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The effect of the refugee scholars, who escaped from  
Hitler's Regime, on Turkish University Reform, which  
was used as a tool for the foundation of the modern  
Turkish Nation-State

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## Abstract

This essay focuses on the effect of the refugee scholars<sup>1</sup> on Turkish University Reform, which directly contributed to the foundation process of the modern Turkish State. Although, Turkey succeeded to form a sovereign country after the Independence War (1919-1924) under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, still the country's education system had been deeply contradicting with the worldview of Mustafa Kemal in 1920s. The primary aim of Mustafa Kemal and his ideology (Kemalism) was to establish a nationalist, secular nation. However, the reactionary basis of the Ottoman education system had been preventing emergence of nationalist and secular Turkish society. Therefore, Kemalist Regime employed radical educational reforms to turn the education system inherited from the Ottoman Empire into a system that supports the ideological basis of Kemalism in 1930s. University Reform, which was initiated in 1933, was a milestone for the reformation of Turkish education system.

Furthermore, for establishing a new university that provides European based education, Turkish State needed specialists and experts because there were not enough Turkish specialists to determine the pathway of the reform. Hence, the refugee scholars acted as the skilled labour force to support the University Reform and also other reforms. Mustafa Kemal initiated breath-taking series of reforms to form a modern nation-state, as he seized power in 1920s. The increasing oppression in Hitler's regime and Mustafa Kemal's reforms were co-existing in the 1930s. Therefore, the suitable working conditions provided by Turkish State and the search of scholar's living under Hitler's regime for a better living place resulted as the immigration of approximately 100 profound scholars from Hitler's regime to Turkey. With this process Turkey obtained the skilled labour, which was needed for the reformation of Ottoman culture based university, Darülfünun to a European-standard university, Istanbul University. Refugee scholars' existence accelerated Kemalist reform's efficiency, because the scholars assisted the Turkish government in many other topics such as reforming judicial institutions, or founding an arts conservatory with western standards (e.g. Ankara State Conservatory).

In this essay, the effect of the refugee scholars on Turkish University Reform, which was used as a tool for the foundation of the modern Turkish Nation-State is explored. The contributions of refugee scholars to University Reform are presented under subtopics of Law, Medicine and Arts. Ultimate conclusion reached in this essay is; refugee scholars accelerated the University Reform and transformed the status of Turkish society in many aspects. The combination of the refugee scholars' intellectual assistance and the radical reforms of Kemalism, sustained Turkey's progress from a reactionary country towards a modern, 20<sup>th</sup> century country.

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<sup>1</sup> In this essay the term 'refugee scholars' includes any academic staff migrated to Turkey from Hitler's regime. Austrian scholars migrated to Turkey after the *Anschlusses* are also included.

# I - HISTORICAL CONJUNCTURE THAT CAUSED THE MIGRATION of THE GERMAN SCHOLARS

After the First World War, there was not a stabilized political structure in Europe. Great Britain and France were the prominent powers in Europe but they were not able to prevent the rise of the fascist and totalitarian ideologies in Italy, Spain and Germany. In this political atmosphere, Hitler implemented oppressive policies against the Jewish minority and did not encounter any significant opposition from the other countries in the first step. This occasion initiated the mass migration to other countries.

## 1-Hitler's Regime and Migration of Scholars

Adolf Hitler gained political power in post-Versailles Germany (1919), which lacked a strong central authority. Hitler's party<sup>2</sup> was founded in an atmosphere that German Mark was losing its value and the unemployment rate was rapidly increasing. Party policies were based on nationalism, promises of economic stability and anti-Semitism.<sup>3</sup>

Discrimination against Jews grew exponentially in Hitler's regime. After 'Boycott of Jewish businesses'<sup>4</sup> Jews were excluded from social life, even many Jewish judges were instantly sent leave with pay.<sup>5</sup> In these circumstances, the Jewish scholars and the scholars who do not support Nazi Party, escaped from Germany via organizations such as "Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland".<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In German: "Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei"

<sup>3</sup> "Nazi Party." *en.wikipedia.org*.

<sup>4</sup> Nazi Party encouraged or forced people to do not purchase goods from Jewish businesses. Many SA supporters posted signs on Jewish stores mentioning German's should not buy from Jews.

<sup>5</sup>Hirsch, Ernst. *Anıların*. 12th ed. Ankara: Tubitak, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Hirsch, Anıların, page 184. Prof. Dr. Philipp Schwartz founded this organization in 1933. It supported the migration of German professors mistreated by Nazi Regime. It's headquarters were in Zurich. Arranging jobs for prosecuted Jewish professors or other opposition professors, such as Friedrich Dessauer or Gerhard Kessler, in Istanbul University was the first significant achievement of the Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland.

## 2- Turkish-German Relations Until 1933

The relationship of Ottoman Empire and Germany was based on Ottoman Army's modernization. As a result of giving the authority to German experts for reform and modernization, sympathy for Germans spread throughout the public. "Germans have the bravery and courage of Ottomans. These two nations are created as mirrors of each other. Ottomans mention German name with respect."<sup>7</sup>

Following the defeat of Central Powers in the First World War, German-Turkish relations interrupted heavily. Successor of German Empire, Weimar Republic and successor of Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic, restored their political relationships with Turkish-German Friendship Treaty on 3.03.1924.<sup>8</sup> The trade between two states grew exponentially as the political relations were restored. Weimar Republic was made to pay excessive amount of war indemnity with the Treaty of Versailles, so its international activity was greatly diminished. Therefore, there was not any significant relationship between two states.

