Not All Quiet on the Ottoman Fronts: Neglected Perspectives on a Global War, 1914–1918

Edited by Mehmet Beşikçi
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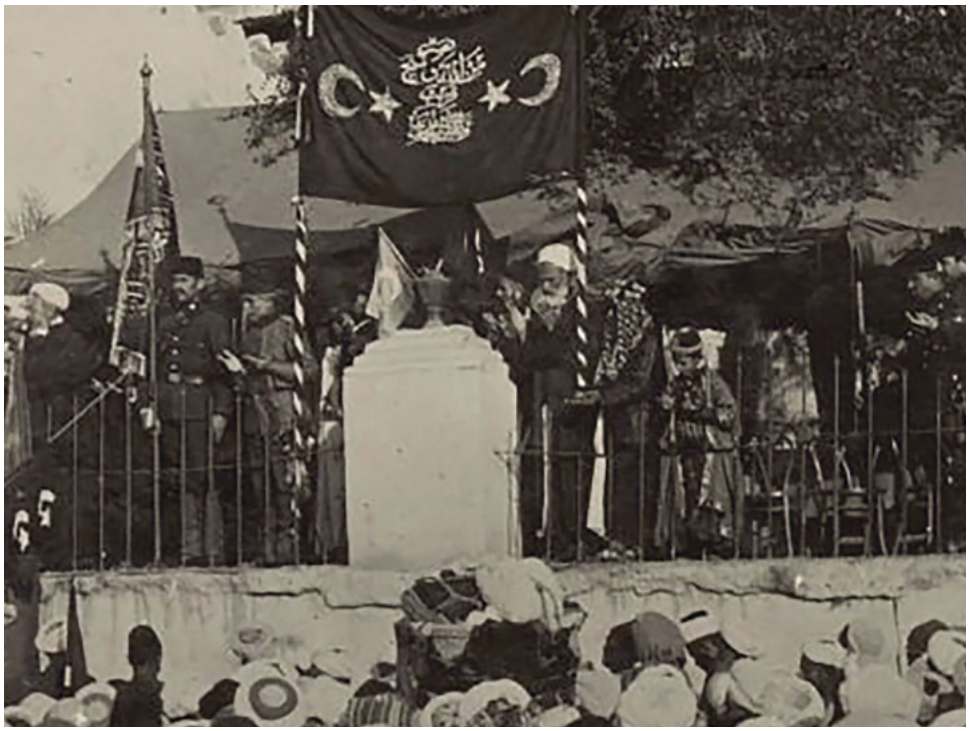

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Introduction

Mehmet Beşikçi and Selçuk Akşin Somel

The First World War was the first great catastrophe of the twentieth century, and the Ottoman Empire was part of it. The Ottoman theatre in the Great War witnessed both the demolition and re-making of the modern Middle East. Yet neither was this destruction so sudden and unchallenged, nor was the re-making smooth and unproblematic. In any case, as Eugene Rogan has observed, the Ottoman front proved more influential in this process than contemporaries ever imagined.[1] Although the Ottoman Empire was eventually defeated, the Ottoman war machine performed surprisingly well and managed to remain on the battlefield until the end of the war on four major fronts (the Dardanelles, the Caucasus, Sinai-Palestine, and Mesopotamia-Iraq) and on less intensive ones (Arabia-Yemen, Romania, Galicia, Macedonia, Iran, and Azerbaijan). However, this intensive war effort necessitated an extensive mobilization of Ottoman society, which included tremendous challenges.

The unprecedented scale of wartime exertions led contemporaries, as well as today's historians, to use the term "mobilization" (*seferberlik*) not only to describe the manpower mobilization for the armed forces, as the specific meaning of the term implied, but also within a much larger context to describe the mobilization of economic, social and even cultural resources of society to keep up with the war effort. This broader usage of the term is actually in harmony with the debate in the historiography on the war, which has argued that with the increasingly "total" character of warfare as a result of various factors such as industrialized economies that provided the means for large-scale destruction, nationalist agitation, participation of the masses in politics, and mass armies equipped and provisioned with modern weapons, the home front and the battlefront became integrated during the First World War.[2] While the level of these factors certainly varied from one country to another, it is clear that the magnitude of wartime mobilization forced all the belligerent states, including the Ottomans, to find ways to cope with its challenges throughout the war years.

As recent research has shown, the process of dealing with the hardships of mobilization had an effect to re-shape state-society relations in the Ottoman Empire. As a general phenomenon, the war promoted far greater state control as a re-

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1 Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books 2015), 403.

2 Stig Förster, "Introduction," in Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (eds.), *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4.

sponse to wartime challenges.[3] In the Ottoman context, the conditions of wartime mobilization pushed the state, controlled by the single-party rule of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), to become more centralized, authoritarian and nationalist, seeking to increase its control at the local level and to permeate into deeper and deeper levels of provincial society.[4] As military performance on the battlefield increasingly came to depend upon obtaining as many resources from the home front as possible, the Ottoman state increasingly made more and more demands on its people. The most immediate demand was to impose an extended system of conscription on society to match the constant need for manpower in the armed forces. But the larger context of permanent mobilization also consisted of such harsh interventions into people's lives as the requisitioning of agricultural products, the commandeering of farm animals, forced employment in transportation and agriculture, and, not least of all, deportation and forced relocation.[5]

However, paradoxically, because of both the state's lack of infrastructural capacity and the CUP government's political-ideological preferences, these demands made the war as destructive on the home front as the defeats on the battlefield. First of all, although it was theoretically universal and had underwent a major reform after the Balkan defeat, the Ottoman conscription system still remained somewhat incomplete, especially in the Kurdish and Arab-populated regions, where tribal structures were dominant and the state's demographic control mechanism was poor. Moreover, although conscription became definitely more inclusive after the 1909 regulations, the ethno-religious hierarchy of the Ottoman polity was still reflected in it, which resulted in discriminatory practices such as employing the "unreliable" elements, mostly non-Muslim Ottoman males, not in the armed units, but in the unarmed labor battalions.[6] Secondly, the mobilization of material resources always haunted the CUP government, as the question of how to feed an enormous army on the battlefront without simultaneously jeopardizing the livelihood of civilians was no easy task. This problem, which was further augmented by the Entente's naval blockade, particularly hit Syria and amounted to famine, where the term "*seferberlik*" became associated

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3 Ian F. W. Beckett, "Total War," in Arthur Marwick, Clive Emsley and Wendy Simpson (eds.), *Total War and Historical Change: Europe, 1914–1955* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), 32.

4 Mehmet Beşikçi, *Between Voluntarism and Resistance: The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 1-2.

5 Yiğit Akın. *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 3-4.

6 Mehmet Beşikçi, "Mobilizing Military Labor in the Age of Total War: Ottoman Conscription before and during the Great War," in Erik J. Zürcher (ed.), *Fighting for a Living: A Comparative History of Military Labour, 1500-2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 535-568.

with starvation in the collective memory of the First World War.[7] In his diary, Private Ihsan Turjman, an Arab Ottoman conscript who served in the Jerusalem Logistics Department of the Ottoman Fourth Army, described the civilian residents' hard struggle with food scarcity and widespread diseases on the home front as an "internal war."[8] As Yiğit Akın has demonstrated, the recruitment of both able-bodied men and draft animals from villages to serve in the army remarkably decreased the agricultural productivity throughout the empire, with the area under cultivation declining from 60 million *dönüm* in 1914 to just 24 million by 1916.[9] Thirdly, the conditions of wartime mobilization created an opportunity for the CUP government to interpret the security measure of deportation as a much larger project to redesign the empire demographically. As is known, this radically nationalist policy primarily targeted the Armenian population, and, to a lesser extent, the Ottoman Greeks and Kurds in Anatolia, and the Arabs in the Ottoman Middle East. Initially presented as a security measure to cover the rear of the Caucasus front, the deportation of Armenians quickly included the entire Anatolian Armenian population; in a process of escalating violence, their deportation practically turned into their annihilation from Anatolia as a result of massacres on their way, as well as diseases, malnutrition and environmental hardships.[10] In this sense, deportation represented perhaps the most extreme form of interfering in social life by the state during the war.

Although the war enlarged state authority over society, it also made the state more dependent on the people for its war effort. Members of Ottoman society were not entirely passive subjects and helpless victims in this interaction with the state. People's own expectations also shaped their responses to the state's mobilizing policies targeting them; these responses sometimes included resistance, as well as voluntary participation in these policies. For example, although Ottoman conscription definitely became more extended and inclusive during the Great War, resistance to it in the form of both draft evasions and desertions was also common; the number of deserters from the Ottoman army so increased in the last of the war that roaming deserters in the countryside turned this military problem into a much larger public order issue.[11] On the home front, the government's

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7 Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 19-38.

8 "We face both a general war and an internal war." Salim Tamari (ed.), *Year of the Locust: Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 154.

9 Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 130-131.

10 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

11 Mehmet Beşikçi, "When a Military Problem Became a Social Issue: Desertions and Deserters in the Ottoman Empire in World War I," in M. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (eds.), *War and Collapse World War I and the Ottoman State* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2016), 480-491.

requisition orders were not always applied with the voluntary support of local people; they sometimes created a conflict between the state and the people, which led to such acts of resistance as hiding draft animals from the authorities.[12] Again on the home front, although ordinary Ottoman women were among the main sufferers of the war, this does not mean that they remained passive victims. As Elif Mahir Metinsoy has discussed, they struggled for their survival and economic rights, and thus became participants of Ottoman everyday politics through a variety of ways ranging from petitioning authorities to open demonstrations.[13] In this sense, the Ottoman state's mobilizing policies during the war always involved a dual attempt at accommodating support and containing resistance. Motivated by the political and pragmatic outlook of the CUP government, this dual attempt led to the formation of new bonds between the state and the Muslim and Turkish-speaking Anatolian population, while it worked to marginalize certain social groups which were not welcome to this new consensus, such as non-Muslim communities of Anatolia, and also the Arab population to a certain extent.[14]

The end of the First World War was as painful as the war itself. As Mustafa Aksakal has emphasized, the war incinerated the Empire's social fabric, assuring that it would take perhaps a century or more before the the Middle East could recover from the destruction.[15] Though the Ottoman Empire was dissolved, the fall of the Ottomans hardly brought stability and peace to the post-Ottoman territories. As a reaction to the invasions in Anatolia right after the Mondros Armistice of October 30, 1918, a nationalist resistance movement was organized in Ankara under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The Ankara government had to wage a war of liberation, also called the National Struggle, which not only achieved to expel the invasion, but also to replace the harsh Treaty of Sèvres with the Treaty of Lausanne, culminating in the foundation of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923.

In the Arab provinces, European imperialism replaced Turkish rule, and the Arabs found themselves divided into a number of new states under British and French domination. The European colonial presence, in turn, prevented the development of truly civilian administrations in most of the region, which might have acted in terms of Arab national aspirations. The political vacuum created by these circumstances has allowed the foundation of the State of Israel and the expulsion of most of the Palestinian people from their homeland, creating a major source of regional instability lasting to the present day.

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12 Akin, *When the War Came Home*, Chapter 4.

13 Elif Mahir Metinsoy, *Ottoman Women during World War I: Everyday Experiences, Politics, and Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2.

14 Beşikçi, *Between Voluntarism and Resistance*, 1-2.

15 Mustafa Aksakal, "The Ottoman Empire," in Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Volume 1: Global War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 459.

In this regard, the memory of the First World War was, and is, as diverse and complicated as the complex and painful reconstruction process in the post-war Middle East. There is no single collective memory of the First World War in the post-Ottoman societies in the region. Personal memories of returning soldiers from battlefields and memories of civilian sufferers on the home front, together with memories from the Allied occupations, have been constantly reshuffled with the post-Ottoman nation-states' politically and ideologically loaded official histories of the war. Whereas these nation-states followed different paths after 1918, the drastic social, political and demographic changes that occurred during the First World War, as well as the trauma of the defeat, fundamentally defined their character ever since. This common legacy calls for an integrated history of the Ottoman war experience in the Middle East.

Within the framework outlined above, this edited volume aims to contribute to the social history of the Ottoman experience in the First World War. The idea of this edited volume originated from the International Conference, "Not All Quiet on the Ottoman Fronts: Neglected Perspectives on a Global War, 1914-1918," that was held at İstanbul Bilgi University on April 8-12, 2014 by the Orient-Institut Istanbul and the History Foundation in Turkey. The starting point of the conference was that the First World War was the central founding experience of the twentieth century, bringing about fundamental changes in the global order, social relations and cultural perceptions; thus it needs to be discussed in relation to various segments of society and on several levels, Marking the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, the conference's main goal was to shed new light on the impact of the war on the Ottoman state and society as reflected in the new currents of historiography, which have begun to eschew one-dimensional nationalist frameworks and instead present multilayered treatments of the experiences, results, and consequences of the war. In this direction, as its main focal points the conference chose three themes as "organizing the war", "experiencing the war" and "speaking about the war".

There has been a series of publications in regard to the Middle Eastern dimension of the Great War owing to the occasion of the centenary of this event, which also include numerous edited volumes and conference proceedings.[16] Also, the

[16] Some titles of the edited volumes include, in the order of publication date, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch, eds., *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2014); Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem and Maurus Reinkowski (eds.), *World War I and the End of the Ottomans. From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015); Yavuz and Ahmad (eds.), *War and Collapse*. Looking at published conference proceedings and exhibitions, we encounter titles such as Aynur Yavuz Akengin and Selcan Koçaslan (eds.), *International Symposium on the World War I on Its Centenary: November 3-5, 2014, Budapest* (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2015); Edhem Eldem, Sinan Kuneralp et al. (eds.), *Propaganda and War: the Allied Front during the First World War; Omer M. Koç Collection* [24 December 2014-02 April 2015] (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı; Vehbi Koç Universitesi, 2014); Zekeriya Türkmen and Serkan Er (eds.), *Understanding the First World War at its Centenary, from 1914 to 2014: International*

relatively intensive utilization of the State Ottoman Archives (BOA) as well as the Turkish Military Archives (ATASE) in recent times has allowed researchers to compile fresh studies concerning hitherto unknown social and economic impacts as experienced by the Ottoman populations during the war. These publications have the merit of covering the main issues and problems of warfare and their impact upon social and economic life. In this context, subjects such as demographic engineering, massacres and ethnic cleansing have received attention, as reflected in these studies.[17]

This volume, on the other hand, focuses on more specific topics which touch upon concrete individual lives and discusses them within economic, demographic, gender, and artistic frameworks. The reader will encounter diverse individuals ranging from ordinary soldiers, peasants, women, orphans to artists who had to struggle for survival within the brutal conditions of a total war.

This edited volume consists of revised and improved article versions of some of the conference presentations. Also, few articles on thematic basis have been requested from non-participant historians. The selection of the conference papers has been made according to the main themes mentioned above. As a result, the volume is similarly composed of there parts as 1) wartime mobilization policies and their social and economic aspects; 2) demographic changes, minorities and gender in the war; 3) memory, representation and the end of the war.

The book opens with Erik-Jan Zürcher's chapter, "What was different about the Ottoman War?" which is based on his keynote speech at the same conference. Navigating between the global and regional levels of the war, Zürcher deals with the critical question of how the Ottoman war experience differed substantially from the experience of the other belligerent states in Europe and their societies. This question leads Zürcher to draw a significant comparative outlook, focusing on five major points as the outbreak of war, total or industrial warfare, the effects of the war on the population, the end of the war, and the political legacy of the war. Without losing the global context encompassing the Ottoman experience and without disregarding its similarities with other belligerent societies, Zürcher argues that the way the people of the Ottoman Empire experienced the First World War and its immediate aftermath differs considerably from the way the war was experienced in Europe. It can be said that Zürcher's comparative outlook

Symposium: November 20-21, 2014, Istanbul Turkey (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Komutanlığı Stratejik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü, 2015); *Uluslararası Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın 100. Yılı Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2017).

