

## KRIKOR ZOHRAB: OTTOMAN-ARMENIAN INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVIST

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The political activism of Krikor Zohrab, one of the most prominent Armenian political figures of the constitutional period in the Ottoman capital, gives us important clues to the dominant Armenian political trends of the time. As a central figure in the middle of intersecting political affairs among the Armenian and Turkish intellectuals and revolutionaries, Zohrab fervently supported solidarity among Armenian and Turkish political organizations, and campaigned hard for the creation of an accommodating environment for the economic, social, and political development of his country, on the basis of a peaceful social contract among the Ottoman peoples of different ethnic origins.

He supported libertarian Ottomanism based on cosmopolitanism, against homogenization or assimilation, in order to save the Ottoman state from disintegration. In order to create a voluntary affinity to Ottomanism he drafted bills on the military conscription of non-Muslims, as well as education, justice, and other social problems. His political interests were not limited to national questions. As a strong believer in the modernization of the Ottoman countryside he campaigned for citizen rights, sought means to improve the condition of women in society and promoted public health, freedom of expression, press censorship, social rights of the workers, etc. These issues clearly indicate his concerns about a bright future for the Ottoman Empire.

The political activity of Zohrab shows one aspect of the dominant Armenian position during the constitutional period of 1908-1915. The Armenians embraced constitutional rule with great enthusiasm, as it aimed at both cultural and national improvement of the Armenian *millet* in the Ottoman state. Zohrab's efforts to create genuine Armenian-Turkish fraternity, and to realize equality based on a citizen rights code, which he believed to be the sole way of resolving the Armenian question, made him a real Ottoman-Armenian.

We will examine Zohrab's political mindset thoroughly through an examination of his stance towards diverse political cases. Such an examination will provide ample evidence that his political and intellectual activism was mostly oriented to the political development and modernization of the Ottoman state.

## ZOHRAB: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Krikor Zohrab was born in 1861 in Beşiktaş, İstanbul. He attended the Makruhian school of his residential quarter, and after his father's death, the Tarkmanchats school in Ortaköy. In 1876, he entered the Engineering Institute of the Lycée of Galatasaray, the Mekteb-i Sultani ("Imperial School"). He wrote poems and short stories in Armenian under the influence of his teacher at the Tarkmanchats school, Tovmas Terzian, who was a famous writer of the time. While Zohrab was still a student at the Mekteb-i Sultani, his first articles were published in the Armenian newspaper *Lrakir* (Journal) in 1876. After his graduation from the Engineering Institute with a degree of *Ingénieur des Ponts et Chaussées* Zohrab worked in the law office of his stepfather, then entered Law School in 1880. A year later, the Law School of Galatasaray was merged with the İstanbul Law School (Mekteb-i Hukuk), from which he graduated. He worked as a lawyer and published a literary magazine, *Yergrakunt* (Planet Earth), where in a realistic mode he wrote several short stories on the daily life of the different social strata.

As a writer Zohrab was especially talented at short stories. According to Kevork Bardakjian, "Allied with his literary fame was a bright public side to this man of shining intellect, tempestuous emotions, and impeccable appearance and manners, which put him in the limelight as one of the foremost, if not the leading, writers and public figures from the early 1890s onwards."<sup>1</sup> He was particularly successful in skillfully painting women's emotions. His characters were usually selected from the lower strata of society, workers, servants, refugees, whom he knew very well as a keen observer and a lawyer.<sup>2</sup> He took sides with the unfortunate women and men excluded from society, and challenged the artificial values of a growing social decadence.

Zohrab published his first study on law in Turkish, *Hukuk ve Ceza Mürûr-i Zamanları* (The Law of Prescriptions in the Criminal Law) in 1885. He contributed to several Armenian newspapers and magazines, such as *Hairenik* (Motherland) and *Masis* (Mount Ararat). *Masis* was the most important Armenian magazine of the time. It was founded in 1852 by Garabed Utudjian, one of the most respectable members of the Young Armenian movement of the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> In 1891, Zohrab became the editor of *Masis*, which had become the avant-garde newspaper of liberal Armenians.

In 1889, Zohrab defended the case of 50 Armenians who had fled to İstanbul from Muş, as they were being persecuted by a Kurdish notable, Musa Bey, who had seized their herds and kidnapped an Armenian girl, Gülizar.<sup>4</sup> In the Hamidian period Zohrab defended other politically

dangerous cases too, such as that of a group of Zeytun Armenians who were accused of preparing a revolt, and of some revolutionaries working against the despotic rule. Zohrab joined in the foundation of two important Armenian educational societies, *Asiagan Engerutian* (the Asian Society) and *Miatsial Engerutian* (the United Society). Especially with the latter, he worked to guide society to revolutionary activities against despotism.<sup>5</sup>

In 1899, he sent a defense text for Captain Dreyfuss, who was to be discharged from the French Army because of his Jewish origin. In response, he received a letter of gratitude and a medal from the Jewish Committee of France. In 1906, after he defended a Bulgarian revolutionary tortured by the authorities, the Ottoman government banned Zohrab from practicing his profession.<sup>6</sup>

After living under the governmental ban for two years, Zohrab decided to leave the country. In May 1908 he left for Paris then for Egypt. After the Young Turk Revolution and the Declaration of Liberties, he immediately returned to İstanbul. He taught at the Department of Law at İstanbul University as a professor, participated in the foundation of the Club of the Ottoman Constitution (*Osmanian Sahmanatragan Agump / Meşrutiyet-i Osmani Kulübü*) and the *Ahrar* (Liberal) Party.<sup>7</sup> In the parliamentary elections of 1908, 1912, and 1914 he was elected as a deputy from İstanbul, first as a member of *Ahrar* and then as an independent.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, during the 1908-1915 period he became a member of the Armenian National Assembly.

Zohrab was one of the most popular deputies in parliament and was considered the leader of the Armenian deputies. His rhetoric and knowledge of Ottoman political circles made him the spokesman of the Armenians of the empire. As will be seen below, he campaigned for the strengthening of liberal Ottomanism, freedoms, basic human rights, workers' rights, and the social position of women. He was active in the reform negotiations in 1913, when he negotiated both with the Russian side through Andre Mandelstam (the translator of the Russian embassy in İstanbul), and with the Committee of Union and Progress through Talat and Halil Beys (Menteşe), who were his close friends. In late May 1915, he was arrested with Vartkes Serengulian, the deputy of Erzurum, and sent to Diyarbakır, where they were to be tried. Although Zohrab wrote several letters on the road to Diyarbakır to Talat Paşa, Hüseyin Cahit Bey, Necmettin Molla, the German ambassador, Hans Wangenheim, and Halil Bey<sup>9</sup> in order to learn what he and Vartkes were accused of, and demanded that they be tried in İstanbul, he was left unanswered. Zohrab and Vartkes were killed near Urfa in July 1915.

## ZOHRAB AS THE SPOKESMAN OF THE OTTOMAN ARMENIANS

Zohrab was a central Armenian figure of the constitutional period. As a writer of novels and short stories, as an editor of the Armenian journal *Masis*, and as a famous lawyer, he was a renowned and respected personality within the Ottoman Armenian *millet*. In his declaration of candidacy to the Ottoman Parliament, published in *Jamanak* in 24 October/6 November 1908, he committed himself to being an *azkayeen kordzich* (national [political/cultural] activist), which was a term for respected Armenians, for their services to the Armenians.

As I declared orally in the last session, I present myself to the Armenian community of the capital as a candidate to the Ottoman Parliament. My titles? My national activity of thirty-one years, from the age of sixteen to these days. First, in the national education institutions, starting with *Asiagan Engerutun* which published *Yergrakunt*, until the most sorrowful and last days of *Miatsial Engerutun*.<sup>10</sup> It was I who paved the way for the revolutionary activity of the teachers of this second institution.

... As a journalist my work has been identified with *Hairenik*, *Arevelk* (East) and *Masis*, always libertarian, always campaigning against injustice and for people, always opposing to the catastrophes of a despotic regime.

... As a lawyer I defended the Armenians of Zeytun before the massacre, in the Punishment Council. Because of this defense the Council decided to arrest me; after living under illegal conditions as a fugitive for one month, I saved myself by indirect means from condemnation.<sup>11</sup>

On 5 September 1908, in a special assembly, the Club of Ottoman Constitution voted for the candidates of Istanbul Armenians. Zohrab was the favorite as he gathered 40 votes out of 43.<sup>12</sup> The other winning candidate was Bedros Hallacyan, a member of the CUP who later on occupied ministerial chairs. Zohrab's election to the Armenian National Assembly shows his popularity among the Armenians. In the elections for the Assembly, the Regional Assembly of İzmir first elected him as their deputy, though Zohrab had not declared his candidacy. On August 24, the Samatia and Topkapı Regional Assemblies, likewise, elected him with an absolute majority. The communities of Pera and Kasımpaşa also wanted to elect him and put his name on the candidates' list, but since his membership was definite after the Samatia and Topkapı elections, these nominations simply underpinned his popularity. Most interestingly, in 1891, when elections for a new Assembly were held, Zohrab was elected in two different neighborhoods: Kuzguncuk-İcadiye and Gedikpaşa-Kumkapı.



The electoral process was the arena for the most important political bickerings between Armenian liberal and conservative groups in 1891. Eventually, the conservatives won with the cancellation of Zohrab's election in the end.<sup>13</sup> In 1910, in one of his speeches Zohrab referred to this incident: "One day they elected me as a national deputy. I had not turned thirty, and the reactionaries, pretending righteousness, rejected me as a deputy; they won. Thirty years later, six regions elected me as their deputy at one time. Did I not tell you that the future is ours?"<sup>14</sup>

Such an acceptance from the Armenian community made Zohrab politically a central figure in Armenian circles. Armenians regarded him as the representative of their cultural and political demands. He was seen as the worthiest Armenian candidate to the Ottoman Parliament. This is why the Armenian journal *Manzume-i Efkâr*, while describing the Armenian candidates of the parliament wrote: "Krikor Efendi Zohrab is so familiar to us through his international reputation, his great proficiency in law and his rhetoric that we find it unnecessary to talk more about him."<sup>15</sup> During the years 1908 to 1914 there were three elections to the Ottoman parliament, and a total of twenty-four Armenian deputies were elected. Zohrab was one of the six deputies who were elected in all three elections. In addition, his membership in the Armenian National Assembly continued until his death in 1915. He was also elected to the *Azkayeen Getronagan Varchutun* (National Central Administration) which was a sort of the executive body of the National Assembly.

Alongside his political activities in parliament and in the Armenian National Assembly, Zohrab published several articles in Armenian newspapers and participated in political conferences, gatherings, and meetings. He was a founding member of the Ottoman Constitutional Club in 1908 along with a few Armenian tradesmen its aim being to strengthen fraternity between Armenians and Turks. As a defender of pluralistic and participatory principles in politics, he also founded the Liberal Group in the Armenian National Assembly in 1911. His first political speech was delivered in a gathering at *Taksim Bahçesi* to commemorate Muslim martyrs who died under the oppression of the Hamidian regime. Nearly 50,000 people listened to his strong and emotional speech. The gathering was organized by the Ottoman Constitutional Club.<sup>16</sup> Zohrab's own account of the meeting appears in a French letter written to his son, Levon Zohrab, on 14 August 1908: "J'ai organisé un grand meeting de 50,000 personnes où mon discours a été acclamé et devenu l'objet d'ovations enthousiastes: les turcs m'embrassaient, me portaient en triomphe".<sup>17</sup>

On 19 August/1 September 1908, Zohrab gave a speech at a gathering at Samatia organized by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF,

Tashnak Party) in the Surp Kevork Church, where he presented his views on the likely modifications of the *Kamun-ı Esasi*. On October 26, again at a meeting in Pera Surp Yerrortutian Church, Zohrab talked about the expectations of the Armenian community from the Ottoman Parliament. These speeches were published in Turkish in his book *Siyasi Nutuklar* (Political Orations) at the end of the year.<sup>18</sup>

On 23 March/5 April 1909, he gave a speech again in the Surp Yerrortutian Church on the conscription of non-Muslims. The other speakers were Bedros Hallacyan, Vahan Papazian (deputy of Van), and Yervant Agnuni (ARF central committee). According to the Armenian newspaper *Puzantion* (Byzantium) the packed audience endorsed the speakers with several standing ovations.<sup>19</sup> On 7 February 1910, Zohrab gave another speech in the Surp Yerrortutian Church to a crowd of 3000 about the current political situation.

On 25 September 1910, in a conference organized by the Raffi Armenian Society in Üsküdar, Zohrab gave a speech under the title of “*Hay Badkamavori Me Hashvedvutiane*” (The Account of an Armenian Representative), and described the activities of the Armenian deputies in the Ottoman Parliament, supporting the constitutional regime and the CUP, which in his opinion deserved the support of the Armenian community because it was the only progressive party in the country.<sup>20</sup>

On 5/18 December 1910, at a meeting organized by the Armenian Liberal Party in Kadıköy, with the participation of Bulgarian deputy Dimitr Vlahov and Russian-German revolutionary Alexander Israel Helpfand (Parvus Efendi), Zohrab spoke although he was not on the program. Taking to the podium after an ovation from the audience and the clamor of the 5000 people calling his name and chanting “We Want Zohrab! Zohrab!” he talked about current political issues, especially the resignation of the Patriarch Yeghishe Turian due to pressure from the “conservative” group in the Armenian National Assembly. He insisted that, for the sake of the constitutional regime, and in order to maintain good relations between the Armenian nation and the government, the Patriarch should not yield to pressure and should continue his mission.<sup>21</sup>

On 8 February 1911 upon the invitation of Greek deputies Kosmidi and Konstantinidis, some 30 Christian deputies gathered in the Tokatlian Hotel in Pera-Beyoğlu to discuss the political conditions of the country. Zohrab, representing the Armenian deputies, took to the floor and stressed the need for Turkish deputies’ participation to such gatherings:

This gathering has not any political character. We, as Armenian deputies, responded to our Greek associates, since we want to establish a perfect acquaintance with them. The podium of the Ottoman parliament

should serve all parts of the motherland. These gatherings are important opportunities for the deputies to exchange ideas with each other, which helps the development of the country. Therefore, I consider this meeting a first step, and hope our Turkish colleagues will be invited to future gatherings. We can reach our aims only when we all work together... I suggest you form a commission for the organization of such meetings with deputies of different nations.<sup>22</sup>

In the 1912 election campaigns Zohrab supported both the ARF and the CUP as defenders of constitutional rule. On March 23 at a gathering in Pera, he compared the old and new regimes and asserted that the Armenians lived under considerably better conditions than during the Hamidian period.<sup>23</sup> At another meeting organized by the ARF in Üsküdar, Zohrab compared the CUP and LEP, and concluded that since the former was the real defender of the constitution, the Armenians should vote for it.<sup>24</sup>

In a nutshell, during this period Zohrab used his supra-party political status and power in order to extend Armenian community support to the constitution, and tried to create real peace between Armenians and the Muslim elements of the Empire. Framing healthy relations between the various constituents of the empire and the government became his top political objective. The strengthening of constitutional institutions was critical for him as he regarded constitutionalism a regime of liberties. According to Zohrab, for the sake of the state, constitution and Ottomanism, liberties and libertarian practices were crucial as they were the only way to maintain the loyalty of the different elements (including the Armenians) living in the Ottoman Empire.

#### ZOHRAB REGARDING THE *ANCIEN RÉGIME* AND THE "NEW LIFE"

Zohrab's various speeches, statements and writings provide a very clear picture of his stance during the constitutional period starting in 1908, with the Proclamation of Liberties (*İlan-ı Hürriyet*), and ending with his tragic death in July 1915. His testimonies reveal that Zohrab was an absolute supporter and advocate of constitutional rule, and an uncompromising opponent of despotism. His efforts to exalt the merits of constitutionalism and expose the calamities of absolutism were some of the most important acts in his political career.