As the Nazi Party seized the political power, the interaction of two states changed drastically. With the efforts of Phillip Schwartz<sup>9</sup>, many scholars immigrated to Turkey, after 1933, amid Nazi Party's oppressive policies. Refugee scholars served main goal of the Turkish government, which was elimination of reactionary Ottoman values<sup>10</sup> and introducing European values. Therefore modernization of Turkish society obtained an important role in the foundation process of the modern Turkish Nation-State.

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<sup>7</sup> İkdam, 18 October 1898 page 1 (acquired from Ortaylı, İlber. *İkinci Abdülhamit Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu*. Ankara: AÜ Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1981. page 52)

<sup>8</sup> Ramazan, Çalık. "Türk-Alman İlişkileri (1923-1945)." *tarihtarih.com*.

<sup>9</sup> He was an effective refugee scholar that organized the migration of many other German refugee scholars. He worked in the Istanbul University Medicine Faculty. He founded Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland to provide housing for German refugee scholars in other countries.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad, Feroz. *The Islamic Assertion in Turkey: Pressures and State Response*. Arab Studies Quarterly, 1982.

## **II - FOUNDATION of the MODERN TURKISH NATION STATE**

After the Turkish Independence War<sup>11</sup>, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and a rapid process of modernizing the traditional institutions of the Ottoman Empire was initiated. Ankara was declared as the capital of the new Turkish State, the monarchy was replaced with the republic regime in 1923. The main purpose of this reformation process was to remove the reactionary, traditional values of the Ottoman Empire and embrace Turkish Nationalism, modernize the Turkish society. This process was led by Kemalism, which was a successor of Union and Progress Party<sup>12</sup> to some degree as it also aimed to transform the traditional Turkish society into a modern society. However, Kemalism was more successful as it succeeded to transform the appearance of Turkey in many aspects by introducing western clothing, Gregorian calendar, Surname Law, Latin alphabet or by integrating the Swiss Civil Code to the Turkish judicial system.<sup>13</sup>

Through the formation process of the modern Turkish Nation-State, adapting to European values was a key concept. As Kemalism, rejected the cultural and social heritage of the Ottoman Empire, it needed a cultural and social basis to sustain the structure of the new Turkish State. European values replaced the Ottoman Empire's traditional mentality in each aspect of the society, such as education, law and arts.

### **1- Kemalism, the Ideology that Shaped the Modern Turkish Nation-State<sup>14</sup>**

Kemalism was the prominent ideology of the Turkish State under Republican People's Party rule (1923-1950). Kemalism suggested that for the progress of Turkey, purification of traditional Ottoman concepts was a necessity.<sup>15</sup> Adapting to European

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<sup>11</sup> This war started when Mustafa Kemal initiated the independence struggle of Turkish nation in Samsun 1919. In the year 1922 after 3 years of armed struggle Turkish Army defeated the Greek Army. The Turkish State was recognized on the international stage with the Treaty of Lausanne (1923).

<sup>12</sup> See also Jan Zürcher, Erik. *Atatürk as a Young Turk*. London, 2009

<sup>13</sup> Jan Zürcher, Erik. "Two Young Ottomanists Discover Kemalist Turkey, The Travel Diaries of Robert Anhegger and Andreas Tietze." *Journal of Turkish Studies* 2002.

<sup>14</sup> See Ahmad, 'Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu' for extended definition of Kemalism. Ahmad, explores the national aspect of Kemalism between pages 68-91

<sup>15</sup> Ahmad, Feroz. *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*. İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1995.

values, rather than preserving the Ottoman culture's influence, was a necessity for salvation of the Turkey according to Kemalism.<sup>16</sup> Mustafa Kemal, founder of the modern Turkish State, stated that the intention of Kemalism was to found a nation sharing the values of European community, while creating a 'modern and civilized'<sup>17</sup> Turkey.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, three of the fundamental principles of Kemalism (republicanism, secularism, revolutionism)<sup>19</sup> were related with modernization and Europeanization of Ottoman political and social heritage. Especially, revolutionism was a key principle as most of the radical reforms employed against reactionary entity of Ottoman institutions were related with revolutionism. For example, abolition of caliphate and proclamation of the republic were conducted according to revolutionism.

Kemalism argued that the peculiarities of European civilization should be combined with original Turkish culture.<sup>20</sup> Establishment of Turkish History Institution and Turkish Language Institution indicates that the new Turkish Nation-State will aim to preserve its original cultural identity as well as adapting to western principles. Mainly, Kemalism considered the Turkish ethnic history as the origins of the modern Turkish Nation-State rather than the Ottoman history.

Statement of a refugee law professor, Ernest Hirsch explains the reason underlying the education reforms of Kemalism: "As a collective unit every nation needs a tradition, to remember with either pride or grief. Kemalist Revolution reduced the connections with Islam tradition and Ottoman history, even old alphabet was forbidden in order to prevent the returning to Arab culture and alphabet. Removed cultural morals must be replaced."<sup>21</sup> Turkish State aimed to replace old Ottoman culture with a nationalist Turkish culture, which was supported by the researches of recently found institutions (Turkish History Institution, Turkish Language Institution).

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<sup>16</sup> Replacing 'Şeriye'(Sharia) Courts, which represents the Islamic law, with secular state courts are an obvious example of replacing Arabic-Islamic culture's influence with European and secular principles. This reform indicates that Kemalism considers European principles as the foundation of its reforms.

<sup>17</sup> Turkish: muasır ve çağdaş

<sup>18</sup> Jan Zurcher, Erik. *The Limits of Modernization in Kemalist Turkey (1923-1945)*. 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Aydın, Ertan. *The Peculiarities of Turkish Revolutionary Ideology in the 1930s: The Ülkü Version of Kemalism, 1933-1936*. Ankara, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Jan Zurcher, Erik. *The Limits of Modernization in Kemalist Turkey (1923-1945)*. 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Hirsch, Anılarım page 299-300

Turkish nationalism was combined with modernization and westernization of the Turkish society.

