient

¹⁴ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/memory>.

¹⁵ Cambridge Dictionary, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/memory>.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 15-16. For a different perspective about connections between architecture, memory and space, Shelley Hornstein, **Losing Site Architecture, Memory and Place**, Ashgate, Burlington: 2011.

conquest, one first accepted and then forgotten by the mass of the people... For everyone, it is better to forget.”¹⁷ The process of nation building evaluated in Renan’s example of France was not an exception since the building process often encounter resistance ended up with violence. Likewise, Charles Tilly’s books demonstrate how war and violence created unity and formed the nation-states in Europe.¹⁸

Durgun mentions “According to Henri Lefebvre, the space in the modern sense is not only the baseline of the political structure, but the political and social itself; politics are built on space, because the social construction of the space is a political process itself. In the political process, the state constructs a physical and discursive space. Space is certainly connected with the processes of power and limitation. So, we can say that modern state shows its power over a certain physical and human geography, administrative division, possession of natural resources, control mechanisms on building identity. These control mechanisms also function as security and protection. Security is not only about the security of the boundaries, but also ensuring the continuity of society within time and space and to transfer of cultural heritage to future generations.”¹⁹ Creation of a collective memory -also can be read as discursive space- also brings the issue of manipulation of it by the state. The creation of a nation necessitates a sense of unity as well as security which often reached through coercion. The connection between these two processes can be linked up through the built environment - physical space- which the meanings and memories carved to the brick and stone constantly changed by the agents, specifically the state.

In the case of the abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim minorities, social construction of the space is the replacement of the discursive space from undesired memories along with disappearing physical existence of the non-Muslim communities. The transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties interrupted the continuity of the communities within

¹⁷ Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? et autres essais politiques*, Paris: Presses Pocket, 1992 pp. 37-39.

¹⁸ Charles Tilly. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, Blackwell, Oxford: 1992. Charles Tilly. *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe, AD 1000 To 1800*, Westview Press, 1994.

¹⁹ Sezgi Durgun, *Memalik-i Şahane'den Vatan'a*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2011, pp.13-14 (The quotation is translated). Also for more information about nationalizing space and identity, Zeynep Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey State, Space and Ideology in The Early Republic*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh: 2015. More information about the theoretical approaches of politics and space, Henri Lefebvre, *State, Space, World Selected Essays*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis: 2009.

space and time and prevented the transfer of cultural transmission to the future generations. Instead, abandoned properties were used for utilizing an alternative discursive and physical space free from any heterogeneous element.

1. Trauma and the Collective Memory

The Ottoman Empire and its successor the Republic of Turkey is no exception considering the argument mentioned above. The Turkish nationalists and the elites of the new regime did create a selective memory narrative encoded with several principles. One is the amnesia of the nation-building process²⁰ implemented during the era of Committee of Union and Progress as well as the disappearance of the non-Muslim communities in Turkey. The common explanation about the events usually involves the widespread insurrection of the non-Muslim communities especially the Armenians, who aid and comfort to the nation's enemies during hard times such as the World War, and "War of Independence".²¹ In this context, the non-Muslim communities as the "enemies of the nation" were not desired and were commonly excluded from the new regime.²² The other one was nourished on the experience of a great trauma of Balkan defeats and by the perceived lateness of Turkish nationalism vis-a-vis other nationalisms (Greek, Armenian, etc...).²³ Actually, both amnesia and sense of victimization²⁴ are consistent with each other as the Balkan Wars were a traumatic experiences for both the Committee of Union and Progress elites and *muhacirin*

²⁰ For the term of "nation-building", Anthony Smith. "State-Making and Nation-Building" in John Hall (ed.), **States in History**. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, pp. 228–263.

²¹ Erik Jan Zürcher, **The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey**, I.B. Tauris, London: 2010, pp. 71.

²² *Ibid.* pp. 195-196.

²³ The memoirs of the members of CUP and Kemalists give us this information as their nationalism emerged from the failure of Ottomanist ideology. So, they simply confess that it was a belated movement vis-a-vis other nationalisms, but as they have seen themselves as the *millet-i hakime* (dominant nation) they had the opportunity to equip their nationalism with the state support which none of the national movements of Ottoman subjects had. For more information, François Georgeon, **Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri Yusuf Akçura (1876 - 1935)**, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999. Masami Arai, **Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2000. Fatma Müge Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım", (Ed. Tanıl Bora), **Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce IV: Milliyetçilik**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2002 pp. 63-76.

²⁴ For how the Ottoman Empire experienced the trauma and the sense of victimization as well as in literature, Engin Kılıç, **The Balkan war (1912-1913) and visions of the future in Ottoman Turkish literature**, **Unpublished Dissertation Study**, 2015.

(immigrants) forced to leave their lands.²⁵ There is also another side of the coin: The Committee of Union and Progress was founded in the Balkans. Also most of its members were born in and they lived in the Balkans and now they were forced to leave.²⁶ The defeat convinced the members of CUP that the policy for Ottomanism was futile and a rather aggressive agenda for Turkish nationalism needed to be followed because other nationalist movements promoted their national autonomy and liberation agendas.²⁷ In only several weeks, the Ottoman Empire lost 83% of its European domain and 69% of its European population and this loss was coupled with an immigrant population of 300.000 people that crippled the economy for years to come.²⁸ So, the Balkan defeats and nationalisms convinced the Committee that the cooperation with the non-Muslim communities was not possible and their existence within the Ottoman Empire's borders itself was a threat²⁹. Also, the Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire had increased. The defeat brought many immigrants who hated non-Muslims, especially Christians due to their previous experiences in the Balkans. So, the immigrants who fled from the Balkans also participated as perpetrators in the deportations and exterminations during the First World War along with the Circassians and other Caucasian people forced to leave their native lands in Tsarist Russia.³⁰ So, the Balkan trauma

²⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, **Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 1995, pp. 161.

²⁶ It is interesting that most of the military and civil elites of the Republic of Turkey included many people from the Balkan cities, such as Salonica, Bitola, Plovdiv, Veles, Nis, Skopje, Ioannina, Pleven, Crete and Aegean Islands. So, it is rather obvious to say that most of the elites of the new regime had lost their home towns and even the committee lost its founding city and headquarters, Salonica which was a huge blow for the members of the committee. A list of Republican elites with their birth place is given in the appendix. For more information, Erik Jan Zürcher, *Unionists and Kemalists: Refugees, Killers and Nation-builders*, draft paper, http://www.academia.edu/22981822/Unionists_and_Kemalists_Refugees_Killers_and_Nation-builders, [21.05.2017].

²⁷ Even the Turkish and Armenian nationalisms conflicted, the Tashnaksutyun and CUP were allied almost at the beginning of 1915 and they did not expect the deportations and massacres which caught them at full surprise. For more information, Arsen Avagyan, Gaidz F. Minassian, **Ermeniler ve İttihat ve Terakki İşbirliğinden Çatışmaya**, İstanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2013. For more information about the politics and alliances between the Unionists and the other political groups, Aykut Kansu, **Politics in Post-Revolutionary Turkey, 1908-1913**, E.J. Brill, Boston: 2000.

²⁸ Stanford J. Shaw, E. Kural Shaw, **Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye, cilt 2**, İstanbul: E Yayınları, 1983, pp. 359.

²⁹ Taner Akçam, **Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur Osmanlı Belgelerine Göre Savaş Yıllarında Ermenilere Yönelik Politikalar**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2008, pp. 83-84.

³⁰ Fuat Dündar, **İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-1918)**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2002, pp. 250. For more information about the use of Circassians during the Late Ottoman and Early Republican Eras, Arsen Avagyan, **Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Kemalist Türkiye'nin Devlet-İktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler**, Belge Yayınları, İstanbul: 2004.

of the Ottoman Empire affected the CUP and the sense of victimization was born as a result of this trauma.

The other side of the story, the devastating defeat by the Balkan alliance of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro -considerably smaller than the Ottoman Empire both in manpower and area- was chosen to be forgotten by the CUP and later by the Kemalists. According to Zürcher, "...Macedonian background of these Young Turks meant that they were directly affected by the trauma of the loss of the Balkan provinces in 1912 and that they tried to apply the lessons they thought they had learned on the remaining parts of the Ottoman Empire, particularly Anatolia; that all their policies in Anatolia, up to and including the Armenian genocide, were attempts to prevent what had happened in the Balkans from happening again."³¹ The elites' experiences during the Balkan Wars constituted the means what to remember and forget as the Unionists wanted to get over from this trauma by forgetting it and reminded themselves that there is Anatolia that would serve the nation state project as the homeland of the Turkish nation.

The 1915 incidents, whether it was an act of deportation or an extermination, were also the core and the beginning of the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties.³² It also marks the state's involvement what to remember and forget as the general population of Turkey suffers from the amnesia. And even so, the fictitious memories imposed onto the masses across the decades in order to blur the vision makes these events even harder to penetrate.³³

³¹ Erik Jan Zürcher, Unionists and Kemalists: Refugees, Killers and Nation-builders, **draft paper**, http://www.academia.edu/22981822/Unionists_and_Kemalists_Refugees_Killers_and_Nation-builders, [21.05.2017], For more information, Erik Jan Zürcher, **The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey**, I.B. Tauris, London:2010. Erik Jan Zürcher "Macedonians in Anatolia: The Importance of the Macedonian Roots of the Unionists for their Policies in Anatolia after 1914", **Middle Eastern Studies**, Vol. 50, No. 6, 2014, pp. 960-975.

³² For conflicting opinions if it is deportation or genocide, Justin A. McCarthy, **Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821–1922**. Darwin Press Incorporated, 1996. Guenter Lewy. **The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide**. University of Utah Press, 2005. Hikmet Özdemir. **The Ottoman Army, 1914–1918: Disease and Death on the Battlefield**. University of Utah Press: Salt Lake City, 2008. Feroz Ahmad "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914", (Ed. B. Braude, B. Lewis), **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, Vol. I**, New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982, pp. 401-434.

³³ Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism and the Two Forms of Cohesion in Complex Societies", **The State: Critical Concepts, Volume II**, John A. Hall eds., Routledge, London: 1994, pp. 9.

One of the subjects that suffers from the same fate -amnesia- is the debate concerning the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities pillaged and plundered. The issue of abandoned lands and properties become versatile and hence, cannot be interpreted in only one way explanation, just because it is also very complex.

The historical framework elaborated above may help to create a consistent theoretical approach for how it is related to the collective memory. The collective memory created by the historical events do not necessarily create an objective approach to the subject, instead it was manipulated by the state and its ideological organs. This may conceive a selective memory according to the state's needs and necessities as well as neglect the others that are irrelevant with the needs of the state. According to the Paul Connerton's book "How Societies Remember", "Readers might reasonably expect that the question thus posed -how is the memory of groups conveyed and sustained? - might lead to a consideration, either of social memory as a dimension of political power, or of the unconscious elements in social memory, or both... For it is surely the case that control of a society's memory largely conditions the hierarchy of power; so that, for example, the storage of present-day information technologies, and hence the organisation of collective memory through the use data-processing machines, is not merely a technical matter but one directly bearing on legitimation, the question of the control and ownership of information being a crucial political issue."³⁴ So, this information reveals that the function of control also serves the state to shape the selective collective memory. Selective memory prioritizes some reminiscences as well as pushing the other ones to the ground to be forgotten.

According to Assmann, "No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections.' This means that a person who has grown up in complete isolation – though Halbwachs never puts the argument in such a direct way – would have no memory, because memory can only be fashioned during the process of socialization. Despite the fact that it is always the individual who 'has' memory, it is created collectively. This is why the term collective memory should not be read as a metaphor, because while the group itself does not 'have' a memory, it determines the memory of its members. Even the most personal recollections only come about through

³⁴ Paul Connerton, **How Societies Remember**, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1996, pp. 1.

communication and social interaction. We recall not only what we have learned and heard from others but also how others respond to what we consider to be significant. All such experiences depend on intercourse, within the context of an existing social frame of reference and value. There is no memory without perception that is already conditioned by social frames of attention and interpretation.”³⁵

The Balkan defeats created huge trauma in the Ottoman Muslim society and the elites showed up meddling with the collective memory. During the shaping of a new collective memory, most of the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, who ruled the state, saw non-Muslims to be blamed of the Balkan defeat. After the Balkan Wars, the Committee of Union and Progress left the ideology of Ottomanism almost completely. On the other hand, the current of Turkism in the society and administration strengthened. According to some thinkers, Turkism was already an agenda that the Committee of Union and Progress had hidden for a long time.³⁶ The Balkans and Balkan Wars, on the other hand, provided positive input for the formation of Turkish nationalism. Balkan nationalisms constituted a vital source of inspiration for Turkish nationalism, both in the practice of nation state building and nation building practices, and in the sense of recognizing nationalism as a militant and populist political movement.³⁷ This led Unionists and then Kemalists to take over a *tabula rasa* to selectively determine the needed and undesired memories according to their ideologies.

2. Raison d’Etat and Memory

Raison d’Etat is simply the right of the state and / or nation to violate the law and the principles of morality that are valid under normal conditions in order to ensure its security and to preserve its existence.³⁸ The perceived threat from the non-Muslim communities caused the Unionists and Kemalists to securitize the regime in order to avoid repeat of the failure of the

³⁵ Jan Assmann, **Cultural Memory and Early Civilization Writing, Remembrance and Political Imagination**, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2011, pp. 21-22. For more information about the Halbwachs’ argument, Maurice Halbwachs, **On Collective Memory**, University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1992.

³⁶ Sacit Kutlu, **Balkanlar ve Osmanlı Devleti**. İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul: 2007, pp. 405.

³⁷ Tanıl Bora, Türk Milli Kimliği, Türk Milliyetçiliği ve Balkan Sorunu. Kemâlî Saybaşılı - Gencer Özcan, **Yeni Balkanlar Eski Sorunlar**, Bağlam Yayınları, İstanbul: 1997, pp. 183-207.

³⁸ Ozan Erözden, “Makyavelizm, Hikmet-i Hükümet ve Modern Devlet”, Akal, Cemal Bâli eds., **Machiavelli, Makyavelizm ve Modernite**, Dost Kitabevi Yayınları, Ankara:2012, pp. 63-80.

Balkans and the Caucasus again in Anatolia.³⁹ At this point, the *raison d'Etat* shows an important aspect in order to understand the process of remembering and forgetting. The core mandate for the *raison d'Etat* is the survival of the state and the protection of the positions of the people in power. According to Foucault, "... *raison d'État*, which by its nature does not have to abide by the laws, and which in its basic functioning is always exceptional in relation to public, particular, and fundamental laws, usually does respect the laws. It does not respect them in the sense of yielding to positive, moral, natural, and divine laws because they are stronger, but it yields to them and respects them insofar as, if you like, it posits them as an element of its own game. In any case, *raison d'État* is fundamental with regard to these laws, but it makes use of them in its usual functioning precisely because it deems them necessary or useful. In the name of what? In the name of the state's salvation. It is this necessity of the state with regard to itself that, at a certain moment, will push *raison d'État* to brush aside the civil, moral, and natural laws that it had previously wanted to recognize and had incorporated into its game. Necessity, urgency, the need to save the state itself will exclude the game of these natural laws and produce something that in a way will only be the establishment of a direct relationship of the state with itself when the keynote is necessity and safety."⁴⁰

So, the *raison d'Etat* is an understanding, reasoning and envisioning about how to run the state and form the "nation" in various ways. During the establishment of the nation, the selective collective memory plays an important role. This means the state has the initiative if not monopoly on what to remember and forget. Foucault expresses that "*raison d'État* must act on the consciousness of people, not just to impose some true or false beliefs on them, as when, for example, sovereigns want to create belief in their own legitimacy or in the illegitimacy of their rival, but in such a way that their opinion is modified, of course, and along with their opinion their way of doing things, their way of acting, their behaviour as economic subjects and as political subjects. This work of public opinion will be one of the aspects of the politics of truth in *raison d'État*".⁴¹ "The alliance between power and memory

³⁹ Erik Jan Zürcher, **The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building From Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey**, I.B. Tauris, New York: 2010, pp. 221.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, **Security, Territory, Population Lectures at the College de France 1977-78**, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 262.

⁴¹ **ibid.** pp. 275.

also has a “prospective” side. Assmann expresses “Rulers usurp not only the past but also the future because they want to be remembered, and to commemorate their own deeds by monuments, ensuring that their glory will be narrated, sung, immortalized or, at the very least, recorded in archives. Power ‘legitimizes itself retrospectively and immortalizes itself prospectively.’”⁴²

Ottoman Empire and later on Turkey's social and political dynamics, especially during and after the Balkan Wars, has been reproduced as the main frame of thought, which has transformed into a two-faceted medallion of victimization and innocence, and even when the state has been a perpetrator, it does not stop itself at presenting victimization just as it belongs to its collective identity. The most common mechanisms mobilized for the reproducing memories at the relevant epistemological and symbolic levels are ignoring, forgetting, using disinformation methods, narration and collective memory, or completely "securitization" of the problem.⁴³

3. Coercion, Consent and Memory

In order to manipulate and reconfigure the memory, Kemalists did not rely only on the brute force but also to the consent of the common people in order to securitize the issue of non-Muslims. The abandoned properties were one of the aspects of this issue but it was the most important one as it involved not only the economic gains of a nation but also erasure of the traces of the other communities. So, this kind of social engineering of the state might have relied on not only the elites but also on the common people in order to preach what to remember and what to forget. Hence, another important aspect of understanding the process of remembering and forgetting process is Gramsci’s idea of hegemony. Gramsci expressed that the dominant groups protect their status to govern by a mix of coercion in a political society and hegemony with the consent of a civil society. The state tries to engender consent within a civil society which is the realm in which the state pursues hegemony. It is a social order where “a common social-moral language is spoken, in which one concept of reality is

⁴² Assmann, *Ibid.* pp. 54.

⁴³ Güney Çeğin, Ümit Kurt. *Kıyam ve Kital Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul: 2015, pp. 247.

dominant, informing with its spirit all modes of thought and behaviour”.⁴⁴ The sphere of civil society includes the religious institutions such as the church, mosque etc., the educational system including kindergartens to universities, non-governmental organizations, the media and family. The coercion, on the other hand, involves “the armed forces, police, law courts and correctional facilities, together with all the administrative departments concerning taxation, finance, trade, industry, social security, etc.”⁴⁵ Certainly, this only explains one aspect of the framework of domination. The state apparatus of coercion is only used on the groups who do not consent.

Furthermore, the state apparatus cannot be separated from creating consent in selective collective memory. This often named as the official narrative which is also seen in the lawsuits of “Türklüğü tahkir” (Insulting Turkishness).⁴⁶ When the lawsuits examined carefully, the people who are sued according to this law are mostly mentioned with their ethnic or religious identity. The people who are sued by the government have mostly challenged the official narrative of the state and are corrected by the state in a coercive way. The mere fact is that the heterogeneous identities were itself a challenge to the official narrative as the Kemalists saw the nation as a classless, unprivileged, coherent society. These lawsuits were rampant from 1920’s to 1950’s.⁴⁷

Either way, therefore, the state’s aim during the Early Republican Era -when the ideas of Connerton, Foucault and Gramsci are combined- was to create a collective memory according to the raison d’Etat and was to forget the ones that contrast with it. The collective memory includes all the traumatic experiences which given an end to the existence of Armenian and Greek communities once residing in all regions of Anatolia and to their property by being transferred to various institutions and elites. The raison d’Etat’s dominance

⁴⁴ Joseph. V. Femia, **Gramsci’s Political Thought Hegemony, Consciousness and the Revolutionary Process**, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp. 24.

⁴⁵ Roger Simon, **Gramsci’s Political Thought an Introduction**, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1990, pp. 71.

⁴⁶ For more information, Mehmet Emin Artuk. Türklüğü, Cumhuriyeti, Devletin Kurum ve Organlarını Aşağılama Suçu (5237 sayılı TCK m. 301), **TBB Dergisi** Sayı 70, 2007. Cemil Koçak. Ayın Karanlık Yüzü: Tek-Parti Döneminde Gayri Müslim Azınlıklar Hakkında Açılan Türklüğü Tahkir Davaları, **Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar**, No. 1, 2005, pp. 147-208.

⁴⁷ Cemil Koçak, Gayri Müslimler ve Türklüğe Hakaret Davaları: Ayın Karanlık Yüzü, **Düzce Yerel Haber**, 20.08.2011, <http://www.duzceyerelhaber.com/Cemil-KOÇAK/3055-Gayri-Muslimler-ve-Turkluge-Hakaret-Davaları-Ayin-karanlik-yuzu>, Access Date: 25.06.2017.

in both political and civil societies created a great rupture in the collective memory as if the non-Muslim communities never existed in these lands.

The silence and the erasure of the memory can be explained in two ways: First, the state's ambitious project to erase all the memorial places such as schools, churches, etc. by means of their distribution contributed in amnesia in the society. This explanation is limited as it neglects the personal memories of the people and the relations between these places and communities. The second idea could be the sharing of responsibility by the state as it transferred and distributed many lands and properties to the elites as well as to the people from all classes. This act also created amnesia about the distribution process.⁴⁸ The importance of the role of looting and "social jealousy" in the expulsion and murder of the Ottoman non-Muslims has been repeatedly emphasized, and it is of great importance in the context of this thesis. They encountered this end during First World War and lost their lives during the deportation because they were deprived of a very important part of their livelihoods, their homes and possessions. The relocation and deportation of the non-Muslims offered great opportunities to the Muslim communities of that region as the non-Muslim businesses, professions, homes, lands, merchandise and possessions acquired by them.⁴⁹ But as the process of transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties was colossal both economically and socially, it only shows that the people consciously chose to "forget" about these "incidents" and did not transfer the memory and experiences to the next generations. The acts and lootings carried out for the economic expectations were encouraged by the official authorities, but no result could be obtained if the citizens were not prepared to deal with such acts.⁵⁰ Also, the economic motivation created a peer pressure to "forget" or it was never mentioned in public space. The massacres and looting were occurred among all social groups of the Ottoman Empire, but as the opposition remained marginalized, silenced or confidential, while in the public is mostly involved in looting of the abandoned properties.⁵¹ Another important aspect is the silence or the apathy of Turkish intelligentsia as most of them

⁴⁸ For more information about Kuzguncuk which once was but no longer religiously and ethnically diverse environment and how it created a gap in the collective memory, Amy Mills, **Streets of Memory Landscape, Tolerance, and National Identity in Istanbul**, The University of Georgia Press, London: 2010.

⁴⁹ Çeğin, Kurt, *Ibid.* pp. 153.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 183.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* pp. 189.

did not care to tell or see it as natural what had happened during that time during Early Republican Era.⁵²

Unionist elites moulded population of Ottoman Empire from a wide range of policies, including mass deportation, resettlement and cultural assimilation. But the Unionist project of creating a modern nation state which affected masses of people physically.⁵³ Mentally, the modern nation state was still empty and needed a memory. The lasting process of identification and adjustment of a national identity necessitated a parallel process for a collective national memory. The process of remembering and forgetting was not restricted to the earlier experiences but was also prevalent during the Early Republican Era when the Kemalists were in power. The Kemalists had similarities and distinctions between the earlier eras of their rule. Most of the Kemalist elites were born and raised in the Balkans. But even though they had been through a traumatic experience as their native lands had been taken away by the newly established Balkan states, they did not seek a revisionist policy in any way.⁵⁴ Actually, they insisted that Turkey and the Balkan states needed each other in order to defend themselves from the revisionist powers in Europe. The Kemalists succeeded in the unresolved issues of population exchange such as etablis and status of the Patriarchate which plagued the Greek-Turkish relations for almost a decade. In addition, the Kemalists also tried to establish close relations with the other Balkan states by entering the Balkan Pact (1934-1938) which included the states of Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia. It shows that the elites of Kemalist Turkey decided that the Balkan trauma caused by these states should be left behind in order to develop relations with one another.⁵⁵ Instead, the Turkish elites created a state project that would “tame” the Eastern parts of Turkey⁵⁶, also be fuelled by the perceived threat of the Armenians.⁵⁷

⁵² Murat Belge, *Edebiyatta Ermeniler*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2013, pp. 62-111.

⁵³ For more information about the population policies, Süleyman Demirci. “The Methods Employed by the Unionists in Power to Control People of the Ottoman Balkan Peninsula”, **Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, No: 21, 2006, pp. 467-479.

⁵⁴ Salih Işık, **Balkan Antantı, Balkan Paktı ve Türkiye**, Trakya Üniversitesi, 2011, unpublished master thesis, pp. 28-36.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 29-58.