Zohrab's stance on despotism and absolutism was the direct result of his experiences in the Hamidian regime. He had lived the first forty-five years of his life under Abdülhamid's rule. As a lawyer, he experienced the suffocating political atmosphere of the period and became a witness of the

sufferings of Armenians in the provinces. This transformed Zohrab into an inconvenient person for the watchful eyes of the regime, at a time when those interested in politics were regarded as potential terrorists, or revolutionaries. In February 1909, while parliament discussed the rights of *içtima-i umumiye* (general meeting) Zohrab declared: "We are a nation who was crushed for thirty years under this term, meeting [*içtima*] (...) I myself went to the police station at least ten times because of this meeting issue."<sup>25</sup>

Having suffered under the absolutist rule, during the constitutional period, Zohrab dedicated his time to two tracks. He regarded the "Ancient Regime" as the source of all problems, which he expected to be resolved under the "new life." The economic, social, and national problems of the Ottoman state, which burdened the new regime, were the legacy of the Hamidian rule, but had to be addressed. Famines and shortages (*kaht u gala*) in the provinces were among the gravest problems during the first months of constitutional rule. The Eastern Vilayets of Anatolia especially were restless because of the distress caused by famine and food shortages, which undermined the vigor of the new regime. The parliament discussed preventive measures to ameliorate this dissatisfaction against the regime. Zohrab admitted the importance of the problem and underlined ...: "The importance of the bill is huge... the shortage that you have mentioned is quite severe. In fact, we are sure of the good intentions, and it is necessary to admit that the responsibility for this situation certainly belongs to the *ancien régime*."<sup>26</sup>

In February 1909, at a time when two officials responsible for some of the abuses in the Hamidian era, Ethem and Rüşti Paşas, were being investigated, some members of the parliament argued that they had been under the control of the Sultan and had had no choice. Zohrab strongly opposed such excuses:

Who was free from the force and oppression applied? Was there a single person in the Ottoman Empire who was not under force and oppression? ... If we were to apply the theory of force and oppression, we would have to release everyone. ... I do not consider those who were not involved directly in secret informing, but who were oppressing others on the basis of reports of informers as helpless, having no other choice. I do not see them apart from private interest.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to his negative judgments about Abdülhamid's rule, Zohrab strongly believed that the Sultan was the perpetrator of the events of April 1909, which is usually considered a counter-revolution attempt against the Young Turk Revolution of July 1908. After the failure of this attempt, when the Sultan was dethroned and exiled to Salonica, the Ottoman

parliament discussed the destiny of Abdülhamid's properties in the Yıldız Palace. In the parliamentary deliberations, Zohrab warned his colleagues of the political importance of the documents preserved by the Sultan in the palace:

Gentlemen, the issue does not relate only to property... But the place is a treasury of secrets. The presence of many political documents can be assumed. In fact, it may have been possible to locate evidence concerning this most recent incident (i.e. the counter revolutionary attempt on March 31, 1909 - R.K.)<sup>28</sup>

The Adana incidents of 1909, which resulted in the massacre of thousands of Armenians in the region, created great distrust among the Armenians and political movements.<sup>29</sup> But most of the Armenians, and Zohrab as a leading figure, saw traces of the methods used under Hamidian rule. In the parliamentary debates, Zohrab claimed the measures taken by the Ministry of Interior to prevent the massacres of the Armenians were inspired by absolutist methods.<sup>30</sup> For instance, telegrams sent to Adana had been basically a replica of the Hamidian telegrams ordering "Secure public order... Especially, protect the foreigners, banks, and the trade companies." In Zohrab's interpretation, this was in fact another mode of allowing the killing of Armenians in a chaotic atmosphere.<sup>31</sup> Zohrab believed that the responsibility of the governor of Adana, Cevdet Bey, was very big. Zohrab considered him to be the main perpetrator of the massacres because he was a "member of the Palace."<sup>32</sup>

Clearly Zohrab's views on the Hamidian rule led him to support constitutional rule fervently. According to Zohrab, the Declaration of Liberties and the Constitution were the only way to save the Ottoman Empire from "darkness" (*zulmet*)<sup>33</sup> which was represented by the absolutist rule of Sultan Abdülhamid. This is why he was politically very active during the constitutional period. His mastery in addressing the people and skills at rhetoric made him one of the most popular figures in political gatherings, organized not only by Armenians, but also by the Young Turks. His expectations from constitutional rule were especially focused on the democratization of the regime, the modernization of the state and government, and a peaceful solution to the Armenian question. He believed the new regime should embrace all the Ottoman nations, for which he addressed the people as "Free Ottomans! Free compatriots!" at the meetings and praised the virtues of constitutional life, saluted the combatants for freedom: "the martyrs, learned leaders, writers, officers, students...[and]... Armenians, Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks."<sup>34</sup>

## ZOHRAB AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE CUP AND AHRAR (LIBERAL) PARTY

Although officially not a member of the ARF, Zohrab is often regarded by scholars as a Tashnak, which is literally wrong, but figuratively correct, because he usually defended the same political or ideological concepts as the ARF, especially after the Young Turk revolution, and participated in the political activities organized by the party.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, some historians, such as Y. G. Çark in his book, *Türk Devleti Hizmetinde Ermeniler 1453-1953* (Armenians in the Service of Turkish State 1453-1953) made another mistake and wrote that Zohrab was a member of the CUP<sup>36</sup> very possibly under the influence of Arshag Alboyadjian, who wrote that Zohrab mostly voted parallel to CUP politics in the parliament.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, Tunaya regarded him a “moderate socialist” and incorrectly stated that he was not only a member of the Liberal Party but a Hnchag too.<sup>38</sup>

During the constitutional period on various occasions, Zohrab announced his sympathy to the ARF. As early as 23 October 1908, when he publicly announced his candidacy to the parliament, he wrote: “They said that I was a Tashnak. If I were, I would be proud of such an attribute. I am only a revolutionary intellectual, and a determined man of literature and speech.”<sup>39</sup> A few days later, in his speech at the Surp Yerrortutian Church, he saluted the ARF as the most important Armenian revolutionary party to have ushered in the new regime with the CUP.

Today, all hearts in our community beat with the revolutionary organizations, and especially with the ARF, which is adorned with nobleness, self-sacrifice, and talent; it is a power devoted to a sublime ideal, whose most important representatives today surrounded me; that is why I feel myself very lucky. Without denying the roles of the revolutionary bodies of other nationalities, and especially the role of the CUP in our emancipation, I can say without hesitation that the primary place is the ARF's. The sentence dedicated to the great French revolutionary, Mirabeau, very much suits the ARF: “Mirabeau, ce n'est pas un homme, ce n'est pas un peuple, c'est un événement, un immense événement. C'est la chute du gouvernement monarchique en France.”<sup>40</sup>

In fact, to some extent, defending the ARF was equal to approving of its cooperation with the CUP. As mentioned above, as a result of the agreements signed between the CUP and the ARF in 1907, 1908, 1909 and 1912, the two parties worked as allies. Zohrab, critical at certain points of the CUP, regarded good relations with the CUP a matter of life and death for the Armenian *millet*. As a result of this situation, when the Hnchag

Party and other Armenian parties ended their opposition to the ARF and the CUP, Zohrab defended their cooperation:

I don't want to leave a criticism directed at the Armenian deputies in parliament unanswered. This criticism is about their harmonious attitude and support of the İttihat and Terakki Party.

...The real liberals in the Islamic element, the real liberals like us are very rare; but they belong to that party to a great extent. Our convictions, our feelings order us to support them for their hard work and make their work easier.

Nobody points out the deficiencies of this [CUP] party as strictly and harshly as I do, but this does not prevent me from seeing their libertarian bases. What is more [important], is there another party more libertarian than theirs?<sup>41</sup>

In 1908, Zohrab was a member of the Ahrar Party. His membership in the Ahrar was due to his admiration of Prince Sabahaddin and closeness to the political ideas the latter supported. In October 1908 Zohrab was a member of the committee welcoming Prince Sabahaddin's return from Paris. The Committee formed by Turkish, Armenian and Greek liberals greeted Sabahaddin in the Dardanelles with a ship that sailed from Istanbul. Zohrab published an article about his impressions and admiration of Sabahaddin's personality:

Sabahaddin Bey is one of the most developed intellectuals among the Turks. His vocation is based on a most earnest and scientific libertarianism.

He is not a populist orator, but a good rhetorician, whose stresses have eagle-like descents and ascents, and his wisdom is bright. His sentences carry the imprint of a man who writes and thinks.

This is the impression - I would say "admiration" - which he left on us with his speech when he talked in front of his father's coffin, which was in fact a pledge, promise, and oath. As far as I remember, Turkish rhetoric never showed such progress.<sup>42</sup>

It is clear that the principle of decentralization advocated by Sabahaddin's *Teşebbüs-i Şahsi ve Adem-i Merkeziyet Cemiyeti* (TSAMC) (The Society for Private Enterprise and Decentralization) and Ahrar fit Zohrab's own ideas about the solutions to the most important problems of the Empire. One must not forget that during the period all Armenian organizations favored decentralization as the main solution to their national question.<sup>43</sup> That is why Sabahaddin and his followers had widespread support from Armenians. In 1908 and 1909 decentralization was one of the most important political touchstones that determined political differences.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, although the politics of the CUP

and its practices often were regarded as centralist, which is correct to a great extent, sometimes, as a result of the heterogeneity or opportunism of CUP's ideology, and according to the needs of political conjuncture, the CUP also supported decentralization for instance, during the reform negotiations in the Eastern Vilayets in the 1912-1913 period. Indeed, when the reforms in the Armenian vilayets became a crucial issue in terms of the Armenians' relations with the government, the CUP government prepared a Law of Provinces (*Vilayât Kamunu*) on the basis of decentralization and self-government principles.

It is normal that Zohrab, "a revolutionary intellectual" in his words, could have sympathy for the TSAMC, which he regarded as a modernist, liberal, and progressive political movement. At the root of this sympathy one can find his positive approach towards the CUP. In to Zohrab's view, the Armenians had to support the CUP because, first, there was no other libertarian movement on the Ottoman political arena,<sup>45</sup> and second, because the CUP was the party governing the state. In other words, the party which held power in its hands: "Remember that the CUP is the party in power. Even if our convictions and feelings would not lead us in their direction, the special interests of our nation order us to compromise with them."<sup>46</sup>

Such a formulation enables us to understand his support of the CUP. Zohrab supported the CUP since there was no "other party more libertarian than" the ARF in the Armenian circles, and since the ARF was "the party in power" thanks to its cooperation with the CUP. The Hnchags, who could on a doctrinal basis have been an alternative to the Tashnaks for his support, maintained a distance from the CUP and opted to work as an opposing party. Thus, it would be a "mission impossible" to try to transform the dominant political discourses through the Hnchag Party. These discourses were poisoned by ethnic hostilities, surrounded by reactionary forces, remnants of the Hamidian regime and society, which was suffering from backwardness. The other Armenian parties, the Ramgavars (Democrats) and the Veragazmial (Reformed) Hnchags were out of the question, because they could have only an insignificant impact on grand politics.

To repeat, alongside belonging to the Liberal Group which he founded in 1911 in the Armenian National Assembly, Zohrab's only party membership was in Ahrar. The Ahrar Party was founded in 1908 with "a western style"<sup>47</sup> program, which was politically very attractive to Zohrab. In his letter to his son Levon on 14 August 1909 he wrote that "Je participe à la formation d'un grand parti politique exclusivement ture. Là aussi on me donne un poste d'honneur."<sup>48</sup> The Party's being "exclusivement ture"



was especially important and explains why Zohrab avoided becoming a member of the party, although its revolutionary and socialist ideas fit him more than Ahrar's economically liberal program. Zohrab was looking for ways to strengthen Ottomanism and believed that instead of working in a radical and national(istic) Armenian party, working in a centrist Turkish party would help to realize his political agenda.

He preferred Ahrar to the CUP for specific reasons: a) in the beginning Ahrar seemed more liberal and democratic than the CUP. Ahrar's insistence on decentralization and Prince Sabahaddin's presence were very attractive to him, especially regarding the Armenian question. The CUP's centrist tendencies repelled him from them. Moreover, Ahrar's organization - although very weak and superficial - had strong resemblances to western style political parties. On the other hand, in 1908 the CUP was not even a political party but a secret organization.

As a result, even though he participated in the foundation of the Ahrar Party, Zohrab chose a political lexicon that was not so antagonistic to the CUP. One may assume that he regarded the Ahrar as the liberal wing of the Young Turk political organizations, and participated in its formation with the hopes of influencing the other, centrist - maybe conservative - wing, the CUP, through a positive opposition from outside. This is how his negative attitude towards the Liberal Entente Party, which was founded after the closure of Ahrar, can be explained.<sup>49</sup> After the counter-revolutionary attempt of 31 March 1909, Zohrab witnessed the Ahrar's strong anti-CUP policies and cooperation with the "reactionary" forces, which sought to remove the constitutional regime. Accordingly, he withdrew his support from Ahrar. In September 1910, while calling on the Armenian *millet* to support the co-operation between the Tashnaks and the CUP, he warned them that "Ahrar and *Mutedil Hürriyet Perveran* parties had a lot of reactionary and religious elements among them."<sup>50</sup>

In May 1909, when the deputy of Berat, İsmail Kemal Bey (from Ahrar and then *Mutedil Hürriyet Perveran*)<sup>51</sup> was accused of benefiting from the March 31<sup>st</sup> events, and the parliament discussed whether to court martial him, Zohrab clarified his position amongst the CUP, Ahrar, and the counter-revolution attempts:

In my first interview with him (İsmail Kemal Bey - R.K.) I saw how this event [of March 31<sup>st</sup>] has been interpreted, and I was not content at all. I really got upset. ...Gentlemen, that there is a party struggle here. One has to make this clear. I am not from the Union and Progress Party, and I have fought many times against the principles of that party. But I have never denied the fact that this is a respected party. They have always defended and will defend its permanence. In that respect I do not have

hostile feelings about this party. During the events and when I sensed efforts and a determination to destroy the party and when I sensed that the blow would also hit our constitutional regime, I felt deep sorrow. ...Unfortunately İsmail Kemal Bey has not joined in my sorrow. ...He should have felt the same sorrow from the blow that hit the opposition party as if it were a threat to his own party. He did not feel that way. When I even cried from my sorrow, he encouraged me by saying "Why do you feel so upset? This is no big deal." At that moment, I considered İsmail Kemal Bey's attitude worthy of censure.<sup>52</sup>

As a result of Ahrar's participation in the counter revolutionary attempt in April 1909, Zohrab distanced himself from that party. Ahrar's cooperation with religious and reactionary elements to overthrow the CUP was unacceptable to Zohrab, because he believed that the anti-CUP camp aimed at undermining the gains of constitutional rule. Against this camp he was on the same side as the CUP, the ARF, and the other Armenian groups supporting constitutional rule. During the constitutional period in most cases he criticized the CUP, especially when it intended to create a kind of authoritarian rule after 1913, but he never left the constitutionalist side. This was his main line of political activity.

#### ZOHRAB ON FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS

Zohrab defended constitutional rule throughout his political life, especially in parliament. His activities in parliament reveal that he was very sensitive to the offenses against constitutional law, and often defended the virtues of the constitutional regime, especially on a legal basis. He regarded the constitution and freedom of political activity as means of modernizing the state and society, which were worries shared by influential groups in the CUP. There are various pieces of evidence useful for understanding his attitude about "constitutional life" (*hayat-ı meşrutiyet*).

Zohrab considered constitutional rule as a regime of freedoms and rights, which had never existed under the previous absolutist rule. Considering freedom the essence of the new period, from the podium of the parliament he advocated freedom of speech, freedom of gathering, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, freedom for women, etc., and opposed regulations which restrained freedoms, such as censorship, limitations on freedom of speech and gathering, limitations on traveling, some articles in the regulation on vagabonds and suspects (*Serseri ve Mazanna-i Su Eşhas Hakkında Nizamname*) which restricted civil rights. Likewise he opposed the concept of adultery (*zina*) in the Criminal Law (*Ceza Kanunu*), which legitimized the oppression of women.