Kemalism aimed to build a nation based on the mentioned concepts under Mustafa Kemal's rule. This aim heavily affected the policies of the government about University Reform and purification of reactionary ideology from education system.<sup>22</sup> The government intended to use the reformed university as a tool for protecting and promoting the secular and modern<sup>23</sup> reforms. The generations educated in this university, who received a nationalist and secular education, would embrace the policies of the new secular state rather than the traditional Islamist and Ottoman ideology.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, Alphabet Reform (1928) establishment of Turkish History Institution (1931) and Turkish Language Institution (1932) conducted according to ideological basis of Kemalism. These events formed an atmosphere that was suitable for implementation of the University Reform.

## **2-Turkish University Reform, a Reform that Served the Foundation of the Modern Turkish Nation-State**

'Fundamentally, the event, which is named as the Turkish University Reform, is the peak of the Atatürk's cultural reforms.'<sup>25</sup> This reform was a result of Mustafa Kemal's efforts to modernize the social status of the Turkish society and especially the Turkish education system. In 1924, the Ministry of Education was made responsible for all of the education institutions in Turkey. Therefore, in harmony with the Kemalism's principles, Ministry of Education initiated rapid reforms in the

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<sup>22</sup> See Ahmad, 'Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu' for further information. In the book thoughts of ex-Prime Minister Rauf Orbay about caliphate is mentioned: "Removing this authority (caliphate) and replacing it with any entity would end up as failure and disaster." (Ahmad, 73) Kemalism aimed to eradicate this common mentality about caliphate.

<sup>23</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk defines a modern nation-state as "An advanced and civilized country that has reached the level of modern civilization" This nation must be rational and secular to create an industrialized economy. (Ahmad, 69)

<sup>24</sup> See Also Arı, Başar. *Religion and Nation-Building in the Turkish Republic: A Comparison of the High School Textbooks of 1930-1950 and 1950 -1960*. Ankara: METU, 2010. For wider analysis of secular reforms in early Turkish Republic.

<sup>25</sup> Reisman, Arnold. *Nazizmden Kaçanlar Ve Atatürk'ün Vizyonu*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011. page 23



education system that was inherited from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>26</sup> The focus of these reforms was reforming the most efficient education facility in the country, Darülfünun.<sup>27</sup> In 1933, Darülfünun was re-established in the name of Istanbul University and this process was named as the Turkish University Reform.<sup>28</sup>

Motive behind the University Reform was constructing the basis of new Turkish State's higher education on European principles rather than Islamic and traditional principles. Therefore, the nonreactive status of Darülfünun was unwanted and the government was willing to found a dynamic university. Since the establishment of the new Turkish State in 1923, Darülfünun was sceptical about rapid reformation process and especially it was not extending the linguistic and historical theses supported by Kemalism.<sup>29</sup> Then, government planned that the reformed Istanbul University will sustain the radical reforms of government by educating intellectual generations based on European education standards.

Second rector of Istanbul University, Cemil Bilsel, mentioned that the new Turkish State's goal will be exceeding European university standards by stating: "Our goal is not reaching an average European university's level; we, actually intend to go beyond this level and establish a national university based on superiority."<sup>30</sup> This attitude, Alphabet Reform and adopting Swiss Civil Law, rather than Sharia Law were all serving the main aim of Kemalist Revolution. Main aim of Kemalism was building a nation based on secular and civilized standards; easing the cultural bonds with traditional Ottoman perception. Refugee scholars contributed to this aim especially in University Reform.

Mustafa Kemal's statement demonstrates the importance of refugee scholars in University Reform: "...for our country's welfare and development we must use all

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<sup>26</sup> Reisman, page 24

<sup>27</sup> Definition: The word is derived from 'dar', which means house and 'fünun', which means science in Arabic. It is usually used in the meaning of university in the Ottoman Era. Darülfünun-ı Şahane or Istanbul Darülfünun was the educational institution founded by □. Abdülhamid . It was the fourth version of the first Darülfünun. The first Darülfünun was founded in 1863. On the other hand, Darülfünun-ı Şahane (the last Darülfünun) is the most long lasting and consistent Darülfünun of the Ottoman Era.

<sup>28</sup> Widmann, page 55. Mustafa Kemal as the president of Turkish Republic stated that: "(For Darülfünun) superficial precautions are non-efficient. Just like our other actions, we are certain to act radically in educational reforms and the new university." This statement shows the radical policy of the government about University Reform.

<sup>29</sup> Jan Zurcher, Erik. *The Limits of Modernization in Kemalist Turkey (1923-1945)*. 2013. page 6

<sup>30</sup> Bilsel, Cemil. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarihi*. İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1943. page 55

necessary foreign technical knowledge...’<sup>31</sup> Refugee scholars provided the technical knowledge for the University Reform, when there was a shortage of competent university professors in Turkey. 98 German and Austrian scholars (mostly professors) worked in the Istanbul University; presence of these profound scholars provided the needed skilled labor to Turkish Government to transform Darülfünun to modern Istanbul University.<sup>32</sup>

### **III- THE EFFECT of GERMAN and AUSTRIAN REFUGEE SCHOLARS on TURKISH UNIVERSITY REFORM and FOUNDATION PROCESS of the MODERN TURKISH NATION-STATE**

Education is one of the most efficient tools in transforming a nation’s dynamics, as it is the legitimate authority responsible for shaping next generation’s moral values and attitude towards national issues. Especially university education has a major influence on next generation’s worldview, as it is the process where the most complex ideas are introduced.

Turkey experienced radical reforms in its most efficient higher education facility, Darülfünun, in 1930s. Furthermore, as a result of Hitler’s oppressive policies, many refugee scholars migrated to Turkey. Hence, these scholars contributed to both the University Reform and to the building of the secular Turkish Nation-State.