⁵⁶ Çeğin, Kurt, *Ibid.* pp. 78-79.

⁵⁷ “Armenians, especially the nationalist Tashnak party, had a considerable role in the planning and financing of the Ağrı rebellion, which was conducted by Kurdish tribes.... Based upon a report from Hoybûn’s Aleppo office,

The built environment during the shaping of collective memory of the nation is vitally important, thus the transfer of abandoned properties and lands as it changes the structure of the space. As. Baven puts it “However, a continuity of successive experiences, setting down layers of meaning, can, I suggest, result in an especially strong power of place – a psycho-geography, an ‘awareness’ of the past (rather than an architectural avatar of a petrified spirit) that is dynamic, handed down by people rather than recorded on the very stones, and is specific to a particular historic and political context. The worth of such places increases where efforts to destroy them remind communities of this value. If the touchstones of identity are no longer there to be touched, memories fragment and dislocate – their hostile destruction is an amnesia forced upon the group as a group and on its individual constituent members. Out of sight can become, literally, out of mind both for those whose patrimony has been destroyed and for the destroyers.”⁵⁸ The non-existence of the communities once inhabited in the Anatolian cities and countryside brought on the amnesia as well as the voluntary forgetting explained above.

The Kemalist elites as well as the Committee of Union and Progress were content with the destruction of the non-Muslim communities and erasure from the landscape. The second phase of the erasure was the “repurposing” of the buildings and lands of the non-Muslim communities. Many of the residential, commercial, cultural and religious buildings belonging to the Greeks and Armenians were converted to institutions for serving the interests of the Kemalist elite such as the education of newer generations, improvement of the conditions of public enterprises and distribution of the existing industrial buildings to the newly generated Turkish bourgeoisie since the rise to power of the Committee of Union and Progress.⁵⁹ Beyond any doubt, the process of transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties was an economically and socially motivated project but one aspect of the project often failed to be noticed: The disappearance of all signs that would remind non-Muslim communities once lived here.

Cardashian noted that the chief of operations at Ağrı was an Armenian ‘who is assisted by several Armenian officers and technicians.’”, for more information, Soner Çağaptay, **Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey Who is a Turk?** Routledge, New York: 2006, pp. 38.

⁵⁸ Bevan, *ibid.* pp. 16.

⁵⁹ Dickran Kouymijan, Soykırım Ne Zaman Biter? Ermeni Vakası, **Ayrıntı Dergi** Sayı 9 Mart-Nisan 2015, pp. 88-91.

The collective memory shaped by the state involvement also formed and was formed by the surroundings, especially, by the space. The space itself cannot be excluded from the ideology as they have served as the ideological apparatuses of the regimes. The Kemalist Republic was no exception. The Kemalist elite used the public and private spaces to serve their needs, to ensure the survival of the republic and of the state. They did not only seek the survival of the state but also the homogenization of the people into a single ethnic and religious identity. The resistance to these attempts was to be brutally crushed as any of these were seen as the threats to the state and the regime. While the state tried to ensure the survival and securitization of the state, the Republic of Turkey had limited resources to accomplish these objectives.⁶⁰ Because various uprisings in the eastern regions of Turkey showed that even Turkey emerging modern nation state, the coercion and consent apparatuses had limited potentials. In order to create order and to homogenize population, the Kemalist elites needed both the coercion and the consent of the people.

During the Early Republican Era, the Kemalists confronted many rebellions especially by the Kurdish people.⁶¹ The coercion mechanism worked ruthlessly as the Republic saw these rebellions as significant threats to its survival. But it would not be possible to contain these threats unless the state found some support and legitimacy from the local notables and intelligentsia which would create the elements of a dependent civil society. I do not claim that the existing civil society elements were all pro-government, but the state had devised public space in order to shape public opinion. One can say that the civil society in Early Republican Turkey cannot be classified as a standard form of civil society as many institutions and societies were part of the securitization of the regime and also related to the ideological crusade of the Kemalist elite.⁶² This brings the question if the term civil society should always be understood as the liberal school suggests by necessity. Despite the liberal understanding, the shifting paradigm claimed by Charles S. Maier challenges the old one and offers a more

⁶⁰ Zürcher, 1995, pp. 252.

⁶¹ For more information about the Kurdish rebellions and its consequences in Turkey, Martin Van Bruinessen. **Agha, Shaikh and State the Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan**, Zed Books, London: 1992.

⁶² More information and insight about the state-civil society relationships, John Keane. **Sivil Toplum ve Devlet Avrupa'da Yeni Yaklaşımlar**, Yedi Kita Yayınları, 2004. Ömer Çaha. **Sivil Toplum ve Devlet**, Orion Kitabevi, 2016. Yılmaz Yıldırım. More about the modernization and the role of the civil society on that matter, **Osmanlı Modernleşmesi ve Sivil Toplum**, Tezkire Yayınları, 2017. Muhittin Bilge, **Türk Modernleşmesi ve Sivil Toplum**, Binyıl Yayınevi, 2009.

plausible explanation to the state-civil society relationship with the example of Germany as the civic associations much coherent with the state activities.⁶³ This means that the existence of public sphere does not inevitably create a democratic and inclusive public space but instead may create a basis of power to consolidate. The influence to public sphere by these civic elements was expanded as the state and elites supported and promoted at a large scale involvement to these societies to mobilize and to gain consent from the masses for nationalist and militaristic causes.⁶⁴ The nationalist cause involved the education of the masses with the nationalist ideology (*Türk Ocakları*), support for the medical personnel serving in the Ottoman/Turkish Army and Navy (*Hilal-i Ahmer*), training and encouraging the airmen for the Turkish Air Force (*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*).

The process of building Turkish nation with its ideology was also secular, jacobine, centralist and definitely positivist.⁶⁵ The aim was to create a classless, unprivileged, coherent society.⁶⁶ So, the state and the Kemalist elites saw the elements of civil society useful proxies to the projected homogeneity Kemalists did not aim to destroy them, instead they absorbed them and turned them into dependent structures in order to survive. Surely, these institutions were non-governmental organizations but it is important not to forget that they had important relationships with the state and the Kemalist elites. These clientelist relationships were vital for the state in order to survive in a one-party state and society. These groups were the most important elements of civil society and serving public welfare. Özbek demonstrates that “an expanding political public sphere would not automatically produce a democratic environment or guarantee a participatory democratic political culture. What matters is not the fact that the foundations of this public sphere are laid by the state; but rather the nationalist and militarist dispositions of this public sphere itself.”⁶⁷

The reason why the civil society organizations depended on the state can be explained

⁶³ Nadir Özbek, Defining the Public Sphere during the Late Ottoman Empire: War, Mass Mobilization and the Young Turk Regime (1908–18), *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 5, 795 – 809, September 2007, pp. 796–797.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 796.

⁶⁵ Youssef Courbage, Emmanuel Todd, *A Convergence of Civilizations the Transformation of Muslim Societies around the World*, Columbia University Press, New York: 2011, pp. 75.

⁶⁶ Ayşe Kadioğlu, The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Apr., 1996, pp. 186.

⁶⁷ Özbek, *Ibid.* pp. 807.

in various ways. First, the elements of civil society might have needed properties and lands as well as donations for their sustainability and the status of “Kamuya yararlı dernek (Associations with Public Benefit)” was prepared for these institutions.⁶⁸ To accomplish this objective, as it will be discussed in the following chapters, these institutions and societies were supplied by the abandoned properties by the state in very reasonable prices and in return most of them gave their support to the Kemalist cause. Actually, many of the founders of these organizations were also the members of the Republican People’s Party.⁶⁹ Second, the political society was dominated by the Kemalists and after the rise of Mustafa Kemal as the sole power in Turkey, there was no choice but to support the elites.⁷⁰

Some of these organizations especially *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths) were involved in this process as they had undertaken the mission of ideological counselling for the Turkish Revolution.⁷¹ But even their so-called autonomy was not acceptable by the state and the Kemalist elites at the Extraordinary Meeting of the *Türk Ocakları* in 1931, the institution dissolved itself and all of their lands and properties were expropriated by the state. It was revitalized by the Kemalist elite as *Halkevleri* (People’s Houses).⁷² This instance shows that the Kemalist elites would not accept any alternative elite group that could be a ball and chain to their rule. They also saw *Türk Ocakları* as a threat, for some of their members cooperated or even supported the Liberal Republicans. After the appearance of the Liberal Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası) in the political scene in 1930, the situation changed for a

⁶⁸ Türk Hava Kurumu, Türk Ocakları, Halkevleri and Kızılay are still recognized as the public benefit associations. For more information about the status, <https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/Derneksislemeleri/izne-tabii-islem/kamu-yararina-calisan-dernek-statusu.aspx>, for the list of the associations, <https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/anasayfalinkler/kamu-yararina-calisan-dernekler.aspx>.

⁶⁹ The chairmen of the *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*, Cevat Abbas Gürer (aide-de-camp of Mustafa Kemal and Bolu MEP), Fuat Bulca (General and Rize and Çoruh MEP), Şükrü Koçak (Erzurum MEP and Minister of Transportation) Seyfi Düzgören (Mardin MEP), Şükrü Sökmen Süer (Erzincan and Gümüşhane MEP, Minister of Interior and Chief Police Constable), Mustafa Zeren (Erzurum and Amasya MEP). The chairmen of *Türk Ocakları*, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul (Şebinkarahisar, Urfa and İstanbul MEP), Ahmet Ferit Tek (İstanbul MEP, Ministry of Interior, Ambassador in London, Warsaw and Tokyo), Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver (Antalya, İstanbul, Mersin and Manisa MEP, Minister of Education and Ambassador in Bucharest). The chairmen of *Himaye-i Etfal*, Fuat Umay (Bolu MEP, Minister of Health), Muzaffer Canbolat (Gaziantep MEP).

⁷⁰ Zürcher, *Ibid.* 1995.

⁷¹ Füsun Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği Türk Ocakları*, İletişim Yayınları İstanbul: 2004, pp. 146.

⁷² Sefa Şimşek, *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi Halkevleri 1932-1951*, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul: 2002.

while as the Turkish Hearths were in close contact with the Liberals, and even the intimacy between these two, forced the Kemalists to close down the Turkish Hearths and seized all their properties and, then establish *Halkevleri* (People's Houses) which would be under the roof of the party-state.⁷³

More relevant examples also included the public enterprises. With the term “public enterprises”, I indicate the institutions which were directly connected to the state, as legal entities carrying out a certain public service. The institutions too much related with the state, - especially commerce-related institutions can be defined as “quasi-public enterprises”. As it will be discussed in the following chapters, although civil society associations benefited from the abandoned properties belonging to the Armenian and Greek communities, the state and the public enterprises were the first to exploit the abandoned properties. Many buildings belonging to the non-Muslim communities which would transmit the cultural knowledge of the older generations to the younger generations were transferred to the state and then distributed for the purpose of a whole “nationalization” process. Many schools, churches, monasteries even local non-Muslim notables' houses and other significant buildings were transferred to the educational institutions in the service of “*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı* (Ministry of National Education)”⁷⁴, “*Milli Savunma Bakanlığı* (military and police forces)”, local authorities and municipalities, healthcare (hospitals and clinics), commercial (chambers of commerce and stock exchanges) and religious organizations (mosques). It is beyond a doubt that the abandoned properties were used for the purpose of creating a fully functioning nation-state and creating a nation ethnically and spiritually homogenous called the “Turks”. The deportation of Armenians in 1915 and the forced expulsion and population exchange of the Greeks from 1923 to 1930 signalled that the exclusion and forced assimilation of the other non-Turks including Kurds, Laz, Circassians, Bosnians, Albanians and other Muslim

⁷³ Çetin Yetkin, *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası Olayı*, Karacan Yayınları, 1982, pp. 63.

⁷⁴ Turkey has got two ministries that carries the term of “national”: *Millî Savunma Bakanlığı* (The Ministry of National Defence) and *Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı* (The Ministry of National Education). This information also reveals what the Republic of Turkey and the Kemalist elites valued the most in the sense of its survival and well-being. The first one is for the physical survival of the state by armed forces, the second is national education for the younger generations of the nation would be indoctrinated by the understanding of the Kemalist elites and mobilized against any threats that would appear in the future near.

communities was near.⁷⁵

It is crucial to understand that creating a dependent civil society, a strong nation state and memory erasing are considerably related to each other. The survival and the securitization of the Kemalist state by means of the modern nation state apparatuses was the main objective. The state did not only rely on the force of its military⁷⁶ and police forces but elites also worked to obtain the consent of the common people, the notables and the intelligentsia. The transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties might also be seen as “bribery” and all the actors benefited from it. But it can also be considered as the Republic of Turkey’s success as almost all the classes and groups were silent about the destruction, confiscation and looting during the First World War and then during the Early Republican Era. The final say could be said by Üngör, “All in all, violence was repressed and ousted from public memory. The massive disruption of the first decades of the twentieth century was disposed of through silence, amnesia, and repression, instead of reflection, discussion, processing, and memorialization. The striking aspect of this process was that the violence that was repressed was not only that in which Young Turks had been perpetrators, but also that in which they had been victims. A whole century of Muslim victimization in the Caucasus and in the Balkans, in particular during the twin Balkan wars, was dismissed and forgotten in favour of ‘looking towards the future’ and amicable inter-state relations with Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and the Soviet Union. Ottoman minorities who were targeted in this victimization, such as Armenians, Kurds, Syriacs, and Arabs, did not have a chance of healing their wounds or memorializing their losses. The new memory of the nation did not permit cracks, nuances, shades, subtleties, or any difference for that matter. Like the new identity, it was total, absolute, and unitary.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ For more information, Nesim Şeker, Forced Population Movements in the Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic: An Attempt at Reassessment through Demographic Engineering, **European Journal of Turkish Studies** No. 16 2013.

⁷⁶ For a perspective about promotion and legitimization of Turkish Armed Forces both a force of coercion and consent in the political arena, M. Naim Turfan, "Looking after and protecting the Republic": The legitimation of the Military's authority in Turkey, **Cahiers d'Études sur la Méditerranée Orientale et le monde Turco-Iranien**, Vol. 5. No. 1 1988, pp. 53-71.

⁷⁷ Uğur Ümit Üngör, **The Making of Modern Turkey Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950**, Oxford University Press, New York: 2011, pp. 223-224.

CHAPTER TWO

“THE SOUL OF THE LAWS”

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CONFISCATION AND TRANSFER OF PROPERTIES

In order to understand the devastation and the transfer of possessions of the non-Muslim communities, we should also take a look at the laws that are related to these events we have mentioned. As they are the products of law, one can look at the constitution, enactments and decrees in order to follow the dimensions of the transfer. For this reason, without the examination of the legal perspective of the confiscation and transfer, the subject would be left incomplete.

Even if we have to review only the Early Republican Era during which the Kemalists were in power, it is important that we should also look at the Armistice Period⁷⁸ between 1919 and 1923 which was the meddling of two parties; the Istanbul government and Grand National Assembly often referred to as the Ankara government and even before that, the period of Committee of Union and Progress during the reign 1913 to 1918, as the continuation of the two political parties (Union and Progress⁷⁹ and People’s Party) both in its predecessor and its successor cadres.

⁷⁸ This period is described as Armistice Period as no sovereign power is intact and two parties are fighting each other in order to gain control of the whole state.

⁷⁹ It can be discussed if the Committee of Union and Progress was a political party or a secret organization which in many instances acted as a shadow government after the Revolution of 1908 until they have acquired the competence to govern the Ottoman Empire. Even after 1913, Union and Progress did not rule from open but instead governed with an oligarchy, *Merkezi Umumi* (Headquarters). According to Tarık Zafer Tunaya “Union and Progress was not a one-chief party. Instead, it was governed what it is called collegial. After that, it was based on a continuous core group. Besides, opposition was complaining not about oppression from a person but a secret committee. *Merkezi Umumi* always pushed the names of the people on the background and had been the superior organ (in the Ottoman Empire)... Until 1913, cabinets were under the supervision of the *Merkezi Umumi*. For more information, Tarık Zafer Tunaya, **Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler, cilt 3, İttihat ve Terakki**, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1989, pp. 558. According to Hikmet Çiçek the people in the core group are Talat, Dr. Nazım, Mithat Şükrü (Bleda), Hacı Adil (Arda), Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir, Dr. Rusuhi (Dikmen), Kara Kemal. After 1909, Ahmed Rıza was discarded from the group and in 1911, Ziya Gökalp was included to group as the ideologue of the committee. For more information, Hikmet Çiçek, **Dr. Bahattin Şakir İttihat ve Terakki’den Teşkilatı Mahsusa’ya Bir Türk Jakobeni**, İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2004, pp.148.

1. The Laws and Decrees Enacted During the Era of the Committee of Union and Progress

When the Committee of Union and Progress had made the decision of deportation, they also enacted some decrees that regulate the decision in order to create the legal basis for its implementation. The decrees and regulations promulgated on the 27th and 30th of May, the 10th of June and 20th of September constituted the legal baselines for deportation.

The first one was “*Vakt-i Seferde İcraat-ı Hükümete Karşı Gelenler İçün Cihet-i Askeriyece İttihaz Olunacak Tedbir Hakkında Kanun-ı Muvakkat* (The Provisional Law of the Precautions to Be Taken by Military Authorities that Oppose the Government during the Times of War)”, dated May 27th, 1915. According to the second article of this provisional law, “Army, army corps and division commanders can deport and settle the town community individually or en masse if they sense any treason or espionage related to the military situation.”⁸⁰ So, in order to deport a community, it was sufficient to only “sense” a community’s malicious intentions.

Another legal baseline was the “*Ahval-i harbiye ve zaruret-i fevkalade-i siyasiye dolayısıyla mahall-i ahire nakilleri icra edilen Ermenilerin iskan ve iaşesiyle hususat-i saireleri hakkında talimatname* (Regulations Related to the Armenians’ Supplies and Settlements that were to be transferred during Conditions of War and Under Exceptional Political Necessities)” dated on 30th of May 1915⁸¹. With this regulation, unlike the provisional law, the choice of deportation was left into the hands of the military officials who initiated the events that led to the exile and extermination of Armenian communities. The regulation, allowed the government to allocate the properties which became available after the Armenians were deported. It stated that “The immigrants and tribes shall settle the evacuated villages, and the properties and lands, after determination of their real values, shall be distributed among them. The real estate belonging to the relocated people in the evacuated villages shall be recorded in accordance with their types, values, and amount, and shall be distributed among the immigrants. The vineyards and olive, mulberry, and orange orchards,

⁸⁰ Nevzat Onaran, **Emval-i Metruke Olayı Osmanlı'da ve Cumhuriyette Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi**, İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2010, pp. 318.

⁸¹ Ahmet Tetik, **Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri 1914-1918 Cilt 1**, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 2005, pp. 429-431.

and the shops, factories, inns and storehouses, that are outside the scope of interest and skills of the immigrants, belonging to the relocated shall be sold in auctions or they shall be rented and the total amount of the money to be gained from the sales shall be invested temporarily in accountable property offices only to be given to their rightful owners.”⁸² After the deportation, it is presumable that the state did not expect the Armenians to return to their lands, unless after the settlement of the refugees, it would only create a turmoil. So, it would make sense that the Committee of Union and Progress intentionally overlooked and even led the Armenian extermination throughout the region.

Another important point that it is related to the transfer of properties is the “*Savaş hâli ve olağanüstü siyasî zorunluluklar dolayısıyla, başka yerlere nakledilen Ermenilerin iskân ve iaşeleri ile diğer konular hakkında yönetmelik* (Regulations for the settlement and rations and other issues pertaining to the Armenians who have been transferred to other places due to coercive political circumstances)” date June 10th, 1915. According to the regulation, the conditions for the Armenians’ deportations and how they would be settled and fed were legally determined. Article 7 “A book of registry shall be drawn for the Armenians who are to be settled in the new houses to be built in the existing villages and towns, or in the newly established villages, to record every family’s name, epithet, age, profession, place of departure, place of settlement, and the names of the family members and their ages systematically in order to provide data for the Public Registration Office.”⁸³ With this article they aimed to achieve the ethnic-religious balance in the region to ensure that the Armenians would not be the majority somewhere else they have deported and keep track of their population. The Article 12 mentions that “A sufficient amount of land shall be given to every relocated family in proportion to their former economic means, and their present needs.” This is also interesting for it reminds one of a debate in the Ottoman Parliament. One of the members of the parliament Emanuel Emanuelidi Efendi took floor and complained about the resettlement of Muslim and Turkish refugees to the Greek villages and claimed that there were vast amounts of land in the empire to be settled, so he asked why the Greek villages were chosen. It is of utmost importance what Mehmet Talat (later he was to be promoted to

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 135.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 136.

the rank of Pasha and appointed to the Ministry of Interior and later as the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire) said about this issue. He said that “At first we tried to settle the refugees in the Muslim villages, we could not do it the other way. Though there were vast amounts of land but as Emanuelidi Efendi said, in order to settle these Muslims from Üsküdar to Basra, we initially needed fifteen twenty million liras. And we did not have that amount. If these refugees, as they have said earlier, were to be distributed across the desert, all of them would die from starvation and Emanuelidi Efendi would not be content about it.”⁸⁴ The quote mentioned above is especially important for that the highest ranks of the officials from the Union and Progress were aware what would happen if the deportees were distributed to the deserts of the empire and he mentioned about in his speech, but when the course for deportations and settlements were designated in 1915, there was no objection even they knew the deported communities would suffer heavy casualties.

Another milestone for the transfer of properties is the “*Harp hâli ve olağanüstü siyasi zorunluluklar dolayısıyla başka yerlere nakledilen Ermenilere ait mal, mülk ve arazilere uygulanacak idare hakkında yönetmelik* (Regulations to be applied to the properties and real estates of the Armenians who were subjected to relocation due to state of war and extraordinary political circumstances)”. Article 7 tells us that “The type, amount, and value of all the estates shall be registered in the behalf of the owner, and charts pertaining to the abandoned fields of the villages and towns shall be drawn and given to the administrative committee.”⁸⁵ The situation that is described here defines not the transfer of possessions but the management by the *Emval-i Metruke Komisyonları* (Commissions of Abandoned Properties). Article 11 stated “The lands and the houses in the evacuated villages would temporarily be distributed among the immigrants in proportion to their needs and agricultural abilities of each family with temporary documents.” Even there is a “temporary” statement in the article, the Article 10 points out “No further procedures shall be followed for the writs pertaining to the usage of the estates drawn after the relocating of the owners [without the presence or prior to the permission of the owner]”. This article can be interpreted as the owners of the properties lost their right of disposition and it is equivalent to the act of

⁸⁴ Meclisi Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 3 Cilt 1 İçtima Senesi 1 26. İnikad 23 Haziran 1330(1914), pp. 609-611, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/MECMEB/mmbd03icf01c001/mmbd03icf01c001ink026.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Onaran, 2010, *ibid.*, pp. 327.

expropriation. Article 12 mentions that “All the information related to the immigrants settled in the villages – such as their names, place of origins, date of settlement, place of settlement, as well as the types, amount, value of the properties – shall be registered in the books, and each settler shall be given an official certificate stating the amount of the estates he received after settling.” Article 16 is also important for that “As for the places that are not suitable – shops, large commercial buildings, public baths, and stores – for the settlement of the immigrants and the remaining buildings; or the places mentioned in article 18, and the fields that remain after the distribution of lands in proportion to settlers’ abilities in development and their economic means, may be subjected to sale through public auction by the local administrative committees appointed under the control of civil and financial administrators.”⁸⁶ At the Article 23 this situation is also especially mentioned here: “Derelict Property Administrative Committees are directly responsible for the governance of all the properties in the evacuated villages and towns in accordance with the regulations stated here by.”⁸⁷

Last of all, the final law related to this subject is the “*14 Mayıs 1331 Tarihli Kanun-ı Muvakkat Mucibince Aher Mahallere Nakledilen Eşhasın Emval, Düyun ve Matlubatı Metrukesi Hakkında Kanun-ı Muvakkat* (Provisional Law for The Abandoned Property, Debts and Credits Which Belong to The Individuals Transferred to The Other Locations According to the Provisional Law dated 14 May 1331)” dated on 26 September 1915. Article 2 states that the foundation properties that bring income would be transferred to the treasury of foundations and the rest of the properties would be registered to the state treasury itself.⁸⁸ Article 5 is also important for the legal basis of this confiscation and transfer. This is especially important for that the court decision could not be objected and appealed after the decision have been made. It also removes legal procedures to demand the property of Armenians at the same time.⁸⁹ We would also see that the era of Committee of Union and Progress was not the only one that gave difficulties when the people that own the requisitioned properties and violated every principle related to this subject. In other eras it can

⁸⁶ Tetik, *ibid.*, pp. 144.