In March 1909 during the parliamentary deliberations on limiting public meetings, he advocated freedom of speech, claiming that an open meeting must not be banned: "Is prohibiting or restricting the right to gather an effective remedy? As far as I know, mischief takes place in a quite secret manner. I have heard for the first time that mischief took place in a public discussion. Therefore, the issue of mischief could not, really, be the subject. This would be out of place."<sup>53</sup>

Zohrab, opposed the prevailing law of punishing vagabonds and suspects. According to Zohrab, beating as a punishment was unreasonable and fruitless. It was discontinued in the Ottoman system of law long ago - except for the Hamidian era, when beating was practiced clandestinely.<sup>54</sup> To reinstate it would be a reactionary act and would not be in harmony with the essence of constitutionalism.<sup>55</sup>

Zohrab was a strong defender of libertarian principles, particularly the Press Law. As a writer and a former editor, during absolutist rule he witnessed how political power could use censorship against freedom of expression. Thus, his reaction to censorship had no compromise. He viewed censorship as a tool of despotism, and since the Ottomans could easily recall the bitter experiences of censorship, there was no need to dissuade newspapers from censoring ideas in a constitutional regime: "there is no doubt that censorship kills thought. Yes, censorship means murdering the thoughts of the whole nation. I do not think that any of my sublime friends would approve print censorship. All our tragic experiences speak against this."<sup>56</sup> Moreover, when a member of parliament recommended punishing the owner of the printing house and the publisher if the content of the publication had elements of crime, Zohrab argued that since the editor and the owner of the paper had to obtain a license from the government, there was no need to punish the printing house and the publisher, because they did not have a direct connection with the content of the paper.<sup>57</sup>

During the parliamentary debates on amendments to the *Kamun-ı Esasi* when some groups wanted to include the concept of "harmful publications" (*neşriyyat-ı muzırre*) in the constitution, Zohrab, argued that there was not such a concept in the Press Law and equated the concept of *neşriyyat-ı muzırre* with despotism (*istibdat*): "Harmful publications can only exist under a despotic regime ... Look, there is no casual mention of harmful publications ... and cannot be. If there were such a statement, then we would be returning to despotism."<sup>58</sup>

Zohrab's ideas about adultery encountered large opposition in parliament. His modernist approach to gender relations caused a great reaction. The deputies cut his speech off and protested several times while

he was at the podium. Aware of the reasons for this reaction, Zohrab chose a moderate way of speaking, but again insisted on his ideas: "I am afraid, since the parliament is made up of men, we are a bit unable to consider the condition of women, whose rights we seek to limit, in an impartial and just manner."<sup>59</sup> Ottoman laws and Muslim law gave prominence to men in the family and in society on the basis of rights, privileges, etc. He claimed that women must be protected by law when the concept of adultery was considered. In addition to this, when some of the representatives argued that adultery was a big crime, because it harmed the purity of generations, he responded:

In past centuries, it was common to use such expressions as, 'I am the son of so and so, so and so is my ancestor, this is an illegal child, a bastard.' I, myself, do not accept these expressions. For the dignity of the twentieth century and for humanity, I strongly reject these expressions; from this moment on there are only humans on earth, no more illegal children, and no more bastards. ... in an article or in the fundamental provisions of the Constitution, it says 'all the Ottomans are equal.' Can the constitutional rule survive if you deprive a man who is already destined for an unfortunate life due to the fact that his father is unknown of the honor of being an Ottoman? Will you render him stained, with a deficiency, forever?<sup>60</sup>

Zohrab believed in constructing constitutional rule and constitutionalism on the basis of developing basic citizenship rights. The democratization of the regime through freedom of speech, freedom of the press, human rights, and most importantly, the principle of equality which found its expression in the constitution was his main political objective. In fact, his opposition to the different governments of the constitutional period is due to the limitations of such principles. This is why he usually displayed a manner of positive opposition: he wanted to channel the regime in a more libertarian direction in which cultural, ethnic, and most importantly political differences could be expressed freely. These considerations were also directly related to his perception of the Armenian Question.

#### ZOHRAB AND "NATIONAL ECONOMY"

In parliamentary discussions Zohrab several times declared his ideas and thoughts on the appropriateness of a liberal or a protective economic model. In most cases he discussed the issue with Cavid Bey, deputy of Salonica (Biga, after the loss of Salonica) and Minister of Finance, who was a strong supporter of a "laissez faire laissez passé" liberal economy. In

such discussions he appeared as one of the most influential defenders of a protective economic system.

According to Zohrab, under the conditions of the prevailing economic system, since the Ottoman Empire had not the power of production (*kavvet-i istihsaliye*), the only way to resolve the problems was to accumulate amounts of small capital in order to create a capital accumulation. He believed that while trying to create a capital accumulation the most important thing is to protect small capital ownership.<sup>61</sup> As such, he strongly opposed the “Spencerian Darwinist”<sup>62</sup> approach of Cavid Bey and claimed that “the most developed countries, the nations which are the most important supporters of a liberal economy, at the end, accepted the method of moderate protection.”<sup>63</sup>

Zohrab was aware of the results of the economic imperialism the ARF aimed at as “economic conquests instead of military conquests.”<sup>64</sup> He supported the idea of Ottomanism in the economic sphere and claimed that, since Ottoman capital ownership was mainly based on small capital, and since such capital was not able to compete with its European rivals, the Ottoman economic system should be protected against the flow of European capital:

Today, you know that there are no borders. The borders are only political; there are no economic borders. ...[Our trade is] mixed with all the European trade. Do you think that, if we adopt all the discourses of the Ministry of Finance in this battle, all the desired wealth will be accumulated in the hands of Ottomans? Because of natural developments and absolute competition the result would be the destruction of the small wealth of the Ottomans and the domination of foreign capital ownership. ...If you completely open our borders, if you destroy our border of defence against such economic invasions, against such economic penetrations, you make us a completely conquered country.<sup>65</sup>

Zohrab, admitted the necessity of foreign capital in branches where Ottoman capital was not competitive. Yet he aimed at creating Ottoman capital ownership through providing protection to Ottoman citizens in some economic areas which needed small capital. According to him, this was the only way to accumulate capital in the hands of Ottomans:

It is possible to run the two ferry companies and the telephone [company] with Ottoman capital. I agree, there are some fields of activity in which Ottoman capital will not be enough. ...In the small works which will be delivered to the Ottomans, the profit will belong to the Ottomans; we must not begrudge this to the Ottomans, and compare with Europeans.<sup>66</sup>

After attempts at establishing a liberal economic system, CUP governments gradually sided with a nationalist economy especially after the Balkan Wars. According to Toprak, the CUP was both the initiator of a liberal economy and the organizer of the nationalistic reactions of small producers and *esnaf*, who suffered from economic liberalism<sup>67</sup> as opposed to non-Muslims, who were dominant especially in trade.<sup>68</sup> The 1913-14 Muslim boycottage was one of the most significant pieces of evidence of this reaction. Especially during WWI, when the gates of foreign trade were closed, a new economic model, "etatist bourgeois system," was established.<sup>69</sup> Ironically, the protective ideas defended by Zohrab against a Unionist, Mehmed Cavid Bey, were adopted by the CUP a few years later with a significant difference: Instead of the "Ottomanism" of Zohrab, the CUP used the expressions "Turkish" or "Muslim" in order to eliminate both foreign and non-Muslim Ottoman capital from local economic markets.

#### ZOHRAB AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

It is clear that Zohrab's opposition to Hamidian despotism and partisanship to the constitutional regime were directly related to the Armenian question. As an Armenian-Ottoman intellectual, and especially as a lawyer, he was interested in the sufferings of Armenians in Anatolia. Mistreatment included land problems, confiscations, backwardness, problems with Kurdish tribes, problems caused by Hamidiye Cavalries, and the massacres of 1894-1896 and 1905. Zohrab saw the problems of the Armenian *millet* as a result of Hamidian despotic rule, and thus supported the Young Turk Revolution fervently. Although his secular, modernist, democratic world view played an important role in determining his attitude against two regimes, it can be easily said that the Armenian question itself was very crucial in determining his political position.

As mentioned above, on 6 November 1908, Zohrab publicly announced his candidacy for parliament with an article published in *Jamanak*, where he discussed his activities during the reign of Abdülhamid as a lawyer, writer, and journalist. He stated that he was one of the few Armenians who publicly campaigned against the regime and called the casualties of the 1896 massacres "victims" (*zoh* in Armenian) in the Armenian newspapers. Moreover, he declared: "I defended the Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian political rebels without differentiation up to the present, always free of charge. Since I defended a Bulgarian revolutionary, who was tortured by the Istibi Macedonian authorities, against the *kaymakam* of Istibi, the government banned me from practicing my profession, and I was compelled to leave İstanbul. Here are my

credentials!<sup>70</sup> Zohrab then antagonised the Armenians who had gained much by serving the despotic regime and said: "Many people gained money, were handed tasks ... and built positions by being closer to the regime, but I stayed far away from all these. I maintained my own independent position as a lawyer, and stayed far from any expectation of gain."<sup>71</sup>

Zohrab knew that the participation of the Armenians in discussing the Armenian Question was impossible under despotic rule, and thus saluted the constitutional regime with great enthusiasm. He believed that the Young Turks, and the CUP had the potential to transform the Hamidian regime into a liberal, democratic one. This was the main motive of his support to the CUP. He perceived the CUP as a modernist, progressive, and liberal party, although some of its elements resisted such principles. He believed that during the Adana massacres some officers participated in the abuses and created anarchy in the city - especially the governor of Adana, Cevdet Bey, and the *mütesarrıf* of Cebel-i Bereket, Mehmed Asaf Bey.<sup>72</sup> The result of that anarchy was the massacre of thousands of Armenians. On the other hand, he rejected claims that the Adana events took place because of the rebellion organized by the Armenians:

I reject a slander, an aspersion, with all my being, all my heart, all my conscience that the Armenians, who have diluted all their existence in Ottomanism, were ready to organize a rebellion.<sup>73</sup>

According to Zohrab, in order to create an atmosphere of reliability and confidence towards constitutional rule, the government should have acted harshly towards abusers, and should have appointed a commission of investigation of neutral people who had not participated in the events. He proposed sending 20,000 Ottoman liras for the mistreated of Adana and stressed only such measures would help the survival of constitutional rule.<sup>74</sup>

On the other hand, even after the Adana events Zohrab called the Armenians to support the CUP at a time when Armenian public opinion was generally suspicious about the CUP due to the Adana massacres. In his speech at the Raffi Armenian Society in September 1910, he argued that even at the time of controversial events of Adana, the Ottoman government did its best to resolve the problems of the Armenians.

[The result of the catastrophe of Adana] is irreversible. But one must accept that the Ottoman government did what we were able to demand from it 'under the present conditions.' When did you see that because of a Christian massacre approximately 100 Muslims were hanged, or when did you see that approximately 1000 Muslim perpetrators were imprisoned? The constitutionalist government showed bravery, and it is

the duty of all Armenians who are judicious, to recognize and act towards the government according to this. Moreover, to compensate for the economic loss arising from the events, the government openhandedly paid the money needed.<sup>75</sup>

Zohrab's approach to the CUP was a direct result of his anxieties about the Ancient Regime (in terms of the Armenian Question, the most important threat of this regime was the massacres), and his worries about the endurance of the constitutional regime. He believed that if constitutional rule failed, the Hamidian regime would be revived. Edwin Pears (1835-1919), who lived in İstanbul as a lawyer more than forty years and corresponded with a leading London newspaper, *Daily News*, wrote about Zohrab's attitude:

[After the massacres in Adana] Two or three of the leading Armenian deputies did their best to stem the current of hostility in their own community against the Committee for what they believed to be its conduct in that province. My friend Mr. Zohrab, an Armenian deputy of ability with whom I discussed the question very fully at the time, felt that in the interest of his race it was better not to give prominence to the massacre. Whether they liked it or not, Armenians had to live among the Turks, and unless they could continue on good terms with the Committee, the only alternative to a series of new massacres was to make an appeal to be united to Russia. But as Russia up to that time had been curiously narrow in its treatment of the Armenian church and community, and seemed to wish to have nothing to do with its people, there were very few amongst them who were in favor of such an appeal. The choice is between massacre and Russia. Hence the general sentiment amongst them was that they must make common cause with the Turks as represented by the Young Turkey Party, and this they continued to do until the outbreak of the war in 1914.<sup>76</sup>

According to Vahan Papazian, Zohrab aimed at leading the ARF to this position in order to gain the continuity of constitutional rule, which he regarded as the most important guarantee of the security of the Armenian *millet*:

[Zohrab] was knocking at the door of the bureau of the ARF every day and was advising us "not to do something foolish, not to make the CUP an enemy of ourselves, that our destiny was in their hands, that it was possible that what happened at Adana today might take place in other places tomorrow, that if the helm of the country and power was in their hands, we had to gain their confidence by being friendly towards them."<sup>77</sup>



Moreover, Zohrab in his speech at the Raffi Armenian Society, declared that the interests of Armenian society made it imperative to cooperate with the CUP, because it was the party that ran the state.

Remember that the İttihat and Terakki Party is the party in power. Even if our convictions and feelings would not lead us in their direction, the special interests of our nation order us to compromise with them. In politics you cannot walk with only your feelings, the survival of the nation must be the most important guide. You can see how reasonable our co-operation with that political party is, for which we are already grateful since they gave the Constitution to the country.<sup>78</sup>

Aspects of Zohrab's ideas about the Armenian question were revealed in a parliamentary debate on the revolt in Albania and governmental measures to suppress it. During the discussions Zohrab repeatedly stepped to the podium and criticized the government for its violent attitude in Albania.

Politics... according to the model adopted in Albania by the government, is a one way politics. It (the government – R.K.) sees a nation or some individuals or a collectivity that has committed a crime against him. It kills this, and closes the case. I, myself, do not call this politics. In fact, politics is measures taken with a number of thoughtful ideas and by coming to terms with the other in a peace-loving way. Drawing a sword in the face of an obstacle is not politics. First of all, there was the context of last year's military dispatch. This context was Cavit Paşa's military operations. These military operations of Cavit Paşa left good memories for Albanians and our government was warned by the deputies of Albania... Nothing. In my opinion, it was seized by a completely superstitious theory. What was it? Government was conducted on the basis of assessing the information and actions of its own personnel. It considered whatever it was informed by its own men as absolute truth. In no instance, did it attempt to investigate whether the information was true or false. I even can say that it did not take into consideration a particular document, which was very valuable at the time of constitutionalism.<sup>79</sup>

These statements were in line with Zohrab's perception of the Armenian problem. If one exchanges the words "Albania" with "Armenia" or "Armenian provinces", and the word "Albanian" to "Armenian" we could follow his way of thinking: political and civil liberty for the minorities, decentralization, governmental affirmative action for ethnic groups, confidence instead of suspicion of citizens, political and cultural measures instead of military intervention. According to Zohrab, such a

formulation of principles of Ottomanism would enable the preservation of the Ottoman state.

The most important aspect of the Armenian Question was land and property problems before and after the Young Turk Revolution: "The return of property seized by the local people in the 1890s, especially by the Kurds during the mass violence of 1895-96, to their Armenian owners."<sup>80</sup> Most of the Armenians regarded the Constitutional Revolution as an opportunity to resolve the land and property issues. One may infer that Armenian support for Constitutional rule was mainly due to the expectations of Armenians about restored property rights. As early as September-October 1908, *Troshag* warned the "revolutionary government" and underlined the need for fundamental changes in the Anatolian provinces:

The wave of the social optimism had subsided. Free floating optimism has slowly given place to skepticism, pessimism and uncertainty. Would the revolution bring unpleasant surprises? The course of events, in a way, confirms our doubts... The fact that the revolutionary government shows tenderness to oppressors creates confusion and anger among us. The guilty are well known: Kurdish bandits, full of drive for vandalism, under the protection of the local authorities... Armenia cannot be reformed by the agents of Armenian massacres!<sup>81</sup>

Another pessimistic interpretation on the development of the revolution, published five months later in the same journal said:

Constitutional practices and their institutionalization were established in peace and without bloodshed. That is why social life was not shaken. There was no radical change in manners, values, and points of view. As a result... the state remained the same in all its practices, inner structure and nature. Monarchy collapsed but its mechanism, the power that creates it, remained in its place intact.