Consequently, this shift from reactionary education to modern education supported the nation building process, which aimed to transform Turkish society into a modern, secular, educated society. After Hitler seized power in Germany (1933) and imposed discriminatory laws, many scholars migrated from Hitler’s Germany to Turkey.<sup>33</sup> This event boosted the success of the University Reform, because these scholars conducted

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<sup>31</sup> Ahmad, Feroz. *Modern Türkiye’nin Oluşumu*. İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1995. page 116

<sup>32</sup> Widmann, page 211

<sup>33</sup> Widmann suggests that although majority of the refugee professors migrated to Turkey because of their ethnic background, some of the scholars migrated to Turkey because of their ideological opposition. Widmann, page 87

significant scientific researches in Turkey and presented many new scientific concepts.<sup>34</sup>

In addition, Turkey was one of the several countries that provided migration opportunity to the German refugee scholars. Even the United States had strict bureaucratic impediments that prevented the migration of refugee scholars to that country.<sup>35</sup> Turkey, received rapid migration of refugee scholars, as it provided the right of residence to the scholars.

In this essay, the effect of refugee scholars on Turkish University Reform and foundation of the modern Turkish Nation-State will be presented under the topics of: *Law, Arts and Medicine*.<sup>36</sup>

## **1-The Effect of the German Refugee Scholars on Turkish Law System and on the Law Faculty of Istanbul University**

Law is; the system of rules which a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and which it may enforce by the imposition of penalties.<sup>37</sup> Laws act as one of the most effective social tools that shape the public life in each aspect. It is the core entity for directing the individuals' behaviors.

In Ottoman Era, the actions of individuals were directed according to the *Sharia* Law.<sup>38</sup> Also, Sultan was empowered with the authority to regulate the laws in the early and mid Ottoman Era. <sup>39</sup> As the global law applications changed in 1800s dramatically, Ottoman State renewed its law system and made it more coherent with

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<sup>34</sup> For example refugee philosopher Hans Reichenbach introduced *Logical positivism* in Istanbul University

<sup>35</sup> Reisman, page 3

<sup>36</sup> Although in Ankara Higher Institute of Agriculture several German scholars have worked in 1920's there is not a topic of agriculture in this essay. The reason is the German scholars worked in that institute were not refugees. Each mentioned topic explores the effect of German scholars on the related facility and the related aspect of the nation-building process. There are some other topics such as, Architecture, Philology, and Economy that German that, refugee scholars contributed to but these topics are not mentioned in this essay due to the word limit.

<sup>37</sup> *Oxforddictionaries.com*. Oxford Dictionaries

<sup>38</sup> Laws are approved by Şeyülislam, who is the highest ranking religious officer. He published a 'fetva' to certify that specific law is in accord with religious principles.

-Heyd, Uriel. *Eski Osmanlı Hukukunda Kanun Ve Şeriat*. 2nd ed. Ankara: Ankara U. page 633-634

<sup>39</sup> Acar, İsmail. *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri Ve İslam Ceza Hukuku*. İzmir, 2001. page 56

the global law practices following the imposition of European powers.<sup>40</sup> *Edict of Gülhane* (1939)<sup>41</sup> and *Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856*<sup>42</sup> were obvious results of the renewed laws. In contrast the Islamic concept has preserved its effectiveness in the law system even in late Ottoman Era. However, *Şer'iyye Courts*<sup>43</sup> were coexisting with the *Nizamiye Courts*.<sup>44</sup> The *Şer'iyye Courts* were regulating many aspects of the social life such as marriage, alimony, heritage; those courts were authorized to sentence convicts to beating, incarceration, exile or even death.<sup>45</sup>

New Turkish government challenged reactionary law system of the Ottoman State in 1920s-1930s. The Turkish government established a law system based on secular laws. It removed the influence of Arabic or Iranian law systems on Turkish judicial system.<sup>46</sup> It was a huge milestone, because adapting to the European laws rather than preserving the influence of Ottoman-Arabic-Iranian law systems meant Mustafa Kemal's regime rejected the judicial heritage of Ottoman system and based its judicial system on European standards. In this process, Civil Code was adapted from Switzerland, Commercial Code was adapted from Germany, Administrative Law was adapted from France, and Criminal Code was adapted from Italy.<sup>47</sup> Hence, Turkish Law System shifted its religious entity to secular entity. Refugee scholars such as Prof. Ernst Hirsch, Prof. Andreas Schwartz undertook important roles in the process of adoption of these laws.<sup>48</sup> For example, Ernest Hirsch personally prepared framework of University Law (1946), Copyrights Law (1951), and Commercial Law (1956).<sup>49</sup> With these new laws traditional, religion based *Sharia Law* lost its influence. Hence, Turkey acquired a secular law system. For instance, because of religious reasons one woman's testimony was not valid in the Ottoman Civil Law

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<sup>40</sup> Ekinci, Buğra. *Osmanlı Mahkemeleri (Tanzimat Ve Sonrası)*. 2nd ed. İstanbul: Marmara U, 2010. page 2

<sup>41</sup> In Turkish *Tanzimat Fermani*. Sultan Abdülmecid wanted to initiate a radical modernization process in Ottoman Empire. The legal system was renewed with this edict. The new legal system guaranteed rights of all Ottoman citizens regardless of their ethnic background.

<sup>42</sup> In Turkish: *Islahat Fermani*. Sultan Abdülmecid aimed to modernize education, justice systems of Ottoman Empire with this edict.

<sup>43</sup> The courts that were employing the Sharia (Islamic) Law.

<sup>44</sup> The courts that were employing the reformed laws, which were in accord with European law system.