17 Some of these titles include, again in the order of publication date, Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *The Land of Aching Hearts. The Middle East in the Great War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, *The First World War in the Middle East* (London: Hurst & Company, 2014); Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*; Ryan Gingeras, *The Fall of the Sultanate. The Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Akın, *When the War Came Home.*

provides a sort of guiding framework for the rest of the chapters focusing on various aspects of Ottoman experience.

The first part, concentrating on wartime mobilization, consists of three contributions of Yiğit Akın, Yaşar Tolga Cora, and Hilmar Kaiser. Akın's article, titled "Altruistic Soldiers, Blood-Sucking Profiteers: Social Relations of Sacrifice in the Ottoman Empire During and After the First World War," presents a glaring dichotomy of the propagandistic official discourse of the self-sacrificing soldier and society for the sake of the nation and motherland on the one hand and the amassing of wealth around a small group of speculators and hoarders at the expense of the population on the other. Here Akın provides realistic examples from contemporary novels concerning the exploitation of common people fighting for the motherland by shameless profiteers. In contrast to the CUP's propaganda of a unified nation symbolized by "Little Mehmet" (*Mehmetçik*), these novels reflect a deeply divided society. One common theme depicts the tragic fight of starving urban women for search of food, while wealthy speculators exploit them mercilessly. Another theme describes *nouveaux riches* who lead extravagant and lavish lives; when officers who return from the trenches observe in Istanbul the luxurious lifestyle of profiteers harvesting from the misery of the masses, experience deep disillusion and regret the sacrifices they made at the frontline.

Cora in his "Towards a Social History of the Ottoman War Economy: Manufacturing and Armenian Forced Skilled-Laborers" examines the relations between genocidal violence against Armenians and the constant need for their productive capacity especially as artisans through focusing on the individual stories of Mariam Uzunian, Srpuhi Chukurian, Yeghia Torosian, who were forced to serve the Ottoman army in order to survive. Cora analyzes the tensions between the need for Armenian skilled labor for manufacturing and the government's genocidal policies. It is revealed that these tensions led to policies ranging from keeping the minimal number of skilled laborers for work after a selection process to compromise with Armenian artisans, particularly after their conversion and with the requirement to teach the trade to Muslims in order to Turkify the economy.

The third article of this part, Kaiser's "The Ottoman Fourth Army's Orphanage Policy, 1915-1918," discusses the efforts of officials, Armenian philanthropic initiatives and missionaries in Greater Syria to provide humanitarian aid to those Armenian deportees who survived the massacres in Anatolia. The commander of the Fourth Army, Djemal (Cemal) Pasha, despite being one of the leaders of the CUP, opposed the policy of Talaat Bey (Pasha) to massacre the Armenians. As a result of this opposition, Djemal Pasha opened orphanages for Armenian children, financed these through the Fourth Army's budget, and enabled western and Armenian relief workers to operate under his jurisdiction. Kaiser argues that in contrast to the efforts of the Unionist and Turkish nationalist Halide Edib Hanim, the director of the Antoura orphanage, to convert Armenian children to Islam and Turkishness, Djemal Pasha succeeded in protecting the Armenian peo-

ple in Greater Syria. As a consequence the former Fourth Army region became a center for an Armenian diaspora which after 1918 served as a basis for Armenian reconstruction efforts.

The second part of the volume, which covers issues related to demographic changes, minorities and gender, include studies of Ayşe Ozil, M. Talha Çiçek, Elif Mahir Metinsoy, Sabine Mangold-Will, and Nikos Sigalas. Ozil's contribution, titled "In the Towns of Western Anatolia at the Time of the Great War: Greek Responses to the Ottoman Boycott and the Forced Population Movement," delves into the responses of the Ottoman Greek subjects of western Anatolia in the face of an economic and demographic campaign raised against them, i.e. the Ottoman economic boycott (1909-1914) and the forced population movement into the interior (1915-1918). Accordingly, war began for Ottoman Greeks several years before belligerents took up arms in 1914. With the rise of Turkish and Greek nationalisms and the growing political struggles over the continuously contracting imperial borders, the Ottoman Empire became the site of new forms of tension and violence. Both the boycott and the deportations culminated in social turmoil, demographic upheaval, and physical destruction, eventually leading to the Population Exchange (1923).

In his "Food for Liberty, Tolerance for Loyalty: the Ottomans and the Druze of Syria during World War I," Talha Çiçek elaborates on the surprising situation of the rural Druze and Bedouin tribes and peasants of Greater Syria, who, in visible contrast to the city dwellers, enjoyed an extensive liberty during the war period. The war-like characteristics of these populations as well as the potentiality of their mobilization for the Entente cause constituted a potential danger in the eyes of the military administration of Djemal Pasha. In addition, they produced plenty amount of cereals and remarkably contributed to the feeding of the cities and the army. Due to the Ottoman policy to please the Druze community in particular, they remained immune to Djemal Pasha's social engineering projects. In turn, the Druzes and a significant part of the Bedouins proved to be loyal to the Sublime Porte throughout the war period.

The third article of this part, Elif Mahir Metinsoy's "Ordinary Ottoman Women during World War I: the Response of Soldiers' Families to the War Mobilization," explores the radical transformation of Ottoman women's status in terms of their incorporation into jobs previously reserved only for men. As a consequence, they acquired new educational opportunities and founded new associations, which both assisted war mobilization and Ottoman women's movement. However, this mass participation of women in public life went together with sufferings such as economic difficulties, poverty, starvation and a series of violence originating from both Ottomans and foreigners. In addition to these challenges, those women whose husbands were sent to the front and therefore officially named as "soldiers' families," were forced to fight with the bureaucracy and resist official encroachments to defend their economic rights and security. These conditions

transformed ordinary Ottoman women into active agents of the war or at least an important factor to take into consideration by decision makers.

Sabine Mangold-Will in her "A different kind of 'Asienkämpfer': German Women at the Ottoman Fronts during World War I" analyzes women who experienced the Great War in a foreign country, and therefore in a transnational social context. By doing this Will inquires about German women's individual motives and motivations to go to the front or to take part in war service in the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, German women participated in war in the Middle East because of their drive to expand their scope of action, their social prestige, their sphere of influence and therefore their need for emancipation. The impact of the experiences of German women in the Ottoman fronts provided them a new sense of self confidence, which in some individual examples even led them to join the National Socialist movement.

The last contribution of this part, Nikos Sigalas' study titled "How the Greek Orthodox Population of Giresun was not Displaced: An Inquiry about the Politics of the Rear Front, the State and the Society during World War I," discusses cases of historical agency which can overcome ideological lines, particularly in cases where civil rule and military administration overlap, or centrally taken decisions and local politics conflict with each other. In addition, the CUP with its different fractions and people belonging to different social groups nurtured specific interests which could be either conflicting or entangled. These rather complex conditions enabled individuals such as the Third Army Commander Vehip Pasha to resist to carry out the order of the central government as well as the local administration to deport the Greek Orthodox population of Giresun. This development "saved" this population group "at least" until the end of the Great War.

The final part of the volume, comprised of studies dealing with issues related to memory, representation, and the end of the war, are edited by Ayşe Polat and Issam Nassar. Polat's article, titled "The Ottoman Religious and Moral Censorship in Post-World War I Istanbul," discloses the centrality of moral and religious factors beyond immediate governmental and state-structural political transformations in the post-World War I Istanbul. The Council on the Inspection of Printed Qur'ans and Islamic Religious Publications and the Abode of Islamic Wisdom, both attached to the Office of the Sheikh al-Islam, inspected Islamic publications and governed matters perceived as pertaining to public morality. During the Armistice period these bodies became much more active in censoring printed material as well as overseeing public morality. Despite the presence of Allied occupation and political crisis, the vitality of these bureaucratic bodies displays the priority given by Ottoman governmental and civil actors to social and moral issues in the public sphere. Having lost political sovereignty, the Ottoman administrators tried to carve out the religio-moral realm as a niche to claim sovereignty in other realms against the Allied powers in Istanbul.

The last contribution of this part of the volume, also the final article, is Issam Nassar's "The Pasha's Official Photographer(s). The Picturing of the Fourth Army's Suez Campaign." This study examines the photographic collections of the Palestinian photographer Khalil Raad and the American artist John Whiting; these collections depict Djemal Pasha's portrait photos as well as glimpses from his close environment and the Fourth Army's Suez Campaign. Nassar by placing some of these photos into their historical contexts and comparing with some similar contemporary pictures undertakes an hermeneutical approach to evaluate and interpret them. By doing this he tries to extricate a psychological portrait of Djemal Pasha.

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What was Different about the Ottoman War?[1]

Erik Jan Zürcher

We can approach the immense historical phenomenon of World War I on different levels: Global, national, regional and even local.

On one level World War I, or the "Great War" as it was known until 1939, certainly was a world war in the sense of a global conflict. The war in the Middle East shows this very clearly, with Englishmen, Scotsmen, Australians, New Zealanders, Indians, Frenchmen and French Africans, Russians, Cossacks, Arabs and Armenians fighting Prussians, Bavarians, Austrians, Turks, Kurds, Circassians and Arabs.

On the other extreme, the war also had a very strong local or regional character: the war in Flanders' fields was very similar for soldiers on either side of the front line, be they German, British or Belgian, but very different from the fighting between Austrians and Italians in the Alps or even from the war experienced by French and German soldiers in the Vosges. In terms of logistics, equipment, intensity, food and health the Mesopotamian front was vastly different from that in Gallipoli.

Between the global and the regional is the level of the single state, and it is with that that I should like to concentrate on. The question I should like to ask is this: In which respects did the Ottoman war experience differ substantially from the experience of the other belligerent states in Europe and their societies? My argument will be that indeed the way the people of the Ottoman Empire experienced World War I and its immediate aftermath differs considerably from the way the war was experienced in Europe. The differences, I think, can be summed up under five headings: 1. The outbreak of war; 2. Total or industrial warfare 3. The effects of the war on the population; 4. The end and 5. the political legacy of the war.

The Outbreak of War

The way the outbreak of war is remembered, and in fact: has been remembered since 1918, in Europe is primarily as the very sudden and ultimately traumatic end to a golden age, a summer that suddenly turned into winter, the crumbling of

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[1] This article is based on Erik-Jan Zürcher's keynote speech at the International Conference, "Not All Quiet on the Ottoman Fronts: Neglected Perspectives on a Global War, 1914-1918," that was held at İstanbul Bilgi University on April 8-12, 2014 by the Orient-Institut Istanbul and the History Foundation in Turkey. It is first published as Pera-Blätter 27, Orient-Institut Istanbul, 2014 in English and Turkish. We thank the author for his permission to publish the text here again.

Barbara Tuchman's Edwardian "Proud Tower".[2] Lord Grey's famous dictum that 'the lamps are going out all over Europe and we will not see them lit again in our lifetime' has summarized the feeling that retrospectively defined the experience of August 1914 for a generation.[3] The outbreak of war is seen as sudden, unexpected, unprecedented and on the individual level as life-changing. This view goes back, of course, to the actual experience of those who took part, particularly the officers. Although great power rivalry had created a climate of almost continuous tension in Europe, few people expected a general European war and when it broke out, ending a period of over forty years of peace in Western and Central Europe, even fewer people expected it to last for more than three or four months. The reality of a long drawn-out conflict fought in the trenches therefore came as a great shock. This is reflected in all of the memorable works of literature that came out of the war, from Sassoon and Graves to Celine, Hemingway and Remarque. The image of the sharp contrast is persistent and also informs a relatively recent novel like *Birdsong* of Sebastian Faulks.[4]

This memory contrasts sharply with the way the proclamation of war was actually experienced in Europe in July-August 1914: the famous "spirit of 1914" or war enthusiasm. For a long time, the idea that this war enthusiasm was universal, dominated historiography. It is still part of the collective memory of the war and is part of every popular historical narrative on the war. However, since the 1990s, quite a lot of revisionist historical research has been done that has substantially altered the picture of universal joy at the outbreak of war. Now that the dust has settled over the debate, the new consensus seems to be that war enthusiasm was largely an urban middle class phenomenon and that its strength has been overrated because of the strength of nationalist propaganda, but that it was nevertheless a reality in August 1914. There is after all ample pictorial evidence, both in photographs and on film that war was celebrated by masses of people in the capitals of Europe.[5]

Neither the later perception of the sudden ending of a "golden" era of peace and prosperity nor the contemporary one of enthusiasm for war, is relevant to an understanding of the Ottoman Empire experience of the outbreak of war.

For the Ottomans the outbreak of war in 1914 was experienced in a completely different manner. In the first place it did not end a period of peace and prosperity, quite the contrary. It came hard upon the heels of a series of small but bloody conflicts (Yemen, Albania, Crete) and two major wars, that with Italy in 1911-

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2 Barbara Tuchman, *The Proud Tower. The World Before the War 1890–1914* (London: Macmillan, 1966).

3 The remark may actually be part of that retrospection itself, as it was first mentioned in Grey's memoirs, published in 1925.

4 Sebastian Faulks, *Birdsong. A Novel of Love and War* (London: Hutchinson, 1993).

5 For a survey of the debate, see: Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War. Between Volunteerism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 34-37.

1912 and the Balkan War, or wars, in 1912-1913. The Italian war led to the loss of the empire's African possessions and ultimately also to the loss of the Dodecanese (although under the Peace Treaty of Ouchy these were to be returned by Italy to the Ottomans – something which, due to World War I, never happened). It was a serious setback, but in no way can be compared to the traumatic effect of the Balkan War.

The outcome of the Balkan War that broke out in October 1912 was a tremendous shock for the Ottoman Muslim population. Of course, nationalist agitation supported by Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia had been going on for decades and in fact the threat that the Ottomans might lose Macedonia had been the strongest motivation for the Young Turk revolution of 1908. The Ottoman army was continuously engaged in counterinsurgency operations sanctioned by the 1909 law against brigandage and the idea that this situation might lead to war with the neighbouring states in the Balkan was not, of course, far-fetched. But any such conflict was seen in terms of one between a huge and powerful empire and a couple of small states.

Just before the war optimism reigned. There was great confidence in the army that had been reformed with German help in the preceding years. The military manoeuvres and parades of 1911 had been reported on very favourably by European observers. When war was declared, a famous cartoon of the period shows Nazım Pasha, the Ottoman War Minister, ordering 800.000 tickets to Sofia, Belgrade, Athens and Cetinje at the ticket office.[6] It was therefore a tremendous shock when the Ottoman armies were defeated within a month and all of European Turkey was lost, with the exception of a few fortified towns. When the war finally ended with the Treaty of Constantinople in September 1913, the Ottomans had lost the vast majority of their European possessions. This was particularly traumatic for three reasons: Firstly, the lost territories had been a core area of the empire since the fifteenth century; Secondly, the majority of the political, military and cultural elite hailed from the area (this was particularly true for the Committee of Union and Progress, which "carried a Macedonian birth certificate" as Tarık Zafer Tunaya has noted)[7] and thirdly, the conquest of European Turkey caused up to 400.000 Muslims to become refugees.

After the peace treaty differences between the Ottoman Empire and Greece over the possession of the Aegean islands adjacent to the Anatolian coast (Lemnos, Lesbos, Chios) persisted and there was widespread fear that war would break out again.

So, where for most of Europe, war was something that had not been experienced for more than a generation (if one does not count the many colonial wars),

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6 Tobias Heinzelmann, *Die Balkankrise in der Osmanischen Karikatur* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1999), 221.