According to Kieser, the cooperation between the ARF and CUP was mainly based on a compromise to resolve the "agricultural question".<sup>82</sup> The decisions of the Sixth Congress of the ARF confirm the accuracy of this interpretation: "The seizure of Armenian lands and properties from the 1890s should be recognized as a systematic cruelty against the Armenians. Consequently, the condition of Armenian land and water ownership of 1890 should be regarded as the *status quo*, and it is one of the most important provisions of constitutional justice and İttihat-Tashnak cooperation."<sup>83</sup> Moreover, according to Asdvadzadurian, the third, fifth, and sixth articles of the secret agreement of cooperation between the ARF and the CUP were about land problems and reforms in the Eastern Vilayets.<sup>84</sup> The memoirs of Tashnak leaders confirm this:

We had the conviction that we should perceive the Ottoman constitutional revolution as something positive and should defend it, making it permanent, and settling it with other freedom-loving elements. We refrained from expressing any political or administrative demands. Instead with all means at hand, we tried to eliminate seizures, pillages (which were supported by the former regime) and mistrust. At the same time, we built strong relations with the leaders of the CUP and cooperated with them for the protection of constitutional liberties.<sup>85</sup>

This problem remained a source of tension throughout constitutional rule. The Armenian Patriarchate frequently petitioned the Sublime Porte and reported cases of abuse in the Eastern Vilayets. In July 1911, the Patriarchate presented a report to the Sublime Porte<sup>86</sup> and the Ministry of Justice and Religion on the sufferings of the Armenians during the period 1908-1911, sufferings such as land seizures, plunder, abuse of local authorities. Papazian writes: "[The report] remained unanswered. Only the president of the administration<sup>87</sup> was invited in order to hear the government's 'oral' explanation, and promises were given: '*icabina bakariz*.'"<sup>88</sup> According to *Troshag* the result of these abuses was large scale Armenian emigration to the West and Russia, which menaced Armenian presence in the country.<sup>89</sup> In an article entitled "Turkey: The Condition" a Tashnak writer complained that the CUP government responded to Albanian or Arab minorities' cultural demands with "Pan-Turkism... which is a fiasco."<sup>90</sup> In 25 December 1912, the Central Administration of the Hnchag Party declared that "[the government] wanted to cure the problems of the people with veterinarians instead of doctors."<sup>91</sup> In fact, as Davison argued, the government made some promises, charged commissions and laid plans for payments to dispossessed Armenians, but nothing was carried out. On the other hand, the government, since it had to take into account its relations with the Kurds in the East, was in a critical situation. Davison seconds this position: "Beset by wars and diplomatic problems and not wishing to antagonize the Kurds, the Porte was in an extremely difficult position."<sup>92</sup>

In the second half of 1912 the Armenian Patriarchate intended to start a propaganda campaign in order to put the reform question in the Eastern Vilayets on the political agenda. Several pamphlets and books were published in a few months as part of the political agitation of the public. The report, however was not published and Babikian had died before he could present his report to parliament. Another important study was in French, prepared by Marcel Leart, *La Question Arménienne à la Lumière des Documents* (Paris, 1913). Marcel Leart was the pseudonym of Zohrab,<sup>93</sup> obviously used to convince the neutral reader and European

public opinion, and to create pressure on the CUP to undertake a reform scheme. In this study, Zohrab, after listing the problems that Armenians faced after the Young Turk revolution, underlines the inevitability of reform in the Armenian Vilayets, on the basis of:

- a. the appointment of a European governor with the approval of the states,
- b. Armenian participation in public works,
- c. administrative decentralization.

Zohrab suggests that these principles do not mean either "separation," "autonomy," nor "special regime," but such reforms could contribute to the creation of a stronger, more peaceful and civilized European-style state, which was considered to be the only way of saving the Ottoman state.<sup>94</sup>

In June 1912, during a parliamentary debate on the budget of *Defter-i Hakani* (Imperial Account-book), Zohrab and Kegham Der Garabedian proposed the addition of 80,000 *kuruş* to compensate for the damage from some illegal acts against the population.<sup>95</sup> The proposal and speech, followed by Zohrab's defence is very important, because it shows a very unusual method in which the Armenian deputies directly added the land problem on the parliamentary agenda. A long quotation from Zohrab's oration solidly describes his thoughts about the land problem, which was, to repeat, the most important aspect of the Armenian Question:

The true core of the article is a grievous wound, namely the land question of Armenians in the vilayets of Eastern Anatolia. ... What was the condition of the Armenians in the Ottoman lands before constitutional rule? ...As you know, the former government declared a physical, and then an economic war against the Armenians. ...[the] economic war was enhanced by evacuating the vilayets inhabited by Armenians. ...What did the government do? On the one hand, it crushed the Armenians with grief and compulsion, and expelled them from the country. On the other hand, Armenians left their villages. By arguing that the rights of those who were expelled from these villages are diluted [*mahlul*], their lands were distributed to others, or ... *muhacirs* were brought from foreign countries. ...Gentlemen, I only present one side. Article 72 of the Land Law is quite clear. It says: "When the people of a village or a town all or partially leave their homeland for a legitimate reason, the land that they possess cannot be registered with a title deed." When the Armenians left their country, did they have an excuse? I think no Muslim with a conscience can say they did not. ...When you judge with logic and reason, can you imagine a person who would leave the place he is tied to with dear memories, who would leave the graveyard where his mother, father and brother are buried, who would leave such a valuable place imbued with so many memories and go to another place?

... However, in many of the Eastern Anatolian vilayets, especially in Bitlis, a number of villages populated by Armenians are now in ruins. These were considered to be diluted and were distributed to others.<sup>96</sup>

Obviously, Zohrab, with his proposal and speech addressing the sufferings of the land problem, underpins his expectation of the constitutional government. Clearly he thinks that, in order for the Ottoman state to gain and maintain the loyalty and confidence of the Armenians, the government must at least show goodwill by providing compensation for the illegal acts committed against Armenians during both the Ancient Regime and constitutional rule. Similar calls were raised against settling *muhacirs* by the ARF in its Sixth Congress convened in August-September 1911.<sup>97</sup>

### ZOHRAB AND OTTOMANISM

Zohrab's attitude towards the CUP reflected his hopes for a less difficult life for the Ottoman Armenians on the basis of equal citizenship. This is why he called the crowd in the first big meeting of the Constitutional period in İstanbul 'Free Ottomans! Free compatriots!'<sup>98</sup> Zohrab defined "Ottoman" as a higher identity that consisted of people from different ethnic origins and religions with cultural differences who lived together in peace. According to this conceptualisation, the national problems of the empire were the result of the assimilationist methods of the state and its project to create an "Ottoman nation." Such an assimilationist policy, however, undermined the feeling of Ottomanism and weakened its principles. On the contrary, his thesis preferred to strengthen cultural rights in order to attract people of different ethnic origins to the principles of Ottomanism. The tension of cosmopolitanism versus Ottoman assimilation depended on military service, education, language, recruitment to state administrative offices and much more. In Zohrab's words: "The sector which will establish the union of the fatherland and which will improve the mutual relations of the various elements who are the products of such a climate, such a country, and such a place, is education and military service."<sup>99</sup>

### MILITARY SERVICE

Until the constitutional period, conscription to the Ottoman Army was reserved for Muslims. Although at the beginning of the Tanzimat era promises were made to the non-Muslim *millets* of the Empire, the doors to general military service remained closed to non-Muslims. Non-Muslim youth were allowed to enrol in some military schools such as the *Tıbbiye-i Şahane*, *Mühendishane-i Bahri-i Hümayun* and *Mühendishane-i Berri-i*

*Hümayun* and graduated as officials in the Ottoman Army, but the number of such students was very low because of restrictions. Thus, the traditional system of *haraçr cizye* continued under the name of “*bedel-i askeri*” until the Young Turk revolution.<sup>100</sup> The principle of equal military service for all nationals of the Empire was defended in the programs of the Armenian revolutionary parties even before the revolution.<sup>101</sup>

With the Proclamation of Liberties, the non-Muslim communities demanded their right to enrol in the military services and the abrogation of military dues (*bedel-i askeri*). In fact, the *bedel-i askeri* was a huge economic burden on non-Muslims. One may argue that the loss of human capital because of military obligations was more crucial than paying the dues. But the communities regarded conscription for non-Muslims crucial for the principles of citizenship and Ottomanism. They referred to the constitution, which declared that “all Ottomans are equal.” The dialogue quoted below, which occurred during a parliamentary debate on the issue of the abrogation of the *bedel-i askeri*, reflects the relationship between this issue and the Constitution, and the difference of views between Muslims and non-Muslims:

Zohrab Efendi: Now, the first conflict is whether non-Muslims are obliged to pay the military due from now on? I suppose they are not.<sup>102</sup>

Zohrab: If it is not known, then we have a conflict here. I, myself, think that the military due of all non-Muslims is duly abolished today with the declaration of the constitution.<sup>103</sup>

İsmail Bey: (Gümülcine [Ahrar, Ahali, Hürriyet ve İtilaf]): Why?

Zohrab Efendi: Due to the principle of equality.<sup>104</sup>

Zohrab also saw military service for non-Muslims as a way to cement all elements together under the flag of being and feeling Ottoman: “Gentlemen, among the various ethnic elements there is now an opportunity of loving and embracing each other. We are delaying this with futile discussions. I am truly in deep sorrow for this.”<sup>105</sup> Zohrab then explains that military service is not only a duty, but also a right; and in fact, first it is a right, and then a duty, and the government cannot say to a non-Muslim that “you will not do your military service.”

In another meeting about the same issue, he reiterated with striking words the importance of the subject on the basis of fraternity, the union of *millet*s and Ottomanism. When one of the deputies opposed this and argued that non-Muslims must pay the *bedel*, Zohrab was irritated: “In this case they cannot be Ottomans until the end of their lives!”<sup>106</sup>

...Let us not consider this as an issue of finance. My sublime friends! This is an issue of fraternity, an issue of policy. We consider and feel this way... it is wrongly assumed that we are being stingy, not wanting

to give money for the defense of the fatherland. We want to give our blood for our fatherland. While we are touched by this feeling, to say that “you are trying to be exempt from the military due” is not a true evaluation of our inner state. We know what is the most harmful thing for the country today. With the legislation proposed here, we want to ensure the establishment of a feeling of fraternity, and only with it can this country find security. This feeling of fraternity will be brought about first of all by quickly making military service a duty to be personally performed.

... This is the most ancient duty of Ottomanism. It is a thousand times more important than the budget. Today, we want to remove all of this partitioning for all of this country. We are working to forbid such things as discrimination based on ethnicity, nationality, etc. We want to live together. And it is necessary to die together in order to learn how to live together.<sup>107</sup>

After long discussions, and the constant insistence of the non-Muslim deputies, *bedel-i askeri* was abandoned on 8 July 1325 (1909), and non-Muslims started to be conscripted into the army. Thus, both in the Balkan Wars, and WWI many non-Muslim soldiers fought in the Ottoman army side by side with Muslim soldiers at the fronts. Today, sometimes newspaper columnists view Greek, Armenian, or Jewish “martyrs” (*şehit*) in the 1911-1918 period as a twist of fate, a colorful memory from history: “On the Gallipoli, Palestine, the East Caucasus Fronts, in Iraq, in Galicia, in Romania, in Janja, Serbia, Montenegro... İsak, İlya, Simon, Mihail, Yuala, Murdaray, Nesim, Kasapyan, Yanko, Kostanti, Yorgi, Yakup, Agop, Bedros, Dimitri, Esteban, Liyon, Kirkor, Berho, Hristo, Mişon, Sarafyan, Lahdo, Savme... who fought shoulder to shoulder with the Turkish soldier [Mehmetçik] and who died in the same trenches.”<sup>108</sup> But it is very sure that in 1909 or 1910, the meaning of military service was crucial for the nations of the Empire, and especially was a *sine qua non* for the non-Muslims vis-à-vis the principle of equal citizenship.

After these impressive admonitions, Tahir Bey, the deputy of Bursa (CUP) conceded: “Bu bedel-i askeri meselesinde Zohrab Efendi’nin mücerret teyid-i uhuvvet-i Osmaniye nokta-i nazarından irad ettikleri ifadat şayan-ı takdirdir.”<sup>109</sup>

## EDUCATION

Until the end of the eighteenth century, non-Muslim Ottoman *millet*s had only church schools where education was a non-regular activity. Education in such schools did not have a standard curriculum and was highly related to the educational level or personal preferences of the

teacher-priest. In the reign of Selim III (1762-1808), the communities started to inaugurate formal schools in their neighborhoods, which was possible only with an imperial *iradé*. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, standardization was enhanced in the schools. During the reign of Abdülhamid, the government strictly controlled the curriculum and banned history lessons in which schools of different ethnic origins learned their national histories alongside the history of the Ottoman Empire.

The issues of education reform, standardization, state control, and especially state interference created tension in the constitutional period. For non-Muslim *millets* the problem had two sides. First, like military service, education was regarded as an opportunity for the union of the peoples. Especially the learning of Turkish was regarded as a unifying practice, by which an Ottoman nation could be generated. For instance, in November 1908, *Jamanak* argued that since the teaching of the Ottoman language was poor in Armenian schools, Armenians could not gain higher positions in the bureaucracy, which was regarded as harmful to the principle of equality and fraternity.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, non-Muslim communities were anxious about the quality of the standardization. Although they accepted the importance of education in Turkish and they were ready to assign more Turkish periods, they did not want to instruct other courses in Turkish. They accepted governmental control over non-Turkish courses, but were not sure of the attitudes of state inspectors, who were usually very strict during the Hamidian era.

Zohrab shared both points of view. In the parliamentary debates he expressed his ideas on the issue several times. For Zohrab, as a defender of the principle of union of the peoples, and as a member of the Commission of Education (*Maarif Encümeni*), education was undoubtedly one of the most important factors that brought peoples together: "There is no doubt that to have uniform instruction, and even to have a single language for education, are supportive and strengthening factors. If the Ottoman language was expanded to the expected degree, then our union would undoubtedly be stronger today. Therefore, we are the supporters of the permanence of the Ottoman language and of the generalization of Ottoman civilization; our conscience supports this generalization."<sup>111</sup>

Obviously, Zohrab was not against instructing Turkish in non-Muslim schools. He also supported the idea of central control or programming in the schools: "First of all, I suggest the permanence of the Council of Education and Directory of Education. Moreover, to have continuous progress in education, I find it indispensable to keep the schools under inspection, to take the level of European education into consideration, and



accordingly, to maintain these committees to ensure progress in our country.<sup>112</sup>

However, since it only aimed at restricting the education programs of the community schools and did not support their needs in a systematic way, he complained about the control mechanisms of the Ancien Régime. Instead of such a threatening and excluding way of working, he offered an affirmative attitude, whereby governments would regard community schools as governmental institutions:

...In practice, there are two ways. One, is the case when the government is completely indifferent to these schools. It does not even deal with their presence... Another way considers these as private schools; a third way may even consider them truly public schools and apply the same generosity, protection and order to all public schools. I am a supporter of this last model. I am talking about primary schools. What did the government used to do before? It is even unaware whether there are Armenian schools. Sometimes it scrutinizes the programs of the teachers but only for prohibition or compulsion. Not a scrutiny done with good will. Do Armenian schools need anything? Who will take care of this? ...What I ask from the government from an Armenian perspective, which comprises a component of this great nation, is not to remain indifferent to Armenian schools. I want to stress the necessity that the state should show these schools the same protection, generosity and supervision as it does to all other schools, as schools of this fatherland.<sup>113</sup>

Nonetheless, as a pedagogical need Zohrab claimed that education with the mother tongue was necessary for a perfect education:

Today, many experts who deal with the science of national education have fixed, as an established truth, the fact that everywhere primary education should be delivered in the mother tongue. Why? This is current and indispensable for the children's progress, nothing else. There is no political idea attached here.

...When the language of primary education is transformed to the mother tongue, then it is also necessary that children study geography, history, and arithmetic in their own mother tongue. But does it mean that we will not study the official language of the state? It is necessary to study it as much, or even more. We must ensure this with all our essence.<sup>114</sup>

Zohrab agreed on a standard education for all Ottomans, but supported the usage of mother tongue in primary schools for pedagogical reasons. On the other hand, he also put the teaching of Ottoman Turkish into primary schools. He believed that, after primary education, school children could continue in a general school, instead of community schools, if they wished

so, because they had reached a certain phase of growth. In this way, schoolchildren who had learned both their mother tongue and Turkish in the community primary school could easily attend secondary or higher education in a public school.