<sup>45</sup> Ekinci, page 154 These punishments were regulated in 1887 and preserved their enforceability till the end of Ottoman State.

<sup>46</sup> Widmann, page 189

<sup>47</sup> Refugee scholars contributed to the process of adoption of these laws. Especially, Ernst Hirsch was active in the process of formation of the new Turkish Law

<sup>48</sup> Widmann, page 190-191

<sup>49</sup> Widmann, page 188

(Mecelle).<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, as the religion's influence was purified from court decisions with the secular Civil Code, which was prepared by Ernst Hirsch, women acquired the equal right for testimony.

Furthermore, refugee scholars educated Turkish jurists, in the Law Faculty of Istanbul University,<sup>51</sup> that were competent in secular and European law system rather than Islamic law system. Andreas Schwartz was the professor for the Roman law. He also contributed to Turkish law system by simplifying the Roman terms.<sup>52</sup> In addition, Ernst Hirsch educated Turkish law students in Commercial Law and Intellectual Property Law.<sup>53</sup>

Refugee scholars' lectures in Istanbul University Law Faculty, contributed to Kemalist ideology by sustaining emergence of a new jurist generation (both lawyers, judges, and law professors) that was able to practice the new secular law system. The Turkish jurists that were educated by the refugee scholars<sup>54</sup> ensured the permanence of the judicial reforms done by Kemalism, as they became professors who taught the laws of the new legal system around Turkey.

## **2-The Effect of the German Refugee Scholars on Turkish Medicine and Istanbul University Medicine Faculty**

Improving health services was a fundamental goal of Kemalism. Populism principle of Kemalism included providing health services, increasing the quality of the doctors. Furthermore, the nation building process in 1930s aimed to counter illiterate mindset of the public about medicine.

In the Ottoman era, public respected superstitious methods over medicine. For example, while many people were dying because of a cholera outbreak in 1917, Ottoman Government distributed papers, which had prayers for health written on it to 'reduce' the effects of the disease.<sup>55</sup> While Kemalism was aiming to counter this

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<sup>50</sup> Ekinci, Buğra. *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa Ve Mecelle*. İstanbul, 2007.

<sup>51</sup> This faculty is the reformed version of the Darülfünun Law Faculty.

<sup>52</sup> Widmann, page 189

<sup>53</sup> Widmann, page 191

<sup>54</sup> For example: Prof. Yaşar Karayalçın, Prof. İlhan Akipek or Prof. Ali Bozer See also: Yüksel, Süleyman. "Av. Ord. Prof. Dr. Ernest Hirsch." *Hukuk Gündemi* 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Sarısakal, Baki. "Osmanlı Devletinde Salgın Hastalıklar Ve Samsunda Kolera." *barisarisakal.com*.

mindset, refugee scholars acted as an important element. They organized public conferences about health,<sup>56</sup> directed 9 institutes in Istanbul University Medicine Faculty, published scientific articles about medicine in Turkey.<sup>57</sup>

Istanbul University was the key facility for the modernization of the health services and education of doctors in Turkey in 1930s. The refugee scholars instructed many Turkish medicine students in Istanbul University Medicine Faculty. The doctors educated by German scholars provided vital health services in the new republic. For example in 1923 there were 554 doctors, in the whole country.<sup>58</sup> Following the University Reform and arrival of refugee scholars the number of doctors increased to 1625 in 1935.<sup>59</sup>

Turkish medicine students benefited from refugee scholars education in many institutes of Medicine Faculty. World-famous professor Phillip Schwartz was the head of Pathological Anatomy Department between 1933-1952. Well-respected Siegfried Oberndorfer, conducted Cancer Research Institute, between 1938-1944.<sup>60</sup> Felix Haurowitz was the head of Bio-chemistry Institute between 1939-1948.<sup>61</sup> All of these profound scholars educated numerous Turkish doctors. Those doctors improved the quality of health services in Turkey significantly. For example, the rate of malaria has decreased drastically in late 1930s.<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore refugee scholars conducted their researches according to modern and scientific methods rather than traditional methods. Prof. Dr. Eckstein published his researches about child health after his observations in rural areas. He was responsible for the establishment of organizations concerned with childcare.<sup>63</sup> In his service period, child mortality rate dropped from 33% to 12%.<sup>64</sup> Prof. Dr. Phillip Schwartz published his scientific researches about *tuberculosis* and *autopsy* in Turkey.<sup>65</sup> Prof.

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<sup>56</sup> Widmann, page 123 These public health conferences were about contagious diseases and cancer.

<sup>57</sup> For example refugee professor Felix Haurowitz published more than 50 articles about medicine in Turkey.-Widmann 128

<sup>58</sup> Saltık, Ahmet. *Türkiye'de Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Sağlık Hizmetleri*. Ankara: Ankara U, Medicine Faculty, 2014. page 1

<sup>59</sup> Saltık, page 1.

<sup>60</sup> Siegfried Oberndorfer's colleague and translator Üveys Maskar described him as : "Oberndorfer was modest, honest, open to dispute and exceptionally successful in teaching." -Widmann, page 120

<sup>61</sup> Widmann, page 128

<sup>62</sup> Jan Zurcher, Erik. *The Limits of Modernization in Kemalist Turkey (1923-1945)*. 2013. page 8

<sup>63</sup> Widmann, page 303

<sup>64</sup> Widmann, page 250

<sup>65</sup> Widmann, page 490

Dr. Pulewka examined the status of medicine education.<sup>66</sup> He prepared new medicine textbooks himself.<sup>67</sup> In addition chemical terms translated by refugee professor Fritz Arndt sustained Turkish science. The common chemistry terms, such as çözücü (solvent), çözünen (solute), seyreltik (dilute) were introduced by Arndt.<sup>68</sup>

The goals of Kemalism regarding medicine; eradicating malaria, boosting the doctor number, decreasing the rate of child mortality, were generally met with the significant support of refugee scholars. Kemalism aimed to shift Ottoman Empire's heritage in medicine, which could not cope with malaria, could only employ 1 doctor per 20.000 citizens.<sup>69</sup> The medicine policy of the Turkish government was focused on acquiring the health standards of Europe and getting rid of the health standards of Ottoman Empire. Refugee scholars delivered this aim by educating numerous Turkish doctors, doing scientific researches about Turkish medicine principles, organizing public conferences and contributing to health services personally. All of these contributions of refugee scholars served the foundation of the modern Turkish Nation-State by developing a modern medicine system and promoting the efforts of Turkish government to found a modern medicine faculty.