⁸⁷ Onaran, 2010, *ibid.*, pp. 329.

⁸⁸ Salahaddin Kardeş, *Tehcir ve Emval-i Metruke Mevzuatı*, Ankara: T.C. Maliye Bakanlığı Strateji Geliştirme Başkanlığı, 2012. pp. 27-28.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 29.

also be seen that the state resists and use the law itself to protect these properties for its sake.

The Greeks' properties which were forced to leave the Ottoman Empire were also confiscated and used by Committee of Union and Progress and for their purposes. As it was elaborated, the laws that used for the properties of the Armenians were also used for the Greek properties as well as the other non-Muslim communities. The Chief Management of Tribes and Immigrants have sent a cipher to İzmit County that the "the people's properties that left to Greece should be appraised and be used for the settlers" in May 11th, 1914. Even Security General Directorate advised that "for now it should be refrained about settling refugees to the Greek villages" these issue of settlement of refugees carried on. Also the decision of Council of Ministers on the May 25th, 1915 shows us that there are instructions about settlement of Muslim refugees to the abandoned properties which left from Greeks and Bulgarians in Çatalca and Uzunköprü.⁹⁰ Even to the date of February 21th, 1916, any laws that are related to the Greek properties did not enacted and the above-mentioned laws were also implemented for the other properties that belonged to the different ethnic and religious communities.

The regulation that was enacted in February 21th, 1916 distinguishes two communities which are expelled to interior parts of the state or even abroad such as Greece and Tsarist Russia. According to this enactment, the properties and real estate of these communities are given to the administration of the Commission for Liquidation and then used for the purposes to resettle the Muslim refugees who came from various regions.⁹¹ The Chief Management of Tribes and Immigrants sent a telegraph to Adana, Aydın, Bitlis and other provinces that the abandoned properties that left by Greeks and Armenians should be used for the settlement of the refugees and in order to make easier for their settling there should not be any rent to be taken from them.⁹²

2. The Laws and Decrees Enacted During the Armistice Period

After the Moudros Armistice that was signed in October 30th, 1918, the notable

⁹⁰ Nevzat Onaran, **Emval-i Metrukenin Tasfiyesi I: Osmanlı'da Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi (1914-1919)**, İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2013, pp. 233.

⁹¹ **Ibid.**, pp. 299.

⁹² **Ibid.**, pp. 234.

Committee of Union and Progress members such as Talat, Enver, Cemal, Bahaeddin Şakir left the country with a German U-Boat four days later. The Committee of Union and Progress dissolved itself and established itself as Teceddüd (Renewal) Party in November 5th, 1918. One of the interesting notions about the Teceddüd Party is that it denounced its ties with the Committee of Union and Progress. The three principles that the party congress has accepted is that,

1. Relations between the members of the former Union and Progress and General Parliament are cut off.
2. The members of Union and Progress that do not accept this program would be excluded from the party. The individuals that accept the program can participate to the party.
3. Domestic and foreign policy would be based on the new principles, this party which entirely different from past actions of the Union and Progress would cease their memberships that have the (negative) qualifications:
 - a. The individuals that led to the destruction of the country with their personal and arbitrary actions.
 - b. The individuals that are to be up for trial at the moment and in the future.
 - c. The individuals that are known by their corruption and serious misconduct.
 - d. The individuals that used the Union and Progress for their personal gains and profiteering.⁹³

As it can be seen above, the newly established Teceddüd Party tries itself to distinguish from the former Committee of Union and Progress, in every article of the program and the parliamentary debates can show the emphasis of differentiation from its predecessor. But an anecdote from the former Committee member and also the third president of the Republic of Turkey Celal Bayar in his memoirs let us understand the relations between them; an official visited the party building “The signboard at the club’s doors draw his attention, underneath the words of the ‘Teceddüd Party’ the name of ‘Union and Progress’ could be picked out. He found the situation odd.

⁹³ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, **Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler Cilt II Mütareke Dönemi**, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1986, pp. 94.

- It was coincidence, happens to be like that, I said.
- At the question of ‘Would not you straighten out?’ laughing:
- The things that do remain under with the influence of time would again get upper hand with the influence of time one day. Life is like that. Let us wait, I answered.”⁹⁴

As many Freedom and Accord Party members and also the high-ranking officers from the British Forces led to believe was that the Kemalist movement and the government in Ankara is a Union and Progress organisation. So, in order to distinguish themselves from the Union and Progress, they constituted a declaration in the opening of The Congress of Sivas (September 4th, 1919) that they do not have any relationship between the Committee of Union and Progress and the other political parties. Also all the delegates were mandated to take the pledge that “they would not seek any personal goals but the salvation and prosperity of the nation and revive or work for their political purposes of any of the political parties including Union and Progress”. All the delegates agreed with the decision but one delegate, Mazhar Müfit (Kansu).⁹⁵ But one should not overlook that the almost all of Kemalist cadres were originated from the ranks of Committee of Union and Progress.

It can also be seen that how Mustafa Kemal which was later the first president of the Republic of Turkey that how he denounces the violence that happened beforehand and understands that the valid position to be on is that distance themselves from the Union and Progress and keeping a good relationship with the Allies and try to convince to world public opinion in order to gain support as he states in parliamentary speech: “We all know our country. Where in the country had slaughters of Armenians taken place? Or still taking place? I don’t wish to talk about the beginning stages of the World War, and what the Allies are talking about is certainly not the shameful act that belongs to the distant past. Alleging that this kind of disaster is being executed in our country today, they have demanded that we stop doing it. ... And, hence, those who acts out of political interest, have attempted to provoke the entire world against us in order to destroy the positive public opinion that is emerging and to prevent the entire world from recasting their negative opinion of us, have in the end falsified

⁹⁴ Celal Bayar, **Ben de Yazdım Cilt 5**, İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1965, pp. 1542-1543.

⁹⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, **Milli Mücadelede İttihatçılık**, İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1987, pp. 128.

and proclaimed this bogus Armenian massacre, which consists of nothing but lies ... and have thereby poisoned the entire world against our devastated country and against our oppressed nation with this terrifying accusation.”⁹⁶

The era of Armistice (1919-1923) is also important for that the policies which we have mentioned for that the same policies were also implemented by the former members of Committee of Union and Progress which we can say they have got the organic bonds⁹⁷ with Kemalist movement. We should also give the information about the Abandoned Properties and also later the requisitioned properties of the Greeks who ran away from the Turkish Army. So this section could be understood as a complement of the policies of the Unionists during the First World War.

The era of Armistice is used for the vacuum of power that happened in the post-Ottoman geography there are two different governments –Istanbul and Ankara governments- which claim themselves as the legal representative of the above-mentioned geography. Even the two governments had their areas of sovereignty they did not claim themselves as sovereign (At the year of 1922, the government in Ankara would reclaim the sovereignty of the whole Asia Minor and declare itself as the Republic of Turkey).

This era is especially important that the Armenians, Greeks’ fate and the size of confiscation and destruction were able to be discussed in the Ottoman parliament. Divaniye MEP (Member of the Parliament) Fuat Bey proposes that the governments of Sait Halim and Talat Pasha should brought into the Supreme Court for their act of crimes. It can be evaluated as creating administrative turmoil throughout the state and lend assistance to the gangs against the rights of security, property and honour and for that matter contribute to the atrocities that the gangs have committed.⁹⁸This proposal pretty much explains the atrocities that the state

⁹⁶ Fatma Ülgen, Reading Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on the Armenian genocide of 1915, **Patterns of Prejudice**, 44:4 2010 pp. 380-381.

⁹⁷ With the term referred as “organic bonds”, both political movements shared the political base, the political elites which most of them were also associated with the Union and Progress earlier even the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic. Moreover, the political capital and the military capacity of Kemalist movement during the Armistice Period was provided from the earlier preparations that the Union and Progress made.

⁹⁸ Meclisi Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 3 İctima Senesi 5 Cilt 1 Onbirinci İnikad 4 Teşrinisani 1334(1918), pp. 103,

and its state-supported gangs committed. Another proposal from the Aydın MEP Emanuelidi, Çatalca MEP Tokinidis and İzmir MEP Vangel enlightens us about the events that have occurred during the First World War which have listed what happened:

1. A population of one million including women and children were massacred and exterminated which they were guilty of nothing but being an Armenian.
2. Two hundred and fifty thousand Greeks that were the core element of the civilization in this country for at least forty centuries were expelled from the Ottoman lands and their properties confiscated.
3. Before the war five hundred and fifty thousand Greek people were also massacred and exterminated and their properties confiscated along the coasts of Black Sea, Çanakkale, Marmara and Prince Islands.
4. The non-Muslim community were prohibited from any commercial activity and with the trade left to the monopoly of certain influential people, all the nation was literally robbed.
5. The members of the parliament Zöhrap and Vartkes were killed.
6. The treatment that were seen appropriate to the Arab nation created the principal causes of today's disasters.
7. The labour battalions that were constituted by the way of mobilization, a head count of two hundred and fifty thousand people lost their lives from starvation and deprivation.
8. Entered the Great War without a cause and in order to honour this ominous act a portion of the country were left to the Bulgarians.⁹⁹

The proposal ends with various questions that if the new government know about the perpetrators, what are their thoughts about these atrocities and when they will take action about these issues. It is also important to say that the government still consisted of Committee of Union and Progress members as the armistice was newly declared. So, it is obvious that they would not be enthusiastic about punishing the people that are involved in non-Muslim deportations and massacres. The Aydın MEP Emanuel Emanuelidi also tells that "I do not

<https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/MECMEB/mmbd03ic05c001/mmbd03ic05c001ink011.pdf>.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 109.

claim that you should execute, jail or something else. I do not claim that you should return this, return that or do this, do that. I am saying that these atrocities cannot be done by the three four people as shown in the proposal of Supreme Court. These atrocities cannot be done by the work of three, four, ten people. It should be much more than that. It cannot be resolved by the punishment, chasing or escape of five, ten people. Even it is resolved it cannot be guaranteed that it would never happen again.”¹⁰⁰

Another proposal was also made by the Kozan MEP Matyos Nalbantyan, Halep MEP Artin, Maraş MEP Agop, Erzurum MEP Medetyan, İzmir MEP Onnik İhsan and Sivas MEP Dikran Barsamyan which included the dissolution of the earlier laws and enactments about the deportation and confiscation of properties. This means that the enactments of May 27th, 1915 which consisted the deportation decision of Armenians and September 27th, 1915 which consisted the expropriation of the abandoned properties. Also at the end of the proposal, it is asked that if the government thinks anything to restore justice for the perished, lost, orphans and widows and their confiscated wealth and sanctity which was all results of these laws and enactments.¹⁰¹ While in a debate Halep MEP Artin expresses himself about the temporary laws that were mentioned above “...with this article, it is authorised that an individual could be expelled from his/her land as well as the villages, towns, cities and deport to somewhere else. To whom this is given? A commander, which in some territories this could be a captain or a major, does not matter who they are...This is a knife, this is an axe that has created great brutality...There is still the blood on it who had suffered from it.”¹⁰²

After the brief explanation, it would be fair to start from the date that was signed the Treaty of Moudros. At this era, we can first see that the liquidation decision by the Committee of Union and Progress was abolished in January 8th, 1920 enacted by the post-war Ottoman cabinet led by Ali Rıza Pasha. The regulation that named as the “*Aher mahallere nakledilmiş olan eşhasın 17 Zilkaade 1333 tarihli kararname mucibince tasfiyeye tabi tutulan Emval-i hakkında kararname* (Enactment about the Properties of Individuals Sent to Other Locations That Liquidated According to the Enactment Dated 17 Zilkaade 1333)” and according to its

¹⁰⁰ **ibid.**, pp. 109-110.

¹⁰¹ **ibid.**, pp. 112.

¹⁰² **ibid.**, pp. 114.

Article 1 it is said that “The registered properties that is under the Treasuries of Finance and Endowment can be taken by the owner of these properties or have the right to use if they are alive”.¹⁰³ This means that if any of the inheriting property owner were not alive, the properties would transfer to the state treasury. Article 9 also states that the wrecked or ruined properties would be compensated by the state.¹⁰⁴ Article 14 tells that if the first owner of the property would not accept the rent contract, the tenants would be evacuated in ten days. Article 15 and 16 mentions that if the property did not sold by the commissions it would be given back to the owners and if it did, the amount of cash from the sale would be given.¹⁰⁵ So, it can be said that the policies that were implemented by the Committee of Union and Progress which was aimed to liquidate all the Armenian properties withdrew and the property rights for the Armenians were given back to them.

After the occupation of Istanbul in March 16th, 1920, the parliament dissolved and paved the way for establishment of government of Ankara. As a matter of fact, the decision that were taken before the date of March 16th, 1920 would be taken into account by the Grand National Assembly and as it can be noticed that the above-mentioned enactment about the Abandoned Properties was also valid. The first law of Abandoned Properties by the Grand National Assembly were enacted in April 20th, 1922. According to that law, the movable properties and realties which belonged to the runaway and absent people are going to be sold and registered to the revenue authorities and the non-movable ones would be managed by the authorities and rented to the people. If the people who owned these properties show up, the amount would be given to them, but not with a representative but the owner itself.¹⁰⁶ It might show that the owners of the properties are either lost their lives in the historical context or they could not come to their former land and properties because of the hostile environment caused by immigrants that were settled before. During the discussion of the articles, especially Article 1 created a tension in the parliament. Various members of the parliament told that the confiscation of these Abandoned Properties are illegal. The member of the parliament Musa

¹⁰³ Onaran, 2010, pp. 334.

¹⁰⁴ Kardeş, *ibid.*, pp. 85.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 88.

¹⁰⁶ Taner Akçam, **Kanunların Ruhu Emval-i Metruke Kanunlarında Soykırımın İzini Sürmek**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012, pp.84.

Kazım (Onar) expressed that “In the article, it mentions that the property that their owners run away or lost in the locations that were freed from enemy. The inheritors exist, would we again assume that the property abandoned? According to the arrangement of the law we assume it is abandoned. Is not it true gentlemen? (Not at all sounds) If any inheritor or representative exists which the other article cancels it also, the procuration cancels by the representative’s withdrawal or cancellation of the represented. It is not clear that they are dead nor the cancellation itself, how do you cancel the legal representation? How do we take the property of the lost which especially has an inheritor? This law is unacceptable... It is not appropriate to issue an article for the lost.”¹⁰⁷

But when “The War for National Independence” was won, the “*Redd-i Emval Kararnamesi* (Enactment about the Rejection of Properties)” which can be seen as a setback in the current laws would be enacted in September 14th, 1922 just after the complete Greek defeat. According to this enactment “The regulations which is dated 8 Kanunısani 1336 which is concerned about the properties that was liquidated belonged to the individuals that were sent to other locations are rejected”.¹⁰⁸ This enactment also led to rejection of the laws that ratified the giveaways of the Abandoned Properties which was declared by the government in Istanbul and it can be seen the Republican regime’s setback about the abandoned properties.

3. The Laws and Decrees Enacted During the Republican Era

After the Enactment about the Rejection of Properties, the newly declared Republic maintained and solidified the policies and practices of the previous cadres. According to the second article of the “*Hükümet Yed'inde Sahibsiz Olarak Mevcut Bulunan Emlakin Emval ve Emlaki Düşman, Usad ve Hasb-el-lüzum Hükümet Tarafından Tahrib Edilmiş Olanlara nispet Dahilinde Tevzii Hakkında Kanun* (The Enactment About The Distribution of the Unattended Properties That Is Under Government Control, The Properties of Enemies and The Destroyed Properties which was necessitated by the Government)” which was dated March 13th, 1924, “...the properties’ worth that were to be distributed and disposed would entered in an account

¹⁰⁷ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 2 İçtima Senesi 3 Cilt 26 112nci İçtima 1.6.1926, pp. 307, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d02/c026/tbmm02026112.pdf>.

¹⁰⁸ Akçam, *ibid.*, pp.90.

of the treasury budget”.¹⁰⁹ According to this article, the state tells that after the transfer of the properties, the respondent was not the private person but the state itself. Another point that it should be mentioned is that this article was changed to “...the properties that were to be distributed would be evaluated of the costs from the year 1331 (1915) and would entered in an account of the treasury budget”¹¹⁰ which gives us the information that the distribution of Abandoned Properties calculated costs would be considered from the prices of 1915. During the parliamentary session of March 6th, 1926, this issue was discussed which is pretty much interesting. The Malatya MEP Reşit tells that “I make a request that the abandoned properties would be given to the non-exchange refugees and immigrants. In other words, they are disaster victims too and nothing else. The properties should be given in the value of 1331 (1915) unconditionally and since 1339 (1923) about eight, ten laws also separate articles have been made and every time this subject was discussed again. I mean the discussions in here that there are half a million, a million lira worth abandoned property creates an illusion from outside that one billion, two billion abandoned properties was abandoned... Thereafter (the government) would not bring any discussion about the abandoned properties.”¹¹¹ The Minister of Interior Cemil answered the question as the question of abandoned properties were tried to be solved by the laws that were enacted with dated March 13th, 1340 (no 441) and April 15th, 1340; also disaster victims would acquire the properties from the value of 1915 according to April 15th, 1340 enactment and expressed that the laws were apparent in that way.¹¹² He also states that “They (abandoned properties) are being sold by the Ministry of Finance in auctions and even with an eight years’ term. This law again sells the properties of lost and runaways. And preferably sells the properties which has the right to occupancy. The difference is this: The price would be paid twenty years instead of eight.”¹¹³

They did not let go off the situation even after that and they enacted another one dated May 31th, 1926 “The Law for Reparations with Properties and Lands for the Families that is killed by the Armenian Assassination Squads” and according to the first article “According to

¹⁰⁹ Onaran, 2010, pp. 362.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 362.

¹¹¹ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 2 İctima Senesi 3 Cilt 23 Altmış Yedinci İctima 6.3.1926, pp. 73, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d02/c023/tbmm02023067.pdf>.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 77.

Cabinet's decision, up to twenty thousand liras of Abandoned Properties' deeds will be distributed to the every member of the deceased families".¹¹⁴ At the end of the enactment, the names of Talat, Cemal, Cemal Azmi, Bahaeddin Şakir, Sait Halim, Kemal and Dr. Reşid who are blamed for the atrocities and acts during the First World War.¹¹⁵ The interesting point on this law is that even these people (or it can be called as officials for they were in power locally and in the central government during 1913-1918) were responsible for the acts of mass murder during the First World War, they were not seen as responsible in the eyes of Republic of Turkey, instead their families were compensated for their losses from the victims of their acts and legacy. These officials that were listed above also seen as the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide by the deported Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, Zaven Der Yeghiayan.¹¹⁶ Article 1 states that the families of the deceased would take abandoned properties of the Armenians worth twenty thousand liras. The parliamentary discussions are also important in this matter. The Sinop MEP Recep Zühtü expresses that the people that were assassinated had "great sacrifices" for their country and many of the deceased's families were in trouble economically even though these people left "a fortune of inheritance". According to Article 4, in order not to have any economic problems again, these properties that has given to the families cannot be sold for ten years.¹¹⁷ Also another way to compensate that "'national property' phrase should be repealed and instead 'from the abandoned properties of the runaway Armenians' phrase should be used. In this way we would give the message to the assassins: 'You can attempt to assassinate and kill a Turk! But we would raise his child to put your eyes out, fracture your head tomorrow, with your own money!' (Bravo sounds)".¹¹⁸

Another legislation to mention is that the law dated May 28th, 1928. Its importance lies on that the registered properties or their prices on the values of 1915 was added to the budget

¹¹⁴ Onaran, 2010, pp. 365.

¹¹⁵ Onaran, 2010, pp.365-366.

¹¹⁶ Sait Çetinoğlu, **Exterminators Yok Ediciler ve Erdemli Müslümanlar**, İstanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2011.

¹¹⁷ Official Gazette 27.06.1926, No. 405,

<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/405.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/405.pdf>.

¹¹⁸ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 2 İçtima Senesi 3 Cilt 25 Yüz Dokuzuncu İçtima 29.05.1926, pp. 602, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d02/c025/tbmm02025109.pdf>.

and with it three hundred thousand liras were added to 1928 fiscal budget.¹¹⁹ Before then these values of the properties were kept in the subdivisions of the treasury for that the former owners of the properties would want the fiscal values of their properties but with this law, these values would be useful for government to cover their expenses. This law is also interesting for that there were no discussions about the properties or their worth. Another point is that out of 316 MEPs only 178 MEPs were available at the time this law put to vote, 134 MEPs were not there. For a decision, as important as this, a qualified majority voting would not be needed in order to pass it. The 1931 fiscal budget shows that the sale of the properties and the properties rented worth about 2.265.000 liras¹²⁰ and 1932 fiscal budget worth 1.725.000 liras¹²¹.

An agreement has been reached to give the abandoned properties to their real owners for the Armenians. As of August 6th, 1924, every Armenian who will be at their proximity of his property has the right to take back his own property. The issue was organized between the 65th and 72nd articles in the Lausanne Treaty's section titled Rights and Interests in Goods. Then, according to this essence, changes were made in Turkish domestic law. In other words, the property or value will be returned to the Armenian or his heir who was at their proximity of his property. In Lausanne, before August 1914, the problems of compensation for the damage of Armenians who are citizens of United Kingdom, France, Italy etc. have been solved. Turkey has accepted on paper to compensate for the damages that these people have suffered. For this reason, Turkey's whole strategy is based on not letting any Armenian from the outside. Because if they do, they would acquire their lands and properties. Armenians who was the citizen of the Ottoman Empire were arrested on the border and forced to leave. The issue, for example, led to diplomatic problems between the United States and Turkey. A few Armenians, who have money, are able to bribe and enter, and the issue became a scandal in Turkey. The resignation of Turkish ministers and bureaucrats was demanded because several Armenians have entered the country.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Akçam, *Ibid*, pp. 229.

¹²⁰ Official Gazette 25.07.1931, No. 1856, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/1856.pdf>.

¹²¹ Official Gazette 30.06.1932, No. 2138, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2138.pdf>.

¹²² Funda Tosun, "Lozan'dan Mal Kaçırma", *Agos*, 23.11.2012, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/3382/lozandan->

Greek communities were applied different legal practices as the state considered it appropriate to exchange the Orthodox Greeks in Anatolia and the Muslims in Greece and concluded negotiations with the Greek state in Lausanne on January 30th, 1923. According to this treaty, Articles 1 and 3 of the "Protocol on the Exchanges of the Turkish Greek Communities", ratified by the Law No. 340 of August 23th, 1923, entered into force on July 25th, 1923, to be signed on January 30th, 1923 for the purpose of determining the term of the "exchanged". According to Article 1 of the protocol; The Turkish citizens of the Greek Orthodox religion who lived on the territory of Turkey on May 1st, 1923 and the Greek citizens of the Muslim religion who lived on the territory of Greece on the same date and the Turkish citizens of the Greek Orthodox religion and Greek citizens of Muslim religion who abandoned Turkey after October 18th, 1912 in accordance with Article 3 will be forced for a population exchange. Those people who are exchanged according to this treaty have taken the title of "*mübadil* (exchanged)". These people would not be able to come and settle in these two countries unless they are granted by the Turkish and Greek governments.¹²³

The Ankara Treaty signed in June 10th, 1930 brought new provisions about the "*mübadil*", "*gayrimübadil*" and "*etabli*", as well as new provisions regarding the situation of some communities. The first part of the agreement is about *mübadil*, the second part is about *gayrimübadil*, the third part is the Turkish citizens, the fourth part is the Greek citizens and the fifth and sixth part is about the "*etabli*" of Istanbul and Western Thrace. According to Article 2 of the Ankara Treaty; the full ownership of the movable and immovable properties left in Turkey by the Greeks will be transferred to the Turkish government. According to Article 6 of the Ankara Treaty; all property of movable and immovable properties belonging to the Greeks benefiting from the Declaration No. 9¹²⁴ will pass to the Turkish government. According to Article 8 of the Ankara Treaty; the full ownership of movable and immovable property belonging to the Greeks and exempted from the exchange shall be transferred to the Turkish government. According to paragraph 2 of Article 12 of the Ankara Treaty; the Greeks who are exempted from exchange and who are present in the Istanbul Region, ownership of movable and immovable property outside of Istanbul will be transferred to the Turkish

[mal-kacirma](#), Access Date: 15.06.2017.