Obviously, once again, Zohrab's "cosmopolitan" Ottomanism showed its stand against a "uniformist" interpretation of Ottomanism. Because, all in all, Zohrab defended the preservation of community schools, but included teaching Turkish language from the earliest stages and increased their allocated periods, suggested the teaching of other subjects in the mother tongue, and left the choice between communal or public schools to the children and their families for secondary and higher education.

Now if we claim that "...well, Armenians have certain private schools, there is no need for those, here you have a school, and we will also teach the Armenian language." ...I, myself think that this cannot be executed right away. For a certain time, this is not even possible for primary education. We have to ensure this with all our existence, and those whose training and level has reached the same degree should certainly attend public schools. ...If we look for thoughts about religion or so on among five- or eight-year-olds, their thinking will be too superficial. ... But a twelve-year-old child who has been through primary school, and who has reached an age of distinguishing good from bad, will certainly understand such things as fatherland, etc... From that moment on, public education, a nation-wide education, will start in its entirety.<sup>115</sup>

It is interesting to see that although the government declared that a liberal approach to the educational system would be applied, especially on the basis of government-community school relationships, the oppressive practice created tension between the state and the non-Muslim *millets*. One and a half years after the first negotiations on education, Zohrab again emphasized the state's right to control educational institutions, but reminded all that the essence of this control should not put people under pressure.

As a very timely example, I may talk of ...the inspectors that the Ministry of Education has recently recruited. Today, many complaints are voiced regarding these officials who work as inspectors of education. ... Does the government have the power to inspect each phase of education and to assess whether uniform Ottoman instruction and education is provided to the Ottoman children? ... I do not think that there is a single person who would oppose it. But what does the government understand about Ottoman education? Does it understand the oppressions in Albania, claiming "You will not use this Latin alphabet!?"

... We raise the issue of education. The union of the peoples is not like this. I will tell you some proofs of this. For instance, they even forbid history books. That is what the inspectors of education do. Is it Ottoman education? To start with, how can you publish a book in this country without having the permission of the Ministry [of Education]? ... There is no better way than to open these wounds and get rid of the rotten smell, instead of closing the issue.<sup>116</sup>

As seen in the cases of military service and education, Zohrab looked for a definition of Ottoman citizenship in which he could express his double identity as Armenian and as Ottoman more comfortably. As an Armenian intellectual, an Armenian writer and a lawyer in the Ottoman courts talented in Turkish, and in close contact with people of different origins in cosmopolitan İstanbul, he had a multi-layered identity. This identity was very keen to see Ottomanism as an umbrella shading all Ottoman ethnic entities. Zohrab's words addressing his colleagues in the parliament reflect this understanding: "We, the various segments of this fatherland, have come united to this circle, and unified. We are all the sons of this fatherland. We embrace it with both our hands and with good will. In order to render this union permanent, we support doing anything necessary with good will and with all our hearts."<sup>117</sup>

#### BEING AN ARMENIAN AND AN OTTOMAN

After the Young Turk Revolution, Zohrab deeply believed that the Ottoman people finally had the chance to live under real constitutional rule. Accordingly he fully embraced this constitution in order to serve his nation and his country.<sup>118</sup> After the proclamation of liberties, on every occasion, he declared that he considered himself both Armenian and Ottoman. In his first speech in Taksim, he declared that national or religious differentiation was no longer important: "Our religions are several, our sect is one. We are the believers of freedom."<sup>119</sup>

While examining his political writings, speeches, and activities in parliament one can find that he often called himself Ottoman, or defended a position in an argument on the basis of Ottomanism. For instance, in February 1909, when he expressed his liberal views on the issue of freedom of gathering, the deputy of Biga, Arif Bey, accused him of looking after his self interest, as an Armenian. Zohrab answered him strongly: "He must explain; we are Ottomans here; we do not follow private interests here. We are Ottoman deputies; I think we are nothing but this."<sup>120</sup>

Zohrab defended this position not only in the Ottoman parliament, but also in Armenian political circles. He worked to convince the Armenians

that the future of the Ottoman Armenians and their peace lay in the success of constitutional rule, and Ottomanist principles. Thus, he called for all Armenians to struggle and strengthen constitutional rule and Ottomanism. Zohrab's attitude always had traces of his ideas about the CUP, which he wanted to build up with a positive approach.

You should know, our fellow citizens, that the revolution which came about with the proclamation of the Ottoman constitution is not perfect. The Islamic element could not easily give up its centuries-old belief that it was the ruler of the country. It needs a great effort and years to change this psychology. By sowing a seed in the soil, can you expect it to begin developing, become a tree, be adorned with leaves, and bear fruit in one moment?

The real liberals in the Islamic element, the real liberals like us, are very few; but mostly they belong to that party. Our conviction, our feelings, order us to support them in their hard work and make their work easier.<sup>121</sup>

When the Bulgarian journal *Dnevnik* asked Zohrab how they (as Armenian deputies) would act in parliament regarding state interests, Zohrab declared:

There are no organized groups in parliament today. There are some nationalities, but none of them is organized as a national party. Frankly speaking, instead of national groups, I would like to see some political parties organized and the nationalities dissolved in those parties. In any case, in the name of Armenian deputies, I can say that they will work for the general interests of the Empire – and it is the same for other deputies. The self-interests of the Armenian nation will come later.<sup>122</sup>

In a gathering in the Surp Yerrortutian Church in Pera, where Zohrab declared his candidacy for the Ottoman parliament, he noted that he would work to remove the “national hostilities” between Ottoman nations, which the Ancient Regime had used to “...create gaps ...and especially to divide us from our Turkish fellow citizens.”<sup>123</sup> Then he added: “First of all, I must say that I will base my studies on the principle of establishing an honest and generous relationship and co-operation with the other Ottoman nationalities and especially with the Turkish element.”<sup>124</sup>

On 22 October 1908, when the previous Patriarch of Constantinople, Matteos İzmirlian who was deposed by the Hamidian regime, came back to take his seat, Zohrab gave a speech in the Armenian National Assembly in the Patriarchate and stressed that since the regime had changed the function of the Patriarch radically, in the current conditions, he had to work as a conciliatory power between the state and the Armenian nation.

This attitude resonated with the Armenian parties' declarations ceasing their revolutionary activities:

In 1894, Patriarch İzmirlian was elected as a man of struggle, demand, and protest; today, at a time when the Ottoman government is already a constitutional entity, he is again recalled to sit on his Patriarchal chair in the name of reconciliation and defense of the lovely relationships which are the symbol of the Ottoman nation. Since there is no longer despotic rule, Patriarch İzmirlian from now on can strengthen and intensify the relationship between the *millet* and the government. He is a symbol of reconciliation, and this is why all of us united our votes around his name, and I have no doubt that the whole Ottoman nation will do the same and salute him.<sup>125</sup>

In August 1909 in Samatia, Zohrab spoke about the Constitution, the *Kamun-ı Esasi*, to the local Armenian community. The organizer of the gathering was the İstanbul branch of the ARF. At the end of the speech, Zohrab gave the example of Krikor Odian,<sup>126</sup> who had helped Mithat Paşa in drafting the *Kamun-ı Esasi*, as a perfect Ottoman-Armenian.

Today, while I put in order my ideas about the Ottoman constitution to put them before you, my mind immediately leaves this place and goes to a foreign country, to salute a man who rests in a foreign cemetery; my mind flies to Odian, who was one of the talented founders of the Ottoman Constitution.

Why am I reminded of this name? Because he was splendidly Armenian and Ottoman. Odian was not that kind of *efendi*, who easily forgets his nationality in order to gain title, honor and money, and seek after tasks, under every regime. He ... became a real Armenian, and ... a real Ottoman. He was engaged in our intellectual development and on the other hand in the new organization of the Ottoman state. What a wonderful model, what a shining personality! All of us cannot have his great talent, but we can walk on his road by always defending our dual identities as Armenians and as Ottomans.<sup>127</sup>

Zohrab called himself and the entire Armenian nation Ottoman from the podium of the parliament on various occasions. He always tried to convince public opinion that Armenians toiled for the development of the country. But, this was not the only subject he discussed. For instance, in January 1910, during parliamentary deliberations on the kind of donations that should be given to the Society of the Navy (*Donanma Cemiyeti*), Zohrab, as an Armenian deputy, supported the idea that since there was a military threat to the Ottoman motherland, the Society could collect donations: "Today Ottoman nations are united under constitutional rule and are ready to always defend even the smallest part of this land."<sup>128</sup>

In March 1911 Zohrab drafted the budget of the Ministry of the Navy and since conditions in the Navy were very poor, he demanded an increase in the budget. In his speech Zohrab again stressed the importance of the defense of the Ottoman motherland.

... The previous sultan accepted, for his personal interest, a principle of destruction of our naval force and for thirty years this principle has held sway.

... Our constitutional rule has found the Navy in this condition. Therefore, the duty that has been passed on to the constitutional rule is not to preserve the Navy – since there is nothing to preserve – but to reestablish it.

... Ottoman land consists of both its own territories and its own waters. Being able to defend one part and unable to defend the other, or compromise on its defense, does not mean defending the fatherland properly.<sup>129</sup>

In May 1911 when parliament discussed expenditures on public health, Zohrab argued that since public health was under great threat from epidemics, the budget and the expenditures of the public health services (*hiŷzissethha*) should be high, and the parliament should not be stingy. When some deputies called the expenditures on public health “extravagance” (*israf*) Zohrab opposed them:

If the government wants to overcome the deficiencies, it has to establish – taking into consideration our special and exceptional position - a ministry for health. While drafting the budget of the Navy, I saw ... the magnificent Navy hospital. If one looks around its wards, one sees pale faces in this hospital, which is very visible [though it is] thought to be our most important institution. If you see the situation of the sons of the fatherland there, you will feel pity, you will cry.

... Think, gentlemen, when it becomes necessary to fight against one of our neighbors, is there a self-sacrifice that we will not make? Will not everyone run to help? However, such an enemy waits at the bedside of the nation, and it destroys the nation with, on the one hand, tuberculosis, and on the other hand syphilis. And you yell that this is extravagance. What kind of national dignity is this?<sup>130</sup>

When parliament discussed a loan that the İstanbul municipality wanted in order to compensate some losses of income, he strongly supported the loan. He claimed that since the city was the capital of the whole Ottoman nation, they had to accept this loan, because it was for the benefit of the capital: “This is the honor of all the Ottomans in the capital. This is the honor of the Ottoman fatherland. We are all involved in and

share this honor. I agree that getting into debt, which is related to the security of the capital, should be endorsed with little hesitation."<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, in April 1909, after the massacres of Adana, when Adil Bey, the under-secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, described the events as an Armenian mutiny, Zohrab emphasized that the Armenian nation imagined its future on the basis of the principle of Ottomanism and rejected such claims: "I reject with all my being, my heart, and my conscience the slander and the aspersion that Armenians, who have had all their existence within Ottomanism, were ready to arrange such a massacre."<sup>32</sup>

These instances show that Zohrab, as a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, as an Armenian, and most importantly as a representative of the Armenian nation in Ottoman political circles, first, regarded the principle of Ottomanism as a means of holding the Ottoman nations together, and second, planned his and his nation's future in the Ottoman state as members or citizens of that Ottoman state, not in a separate or independent Armenian state.

During the second constitutional era, especially between 1908 and 1912, Ottoman politics experienced an unprecedented pluralist political struggle. The political activity of Zohrab, which provides important clues about the mindset of the time, shows there were certain common political grounds among different political groups, especially on the basis of their world views, and reveals the possibility of a political consensus between Turkish and Armenian political groups. Zohrab, usually a sharp opponent of the CUP, sought peaceful talk with the CUP, because he saw the potential to transform the regime and the state into a more pluralistic, libertarian, democratic one through that party. Moreover, from a *realpolitik* perspective, Zohrab believed Armenians should support the CUP in order to prevent possible massacres in the Anatolian vilayets. Unfortunately, today we can easily determine that this last calculation was a catastrophic mistake, but in Zohrab's time, in which the danger of massacres always existed for Armenians like the sword of Damocles, this strategy was understandable.

## CONCLUSION

The main aim of this paper was to present evidence-examples showing the unfounded nature of claims portraying the Ottoman Armenians as a politically monolithic entity. The paper elaborated the transformation of certain Ottoman Armenian groups and individuals, before and after the Young Turk Revolution. As the Constitutional era provided chances of common political grounds between Armenians and non-Armenian

Ottomans, I have placed special emphasis on the political cooperation and coalition schemes between Armenian parties and other Ottoman parties before and during the constitutional period. In my opinion, present day historians - due to the shadow of the catastrophe of 1915 - in constructing late Ottoman history usually ignore and exclude the above-mentioned cooperation.

Alboyadjian<sup>133</sup> blamed Zohrab for acting in line with the Unionists during his parliamentary career. On the other hand, according to Turkish writers and historians Zohrab was arrested by the Unionists in 1915 and, while he was being sent to Diyarbakır for trial, he was killed by a band of Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, the Special Organization. How Zohrab could be accused of being a sympathizer of the CUP and yet arrested by them? I thought that the effort to comprehend the political mindset of Zohrab and to place it in the proper historical context would be a way to better understand the past.

What were the developments which led Zohrab, an adversary of the Hamidian regime, to leave his job as a lawyer? And what was the reason for his return from Paris only a week after the Young Turk Revolution? What made him take part in founding the Liberal Party (Ahrar), and what made him support the CUP, which he also criticized to a great extent? The answers brought forth in this paper may help the reader to find some of the missing pieces of a reconstructed late Ottoman history.

This paper tried to prove that first and foremost, Zohrab was an Ottoman liberal. He was convinced that both the Armenian community (that he belonged to) and the Ottoman state (the community he was part of) should be ruled by more liberal laws and institutions, and he worked for the realization of this aim.

As an Ottoman and as an Armenian, Zohrab had too many reasons to oppose the Hamidian regime. Those same reasons made him a strong supporter of the Young Turk Revolution, which, for Zohrab and many others, together with the constitutional regime, were the likely actors who could realize these hopes. Zohrab's support for the Unionists was completely pragmatic. According to him, the constitutional regime was a crucial necessity for the progress of the country. Therefore, it was necessary to stand against all attacks directed at the party, which defended the constitution. The Unionists had to be guarded against the political groups which aimed at returning to the Ancien Régime. Furthermore, siding with the CUP, which held the destiny of the country in its hands, might bring about new gains for the Armenians and might prevent the occurrence of new Armenian massacres.



Though a member of Ahrar, Zohrab generally stood close to the ARF. He was in tune with their policies in the parliament and made recommendations to them in agenda and policy setting, and tried to influence them to cooperate with other parties.

Equally interesting is why and how Zohrab, a supporter of the Ahrar Party in late-1908, called upon the Armenian community to support the CUP in his speeches of 1910. Obviously, his relation with the Ahrar was over by May 1909, when he accused and condemned deputy İsmail Kemal Bey in a speech in parliament due to the latter's negative attitude towards the Unionists and the constitutional regime during the March 31 Event.

For the Armenians, the involvement of the Unionists in the Adana incidents was beyond doubt. Yet, the post facto measures taken by the CUP and sentencing certain Muslims, though largely insufficient, could be seen as a sign of partial protection. Only under a constitutional regime one could force the government to take precautions, to raise complaints in parliament, and to call the ministers to account. For this reason, those who worked for the constitutional regime had to be backed up strongly. The fact that Zohrab, not only in 1910, but also in 1912, recommended that Armenians vote for the CUP, can only be explained with this background in mind.<sup>134</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kevork B. Bardakjian, *A Reference Guide to Modern Armenian Literature 1500-1920*, Detroit, Wayne State University, 2000, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Minas Teoleolian, *Tar Me Kraganuthun 1850-1950* (Literature of a Century 1850-1950), Cairo, Husaper, 1955, p. 375.

<sup>3</sup> In its first editorial in 1852, *Masis* declared its aims: "to reform, to enlighten, and to help the nation... It is necessary, on the one hand, to spread enlightenment and to develop certain skills through well-organized schools, and on the other hand to cultivate the desire for virtue, diligence, economy, and self-sufficiency" (Arshag Alboyadjian, "Hisnamyag Me" (A Fifty-year Anniversary), *Masis*, 3 February 1901, pp. 65, 67.