7 Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler. Cilt 3: İttihat ve Terakki Bir Çağın, bir Kuşağın, bir Partinin Tarihi* (Istanbul: Hürriyet Yayınları, 1989), 13.

in the Ottoman Empire it was already a reality. The Balkan Wars had directly confronted the Ottoman public with the hardships of war: mobilization, defeat, and also: hunger, a cholera epidemic and a mass of displaced persons. In the spring of 1914, as Mustafa Aksakal has shown, the expectation that war might resume between Greece and the empire was still widespread.[8] When World War I came, it was therefore the third war in quick succession. For the Ottomans, therefore, the outbreak of war in 1914 could not be seen retrospectively as a sudden end to a glorious summer and the war-peace dichotomy that characterizes the "Great War in modern memory" (to paraphrase Paul Fussell)[9] in Europe could never work.

Neither was the "Spirit of 1914" much in evidence. With two military defeats in quick succession behind it, there was no perceptible war enthusiasm in the Ottoman Empire. The urban population expressed genuine patriotic feeling on two occasions in 1914. The first was when the British government impounded the two battleships that were being built for the Ottomans on British yards. This was a very sensitive issue because part of the cost of the battleships had been covered by voluntary contributions to the Ottoman Fleet Society from the public, which therefore had followed the construction of the ships with great interest. The ships were urgently needed to counterbalance the dominance of the Greek navy that had been demonstrated in the Balkan Wars. So the British decision in early August gave rise to widespread anger and demonstrations.

The decision by the Ottoman government in September to abolish unilaterally the 350-year old system of the Capitulations, which granted fiscal and legal privileges to foreign subjects and by the early twentieth century had created a semi-colonial situation in the empire, was apparently also greeted with genuine and spontaneous joy on the part of the Muslim population.

This was in sharp contrast with the public reaction to the declaration of war (and of Jihad) at the end of October 1914. Public demonstrations in favour of war took place, but, as Mehmet Beşikçi has shown, they were all organized by the ruling Committee of Union and Progress and its affiliated organizations, like the Turkish Hearths, the National Defence Committee or the Fleet Society. Attendance was small and in some cases street vendors, porters and beggars were paid to take part. The Ottoman population knew no "war enthusiasm" in 1914.[10] It accepted the inevitable.

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8 Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914. The Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 42-56.

9 Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

10 Beşikçi, *Between Voluntarism and Resistance*, 63-92.

Industrial and Total War

There is some debate whether World War I was the first "industrial war" in the sense that it was waged with industrial means and that industrial production capacity ultimately decided the outcome. Some give this doubtful honour to the American civil war fifty years earlier, but however that may be, there can be no doubt that World War I was waged with industrial means. Whether we look at arms production, the need to feed and clothe the troops, the provision of medical supplies or the transport needs of armies of millions, all of this demanded the involvement of industry. Industrial development in the Ottoman Empire was still minimal, however and we can therefore characterize the empire as an agricultural society involved in an industrial war.

A few statistics make this abundantly clear. Industry in 1914 was of course still largely dependent on coal as energy source. Now let us look at the coal production of the belligerents in the early 20th century. The numbers for 1900 (millions of metric tons in this case) tell their own story. Coal production of the United Kingdom was 381 times that of the Ottoman Empire and Russia's coal production was 27 times bigger. There was no steel production on an industrial scale in the Ottoman Empire at all.[11]

The result of the lack of industrialization was that almost all armaments and certainly all railway engines, trucks, cars, artillery guns and shells, airplanes and wireless equipment had to be imported from Germany or Austria. Rail transport thus was crucial, both for moving the troops and for supplying them. Here too, the Ottoman Empire was at a great disadvantage. The United Kingdom had 5.6 times the mileage of the Ottoman Empire, in spite of having a surface area twenty times smaller. Russia had a railway network eleven times the size of the Ottoman one. In terms of density (km of track per square km of surface, even colonial India had five times the density the Ottoman Empire.

In addition the entire Ottoman rail network was single-track, some crucial passages like the Taurus tunnels had not yet been completed and part of the network was narrow gauge. The result was that material coming from Germany had to be loaded and unloaded a total of eight times before it reached the Palestine front and that divisions on average spent six weeks on the road (four of them marching) before they reached the front. Lack of transport also meant that it was very difficult to feed the troops and the population in general. Syria and Lebanon went through the worst famine in their history while Anatolia had a wheat surplus.[12]

While it is of course true that Austro-Hungary and Russia also lagged far behind France, Britain, the United States and Germany in terms of industrialization,

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11 These and following data are taken from Brian Mitchell, *International Historical Statistics. Europe 1750–1988* (New York: Stockton Press, 1992).

12 Erik Jan Zürcher, "Between Death and Desertion. The Experience of Ottoman Soldier in World War I," *Turcica* 28 (1996), 235-258.

the situation of the Ottoman Empire in this respect was incomparable. Where its main enemies (France, Britain and Russia) together accounted for 26 percent of world industrial output in 1913 (and the USA for 35 percent), the Ottoman Empire accounted for under one percent.[13] So, industrial warfare from the start was a game the empire was very ill-positioned to play.

Next to the term "industrial war" the term "total war" is also often used to describe World War I. The concept of "total war" involving the mobilization of all human and material resources of a country for the war effort was popularized by Colmar von der Golz in his 1883 *Das Volk in Waffen*, which not only glorifies war, but also basically denies the fundamental difference between army and civilians in modern war. Apart from a huge logistical and administrative effort, waging "total war" also necessitated an effective and pervasive propaganda effort to involve and motivate society at large. Germany, France and Britain were very effective at this by making use of the press, posters, and film. The invention of the term "home front" by the British government was itself a propagandist masterstroke and perhaps the ultimate vindication of von der Golz's ideas on total war. As Erol Köroğlu has shown, the Ottoman Empire with an illiteracy of over ninety percent was not able to sustain such a propaganda effort.[14] The use of religion to mobilize the population could compensate for this to a certain extent, but not enough.[15]

So in terms of the industrial or total nature of the war the experience of the Ottoman Empire was significantly different from that of the European belligerents. This is also true for the scale of the war. In relative terms (as percentage of the population) the number of war casualties was high. The percentage of those who lost their lives was second highest after that of Serbia in World War I, mainly due to the large number of soldiers who died of disease. But in absolute terms the campaigns fought by the Ottoman army were of a different order of magnitude from those fought on the Western front. The only campaign that came close was that of Gallipoli, but even that was three times smaller than the Somme-campaign in the summer of 1916 in terms of numbers of soldiers committed. At the time of the Third Battle of Gaza the Ottoman army had less than 35.000 soldiers on the Palestine front.[16] In the same year 1917 Nivelle put 1.2 million French troops in the field for his ill-fated offensive. – over thirty times as many!

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13 http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/indrevtabs1.asp (accessed 21.09.2014).

14 Erol Köroğlu, *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918). Propagandadan Milli Kimlik İnşasına* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004).

15 Beşikçi, *Between Voluntarism and Resistance*, 72-80.

16 M. Larcher, *La guerre turque dans la guerre mondiale* (Paris: Etienne Chiron, 1926), appendix 48.

Demographic Engineering

The policies of the Ottoman towards its own citizens also distinguish it from its European counterparts. All belligerent countries took measures against communities and individuals whose loyalty was doubted. There were internment camps and prisons for "enemy aliens" (even if they had lived in the country all their lives) and for conscientious objectors. Deportations of tens of thousands occurred in German-occupied Belgium and France as well as in Russian-occupied Galicia. Russia also expulsed national minorities from their own territories.[17] But the Ottoman policies were on a different scale altogether. In no other belligerent country was the war employed to fundamentally re-engineer the demographic make-up.

The Balkan War defeat and the subsequent forced removal of a large part of the Muslim population from the Balkans convinced the Young Turk leadership in Istanbul that Anatolia now was the "Turk's last stand" and that it needed to be secured.

Even before the outbreak of war, in May-June 1914, the Young Turks organized a campaign to expel about 160.000 Greek Orthodox citizens from Thrace and the western shore of Anatolia. This campaign was partly inspired by fear that war with Greece might restart and that the west coast would prove vulnerable. Successive Young Turk delegations had toured the area in previous years and already pointed out that the Greek Orthodox communities had a dominant position in the economy. They were accused of disloyalty and qualified as a "tumor that needed to be removed." When that removal took place in June 1914 refugees from the Balkans who had been brought to the area by the government played a role in the violence. When the Greek Orthodox had been forced to flee, their properties were given over to the refugees.[18]

In 1914 the hands of the government were still tied in the east because in February it had been forced by the European powers, under a great deal of Russian pressure, to agree to a far-reaching programme of reform in the "Armenian" provinces, which were intended to improve law and order and in particular to solve the conflicts over Armenian-owned real estate that had been seized by Kurdish tribes and immigrants from the Caucasus and Bulgaria who had been resettled in the East. In August the government suspended this programme and after war broke out in October it was fully repudiated.

What happened next was a combination of planning and event-driven improvisation. Young Turk leaders such as Talaat had clear ideas about the way Anatolia should be restructured in demographic terms. From the nationalist agitation in the Balkans they had learned the importance of statistics and as Minister of the

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17 Alan Kramer, "Martial Law and War Crimes," in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich and Irina Renz, *Brill's Encyclopedia of the First World War* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 220-230.

18 Emre Erol, "Organised Chaos as Diplomatic Ruse and Demographic Weapon," *TSEG The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 10/4 (2013), 66-96.

Interior, Talaat, gave instructions that Armenians should be relocated so that they would nowhere constitute more than five percent of the population. After the defeat against the Russians at Sarıkamış (December 1914) and especially when the British and French attacked the Dardanelles (from March 1915) the Young Turks started a programme of deportations of Armenians to the Syrian desert, first from the areas close to the eastern front, then all over Anatolia. The deportations were accompanied by mass executions of Armenian males and ultimately may have cost some 800.000 civilians their lives.

There is an abundant literature on many aspects of the Armenian genocide, but for the purposes of this chapter the important thing is to note that as a result of the demographic policies of the Committee of Union and Progress Anatolia was turned into a solidly Muslim land with a completely different ethnic make-up than it had only a few years earlier. This laid the basis for the Turkish nation-state as it would emerge after the war. The process through which a state starts to see a sizeable part of its own citizens as enemy aliens and then uses its powers to destroy them is not mirrored in any of the other belligerent countries, although, of course, the colonial powers had sometimes used similar means on their subject populations in the colonies, albeit on a smaller scale.[19]

The Peace Treaty

All post-World War I treaties left a traumatic imprint on the defeated countries that were affected. In Germany, the Treaty of Versailles right from the start was understood as a "Diktat", a term much used by German nationalists in the Nineteen Twenties. And they were right, of course: it was a dictated arrangement imposed on the defeated Germans without any serious negotiation between victors and losers. The Sèvres Treaty fits into the series of imposed treaties concluded in Paris.

The treaty also resembled the other products of the Paris Peace Conference in that it was a vengeful treaty. The treaties were not just attempts to bring about a lasting peace in the postwar world, they were also instruments of retaliation and retribution. The most famous instance of this, of course, are the war guilt clause and the enormous war indemnities included in the Versailles treaty, but the proceedings of the London and San Remo conferences of 1920 as well as the memoirs of participants make it abundantly clear that "punishing the Turk" was also a consideration in the case of the Sèvres Treaty.

It can also be questioned to what extent the post-war treaties really adhered to the ideal of self-determination of nations that had been enshrined in President

[19] Even the German suppression of the Herero and Nama in Southwest Africa, recognized by the United Nations as the first genocide of the 20th century, made 80.000 victims at most.

Wilson's Fourteen Points and in the charter of the League of Nations. Clearly, blocking the preference of the Austrians for unification with Germany, expressed in a legitimate referendum, was in direct contravention of this principle. Decisions on the "national" borders favoured the claims of the former "subject peoples" in every case: Poles, Slovaks, Romanians and Serbs. This is also true for the Ottoman Empire. The awarding to Greek administration of the whole area from Scalanova (Kuşadası) in the south to Kemer on the Gulf of Edremit in the north, including the city of Izmir rested on recognition of the Greek claim that in this whole area Greek Orthodox had formed a majority before expulsions of 1914. The same is true for the handover of Thrace to Greece. Historical statistics indicate that this claim was exaggerated and that Greek Orthodox formed a majority or plurality only in parts of the *sancak* of Izmir (Ayvalık, Foça, the Eritrea peninsula) as well as in some coastal areas of Thrace. Both the British High Commissioner in Istanbul, De Robeck, and Foreign Minister Curzon recognized that the decisions on Thrace and Izmir clearly contravened the principle of self-determination.[20]

In the east, the treaty left the establishment of the exact borders between the Ottoman Empire and Armenia to the mediation of President Wilson, but essentially the size of the new Armenia (which was to include large parts of the provinces of Trabzon, Erzurum, Bitlis and Van) was based on claims of a pre-war Armenian majority, although it is clear that even before the deportations and mass killings of Armenians in 1915 they had formed a majority in only very few rural districts (*kazas*) as well as in the city of Van. So, inasmuch as these new borders of the Ottoman Empire were legitimized on the basis of self-determination, they were very questionable, but in that respect they were not fundamentally different from, say, the new Polish, Czech, Hungarian or Romanian borders.

To sum up: all of these treaties were unilaterally imposed, they were vengeful and the borders they drew were unjust. What makes the Sèvres Treaty different is its semi-colonial character. The treaty not only took away large territories from the empire and limited its future armed forces, it also placed what remained of the empire under tutelage.

After much debate, the allies had decided to leave Constantinople and the Straits in Ottoman hands, but Ottoman authority was severely impaired. The Straits were fully demilitarized and placed under an international commission with full authority over anything to do with shipping through the Straits, On this commission Britain, France, Italy, Russia, the United States and Japan were represented by a commissioner each with two votes, Greece and Romania had one vote and the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria would have one vote only if and when they would have become members of the League of Nations. The sultan and his gov-

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20 Paul C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres. The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974), 268-269.

ernment would remain in Istanbul, but the city was held hostage as well. The allies reserved the right to take it away if the Ottomans did not faithfully execute the treaty (article 36).

Then there were the exclusive rights of economic exploitation of the economic resources in Ottoman Anatolia that were granted to Italy in the southwest and to France in the south. These were not a part of the Sèvres Treaty, but France and Italy signed an agreement to respect each other's rights in these areas on May, 11th, 1920. The agreement, which had been kept out of the text of the treaty itself for fear that the Ottomans might refuse to sign, was only made public three months later at the signing of the Treaty in Sèvres on August, 10th.[21]

The capitulations were explicitly restored and would in due course be replaced with a judicial regime drawn up by European legal specialists. All of these articles combined meant that the Ottoman Empire would not only be much reduced but would also revert to a semi-colonial status much worse than had been the case before the war.

Finally, the treaty also endeavoured to undo the demographic and economic changes that the regime of the Young Turks had brought about during the war. Not only did it stipulate protection for the minorities. The Ottoman government also promised resettlement of all those who had been removed since the first of January 1914 and full restitution of all possessions that had been taken over from Greeks and Armenians that had been deported or had left. These possessions also had to be restored to the condition they had been in before the occupants left.[22]

So, while the treaty in many ways is an instrument similar to the other Paris treaties – the codification of a "victor's peace" – here are two elements that definitely distinguish the Sèvres treaty from its sisters: the semi-colonial elements that clearly relegated the Ottoman Empire to a subjugated status, and the effort to redress the internal ethnic and economic policies of the empire.

The End and the Aftermath

The fifth aspect of the Ottoman war experience that differs drastically from that of the European belligerents concerns the way the war ended.

The effects of enormous loss of human life, economic dislocation, inflation, hunger and loss of morale that were felt in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Russia were very much in evidence in the Ottoman Empire too. By 1918 the empire's capacity to wage war was waning fast. However, the popular reaction was very dif-

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21 The agreement was originally known as the Tripartite Agreement as Britain was meant to be a co-signatory. In the end, Curzon decided not to involve Britain in the agreement, which it had helped to shape. (Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres*, 293).