### **3-The Effect of Refugee Scholars on Modernization of the Turkish Art**

In the late Ottoman Era, there were institutions concerned with arts such as, Mekteb-i Sanayi-i Şahane (1883) or Darülbedayi<sup>70</sup>, which aimed to follow Western art trends.<sup>71</sup> Kemalism aimed to promote these efforts due to the nation-building process. The main goal of Kemalism in arts was to transform the profile of each citizen. Kemalism wanted each citizen to acquire western values, regarding arts. Many institutions such as; Turkish State Theatre, Directorate General of State Opera and Ballet and Presidential Symphony Orchestra, were established to distribute western arts values.

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<sup>66</sup> He published this book about the Turkish medicine education: Pulewka, Paul. *Wissenschaft Und Bildung in Der Modernen Turkei*. Stuttgart: Rudi Paret, 1960.

<sup>67</sup>For example Pulewka prepared a textbook named '*Tedavi bakımından Farmakoloji Merkezi ve Muhiti Sinir Sistemi Üzerine Tesir Eden İlaçlar*,' Konya 1951. That book demonstrates the principles of Pharmacology about neural system. –Widmann page 372

<sup>68</sup> Reisman. Page 36

<sup>69</sup> Saltık, page 1

<sup>70</sup> An Ottoman imperial theatre, established in 1914.

<sup>71</sup> Koç, Nurgün. *Atatürk Ve Güzel Sanatlar*. Karabük: Karabük U. page 43

Atatürk highlighted the importance of arts in the modernization process with these words: “We are far below the desirable civilization level because the artists are not given the importance they deserve.”<sup>72</sup>

Refugee scholars contributed to transformation of traditional Ottoman Art to modern Western style art in two institutions: Ankara State Conservatory and Academy of Fine Arts. Although only a few refugees worked in Academy of Fine Arts<sup>73</sup>, refugee professors contributed to Ankara State Conservatory significantly.

As Ankara State Conservatory was the first conservatory founded by the new Turkish Republic, it is a proof that new Turkish State wanted to promote cultural and artistic activities in Ankara rather than Istanbul. The reason behind this was establishing a new cultural capital in Ankara, which was not affected by Ottoman Empire’s traditional roots.<sup>74</sup> Refugee scholars furthered Turkish State’s attempts with their activities such as; performing classical European dramas and operas in Ankara State Conservatory, or organizing the musical education in *Halkevleri*.<sup>75</sup>

In order to establish Ankara State Conservatory (ASC) besides Hindemith, German artists; Carl Ebert, Dr. Praetorius, Eduard Zuckmayer, Morkowitz were invited. Most of them were refugees. Hindemith was responsible for the music department and Ebert was responsible for the drama department. Conservatory was officially founded in 20.5.1940.<sup>76</sup> Hindemith was the person in charge for the whole establishment process of ASC and he brought many experienced refugee artists to Turkey.<sup>77</sup> About his work his colleague Eduard Zuckmayer said “Chamber music, a small Madrigal choir, violin choirs, school orchestra, student concerts were initiated by him. He requested immediate establishment of city choir.”<sup>78</sup> Hindemith was also mentioned by Cevat Dursunoğlu<sup>79</sup> in the article for 30. Anniversary of the Conservatory

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<sup>72</sup> Koç, page 44

<sup>73</sup> Rudolf Edwin Belling, Franz Hillinger, Bruno Taut

<sup>74</sup> Koç, page 49. Istanbul was the capital of Ottoman Empire for approximately 500 years. Therefore, Atatürk chose Ankara as the capital to implement his reforms without encountering the resistance of conservative Ottomanists, who were effective in Istanbul.

<sup>75</sup> *Halkevleri* is the successor organization of *Türk Ocakları*. *Halkevleri* acted as the organization that distributed values of Kemalism to the public.

<sup>76</sup> Widmann, page 217

<sup>77</sup> Widmann, page 224

<sup>78</sup> Widmann page 225

<sup>79</sup> Turkish politician and pedagogue. Dursunoğlu accompanied Hindemith, while he was preparing reports, regarding Ankara State Conservatory.



“Hindemith, world-famous artist, brought many talented masters of drama and music society here such as Carl Ebert, Dr. Praetorius, Zuckmayer and Markowitz. He had praiseworthy contributions to our conservatory.”<sup>80</sup>

Refugee artist, Carl Ebert has lived in Turkey during the World War 2, and he is the founder of modern Turkish opera.<sup>81</sup> Hindemith invited Ebert to the ASC. Ebert educated many Turkish students. He served as the director of opera shows ‘Bastien and Bastienne, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, Figaro, Fidelio, Masquerade’. He also directed the plays ‘Julius Caesar, Faust, King Oedipus’. Mahir Canova, one of Ebert’s first students, directed drama department of ASC after Ebert’s departure.<sup>82</sup>

Consequently, the contributions of refugee scholars enabled Turkish government to establish the first conservatory of the Turkish Republic. Establishment of ASC was a major development in order to form the citizen profile that Kemalism wanted to build. The existence of ASC drove citizens to have western artistic tastes by educating arts students with western art principles and by expanding the quantity of the European style dramas. In addition, refugee scholars sustained Kemalism’s aim to build a cultural capital in Ankara. In early 1920s Ankara was a small town with a population of 20.000<sup>83</sup> that did not have dramas until 1924. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Turkish government aimed to promote Ankara’s status in each extent to preserve its position as the capital. To make Ankara emerge as a political and social centre that may compete with Istanbul even in the artistic means, government provided support for the establishment of arts institutions such as ASC. ASC was focused on achieving this purpose by acting as the leading representative of modern arts in Ankara. Refugee scholars enabled the emergence of Ankara as a cultural capital with their vital supports to this effective arts institution of ASC.