<sup>4</sup> The incident of Gülizar became one of the most popular stories of the time. Many Armenian folktales and songs were produced narrating the story of Gülizar, kidnapped and detained by Musa Beg who wanted to have her as his wife, later saved by an Armenian *fedai*, Msho Kegham (Kegham of Muş, Kegham Der Garabedian, deputy of Muş in the second constitutional period), who married her in order to save her "honour".

<sup>5</sup> Krikor Zohrab, *Jamanak*, 24 October /6 November 1908, n. 9, (*Yerger (Works)*, Volume V, Yerevan, Grakanutyán yev Arvesti Tangaran, 2004, pp. 95-96).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> According to a letter sent by Zohrab to Turkish newspapers, the Club of Ottoman Constitution was founded by Armenian tradesmen in order to strengthen Armenian-Turkish fraternity. Zohrab was also a founder of the Club (*Arevelk* (East), 20 July 1908, no 6860 (*Yerger*, Vol. IV, Yerevan, 2003, Grakanutyán yev Arvesti Tangaran, p. 141).

- <sup>8</sup> In the elections of 1908, Zohrab and Bedros Haladjian were on the joint list of the Liberal Party and CUP constituting five candidates: Pandelaki Kosmıdı (342 votes), Konstantin Konstantinıdı (36 votes), Vitali Feradci (461 votes), Bedros Haladjian (455 votes), Krikor Zohrab (392 votes) (Tank Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler, İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi* (Political parties in Turkey during the second constitutional period), Vol. II, İstanbul, Hürriyet Vakfı, 1984, pp. 27, 144.
- <sup>9</sup> Halil Bey was his biggest hope, because Zohrab had rescued him from the angry crowds of the counter-revolutionary attempt of 31 March 1325 (1909) by hiding him in his home.
- <sup>10</sup> *Asiagan Engetutium* and *Miatsal Engetutium* were societies founded to develop the quality of education in Armenian national schools. As Niyasi Berkes points out, especially during the Hamidian Era, educational foundations were the sole and, thus, the most important "in fact political" occupation for the non-muslim communities. For the non-muslims educational institutions provided the only way to express their national identity, and culture, which helped their national awakening.
- <sup>11</sup> *Jamanak*, 24 October/6 November 1908, n. 9 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, pp. 95-96).
- <sup>12</sup> *Puzantion*, 6/19 September 1908, no 3633 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 448).
- <sup>13</sup> Arshag Alboyadjian, *Anhedatsoğh Temker: Krikor Zohrab, İr Geanke yev İr Kordze* (Vanishing Figures: Krikor Zohrab, His Life, and His Work), İstanbul, Der Nersesian, 1919, p. 189; Albert Sharurian, "Azkayin yev Kaghakagan Kordziche," (The National and the Political Activist) in Zohrab, *Yerger*, Vol. V, pp. 6-12. In 1888 Zohrab was elected by the Harput community to the National Assembly, but this election was also cancelled for the same reason.
- <sup>14</sup> Krikor Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me Hashvedvutiune" (The Account of an Armenian Representative), *Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 381.
- <sup>15</sup> *Manzume-i Efkâr*, 8/21 September 1908, no 2221 (Sharurian, pp. 16-17).
- <sup>16</sup> According to a press release announcing the meeting: "Tomorrow, Thursday, at Pera Taksim Garden, the printed version of the Turkish speech which will be delivered by Krikor Zohrab will be sold in front of the doors of the Garden. The proceeds will go to the national company for the Niyazi and Enver assault boats," *Arevelk*, 31 July 1908, no 6882 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 444).
- <sup>17</sup> Zohrab, *Yerger*, Vol. IV, p. 147.
- <sup>18</sup> Krikor Zohrab, *Siyasi Nutuklar*, Dersaadet, 1324/1908.
- <sup>19</sup> *Osmarlı* (Ottoman) newspaper, 25 March 1909.
- <sup>20</sup> Zohrab, *Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 476.
- <sup>21</sup> *Azadnamard*, 6/19 December 1910 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, pp. 423-426, 522).
- <sup>22</sup> *Puzantion*, 8/21 January 1911 (*Yerger*, Vol. VI, pp. 9-10).
- <sup>23</sup> *Azadnamard*, 24 March/6 April 1912, no 854 (*Yerger*, vol. VI, p. 168).
- <sup>24</sup> *Azadnamard*, 30 March/12 April 1912, no 858 (*Yerger*, vol. VI, p. 169).
- <sup>25</sup> "Biz 30 sene bu içtima kelimesinin altında ezilmiş bir milletiz. (...) Ben kendi payıma belki içtima meselesinden dolayı, belki on defa zabıtaya gittim geldim" (Meclisi Mebusan Zabıt Cemesi (MMZC): Devre: I, İçtima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 1: 4 Kanunuevvel 1324 Tarihli Birinci İnikattan-19 Şubat 1324 Tarihli Otuzuncu İnikata Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 150).
- <sup>26</sup> "(...) Bu maddenin ehemmiyeti azımdır. (...) Şimdi bütün istizahtan istinbat olunan hal, o dediğiniz galanın pek şiddetli olduğu merkezindedir. Esasen hüsn-ü niyetlerinden biz eminiz ve şu halin mesuliyeti dahi, devr-i sâbıkaya ait olduğunu elbette teslim etmek lâzımdır" (ibid. p. 191).
- <sup>27</sup> "Cebir ve tazyik kimin üzerinde yoktu? Acaba Memalik-i Osmaniyede bir ferd var mıydı ki cebir ve tazyik altında bulunmasın? Binaenaleyh eğer cebir ve tazyik nazariyesini

tatbik edecek isek herkesi salıvermeliyiz. (...) Zira onların böyle kendileri doğrudan doğruya hafiyelik etmeyip de fakat hafiyeler tarafından verilen jurnalları medar ittihaz ederek ötekine berikine zulmedenleri ben muhtazır göremem. Ben bunları menfaat-ı şahsiyeden ari göremem" (ibid., pp. 642-643).

- <sup>28</sup> "Efendim mesele yalnız mala taalluk etmez. Eğer yalnız mala taalluk etse, Maliye Nezareti tarafından vaz-ı yed olunması kafidir. Fakat orası bir hazine-i esrardır. Birçok evrakı siyasetin mevcut olması melhuzdur. Hatta bu son vakaya [31 Mart Vakası] dair birçok delaili derdest olunmak taht-ı ihtimalindedir" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Benesi: 1, Cilt: 3: 28 Mart 1325 Tarihli Elli Beşinci İnikattan-14 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksen Birinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 140).

- <sup>29</sup> Estimates on the Armenian victims in the Adana massacres vary from 17,000 to 30,000. The parliament appointed an inspection committee under the leadership of Hagop Babikyan (1856-1909; Tekfirdağı/Tekirdağ) and Yusuf Kemal (Tengirşen, 1873-1976; Kastamonu). The other members of the committee were Arif Bey (chief secretary of the Council of State), and judge Mosdichyan Efendi. After their return to the capital Babikyan wrote a report which was not published until 1919. In his account Babikyan put the number of the Armenian victims at 21,000 (*Adanayı Yegherne, Hagop Babikiani Deghegaki* (The Catastrophe of Adana, The Report of Hagop Babikyan), İstanbul, 1919, p. 48. In his foreword to the book Hagop Sarkisian claims that "Babikyan was poisoned by the Jeune Turcs in reply to the truth he reported, and died on 20 July 1909" (ibid., p. 6). Cemal Paşa cites 17,000 Armenian and 1850 Muslim victims in the incidents in his memoirs, *Hatıralar* (Memoires), İstanbul, Selek, 1959, p. 354. For Yusuf Kemal's account on Adana see his book, *Vatan Hizmetinde* (under the service of the fatherland), İstanbul, Bahar, 1967, pp. 120-124.

- <sup>30</sup> "(...) idare-i müstebidenin lisanını mutazammın... Ve idare-i müstebidenin her kelimesi bir mazarratı, bir vehameti münderiştir" (MMZC, p. 116),

- <sup>31</sup> "Dahiliye nezaretinin emrini gördük. Asayiş iade ediniz. Ve alt tarafında da bahusus ecnebileri, bankaları ve müesseseleri muhafaza ediniz. Ben[ce] şu bahusus tabirini[n] ahval-i ruhiye-i mahsusaya göre, oradaki efkar-ı irticaiyye nazaran pek fena sui tefsire uğrayacağı derkardır. İşte mesuliyet-i maneviye buradadır. Yoksa 'Ermenileri katledin' diye bir emir-i sarih yoktur" (ibid.).

- <sup>32</sup> "(...) Oradaki valinin methali ne derecededir? Şüphe yok ki, bunu tayin etmek için elde esbab-ı kafiye yoktur. Fakat saray mensubininin olması ve saray tabirinin ihtiva eylediği bütün vehamet haddizatında oldukça ağır mukaddime-i sübut demektir" (ibid.).

- <sup>33</sup> Zohrab, *Siyasi*, p. 6.

- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 7. The first meeting was held in Taksim, on 31 July 1908. He spoke in the name of the Ottoman Constitutional Club. His three speeches were collected in a book called *Siyasi Nutuklar*. Apart from these three, there were two other speeches given in Beykoz and Tepebaşı: "Meşrutiyet-i Osmanî Kulübü Namına Taksim Bahçesinde İrad Olunan Nutuktur", "Beykoz İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti Tarafından Tertip Edilen Mitingde Verilen Konferanstr: Vatan-ı Osmanînin Esbab-ı Tealisi Nedir?" and "Tepebaşı Bahçesi Kışlık Tiyatrosunda Verilen Konferanstr: İhtihab ve Uhuvvat". The first speech was also published in *Osmanlı Meclisi'nde Bir Ermeni Mebus: Öyküler* (An Armenian MP in the Ottoman parliament: homage), İstanbul, Aras, 2001, pp. 175-180. The second speech was published in Mehmet Ö. Alkan (ed.), *Cumhuriyete Devreden Düşünce Mirası: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi* (the conceptual legacy inherited to the republic: the aggregate of reform and constitution), Vol. 1, İstanbul, İletişim, 2001, pp. 570-471.

- <sup>36</sup> Rh. Y. G. Çark, *Türk Devleti Hizmetinde Ermeniler 1453-1953* (Armenians in the Service of Turkish State 1453-1953), İstanbul, Yeni Matbaa, 1953, p. 236.
- <sup>37</sup> Alboyadjian, *Anhedatsogh*, pp. 204-208; Turkish summary in Zohrab, *Öyküler*, p. 169.
- <sup>38</sup> Tunaya, p. 144.
- <sup>39</sup> *Jamanak*, 24 October/6 November 1908, n. 9 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 96).
- <sup>40</sup> Krikor Zohrab, "İnch Ge Bahanche Haye Osmanyan Khorhertaranen," (What Does the Armenian Demand from the Ottoman Parliament?), *Jamanak*, 30 October/12 November 1908, no 14 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 101).
- <sup>41</sup> Krikor Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me Hashvedvutiune" (The Account of an Armenian Representative), *Azadamard*, 16/29 September-18/1 October 1910, no 388-390 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, pp. 389-390).
- <sup>42</sup> Krikor Zohrab, "Sabahaddin Beye Timavorelnis," (Our Welcome to Sabahaddin Bey), *Sourhantag* (Postman), 27 September/9 October 1908 (*Yerger*, Vol. III, Yerevan, Grakanutyun yev Arvesti Tangaran, 2002, p. 425).
- <sup>43</sup> See the article raising Armenian concerns on political centralization in *Troshag* "Turkia" (Turkey), 1909 February-March (2-3), p. 17.
- <sup>44</sup> Tunaya, p. 146.
- <sup>45</sup> "The real liberals among the Mulsims, the real liberals like us are very rare; but to a great extent they belong to that party. Our persuasions, our feelings order us to support them in their hard work, and make their work easier. Nobody points out the deficiencies of this party in such a strict and harsh manner as I do. But this does not prevent me from seeing their libertarian bases. What is more, is there another party more libertarian than theirs?! Ahrar and Mutedil Hürriyetperveran parties have a lot of reactionary and religious elements." (Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me," pp. 389-390).
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 390.
- <sup>47</sup> Tunaya, p. 17.
- <sup>48</sup> Zohrab, *Yerger*, Vol. IV, p. 147.
- <sup>49</sup> Eşref Yağcıoğlu (ed.), *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Son Yılları, 1916 Kongre Zabıtları* (the last years of İttihat and T.Yerakki: the 1916 congress records), İstanbul, Nehir, 1992, p. 91.
- <sup>50</sup> Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me," p. 389-390.
- <sup>51</sup> Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi* (the 1908 coup), İstanbul, İletişim, 2001, p. 383.
- <sup>52</sup> "İlk defa kendisiyle (İsmail Kemal Bey'le) mülakatında bu vakanın (31 Mart) ne surette telakki edildiğini gördüm ise, bundan pek memnun olmadım. Ben bunu gayet müteessir olarak telakki ettim. Biliyorsunuz ki efendim, bunda bir fıkra mücadelesi vardır. Bunu açık söylemeli. Ben İttihat ve Terakki Fırkasından değilim ve çok defa da o fırkanın düsturları aleyhinde mücahedede bulundum. Fakat o fırkanın muhterem bir fıkra olduğunun hilafında hiçbir vakit değildim ve bakasının taraftarıyım ve idim. Bu itibarla, olan vakada bu fırkaya karşı bir husumet beslemem ve fırkayı mahvetmek için bir cehd ve azim gördüğümünden dolayı ve onun zımında Meşrutiyetimize de vurulan darbeyi gördüğümünden dolayı son derece müteessir oldum. (...) Yalnız İsmail Kemal Bey bu teessürüme iştirak etmedi. (...) Kendisi bir fıkra-i muhalifeye vurulan darbeden kendi fırkasına olan bir tecavüz gibi müteessir olması lazım gelirdi. Böyle müteessir olmadı. Hatta ben teessürümünden ağladığım vakit "Canım niçin böyle müteessir oluyorsunuz? Bu kadar ortada bir şey yok" diye beni teşci etti. Bu noktada ben İsmail Kemal Bey'in hareketini şayan-ı muahaze görürüm" (MMZC: Devre: I, İetima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 3: 28 Mart 1325 Tarihli Elli Beşinci İnikattan-14 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksen Birinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 715).