22 According to article 144 of the treaty. Cf: http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/pdf/1920/TS0011.pdf (accessed 22.9.2014)

ferent from that in the other countries. Strikes and mutinies played a key role in forcing the other European states out of the war as well as in the downfall of the monarchist regimes. In February 1917 in Russia, in January 1918 in Germany and Austria-Hungary and again in October 1918 in Germany factory workers staged mass protests and went on strike. These strikes played an important part in the collapse of the imperial regimes and in undermining the war effort. Over a million workers took part in the German strike wave of January 1918 and in Austria and Hungary participation was also very high, with some 700.000 workers striking. In the Ottoman Empire, however, with its low industrialization and small industrial workforce, nothing along these lines occurred. Organized industrial workers in the major urban centers, capable of taking collective action, were a key factor enforcing regime change and were almost completely absent in the Ottoman Empire.

A special case of mass protest closely akin to industrial strikes occurred in 1917-1918 in the form of mutinies by the armies of the central powers and Russia. Mutinies seem to have become widespread in Russian front line units during the winter of 1916-1917 after the Brusilov offensive. In February and March mutinies spread through the Petrograd garrison, men shooting their officers, and the failed Kerenskij offensive of June 1917 encouraged further mutiny. In September 1917, the French suppressed a mutiny by the Russian division on the base of La Courtine behind the western front, and in February 1918 a mutiny affecting the crews of forty ships in the Austrian naval base at Cattaro (Kotor) caused panic in Vienna. The mutiny of the German navy in Kiel and Wilhelmshaven in October 1918 triggered the widespread unrest that brought down the imperial regime in Germany. Within days the sailors had joined forces with striking workers in cities as distant as Cologne, Hannover and Berlin. Mutinies and strikes thus merged into one major movement.

The Ottoman army suffered no major mutinies, although the conditions under which the Ottoman soldier had to fight were probably the most atrocious of all, certainly in terms of provisioning. Ottoman soldiers did not resist in the form of mutinies, but in the form of desertion. At the end of the war the Ottoman army had four deserters for every soldier on the front, a proportion far higher than even the Russian army suffered. Desertion became an enormous problem, forcing the Ottoman government to increase its rural gendarmerie eightfold as armed deserters roamed the countryside.

When the end came, the social unrest and agitation in Russia, Germany, Austria and Hungary led to a radical regime change. The monarchies fell and political power was taken over by well-established political organizations of the Left. In Germany, the Majority Social Democrats together with the more radical Independent Social Democrats dominated the post-war interim government until December 1918. The moderate Majority Social Democrats emerged as the most powerful force in the January 1919 elections with nearly 38 percent of votes. In German Austria the Social Democrat Karl Renner was elected head of the first

republican government, while in Hungary the liberal Károlyi governed with Social Democrats and Communists. The provisional government of Russia was dominated by liberals (the Kadets), and increasingly by different socialist parties. It shared power with the Boshevik-dominated workers' and soldiers' councils. In each of these cases, in other words, experienced socialist or social-democrat mass movements with a developed programme and established leadership and cadre structure were immediately available as alternatives to the monarchy and the discredited wartime regimes. In each case there were close – though not always unproblematic – links between these parties and the workers' movements that had triggered the downfall of the imperial regimes through their industrial action.

This was certainly not the case in the Ottoman Empire. The empire's most important socialist movements in the empire had been Jewish, Bulgarian, Greek and Armenian and they had not survived the Balkan War and the deportations and massacres of World War I in the empire. The Ottoman Muslim socialist movement (the Ottoman Socialist Party formed in 1910) was very weak. The party had no real mass following or stable organization, and the same is true for the other socialist splinter groups in the capital. Fundamentally, the weakness of socialist and social democrat currents in the Ottoman Empire was of course linked to a lack of an industrial workforce.

The so-called Ottoman Liberals were not in any position to take over effectively. The Entente Liberale was an amalgam of individuals and groups who shared little but their hatred for the Committee of Union and Progress and who had not been active politically inside the country since the Unionist coup d'état of January 1913. After a period of transition, the "Liberals" did come to power in Istanbul in March 1919, but they depended on the support of the palace and the British for their hold on power. From March 1920 they operated under formal British occupation. They hardly had a power base of their own and certainly none outside the capital, Istanbul. This was evidenced in the results of the 1919 general election, in which the Liberals failed to gain a single seat in Anatolia.

In the absence of political alternatives, power in the country at large, outside the capital, remained in the hands of the ruling coalition of the war years: Unionist party bosses and army officers, allied to Muslim trading interests in the provincial centers of Anatolia that had profited from the transfer of Greek and Armenian property. The backbone of the nationalist resistance movement in Anatolia was formed by the remains of the imperial Ottoman army led by Young Turk officers. In other words: unlike the other defeated empires the Ottoman Empire did not undergo a regime change, even if the top names of the Young Turk regime of the war years (Enver, Talaat, Djemal) were no longer there and even though this regime replaced the monarchy with a republic in 1923. Even during the first decades of republican rule, people – very often with a military background – who had been part of the ruling elite of the years 1913-1918 continued to run the country. One reason that they were able to do so, was that they did not have to shoulder the

blame for the defeat. That blame was put on the Unionist leaders that had been in charge in 1918 and fled the country and ironically also on their enemies: the sultan's liberal government in Istanbul that had signed the Treaty of Sèvres. The members of the delegation that signed the treaty were all banned from Turkey forever.

As we know, alone among the defeated countries, the Young Turks led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha managed to undo the postwar settlement imposed by the Entente by taking up arms again. In 1914 the outbreak of war had not meant a sharp division between the end of an era and the beginning of a new one as it had in Europe. In the same way, the armistice did not mean the end of war. War continued in Anatolia for another four years and by the time it ended the victory in this "national struggle" had erased the memory of defeat. The generals that ruled the early republic where not so much the losers of 1918 as the national heroes of 1922.

Thus, like the outbreak of war and the war itself, the aftermath of the war too had a very different character in the Ottoman Empire when compared to the other defeated continental empires of Europe. The Ottoman war really was decidedly different from that of the other countries of Europe.

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Part 1:
Wartime Mobilization Policies and Their Social and Economic Aspects

Altruistic Soldiers, Blood-Sucking Profiteers: Social Relations of Sacrifice in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War

Yiğit Akın

Mobilizing a war-weary society in the wake of the disastrous Balkan Wars (1912-13) presented an onerous challenge to the Ottoman elites in August 1914. They tried to overcome it through a combination of coercion and consent. The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government, on the one hand, implemented unprecedentedly strict and expansive policies of conscription, tightening its grip on the empire's social and political life.[1] On the other hand, the Unionists energetically sought to justify the war effort to the Ottoman people by crafting a convincing "war narrative." The narrative they came up with had two interrelated aspects: external and internal. Externally, the Unionists underlined the long-lasting victimization of the Ottoman Empire by unilateral Entente aggression and emphasized the defensive nature of the Ottoman war effort.[2]

More important for the purposes of this chapter is the internal aspect of the war narrative, which was centered on the rhetoric of the "equitable distribution of the war's burdens." From the very beginning, the Unionists realized the importance of developing an image of "a society united in sacrifice" to overcome widespread war-weariness and re-motivate the home front for a new conflict. At the heart of this narrative stood the idealized image of the ordinary Ottoman soldier, "Little Mehmet" (*Mehmetçik*).[3] He represented Ottoman people's whole-hearted devotion to the war effort and was characterized as the embodiment of the values that defined the greatness of the Ottomans. Through the cult of the ordinary soldier, the Unionist political elites strove to convey the impression of a nation that had overcome its internal divisions and unified behind the government in defense of national honor and boundaries.

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1 For a detailed discussion, see Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower during the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 82-110.

2 I have discussed this aspect in more detail in my *When the War Came Home*, 70-77.

3 In almost all belligerent societies, the ordinary soldier occupied a privileged position in the wartime moral discourse. See, for instance, Jean-Louis Robert, "The Image of the Profiteer," in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert (eds.), *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 104; John Horne, "Soldiers, Civilians, and the Warfare of Attrition: Representations of Combat in France, 1914-1918," in Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity, and the Social History of the Great War* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1995), 223-249.

The soldier who figured centrally in the official propaganda was a man who was ready and eager to perform historically monumental tasks. His foremost qualities were altruism, courage, modesty, and, most importantly, a sincere willingness to sacrifice in the name of the greater Ottoman cause. "History is the witness," asserted Enver Pasha, the acting commander-in-chief of the imperial army, in his declaration on war, "that there is no soldier more steadfast and more altruistic than the Ottoman soldier."[4] The official rhetoric assigned the ordinary soldier a momentous role: the fate of the six hundred-year-old empire, under attack by enemies from every direction, depended upon him. His performance on the battlefield would determine not only the future of the seat of the sultan and home of the caliph, but also the lives of millions of Ottomans and fellow Muslims. Aware of the fact that he was fighting for the very existence of the empire and defending the entire Islamic world, the soldier, as described in wartime propaganda, was determined to fight to the last drop of his blood.[5]

The war narrative portrayed him as a man who would voluntarily put the cause of the empire and religion above his own life and be willing to leave his village and family behind and rush to the battlefront. He eagerly undertook the most difficult duties, yet performed them skillfully. In return, he did not expect any reward or recognition, and sometimes even rejected rewards if they were offered to him. The most effective way to highlight the altruism of the ordinary soldier was to show that he prioritized his duty to the empire over his attachment to his home, family, and loved ones. Zahir, the hero of Faik Ali's play *Payitahtın Kapısında* [At the Gates of the Capital], tells his fiancée before leaving for the front that he has found a love, a love for the nation, for which he can leave her without thinking twice. "Don't be jealous of this love. Share this feeling of mine sincerely. And love me less, much less than the nation."[6] Similarly, in Ali Ekrem's famous poem *Şehid Oğlum* [My Martyred Son], the son's loyalty to the nation is so strong that he does not hesitate to leave his own mother, who heartily embraces him: "'Mother,' he said, 'let me go off to the war / Let me destroy the enemy of the nation / The nation is my real mother, not you / I will not let the enemy trample my nation.'"[7]

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4 "Başkumandanlık Vekaletinin Beyannamesi Suretidir." For a copy of the flyer that includes the *fetva* on the war (*feteva-yı şerife*), the imperial declaration (*beyanname-i hümayun*) and the declaration of the acting commander-in-chief (*başkumandanlık vekaletinin beyannamesi*), see Nazım H. Polat, *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1991), 216-22.

5 In the Unionists' war narrative, the ordinary Ottoman soldier was almost always described as a Muslim. For more on the "cult of the ordinary soldier," see Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 92-96.

6 Faik Ali, *Payitahtın Kapısında: İki Perdelik Manzum Temaşa* (Istanbul: Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası Matbaacılık Osmanlı Şirketi, 1918), 76.

7 "'Anne,' dedi, 'bırak harbe gideyim / Vatan düşmanını berbad edeyim / Asıl anam vatan, seni n'ideyim / Vatanımı çiğnetmem düşmanıma.'" Ali Ekrem, *Ordunun Defteri* (Istanbul: Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası, 1336 [1920]), 70. Both Faik Ali and Ali Ekrem (as well as Celal

Emphasizing the importance of collective sacrifice for the empire, the Unionists' war narrative also prescribed certain roles for relatives who sent their fathers, sons, and husbands to the army. Parents, wives, and children were expected to carry on during the war, which tore their male family members away from them, with great pride and dignity. The message sent through propaganda was that they should, first and foremost, encourage their sons and husbands to go to war, fight bravely, and, if necessary, die a hero's death. Realizing that attachment to family members might play a significant role in deterring young men from answering the call, the Unionist narrative developed a wartime image of the encouraging and supportive family. In a poem published by Celal Sahir in *Türk Yurdu*, for instance, a wife called out to her husband: "Go, my lion-hearted one, go and save the country / If you don't go, I won't shed fewer tears but more!"[8] In Sergeant Fahreddin's story, published in *Harb Mecmuası*, the prominent propaganda organ published by the Ministry of War, his son, Necmeddin, plays a similarly encouraging role. When he hears the drums announcing the mobilization, Necmeddin curiously asks his father, "Father! Our Sultan has declared war. This is why the drums are being played. Those who go to the army will become either a martyr or a *gazi*…. Dad, will you not become a martyr or a *gazi* like them?"[9] Mehmed Emin repeated the same message in his well-known poem *Ordunun Destanı* [Epic of the Army], exhorting young women to emulate their mothers and grandmothers: "And be like those who / Demanded [from their husbands] heroism and sacrifice...," and admired them. "How happy is the woman who / In her heart, suppresses deep sorrows that shake the soul / In the springtime of her life / Endures her inner woe for the nation."[10] In another widely-read poem *Orduya Selam* [Hail to the Army], the poet spoke for every woman and household when addressing the army: "Know that in this country every woman's / Last son is yours / Big or small, every household's / Last life is yours."[11]

Sahir, Mehmed Emin, and many others mentioned in this chapter) were among the well-known literary figures of the era. Either due to their sincere personal commitment to the greater Ottoman cause and/or financial incentives used by the CUP, they participated in the "literary mobilization" during the war. For an extensive discussion, see Erol Köroğlu, *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918): Propagandadan Milli Kimlik İnşasına* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004).

8 "Git, arslan yüreklim git, yurdu kurtar / Gitmezsen gözyaşım eksilmez artar!" Celal Sahir, "Köyde Kalanın Türküsü," *Türk Yurdu* 75 (21 January 1915): 35.

9 Mehmed Rifat, "Galiçya Mefahirinden," *Harb Mecmuası* 15 (December 1916): 227-233.

10 "Ve onlara benzeyin ki eşlerinden / Kahramanlık, fedakarlık isterlerdi...." "O kadına ne mutlu ki ruhu sarsan / Hıçkırıklı hicranları kalbde boğar / Ömrün bahar çağlarında aşkla çarpan / Genç bağrına vatan için taşlar basar." Mehmed Emin, *Ordunun Destanı* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası, 1331), 14, 16. The literary historian Erol Köroğlu calls Mehmed Emin Bey (Yurdakul) a "one-man propaganda army" in his *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı*, 284-298.

11 "Bil ki yurtta her kadının / Son evladı sana feda / Büyük, küçük her çatının / Son hayatı sana feda!" Fevziye Abdullah Tansel (ed.), *Mehmed Emin Yurdakul'un Eserleri*, vol.1, *Şiirler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1969), 198.

While emphasizing its supportive functions, the official propaganda marginalized the suffering of the home-front population and shrouded it in an all-encompassing discourse of duty (*vazife*) and sacrifice (*fedakarlık*). Just as the soldier was expected to sacrifice his life for the sake of the empire, home-front civilians were expected to place the empire's survival above their own grief. Their duty in the war included, but was not limited to, the acceptance of privations and other difficulties with fortitude. Cenab Şehabeddin, another famous poet of the era, wrote in *War Magazine* that even the capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453 had not required as great a sacrifice from the nation (*millet*), yet "the nation has never seemed so willing to make such a sacrifice."[12] Families might endure wartime difficulties, but none of these mattered so long as the enemy was defeated and the empire and the religion survived. All necessary sacrifices to ensure victory for the Ottoman army should be made without hesitation.

The deployment of a rhetoric that featured the ordinary soldier and lauded the sacrifices on the war front as well as the home front obviously intended to convince Ottoman people to adopt this idealized wartime code of behavior and to encourage similarly altruistic acts. Portraying a society, whose members shared the war's burdens willingly and equitably was therefore essential for the Unionists' war narrative. This moral language became a means of regulating, what the historians Winter and Robert call, the "social relations of sacrifice" during the war.[13] The CUP elites promoted this imagery to strengthen social cohesion, which, under the weight of mounting battlefield casualties and home-front privations, became increasingly vulnerable. In this regard, while "sacrifice," the key term of this wartime vocabulary, became the metaphorical bridge that was hoped to link the front and the rear, it also became the glue that held Ottoman people together.