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<sup>80</sup> Widmann, page 217

<sup>81</sup> Widmann, 224

<sup>82</sup> Widmann, page 228

<sup>83</sup> Cengizkan, Ali. "Türkiye İçin Modern Ve Planlı Bir Başkent Kurmak: Ankara 1920-1950." *goethe.de*. 2010.

## **IV - CONCLUSION**

Kemalism rejected the heritage of Ottoman Empire in each aspect. The underlying reason of this action was adapting Turkish nation to European and western values, reducing the influence of Ottoman culture on new Turkish Republic. Kemalist regime aimed to build a nation, which can compete with European nations while preserving its cultural origins. After the establishment of the new Turkish Republic in 1923, rapid process of modernization and reformation was initiated by Kemalist regime. Other reforms such as abolition of caliphate, introducing western clothing, Gregorian calendar, Surname Law, Latin alphabet or employing University Reform aimed to build a nation that can compete with European nations.

Refugee scholars served as an accelerative element in modernization process of the Turkish public and in the University Reform. They increased the efficiency of the reforms that lead to formation of the modern Turkish Nation-State. It was impossible to deliver University Reform with native professors, because there was not a significant amount of academic staff in Turkey. Therefore, refugee professors acted as the skilled labour for the University Reform. Refugee scholars were employed for the re-establishment of Darülfünun in the name of Istanbul University. By reforming Darülfünun, which was not furthering the historical or linguistic theses suggested by Kemalism, refugee scholars served the goal of transforming the heritage of Ottoman education system.

In law, studies of refugee professors such as Ernest Hirsch or Andreas Schwartz ensured the permanence of the judicial reforms of Kemalism. By educating many Turkish jurists with a European style law education and reforming the Turkish judicial system, refugee scholars strengthened the roots of modernizing efforts of Kemalism in the law system of Turkey. In medicine, refugee scholars were employed in Medicine Faculty of Istanbul University, they did many scientific researches about medicine and served in public health institutions. Also professors such as Fritz Arndt contributed to Turkish science by translating the foreign terminology. In arts, refugee scholars' main contribution to the foundation of the modern Turkish nation was contributing to foundation of a cultural capital in Ankara by introducing modern art concepts in Ankara State Conservatory. Kemalist regime established its new capital in

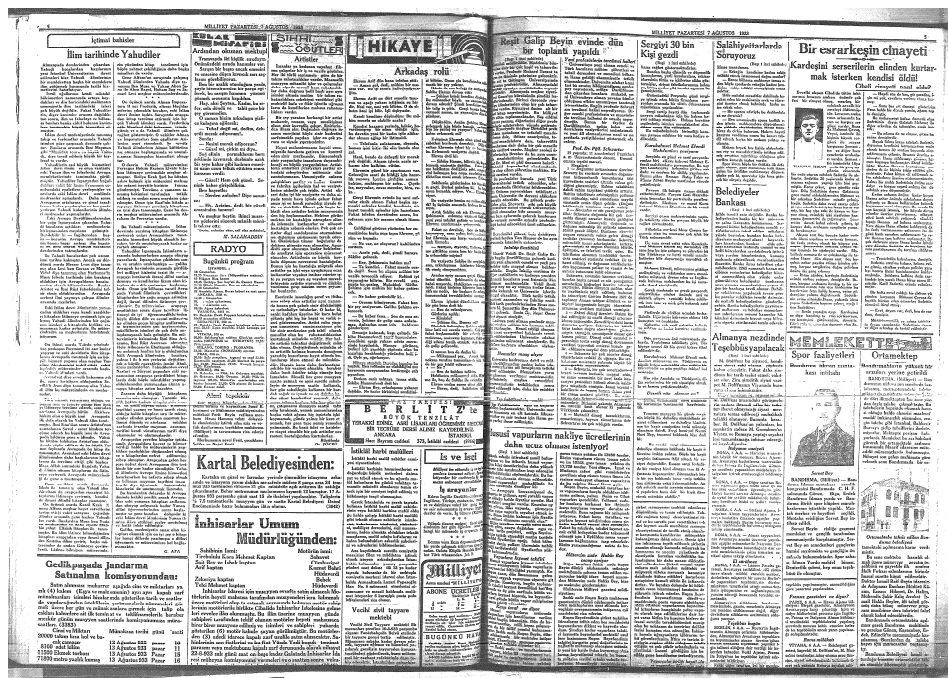
Ankara to stay away from traditional roots of Istanbul and refugee scholars contributed to the establishment process of the new capital by providing one of its essential needs, arts.

Consequently, refugee scholars accelerated the University Reform and transformed the status of Turkish society in many aspects. The combination of refugee scholars' intellectual assistance and the radical reforms of Kemalism, sustained Turkey's progress from a reactionary and underdeveloped country towards a modern, 20<sup>th</sup> century country.