- <sup>53</sup> MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 1: 4 Kanunuevvel 1324 Tarihli Birinci İnikattan-19 Şubat 1324 Tarihli Otuzuncu İnikata Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 150.
- <sup>54</sup> “Mademki evvelden mevcut idi, binaenaleyh onun hüsn-ü tesiri görülmüş olması lazım gelirdi. Denilecek ki, ben bunu teslim ederim ki, efendim o darp gaynresmi, hafi, yani bir nevi zulmi bir darp idi. Çünkü hüküm hâkimde değil idi” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 2: 11 Kasım 1324 Tarihli Otuzdördüncü İnikattan-26 Mart 1325 Tarihli Ellidördüncü İnikada Kadar Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 681).
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 601.
- <sup>56</sup> “Hiç şüphe yok ki, sansür efkârı katletmek demektir. Evet, kablettab, sansür vaz etmek, bütün milletin efkârını katletmek demektir. Kablettab, sansürü vaz etmeyi zannetmem ki rüfeka-yı kiramdan hiçbirisi tensib etsin. Bizim gördüğümüz acı tecrübeler tamamıyla bunların aleyhindedir” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 3: 28 Mart 1325 Tarihli Elli Beşinci İnikattan-14 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksen Birinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 190).
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 508-509.
- <sup>58</sup> “Neşriyat-ı muzırre yalnız idare-i istibdatiye de bulunabilir. Buna mebnidir ki bu Matbuat Kanunu’nun 31. maddesinde pek musarrah surette deniliyor ki ‘20. madde mucibince usul-ü meşrutiyet aleyhine ve emniyet-i dahiliye ve hariciyeyi muhil ceraine tahriki havi...’ Bakınız, bunda lalettayın neşriyat-ı muzırre kaydı yoktur ve olamaz. Eğer böyle bir kayıt olursa istibdatı iade etmiş olacağız” (ibid., p. 660).
- <sup>59</sup> “Meclis-i Mebusan’ın erkeklerden müteşekkıl olması hasebiyle haklarını tahdit etmek istediğimiz kadınların vaziyetini münsifane, bitarafane düşünmekte zannedersen biraz aciziz” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 3, 5inci Cilt: 27 Mart 1327 (1911) Tarihli Yetmişikinci İnikattan-13 Nisan 1327 (1911) Tarihli Seksenaltıncı İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1990), p. 400).
- <sup>60</sup> “(...) O asırlarda ben falanın oğluyum, falan benim ecdadımdandır, bu veled-i zinadır, piçtir tabirleri cari idi. Bendeniz bu tabirleri kabul etmem. 20nci asrın şerefi için ve bütün insanıyetin şerefi için bu tabirleri kemal-i şiddetle reddederim; bundan sonra dünya yüzünde yalnız insanlar vardır, veled-i zinalar, piçler yoktur. (Gürültüler) (...) Müsaade ederseniz, Kanun-ı Esasi’nin bir maddesinde yahut ahkam-ı esasiyesinde diyor ki ‘bütün Osmanlılar müsavidir.’ Eğer babası meçhul olduğundan dolayı zaten bedbahtlığa mahkum olan bir adamı siz Osmanlılık şerefinden mahrum ederek bir nakisa ile ebedi surette lekedar edecekseniz, Meşrutiyet kahr mı? (Gürültü)” (ibid., p. 400). For a detailed account of parliamentary sessions on adultery derived from Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi see Osman Köker, “İstanbul Mebusu Kırkor Zohrab Efendi’nin ‘Erkekler Meclisi’nde Kadınların Savunması: Meclis-i Mebusan’da Zina Tartışması,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no 56, August 1998, pp. 13-20.
- <sup>61</sup> “Onun için geçen gün büyük servetler teşkiline dair olan sözlerine cevap olarak ‘küçükleri ezmemek şartıyla’ dedim.” (Meclisi Ayan Zabıt Ceridesi (MAZC): Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 2, 1inci Cilt: 1 Teşrinisani 1325 (1909) Tarihli Birinci İnikattan-1 Mayıs 1326 (1910) Tarihli Altmışsekizinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.), p. 363).
- <sup>62</sup> “...Spencer’in bu nazariyesini yalnız hayvanat ve nebatat için cari olur. Fakat heyet-i içtimaiyeler için cari olamayacağını [ulema] çoktan beri kemal-i vuzuhla ispat ettiler” (ibid., p. 362).
- <sup>63</sup> “...En müterakkî devletler, en serbesti-i ticaret taraftarı olan milletler bile, nihayetünnihaye, gelmişler, himaye-i mutedile usulünü kabul etmişlerdir.” MMZC, “12 Nisan 1326” (25 April 1910) (ibid.).

- <sup>64</sup> "Bir ecnebi memlekete Avrupa'nın bir lirası gitmesi, bir nefer süngülü askerinin gitmesi kadar mühimdir. Bizim memleketimiz mehmeamken istikraz etmekten müctenip olması icap eder. ...Bugün harben fetih yoktur. Bugün harp, feth-i iktisadidir" (ibid., pp. 362-363).
- <sup>65</sup> "(...) Bugün, bilirsiniz ki, hudut yoktur. Hudutlar yalnız siyasiyedir. İktisadi hiçbir hukuk yoktur. (...) (Bizim ticaretimiz) Bütün Avrupa'nın ticaretiyle muhtelittir. Şimdi şu müthiş saha-i mübareze içinde maliye nazırlarının düsturlarını öyle mutlak bir surette tatbik edecek olursak, ümit eder misiniz ki, arzu edilen o büyük servetler, Osmanlılarda hasıl olsun? ...Cereyan-ı tabii ve rekabet-i mutlakadan, Osmanlılarda olan servet-i cüzîyenin mahvından ve ecnebi sermayedarının tahakküm etmesinden başka bir netice hasıl olmaz. ... Bu iktisadi tecavüzlere, bu iktisadi hatvelere karşı siz hudutlarınızı tamamen açarsanız, hudud-u müdafamızı yıkarsanız, bizi tamamiyle mefuh bir memleket haline korsunuz" (ibid.).
- <sup>66</sup> "Gerek seyr-i sefain şirketi, gerek Haliç ve gerek telefon, hep bunları Osmanlı sermayesiyle yapmak mümkündür. Ötede öyle faaliyet sahalanı vardır ki, ona Osmanlı parası kifayet etmez. Bunu tasdik ediyorum. (...) Osmanlılara tebliğ olunacak ufak işlerde hasıl olan kâr ve menfaat, yine Osmanlılara ait olacağından bunu çok görmemeli ve ecnebilere kıyas etmemeli" (ibid.).
- <sup>67</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Ekonomi ve Toplum (1908-1950) Millî İktisat-Millî Burjuvazi* (Economy and society in Turkey (1908-1950): national economy-national bourgeoisie), İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995, pp. 4-5.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid. p. 5.
- <sup>69</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Ekonomi ve Toplum (1908-1950) İttihat-Terakki ve Devletçilik* (Economy and society in Turkey (1908-1950): Statehood and the CUP), İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995, p. 159.
- <sup>70</sup> *Jamanak*, 24 October/6 November 1908, n. 9 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 96).
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 97.
- <sup>72</sup> MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: I, Cilt: 3: 28 Mart 1325 Tarihli Elli Beşinci İnikattan-14 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksen Birinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1982), p. 117.
- <sup>73</sup> "Bugün bütün mevcudiyetlerini Osmanlılığın içinde tahlil etmiş olan Ermenilerin böyle kıyam için, mürettep olmak için müheyya bulunmak gibi bir buhtanı, bir iftirayı bütün mevcudiyedim, bütün kalbim, bütün vicdanımla reddederim" (ibid., p. 130).
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid. pp. 129-130.
- <sup>75</sup> Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me," p. 384.
- <sup>76</sup> Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople*, London, H. Jenkins, 1916, pp. 299-300.
- <sup>77</sup> Vahan Papazian, *Im Hushere (My Memoirs)*, 2 Vols., Beirut, Hamazkayin Press, 1950-1952, p. 129.
- <sup>78</sup> Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me," p. 390.
- <sup>79</sup> "(...) Siyaset, (...) Arnavutluk'ta hükümet tarafından ittihaaz olunan şekle göre yekpare bir siyasettir. Kendisine karşı kıyam etmiş bir millet görüyor, yahut bazı efrat görüyor veyahut bir heyet-i miçtemia görüyor. Bunu tenkil ediyor, meseleyi bitiriyor. Bendeniz buna siyaset demiyorum. Haddizatında siyaset diye birçok teenni ile ve yekdiğerleriyle anlaşmak suretiyle sulhperverane bir tarzda ittihaaz olunan tedabire denilir. Yoksa bir müşkilin önünde bulununca hemen kılıca sarılmak, bu siyaset değildir. Bir kere geçen sene icra kılınan sevkıyat-ı askeriyenin mukaddematı vardı. Bu mukaddemat Cavit Paşa'nın hareket-ı askeriyesi idi. Bu Cavit Paşa'nın hareket-ı askeriyesi Arnavutluklarda iyi bir hatıra teşkil etmiyordu ve bu hükümete bütün bizim Arnavut mebusları tarafından ihtar olundu. Hükümet ne yaptı? Hiçbir şey yapmadı. Bendenizce tamamiyle batıl bir

nazariyeye kapıldı. Nedir o? Hükümet kendi adamlarının ihbarını sahih ve hareketını doğru addetmek nazariyesine meclup oldu. Kendi adamları tarafından kendisine her ne ihbar olundu ise bunu bir hakikat-ı katiyye olarak telakki etti. Hiçbir vakit bunun haklı ya da haksız olduğuna dair tetkik etmek için bir teşebbüste bulunmadı. Hatta diyebilirim ki pek kati bir vesikayı, hiç değilse zaman-ı meşrutiyyette pek kıymetli olan bir vesikayı nazar-ı dikkate almadı” (MMZC: Devre: 1, İctima Senesi: 2, Cilt: 1: 1 Teşrinisani 1325 Tarihli Birinci İnikaddan-13 Kanunısanı 1325 Tarihli Otuzuncu İnikada Kadar/Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1985), pp. 323-324).

- <sup>80</sup> “1890’larda yerel ahaliye, özellikle 1895-96’daki kitlesel şiddet sırasında Kürtler tarafından el konulmuş olan mülklerin Ermeni sahiplerine iadesi” (Hans-Lukas Kieser, “Türk Ulusal Tarihçiliğinin Gölgesinde ‘Ermeni Tehciri’” (“The Armenian deportation’ in Turkish national historiography) *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* (history and soviet new approaches), no 1, Spring 2005, p. 245).

<sup>81</sup> *Troshag* (Flag) [Editorial], September-October 1908.

<sup>82</sup> Kieser, p. 245.

<sup>83</sup> *HH Tashnaksutian Vetserort Enthanur Joghovin Voroshumnere* (Decisions of Sixth Congress of AR Federation), İstanbul, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>84</sup> A. Asdvadzadurian, “İttihad-Tashnaksagan Haraperutiunnere” (Unionist-Tashnak Relationships), *Haitrenik*, vol. XLII, no 12-13 (1964), p. 75.

<sup>85</sup> Papazian, p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> *Anadolu Vilâyat-ı Osmaniyesindeki Arazi Meselesine Dair Ermeni Patrikhanesi’nden 7 Temmuz Sene 327 Tarihiyle Makam-ı Sami-i Sadaret-Uzma ile Dahiliye ve Adliye Mezahib-i Nezaret-i Celilelerine Arz ve Takdim Kılınan Takririn Süretidir*, İstanbul, Dikran Doğramacıyan Matbaası, 1328/1912; in Armenian, “Hayeru Gatsutiune Turkio Mech” (The Conditions of Armenians in Turkey), *Troshag*, February-March 1913 (2-3), pp. 31-36; *Anadolu’nun Mahall-i Muhtelifesinde Emlâk ve Arazi-i Magsube Hakkında Ermeni Patrikhanesi’nce Teşekkül Eden Komisyon-ı Mahsis Tarafından Tanzim Olunan Raporların Süret-i Mütercimesi*, İstanbul, Dikran Doğramacıyan Matbaası, 1327/1911). According to the first report, the list of confiscated lands and properties was as follows.- a) national properties: 13 monasteries, 27 churches, 16 cemeteries, 18 real estate properties, b) private properties: 7000 properties and vineyards/orchards (those smaller than 100 hectares were not counted).

<sup>87</sup> The president of the Central Administrative Body of the Patriarchate.

<sup>88</sup> Papazian, p. 182.

<sup>89</sup> “Ardakaghte,” (Emigration), *Troshag*, August 1910 (8), p. 102.

<sup>90</sup> “Turkia: Gatsutiune” (Turkey: The Condition), *Troshag*, March-April 1911 (3-4), p. 44.

<sup>91</sup> “Haidararutiun” (Declaration), *Hnchag*, January 1913 (1), p. 1.

<sup>92</sup> Roderic H. Davison, “The Armenian Crisis, 1912-1914,” in *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1990, p. 182.

<sup>93</sup> Zohrab, *Yerger*, Vol. IV, p. 645; Krikor Zohrab, *Haygagan Hartse Pasdatughter Luysin Dag* (Armenian Question in Light of Documents), Beirut, Shirag Press, 1983, pp. 2-3.

<sup>94</sup> Zohrab, *Haygagan Hartse*..., p. 27.

<sup>95</sup> “Bitlis vilâyetinde nameşru mahlulâtın ve kuyudat-ı asliyelerine mugayyir vuku bulan suüstimalâtın ber-vech-i hakkaniyet tasliih ve tesviyesi zımında beşinci fasılın (“Masarif-i umumiye-i mütennevvia” hakkındaki fasıl) masarif-i müteferrika maddesine seksen beş bin kırkışın zam buyurulmasını teklif ederiz. İstanbul mebusu Zohrab // Muş mebusu Keğam” (MMZC: Devre: 2, İctima Senesi: 1, 2nci Cilt: 20 Haziran 1328 (1912) Tarihli

Yirmibeşinci İnikaddan-23 Temmuz 1328 (1912) Tarihli Kırkyedinci İnikada Kadar ([Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1991], p. 284).

- <sup>96</sup> “Maddenin mahiyeti, Anadolu-i Şarki vilayâtındaki Ermenilerin arazi meselesi namıyla tesmiye edilen gayet elim bir cerihasından ibarettir. ...Bilirsiniz ki muhterem arkadaşlarım, meşrutiyetten mukaddem Ermenilerin vaziyeti Memalik-i Osmaniye’de ne idi? ...Bilirsiniz ki, hükümet-i sabıka, Ermenilere karşı maddi bir harp ve sonra da iktisadi bir harp ilan etmişti. ...Bilirsiniz ki iktisadi harbi de bütün Ermenilerle meskun olan vilayati boşaltmak suretiyle ileri götürdü. ...Ne yaptı? Bir taraftan Ermenileri öyle kahr-u cebr altında ezdi, memleketten tardı. Diğer taraftan Ermeniler karyelerini terk ettiler. Bu karyelerdeki hakları mahlul oldu diyerek bunların arazisini şuna buna tevfi etti yahut ecnebi memleketlerden muhacirler getir(di). Efendiler, yalnız bir ciheti arz ediyorum. Arazi Kanunnamesi’nin yetmiş ikinci maddesi pek sarıhtır. Orada diyor ki, “Bir karye ve kasaba ahalisi umumen veyahut bazı bir özü-ü sahiha mebnî terk-i vatan ettiklen halde, mutasarrıf oldukları arazi müstahakk-ı tapu olmaz.” Ermeniler arazilerini terk ettikleri vakit mazur mu idiler? Zannedirim bundan vicdan sahibi hiçbir Müslüman diyemez ki bunlar mazur değildir. ...Mantıkan, aklın muhakeme etseniz, bir insan tasavvur eder misiniz ki, kendisini kalben hatırat ile merbut bulunduğu karyesini, kendi anasını, babasını, kardeşini defnettği toprağını mezaristanını, o kadar hatırat ile memzuç olan kıymetli bir yeri terk ile başka bir yere gitsin? Halbuki, Anadolu-i şarki vilayetlerinin birçoklarında, bilhassa Bitlis vilayetinde Ermenilerle meskun olan birçok karyeler, bugün viran ve harap bir haldedir. Bunların arazisi mahlul denilerek öteye beriyeye tevfi edilmiştir” (ibid., pp. 284-285).

- <sup>97</sup> *HH Tashmaktutian Vetserort Enthanur Joghovin Voroshunnere*, pp. 4-7 (subtitled “Hoghavedje” [Question Agraire]).

- <sup>98</sup> Zohrab, *Siyasi Nutuklar*, p. 3.

- <sup>99</sup> “Boyle bir iklimin, bir memleketin, bir yerin mahsulü olan ve anasır-ı muhtelifeyi birbirine isındıracak ve tevhid-i vatani teşkil edecek şey, maarıftır, diğer taraftan da askerliktir” (MMZC: Devre: 1, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 6: 18 Temmuz 1325 Tarihli Yüzyımbirinci İnikaddan-8 Ağustos 1325 Tarihli Yuzkirkinci İnikada Kadar [Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.], p. 302).

- <sup>100</sup> Ufuk Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni* (the odyssey of non-Muslim Ottomans’ conscription), İstanbul, Simurg, 2000; Gülnihal Bozkurt, *Alman-İngiliz Belgelerinin ve Siyasi Gelişmelerin Işığında: Gayrimüslim Osmanlı Vatandaşlarının Hukuki Durumu (1839-1914)* (the legal status of non-Muslim Ottomans in the light of German-English documents and political developments), Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989; Eric Jan Zürcher, “Teoride ve Pratikte Osmanlı Zorunlu Askerlik Sistemi,” in his *Savaş, Devrim ve Uluslaşma Türkiye Tarihinde Geçiş Dönemi (1908-1928)*, İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2005.