War Profiteers: Those who did not Sacrifice

The Unionists' increasingly bold emphasis on duty and sacrifice indeed aimed to mask the fact that the war's burdens were not shared equitably among the Ottomans. On the Ottoman home front, the social and economic conditions gradually worsened from the early 1916 onward as the problems of food supply and its fair distribution became more and more acute. In the absence of external supply sources, the Entente's naval blockade, harsh requisitioning policies, the still undeveloped and inefficient transportation network, frequent natural disasters, and, more importantly, the significant loss of manpower to conscription and ethnic cleansing made it virtually impossible for the CUP government to simultaneously

12 Cenab Şehabeddin, "Makale-i Mahsusa: Hatırat-ı Harbiye," *Harb Mecmuası* 21 (August 1917): 322-326.

13 Winter and Robert (eds.), *Capital Cities at War*, 10.

meet the needs of the army and the urban population for food.[14] As the prices skyrocketed throughout the empire, the Ottoman state officials wrestled with enormous difficulties in feeding the army while preventing the civilian population from succumbing to starvation. These challenges and shortcomings in government policies, however, led to increasingly dire food shortages, as hunger struck many regions of the empire.

As the death toll mounted and home-front burdens became all the more difficult to shoulder, social relations of sacrifice began to be strained. The discrepancy between those who sacrificed and those who benefitted from these sacrifices became increasingly visible. Most notable among the latter were the war profiteers. Especially in the second half of the war, they were frequently-encountered, universally-despised figures on the Ottoman home front. As such their presence greatly undermined the Unionists' war narrative. While the ordinary soldier represented the ideal of collectively sacrificing Ottoman people, the phenomenon of the war profiteer came to symbolize the highly unequal nature of these sacrifices demanded of the population.

While the First World War spelled misery, poverty, and death for the majority of Ottoman citizens, it also spawned enormous business opportunities for a relatively small group of people. A number of contractors who provided the army with manufactured and non-manufactured goods benefited greatly from the wartime expansion of the army's consumption. Similarly, merchants, middlemen, and bureaucrats close to the CUP circles who controlled the food supply to the army and the big cities earned enormous amounts of money.[15] When the guns fell silent in November 1918, all of these groups that had amassed large fortunes came to be seen as the war's real winners.

The wealth and lavish lifestyle of the war profiteers played a critical role in alienating the lower classes as well as some members of the army from the Ottoman war effort. Especially after the second year of the war, the contrast between those who shouldered the brunt of the burden for the war and those who enjoyed their privileged status and benefited from the war surfaced more clearly. This contrast did not escape even from the attention of foreigners: "Each night when I passed the Petits Champs, I saw a row of starving children, poor little living protests of humanity against the barbarisms of war and the cruelty profiteers, huddled on the pavement, mute, uncomplaining, too weak to even ask for alms."[16] Soldiers similarly found this increasingly widening gulf between the privileged few and the rest of the society morally repugnant. Those who had been given furlough became less

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14 For an extensive discussion of these problems, see Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 111-143.

15 Zafer Toprak, *İttihat-Terakki ve Cihan Harbi: Savaş Ekonomisi ve Türkiye'de Devletçilik* (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2003), 151-178; Deniz Dölek-Sever, "Wartime Criminal Policy: Profiteering and Theft in Istanbul, 1914-1918," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 23/1&2 (2017): 35-57.

16 Francis Yeats-Brown, *Caught by the Turks* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 171.

enthusiastic about the front-line service when they got back and asked to be assigned to transport units. "At that time I could not understand the reason of this reluctance," wrote an officer: "Once I saw Istanbul, illicitly acquired mansions of some and wretched conditions of others, once I listened to tales about war profiteers and tragic stories of relatives of those who had died on the fronts, I understood the situation…. This is why those who returned to the front did not want to sacrifice their lives. They had seen the scandal at the rear."[17]

The extravagant consumption habits of war profiteers coupled with their indifference to the wartime plight of the urban poor greatly contributed to the erosion of the legitimacy of the CUP government. In tandem with deteriorating social conditions, these discrepancies on the home front intensified pressure on the Unionists and military commands. This loss of legitimacy in turn posed a sharp challenge to the state's authority and its capacity to maintain social and cultural integration during the war. Among other factors, the disaffection sparked by a strong sense of injustice helped to cripple the Ottoman war effort.

In order to deal with the increasingly acute problem of profiteering, state officials occasionally pursued aggressive policies against the speculators and hoarders, and attempted to inflict heavy penalties on them. From time to time, they seized their assets and revealed their names to the local and imperial press. Through these kinds of cursory attacks, the government tried to create the impression that it was working to correct the injustices that plagued the wartime Ottoman society and distance itself from the profiteers. The CUP government also enacted legislation in this effort (in particular the Law Against Profiteering, *Men-i İhtikar Kanunu* of June 1917) and established a special agency equipped with extraordinary authority (*Men-i İhtikar Komisyonu*). In this agency's first public declaration, it referred to profiteering as "nothing but treason to the nation" ("*vatana hıyanetten başka bir şey değildir*"). Profiteering, according to the agency, weakened the empire's ability to wage war effectively.[18] In order to defend the nation against "internal enemies" and curb speculation, the agency promised to use all available means at its disposal.

Despite these measures, however, the Ottoman government failed to prevent profiteering, reduce food and fuel prices, and distribute the cost-sharing of the war equally among the citizens. There were several obstacles to combating profiteering, including the radically re-structured wartime relations of economic activity, monopolization of the railroad transport by the military, the army's depend-

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17 Ziya Göğem, *Kurmay Albay Daday'lı Halit Beğ Akmansü*, vol.1 (Istanbul: Halk Basımevi, 1954), 408.

18 "İhtikârın Men'i: Men-i İhtikâr Komisyonu Beyannamesi," *Tanin* (27 May 1917), 1-2. For the news on and slightly different interpretations of this new legislation see the newspapers *Sabah*, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, and *İkdam* of the same date. See also, Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994), 72-75. For the law, see *Meclis-i Umumi'nin Münakid Olmadığı Esnada Heyet-i Vükelaca Ba-irade-i Seniyye Mevki-i İcraya Konulan Levayih-i Kanuniyye (1333)*, 4-5.

ence on the provisioning system in place, the CUP's attempts to create an "indigenous bourgeoisie,"[19] and, finally, the close relationship between the profiteers and some leading Unionists, including İsmail Hakkı Pasha (nicknamed "the Lame", *Topal*), head of Army Provisioning Office (*Harbiye Nezareti Levazımat-ı Umumiye Dairesi*) and arguably one of the most unsympathetic figures of Ottoman home-front.

Public criticism against profiteering and war profiteers had already begun during the course of the war. Especially from the second half of 1917 onward, when censorship on the press was relaxed, newspapers, including those close to the CUP line, published articles that condemned profiteers and, to some extent, criticized the government's passiveness in the matter.[20] This was presumably done with the tacit approval of the CUP leadership to vent public anger in a controlled way. But, with the end of the war and the flight of the Unionist leaders (among whom was İsmail Hakkı Pasha), the campaign against war profiteers spread throughout the entire media. In the last months of the war and after, newspapers, magazines, and other publications were full of denunciation of war profits and profiteers. Writers and contributors did not hesitate to point out the fact that the Unionist policies of creating a "national economy" and a "national bourgeoisie" turned out to be devastating for Ottoman society. Among other media outlets, novels, stories, theater plays, and other literary works were also important venues to examine these wartime social tensions in the Ottoman Empire.[21]

The most prominent aspect of these works was their unmistakable emphasis on the unequal distribution of war's burdens among the Ottomans. They testify that the realities of the wartime Ottoman society were often a far cry from the ideal representation of a unified people symbolized in the image of the altruistic ordinary soldier. Over and over again, the authors of these literary pieces highlight the perception that speculators capitalized on the suffering and sacrifices of sol-

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19 The most definitive work on the subject remains Zafer Toprak's *Türkiye'de Ekonomi ve Toplum, 1908-1950: Milli İktisat, Milli Burjuvazi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995).

20 See also, Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı Tarihi*, vol.3 part.4 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1967), 539-543.

21 Here, I am in agreement with Yael Zerubavel who argues that despite being works of fiction novels could touch on sensitive social and psychological issues and "express them in more subtle and complex ways than public discourse may allow." One can also expand Zerubavel's observations to other genres of fiction. Yael Zerubavel, "Patriotic Sacrifice and the Burden of Memory in Israeli Secular National Hebrew Culture," in Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein (eds.), *Memory and Violence in the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 90. For war profiteers in Turkish literature, see Murat Koç, *Türk Romanında İttihat Terakki (1908-2004)* (Istanbul: Temel Yayınları, 2005), 416-463; Murat Kacıroğlu, "Milli Mücadele ve Erken Dönem Cumhuriyet Romanında Harp Zenginleri," *Karadeniz Araştırmaları* 20 (2009): 117-136; Seçil Deren Van Het Hof, "Erken Dönem Cumhuriyet Romanında Zenginler ve Zenginlik," *Kültür ve İletişim* 13 (2010): 81-106. For a recent study of the image of war profiteers in humor gazettes, see Amy Mills, "Becoming Blind to the Landscape: Turkification and the Precarious National Future in Occupied Istanbul," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 5 (2018): 99-117.

diers, their families, and the urban poor in general.[22] Fitnat, the protagonist of Selahaddin Enis' *Zaniyeler* [Harlots], gives voice to this popular perception that the profiteers established their reign on people's poverty: "they set your throne on the ribs of those who die in the streets, on the arms of those who tremble with cold."[23] In Ercüment Ekrem's *Gün Batarken* [When the Sun Sets], the reader is introduced to the story of Gülsüm, a soldiers' wife and former neighbor of the profiteer and protagonist Hulki from the neighborhood of Estekzade in Fatih. In the absence of her husband, Gülsüm works hard to earn her family's livelihood and keep her sick baby alive. She sells everything she owns, save her chastity. Eventually, her baby dies of malnutrition on the very same day Hulki and his partners' speculation lead to sugar prices skyrocketing in the capital.[24] In this sense, the source of the speculators' wealth is the desperation of the people.

As Gülsüm's story attests, food (or the absence of it) occupies a special place in these narratives. Therefore, novelists consciously associated poverty and hunger with excessive consumption and sumptuousness to draw attention to the social and economic discrepancies generated by the war. Almost all of these literary pieces vividly describe scenes of profiteers' dinner parties in their magnificent mansions, long lists of delicious and exotic dishes, and profusions of food and drink. Following these scenes of excessive indulgence in eating, drinking, and pleasure, these novelists often take the reader on a tour of homes and neighborhoods where the poorer segments of the population live. For instance, after a lavish banquet, Hulki, the main character of *Gün Batarken*, realizes that he and speculators like him caused the starvation of people in these poor neighborhoods of Istanbul. There is a more or less similar scene in Ömer Seyfeddin's *Niçin Zengin Olmamış* [Why Did Not He Become Rich]. On the morning following a party of eating, drinking, and '*alaturka saz*,' the protagonist runs into municipal workers who are collecting dead bodies of the poor and realizes that their acts of profiteering have led to the starvation of these people. He immediately decides to become an anarchist and sets out to kill "the Lame" or one his aides: "killing one of these people," he writes into his diary, "would be more beneficial, much more beneficial than killing thousands of enemy soldiers in the trenches."[25]

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[22] For similar yet culture-specific descriptions of war profiteers in other belligerent countries, see Jean-Louis Robert, "*The Image of the Profiteer*," in Winter and Robert (eds.), *Capital Cities at War*, 104-132; Pierre Purseigle, "Mirroring Societies at War: Pictorial Humor in the British and French Popular Press during the First World War," *Journal of European Studies* 31 (2001): 289-328; François Bouloc, *Les profiteurs de guerre, 1914-1918* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 2008).

[23] "Saltanat sandalyenizi sokaklarımızda ölenlerin kaburgaları, soğuktan titreyenlerin kolları üzerine kurdular." Salahattin Enis, *Zaniyeler* (Istanbul: A. Toygar Cumhuriyet Kitabevi, 1343 [1924]), 120.

[24] Ercüment Ekrem Talu, *Gün Batarken* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1990 [1919]), 66-70.

[25] "Onlardan bir tanesini öldürmek, siperde bin düşman neferi öldürmekten de çok hem pek çok hayırlı." *Niçin Zengin Olmamış* was first published in the third issue of *Büyük Mecmua*

A more prominent theme, however, is that profiteers owed their very existence to the ongoing war. The longer it continued, the richer war profiteers became.[26] Despite the widespread popular desire that the war should end, war profiteers wished the opposite. The speculator Mikail Bey in Celal Nuri's *Ahir Zaman* [Recent Times], for instance, was so content with his life during the wartime that he wanted it would last two hundred years.[27] One of the cartoons in Sedad Simavi's popular cartoon album, *Yeni Zenginler/Les Néo-Riches*, depicts a profiteer who "passed out as soon as he read the news about the peace."[28] In many of the literary works, which deal with profiteering, one comes across soldiers who witness the extravagant life of profiteers on the home front and question the meaning of war and their sacrifice. Two honest and altruistic officers in Yakup Kadri's *Kiralık Konak* [Mansion for Rent], Azmi Bey and Major Hüsnü Bey ask each other "Are we fighting for these bastards? Are we fighting so that they can eat and drink and fatten up their bellies and cheeks?"[29] The same fatal question is asked by Nihat, the protagonist of Peyami Safa's *Mahşer* [Armageddon], who recently returned from the front and likens Istanbul to Armageddon (*mahşer*): "God damn! Did those young soldiers whose heads were severed like footballs in front of my eyes give their lives for these?"[30] And added "Battlefields are more beautiful than cities. Honest Turks always preferred death over life in Turkey."[31] The war profiteer, according to the author of *Gün Batarken*, "is a different creature. He is a morbid person stimulated by the smell of blood. 'Conscience' is translated into his dialect as 'self-interest'; profiteer salts his bread at the dinner table with tears, he wants to mix the smoke of his cigarette with the curses of orphans. If each son of the nation who died on the frontiers did not earn him a couple hundred liras, to him

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in March 1919. Here I use the following edition: Ömer Seyfettin, "Niçin Zengin Olmamış," in *Bütün Eserleri* vol.7 (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2001), 84-96, 95. In the immediate aftermath of the war, young but widely read story-writer and novelist Ömer Seyfeddin became a strikingly vocal figure against the moral degradation in Ottoman society. His anger against the profiteers was aggravated by his disappointment with the Unionist regime to which he had been deeply attached. Tahir Alangu, *Ömer Seyfeddin: Ülkücü Bir Yazarın Romanı* (Istanbul: May Yayınları, 1968), 341, 432.

26 Refik Halid rightfully argues that the only remedy to war profiteering is peace. Refik Halid, "Harp Zengini," *Yeni Mecmua* 42 (May 1918): 301-302.

27 "Ah! Ömür iki yüz sene sürse, harp de devam ededursa." Afife Fikret [Celal Nuri], *Âhir Zaman* (Necm-i İstikbal Matbaası, 1335 [1919]). Here I use the following edition Mustafa Kurt, ed., *Celal Nuri İleri'nin Romanları: Perviz, Ölmeyen, Merhûme, Âhir Zaman* (Ankara: Kurgan Edebiyat Yayınları, 2012), 236.

28 Sedad Simavi, *Yeni Zenginler/Les Néo-Riches* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Orhaniye, 1334 [1918]).

29 "Biz bu alçaklar için mi harp ediyoruz? Bunlar yesin içsin, göbekleri ile yanaklarını şişirsin diye mi?" Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Kiralık Konak* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1989 [1922]), 265.