# Appendix A: The Topic of 'Emigration of German Scholars to Turkey in 1930s' in German and Turkish Press

## 1-Turkish Press<sup>84</sup>

Newspaper Name: Milliyet, Publication Date: 7th of August, 1933



In the newspaper above, it is mentioned that world-famous German professors will be employed in Istanbul University. Newspaper highlights how knowledgeable and skilled the German professors are. According to the newspaper, professors will examine the recently opened university and state their opinions about the reform. Hence, according to *Milliyet* newspaper it can be stated that while implementing University Reform, German scholars will be effectual and their presence in Turkey is highly beneficial. Besides this statement, the background of professors or their relationship with the Hitler's regime is not widely mentioned. This might be a

<sup>84</sup> Turkish National Library Archive

consequence of Hitler's strong image in Turkish public's opinion, and positive image of German nation<sup>85</sup>. Turkish state did not visibly supported Hitler's policies but did not insult his regime either. Even in 10 August 1933 the first trade convention was signed between these recently established states.<sup>86</sup> As a direct result of two countries relationship, in the newspaper the positive impact of German scholars on University Reform is highlighted rather than Hitler's regime's oppressive policies on the scholars that migrated to Turkey.

## 2-German Press

None of the newspapers published in Germany between 1933-1940 (Reichswart, Fehrbelliner Zeitung, Vossische Zeitung, Teltower Kreisblatt...) mentioned the migration of Germany's prominent professors. The database of ZEFYS<sup>87</sup> did not contain any newspaper articles, published in Germany, about the topic. If the German newspapers did not mentioned rector of Frankfurt University (Fritz Neumark) or Mayor of Magdeburg (Ernest Reuter) leaving the country, it was certainly a result of lack of press freedom in the country. A newspaper (Teltower Kreisblatt) depicting Goebbels' new book with a page did not even mentioned a judge (Ernest Hirsch) being fired with no excuse or a mayor (Ernest Reuter) escaping the country. This double-standard is an indicator of Hitler's regime's policy about newspapers. For Hitler's regime newspapers was an efficient tool to control public opinion. Moreover, Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda Joseph Goebbels spoke with newspapers' editors regularly and described which topics can be mentioned.<sup>88</sup> This topic of scholars migrating from the country was not mentioned probably because it was not appropriate in a situation that Goebbels policies are present. On the other hand, there was not any injurious news about refugee professors in Turkey probably because these news would also insult Turkish State. Germany was importing agricultural goods and mines such as chrome from Turkey. Also Turkey might have

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<sup>85</sup> The background of Turkish- German relationship is explained in page 4

<sup>86</sup> Ramazan, Çalık. "Türk-Alman İlişkileri (1923-1945)." *tarihtarih.com*.

<sup>87</sup> ZEFYS has the database of the newspapers published in Germany from 1617 to 1946. - Web. <<http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/>>.

<sup>88</sup> Ramazan, Çalık. "Türk-Alman İlişkileri (1923-1945)." *tarihtarih.com*.

became an important future ally for Germany after Turkey obtained the right for fortification of Bosphorus Strait with Montreux Convention (1936).<sup>89</sup> On the basis of above, German press did not mention the migration of scholars.

## **Appendix B**

### **Important refugee German Scholars in Turkey**

98 German and Austrian scholars worked in Istanbul University (IU) between 1933-1945 and estimated total number of refugee scholars all around Turkey is 107.<sup>90</sup> In the first year of IU (1933-1934) there were 85 foreign faculty members<sup>91</sup>. Refugee professors migrated to Turkey initially from 1933, the year Hitler came into office.

Ord. Prof. Dr. Ernest Hirsch (1902-1985)- Law professor in ordinary, Istanbul University (IU) Law Faculty, received honorary doctorate from IU, rector of Berlin University. He was dismissed from service while he was working as a judge in Germany. His memories have been referred in this essay for presenting a broadened perspective about the social status of German society under Hitler's rule and widening the investigation about University Reform.

Ord. Prof. Dr. Philipp Schwartz (1894-1977)- Pathology professor in ordinary from Jewish descent, president of NdWA (Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland) He worked in IU Medical Faculty, and received honorary doctorate from IU. While Nazi Party was in power, he arranged jobs for many German professors – jobs- in Turkey. He naturalized to Turkish citizenship in 28.04.1948.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ramazan, Çalık. "Türk-Alman İlişkileri (1923-1945)." *tarihtarih.com*.

<sup>90</sup> Widmann, page 277

<sup>91</sup> 38 ordinary professors, 4 professors and 43 assistants

<sup>92</sup> Namal, Arın. "Ord.Prof. Dr.Philipp Schwartz'ın (1894-1977) İstanbul Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi'nde Patoloji Eğitime Katkıları." *Türk Patoloji Dergisi* 2003.

Ord. Prof Dr. Gerhard Kessler (24.08.1883-16.08.1963): Economics professor in ordinary. He worked in IU Economics Faculty. He was not from Jewish descent but he was dismissed from his duty in Leipzig University because he was a strong opposition figure. He stated that 'he is proud to be the first German professor, who lost his job because of the struggle for justice against the despotic government.'<sup>93</sup> He founded the first Turkish Labour Union in 1946 with Orhan Tuna.<sup>94</sup>

Prof. Dr. Ernest Reuter (1889-1953): Economics professor from Jewish descent. He was Mayor of Magdeburg.<sup>95</sup> He was sent to concentration camp in Lichtenburg twice. He worked in Political Sciences Faculty in Ankara. After the Second World War, he worked as the Mayor of Berlin.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Ceylan, Ömer. "Türkiye'de Sosyal Siyasetin Oluşumunda Gerhard Kessler." *Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları Dergisi* 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Widmann, page 456

<sup>95</sup> Widmann, page 261

<sup>96</sup> Widmann, page 480

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