- <sup>101</sup> See for instance, *Dzrakir Hai Heghapokhagan Tashmaktutian Gazmivad: 1892i Enthanur Joghovin* (The Program of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Formed in the General Congress of 1892), Geneva, 1906, (4<sup>th</sup> edition), pp. 4, 12; *Dzrakir Hnchagian Gusagtsutian (Dagasdani Hamar)* (The Program of the Hnchagian Party/For Turkey), İstanbul, 1908, p. 11; *Dzrakir Sotsial-Demokrat Hnchagian Gusagtsutian (Dagasdani Hamar)* (The Program of the Social-Democrat Hnchagian Party/For Turkey, İstanbul, 1910, p. 9.

- <sup>102</sup> Kansı, p. 402.

- <sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 391.

- <sup>104</sup> “Zohrab Efendi: Şimdi, birinci ihtilaf, evvel be evvel bundan böyle gayrimüslimler bedel-i askeri ile mükellef midirler? Degillerdir zannedirim. / Seyyid Bey (İzmir): Malum



değil. / Zohrab: Eğer malum değilse ihtilafımız var. Bendeniz öyle zannederim ki bugün gayrimüslimlerin bedel-i askerisi Kanun-ı Esasi'nin ilanıyle bihakken mefshuttur./ İsmail Bey: (Gümülçine): Neden? / Zohrab Efendi: Müsavat kaydıyle" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 4: 16 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksenikinci İnikaddan-11 Haziran 1325 Tarihli Yüzüncü İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.), p. 429).

<sup>105</sup> "Efendim, anasır-ı muhtelif arasında birbirimizi sevecek, kucaklayacak bir vesile gelmiş. Bunu beyhude münakaşalarla temdit edip duruyoruz. Ben buna hakikaten dilhunum" (ibid.).

<sup>106</sup> "Hülasa, ölüncüye kadar onlar Osmanlı olmamalı!" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 5: 13 Haziran 1325 Tarihli Yüz Birinci İnikattan-16 Temmuz 1325 Tarihli Yüz Yirminci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.), p. 189).

<sup>107</sup> "(...) Biz bunu bir mesele-i maliye diye telaki etmeyelim. Rûfeka-yı kiram! Bu mesele, bir uhuvvet meselesidir, bir siyaset meselesidir. Biz böyle telakki ve böyle hissediyoruz ve biz bugün vatanın müdafaası uğrunda para mı esirgiyoruz zannolunuyor. Biz vatanımız için kanunları vermek istiyoruz. Biz bu his ile mütehasis olduğumuz sırada siz bedel-i askeriden muaf olmak için gayret ediyorsunuz demek bizim ahval-i ruhiyemizi doğru olarak muhakeme etmek değildir. Bugün bu memleket en ziyade hangi cihetten mutazarrırdır, biz bunu biliriz. Burada yaptığımız kanunlar içinde her vakit uğraştığımız bir hiss-i uhuvvet teessüsü içindir ki, bu memleket yalnız onunla selamet bulabilir. Bu hiss-i uhuvveti evvel be evvel vazife-i askeriyeyi bilfil ifa etmek noktasından isticil ile meydana getireceğiz.

(...) Osmanlılğın en akdem vazifesi budur. Bütçeden 1000 kat daha mühimdir. Bugün bütün bu memleket için bu tefrikaları kaldırmak istiyoruz. Kavmiyet, milliyet vesair birtakım bu gibi şeyleri menetmek için uğraşıyoruz. Biz beraber yaşamak istiyoruz. Beraber yaşamak cihetini öğrenmek için de beraber ölmek lazımdır" (ibid., p. 191).

<sup>108</sup> "Çanakale'de, Filistin'de, Şark Kafkas cephele-rinde, Irak'ta, Galiciya'da, Romanya'da, Yanya'da, Sırp Karadağ'da... Mehmetçik'le omuz omuza çarpışan, aynı siperde ruhunu teslim eden İsak, İlya, Simon, Mihail, Yuala, Murdaray, Nesim, Kasapyan, Yanko, Kostanti, Yorgi, Yakup, Agop, Bedros, Dimitri, Esteban, Liyon, Kirkor, Berho, Hristo, Mişon, Sarafyan, Lahdo, Savme..." (Melumet Gündem, "İmparatorluğun Öteki Çocukları, Gayrimüslim Vatan Şehitleri," *Milliyet*, 1-3 March 2005).

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, p. 191.

<sup>110</sup> Servet-i Fünun, 17/30 November 1324/1908 (quoted by Recep Karakaya, *Kaynakçılı Ermeni Meselesi Kronolojisi (1878-1923)* (The Armenian Question chronology, 1878-1923), İstanbul, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001, p. 341).

<sup>111</sup> "Şüphe yok ki terbiyenin yeknesak olması, hatta mümkün olduğu takdirde lisanın bir lisan olması esbab-ı takviye ve tahkimiyesinden biridir. Eğer ki lisan-ı Osmani matlub derecede tevessü etmiş olsaydı, hiç şüphe yok, itihadımız bugün daha muhkem olacaktı. Binaaleyh biz lisan-ı Osmani'nin bekası ve medeniyet-i Osmaniye'nin ta'mim taraflarımız, biz videdanen o ta'mim taraflarımız" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 4: 16 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksenikinci İnikaddan-11 Haziran 1325 Tarihli Yüzüncü İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.), p. 208).

<sup>112</sup> "Evvel be evvel Maarif Meclisi'nin ve Maarif Müdüriyeti'nin ibkassını teklif ederim. Kezalik daima maarifin terakisi noktasından mekatibi murakabada bulundurmak Avrupa'nın maarifinin derecesini nazar-ı itibara almak, ona göre memleketimizde terakki etmek için bu gibi heyetlerin muhafazası bendenizce elzemdir" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 6: 18 Temmuz 1325 Tarihli Yüzyirmibirinci İnikaddan-8 Ağustos 1325 Tarihli Yuzkirkinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, n.d.), p. 303).

<sup>113</sup> "(...) Ameliyatta iki şekil var. Bir, olabilir ki hükümet bu mekaptan büsbütün biganedir. Bunların mevcudiyetini bile arayıp sormasın. Bu, bir şekildir. Biri de bunları mekâtib-i hususiyeden addetsin; bir de olabilir ki bunlar devletin mektebini iyi telakki etsin ve devletin mektebine ait olan sahaveti, himayeyi ve nizamatı aynı zamanda icra etsin. Ben bu şekil-i ahirini taraftanyım. (Gürültü) Mekâtib-i iptidaiyeden bahsediyorum. Şimdiye kadar hükümet ne yapıyor? Ermeni mektepleri var mıdır, farkında bile değil. Ara sıra muallimlerin programlarını tetkik eder. Onda da ya men ya zeer için. Yoksa hüsn-ü niyetle bir tetkik değil. Ermeni mekteplerinin ihtiyacı var mıdır? Kim bununla meşgul olacak? (...) Ben şimdi şu millet-i muazzamanın bir cüzünü teşkil eden Ermeni noktasından benim istediğim hükümetin Ermeni mekteplerinden bigane durmamasıdır. Devletin mektebi, bu vatanın mektebi olmak itibarıyla, diğer mekâtibi nasıl himaye ediyorsa, nasıl sahabet ve nezaret ederse o suretle nazar-ı sahabetle bakması lüzumunu arz ederim" (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: I, Cilt: 4: 16 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksenikinci İnikaddan-11 Haziran 1325 Tarihli Yüzüncü İnikada Kadar, p. 209).

<sup>114</sup> "Bugün ilim-i terbiye-i akvamla meşgul olan birçok hükâm, bir hakikat-ı müseleme olmak üzere tayin etmiştir ki her yerde terbiye-i iptidaiye lisan-ı maderzad ile olacak. Ne için? Bu hiçbir noktadan değil, çocuğun terbiyesinin tekâmülü noktasından caridir, elzemdir. Bunda bir fikr-i siyasi cari değildir. (...) Terbiye-i ibtidaiyenin lisanı lisan-ı maderzad olunca, coğrafyayı da kendi lisanından okumalı, tarihi, hesabı da kendi lisanından okumalı. Fakat bu demek midir ki asıl o devletin lisan-ı aslisini okumayacağız? Aynı derecede ve belki daha ziyade okumak lazımdır. Bunu bütün mevcudiyedimizle temin etmeli" (ibid., p. 209 - emphases are mine).

<sup>115</sup> "Şimdi eğer kalsak da (...) "işte Ermenilerin birtakım mekâtib-i hususiyesi var, bunlara ne hacet, işte size mektep, Ermeni lisanını da öğreteceğiz." [desek] (...) Şimdi bendeniz öyle zannedirim ki bugün hemen, bu kabil-i icra bir şey değildir. Bir müddet için de daha, hele tedrisat-ı ibtidaiye için mümkün de değil. Bunu bütün mevcudiyedimizle temin etmeli, terbiyesi ve seviyesi bir dereceye kadar vâsıl olan elbette mekteb-i umumiyyeye gitmeli. (...) Sekiz yaşında, beş yaşında bir çocuğun fikrinde din yahut bu gibi efkâr ararsak ondaki efkâr pek suni bir şey olacak. (...) Fakat terbiye-i ibtidaiyeyi haiz on iki yaşında bir çocuk bir muhakemeye, hiç değilse bir sabi-i mütemyiz olacak çağa yetiştiği vakit, o vakit elbette vatan ve saireyi muhakeme edecek. Bir iktidar hasıl olacak. İşte o vakitki terbiye-i umumiye, terbiye-i vataniye bütün mevcudiyetiyle başlar" (ibid., p. 208).

<sup>116</sup> Ben size pek yakın bir misal olmak üzere Maarif Nezaretinin ahiran ihraz ettiği (...) maarif müfettişlerini gösterebilirim. İşte bugün maarif müfettişi namıyla icra-yı vazife eden memurlardan pek çok şikâyet vuku buluyor. Binaenaleyh bu bahis öyle baş aşağı atılacak bir şey değildir. (...) Hükümetin maarifin her bir safhasını nazar-ı teftişte bulundurmağa ve etfal-ı Osmaniyyeye yeknesak bir tedris ve terbiye-i Osmaniyye verilmesine dikkat etmeye selahiyeti yok mudur? Evet, bahsi bu suretle arz ederseniz buna karşı itiraz edecek kimse yoktur. Fakat hükümet bu terbiye-i Osmaniye tahtında ne anlıyor? Amavutluk'ta "Siz Latin harufatı kullanmayacaksınız?" diye tazyikleri mi anlıyor. (...) Bir maarif bahsi açıyoruz. İttihat-ı anasır böyle değildir. Buna dair pek müphem deliller söyleyeceğim. Mesela tarih kitaplarını bile men ediyorlar. İşte maarif müfettişleri bunları yapıyorlar. Terbiye-i Osmaniye bu mudur? Bir kere bu memlekette maarifin izni olmadan kitap nasıl basılır? Size kardeşane bir şey söyleyeceğim. Bu bahisleri kapamaktan ise bu yaralanıp açığı taaffünlere ref etmekten daha iyi bir tarık yoktur (gürültü) (MMZC, Devre: I, İctima Senesi: III, 2nci Cilt: 20 Kanunuevvel 1326 Tarihli Yirmibirinci İnikaddan-31 Kanunusani 1326 (1910) Tarihli Kırkinci İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basimevi, 1986), pp. 176-177).

- <sup>117</sup> “Biz, bu vatanın ecza-yı muhtelifesi, müttehiden şu daireye gelmiş, birleşmiş. Hepimiz hüsn-ü niyetle ve iki elimizle vatana sarılmış evlatlarıyız. Bu ittifadı daimi kılmak için her ne yapmak lazım ise onu da hüsnüniyetle bütün mevcudiyetimizle yapmak taraflarıyız” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 4: 16 Mayıs 1325 Tarihli Seksenikinci İnikaddan-11 Haziran 1325 Tarihli Yüzüncü İnikada Kadarp. 108).
- <sup>118</sup> Sharurian, p. 7.
- <sup>119</sup> “Dinimiz muhtelif, mezhebimiz birdir. Hepimiz hürriyet meslekdaşlarıyız” (Zohrab, *Siyasi Nuklalar*, p. 9; Zohrab, *Öyküler*, p. 179).
- <sup>120</sup> “İzah etsin, biz burada Osmanlıyız, biz burada menafi-i hususiye takip etmiyoruz. (Gürültüler) Osmanlı mebusuyuz, biz bundan başka bir şey değiliz zannederim” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 1, Cilt: 1: 4 Kanunuevvel 1324 Tarihli Birinci İnikattan-19 Şubat 1324 Tarihli Otuzuncu İnikada Kadar (Ankara: TBMM Basimevi, 1982), p. 152).
- <sup>121</sup> Zohrab, “Hay Badkamavori Me,” pp. 389-390.
- <sup>122</sup> *Jamanak*, 24 December 1908/6 January 1909, no. 61 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 139).
- <sup>123</sup> Zohrab, “Inch Ge Bahanche,” p. 101.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 102.
- <sup>125</sup> Adenakrutiunk Azkayin Joghovo 1908-1909 (Minutes of National Assembly), (İstanbul: 1910), p. 65 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, pp. 93-94 - emphasis is mine).
- <sup>126</sup> Krikor Odian, 1834, İstanbul-1887, Paris. Author, lawyer, bureaucrat, one of the most respected members of the Young Armenians. While acquiring university education in Paris, he witnessed the 1848 Revolution. He returned to İstanbul and worked on the Education Committee of the Armenian Patriarchate. In 1855 and 1860 he was a member of the commission charged with preparing a constitution for the Armenian community. He became a counselor of Miḥat Paşa and helped him in drafting the first Ottoman Constitution. Before the Congress of Berlin he drafted a reform project for the Armenian Vilayets. In 1880 he settled in Paris.
- <sup>127</sup> “Osmanyan Sahmanatrutyan Veraknutyune” (Revising the Ottoman Constitution), *Manzume-i Efkâr*, 20 August/2 September 1908, no 2205 (*Yerger*, Vol. V, p. 67-68).
- <sup>128</sup> “Bugün akvam-ı Osmaniyye meşrutiyette birleşmiş ve bu toprağın en ufak bir cüzünü bile müdafaaya, her vakit müdafaaya müheyyadır” (MMZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 2, Cilt: 1: 1 Teşrinisani 1325 Tarihli Birinci İnikaddan-13 Kanunsani 1325 Tarihli Otuzuncu İnikada Kadarp. 490).
- <sup>129</sup> “(...) Kuvve-i bahriyemize karşı Hakan-ı Sabık kendi siyaset-i şahsiyesi iktizasından olmak üzere bir tahrip düsturu kabul etmiş ve 30 seneden beri o düstur istimal olunmuştur. (...) Meşrutiyetimiz Bahriye’yi bu şekilde buldu. Binaenaleyh, Meşrutiyet’e terettüp eden vazife, Bahriyeyi muhafaza değil – zira muhafaza edecek bir şey kalmamıştır – Bahriyenin yeniden ihdası vazifesi idi. (...) Vatan-ı Osmani, gerek kendi toprağından ve gerek kendi sularından teşekkül eder. Bir kısmını müdafaya muktedir olmak ve diğer kısmını müdafadan aciz kalmak yahut onun müdafası hususunda müsamaha etmek, müdafa-i vatan vazifesini hakkıyla ifa etmek değildir” (MAZC: Devre: I, İctima Senesi: 3, 2nci Cilt: 24 Subat 1326 (1910) Tarihli Otuzdokuzuncu İnikaddan-25 Nisan 1327 (1911) Tarihli Ellisekizinci İnikada Kadar[Ankara]: TBMM Basimevi, 1989), pp. 325-326).
- <sup>130</sup> “Eğer hükümet noksanları tanzim etmek isterse, bizim mevki-i mahsumumuzu, mevki-i istisnaimizi düşünerek, umur-u sülhiye için bir nezaret teşkil etmeli. Bendeniz Bahriye bütçesini tanzim ettiğim zaman şurada pek gözümlünüzün önünde mutena bir binayı gözdüm, bu gayet muhteşem Bahriye Hastanesi idi. Onun koşulları gidip gezilse, en göz önünde bulunan ve en mühim bir müessesemiz zannedilen bu hastanede sararmış solmuş çehreler görüldü. Oradaki evlad-ı vatanın bir kere halini görün, acıyacaksınız,