¹²³ **Devlet Malları Mevzuatı**, T.C. Maliye Bakanlığı Milli Emlak Genel Müdürlüğü, 2005, pp. 129.

¹²⁴ The people who left their homes after 18 October 1912.

government. According to paragraph 1 of Article 12 of the Ankara Treaty; the ownership of the movable and immovable property belonging to the Greek Orthodox people of Turkish origin and who are deprived of the right to return will be transferred to the Turkish government.¹²⁵

After the sacking and the distribution of the Abandoned Properties, a new application about these properties began. Late 1920's and 1930's was especially important for the new Republic of Turkey for the appropriation of the properties that are mentioned above in the legal basis. During the parliament debates, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü tells that "in Turkey, the property that are available in the land register is about twenty-thirty percent and the unregistered ones amount to seventy-eighty percent."¹²⁶ This was very vital for the nation-state to give these properties to the acceptable citizens of the Republic and also as the sole sovereign of a specified territory, the government should have the knowledge of every property across the country. In order to accomplish this objective, the government issued numerous laws in order to solve the above-mentioned problem.

One of the milestones in the transfer of the properties is that "Tapu *Kayıtlarından Hukuki Kıymetlerini Kaybetmiş Olanların Tasfiyesine Dair Kanun* (The Law about the Settlement of the Land Titles That Have Lost Its Legal Value)" which is numbered 1515 and dated on June 2nd, 1929.¹²⁷ According to this law's first article it tells that "the people that have held the properties in their disposal bona fide -orchards, gardens and land for fifteen years and the other kinds of property for ten years- would be given to the occupant and registered to the person. The law did not have any discussions in parliamentary session and came into force without any comment about it. But the intention of the council mandate shows the true reason behind the above-mentioned law. It states that "About thirty percent of the real property that is registered in the land registries was lost its legal values because of the changing handovers by unofficial sales, grants and distribution." This is a very important

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-131.

¹²⁶ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 2 İçtima Senesi 3 Cilt 26 112nci İçtima 1.6.1926, pp. 50, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d02/c026/tbmm02026112.pdf>.

¹²⁷ Official Gazette 09.06.1929, No. 1211, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/1211.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/1211.pdf>.

point to express because the government confesses its illegitimate confiscation and transfer to the notables and locals. It carries on by “Ever since the establishment of the Land Registry Office which is over half a century, the state could not accomplish a general land registration and The Republican government understands its importance and in some regions unplanned some other planned land registrations and cadastres being made...”¹²⁸ As this might show us that the Republican government was aware that the distinctive characteristic of the nation-state was the undisputable sovereignty and complete knowledge in limited space which is often mentioned as “homeland”.

The *Kadastro ve Tapu Tahriri Kanunu* (Law of Cadastre and Land Registration) which is numbered 2613 and dated on December 15th, 1934¹²⁹ and the *Tapu Kanunu* (Law of Land Titles) which is numbered 2644 and dated on December 22th, 1934¹³⁰. After the confiscation of properties of the non-Muslims by the state itself, it was distributed and sold by the government. But at the end of the 1920’s and during the 1930’s, these remaining properties started to be registered officially to the person in its disposal by the government. Another subject that is important in this process is that the regions notables’ word was accepted as experts which means that their word would always count as truth and probably many local notables gained enormous amount of properties with this.¹³¹

The salient thing about The Law of Cadastre and Land Registration is that in the Article 22/E tells that “the properties would be registered to the occupant regardless of it has any land titles or the time of disposal has ended.” According to this law regardless of their former owners, the people who held the land or properties at the time would gain the title no matter how. This also creates advantage and opportunity to the local notables to gain the lands and properties as they would be the legal experts in order to determine whose properties

¹²⁸ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 3 İctima Senesi 2 Cilt 12 Yetmiş Üçüncü İnikat 30.05.1929, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d03/c012/tbmm03012073.pdf>.

¹²⁹ Official Gazette 23.12.1934, No. 2887, pp. 4557-4560, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2887.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2887.pdf>.

¹³⁰ Official Gazette 29.12.1934, No. 2892, pp. 4595-4597, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2892.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2892.pdf>.

¹³¹ Onaran, 2013, pp. 494.

belong to whom. The Law of Cadastre and Land Registration Article 22/F also states that the properties that does not have any inheritor would be transferred to the state itself. Article 22/H mentions that the unclaimed properties would transfer to the state unless anyone does not appeal to the government as an inheritor which probably led the state to acquire vast amounts of lands and properties.

The Law of Land Titles' Article 6 is especially important that it gives away the true nature of these laws. "The vacant land that are in dispose but not in the state ownership, the administrative committee would give the occupying people which do not own any land (for free) registered on his/her behalf that the settlement percentage would be determined by the committee. If the people that occuppies have land and does not exceed the settlement percentage, the land would be given to the people until the percentage exceeds. Thus the land that is in dispose of the state would be registered to the person that occupies the land and the occupied land would be registered to the title deed." This part of the article shows that the occupant should not have any land in order to have the land itself, but anyway even the occupant have any land on his/her behalf, it does not change the situation, the state again gives land for free according to their percentages which can be considered as a contradictory situation.

Also the article carries on to say that if the occupants that uses the land as plantations and orchards again the land would be given as free to the occupant and registered to the person only with the %8 tax revenue of these properties actual value. Also even a person does not use and gain some land from the state itself the person would appeal to the highest civil authority and if the authority grants the right, the person takes and register to himself/herself the desired land in about a year. It grants this right just after the first instalment of the payment.¹³²This might mean that the government wants to register the abandoned properties to the Turkish citizens in order to gain knowledge about the properties that are available as most the properties were not registered to the land cadastre and also to tax them for registering as the income to the treasury itself.

¹³² Official Gazette 29.12.1934, No. 2892, pp. 4595-4597,
<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2892.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2892.pdf>.

The Article 7 of The Law of Land Titles also decides that the state properties that does not have any inheritors. The properties which do not exceed 20 hectares can be registered to the person who would pay its %50 tax revenue during the two years after the date of notification which this article also includes the dwellings. The Article 24 can also be valuable example to understand the structure of the laws. The article states that the abandoned and foundation-owned graveyards that are in the villages would be registered to the village's individual estate. This article clearly implicates that these graveyards belong to non-Muslim communities that do not exist anymore in many parts of Turkey. It is also a matter of question that what happened to these graveyards and if any of them did manage to survive the catastrophe of a hundred years of denial and destruction. Article 9 states that "The places that are settled without permission if the concerned authorities and councils agree would be registered to the person who is settled at its worth of ten percent." This means that the government -in order to register the abandoned properties to somebody- accepts the de facto situation which the locals have many of these abandoned properties in their possessions and distributes them almost at no charge. In the parliamentary debate, the İstanbul MEP Hamdi asks if this law is nunc pro tunc or not. Raif on behalf of the Council of Justice explains that the law does not affect the earlier settlements but after it.¹³³ He also carries on in another discussion: "Apart from this, there is another part of the lands that the state provisionally possesses and property that does not owned by any individual. It used to be called abandoned lands. I mean that the one ameliorates the place would own these places. In this law, we accept this sort of land's existence. Who he/she ameliorates these places and uses as farms would own it."¹³⁴ The Article 24 states that "The abandoned and unattended and public graveyards which belongs to the foundations would registered to the village's legal person." This is also very substantial in order to emphasize the full picture. "The abandoned and unattended graveyards" refer to the graveyards of non-Muslim communities which were living there only a few years ago. In a parliamentary debate the Minister of Interior Şükrü Kaya confesses that "As far as I am concerned the places that are once-acknowledged as graveyards are just abandoned and today they may be not graveyard but orchards and farms.

¹³³ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 4 İçtima Senesi 4 Cilt 25 Yirminci İnikad 22.12.1934, pp. 244, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d04/c025/tbmm04025020.pdf>.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 248.

Otherwise no individual cannot possess any graveyards in any place.”¹³⁵ The debate shows that most of the non-Muslim community graveyards were turned into orchards and farms and it does not even mention what happened to the tombstones.

The interesting notion between The Law of Cadastre and Land Registration and The Law of Land Titles is that the Law of Cadastre and Land Registration Article 22/G -even it is more abstract- the same as the Law of Land Titles Article 6 that the two have certainly parallels between them. The only difference between these two is that the first one does not require any appeal to the highest civil authority.¹³⁶

It can be seen that starting from 1915, how huge the transfer of property and pillaging is. 1915 to 1940's, even there were inactivity along the time but the state and governments carried on enact more laws and it aimed not to give any properties to the people that once belonged to them and lose them in the “dark labyrinths of laws”. It is also important to see that there is no interruption between the Committee of Union and Progress and their successors Kemalists.

These can also show that the even it can be considered as two different political groups¹³⁷ -Committee of Union and Progress and Kemalists- even in their policies and political cadres shows otherwise. It can only be differentiated as the committee adopted a more aggressive policy against the non-Muslim communities as the World War I was raging but the Kemalists were more cautious but carried on the assimilationist policies as much as their predecessors. Another important aspect that can be effable that the cadres of Committee of Union and Progress and Kemalists do coincide with each other as the former members of the Committee would take side with the government in Ankara. Almost all of the Kemalist elites were originated from the Committee but the only difference was the former notable members of the Committee were not very influential in the Kemalist cadres, instead the ones which is at the lower levels of the Committee's hierarchy took control in the newly

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 250.

¹³⁶ Official Gazette 23.12.1934, No. 2887, pp. 4557-4560,
<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2887.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2887.pdf>.

¹³⁷ While Feroz Ahmad offers an interruption between two groups, Erik Jan Zürcher offers otherwise as the two groups were strongly related with each other both in political cadres as well as their policies.

established Republic of Turkey. The remaining influential figures from the Committee would be purged during the 1926 İzmir Assassination Attempt Persecution in the Independence Tribunals including Kara Kemal, Dr. Nazım, Cavid and İsmail Canbulat. But it is also substantial to state that the Kemalists were eager to “finish” what the Committee of Union and Progress “started” and in the end, they created a nation state which was cleared from the non-Muslim communities.

The legal documents that have been discussed above can be seen as examples of the confiscation and transfer of the non-Muslim’s properties to the citizens of Turkey. These laws tried to make sure that the homogenization of Anatolia would be complete and free of any ethnic and religious divisions and conflicts. But one should not forget that even the main motivation was to Turkify any community in Anatolia, Muslims were seen as “potential” Turks which can be converted to the Turkish citizens which Republic of Turkey tried to achieve. The Armenians, Greeks, Jews and the other non-Muslim communities were seen non-convertible to the desired identity and for that reason these groups were targeted for deportation, expulsion, exclusion, mass atrocities and population exchange.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TRANSFER OF THE ABANDONED PROPERTIES BY THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY

As it was seen in the previous chapter, the legal basis of the confiscation and transfer of the properties were prepared in order to give them to the people who were settled according to the government's directives that aimed to assimilate the Muslim non-Turks and Turkify the other provinces which were mainly consisted of Kurdish ethnicity.¹³⁸ These properties constituted high numbers. The book titled "*İskan Tarihçesi* (The History of Settlement)" which were published in 1932 underlines that the people settled in new Republic of Turkey were classified as 499.239 exchanged, 172.029 non-exchanged, 14.312 disaster victims¹³⁹, 35.936 refugees, 18.430 native residents and 2.774 people that were sent to the west to the east¹⁴⁰. It also states that during the period between 1923 and 1929, 88.700 houses, 5.000.000 of land, orchard and gardens and 4.300.000 of olive, fig other trees were given to the settlers which indicates how great the confiscation and the transfer of the abandoned properties were. Another table from the book that shows the reparation and construction statistics, one of the titles in the statistics mentions the 19.279 of "repaired abandoned houses" repaired by the state itself.¹⁴¹ These statistics are especially vital to understand how the "abandoned properties" that are left from the non-Muslim communities were used in order to settle the immigrants arrived from the various lost territories of empire in the last decade. In this chapter I aim to emphasize the importance of the central authority who are directly involved in the distribution process. This distribution process is exclusively important as the state itself was the primary actor to the transfer the properties and goods to the desirable institutions and people. Moreover, this reveals a symbiotic relationship between the state and non-governmental organizations such as *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Himaye-i Etfal*

¹³⁸ For more information, Fuat Dündar. **İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-18)**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002. Fuat Dündar. **Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008.

¹³⁹ The term of "disaster victim" was examined in the previous chapter that its legal meaning was indecisive that how the disaster should be interpreted and what should be qualifications about being a disaster victim.

¹⁴⁰ These people were mostly Kurdish and the aim to "resettle" them in the western regions of Turkey was to assimilate them and resettle their former residences with Turkish immigrants which can Turkify these provinces or cut their relationship with their tribal leaders and make them easier to control.

¹⁴¹ **İskan Tarihçesi**, Ankara:Hamit Matbaası, 1932, pp. 135-141.

Cemiyeti (later its name was to be changed to *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, Child Protection Agency), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society, later its name changed to *Türk Hava Kurumu*, Turkish Aeronautical Association), various sports clubs and societies, as well as to the Republican People's Party. As the state supplied these organizations properties that would keep them afloat, these non-governmental organizations played important role in a newly established state, strengthening the regime and in some ways, help the state in its endeavour of its ideological crusade.

Furthermore, it is important to comprehend who led the distribution process, this chapter focuses on the decrees that are issued by the Cabinet. This connotating the noteworthiness of these properties and the process that even the Cabinet was involved in order to regulate the transfer and distribution. The legal basis of the distribution was examined in detail in the previous chapter, it is not needed to emphasize again to avoid the repetition. In order to understand and recognize the full picture of the confiscation and transfer, it is crucial to analyze the beginning of the cycle. The cycle starts with the confiscation of the movable and non-movable properties by the Committee of Union and Progress and later continued during the Early Republican Era which were elaborated in the previous chapters. After having seized by the government, the confiscated properties were divided between the departments of the state, especially between the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance. These properties were then given to the various departments of the state, such as the security forces (General Staff, police force), educational institutions (middle schools, high schools, military, business, agriculture, special schools and even the National Library), local authorities and municipalities, health institutions, and commercial organizations (local chambers of commerce and industry, local stock exchanges and to the national banks). The vicious circle goes on with the subsidization of the semi-official non-governmental organizations such as *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (later its name was to be changed to *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, Child Protection Agency), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society, later its name changed to *Türk Hava Kurumu*, Turkish Aeronautical Association), various sports clubs and societies, as well as to the Republican People's Party.

On the other hand, the state also transferred the properties at its disposal by different

methods. As it was reviewed in the previous chapter, one of the ways to transfer the properties was to give them to the settlers almost for free. Another method was the selling off the properties in the auctions, arranged by the local revenue offices and most published in the local newspapers. By this way the state ensured the distribution of properties to the people that were notable and wealthy in their regions.

In order to understand the complex structure summarised above, this paper will start from the highest circle of the state hierarchy and then step down one by one to the properties that would have private ownership. So, as the highest one was the state laws as it was reviewed in the previous chapter, it would be appropriate to carry on with the expropriation by the departments of the state.

According to the findings from the Prime Ministry Archives, nearly 500 distributed lands and properties was analysed during the years from 1924 to 1944. This is a different example as these real estates are given by the highest form of authority¹⁴² and signed by the president and the council of ministers which makes these documents significantly important. In other words, the state and the government were involved in the process of transfer and distribution of the possessions that were once belonged to the non-Muslim communities.

When the cabinet decrees were evaluated carefully, it can be seen that the most of the properties granted, sold or rented were mostly (71%) consisted of lands. It can be seen that the transfer of properties occurred in regions mostly depend on the agricultural economies and as these decrees were to be all over the country itself, it would not difficult to say that these charts would belong to a country which is not an industrial but an agricultural one. This is an important assumption when we are looking at this because even at the Early Republican Era there were many factories and commercial related workshops - it would be seen in the next

¹⁴² By the clause of state defined as "the highest form of authority I refer to; "My use of the word hierarchy in the subtitle of this work is meant to be provocative. There is a strong theoretical need to contrast hierarchy with the more widespread use of the words class and State; careless use of these terms can produce a dangerous simplification of social reality. To use the words hierarchy, class, and State interchangeably, as many social theorists do, is insidious and obscurantist. This practice, in the name of a "classless" or "libertarian" society, could easily conceal the existence of hierarchical relationships and a hierarchical sensibility, both of which-even in the absence of economic exploitation or political coercion-would serve to perpetuate unfreedom." Murray Bookchin. *The Ecology of Freedom: the emergence and dissolution of Hierarchy*. Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982, pp. 3.

chapter- around the country, the level of industrialization was not sufficient compared to the other European states.

These statistics show that the newly established Republic of Turkey suffers from the destruction that led millions of deaths around the years of 1912 to 1923 and some regions were burned to the ground and even got uninhabited that it had to be rebuilt again. It can be realized that the reason of large acres of lands that are empty were also from the destruction of Armenian communities during the First World War then and the continuity of some policies after the Republic of Turkey has been established and the population exchange that led 1.5 million people had been sent to Greece and only get one third of the Muslim population - about half a million people from the population exchange- from Greece. Even with these numbers, it can easily be seen that about 5-6 million people ran away, killed or translocated during these years. This can be confirmed by 1914 population census that Armenians, Greeks and Jews were roughly making 3-3.5 million they were almost %20 of the general population that is almost 16 million.¹⁴³ The 1927 population census shows that the population of Republic of Turkey is about more than 13.5 million which is that after fifteen years it can be seen that the Anatolian region did not heal from the destruction of earlier catastrophic events. The same population has been reached in 1935 population census which means that twenty-one years has been passed in order to replenish the population that these regions once had.¹⁴⁴ This might show that even Turkey received many refugees from different sources -such as Balkans and Caucasus- it did not help much to regain lost individuals and use the abandoned properties to include them to the healing economy.

1. The Properties Appropriated By the Ministries of the State

After the confiscation of the abandoned properties; the government began to transfer the properties to the various people and institutions. But as the government and the state is the highest form of hierarchy, it is appropriate to begin from this one. This section would be divided into sub-sections by their form of use of the properties in order to be understood and evaluated more easily.

¹⁴³ Tetik, *ibid.*, pp. 663.

¹⁴⁴ *İstatistik Göstergeler 1923-2009*, TÜİK, 2010, pp. 8, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/yillik/ist_gostergeler.pdf.

1.1. Educational Institutions

About %10 of the properties which were transferred to the departments of the state were used for the educational purposes. These properties were distributed all over the cities such as Konya, Sivas, İzmir, İstanbul, Adana, Antalya, Antep, Trabzon, Samsun, Çorum and Sinop all of which were the regional centres of Turkey. According to the statistics, many non-educational buildings were also repurposed in order to serve the educational needs for state.

Another important point about these transfers and distributions is that most of the properties (%75) in education were granted to the state and only a small percentage of the properties were rent or sold. This can also show that these properties do not only serve to the Turkification of properties and land registries but the properties were also used as an investment for the upbringing of later generations and cripple other ethnicities' educations such as confiscations of non-Muslim community schools. This includes all sorts of schooling that Teacher's Schools, High Schools, Agricultural Schools, Business Schools, Mutes and Blinds Schools, Middle Schools and even libraries and books. And the decree that is dated in 19 July 1932 shows that the buildings and the lands which was left by the Greeks in Samsun that were inherited to the treasury would be transferred to the local authorities in order to be built as schools and buildings for the public welfare¹⁴⁵ might give us an understanding about how they are using the abandoned properties that are useful for these purposes.

1.2. Military and Police Forces

According to the findings, almost half of the properties that are given to the departments of the state from the Prime Ministry Archives were given to the elements of military and police forces. This means that the newly established Republican regime tries to strengthen its hegemony over its borders and be unchallenged by the recent uprisings happening in the Kurdish regions of Turkey¹⁴⁶. So, in order to see the full picture, most of the properties that is distributed were given in Diyarbakır for the establishment of 7th Army Corps

¹⁴⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 13186, dosya: 157-94, yer no: 30.56..3.

¹⁴⁶ Many Kurdish rebellions have occurred in the Eastern regions of Turkey, the most important ones are the Şeyh Said, Ağrı and Dersim. Even the work is much biased for more information **Genelkurmay Belgelerinde Kürt İsyanları**, Kaynak Yayınları, İstanbul: 1992. For a conflicting opinion that most of these "rebellions" cannot be evaluated as so, Ayşe Hür, Resmi Tarihin Sözde Kürt "Ayaklanmaları", **Radikal**, 02.08.2015, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/ayse-hur/resmi-tarihin-sozde-kurt-ayaklanmalari-1407729/>.

Artillery, Engineering and Bridging Battalions located in different villages that they are now resided with metropolitan area of Diyarbakır and one of them named as 8th Main Jet Base Group Command. This can be considered significant because this armed forces of Turkey was established very close to the border, where there was a high tension about issue of Musul. Even this issue brought Turkey and Great Britain brink of a full scale war. Another reason that can be related with the decision is that these properties were just given to the armed forces after the Şeyh Said Rebellion which the state itself saw their weaknesses about controlling the region.

Another example that must be mentioned is that the two of abandoned properties would be given to the law enforcement in order to be used as Fatihpaşa Police Headquarters which is again placed in Diyarbakır. This example confirms that the state entrenches the region not just with armed forces but also with the law enforcement to ensure the securitization of one of the largest cities in the region and the district today it is called as Suriçi.

Two of the other abandoned properties are located in Bursa and Ankara advocates the importance of allocation of the properties to the military. The first instance is the İspandit Hotel (Splendid Hotel) that is used as a military hospital since the liberation of Bursa would be surrendered to the state.¹⁴⁷ After the 1950's the state used the hotel as a military hospital and then built another complex to match its needs which also can be an important instance that how they have used buildings that are left from the non-Muslim communities. The second instance is that a factory from Ankara would be given to the Ankara Garrison Headquarters which means that it would be used as a significant military complex in Bentderesi.

These examples show that the military complexes were very much important, these structures both served the distribution of the abandoned properties to one of the most important -it still is- branch of the state and also in dire need of "peace in the homeland", they did not hesitate to take lands and properties in order to achieve security. Correlated with this pattern, the institutions that supply the abandoned properties also gave these properties as a

¹⁴⁷ Splendid Hotel is one of the important hotels in the late Ottoman Period in Bursa and as the information above tell us it was held by the military in the early years of the New Republic. For more information, İsmail Yaşayanlar, **Osmanlı Dönemi Bursa Otelleri**, Bursa: Nilüfer Belediyesi Yayınları, 2013.

grant but for sale or rent. This might also confirm that how the state and the government gave importance to the security and how the security itself was very vital in the newly established Republic of Turkey.

1.3. Local Authorities and Municipalities

As the departments of state were sharing the abandoned properties, various properties were also acquired by the local authorities and municipalities. The terms of local authorities include the *İl Özel İdaresi* (Special Provincial Administration) and *İl Valiliği* (Province Governship). This means some of the properties were under the possession of local authorities and distributed to the people and institutions. This subject will be detailed in the next chapter that how the local authorities preferred to transfer abandoned properties. After a brief evaluation, about %30 of the properties from the cabinet decrees would consist of this sub section. Contrary to the other sub sections, most of these abandoned properties were sold or confiscated (%93) and it can also be seen that more than %78 of the properties were lands of various forms which confirms the earlier claims in the sections.

If the decrees would be investigated deeply, one of the interesting notions about it is that for the recovery of the city of Bitlis, about sixty parcels of land had sold to the local authorities in order to reconstruct the city which is dated in 1926. That might be a late period that the new Republic could not even recover a city which had been faced a disaster during the First World War and of course, the relocation and the massacres of the non-Muslim communities which had been once lived there. The lack of labour and necessary craftsmanship had prevented the most of the cities reconstruct and prosper once again. As in most of the provinces, the non-Muslim communities were dominant in the local economies of the Ottoman Empire and also much of the craftsmanship were provided by them. After the deportation and the massacres, craftsmanship related to the military and civil infrastructure was not able to be used. Venezuelan officer whom he served in Ottoman military for four years, mentions about the example of Diyarbakır “After the destruction of the Armenians, the trade in bazaars of Diyarbekir were brought to a halt...”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ Rafael de Nogales, *Osmanlı Ordusunda Dört Yıl (1915-1919)*, Çev. Vedii İlmen, İstanbul: Yaba Yayınları, 2008, pp. 115.