30 "Hay Allah cezalarını versin! Çanakkale'de, gözlerimin önünde kafaları futbol topu gibi, koparak havaya fırlayan Türk gençleri bunlar için mi can verdiler?" Peyami Safa, *Mahşer* (Istanbul: Orhaniye Matbaası, 1924), 85.

31 "… harp cepheleri şehirlerden daha güzeldir, daima namuslu Türkler ölümü, Türkiye'de hayata tercih etmişlerdir." Peyami Safa, *Mahşer*, 360.

they would have died in vain. Yet, for him, the word 'nation' is a myth: money is the only reality on earth."[32]

The disruption of the social relations of sacrifice had also far reaching consequences. Besides the obvious moral issues surrounding war profiteering, it was also portrayed in post-war literature as a sign of the total breakdown of the social hierarchy upon which Ottoman society was built. Almost all profiteers in the literary works mentioned about were untalented, ignorant, brusque characters who, thanks to their close relations with party bosses and military leaders, managed to get contracts or secure privileges of renting railroad cars. In *Gizli El* [The Hidden Hand], Reşat Nuri mentions the profiteers who had lacked money to cross the [Galata] bridge.[33] Kerami Bey of Selahaddin Enis' *Zaniyeler*, who had used to light his house with cheap kerosene lamp before the war, gains the power to deprive the whole Istanbul of lamps and light.[34] The protagonist in Refik Halid's *İstanbul'un Bir Yüzü* [A Side of Istanbul], İsmet and his close friend Kani, both war profiteers, were servants in the mansion of Fikri Paşa until the lucky day they secured a contract with the Army Provisioning Department for collecting olive oil in Aleppo.

Ottomans who tried to survive on a fixed income, on the other hand, experienced significant decline in their social status. In literary works, the reader comes across the elites of the pre-war Ottoman society who had lost their material wealth as well as social status.[35] In the well-known play of Ömer Seyfeddin, *Mahcupluk İmtihanı* [The Trial of Shyness], Müstemend, the servant, was previously the supervisor of the speculator Hayranzade when they were working together in a government office.[36] In Seyfeddin's *Memlekete Mektup* [Letter to the Hometown], the protagonist's lawyer friend has to sell everything and close his office. He is then employed as a clerk in a speculator's office, who, before the war, was a janitor in the courthouse.[37] In Midhat Cemal's play, *Yirmisekiz Kanun-ı Evvel* [January

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[32] "Harp taciri başka bir mahluktur. Kan kokusuyla tenebbüh eder bir marizdir. 'Vicdan' denilen cevher-i kıymetdar onun lehçe-i mahsusunda 'menfaat' tesmiye edilir. Muhtekir akşam sofrasında yediği ekmeği gözyaşıyla tuzlar, içtiği sigaranın dumanına yetimlerin ahı karışmasını ister. Serhatte can veren evlad-ı vatandan her biri, kendisine bir kaç yüz lira kazandırmamış ise, cümlesinin ölümü hebadır. Zira vatan kelimesi onun için bir efsane, para ise dünyada yegane hakikattir..." Ercüment Ekrem, *Gün Batarken*, 33-34. See also, Refik Halid, "Harp Zengini."

[33] Reşat Nuri Güntekin, *Gizli El* (Istanbul: İnkılap ve Aka Kitabevleri, 1973 [1919]), 5.

[34] Selahaddin Enis, *Zaniyeler*, 54.

[35] For this wartime phenomenon, see also Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 45-47, 200-201.

[36] Ömer Seyfeddin, "Mahcupluk İmtihanı" in *Ömer Seyfeddin'in Toplu Eserleri* vol.9, ed. Tahir Alangu (Istanbul: Rafet Zaimler Kitap Yayınevi, 1963), 27. For more on this play, see Enver Töre, *II. Meşrutiyet Tiyatrosu: Yazarlar-Piyesler* (Istanbul: Duyap Yayınları, 2006), 120-122.

[37] *Memlekete Mektup* was first published in the second issue of *Büyük Mecmua* in March 1919. Here I use the following edition: Ömer Seyfettin, "Memlekete Mektup," in *Bütün Eserleri*, vol.7 (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2001), 74-83.

Twenty Eight], the Pasha who was the protagonist's father-in-law and a retired war hero, had to sell his medals in order to afford the burial of his wife.[38] Similarly in Server Cemal's *Nadide*, a retired Pasha's family had to sell all their valuables to survive and to buy medicine for their sick daughter. At the pharmacy they saw war profiteers' luxurious cars passing: "See, the *noveaux riches*, who suck our blood!"[39]

Conclusion

The Unionists went to great lengths to craft a convincing war narrative where the Ottoman society was construed as unified in defense of the homeland and religion against aggressive enemies. The cult of ordinary soldier was an essential element of this narrative. As the war dragged on, the Unionist elites continued to invest in this narrative to justify the government's wartime policies and its determination to stay in the war. The soldier-hero, thus, preserved its privileged status in the wartime discourse until the end of the war. This was a conscious attempt on the part of the Unionists to transcend prewar and wartime divides that plagued Ottoman society. At least to the reading and listening public, they sought to provide a vocabulary through which they could make sense of the war and their own role in the conflict.

As the reality crushed any expectations of a short war and the wartime burdens became increasingly unbearable, however, this image of a united and collectively sacrificing Ottoman nation began to shatter. Along with other factors such as the increasing human cost of the war, rapidly declining living standards, and widespread shortages, the conspicuous presence of war profiteers undermined the social relations of sacrifice which in turn fomented widespread animosity toward the Unionist wartime regime. The unprecedented proliferation of profiteers and the Unionists' ineffective policies against them further compounded the already intensified war-weariness in the Ottoman society.

Studying the Ottoman Empire during and after the First World War from the perspective of the social relations of sacrifice reveals the importance of values, symbols, discourses, and representations in order to gain a fuller sense of the war experience. Of the prominent images discussed in this article, the war profiteer continued to haunt the cultural scene of the post-war years. The ordinary soldier, however, disappeared from the official memory altogether. Their disparate destinies in the interwar period should be the subject of further research.

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38 Midhat Cemal, *Yirmisekiz Kanun-ı Evvel* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1334 [1918]), 126-127.

39 "İşte bizim kanımızı emen kibarlar, yeni zenginler!" Server Cemal, "Nadide," *Türk Yurdu* 14/5 (16 March 1918).

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Towards a Social History of the Ottoman War Economy: Manufacturing and Armenian Forced Skilled-Laborers[1]

Yaşar Tolga Cora

Among the objects on the second floor of the Armenian Museum of America in Watertown, Massachusetts, stands a chalk mold, dated 1914.[2] (Figure 1) According to the long description displayed next to the object, the mold carries a story which saved an Armenian family during the Armenian Genocide. It belonged to Krikor Uzunian of Hussenig (Ulukent) village, in the vicinity of Kharberd (Harput). Mr. Uzunian had a workshop on the top of his family house. As someone who had experienced the Armenian Massacres in 1895-96, the chalk-maker also built a refuge room for times of danger. After Mr. Uzunian was killed in 1915, his family went into hiding in that secret room and came out only after they ran out of supplies. Mariam Uzunian, Krikor's wife, had learned the trade from her husband and continued to produce chalk for the army–in return for an exemption from the deportations.[3] Mariam Uzunian had saved her own and some other Armenians' lives thanks to her artisanal skills, and the need for those skills by the authorities during the war. Through Armenian survivors' accounts, this article aims to contribute to the social history of the Ottoman Army by highlighting different aspects of labor of Armenian women and men during World

1 This article is part of my broader research on Armenian labor in the late Ottoman Empire. I would like to thank Veysel Şimşek and Vahé Tachjian for their comments and suggestions.

2 Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), Watertown, MA. (ALMA # 1992.350); Chalk pouring mold designed and produced by Krikor Ouzounian [Uzunian], Hu[s]senig, Kharpert, circa 1914. Donated by Ardashes Ouzounian and Armenouhi Knaian. I thank Gary Lind-Sinanian from ALMA for his help in locating the item and providing me the image.

3 The description slightly differs from Bertha Nakshian Ketchian's version of the story as it appeared in a memory-book (*houshamadyan*) on the village. A native of Hussenig and a survivor of the genocide, Ms. Nakshian Ketchian, who knew Mariam Uzunian personally narrates that Krikor Uzunian was conscripted to the Ottoman Army in 1914 and Mariam Uzunian had put two of their daughters in the orphanage and stayed with one of her daughters and a neighbor in a secret room in the workshop until the massacres were over. Yet Ms. Uzunian's artisanal skill and labor is central to this version of the story, too. Even after the war, she was not allowed to leave her village for some time as opposed to many others, because the authorities needed the chalk she could produce. Bertha Nakshian Ketchian, *In The Shadow of The Fortress: The Genocide Remembered*, ed. Sonia I. Ketchian (Cambridge: Zoryan Institute, 1988), 97-98.

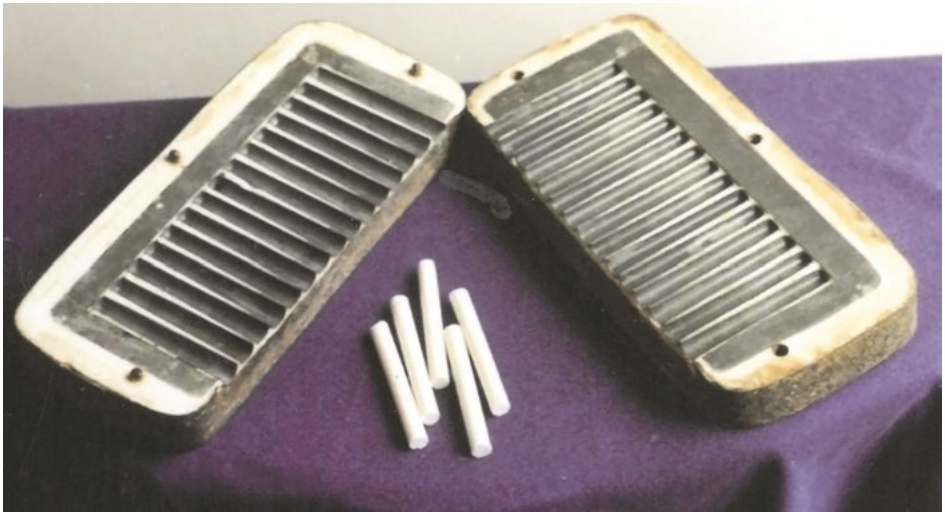

Figure 1: Chalk pouring mold designed and produced by Krikor Ouzounian [Uzunian], Hussenig, Kharpert, circa 1914. The mold was used by Krikor's wife, Mariam, to produce chalk for the army during the World War I. Courtesy of the Armenian Library and Museum of America

War I.[4] It emphasizes the connectedness of the manufacturing by Armenian forced laborers and their role in the Ottoman war economy.

Many Armenian soldiers and civilians worked either as conscripts or as forced laborers in the military manufactories and workshops (*imalathane*) that were set up by civil and military authorities in the Third Army zone during World War I. I primarily focus on the Third Army military zone, which covered contemporary Eastern Anatolia during the war, because deportations of Armenians began in this region earlier than other areas and this zone had to depend on its own resources–human capital and the production of provisions for the army–due to logistical problems.[5] In this context, Armenian labor in the manufacturing units and outside the army became critical for the logistics of the Ottoman army, and thus, in the case of the Third Army, a key subject in mapping the social history behind the front lines during World War I .[6]

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4 For the social history of the Ottoman homefront, see: Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

5 On the condition of the Third Army, see Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 40-41; Tuncay Öğün, *Kafkas Cephesinin I. Dünya Savaşındaki Lojistik Desteği* (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1999), 11-12.

6 That does not mean that Armenian labor, particularly the labor of the deported Armenian women, was not an important factor in the other Armies' zones. On the contrary, their labor was crucial for the provisioning of the army. For instance, in the Fourth Army zone under the command of Djemal Pasha in Northern Syria, where the deported Armenians

My goal is to examine the relations, both tensions and correlations, between mass violence against Armenians and the constant need for their productive capacity as laborers throughout the war. This will allow us to think along with, if not compare to, the other notorious instances of forced labor. The most infamous of them was of the Third Reich, which annihilated Jews and other racial groups while it was in dire need of laborers for its industries. As a historian of the Nazi economy put it succinctly, the Reich "faced an unresolvable contradiction between its genocidal racial ideology and the practical imperatives of production."[7] The solution for compensating the labor shortage in Germany during World War II was to use millions of prisoners of war and laborers from the occupied territories in the east (*Ostarbeiter*).[8] The number of the workforce in the Ottoman Empire diminished during the war due to conscription of able bodied men and the deportations of Armenians which was compensated by other groups particularly women. [9] For agricultural production, the Ottoman authorities used POWs in the western regions of Anatolia, formed female labor battalions for harvest in Adana region, and passed regulations for compulsory participation of non-conscripted people in agricultural production.[10] The Ottoman Empire without a sound industrial basis, was even more dependent on artisanal manufacturing in mass scale during World War I. As I will describe below, the need for Armenian skilled labor for manufacturing and the government's policies towards the Armenian communities were often in tension. These tensions resulted in different policies ranging from keeping the minimal number of Armenian skilled laborers for work after a selection process to compromise with Armenian artisans, particularly after their conversion. The latter was accompanied with the firm belief that they would teach the trade to Muslims, thus "Turkify" the economy. Therefore, histories of Armenian survivors–women like Mariam Uzunian who produced in their *own* workshops for the army and in the workshops of the army or Armenian soldiers in the army manufactories–I argue, belong to the field of social and economic history of World War I, as much as they are part of the Armenian Genocide. In this article, I aim to examine them simultaneously to highlight this connectedness.

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reached in massive numbers, the number of Armenian women working in the army workshops is claimed to have been as high as 15.000-20.000. See: Mevlut Yüksel, "Suriye, Halep, Zor ve Urfa Bölgelerinde Ermenilere Yönelik İskân Uygulamaları (1915-1917)," *Ermeni Araştırmaları* 54 (2016): 71-114 particularly 94-96.

7 Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Viking, 2007), 520.

8 For a study on the organization of these different types of labor on a local level see: Walter Struve, "The War Time Economy: Foreign Workers, 'Half Jews' and The Other Prisoners in A German Town," *German Studies Review* 16 (1993): 463-82.

9 Metinsoy, *Ottoman Women during World War I*, 115-158; Yavuz Selim Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire: Society for The Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women, 1916-1923*, (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2005).

10 Zafer Toprak, *İttihad-Terakki ve Cihan Harbi: Savaş Ekonomisi ve Türkiye'de Devletçilik, 1914-1918* (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2003), 87.

The focus in the scholarship on the Ottoman economy during the war has been on finances, war profiteering and inflation. Except for the state's intervention in agricultural production which are briefly mentioned above, the control of manufacturing according to the army's needs has not been examined adequately.[11] Topics of labor in general, and forced labor of Armenians in particular, began to receive some attention in the works on the genocide. The focus has been on the better-known instances of Armenian forced labor during World War I, namely the labor battalions (*amele taburları*)–which are closely associated with the massacre of many Armenian conscripts in the Ottoman army.[12] And, recently there is a growing interest on Armenian officers who served in the Ottoman army in different professional capacities– most prominently, as medical doctors.[13] Likewise the fate of thousands of women and children who were taken into Muslim households, turned into slave-laborers and sex-slaves, and made to perform household chores is another developing field of research.[14] On the other hand, the topic of Armenian skilled labor during World War I has recently received only some attention, yet the main focus, as Taner Akçam notes, is the discussion about the exception of artisans to deportations.[15]

At another level, I also aim to develop a discussion already in progress about the workers in the manufactories and workshops set up by the Ottoman authorities as "gray-zones", a term developed by Primo Levi in his examination of various types of workers in the forced labor camps in the Holocaust.[16] In these camps, a

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11 Zafer Toprak, *İttihad-Terakki ve Cihan Harbi*, passim; Şevket Pamuk, "The Ottoman Economy in World War I," in Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (eds.), *The Economics of World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 112-136.