One of the interesting decrees that are related to the local authorities and municipalities is that the church in Samsun's Alaçam district would be handed over to the local authorities in order to be restored and used as a school which is dated in 2 March 1932.¹⁴⁹ The other decrees about the education issue is the building that are left from the Greeks and still used as the Sakarya School would be surrendered to the local authorities.¹⁵⁰ The second instance is that the Dumlupınar School left from the Greeks and registered to the treasury would be sold to the local authorities with an imbursement.¹⁵¹ This might be also suitable for the education sub section but the distinctive part of this decree is that the local authority confiscated the church and granted to the Ministry of National Education. The state departments in the educational did not have the monopoly in this area, the local authorities had a say in these processes. But certainly, final say belonged to the Ministry of National Education.

Even it has not got any significance in the full picture, one of the decrees also needs attention. The decree which is dated in 5 March 1927 that the burned house land left from the non-exchanged individuals in İzmit would be given for an imbursement to the Municipality of Kocaeli in order to construct a bus terminal.¹⁵² At the first insight, it does not show anything suspicious but the reference to the burned house gives information about the non-Muslim neighbourhoods in İzmit. This information refers to the fire of İzmit in the Armenian Quarters in 27 August 1915 which the whole quarters was burned down and the fire could not be controlled for two-three days. In some provinces, arson was the main motivation that these non-Muslim communities could not return to their hometowns again because of their livelihoods and living space was destroyed. One of the most prominent example is the 1916

¹⁴⁹ The elementary school opened in Alaçam in 1934 and it is confirmed in the school's web page that the school was converted from a school and named as Atatürk Elementary School. For more information, http://alacamataturkortaokulu.meb.k12.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/55/02/727656/icerikler/okulumuzu-taniyalim_37028.html?CHK=900bf0a1c68b8000cf141379b5c42bb3.

¹⁵⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12355, dosya: 145-91, yer no: 26.14..12. According to the information of the school, it was built as a household for Greek Andavaloğlu, but he was executed by the Independence Tribunals. For more information, http://samsunsakarya.meb.k12.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/55/18/968551/icerikler/tarihcemiz_46701.html.

¹⁵¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12675, dosya: 143-91, yer no: 27.30..12.

¹⁵² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4814, dosya: 83-26, yer no: 23.12..16.

Fire of Ankara burned down the whole non-Muslim quarters.¹⁵³

Another important series of decrees are the two factories were transferred and distributed by the municipalities. Tuzakoğlu Flour Factory in the district of Darağacı that were taken by Municipality of İzmir would be paid with the interest within eight years and eight instalments.¹⁵⁴ The other one, Fındıklıyan Flour Factory is an abandoned property and registered to the treasury in Edirne would be rented to the Municipality of Edirne for ten years.¹⁵⁵ Some of the local authorities acquired the scarce industrial complexes and possibly distribute them to the people that are potentially “suitable” people which had close relations with the central and local governments.

Another important decree is that the inn which belonged to the lost individuals -by this statement it tells that these properties belonged to the non-Muslim communities but possibly to the Armenians as the Greeks were stated as the exchanged- in Polatlı province would be sold to the municipality. As previously mentioned, many commercial buildings including the factories were owned by the non-Muslim communities and after their flight from Turkey, many departments of the state took the liberty to acquire which the laws about the abandoned properties made the backdrop about it.

According to the another decree, it is stated that the schools, temples and charities of the non-Muslim communities transferred to the local authorities do not have an obstacle according to the Law of Abandoned Properties dated 18 March 1925. The state decided to seized all properties and transfer them to the local authorities and let these local authorities deal with the abandoned properties. As it would be seen in the next chapter, their choices about how to handle these properties differed from each other.

¹⁵³ For more information, Ferda Balancar “Soykırımın tamamlayıcı unsuru olarak ‘yangın’” **Agos**, 20.02.2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/10657/soykirim-tamamlayici-unsuru-olarak-yangin>, 1916 Büyük Ankara Yangını, <http://www.hafizakaydi.org/buyukankarayangini/>, Nesim Ovadya İzrail, **24 Nisan 1915 İstanbul, Çankırı, Ayaş, Ankara**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2013, pp. 196-203.

¹⁵⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3444, dosya: 83-15, yer no: 18.25..2. Tuzakoğlu Factory was opened by Yuan Tuzakoğlu and Vasil İstefanidi in 1908 and one of the most important factories around the region. It was also used as State Security Courts and Turkish Economy Institution. For more information, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/tarihi-bina-bakin-ne-olacak-40061330>.

¹⁵⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3471, dosya: 105-16, yer no: 18.26..9. The Fındıklıyan Flour Factory belonged to the Trakya Flour Company which was owned by Edip Ağaoğulları and Kemal Dönertaş. Fındıklıyan Flour Factory was later changed its name to the Dönertaş Flour Factory. For more information, http://www.trakyaun.com.tr/?page_id=7.

The importance of this sub sections shows not only the central government was involved in this transfer and distribution processes but also the local authorities. Chapter Three can considered as a prelude for the Chapter Four for it addresses the relationship between the central government and the local authorities and how they were involved in the issue of the abandoned properties.

1.4.Healthcare Facilities

According to the decrees, not much of the abandoned properties are given to the healthcare facilities. But it can also be interpreted as many of the provinces did not have proper medical services and only a few of them were giving sufficient treatment. Most of the hospitals and healthcare facilities belonged to the missionaries operating all across the Anatolia. Also, the first modern hospitals and dispensaries were opened by the missionaries.¹⁵⁶ The first hospitals that are opened in Anatolia is the cities of Antep, Talas (Kayseri), Mardin and Van and carried on with İstanbul, Merzifon, Sivas, Harput, Diyarbakır, Erzurum and Konya.¹⁵⁷ This means that the non-Muslim communities did not have the hospital divided by their ethnic identities but with their religious affiliation, so in these establishments they would receive proper healthcare treatment and also work as an employee.¹⁵⁸

One of the decrees is especially important as it has been a landmark to the city of Elazığ. The building that is known as the *Beşkardeşler* (Five Brothers) and belong to the *Milli Emlak* (National Property) would be surrendered to the newly established *Emraz-ı Akliye ve Asabiye Hastanesi* (Mental and Neurological Diseases Hospital) in Elazığ. The *Beşkardeşler* Building is especially important in the region because the building was the household for the Fabrikatoryan Brothers consists of five houses that built for each of the brothers. After the

¹⁵⁶ Apart from this, the missionaries also brought many technological devices to the Ottoman Empire such as the telephone, sewing machine modern farming tools and press machine. Gülbadi Alan, **Amerikan Board'ın Merzifon'daki Faaliyetleri ve Anadolu Koleji**, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2008, pp.387.

¹⁵⁷ Ayten Sezer, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e; Misyonerlerin Türkiye'deki Eğitim ve Öğretim Faaliyetleri, **Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi**, Ankara, Ekim 1999, pp.176

¹⁵⁸ For more information, Ercan Haytoğlu, Amerikan Misyonerlerinin Anadolu Topraklarındaki Sağlık Faaliyetleri ve Ermeniler, **Yeni Türkiye** 60/2014.

establishment of the Republic, the government chose to give it to a mental hospital.¹⁵⁹

In another decree dated in 1 September 1926, the cabinet decided to transfer the land that belongs to the *Milli Emlak* (National Property) in Ereğli in order to build a Coast Medical Administration.

Even there are very few cabinet decrees about the healthcare, most of the buildings that has been used as hospitals were later used for different purposes or different buildings such as the Saint Afrem Catholic Monastery and Capuchin Monastery were converted to military hospitals just after the deportation and massacres began in 1915.¹⁶⁰ Therefore, it is possible to assume most of the hospital buildings that were left before 1915 were used for different purposes and other buildings not related with healthcare facilities anyhow were used as hospital buildings.

Some of the medical institutions were also built on the properties that once belonged to the non-Muslim communities such as the *Konya Numune Hastanesi* (Konya Sample Hospital). The lands and the household of *Konya Numune Hastanesi* belonged to an Armenian family once.¹⁶¹ The *Kayseri Numune Hastanesi* (Kayseri Sample Hospital) was the American College which belonged to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the building used as a shelter for Armenian refugees during the Armistice Period then converted to a *Numune Hastanesi* operated until it has been the target of an arson by one patient in 1930.¹⁶²

In conclusion, even the lack of cabinet decrees about the healthcare facilities, most of

¹⁵⁹ Fabrikatoryan Brothers were an important family in Elazığ, Mezre that they were in the business of producing silk, which was one of important sectors in the region. But the during of events that took place during 1915, none of the brothers made it alive. Then it was seen above, used as a mental hospital and later demolished in order to be build apartments to the perimeter. For more information, Zeynep Kezer, Spatializing Difference: The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey. **Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians** 2014, 73(4), 507-527, also the conference which took place 20-21 November 2015, A Civilization Destroyed Specific Regions and Groups 1, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lo3nhNYooc>.

¹⁶⁰ Yves Ternon, **Mardin 1915 Bir Yıkımın Patalojik Anatomisi**, Çev. Naringül Tateosyan, İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2013, pp. 314-315.

¹⁶¹ Aris Nalci, "100. Yılında Sürgün Yolunda 7: Konya'da Tehcire Karşı Mevlevi Tavrı", **Radikal**, 20.04.2015, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/100-yilinda-surgun-yolunda-7-konyada-tehcire-karsi-mevlevi-tavri-1339477/>.

¹⁶² Fatih M. Dervişoğlu, "4 Eylül 1919 Şafağında Sivas Şehri ve Bir Ermeni Hadimi: Miss Graffam", **Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi**, Volume 2/6 Winter 2009, pp. 152.

these buildings were repurposed by the ministries of the state. The reason of the absence of buildings related to healthcare might be the lack of the state involvement in these issues and also inability to offer healthcare services to the rural areas even in the late 1950s and 1960s. Instead, the missionary groups substituted the lack of the government involvement during the early 20th century. During the Republican Era, the government did not grant any eligibility to these institutions and almost all of these institutions faced with close down with the exception of urban areas. Another conspicuous deduction from the decrees is some facilities were built on the lands and properties belonged to the non-Muslim communities. This means the government did not only seized the private properties but also used them in order to serve the public interest.

1.5. Commercial Establishments

One of the most important aspects of the transferring and distribution of abandoned properties were the notion of *Milli İktisat* (National Economy).¹⁶³ The term of *Milli İktisat* was the removal of undesirable identities from the nation's commercial activities, meant the creation of a "national bourgeoisie". So, as this statement excluded the non-Turkish-non-Muslim people and communities suffered from them the most. As the non-Muslim communities dominated much of the commerce until the First World War in Ottoman Empire and late 1930's in İstanbul as well as İzmir¹⁶⁴ and Edirne¹⁶⁵. The domination of these communities started to be crippled by the economic boycotts at first and carried on with the expulsion, deportation and obviously, mass murders.

The disruptive policies against the non-Muslim communities were especially obvious the era of Union and Progress. For example, the Greek community suffered a lot from these policies. At this point, it should be mentioned that the Unionists conducted boycott to the

¹⁶³ For more information, Zafer Toprak. **Türkiye'de Ekonomi ve Toplum (1908-1950) Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi**, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul: 1995. Zafer Toprak, **Türkiye'de Ekonomi ve Toplum (1908-1950) İttihat-Terakki ve Devletçilik**, İstanbul; Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995.

¹⁶⁴ For more information about non-Muslim commercial activity in İzmir during the Early Republican Era, Sabri Yetkin, **İzmir Ticaret Rehberi 1926**, İzmir Kent Kitaplığı Yayınları, İzmir: 2002.

¹⁶⁵ For more information about the social and economic presence of Jews in Edirne, Rifat N. Bali, "Edirne Yahudileri" (Haz. Emin Nedret İşli ve M. Sabri Koz), **Edirne: Serhattaki Payitaht**, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul: 1998. Naim A. Güleriyüz. **Tarihte Yolculuk Edirne Yahudileri**, Gözlem Gazetecilik Basım ve Yayın, İstanbul: 2014.

Greeks in the Ottoman Empire during the years of 1913-1914.¹⁶⁶ The Greek success over the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars were seen as the endeavour of Greeks living in the Empire and the Georgios Averoff Armoured Cruiser which was bought by the entrepreneur Georgios Averoff and clinched the Ottoman Navy to the Sea of Marmara brought great hostility. Hereupon the boycott against the Greeks had begun by the direct involvement of the members of the committee. The boycott had two aims to be accomplished. The first one is that the Unionists aimed to create a “national economy” and also the “national bourgeois” in order to make easier to transform itself a nation-state. One of the most important barriers for creating a national bourgeois and economy was that the Greek’s commodity and capital and the Unionists wanted to use these possessions to create of Muslim-Turk bourgeois. The second aim for the boycott was that as they have seen as a potential threat for the Unionists, it was to accomplish the “voluntary” emigration of Greeks from the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶⁷ At the same time the discussions that were happening in the public were answered by a newspaper:

*“The steps that were taking for protection of progress of our nationality and promotion of Muslims in the profession of economics cannot be harmed by these complaints and objections. The nation that is awakened by the public impression cannot be stopped by any force... In summary, today the subject that has been complained two or three a week is not a boycott in our opinion... They say that it is a boycott, we applaud the joyful manifestation of the public impression.”*¹⁶⁸

These policies did not stop in the Armistice Era, but one can say that this era was a halt in the above-mentioned policies. After the Greece’s defeat in Asia Minor, the policies continued on, even accelerated the process of transfer and distribution. The presented examples would show that the process continued on and distributed to the institutions that might help to form a bourgeois class and establish a “national economy”.

¹⁶⁶ For more information about boycott policy during the Late Ottoman Era and its effect to the *Milli İktisat*, Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, **Osmanlı'yı Müslümanlaştırmak Kitle Siyaseti, Toplumsal Sınıflar, Boykotlar ve Milli İktisat (1909-1914)**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2015. Earlier boycott attempts during the Late Ottoman Era, Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, **1908 Osmanlı Boykotu Bir Toplumsal Hareketin Analizi**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul: 2014.

¹⁶⁷ Fuat Dündar, **Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2008, pp. 204.

¹⁶⁸ Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, 1913-14 Rumlara Karşı Boykot ve Hüseyin Kazım'ın Bir Risalesi, **Çağdaş Türkiye Araştırmaları Dergisi**, Sayı13, 2006 Güz, pp. 97.

This draft decree which was proposed in 2 December 1925 is especially important for that it gives grants to the chambers of commerce and industry and factories to possess the abandoned properties which were transferred to the treasury of the state. The draft was discussed in the parliamentary session of 15 February 1926, the debates are especially important to the mention the confiscation and transfer process to the non-governmental organization and also to the private individuals. The Elaziz MEP Hüseyn asked that if it included the Child Protection Agency, the Urfa MEP Refet asked if it also included the Turkish Hearths and Teacher's Union and the last one Van MEP Hakkı tells that if it includes the Turkish Aeroplane Society, he would withdraw his motion and the Çatalca MEP Şakir confirmed that the decree included all of these non-governmental organizations also.¹⁶⁹This affirmation is very important that in the later sub-sections, it will be seen that these transfer of abandoned properties would occur as one of the main arguments this thesis contends.

With this information, many abandoned properties were also used for the establishment of local chambers of commerce offices such as Yozgat Chambers of Commerce, Adana Cotton Stock Exchange, İzmir Fig Stock Exchange, Balıkesir Stock Exchange of Commerce, Malatya Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Elazığ Chambers of Commerce, Balıkesir Stock Exchange of Commerce and Grain and Economics Office and Industry and Muğla Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The importance of this information is that the chambers of commerce which is the cradle of trade and economic activities were also supplied with the abandoned properties meaning that many of the local economic activities were depended on the properties that were once belonged to some non-Muslim individual that even the structures of these institutions were given from the same source.

The state itself was involved in the transfer and distribution process which they have taken some of the buildings that were registered to the treasury. The Antep Economics Office and Chambers of Commerce, Adana Province Commerce Office, Trabzon Port Administration, İnebolu Port Offices Adana Regional Industry and Labor Office, İzmir Naval Trade Offices and Port Chairmanship Management as well as the Ministry of Commerce were just the examples of the above mentioned statement. They also aimed to achieve the better

¹⁶⁹ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi Devre 2 İctima Senesi 3 Cilt 22 Elli Altıncı İctima 15.02.1926, pp.209-210, <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d02/c022/tbmm02022056.pdf>.

management and control of the commerce for that as it can be seen in the newspapers of 1920's, 1930's and even 1940's, the state fought against the black-marketeering and monopolies in some areas such as alcohol, tobacco, sugar gasoline, matches, salt, gunpowder, port administration and even deck of cards. As with these monopolies and the lack of a strong bourgeois class, the state itself became an entrepreneur trader itself.¹⁷⁰

Another important decree about commerce is that one with the transfer of lands from the abandoned property in Balıkpazarı Ankara in order to construct the building of Ziraat Bankası (Agricultural Bank) in 1924. Not only the state is involved with and haul the responsibilities of bourgeois class but also feed the banks with cash and properties in order to enhance the capabilities of these banks and bring them into force. Ziraat Bankası is not the only example that has been established or feed from the state as a public bank, İş Bankası (Business Bank) and Emlak ve Eytam Bankası (Land and Credit Bank) are also the examples government involvement in the process of creating a “national economy”.

As this sub section is a route guide in order to understand the main motives of distribution of properties, more information would also be given in the next chapter, both of these chapters would be complementary in order to find out big picture.

1.6. Religious Buildings

This sub section would be important to show the reader that the abandoned properties were not only used for commercial and military purposes but also used for the conversion of buildings to which would be suitable for the new nation state's needs that aims to create a homogenous population with every available means. Turkey's nation state building process aimed to create an ethnically homogenous nation which forced everyone to embrace the Turkish identity and religiously Sunni domination in the spiritual sphere.

The above mentioned domination of Islam in the “homeland” especially the sect of Sunnism would be reinforced with the conversion of non-Muslim community temples to the mosques and masjids. This understanding is not a new one as the Ottoman domination could guide us what to expect from this process; the greatest church or cathedral would be converted to a mosque when a city was taken from a hostile force. As the non-Muslim communities

¹⁷⁰ A. Şnurov, **Türkiye Proleteryaşı**, İstanbul: Yar Yayınları, 1973, pp. 48.

would seem to Kemalist elites “hostile” and “internal tumours”, “conquering the homeland” from the Armenians, Greeks and the other to-be-competitive communities -there would be Kurds after the 1923 which does not fit to the classical “hostile” type of community- that would be cleared from them and given them to ethnically Turks and to-be-Turks¹⁷¹.

Even these hostilities may go far away from the events that this paper gives insight of, the real sense of hostilities began in much closer times. It can be said that the Balkan Wars were triggered off the ethnic and religious policies of the Committee of Union and Progress, we should go back to see that origins of these policies were set up and after the Thessaloniki Congress, the Committee began to approach as hostile to their former allies and saw them as a threat. The reason for such hostility was based on the decisions that were taken in the Congress which included a Turkist programme instead of an Ottomanist one.¹⁷² After the decision was taken, Committee of Union and Progress started a Turkish nationalist programme and tried to establish its most of the cadre from Turkish origins and tried to limit the groups which came from a different religious or ethnic minority. It can be observed that in memoirs of Kazım Pasha (Karabekir), Enver Pasha tells that “*Blood brotherhood is both historical for us. But I did not like your touching on about the crescent symbol. This symbol obviously more comprehensive than the march of ‘I Am a Turk’.* The committee takes not only Turks but every Ottoman that is Muslim. Arab, Albanian can also join just so they are partisans of freedom and constitutional monarchy. With the symbol of crescent we do not wage jihad to the cross, do we?”¹⁷³ It can be seen that the decision was taken by the elites of committee that the exclusion of non-Muslims started to begin and more was on the way.

At this point with the quote of Fuad Köprülü “*Turkishness at the centre, the circle at its round is Islam and at outer rim there was the idea of Ottomanism.*”¹⁷⁴ The people that had “forgotten” or “unaware” of his/her Turkishness would be remembered to them. In this case, especially the Alawis and Turkomans were the main examples to be depended on such

¹⁷¹ The term to-be-Turks used for the Muslim communities that can be Turkified such as Bosnians, Albanians, Kurds, Circassians, Laz, Zazas, Georgians, Arabs and Romanis.

¹⁷² Fuat Dündar, **İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-18)**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2002, pp. 32.

¹⁷³ Kazım Karabekir, **İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti**, İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 1995, pp. 138.

¹⁷⁴ Dündar, 2002, pp. 32-33.

policies and building of the Turkish identity as they were seen as protected their “original traditions”. The Muslims were seen as the “potential” and “future” Turks and as they have shared the same religion, they were seen as more prone to the assimilation of Turkishness. And the outer rim, the non-Muslims were perceived as the potential threat for that they could not Islamize nor Turkify and if necessary they would be disposed in various ways for they were seen as “internal tumours”.¹⁷⁵

After the base has been set in order to understand the events that led to the expulsion and massacres of almost whole non-Muslim communities from Turkey, the cabinet decrees might enlighten us about these process of destruction and conversion. In the previous sub sections, it has seen that some of temples were converted for other purposes. The sub section only gives an insight about the ones that was used for the religion related purposes.

The first decree dated in 1925 granted the church in village of Fertek in Niğde would be granted that it would be converted to a mosque. This church was probably left by the community of Karamanli that has got an interesting history which creates a division from their Greek brethren which they were exchanged by Greece and Turkey during 1923.¹⁷⁶ The other decree is the decree dated in 1938 that in the province of Sarıkamış, Kars the converted mosque which was once a Russian church would be sold to the municipality or local authorities. This gives an understanding that after the occupation of Turkish troops, the non-Muslim communities that resided in this province were removed or run away before the armed forces has come and then the next step was probably conversion of this church to a mosque.

Another vital decree that might show that the distribution of abandoned properties is that the official correspondence between the Ministry of Finance and the Presidency of Religious Affairs. In this correspondence dated in 1942 -which might be considered as late era for the distribution- mentions that the Presidency of Religious Affairs had many abandoned properties as their local offices in the provinces which the ministry aims to sell according to the existing laws. But the presidency declines the sale as the budget for the local mufti offices

¹⁷⁵ Fuat Dündar, “İttihat ve Terakki'nin Göç ve İskân Politikası (1913-18)”, **Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar**, Sayı 5, 2007, pp. 222-223.

¹⁷⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi, yer no: 11.77..4

would not carry such a burden and pleads to keep the abandoned properties which they had. This shows us that that every department of the state exploited and took advantage of these abandoned properties that it even includes the spiritual guidance that would not be expected to be included in this injustice and wrongdoing.

The last decree that might catch the attention is the sale of Çanakkale Greek Church's belongings to the newly constructed İmroz Church dated in 1934. It is strange that how state confiscated the belongings that once belonged to the Greek church and even stranger thing is that the sale of these movable properties to the newly built church which at the first place to the people that would been rightfully theirs. It is a great injustice that the properties that was once belonged to Greek community would not be granted to the Greek minority as they had to pay the price in order to have them again, which might be called as an official state-sponsored robbery.

2. The Properties Appropriated To the Non-Governmental (Semi-Official) Organizations

In order to understand the complex structure of the confiscation and transfer of the abandoned properties, it is necessary to analyse the nature of the non-governmental organizations in the Early Republican Era. The implementation of the status of association working for the public welfare started with the *Kızılay*. Until 1950, 36 associations were granted this status. Apart from the privileges granted to associations working in the public interest, some associations become privileged within the general structure by taking advantage of special exceptions and privileges, unlike others.¹⁷⁷ As it will be detailed below, even many of establishments such as the *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Himaye-i Etfal* (Child Protection Agency) and various societies and sports clubs could be considered as non-governmental organizations, the close relationship between these organizations and the state is apparent. Many of these establishments took support in cash and property by the government granted them these as the promoters of “public welfare” as it was mentioned in the earlier documents. In this section, the sub-sections

¹⁷⁷ **Kamuya Yararlı Dernek Statüsünün İrdelenmesi ile Kamuya Yararlı Derneklerle İlgili Yürütülen İş ve İşlemlerin Değerlendirilmesi**, T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Denetleme Kurulu Araştırma ve İnceleme Raporu, 2010, pp. 341-342.

would be divided according to organizations and would be evaluated.