12 For a brief survey on the labor-battalions, see: Erik Jan Zürcher, "Ottoman Labour Battalions in World War I," in Hans-Lukas Kieser and Dominik J. Schaller (eds.), *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern und die Shoah – The Armenian Genocide and the Shoa* (Zürih: Chronos, 2002), 187-195.

13 Arsen Yarman, *Ermeni Etıbba Cemiyeti (1912-1922): Osmanlı'da Tıptan Siyasete Bir Kurum* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014), 271 f.

14 For the scholarship developing on Armenian women, particularly on the debates about their recovery into the Armenian community, see the following articles: Vahé Tachjian, "Gender, Nationalism, Exclusion: The Reintegration Process of Female Survivors of the Armenian Genocide," *Nations and Nationalism* 15 (2009): 60–80; Lerna Ekmekcioglu, "A Climate for Abduction, A Climate for Redemption: The Politics of Inclusion during and after the Armenian Genocide," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55 (2013): 522–53; Vahé Tachjian, "Mixed Marriage, Prostitution, Survival: Reintegrating Armenian Women into Post-Ottoman Cities," in Nazan Maksudyan (ed.), *Woman and the City, Women in the City* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 86-106.

15 Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 374-375.

16 For a discussion of the "Gray-Zone" see Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 36-69. Vahé Tachjian is the first one to suggest that Levi's terminology is a suitable tool to analyze some Armenian elites' reactions to women who had worked in the workshops, while debating their incorporation into the post-war community. Tachjian, "Mixed Marriage, Prostitution, Survival," 102.

number of Jews were assigned as directors and thus collaborated with the perpetrators. They did so for a wide range of reasons, as Levi writes: "terror, ideological seduction, servile imitation of the victor, myopic desire for any power whatsoever, even though ridiculously circumscribed in space and time, cowardice, and, finally, lucid calculation aimed at eluding the imposed orders and order."[17] I will adapt Levi's ideas to the context of the workshops set up by the civilian authorities during the Armenian Genocide as sites to focus on the issues of resistance and solidarity among Armenians who were subject to forced labor in them. I also aim to question the differences, if any, between the army manufactories where conscripted Armenians worked and workshops set up by civilian and military authorities where deported Armenians, mainly women and children, worked to stay alive, thus creating various historical and ethical questions about forced labor during World War I.

The International Labor Organization's 1930 definition of forced labor as "every kind of work or service demanded of a person under threat of punishment and which is not entered into freely" remains to this day the main definition of forced labor, yet it is problematic when it comes to distinguishing free from forced labor in times of war.[18] Just as the lines between free and forced labor blurred in cases like the use of colonial labor by the European overseas empires, it is impossible to talk about Armenian "free labor" during World War I under the conditions of genocide. Therefore, neither the unarmed Armenian conscripts in workshops, nor artisans in deserted towns after the deportations, nor women put in a workshop to produce for the army could be called free, given that they did not have another option.

Forced labor was a reality of World War I, a result of its totalizing tendencies. The widespread conscription resulted in an ever-growing need for a labor force in every belligerent nation, a demand which could not be satisfied with female and child labor alone, but required other means.[19] Yet, the concept of forced labor is a difficult one to describe in the period before World War I. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 are primarily concerned with the use of prisoners of war as the forced labor, with few and vague statements on the civilian populations.[20] During the war, the German Imperial Command's "documents detailing war aims" which upheld the notion of the "necessity of war" did not consider itself bound by international law and pushed the limits of forced labor in the occupied

17 Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 43.

18 Jens Thiel and Christian Westerhoff, "Forced Labour," in *1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, eds. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2014-10-08.

19 Elif Mahir Metinsoy, *Ottoman Women during World War I: Everyday Experiences, Politics, and Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

20 Thiel and Westerhoff, "Forced Labour."

territories.[21] The British Empire forcibly brought men from the colonies as laborers, meanwhile, in their colonies, Germany and Belgium used more than a million forced laborers who worked in infrastructure works and as porters, particularly in Africa.[22] As recent studies show, the forced labor regimes during the war, such as the English labor recruitment in the Egyptian countryside, created new forms of political subjectivities and alerting the power relations in the colonial regime.[23]

The Ottoman Empire followed the other belligerent states in terms of its labor policies during the war. The government and the military aimed to expand infrastructural capacity as the war changed the home front and ruined local economies.[24] The state of mobilization (*seferberlik*) which was declared on 2 August 1914 aimed to use all available human resources for the war effort. The need for labor rose to enormous proportions following the deportation of Armenians from the late spring of 1915 onward. For instance, according to official Ottoman correspondence, in the sub-province (*sancak*) of Kayseri in central Anatolia alone, there was a need for 1,182 artisans to work in various sectors in late 1915.[25] The Third Army on the eastern front was in dire need of manufactured goods and tried to procure them, particularly textiles and leather for uniforms, shoes, bags and covers, through a number of manufactories and workshops.[26] Armenian men and women were forced to work in order to avoid deportation and if already deported to stay alive in their new location.

Different categories of forced labor of Armenians during World War I should be distinguished. The cases of forced labor in the army manufactories and the workshops set up during the war, and individual artisans should be treated as separate categories. In these work-spaces, just like the labor battalions, conscripted Armenians served at different points during the war, whereas the workshops which were set up by the military or civil authorities for the needs of the army had different characteristics. As I will examine later in the article, workshop workers also included women, further complicating the issues related to forced labor, the army, and the mass-violence. The lack of detailed sources does not allow us to

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21 Ibid.

22 Radhika Singha, "Finding Labor from India for the War in Iraq: The Jail Porter and Labor Corps, 1916-1920," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (2007): 412-445.

23 Kyle J. Anderson, "The Egyptian Labor Corps: Workers, Peasants, and The State In World War I," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49 (2017): 5–24.

24 Yiğit Akın, "*Seferberlik*: Building up the Ottoman Homefront," in Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem and Maurus Reinkowski (eds.), *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: from the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London: IB Tauris, 2016), 55.

25 Oya Gözel Durmaz provides a full list of the sectors and needed number of artisans in her dissertation on social history of Kayseri during the war. Oya Gözel Durmaz, "A City Transformed: War, Demographic Change and Profiteering in Kayseri (1915-1920)," (PhD Dissertation, Middle East Technical University, 2014), 182.

26 Felix Guze, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Kafkas Cephesi'ndeki Muharebeler*, translated from German by Hakkı Akoğuz (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 2007), 85-86.

make further distinctions between these categories, and in some cases, the distinctions are blurred.[27] Yet, the manufactories and workshops were also different from the cases of artisans in cities or big towns who were deemed useful for the functioning of the *civil* market in the short-run. Although the distinctions between civil and military were also unclear in many instances, these analytical categories are still important as they allow us to understand the policies of the government and the military authorities regarding Armenian forced labor.

Ottoman Army Manufactories during WWI: Armenian Artisans in the Army

As the center of the Third Army, the city of Erzincan (Yerznka in Armenian) was the main manufacturing zone for the army's needs in the region. A factory of wool textiles (*abahane*) and a tannery complex (*debbaghane*) including a shoemaking section had been located near the city since the 1870s.[28] Fred Burnaby, a Turkophile British military officer, who traveled the region before the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78, was given a tour of the boot manufactory in the tannery. There he witnessed 450 soldier-artisans, Muslims and Armenians, drilling with bayonets for two hours and working in the factory for the rest of the day–for 14 hours–depending on the task. Burnaby stated:

> The manufactory was clean, and great order prevailed in the arrangements. Forty thousand pairs of boots had been made during the previous two months, my companion had received instructions from the authorities to forward 12,000 more to Erzeroum. The order had only just been issued, and was urgent... In one room a number of Armenian and Turkish lads were working sewing machines.[29]

Armenians' presence in the factory, and therefore in the Ottoman army as soldiers, at this early date is quite notable, although the author neither states whether they drilled or not, nor gives any information about the ratio of Muslims to

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[27] One of the reasons for difficulty in establishing categories is the lack of access to official sources on these workshops. The survivor accounts are vague in terms of the "ownership" of the workshops, and rightfully so, as the government and the army had organic ties in many instances and many "civilian" perpetrators were part of the Committee of Union and Progress, therefore indistinguishably close to the government.

[28] They have not, however, received the attention of historians. For instance, there is no mention of these factories in the histories of military factories in the Ottoman Empire and Early Republic, which focus on production of weapons and munitions. See Eyüp Durukan, *Askeri Fabrikalar Tarihçesi*, (Ankara: Askeri Fabrikalar Basımevi, 1940). Likewise, historians of the social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire, with their focus on the Ottoman "core provinces" in the Western Anatolia and Southern Balkans, and their persistent bias that mass-scale manufacturing did not exist outside those regions, overlooked these manufactories.

[29] Fred Burnaby, *On Horseback through Asia Minor*, vol. II (London: Sampson Low, 1877), 64-65.

Armenians in the factory. Yet, Armenian soldiers continued to work in the factory over the following decades. For instance, an Armenian shoe-maker from Sivas, Mr. Blecian, died in the summer of 1912 during the drills, while serving in Erzincan.[30] In Erzincan, the factories continued to function after 1914. British intelligence claims that, although the Ottoman authorities aimed to centralize cloth production for the army around Istanbul, army manufactures in Erzincan and Baghdad remained intact.[31] According to official figures, in January 1915, in addition to manufactories in Erzincan and Bayburt, workshops for manufacturing tents for the army were established in Diyarbekir.[32]

Visual evidence shows that the Ottoman army founded various small workshops to produce boots and textiles in other military regions, including Beersheba, Palestine which was under the command of the 4th Army Corps. Although the photographs may give us an idea of what the workshops looked like, the photographer's goal was not to present the actual working conditions there, and the images were part of the propaganda activities of the Ottoman army.[33] (Figures 2 and 3) Many of the soldiers in the photos were presumably non-Muslim conscripts from the region, who served as workers at Beersheba, a camp with an infamous name.[34] In the scene where soldiers are working diligently at sewing machines, a tailor is seen measuring an officer. In the other photo there are boot-makers at work under the supervision of a soldier, who stands like a statue, and only one person, the commander officer, is looking at the camera. Manufactories' deplorable physical conditions–the lack of glass windows and low-quality ceiling–were surpassed by the image of military order superimposed on them. There are two hierarchies in the picture: a taken-for-granted one, the military order of ranks, and the hierarchy between the masculinities of dominated and dominant men, the served and the serving in the workplace.[35]

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30 *Hoghdar* (Sebastia/Sivas), no. 29 (25 August 1912), 3.

31 War Office, *Handbook of the Turkish Army*, Eight Provisional Edition, Feb. 10, 1916 [reprint at The Imperial War Museum, 1996], 109.

32 Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, c.2, Kafkas Cephesi 3. Ordu Harekatı* (Ankara: Genelkurmay ATESE Yayınları, 1993), 678-679.

33 Salim Tamari claims that the photographs were taken by the famous photographer Khalil Raad, who worked for the Ottoman military authorities in Syria and Palestine during the war. However, the Library of Congress does not mention Raad's name in the description of the collections. For an examination of Ottoman propaganda photos during the World War I, see: Salim Tamari, "The War Photography of Khalil Raad: Ottoman modernity and the Biblical Gaze," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 52 (2013): 25-37.

34 For first-hand accounts of Jewish conscripts from Palestine in the labor battalions, see: Glenda Abramson "Haim Nahmias and the Labour Battalions: A Diary of Two Years in the First World War," *Jewish Culture and History* 14 (2013): 20-23.

35 These images can be compared with the photographs of Egyptian Labor Corps in the British Army during the Palestine Campaign, see: Mario Ruiz, "Photography and the Egyptian Labor Corps in Wartime Palestine, 1917–1918," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 56 & 57 (2014): 52–66.

Figures 2 and 3: Boot and tailoring workshops, Ottoman Army Camp, Beersheba, Palestine, 1917. Library of Congress, John D Whiting Collection-13833 [ppmsca 13709 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.13709 and ppmsca 13708 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.13708; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ppmsca-13709-00148 and LC-DIG-ppmsca-13709-00149]

Faik Tonguç, a reserve-officer, visited the military boot factory of Erzincan on his way to the Caucasus front in late January, 1915. There he saw that "the factory produced sturdy goods at the quality of European merchandise," yet Tonguç and his colleagues were not able to visit the textile manufactory which was far away from the boot factory, although they had heard that it likewise produced high-quality textiles.[36] Tonguç focuses on the quality of the goods in his narrative, but he does not mention Armenian soldiers working in the boot factory. However, Armenian survivors' accounts allow us to reconstruct some of the history of these manufactories during the early period of the war.

One of workers in the boot manufactory was Yeghia Torosian, a tailor in the district. In the early days of the mobilization, he was recruited into the army in Erzincan. He was assigned to the 35th Battalion to work in the military tannery complex,[37] where some 800 men worked. There were two directors, one battalion commander at the rank of major, and intendants who oversaw the soldiers in a total of 16 offices. Just as Burnaby had stated almost 40 years earlier, the workday lasted 16 hours, and if they fell short of completing an order, they had to work at nights. Leaving the manufactory was completely forbidden. The soldier-laborers were allowed to go out for a few minutes only during the intervals of the work, and were subject to harsh punishments, corporal and other, if they were late. Aware of this work and punishment regime, workers hurried to be present in a punctual manner. However, the natives of Erzincan had received permission to go home to sleep after finishing their work, on the condition that they would be present at work at the right time in the morning. When they failed to do so, they would be beaten. If we accept Torosian's testimony, in one occasion a soldier-worker who claimed to be sick and was late was beaten to death by his superiors. For Yeghia Torosian, "consequently, it was death that saved [him] from that painful work and beating."[38] There is evidence that the workers' (both Muslim and Armenian) conditions in the manufactory were far from bearable. The typhus epidemic in the winter of 1914-1915 had diminished the number of workers at the factory to 235 in March of 1915, from 800 in September of the previous year.[39] This was above even the very high average death rate in the Ottoman Army from diseases in the same period.[40]

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36 Faik Tonguç, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Bir Yedek Subayın Anıları* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 1999), 26.

37 Hayastani Azgayin Arkhiv, *Hayots Tseghaspanutyune Osmanyan Turkiayum*, Vol. III (Yerevan: Azgayin Arkhiv, 2012), 178-79. In the original text the tannery is spelled as *dabakhane*.

38 Ibid., 179.

39 Ibid., 180. Compare with Raymond Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London; New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 312.

40 The worst period of typhus was January-March 1915, following the Ottoman defeat at the Caucasian front. The incidence rate of typhus among the soldiers of the Third Army was 24.78 per 1000 in March 1915 and deaths from the epidemic reached 22 % of those who

The start of the deportations of Armenians from Erzincan in May 1915 worsened the conditions of the Armenian soldiers in the manufactories. First, all permissions to leave the premises including the permission to spend nights at home were cancelled following the deportations. For instance, when Kalusd Surmenian, an Armenian lieutenant in the Ottoman army to visit his brother-in-law Karnig Sarrafian at the facilities, he was not allowed by the officer in charge. Surmenian had to get permission from the director of the factory, a former teacher of the lieutenant at the military high school in Erzincan.[41]

In this instance, the Armenian officer's connections might have helped his brother-in-law to survive. According the Surmenian's testimony, the soldier-laborers were massacred within the following months. First, following the deportations of Armenians from Erzincan, according to Surmenian, the authorities murdered 600 of the Armenian workers, alongside the other Armenians who were affiliated with the military, such as the doctors in the military hospital and the students in the military high school. Only five of that group survived the massacres, severely wounded, and took refuge in the mountainous Dersim area.[42] After these massacres there were only 60 Armenians remained untouched in the manufactory, Surmenian's brother-in-law Karnig was among them.[43] About 50 of these soldiers were forced out of the factory and deported to Kemah following the news of the fall of Erzurum in February 1916.[44]

Compared to the Armenians in the labor battalions in the same region who faced the fate of massacre, the Armenian soldiers in the manufactory had been in a relatively better condition, temporarily, as long as there was a demand for shoes for military personnel, thus for skilled laborers. An eyewitness account makes a similar point about conscript Armenian artisans from the Sivas region; the military authorities separated some of the skilled laborers from the unskilled ones at the time of conscription, the former were sent to work in the army workshops, and the remaining skilled and unskilled ones were sent to the labor battalions.[45] Likewise, when the soldiers in the labor battalions were gathered later in the war, the artisan Armenians numbering around 500, were picked and kept along with Muslims and Greeks in those units, whereas, the unskilled Armenians soldiers

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were infected by typhus. Hikmet Özdemir, *Salgın Hastalıklardan Ölümler, 1914-1918* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005), 190-191.