2.1. *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths)

The *Türk Ocakları* was a very important institution that was shaped the Young Turks Movement which would later be named as the Union and Progress Committee, established in 1912 as a cultural association. Mehmet Emin (Yurdakul), Ahmed Ferid (Tek); Yusuf Akçura, Ahmed Ağaoğlu, Emin Bülend (Serdaroğlu), Fuad Sabit ve Mehmet Ali Tevfik (Yükselen) were the founders and also in the administrative committee of the Turkish Hearths.¹⁷⁸ After the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Turkish Hearths were assigned by the new regime to act as the main ideological apparatus for Turkish nationalism in order to “educate” the masses win them for their cause. Before it was closed by the direct command from Mustafa Kemal in 1931, the Hearths had 266 local offices and over 30.000 members which made this institution one of the most important non-governmental organization in Turkey at its time.¹⁷⁹ The Turkish Hearths was one of the most important examples how closely the state and non-governmental organizations closely-knitted until it was shut down by the state and their properties was acquired. The relative autonomy of the Turkish Hearths was also undermined and a direct relationship was established as the Republic of Turkey evolved into a party state with the foundation of *Halkevleri* and *Halkodaları* (People’s House and People’s Rooms).

As quantity of 45 lands and properties had been given to the Turkish Hearths, these have been distributed all along Turkey’s provinces such as Bayburt, Denizli, İzmir Adana, Trabzon, Elazığ, Mersin, Afyon, Konya, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Kırklareli, Van and Ankara. More than half of the properties (%55) have been granted to the local Turkish Hearth offices and a considerable amount of properties (%37) have been sold to them. This means that the state also fed the non-governmental organizations in order to shape according to their policies and wanted to help these organizations to fill the gap that the civil society had. The Early Republican Era inherited a legacy from the Ottoman Empire rather a faint civil society. Even so, there were traditional -madrasahs, religious orders and waqfs- and modern -enterprises,

¹⁷⁸ Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği Türk Ocakları (1912-1931)*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004, pp. 53.

¹⁷⁹ For more information, Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği Türk Ocakları (1912-1931)*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004.

interest groups, political parties, associations and trade unions- aspects of the non-governmental organizations.¹⁸⁰ But the state's ambition of homogenization in all levels also left the elements of civil society to have a symbiotic relationship. So, the recruitment of remaining civil society by the state was rewarded with the abandoned properties.

In order to understand the full picture, the cabinet decrees must also be investigated. One of most important documents which might be related with the distribution is that the decree of 23 pieces of land which were left by the non-exchanged people in Malatya would be given to the local Turkish Hearth dated in 1927. This might show that in order to flourish the civil society and the teachings that are preached by these institutions the state did spare no expense.

The cultural buildings left by the non-Muslim communities were also used for objectives of the Turkish Hearths such as theatres, cinemas, school and colleges. The examples of Aydın and Adana are exclusively important. In one of the cabinet decrees, the theatre building left by the Armenians in Ödemiş would be sold to the local Turkish Hearth for its remuneration which is dated in 19 May 1924.¹⁸¹ The other example is that in 1924 that the cinema theatre belonged to the Greeks and Ottoman Hotel in Adana would be sold to the Turkish Hearth.¹⁸² The removal of the non-Muslim communities succeeded with the seizure of cultural assets and used for the entrenchment of the new Republican regime and its ideals. Once upon a time, the cradles of multiculturalism were transferred to the state and converted to symbols of the Turkish nationalism.

Another important decrees that might give an insight about these processes is the decree from 1926 which stated that two houses which are reserved for the refugees from Georgia and Armenia would be auctioned for the Republican People's Party and Turkish

¹⁸⁰ For more information, Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Toplumun Türkiye'deki Sorunları*, (Editors: Selahaddin Bakan, Adnan Küçük ve Ahmet Karadağ), **21. Yüzyılın Eşiğinde Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat Cilt 2**, İstanbul: Aktüel Yayınları, 2005, pp. 693.

¹⁸¹ Ödemiş Turkish Hearth is one of the first rural branches of the Turkish Hearths around the region and also in the country. For more information, Günver Güneş, *Modernleşme Sürecinde Ödemiş Halkevi'nin Kuruluş ve Faaliyetleri*, **Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi**, Cilt 21 Sayı 63 Kasım 2005; Günver Güneş, *Türk Ocağı Taşra Şubelerine Bir Örnek: Ödemiş Türk Ocağı ve Faaliyetleri*, **Türk Yurdu**, Yıl 23, Sayı 192, 2003.

¹⁸² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 398, yer no: 9.19..16.

Hearth.¹⁸³ The other examples are the decree from 1927 that a building and three shops which was reserved for the refugees that came from Georgia and Armenia would be sold to the Turkish Hearth.¹⁸⁴ The last example from the year of 1927 that one of the abandoned properties rented in Elazığ was reserved for the refugees from the east would be sold to the Turkish Hearth.¹⁸⁵ The effort to homogenize the new Republic with the upcoming refugees by all over the Balkans and also Caucasus helped the abandoned properties to be used by these people and served the state economically as the abandoned lands and properties were used by the people and in addition to this, the state was able to tax them, but according to these documents, the state was also motivated to enhance the capabilities of the Turkish Hearths. A “normal” institution of civil society would not gain such benefits that sometimes surpass the aim of homogenization and inhabitancy of the homeland that might show us that how the state and it was related.

Another hint to trace the abandoned properties is the decree which is dated in 12 August 1928 that the district school which registered to the state treasury in Ayaş would be given to the Ayaş Turkish Hearth.¹⁸⁶ As there was absence of educational institutions in many provinces which was seen in the previous sections, the state wanted to give the registered property of a school to a local Turkish Hearth might seem a bit odd. This information might lead us that the mentioned school in this decree would be a school which was possibly owned previously by the non-Muslim communities.

Even the houses of non-Muslim communities had been used for the aim of establishing local Turkish Hearths. The decree from 1927 that the house which belonged to Papas İstopan from the exchanged minorities in Pınarhisar would be given to the Turkish Hearth.¹⁸⁷ The other instance is the decree of the same day that the house which belonged to Kiremitçioğlu Konstantin from the exchanged minorities in Kırklareli would be sold to the Turkish Hearth.¹⁸⁸ Certainly, the other types of buildings such as hotels and shops were also

¹⁸³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4344, dosya: 135-95, yer no: 21.70..7.

¹⁸⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4679, dosya: 135-102, yer no: 22.87..1.

¹⁸⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5076, dosya: 240-10, yer no: 24.25..19.

¹⁸⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6997, dosya: 145-63, yer no: 30.50..11.

¹⁸⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5753, dosya: 135-122, yer no: 26.59..3.

¹⁸⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5759, dosya: 135-124, yer no: 26.59..9.

used for the same purpose. The decree which is dated in 19 May 1924 that the buildings that are left from the Armenians in Tarsus would be sold to the Turkish Hearth with its remuneration¹⁸⁹ and another decree that it states -of course it also states that this buildings once belonged to a Greek individual- that the Stropoli Building would be suitable for Trabzon Turkish Hearth.¹⁹⁰ The last examples were the decrees of 1925 that the shop from the abandoned property numbered 1185 in Konya would be sold to the Turkish Hearth¹⁹¹ and the building from the abandoned properties transferred to the state treasury in Çarşı Avenue Denizli would be sold to the Denizli Turkish Hearth.¹⁹²

Füsun Üstel states that, the Ankara Turkish Hearth building was built upon an Armenian graveyard; under the city planning the graveyard was turned into a building plot and then bought from the General Directorate of Foundations in 1926 costed the institution 42.786 Turkish Liras.¹⁹³ It means that the institution was mainly founded and funded on the abandoned properties which belonged mostly Greeks and Armenians.

2.2. *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society)

The *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society) was established in 1925 under the command of Mustafa Kemal in order to flourish the military, civil, sportive and touristic aviation all across Turkey. It was established by Cevat Abbas Gürer. He had served Mustafa Kemal as a military assistant. The society would later have changed its name to the Turkish Aviation Institution.¹⁹⁴ This might show the close relationship between these non-governmental organizations and the state. Most of Kemalist elites known each other before the establishment of Republic of Turkey and met during the reign of Union and Progress. Furthermore, the Kemalist elites were also important figures in the Committee of Union and Progress but the clique in power included the low and middle rank members of the committee such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, Kazım Karabekir and Ali Fuat Cebesoy.

¹⁸⁹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 539, yer no: 9.26..16.

¹⁹⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi dosya: B1, yer no: 40.237..13.

¹⁹¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1498, yer no: 12.74..8.

¹⁹² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1499, yer no: 12.74..9.

¹⁹³ Füsun Üstel, **İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği Türk Ocakları (1912-1931)**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004 pp. 230.

¹⁹⁴ For more information, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/turk-hava-kurumu>.

As the new state realized the importance of aviation, the local offices, support and membership has grown steadily. It is worth mentioning that the locals and notables of various provinces donated great sums of money to purchase new aeroplanes for the state. Moreover, many advertisements were given by *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* and its successor *Türk Hava Kurumu* to attract the attention about threat from the air forces from nearby states -especially Italy- in the newspapers of 1930's. The support did not only come from the people itself but also from the state and the government. The type of distribution of abandoned properties points that they were rented (%28), granted (%28) or sold (%42). Some of the decrees need a more detailed insight in order to understand more about the distribution process.

The decree dated in 20 September 1927 that Safa Hotel which was transferred to the state treasury in Elazığ would be sold to the Turkish Aeroplane Society with the price of 7718 liras.¹⁹⁵ This reveals that the state gave a very valuable building to the Aeroplane Society in order to support the branch itself. Another important decree is that the decree dated in 20 November 1927 that the inn and its outhouses left from the non-exchanged minorities of Baloğlu Misak in Polatlı would be surrendered to the Aeroplane Society Polatlı Branch.¹⁹⁶ The same process had been used for the Polatlı Branch of Aeroplane Society as they granted the whole inn which included many shops and rooms that might be rented in order to support the activities of the society.

Another interesting cabinet decree is about the abandoned properties that have been used for bartering. According to the document, the lands left from an exchanged Greek's son of Küpeci Anastas and Aleksandros in Ankara would be given to the daughter of Hulusi İzmirli Mediha for the transfer of her property to the İzmir Aeroplane Society which is dated in 6 September 1928. This might show a hint which the state used the properties in order to trade for the vital resources, lands and properties to achieve the means and objectives that it had.

The decree dated in 22 May 1927 that a house in Elazığ reserved for the settlement of the refugees coming from the east would be sold to be used as the building of Aeroplane

¹⁹⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5607, dosya: 135-117, yer no: 25.51..16.

¹⁹⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5839, dosya: 135-125, yer no: 26.63..9.

Society.¹⁹⁷ The information gives us hints about the intentions of the state. The first hint is the case of settlement of the refugees from the east meaning they were probably came from Georgia and Armenia. Also, the state's intention to substitute the refugees for the displacement of Armenians was clear that most of the real estate belonged to them was in disuse. The second hint about the decree reveals the priorities of the state. A dynamic but dependent civil society is desired even at the expense of a few landless and homeless refugees. The same importance has given also to the Aeroplane Society as they were given to the Turkish Hearths. The effort of homogenization and resettlement of the coming refugees from all over the neighbours had been undermined and left to its place to the elements of "civil society" if they might have called any. Another process continues with the decree dated in 6 April 1926 that a shop and three story building from a lost Greek individual in İstanbul would be rented with negotiated tendering to the Aeroplane Society.¹⁹⁸ A whole building consisted of three floors is distributed to this very institution as they were deemed as the promoters of "public welfare".

2.3.Himaye- i Etfal Cemiyeti (Child Protection Agency)

The *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (Child Protection Agency) was established in 1921 in Ankara and many of the founders of this agency is vital to the Kemalist cause such as Fevzi Çakmak, Rauf Orbay, Adnan Adıvar, Rıza Nur and Mustafa Necati Uğural which might show the reader about the agency's importance. The aim of the agency was to protect the orphans from the destruction of war and increase the awareness on the social service in emerging Republic of Turkey.¹⁹⁹ As the state was aware of the situation that the endless war waged upon the different theatres had also left many children without their mothers and fathers, sometimes not even any relatives that might tend them. The care and education of these children were supported by the state as many of the children's fathers fought in the battlefields during the chaotic years and most of founding fathers of the Republic were also originated from a military background.

¹⁹⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5214, yer no: 24.32..17.

¹⁹⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3429, dosya: 135-89, yer no: 18.24..7.

¹⁹⁹ Makbule Sarıkaya, Cumhuriyet'in İlk Yıllarında Bir Sosyal Hizmet Kurumu: Türkiye Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti, **A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi** Sayı 34 2007, pp. 323.

As a brief information to gain insight about the distribution process, the decrees can guide us reveal more about it. According to the one of the cabinet decrees, a building that are left from the abandoned properties in Kaleiçi District in Çatalca would be sold to the Child Protection Agency's Çatalca Branch. Another decree which is dated in 13 October 1927 that the abandoned shop that is left from daughter of Ohanyan Agop İbrantohi in Erbaa would be sold to the Child Protection Agency in Erbaa.²⁰⁰ These examples might reveal that the Agency had been supported by the state itself in order to enhance their activities such as fundraising and building more orphanages or converting the abandoned properties to the orphanages that had been distributed by the new regime.

The above mentioned claim can be supported by this very example is the decree dated in 20 September 1927 that three parcels of land which the borders and amounts are specified in Malatya would be sold to the orphanage Malatya Branch.²⁰¹ This shows even the *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* was an institution of civil society, when these distributions were seen, it cannot be seen as the “pure” examples of civil society that in every aspect of life. The Republican regime has included the agency with the personal relations and also legally as they have also seen this agency as the promoter of “public welfare”.

Another interesting and very important example is the decree dated in 1 August 1926 that a part of the graveyard turned into building plot by the departments of state in Denizli would be sold to the Child Protection Agency Denizli Branch.²⁰² This is a very vital document that what happened to the cemeteries which was once belonged to the non-Muslim communities. This document tells that the graveyard of some non-Muslim group were turned to a building plot for the future construction which violated the sanctity of these places and also the destruction of places of memory that might connect the future generations to the past, as that happened in many places all across Turkey.

2.4.Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti (Red Crescent)

Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti (The Red Crescent) is the oldest institution among the ones that has been reviewed as it was established in the year of 1868 for the objective of sustaining

²⁰⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5707, dosya: 135-121, yer no: 26.56..16.

²⁰¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5656, dosya: 135-120, yer no: 26.54..5.

²⁰² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3938, dosya: 231-8, yer no: 20.49..19.

the casualties of war for that was experienced during the Crimean War of 1854. The institution has changed its name to *Kızılay* in 1935. The institution's objective was to provide unconditional aid and social service to the people that needed help during the national emergencies such as wars and disasters.²⁰³

Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti also used the resources provided by the state which means that they had their fair share from the abandoned properties. Again, the same pattern goes on with the *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti* that all of lands and properties were sold to the institution as the *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* and most (75%) of the properties were lands. The examples might give us a better understanding about this transfer process. The decree which is dated in 11 August 1927 that the land in Çivril Station Avenue would be sold to the foundations that promote public welfare such as Aeroplane, Turkish Hearth, Red Crescent and Child Protection Agency²⁰⁴ gives the information of all of these non-governmental organizations have been declared by the law as the promoters of public welfare and given to them. Another example is that as the decree goes, nine parcels of land from the non-exchanged individuals in Kocaeli would be sold to the Red Crescent dated in 17 November 1926. The other example is decree which is dated in 5 June 1927 that an abandoned farm from the non-exchanged individuals in Bapuhti Malatya would be sold to the Red Crescent in order to be constructed a building.²⁰⁵ The last decree which is dated in 5 June 1927 that two parcels of abandoned land from the non-exchanged individuals near the municipality in Eskişehir would be sold to the Red Crescent.²⁰⁶ This information might also show that as the Red Crescent had flourished by the support of the newly-established state, it has grown and opened more local offices and build new buildings in the existed ones.

Not only were the lands distributed to the Red Crescent but also the buildings. The instance of the decree which is dated in 9 November 1930 that no: 42 house in the district of Gökçe Bozdön in Sivas decided to be given to the Sivas Red Crescent with remuneration²⁰⁷ and the decree which is dated in 18 October 1934 that the building from Tahtacıyan Mikran in

²⁰³ For more information, <http://www.kizilay.org.tr/Kurumsal/tarihcemiz>.

²⁰⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5484, dosya: 132-45, yer no: 25.45..15.

²⁰⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5293, yer no: 24.36..7.

²⁰⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5294, yer no: 24.36..8.

²⁰⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 10164, dosya: 135-141, yer no: 15.72..8.

Trabzon would be sold to the Red Crescent.²⁰⁸ These decrees can give an insight that the Red Crescent had taken buildings with the possible purposes of establishment of new local offices or rent these buildings to the people as a steady income as the institution continues to rent the properties that were donated by people.

2.5. Other Examples

As these examples were too distinctive from each other, an additional sub section needed to be merge all the examples that can show us that all types of properties were given to the various non-governmental organizations. These examples vary to the Republican People's Party, sport clubs and commercial associations.

After a brief prologue, the decree dated in 25 June 1924 that no. 570 house in Karantina İzmir would be rented to the People's Party²⁰⁹, the decree dated in 7 December 1924 that the top floor of the apartment belonged to the National Property in İstanbul Vezneciler would be rented to the People's Party²¹⁰ and the decree dated in 13 May 1925 that the Sillogos Building belonged to the Greek Literature Society would be rented to the Republican People's Party Beyoğlu Office²¹¹ are vital examples that even the core centre of political regime, Republican People's Party were involved in these transfer and distribution processes. As the merging of party and the state continues, it makes harder to distinguish as the acquired abandoned properties by the party might be evaluated as the state property. It would not be expected that the non-governmental organizations would benefit from these properties and the party-state does not. When the Turkish Hearths were dismissed by the orders of Mustafa Kemal, all the properties had been registered to the party and later these properties were used as the establishment of People Houses but we do not have sufficient information that how many properties have been still under the control of the party.

The next examples are related to the leisure and sport activities that the state had also gave much importance to this issue. The decree dated in 3 August 1924 that an orchard, building and land from the abandoned properties in Trabzon would be sold to the Trabzon

²⁰⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 1428, dosya: 135-154, yer no: 49.71..6.

²⁰⁹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 637, dosya: 247-4, yer no: 10.31..14.

²¹⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1217, dosya: 132-38, yer no: 12.60..7.

²¹¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1927, yer no: 13.29..20.

Training Hearth²¹², The decree dated in 25 March 1925 that a building from the exchanged individuals would be rented to the Trabzon Training Group²¹³ and the decree dated in 1 August 1926 that 21 parcels of land belonged to the non-exchanged individuals in Adana would be sold to the İdman Yurdu in order to be constructed a stadium named Ermeyardı²¹⁴ might show that the state both supported the sport activities all across the country and of course, fed these institutions with the abandoned properties which were once inhabited by the non-Muslim communities.

The last examples are economical societies which aimed to promote the activities that they were specialized in. The first example, *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti* (Ankara Wool Society) which would later be named as the “*Türk Tiftik Cemiyeti* (Turkish Wool Society)” aimed to promote the Ankara Tiftik Wool that were provided by the Ankara Goats established in 1930.²¹⁵ The decree which is dated in 13 January 1932 that land of the state treasury would be given to the *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti*²¹⁶, the decree which is dated in 26 May 1932 that *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti* would get assistance from the 1931 Budget,²¹⁷ The decree which is dated in 27 February 1934 that the land that are given to the *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti* would be increased to 690 square metre according to the law no. 12151²¹⁸, The decree which is dated in 19 December 1935 that the land that belonged to the state treasury Kızılyar Kızılkoca Township Yozgat would be sold to the *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti*²¹⁹ and The decree which is dated in 20 April 1940 that Beyazıtöğlü Farm belonged to the state treasury in Yozgat would be sold to the *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti*²²⁰ can show that the state helped to the non-governmental organization by the abandoned properties to raise its income from the wool.

Another example is about the *Türk İktisat Cemiyeti* (Turkish Economy Society) established in 1929 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Kazım Özalp, Hasan Saka, Celal Bayar,

²¹² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 760, dosya: 148-2, yer no: 10.37..17.

²¹³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1712, dosya: 148-11, yer no: 13.19..4.

²¹⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3937, dosya: 148-13, yer no: 20.49..18.

²¹⁵ For more information, Güven Şahin, Türkiye’de Ankara Keçisi (Capra Hircus Ancryrensis) Yetiştiriciliğinin Dünü Bugünü ve Yarını, **CBÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, Yıl 2013, Cilt 11, Sayı 2, pp. 345-346.

²¹⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12151, yer no: 25.4..9.

²¹⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12928, dosya: 182-45, yer no: 29.43..5.

²¹⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 214, dosya: 132-133, yer no: 42.10..18.

²¹⁹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 3723, dosya: 219-60, yer no: 60.96..9.

²²⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 13360, yer no: 90.39..20.

Saffet Arıkan and Yusuf Kemal Tengirşek whom again can be considered as the founding fathers of newly established Republic of Turkey. This non-governmental organization aimed to ease the destructive effects of 1929 Crisis which the whole world suffered, encourage savings and display and use of local manufactures.²²¹ So, the information might be helpful that the decree dated in 27 May 1944 that a land around the Ayrancı District in Ankara would be given to the *Türk İktisat Cemiyeti*²²² can show that they were also fed with the abandoned properties that these institutions operating in mentioned areas of expertise.

3. The Properties Appropriated To the Private Persons and Companies

After the detailed examination of the transfer and distribution of abandoned properties by the state to various governmental and non-governmental organizations had close links with the state. The distribution of the abandoned properties to the private ownership is another issue that must be examined. These cabinet decrees might give a clue about the close relationship and ties with the state and the capitalists in the sense that aim of creation a “national bourgeois” for the Republic of Turkey. The establishment of “national companies” by the Muslim entrepreneurs, started by the years of the Union and Progress’ rule as they tried to accomplish the objective by using economical weapons such as boycotts. But during the years of World War I, Committee of Union and Progress developed a more aggressive policy about this very issue. It deported and massacred non-Muslim communities and constituted private companies which were related with the committee’s local branches. Even the Armistice Period was a backlash for the national movement, after the victory these policies were carried on with the similar forces that are called Kemalists which they were also the low and medium rank members of Union and Progress. As they carried on the economic policies of the Union and Progress, the abandoned properties were also given to these companies in order to use these properties as a capital and a space for the establishment of their factories and ateliers.

This brief explanation is vital in order to carry on to the main subject as were to study the cabinet decrees issued by the state itself. There are 122 abandoned properties that are distributed to the private sector and %13 of the properties were granted, only %5 of them

²²¹ For more information, <http://www.tek.org.tr/tarihce.php>.

²²² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 3/891, dosya: 76-11, yer no: 105.34..15.

were rented and most of them were sold -%81- to these companies. So, it can be seen that the distribution was made by the means of sale. Another distinction is that the difference if the property were distributed to a private person or a legal person which refers to the private companies previously mentioned. Most of the properties -%78- were given to the legal person which was used for the establishment of new companies that seeks to transact business.

3.1.Private Person

The first example is dated 16 September 1929 that an inn called Taşhan in Istanbul was given to the sister of Talat Paşa according to the decree that was previously issued which included the reparations for the families that are killed by the Armenians²²³. This interesting decree shows that the law that previously mentioned was implemented by the council of ministers as well as the president himself. This does not stop here as the decree dated 9 April 1939 show that that the three buildings that belonged to the Topalyan Karnik would be granted to the wife of Talat Paşa that can also validate the claim made above.

The other example is that the decree dated 7 January 1931 shows that the buildings that was owned by the National Property and used by the police academy would be rented to the policeman and officers as their rent to the other private persons were seen objectionable²²⁴. As it can be seen, this is a different case than the other ones as, the decree grants the rent to private person but other half of the decree closes that possibility as it demands for the use these buildings for the fulfil the needs for housing. This decree might also be related with the examples of military and police forces but this might show that the decree bans the civilian citizens to be included in the distribution process.

Another example is that the cabinet decree dated 23 January 1923 gives us an insight that a coal mine in Ereğli, Zonguldak would be counted as an abandoned property and Mehmet Arif would be counted as the owner of the mine²²⁵. This is an interesting information that the state would count the coal mine as an abandoned property which possibly belonged to a non-Muslim individual previously and distributed to a person which would be seen by the state as “suitable”. The other cabinet decree dated 26 May 1934 gives the information that a

²²³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 8389, yer no: 5.47..15.

²²⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 10478, yer no: 17.2..13.

²²⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: yer no: 6.47..2.

land which once belonged to the Greeks would be sold to Hamdiye Hanım²²⁶. This also enlightens us that that even the population exchange has been implemented years ago, it can show us the transfer and distribution process still carries on.

The more examples do not consist of distributing abandoned properties but the memorandums directly from the council of ministers such as the decree of 4 October 1931 which aims to sell the gardens and olive groves in the region of İzmir to the people revived these lands once belonged to Greek communities²²⁷. Also, the same process happens to be occurring in the district of Karaburun which is dated 11 August 1934 that the lands which are left from the Greek communities would be sold to the people who cultivated them²²⁸. Also the other decree dated 20 December 1934 mentions that some enactments would be repealed in order to give clearance for the sale of the lands and properties which by the time they were occupied by the local bureaucrats and officers²²⁹.

The last interesting example about the abandoned properties is about Kemal, the former mayor of Kadıköy and governor of Hama proposed by the Cebelibereket MEP General Naci dated 8 July 1931. According to the proposal, Kemal lost all of his possessions in the year of 1919, usurped by the Armenians including cash, jewelleries and furniture. So, Kemal, for the compensation of his loss, claimed the lands and properties that belonged to Agopyan, Peştimalciyan and Şişmanyay. This might be interesting that this issue was voiced by a MEP that demands these abandoned properties personally as the usurpation of these commodities went back to almost twelve years but he chose to take action so many years later.

3.2.Legal Person

Most of the abandoned properties had been granted, rented or sold to the companies which is stated as “legal person” by the law itself. These examples include private companies, factories, banks and cooperatives. This information is especially important as the state and the government fed their departments and so called non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector which aim to empower the national bourgeois. After this brief examination,

²²⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/746, yer no: 45.37..6.

²²⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 11833, yer no: 23.69..15.

²²⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/1135, yer no: 47.56..15.

²²⁹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/1762, yer no: 50.87..18.

the examples might give us a hint that how the state helped the private sector.

The first decree about the private sector dated 3 May 1925 states that a shop left from Ohannes ođlu Andon would be rented to the Ankara Public Servants Cooperative Company²³⁰. Even this can be considered as a private company, the name of company reveals information that the shareholders are possibly the public servants which they also get their share from abandoned properties by these established cooperative.

The other examples are factories that were to build to the abandoned lands or operate the ones that already existed from the non-Muslim communities. The decrees that are dated 9 February 1925²³¹, 30 August 1925²³² and 11 November 1925²³³ are related about the silk factory and the establishment of a company which would work in the sector of processing silk in Elazıđ. According to these decrees, at first the Elazıđ MEP Hüseyn had proposed in the parliamentary session that the factory that is abandoned should be brought into work; later the information that are given to us is that the factory was formerly belonged to an Armenian person and the building would be granted to the newly established company. So, these three cabinet decrees show that the process to grant an industrial building would be transferred to a private company. The examples continue on with the Joint Stock Company of Isparta Carpet and Thread Factory which is dated 2 April 1925 that the abandoned buildings and lands would be given to the company by the condition of constructing a factory²³⁴. Another example about factories is that the decree dated 28 August 1937 grants the sale of three piece of lands to Bakırk y Hydraulic Lime Factory²³⁵. The next one is the decree which is dated 20 August 1924 that the necessary abandoned properties would be given to the paddy factory in Marař in order to construct the essential facilities²³⁶. The last example about the factories is that the decree dated 13 February 1929 that in order to establish an ice factory in Birecik, the lands

²³⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: 1878, yer no: 13.27..12.

²³¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: yer no: 7.41..22.

²³² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: 2420, yer no: 15.54..14.

²³³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: 2778 yer no: 16.72..13.

²³⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: 1759, yer no: 13.21..11.

²³⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/7310, yer no: 78.75..20.

²³⁶ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928  ncesi Sayı: 722, yer no: 10.40..19.

that costs 600 liras from the national property would be transferred to Yaşar oğlu Bekir²³⁷.

Another transfer and distribution process had occurred in the case of private banks. As most of the private banks were also responsible for the distribution process such as the Agricultural Bank and the Land and Credit Bank as it would be seen in the next chapter, these examples might show that they did not only distribute the abandoned properties but also took their fair share from them. The cabinet decree dated 24 January 1926 that the İtibar-ı Milli Bankası (Bank of National Reputation) would rent the basement of the Gülbenkyan Inn in Sirkeci²³⁸. The other instance is the cabinet decree of 21 September 1924 that the Akhisar Tobacconist Bank would acquire a farm and shop in order to raise the tobacco seedlings from the abandoned properties²³⁹.

Legal people were also interested in the mining industries as Turkey held many valuable resources that deemed worthy to be extracted from the ground. For example, according to the decree dated 10 April 1927, the lands in the district of Kaller and a water mill near Kalhane would be sold to the Ergani Copper Turkish Joint Stock Company which belonged to the abandoned properties²⁴⁰. Another one is the decree dated 24 October 1927 that the number 239 Enamiye coal mine's shares which belonged to the inheritors of Tomris oğlu Paulaki and Acenta Hasan Efendi would be sold to the Mines Turkish Joint Stock Company²⁴¹.

As for the other instances that would interest us, the decree dated 29 December 1926 that the eighty pieces of lands would be sold to the Malatya Industrial Enterprise Turkish Joint Stock Company in order to build the necessary facilities of the company and the housing of the workers from the abandoned properties is a good example²⁴². The next one is the cabinet decree dated 11 January 1928 that the building which is under the occupation of the Trabzon Sale Office belonged to the treasury would be transferred to the Gunpowder and Explosion

²³⁷ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 1/7687, yer no: 2.15..37.

²³⁸ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3054, yer no: 17.86..9.

²³⁹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 915, yer no: 11.45..11.

²⁴⁰ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: yer no: 23.22.6.

²⁴¹ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5750, yer no: 26.58..19.

²⁴² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6961, yer no: 30.48.15.

Materials Turkish Joint Stock Company²⁴³. According to the decree of 13 July 1926 that the Anadolu Automobile and Buses Turkish Joint Stock Company would receive a loan interest rate of %5 which would be acquired from the checking account of the abandoned properties²⁴⁴. The last instances are the decree dated 12 August 1928 that the old arsenal in Karaağaç from the national properties would be sold to the İstanbul Butchers Turkish Joint Stock Company in order to be used as a leather factory and the decree dated 15 October 1930 that some of the national properties in Ahırkapı İstanbul would be joined to the Atalıkzade Tahir and His Sons Company in order to be established as industrial complexes²⁴⁵.

It is vital to understand what these decrees, laws and enactments mean in the case of the abandoned properties and its sale, transfer and distribution to the departments of the state and also to the so-called non-governmental organizations. These connections can show that how closely these organizations are aligned with state. One cannot deny that these institutions were funded and fed by the state itself with the laws declared these organizations as the promoters of the “public welfare”. These decrees can verify that how much the non-governmental organizations depend on the state in order to function properly and in return gave their support for the state’s policies.

Only a small percentage (%4) of the abandoned properties were rented to the state and civil society. More than half of the abandoned properties (%51) were sold and almost other half (%45) of the abandoned properties were granted to the state or civil society. The importance of this table shows that indifferent if the property was on sale or granted, the state violated the right of private property and of course right to live for the non-Muslim communities. These decrees also cause the communities to suffer from communal amnesia as their cultural and religious buildings were tore down and repurposed according to the new nation state. While these former buildings also constructed a multicultural and heterogeneous past, the state wanted to get rid of them, did all to erase memories of the old and erected new ones in order to denounce the “old regime”.

In the conclusion, it can realized that most of the basic structures and functions of the

²⁴³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6062, yer no: 27.74..12.

²⁴⁴ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3769, yer no: 19.41..10.

²⁴⁵ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 10094, yer no: 14.68..18.

society depend on the “abandoned properties” which in this case most of them gained by the government with the destruction and disappearance of the non-Muslim communities in Anatolia and Thrace, especially Greeks and Armenians. Today’s problems may even be linked to these past ones as not many independent organizations occur in the today’s civil society and many of the inheritors of these properties would demand justice as their properties were unjustly taken from them as one nation labelled as “traitors” even resonates today by its outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TRANSFER OF THE ABANDONED PROPERTIES BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The previous chapter shows how the abandoned properties of the state transferred and distributed to semi-official organizations and private person. But it does not reflect the full picture. Thanks to the permissions granted by the central authority, many branches of the local governments were also authorized to distribute the properties to the desired individuals. Many Kurd and Turk notables had their claims on a certain land or a property belonged to the non-Muslim people. At the end, the property -in our case, these properties were mostly consisted of abandoned properties which was left from the non-Muslim communities especially Armenians and Greeks- would be registered to the notables.

In order to write this chapter almost all local newspapers archived in Beyazıt State Library and published in the provinces during the period of 1928-1940 have been studied. In order to reach more local newspapers, the National Library in Ankara has also been investigated but this archive showed less promising results than Beyazıt State Library. Certainly, this paper does not claim that all local newspapers; but it can be said that a large variety of newspapers have been studied.

The advertisements that were published in these local newspapers were distributed by different state institutions such as the Agricultural Bank, Land and Credit Bank, Local Revenue Offices, Land Registry Offices, local authorities and municipalities, fiscal directorates, National Property Offices, also by the State Treasury and even by the Republican People's Party itself. So, variety of state institutions show that the central authority transferred and distributed the abandoned lands and properties through various official channels. There is no single distribution channel in local scale but many from public banks to local authorities and even to the political parties. We reached of 9.823 properties published by local newspapers in 42 provinces.²⁴⁶ These advertisements provide important details to evaluate

²⁴⁶ Adana, Afyon, Amasya, Ankara, Antep, Ardahan, Aydın, Balıkesir, Bitlis, Bursa, Çanakkale, Çankırı, Denizli, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Eskişehir, Giresun, Iğdır, İstanbul, İzmir, Kars, Kırklareli, Kilis, Kocaeli, Kütahya, Malatya, Manisa, Maraş, Mardin, Mersin, Rize, Samsun, Sinop, Tekirdağ, Tokat, Trabzon, Tunceli, Urfa, Yozgat, Zonguldak.

local distribution process of the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities specifically the Armenians and the Greeks. The properties in the advertisements show also a great variety. They included many agricultural lands and properties as well as industrial-commercial buildings and community buildings such as churches, cemeteries and schools.

The advertisements placed to the newspapers by the local revenue offices and any other distributive institutions would also prove that %34,89 of the properties transferred and distributed shows that the economy of Turkey depended on agriculture. The cabinet decrees show that only %7 of the properties was related to the commercial and industrial purposes. This percentage confirms the argument that only a small part of the properties would serve to the commercial and industrial interests of the society and the state as a whole. But still, it is obvious that it did not play a vital role in the properties which were transferred to the various institutions and individuals.

In the following sections, the abandoned lands and properties which were sold, rented or registered are categorized according to their usage as residential, industrial, agricultural and commercial and cultural and religious. Even some of the abandoned properties belonged to a Greek or an Armenian, most of the advertisements do not have any information if they have belonged to a specific non-Muslim identity. So, it is important to use the general term of non-Muslim.

1. Cultural and Religious Properties

Of all 9823 properties, only 171 (%1,74) properties aim to serve the cultural and spiritual needs of the people that rented, sold or registered. This low percentage should not give the impression that these buildings were so rare. The findings from the local newspapers show that these abandoned lands and properties were once used for the cultural and religious needs. Most of these properties were used by the other institutions and the state as discussed in the previous chapter. But one also should not forget that many cultural and spiritual properties were also left to decay in order to let forget the non-Muslim heritage that these lands once provided.

After a brief evaluation, we can evaluate the first the examples of schools once belonged to the non-Muslim communities. Forty-eight properties of the cultural and religious

buildings consists of any types of schools from the abandoned properties, confiscated by the *Milli Emlak* (national properties), municipalities, state treasury or local authorities. These schools were not concentrated in the same region. Instead; they had spread all around Anatolia such as Elazığ, Urfa, Sinop, Samsun, Kütahya, Aydın, Giresun, Amasya, Trabzon, Zonguldak, Denizli, Bursa and Kars. Another interesting point is that almost three quarters of these properties were sold means of local advertisements, mostly in auctions. Only %8 of the schools were rented which we cannot know for sure that whether the buildings were used according to their original purpose. %19 of the schools were registered to the treasury or national properties in order to be sold or rented by the state. So, the questions such as who acquired the above-mentioned properties and how these buildings were used -if they are used for their original purposes or repaired and used for a completely different purpose. This informs us about how the state highlights a priority on the issue of education. Many educational institutions were assigned in order to educate masses according to the principle of “national education”. There was also the process of destruction of these buildings through deforming and repurposing its original use. The distribution also led the transmitters of the cultural values of the non-Muslim communities turned dysfunctional and even put to use for the conflicting cause, Turkish nationalism.

The cultural and religious buildings are vital to a community in order to survive. Without them, it is impossible to represent community in the public space. Community cannot keep its collective memory intact as a whole group as well. The cavities and gaps in the collective memory would also harm the community and soon it cannot be kept together. The retrospective and prospective narration is the most important notion in the collective memory as this process helps communities to be “imagined”²⁴⁷ and then perceived as the truth itself even if the individual does not even know the whole community at all. The Armenian and Greek communities were not the perfect examples of the “modern nations” as they did not have uniform language, mind-set or even religion in the sectarian sense. As Turkish nationalism flourished during Late Ottoman and Early Republican Eras, Late Ottoman Era was also fruitful for the Armenian and Greek nationalisms and the cultural and spiritual

²⁴⁷ For more information, Benedict Anderson, **Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism**, Verso Books, 2016.

buildings was hearth and home of these very ideas. These nationalisms -Turkish, Greek and Armenian- were sometimes collaborated and competed with each other. But the tides turned during the Balkan Wars and relations with these nationalisms took a turn in a hostile and violent way.

The “extremely violent societies”²⁴⁸ would bring mass violence and destruction as the nations -or it can also be called as communities as the most of the people did not see themselves as a member of a nation; instead identified themselves with their religions or sectarian divisions- well-being, it would not be surprise that the cultural and spiritual buildings would be first target in violent times. The destruction of these buildings creates an amnesia in the collective memory as well as leaves a gap in the transfer of knowledge to the future generations. Even then, these buildings were not left alone, instead used again in the “national education” as Turkish schools. Some churches and monasteries were also converted in this process as well. Once a community’s places of “self-reproduction”, the destruction and expulsion of communities led the destruction of memory as well and used for “other nations” objectives and ambitions.

2. Residential Properties

According to the existing data, out of 9822 land and property, 2021 (%20,57) of properties are residential which were rented, sold or registered. This percentage shows that a substantial amount of residential buildings involved many non-Muslim neighbourhoods as many households recorded in the local newspapers were in the same neighbourhood. This piece of information is vitally important as the sale of the properties do not show a random pattern, instead indicates a physical destruction and handover of non-Muslim neighbourhoods. The previous section was about the survival of collective memory of a community as well as its well-being. But the transfer and distribution of residential areas and neighbourhoods imply the state and Kemalist elites deprived the non-Muslim communities from their very right: the right to exist physically in a specific geographical area.

²⁴⁸ The concept was taken from the book of Christian Gerlach, **Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World**, Cambridge University Press, 2010. which gives us a detailed analysis about the motivations of genocide and ethnic cleansing and byproducts such as pillaging, looting and transfer of properties.

The example of Mardin can be explanatory about the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties once belonged to non-Muslim individual. The neighbourhoods of Şeyullah, Eminettin and Babıcedit -other examples also exist such as Kölesiyen, Babıssor, Çabuk and Miskin but they are not quantitatively prominent - reveals an extensive process of transfer and distribution. Only in a year, 122 households were sold, rented or granted to the local notables, bourgeoisie and elements of civil society. So, it reveals that after the physical elimination of communities from a specific neighbourhood, it carried on with the physical elimination of buildings – it makes no difference whether it was residential, commercial or industrial-agricultural- from their former state and even alteration of its former use.

The process did not only contain physical destruction and alteration but it was also subject of the “toponymical engineering”. This was not unique for the Early Republican Turkey. It began with Committee of Union and Progress just after the decree of the deportation had been issued and the name of the villages began to be changed. This did not stop instead it continued in the Republic of Turkey. The research reveals that in Mardin %91 of the places’ name were changed and gave Turkish names once in the languages of Syriac, Kurdish, Arabic and Armenian.²⁴⁹ It was the city that suffered the most deal of change in toponymy.²⁵⁰

Of course, Mardin is not the single example of the study. Another interesting case about the process of transfer and distribution of residential buildings is İzmir. The *Emlak ve Eytam Bankası* and *Ziraat Bankası* were two of the main distributors of the abandoned properties to the public. These banks distributed 348 houses just in İzmir. This is a significant number when compared to the total distributed properties. These banks also transferred and distributed properties in İstanbul, Ankara, Adana, Trabzon, Giresun, Samsun and Aydın. Hence, the banks were active agents of distribution in the urban areas of Turkey. The abandoned properties of the sparsely populated areas of Turkey were transferred and distributed by the local governments. So, there was a stark contrast between the state and the banks as they cooperated with each other closely and also were involved in the transfer and

²⁴⁹ Kerem Öktem, “The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and The Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey, *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, <http://ejts.revues.org/pdf/2243>, No.7, 2008, s.9
Date of Access:19.04.2017.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, s.18.

distribution process. The banks mentioned above were not the only examples which transferred and distributed the abandoned properties. *Kayseri Köy İktisat Bankası* (Kayseri Village Saving Bank)²⁵¹, *Akhisar Tütüncüler Bankası* (Akhisar Tobacconists Bank)²⁵² and *Adana Pamuk Borsası* (Adana Cotton Stock Exchange)²⁵³ were the examples of the organizations that were involved in the local scale of the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties. They did not only distribute the lands and properties to the local notables and bureaucrats but they also acquired some of the abandoned properties to themselves. Thus, they were not only the intermediaries of the transfer and distribution process but also its agents.

The state and the public enterprises were not only agents in the transfer and distribution process. Instead, -as evaluated in the previous chapters- other agents such as the banks, chambers of commerce and industry and private companies were involved in the process. Hence, the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties were not merely top-down process. The state and its treasury acquired all the abandoned properties during the First World War and then in Kemalist Republic. It distributed them accordingly. It even hold the monopoly of the abandoned properties but did not intervene much, instead it transferred them to the local governments and public enterprises to ease up and accelerate the whole process.

The other example on the destruction of neighbourhoods of the non-Muslim communities is the fires scourged the Anatolia such as Amasya Selağzı (12.03.1914, 21.07.1915), Kastamonu Cebrail (03.05.1914), Bandırma (30.06.1915, 03.1917), Bursa Orhangazi (23-24.08.1915), İzmit (27.08.1915), Haçın (03.10.1915), Ayvalık (08.1917), Gelibolu (18.04.1917), Erdek (27.08.1917) and Tirebolu (1917).²⁵⁴ The interesting fact about these fires is that these residential neighbourhoods were inhabited with non-Muslim communities but deported or expelled during the First World War. After deportations, these neighbourhoods were burned down by the suspicious fires and hence any evidence of places

²⁵¹ Emre Can Dağlıoğlu, "Kayseri'nin gelişmesinde emval-i metruke vurgunu çok önemli rol oynuyor", *Agos*, 27.03.2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/11043/kayserinin-gelismesinde-emval-i-metruke-vurgunu-cok-onemli-rol-oynuyor>, Access Date: 12.05.2017.

²⁵² Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi, yer no: 11.45..11.

²⁵³ Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi, yer no: 10.41..10.

²⁵⁴ Ferda Balancar, "Soykırımın tamamlayıcı unsuru olarak 'yangın'", *Agos*, 20.02.2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/10657/soykirim-tamamlayici-unsuru-olarak-yanigin>, Access Date: 12.05.2017.

of memory were also vanished. Then, the names of the neighbourhoods were changed by the Unionists and Kemalists. The names of neighbourhoods in İzmit were changed to Talat Bey and Mazhar Bey and then Kozluk. In the advertisement of the local revenue office the neighbourhood of Kozluk was described as burned down neighbourhood and sold as arable fields. Haçın's name was also changed by the Kemalists and was named as Saimbeyli in memory of Saim Bey who fought and expelled the Armenians there.

One of the bizarre examples about the residential buildings is from the city of Mardin again. The announcement dated 28 November 1935 shows that both the state and one of the leading Muslim families of Mardin, the Şatanas, even they are not inheritors of immovables they saw themselves as the shareholders to the house. It is clear that the legal part is also highly controversial.²⁵⁵ Another interesting and again maybe bizarre point in the publication of the Mardin Ulus Sesi newspaper, dated April 16, 1936, is that the legal proceedings concerning the mentioned immovable properties were experienced between the heirs of the owners of the property and the treasury. It is not known how the treasury has a say about these real estates.²⁵⁶

3. Agricultural Lands and Properties

Agricultural lands and properties consists more than one-third (%34,89) of the properties found in the local newspapers. This detail indicates that the Ottoman Empire and later Republic of Turkey were indeed agricultural country, not an industrial one. So, the economy of the Ottoman Empire and later the Republic of Turkey was depended on the agricultural goods and even the industry was strongly interconnected with the agriculture as the industry utilized the agricultural products. The detail show the abandoned properties were vital for the economy of the state as well as for the creation of a national bourgeoisie. The key element of wealth of the time was land as the main economic activity was agriculture. This concept was not a new concept since Ottoman Empire was depended on the conquest of the new lands and then imposed tax on these places in order to sustain such a great economy. This

²⁵⁵ Ulus Sesi Sayı 383 28.11.1935.

²⁵⁶ Ulus Sesi Sayı 401 16.04.1936.

understanding of wealth did not change until the late periods of Republic of Turkey.²⁵⁷

The idea and policy of conquest did not only involve the invasion of foreign countries. It also included the inner conquest as the state also formulated some policies to assimilate some ethnicities and religions into the primary culture by settling Muslim communities to the conquered areas and created Muslim enclaves in the new provinces. The policy of settlement endured for centuries. But the Ottoman power lost its former glory and the reverse migration and settlement had begun. Then, the state used the human capital for the consolidation of existing borders and surrounded the “suspicious” communities with Muslims from Caucasus and Balkans. This was especially evident just after the Balkan Wars as the Muslim communities decimated almost all over the Balkans. By 1912, when the war started, the number of exiles who had reached Turkey was 413.922 people. The number of those who remained in the Balkans was certain and when the number of those who were immigrated was gathered, it turned out that some 650.000 of the population before the war had been lost. It was clear that all of them were slaughtered, died of starvation and diseases. Thousands of soldiers, government officials and their families who died in the Balkan Wars were not included.

Almost half a million of population was mobilized in the “inner conquests” of the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey. They were settled all over the borders of Turkey and again they created some “to-be-Turkish” enclaves. By the term of “to-be-Turkish” I mean that most of the immigrants came from the Balkans and the Caucasus were not “Turkish” as they did not have the consciousness of “Turkishness”. The elites saw them both a partner and reliable communities. The Union and Progress and later Republic of Turkey saw them as reliable communities in the eastern part of Turkey where Kurds were in majority in almost all provinces. But even then, the elites were also suspicious of immigrants. In some decrees it was stated that communities such as Bosnians, Albanians, and Circassians etc. cannot be more than %10 in a province. So, the state saw them as potential Turks and tried to assimilate them gradually in order to create a Turk and Turkish citizen from them.

%40,95 of the lands and properties were rented to the locals almost in all provinces.

²⁵⁷ For more information, Halil İnalcık, **Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy**, Variorum collected studies series, London, 1978.

This percentage of renting is certainly interesting in the sense that, the state did not want abandon its right to possession. The notion of private property was relatively new concept as the 1858 Land Code even it is debated that²⁵⁸the idea of private property did not really work out until the beginning of 20th century. But the seizure of the properties by the state is still apparent during the Early Republican Era as it can be seen in the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties. Even some principles of private property were implemented in the law, the lands and properties of the non-Muslim communities were not included as the abandoned properties were rented, sold or rented with a high hand.

%55,44 of the lands and properties were sold to the locals almost in all provinces. %3,59 of the lands and properties were granted to the locals since some people claimed that the property was belonged to them. This land and property grants can be considered insignificant but the people who had claimed these abandoned properties from the local revenue offices as a grant requires more answers. For example the granted abandoned properties belonged to the Armenian and Greek individuals as their former owners but somehow these properties ended up owned by the Muslims as they claimed to have used the property for decades and demanded from the local government to register these to their behalf. The locals of the provinces possibly seized these properties just after the deportation of the Armenians and then exchange of Greeks. Yet they did not have any documents they owned these properties. So this process to grant them helped these people to document their possession in order to prove their ownership and have their title deeds. In the previous

²⁵⁸ 1858 Land Code envisages only the redistribution of the miri (demesne) property to the rayah, and that there is no different from the ottoman classical land code. From the 19th century's second half of the century onwards, the centrist state felt the need to re-establish its own power and redistribute the right to possess the land to the peasants, in order to operate the miri land, which was controlled and taken over by the mütegalibe (tax collectors). As a matter of law, according to the provisions in the law, the right of property of the land (rakabe) remains in the state and the right of possess is paid to the villagers. According to Kenanoğlu, this distribution is basically not different from classical soil distribution, nor in the provisions of the law, there is also no sign of the conversion of the miri land to private property. A person who pays the sales price according to Land Code, is a tenant in the land where he pays the price, and is taken from the land if he does not cultivate the land for three years as in the classical system. If a person wants to sell his right to save another person's sale, the sale made without the permission of the land clerk is not legally valid. In this context, Kenanoğlu points out that the lawfulness of the law is an obvious goal to protect the peasantry, but the villagers sell their land-possessing rights to the village farmers, and they are linked to the high taxation of the state and fears of recruitment. For more information, Macit Kenanoğlu, **"1858 Arazi Kanunnamesinin Osmanlı Siyasal ve Toplumsal Yapısı Üzerindeki Etkileri 1856-1876"**, (Siyaset Bilimi Doktorası/Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi), Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Siyaset Bilimi Anabilimdalı, Ankara 2002.

chapters, it was mentioned that the %70 of the lands and properties were not registered to the state revenue office. Therefore the state could also gain from this transaction since it can tax them properly from now on.

There are even more bizarre cases requiring attention. What is interesting about the announcement of the 19th of September 1935 in Mardin *Ulus Sesi* (Nation's Voice) newspaper is that two non-Muslim citizens and also the village of Ibrahim Agha, who were among the inheritors or shareholders. Undoubtedly, it is striking that Doctor Refail who were non-Muslims and Cemil and Emine who were Muslim names of Hanna's sons. To comment on the situation mentioned in, some of the mentioned properties were confiscated by the state and part of the local landmark. Afterwards, in 1915, the loss of their lives in the event of the return of the heirs of the victims was highly improbable. The point to be taken into consideration here is that both the village heads and the state itself still claimed rights on these lands and properties as subjects themselves, even though the heirs had returned. In legal terms, how this situation is "adapted to its cover" is a question mark.²⁵⁹ Another noteworthy announcement dated 30 July 1936 is how the hands of the city of Kızıltepe (Tel Armen), an old Armenian town, changed hands and passed on to the hand of Musa Kalav.²⁶⁰ These examples show even they were not related to the inheritors of the people who had once owned the abandoned properties, some people saw as their right to confiscate properties of the non-Muslim communities as their own.

4. Commercial-Industrial Properties

Ottoman Empire was not an industrial country. Instead it had a few industrial complexes around the densely populated areas of the empire and cities close to the trade routes and ports. The Thrace and the Aegean Regions were much more connected to the global routes such as the cities of İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara and Bursa. The existing industrial complexes were related to the agricultural facilities of the regions as the flour, dried fruits, processed tobacco and silk etc. The dependency on the agriculture also created a fragile industry largely affected by natural conditions.

²⁵⁹ Ulus Sesi Sayı 374 19.09.1935.

²⁶⁰ Ulus Sesi Sayı 415 30.07.1936

The commercial and industrial abandoned properties cover the %40,3 of the total abandoned properties distributed from local governments and municipalities. This detail is vitally important. Because it shows us the large amounts of land and property related to the economic activities such as commercial and industrial sectors. The transfer and distribution of these abandoned properties served to a much more important idea: The “nationalization” and to repurposed the abandoned properties to create a national –by the term national I mean “Turkish”- bourgeoisie. The process of creating a national bourgeoisie did not begin in the Kemalist era but in the era of Union and Progress. The policy of *Milli İktisat* (National Economy) aimed to change the demography of the trade and industry by supporting the Muslim businesses, boycotting the non-Muslim shops and industries and even threatening them. The confiscation of capital, land and properties used by the non-Muslim merchants transferred and distributed to the Turkish merchants was based on the creation of the Turkish bourgeoisie. Ahmet Mithat and Musa Akyigit began to defend the policy of *Milli İktisat* after the 19th century.²⁶¹ This thesis, which became the policy of the Committee of Union and Progress, advocated creation of national bourgeois with state support as a necessary way to development. This policy, conveyed to the headlines of the newspapers with the words "O Turk, be rich!" was embodied in the *1913 Teşvik-i Sanayi Kanunu* (Incitement of Industry Law). While this law provides state incentives for private entrepreneurship for the development of the national industry, those closest to the state bureaucracy were the most beneficiaries. According to Keyder, “Most of the time members of the local Union and Progress organization and their partners were the same people. While the government supported such initiatives, it ensured that the party organization and the emerging national bourgeoisie network were identified. Thus, the ideal of political control over the economy of the Ottoman bureaucracy took place during the war.”²⁶² The national bourgeois class which the Union and Progress sought to create was very trade-oriented, and the industry continued to be vulnerable in the face of dynamism in the sense of industrialization after 1908. The aim of the Union and Progress was to Muslimize capital and to create a national or indigenous

²⁶¹ Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009*, Ankara: İmge Yayınları, 2012, pp. 26.

²⁶² Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010, pp. 84-85.

bourgeoisie.²⁶³

The national economy continued in full swing during the Kemalist Republic. The demise of the empire also gave an end the influence of the high ranking Unionists. But the mentality of the economy remained unchanged. They succeeded in realizing a brand-new accumulation of Armenian properties which were wiped off from Anatolia when the Greeks and the competing non-Muslim merchants were greatly diminished until the end of the Early Republican Era. The outcome of the policy ended up with creating a bourgeoisie that almost all of them had close links with the Kemalist elites or even as being a Kemalist. In the period between 1923 and 1929, the tradition of *Milli İktisat*, which was the economic ideology that lasted until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, was accepted. In 1927, the *Teşvik-i Sanayi Kanunu*, similar to the law of the Unionists in 1913, was issued in 1927 to encourage industrialization by private entrepreneurs. According to Boratav, “A new wealthy stratum has been formed that is borrowed from the monopoly profits of the privileged corporations established in cooperation with the foreign capital, which in some cases can take over the functions of the traditional comprador trade bourgeoisie, in cooperation with the Muslim-Turkish trade bourgeoisie and the political bureaucracy and the high bureaucracy”.²⁶⁴ After 1929, the national bourgeoisie project was not abandoned by the state. Since entrepreneurs had no capital accumulation to reach this point, the state itself engaged in industrialization.

%35,41 of the commercial and industrial properties were rented in the local newspaper’s announcements. The same pattern was discussed in the previous chapters; as the state and the treasury had so much properties in their disposal and still did not sell them to the individuals and kept them for a steady income source for much longer. Therefore, this might seem be inconsistent with the other objectives of the Kemalist elites as they tried to create a national bourgeoisie with a statist economy just after the 1929 Economic Depression. They used a concept called the state capitalism in the economy of Turkey. According to this idea, the state is the pioneer and the perpetrator of for profit capital investments and the economic structure that the state sector is using to improve the profits from these investments. They resorted to the concept of state capitalism while doing so, for example, by some circles who

²⁶³ Ahmet İnel, Türkiye’de Burjuvazinin Serüveni, **TÜSİAD Görüş** Sayı 76 Aralık 2012, pp. 14.

²⁶⁴ Boratav, pp. 61.

wanted to explain the Soviet Socialist System and the economic establishment in the first years of Republic of Turkey. But the difference from the Soviet example is that the Kemalist elites embraced solidarism and did not accept the class structure as in the Mustafa Kemal's proverb "We are an unprivileged, classless, coherent crowd".

This important concept, written in French as "solidarité", was shaped by the writings of Alfred Fouillée in the period of the French Third Republic as well as the publications of Emile Durkheim. Solidarism is a middle way between socialism and liberalism, and between pure science and religious dogmatism. Léon Bourgeois argues that solidarity is in fact not very different from corporatism, and its purpose is to suppress classes. Solidarism's greatest longing is to create a classless, homogeneous and peaceful society. Another integral part of solidarity is secularism. French solidarists have rejected the beliefs that are against science and have taken a repressive attitude. Religion must consist of rules that are not against the rules of modern society and to the scientific evidences. So, even they followed the same path in the economic sense, the political views of these examples was very different from each other.

One of the interesting examples in the rented properties is the brothel in Kırklareli. It was rented by the state treasury in 1937. It shows that the state had strict control in many fields of profession even owning the building and renting it for the prostitution. Furthermore, many local governments and municipalities had many lands and properties left from the abandoned properties and chose to rent them to the local individuals and notables to gain a steady income from them not selling them as cheap as dirt.

%62,94 of the properties were sold in the local announcements. The commercial and industrial abandoned properties were vital for the reconstruction of the Turkish economy as the Ottoman Empire and Turkey suffered from the wars beginning from 1911 to 1922 -more than a decade- and countless rebellions devastated the whole country's infrastructure, trade and industry. The reconstruction and instigation of the Turkish economy was depended on a fragile path as many non-Muslim individuals operated commercial and industrial activities all around the country. According to Rafael de Nogales, who had served in the Ottoman Empire for four years, "After the annihilation of the Armenians, trade stopped in the streets of

Diyarbakır. There were no men in the places where the carpets, the leather, the silk and the wool were sold." The same pattern was also repeated in Tokat in May 1914 and January 1916 as the neighbourhood and market were burned down with the fires.²⁶⁵ The trade was in a halt all over Turkey during the decade and the period of reconstruction was built on what was left in the country. The abandoned properties helped the state and treasury to get back on its feet and the process of transfer and distribution allowed the Turkish bourgeoisie to blossom and free from any non-Muslim activity around all Anatolia except the cities of İstanbul and İzmir which had a strong Greek presence. Soon, the Greek presence in trade and industry in these cities were ended by the *Varlık Vergisi* (Capital Tax), 6-7 September 1955 Pogrom and 1964 Greek Deportation. The non-existence of the non-Muslims in Anatolia created a great gap in the commerce and industry as well as in the craftsmanship. The compensation of their non-existence was filled only decades later because even their properties and goods for the activities were here, their know-how for these activities were invaluable and many Muslim merchants and industrialists did not have any of it. Therefore, even many merchants and industrialists acquired the abandoned lands and properties, many of them could not survive without the intervention of the state. This dependency on the state and the government created close relationships between bureaucrats and bourgeoisie only to be broken with the emerging political force of Democrat Party in 1946 and come to power in 1950.

%1,64 of the properties were granted to the locals in the local newspaper's announcements. The vital information about the grants of industrial properties are about the mines in Aydın and Manisa. The announcements published in 1929 reveals that two mines in Aydın and four in Manisa was granted to the industrialists. These resources may be bought by random people in Turkey instead possibly they were given to the individuals who had close relationships with the Kemalist elites or even a Kemalist himself. There were also three factories in Kilis granted to the industrialists in 1939. The issue of granting lands and properties can be related to the elites' desire to give certain abandoned properties to the people related to the Kemalists.

According to Öztürk "In the process of nation-state establishment in Turkey, extending

²⁶⁵ Ferda Balancar, "Soykırımın tamamlayıcı unsuru olarak 'yangın", *Agos*, 20.02.2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/10657/soykirim-tamamlayici-unsuru-olarak-yangin>, Access Date: 12.05.2017.

from the Ottoman period to the republican period, most of the minority elements were forced to leave the country. On the other hand, not only those who left the country but also the minorities who remained in Turkey lost their activities in time (with applications like the Varlık Vergisi, which took place during the Second World War). The big capital groups that would stand out in the next periods like Koç, Sabancı and Çukurova were benefiting indirectly or directly in various forms from economic possibilities in the hands of non-Muslims".²⁶⁶ The change of ownership we see here is slowly taking place and it has not attracted much attention in the process of being up to day. We see how the Anatolian geography has been made uninhabitable, specifically the Armenians and Greeks.

It is noteworthy that the subject of the property is related to the right of saving. As we have seen, the treasury and the state were going to lease land and property to a considerable degree - almost half (43.5%). What should be removed here is that the state itself gave very limited support even for creating its own national bourgeoisie, and for the elements it supports, it only gave the right to save annually through rent. In other words, Turkey lost its bourgeoisie living in this geography in the direction of the nation-state project - apart from certain regions and cities - in order to compensate for it. It is not surprising that Turkey, a corporatist party state, pulling the strings, depriving accumulation of the capital which is the most important condition creating a national bourgeoisie, is a situation can be understood within Kemalist mind-set.

²⁶⁶ Özgür Öztürk, **Türkiye’de Büyük Sermaye Grupları Finans Kapitalin Oluşumu ve Gelişimi**, Sosyal Araştırmalar Vakfı Yayınları, 2010, pp. 28.

CONCLUSION

This thesis focused on the transfer and the distribution of the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim communities by various central and local state actors to the public institutions and non-governmental organizations during the Early Republican Era. The aim of the thesis was to reveal how the transfer and distribution process of the abandoned properties of the non-Muslim minorities served the removal of the memory and physical traces of the non-Muslim minorities and the creation of dependent civil society organizations. As it was discussed through the thesis, the state, various public enterprises and the non-governmental organizations were connected to each other directly by the process of transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties left by the non-Muslim minorities. The transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties resulted in on the one hand loss of autonomy of civil society organizations and their integration to the state's nation building project, on the other hand their cooperation with the state in the disappearance of physical traces of the non-Muslim communities from the earth and collective memory in collaboration with the civil society organizations. The civil society-state collaboration was not an artificial construction, instead it had organic bonds with each other. Some members of the civil society organizations had close relationship with the state who were also public servants and even statesmen.

As it was evaluated in the second chapter, the legal framework for the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties differed from time to time during the era of Union and Progress and Early Republican Era, but there were important similarities and continuities in the legal framework during both periods. The Unionists and the Kemalists shared the same thought about the fate of the abandoned properties. Committee of Union and Progress confiscated and distributed the abandoned properties just after the decision of deportation and the Kemalists carried on to their policies about the abandoned properties just after a brief interruption during the period of Armistice. The cadres of the Committee and the Kemalists were almost very same as they have overlapped each other. The only difference between the cadres were the high ranking officials, as the Unionist high ranking officials were eliminated just after the First World War and then during the İzmir Assassination Lawsuits. It is also important to see that there is no interruption between the Committee of Union and Progress and their successors Kemalists. Although belonging of the abandoned properties to an

Armenian or a Greek changed the status of the properties in the legal documents, it did not prevent transfer of their properties to the public enterprises and the non-governmental organizations by state and its local branches. By means of the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties, the state and its elites were able to erase the non-Muslim communities from the collective memory and also from the physical and discursive space as if they had never lived in Anatolia in recent past. The recent memory of the Turkish nation was not permitted any disagreement in this matter.

In the second chapter, the channels for transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties were discussed. The channels varied. Many agents were responsible for delivering the lands and properties such as Agricultural Bank, Land and Credit Bank, Local Revenue Offices, Land Registry Offices, local authorities and municipalities, fiscal directorates, National Property Offices, also the State Treasury and even the Republican People's Party itself. The variety of state institutions shows that the central authority transferred and distributed the abandoned lands and properties through various official channels. There was no single distribution channel in local scale but many, ranging from public banks to local authorities and even to the political parties. This might give us a few insights; the lands and properties with high value may be distributed directly by the state. But the state did not want to involve directly in the local distribution channels and let the local governments and its organs to handle these affairs. It also indicates that the state did not only rely on one specific institution to transfer and distribute the abandoned properties. Instead this process was not uniform. The central and local actors were interconnected in the distribution process.

It is vital to understand what these decrees, laws and enactments mean in the case of the abandoned properties and its sale, transfer and distribution to the departments of the state and also to the so-called non-governmental organizations which kept close connections with the state. These connections show how closely these organizations were aligned with state. It is almost impossible to see how they differed from state apparatuses. In that sense, they can be called semi-official organizations. One cannot deny that these institutions were funded and fed by the state itself by the laws which declared these organizations as the promoters of the "public welfare". These decrees can verify how much the non-governmental organizations were depended on the state in order to function properly and carried on to the civil society's

main purposes.

In the third chapter, the distribution process of the abandoned properties were discussed. After being seized by the government, the confiscated properties were divided between the departments of the state, especially among the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance. These properties were then distributed to the various departments of the state, such as the security forces (General Staff, police force), educational institutions (middle schools, high schools, military, business, agriculture, special schools and even the National Library), local authorities and municipalities, health institutions, and commercial organizations (local chambers of commerce and industry, local stock exchanges and to the national banks). Distribution process continued with the subsidization of the semi-official organizations such as *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (later its name was to be changed to *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, Child Protection Agency), *Kızılay* (Red Crescent), *Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti* (Turkish Aeroplane Society, later its name changed to *Türk Hava Kurumu*, Turkish Aeronautical Association), various sports clubs and societies such as *Ankara Tiftik Cemiyeti* (Ankara Wool Association) and *Türk İktisat Cemiyeti* (Turkish Economy Association), as well as to the Republican People's Party. The cabinet decrees shows that almost all of the properties granted, sold or rent (91,24%) were commercial and industrial properties. 3,46% of the properties were related to agricultural activities, 2% of them were related to the cultural and religious purpose, 2,5% of them were residential.

In the fourth chapter, the announcements and advertisements published in the local newspapers during the era between 1928-1940 were reviewed. 9.823 properties were found during the studies of local newspapers in the 42 provinces. The abandoned properties listed in local newspapers show a great variety. They included many agricultural lands and buildings as well as industrial-commercial and community ones such as churches, cemeteries and schools. Of all 9823 properties, only 171 (%1,74) properties aimed to serve as cultural and religious buildings. 2021 (%20,57) of properties were residential, agricultural lands and properties consists more than one-third (%34,89) of the properties. Commercial-industrial properties consists almost half of (43,09%) the abandoned lands and properties found in the local newspapers.

As it was discussed in length in the first chapter and mentioned in the following chapters, the abandoned properties did not only show us the economic destruction of the whole country. In addition, they show the disappearance of non-Muslim communities from the physical and discursive space. The collective memory shaped by the amnesia, transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties and state involvement formed the surroundings, in this case the built environment. The space politics itself cannot be excluded from the ideology as they serve as the ideological apparatuses of political regimes. The Kemalist state elite was no exception. They used the public and private spaces to serve their needs, to ensure the survival of the republic and also the new state. They did not only seek the survival of the state but also the homogenization of the people on the basis of a Muslim Turkish identity. The resistance to these attempts was to be brutally crushed since all such attempts were seen as the threats to the state and the regime.

It is crucial to understand that during the Early Republican Era, creating a dependent civil society, a strong nation state and memory erasure were considerably related to each other. These processes were the outcomes of the survival and the securitization attempts of the Kemalist state and its elites. The state did not only rely on the brute force of its military and police forces but instead, they also worked to take the consent of the common people, notables and intelligentsia. As Özbek reviewed that under the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress the civil society organizations became dependent to the state to sustain themselves, and in return the state used them to solidify the nation state along nationalist and militaristic lines, the same relation between the state and the civil society organizations also continued in Early Republican Era.

The change of ownership as discussed in the thesis took place not suddenly but slowly. Their transfer and distribution have not attracted much attention of the scholars being up to day. It is noteworthy that the issue of the abandoned properties is also related to the right of possession. As we have seen in the fourth chapter, the treasury and the state were leasing lands and properties to a considerable degree - almost two thirds of it (60.28%), and more than one third of the abandoned properties (36.21%) were rented as the documents found in the archives suggest. Although the result is very interesting, it is not surprising that Turkish state as a corporatist one-party state in this period, held all the power and that even the classes

were rejected about the issue of abandoned properties. In this context, since the state elite imagined the nation as an organic entity in the corporatist sense, keeping the abandoned properties in its possession, depriving of the capital and accumulation to national bourgeoisie is a situation which can be understood within the Kemalist mind-set.

The vast quantity of the abandoned properties discussed in the thesis shows that the erasure of the Anatolian non-Muslim communities existence from the collective memory as well as the erasure of their physical existence- were cut off by the state and the political elite. The state archives offer much more details about the abandoned properties some of which were evaluated in the previous chapters. However, direct intervention of the state in the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties was scarce. The state was involved in the processes when the central legislative regulation was required. For this reason, it is necessary to investigate more thoroughly and thoroughly the question whether these immovables which had been rent as mentioned above were sold by the government later. The hesitance of the state to sell the abandoned properties can be explained in various ways as it was discussed in the fourth chapter. The state might not want to sell the properties because of the possibility that the non-Muslim communities who left the country may come back again. Another reason might be that tracking and taxing the unregistered lands and properties were difficult, so the state might prefer waiting for mapping and registering the abandoned properties before selling them. Maybe, the state could not control the transfer and distribution process as much as it wanted or even the state did not want to lose control of the abandoned properties as it was a steady source of income to the treasury and contributed greatly to the Turkish economy.

This thesis contains limited knowledge about the issue of abandoned properties. Mostly we do not know the individuals who acquired these properties and the fate of the all the abandoned properties belonged to the non-Muslim communities apart from the examples used in this thesis. However, as the examples show the relationship between elements of the civil society, the state and the public enterprises were evident. They supported each other for the material and ideological gains. The silence, amnesia and marginalization were the outputs of the destruction of the communities and during the transfer and distribution of the abandoned properties almost all people from different classes benefited from these properties. For a more in-depth analysis of this highly sensitive topic, it is imperative that all of the

archives related to this period (title deeds, government correspondence, population records, etc.) should be accessible to all academics without any restrictions.

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V. CABINET DECREES

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Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 760, dosya: 148-2, yer no:
10.37..17.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi dosya: B1, yer no: 40.237..13.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 915, yer no: 11.45..11.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1217, dosya: 132-38, yer no:
12.60..7.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 1428, dosya: 135-154, yer no:
49.71..6.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1498, yer no: 12.74..8.

- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1499, yer no: 12.74..9.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1712, dosya: 148-11, yer no: 13.19..4.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1759, yer no: 13.21..11.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1878, yer no: 13.27..12.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 1927, yer no: 13.29..20.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: yer no: 7.41..22.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 2420, yer no: 15.54..14.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 2778 yer no: 16.72..13.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3054, yer no: 17.86..9.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3429, dosya: 135-89, yer no: 18.24..7.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3444, dosya: 83-15, yer no: 18.25..2.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3471, dosya: 105-16, yer no: 18.26..9.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 3723, dosya: 219-60, yer no: 60.96..9.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3769, yer no: 19.41..10.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3937, dosya: 148-13, yer no: 20.49..18.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 3938, dosya: 231-8, yer no: 20.49..19.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4344, dosya: 135-95, yer no:

21.70..7.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4679, dosya: 135-102, yer no:
22.87..1.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 4814, dosya: 83-26, yer no:
23.12..16.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5076, dosya: 240-10, yer no:
24.25..19.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5214, yer no: 24.32..17.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5293, yer no: 24.36..7.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5294, yer no: 24.36..8.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5484, dosya: 132-45, yer no:
25.45..15.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5607, dosya: 135-117, yer no:
25.51..16.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5656, dosya: 135-120, yer no:
26.54..5.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5707, dosya: 135-121, yer no:
26.56..16.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5753, dosya: 135-122, yer no:
26.59..3.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5750, yer no: 26.58..19.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5759, dosya: 135-124, yer no:
26.59..9.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 5839, dosya: 135-125, yer no:
26.63..9.

- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6062, yer no: 27.74..12.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6961, yer no: 30.48.15.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 6997, dosya: 145-63, yer no: 30.50..11.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 8389, yer no: 5.47..15.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 1/7687, yer no: 2.15..37.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/746, yer no: 45.37..6.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/1135, yer no: 47.56..15.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/1762, yer no: 50.87..18.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 2/7310, yer no: 78.75..20.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Öncesi Sayı: 10094, yer no: 14.68..18.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 10164, dosya: 135-141, yer no: 15.72..8.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 10478, yer no: 17.2..13.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 11833, yer no: 23.69..15.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12151, yer no: 25.4..9.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12355, dosya: 145-91, yer no: 26.14..12.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12675, dosya: 143-91, yer no: 27.30..12.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 12928, dosya: 182-45, yer no: 29.43..5.
- Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 13186, dosya: 157-94, yer no: 30.56..3.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 13360, yer no: 90.39..20.

Katalog, Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları-1928 Sonrası Sayı: 20774, dosya: 76-11, yer no:
105.34..