41 Kalusd Surmenian, *Yerznka* (Cairo: Sahag-Mesrob, 1947), 284.

42 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 314. The manufactory should have been repopulated after the typhus epidemic hit it.

43 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 316.

44 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 319.

45 Yervant Alexanian, a soldier in one of such workshops, provides details for the life in the army-workshops and the selection process in Sivas, see Yervant N. Alexanian, *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*, ed. Adrienne G. Alexanian (New York: Transaction Publications, 2017), 46-47, 49-51.

were sent to face their fate.[46] The need for artisans in the army for manufacturing was the main logic behind this process of selection. The political decision about Armenians and need for their labor in the war efforts were in conflict throughout the war.

The military manufactories in Erzincan raise many questions. Who were the newcomers who repopulated the labor force in the workshops following the devastation by the typhus epidemic in March 1915? Were they disarmed Armenian soldiers, who were chiefly assigned to the labor battalions after February of 1915? Why were most of the Armenian soldier-laborers in the factory, alongside other Armenians serving the army, massacred following the deportations? Why did the Ottoman military authorities practically give up on production in the tannery by reducing its labor force to one-tenth of its capacity?

The Russian advance was probably the main reason behind the massacres of the workers in the military workshops, as was the case for Armenian soldiers in the ironworks manufactory in Erzurum, who faced the same fate upon news of the advance of Russian forces.[47] The previously-mentioned policy of centralization of military textile production around Istanbul might have been a byproduct of the Russian advancement. Yet, in addition to these political and strategic reasons, one should also take into consideration the broader organization of Ottoman society according to the needs of the army during the war and the use of forced labor of Armenians to fulfill these needs. The most obvious outcome of the use of forced labor was the many workshops set up either by military or civil authorities to serve the needs of the army. This constituted another aspect of forced labor of Armenians during World War I– labor of those who were not conscripted into the army– namely the labor of women and children.

What we see in the cases of non-military workshops is a deliberate policy of grouping Armenian artisans under one roof for the sake of centralizing production and serving the needs of the army (and probably the civilian market, too). There are many such cases throughout the Third Army zone. In Erzincan, the most famous of these workshops were the ones directed by the *Altunmakas* (Golden-scissor) Gabriel and his brother, a tailor and a jeweler.[48] Theirs must have been a large establishment; an eyewitness claims to have seen gallows where 30

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46 Karapet Garbician, *Yeghernapatum Pokr Hayots yev Norin Metsi Mayrakaghakin Sebastioy*, (Boston: Hayrenik, 1924), 44-45; for the separation of soldiers with artisanal skills, 570. Garbician gives an interesting account of the conflict between military and civil authorities on the policies on Armenians in the labor battalions and the fate of the soldiers in these units in the Sivas region. Ibid., 570-573. Yervant Alexanian provides a list of Armenian soldiers who had been working in the workshop who "had been working without pay for the Ottoman Army for more than two years, having been separated forever from their families by their own employers." Alexanian, *Forced into Genocide*, 63-64.

47 Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 313.

48 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 316. Kevorkian states that the names of the directors were Avedis Kuyumjian and Nshan Buludian. Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 310.

tailors from the workshop had been hanged in July of 1915.[49] Other towns also had workshops where Armenians worked for the military. In Antep (Ayntab), 370 Armenians were employed in a factory that made clothing, shoes and ironware for the army.[50] Likewise, another survivor had stayed for some time at a manufactory in the town of Malatya that produced textiles for the army, where his mother had found a job as a weaver. The workers at the manufactory were all Armenians who had converted to Islam.[51]

Conversion to Islam seems to have been one of the main prerequisites for the survival of artisans in towns who were not deported because their work was deemed indispensable. That strategy of individual survival was a compromise from the perspective of the authorities who also sought the running of the market–also with one long-term goal in mind, namely "Turkification" of the economy. The case of Avedis, a renowned boot-maker in Erzincan and the above-mentioned Lieutenant Surmenian's father is illuminative in this respect. Avedis was closely affiliated with the military and civil authorities of the town, who frequented his shop, and he even kept their shoe sizes in his notebook. Before the deportations of Armenians, according to the testimony of a relative, Avedis was notified of the coming deportations, and he was given the promise that he would not be deported on the condition that he would teach some Muslim boys the trade. When he asked about the fate of his family, he was told that they would be granted the right to stay if he converted. Regardless, Avedis declined and was deported.[52] In Kayseri, the situation was similar but on a mass scale. Artisans, numbering 1400 in the central district (*kaza*), who were officially exempt from the deportations due to their skilled labor, later in the war, nevertheless applied to the authorities for conversion to Islam to avoid deportation.[53] These cases show the tension between policies towards the Armenian communities and the economic calculations for the army, and sometimes the compromise between the urgent needs economic needs and long term political goals.

The conversion of artisans was a means of transferring their skills to the perpetrator group and a way to "nationalize" the economy.[54] Thus, in addition to the

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49 Verjine Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of The Eye-Witness Survivors* (Yerevan: Gitoutyoun, 2011), 206. This is also the time when soldiers in the boot manufactory were massacred.

50 Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 608.

51 Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide* 227. This might be the workshop set up by a certain Osman. Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 411.

52 Mamikon Ashchean, *Yerznka: Husher Mets Yeghernen* (New Jersey: np, 2008), 16-17.

53 On the conversion of Armenian artisans in the town: Gözel Durmaz, *A City Transformed*, 91-97, particularly 95-96.

54 The most widely known study of the nationalization (i.e. Turkification) of the economy is Zafer Toprak's classic *Milli İktisat* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982). Written at an era when mentioning of the Armenian Genocide was a taboo, the book, despite its great description of the CUP's policies towards Muslim artisans, overlooks the developments among the non-Muslims workers.

appropriation of Armenian property and capital, as has been demonstrated by various scholars,[55] the genocide constituted a moment of attempted Turkification of the labor force in Eastern and Central Anatolia, by leaving a minimum number of Armenian artisans needed to continue production in the short run and to teach the trade to Muslims in the long-run. Due to our limited knowledge about labor in Anatolia in the late Ottoman Empire, and particularly at the beginning of World War I, it is not possible even to make educated guesses as regard to this particular change in the composition of the labor force as well as economy. Yet closer, quantitative research on the Armenian artisans, their work spaces, and rates of conversion cases among them, could provide more information about this long-term policy of the Turkification of the economy from the perspective of labor.

Women in the Workshops

Ottoman military and civilian authorities established workshops which produced goods for the army and market during the war. However, certain characteristics distinguished these workshops from the military manufactories discussed above. Mainly women but also other Armenians were forced to work in these workshops to avoid deportations or to obtain temporary shelters. Likewise, "ownership" of these workshops was different from the military manufactories. For instance, in the case of Erzincan "ownership" meant that the Ottoman central state had confiscated properties and means of production, which had predominantly belonged to Armenian merchant-entrepreneurs and artisans who were deported from the town in the first convoys in mid-May 1915.[56]

Erzincan was a major producer of textiles, particularly *manusa*, a rough cotton cloth, and *havlu* (towels). Before 1915, the production of these textiles was the main source of income for the Armenian community in the region. The manufacturing was carried out by a system of subcontract hierarchy, in which female laborers were located at the bottom and Armenian merchant-entrepreneurs, who controlled it, were at the top.[57] The merchant-entrepreneurs, the Lepians and Der Stepanians, were among the leaders of the community in Erzincan, and the first ones to be deported. Sarkis Der Stepanian had enjoyed close relations with the government authorities and members of the CUP before the war, and upon re-

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55 For two notable works on the topic, see: Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction. The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Continuum, 2011); Bedross Der Matossian, "The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of 'Armenian Capital' at the End of the Ottoman Empire," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, (2011), http://ejts.revues.org/4411.

56 Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 309.

57 For the details of the textile production in the region, see my "Female Labor, Merchant Capital, and Resilient Manufacturing: Rethinking Ottoman Armenian Communities through Labor and Business," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61 (2018): 361-395.

ceiving the order of deportation entrusted his property to a certain *Eczacı* (Pharmacist) Mehmet, a prominent CUP member in the area. After the war, Eczacı Mehmet was accused of organizing massacres, rape, and confiscating Armenian mobile and immobile properties, including that of the Der Stepanian family. In the words of Sarkis Der Stepanian's son Noyig, Mehmet had "managed to make, during the four years of war, a capital of half a million Turkish pounds" due to his relations with the army commanders and Memduh, the Mutasarrıf [district governor] of Erzincan.[58]

In this rather "typical" story of building a fortune on Armenian capital and properties, Mehmet's activities also give us clues about other ways to earn money during the war, especially through abusing women's forced labor. After the deportation of male members of the Lepian family, Eczacı Mehmet confiscated their house and turned it into a workshop producing textiles, which had two sections: one for producing *manusa* and towels and the other for making towels only. Srpuhi Chukurian, who was the female director of the latter section, left a short testimony that detailed how the workshop functioned.[59] Coming from an important *manusa*-producing family in Erzincan, Srpuhi was a good candidate for running one of the sections.[60] Her section was smaller, with seven workers, five women and two men. According to Srpuhi the larger *manusa* section had 30-35 workers, chiefly women and directed by an Armenian man, Yeghia Torosian, who is discussed above in the context of the boot manufactory. Yeghia was assisted by Master Papel, a carpenter who was responsible for the maintenance of the weaving looms. The *manusa* section had 21 looms, 16 for producing *manusa* and five for making towels. The Ottoman armed forces needed more and more vests, underwear and bags which supplemented the poor-quality uniforms.[61] (Figure 4) Perpetrators like Eczacı Mehmet made good use of such opportunities through using the forced labor of Armenians. His business might have further benefited from the destruction of the labor force in the military manufactories.

Some of the Armenian women in the workshop were subjected to sexual abuse. Srpuhi Chukurian mentions three Armenian women from Bayburd (Baberd) working at the workshop. Khandjane Boyadıcian was one them and left a testimony in form of a petition of complaints against Mehmet to the British authorities after the

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58 Walter C Bandazian (ed.), *British Justice and Turkish Leaders Accused of War Crimes against Armenians in World War I* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2015), 261.

59 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 315-316.

60 The Chukurian Brothers were among chief merchant-entrepreneurs of *manusa* in Erzincan before the World War I. *Annuaire Oriental*, (1913), 1542.

61 Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire,* 84. Newly conscripted soldiers had to bring and wear their own clothing instead of state-issued uniforms. As Beşikçi shows, by the mid-1915, there were many soldiers in the Third Army who were still in their civilian clothes. See Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 112, n. 75. For the lack of uniforms and cases of thief see: Abramson, "Haim Nahmias and the Labour Battalions," 27.

Figure 4: A cotton vest used by Ottoman soldiers to suplement their uniforms during the war. Austrialian War Memorial, REL/01208.002

war. Eczacı Mehmet forcibly sent Khandjane to his home, where he kept her with a 20-year old daughter of an Armenian merchant from Erzincan.[62] Upon opposition from Mehmet's wife, the two women were sent from Mehmet's house and placed at the textile workshop. In the workshop, Mehmet sexually abused them;

[62] Bandazian (ed.), *British Justice and Turkish Leaders Accused*, 257-258. Khandjane in her testimony does not provide the name of the other woman in the house.

yet the younger woman was sent away because she resisted him which adds another dimension to the experiences of women forced-laborers. Khandjane was kept in the workshop for over a year, until the Russian occupation of Erzincan in July 1916. During that period, Mehmet took Khandjane to her native town of Bayburt to recover some of the money she had hidden and take it for himself. Enduring sexual abuse and giving the money might have been related to Khandjane's hope of finding her children, as she found one of them with Mehmet's assistance. From her testimony, we understand that Mehmet ran the textile workshop for about a year, profiting from the production and also abusing the workers.

The Armenian overseer of the workshop, Yeghia Torosian, claims to have helped around 100 Armenian women escape to Dersim in groups.[63] If Yeghia's testimony is true, then we may assume that there was a large number of women workers in the workshop and new workers were recruited to compensate for the laborers who escaped.

One way to do so would have been to recruit Turkish women and children, especially of the lower classes, who lost the breadwinners of their families to the conscription, and displaced by the Russian occupation. Yet, due to their inexperience and probably due to ethnic tensions, they were not preferred as workers. In Mehmet's textile workshop in Erzincan, there were 10 Muslim women workers who were placed there primarily to learn the craft– whom the Armenians regarded with disdain.[64] This is similar to the case of Armenian male artisans who were asked to teach the trade to Muslims boys, as we saw in the case of Avedis, the boot-maker. We have no detailed information on these Muslim women workers in the workshop in Erzincan, yet it is well known that in the larger cities of the empire, the state and some associations carried out fund-raising activities for such Muslim women, and they set up workshops to allow them to earn income during World War I.[65] The story of one impoverished Muslim woman in Istanbul who worked in such a workshop provides information about, the low pay, long work hours, and workplace conditions including "the dirt and the meanness and the poverty-stricken air of the place".[66] We can safely assume that the conditions in workshops like that of Erzincan were worse than the workshops set up by the state authorities in the capital. Established under the auspices of the imperial elite, the state-run workshops in Istanbul were highly publicized enterprises to

63 "Letter by Yeghia Torosian to her aunt, 2 May 1917," in *Dzayn Tarapelots*, ed. Petros Tonabetian (Paris: Hakob Turapian, 1922), 141; Compare with Hayastani Azgayin Arkhiv, *Hayots Tseghaspanutyune*, vol. III, 192.

64 Surmenian, *Yerznka*, 316.

65 Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire,* in passim.

66 Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire,* 94-100. The account is based on Şevkiye Hanım's son Irfan's biographic work on the family, İrfan Orga, *Bir Türk Ailesinin Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Ana Yayıncılık, 1994). It should be noted that the book was originally published in English as *Portrait of a Turkish Family* (New York: Macmillan, 1950).

show the generosity of the state towards the women in the soldiers' families.[67] In the case of the workshop in Erzincan which was based on confiscated Armenian property and relied on forced laborers who were subject to sexual abuse, there was no such publicity.

The cases of forced labor of female workers in the workshops in Erzincan and elsewhere, raise more questions than they answer. One question is the complex relations between the perpetrators, the Armenian superintendents in the workshops and the workers. One way to approach to these workshops as examples of the "gray-zone," where superintendents had possessed some power due to their position in the work hierarchy. Levi claims that the privileged prisoners, who constituted the gray-zone, were minorities in the institutions of slave labor in the Holocaust, but that they represented a majority among the survivors.[68] Although there is no evidence to suggest that this was also the case with the Armenians who were superintendents of such workshops, some were nevertheless able to survive and leave their accounts. Yet, neither Srpuhi Chukurian nor Yeghia Torosian mention their position as power holders within the workshop or talk about the sexual and other abuses which took place on the premises. Their testimonies are narratives of their survival and the survival of others, but not of their "privileged position" (using again Levi's terminology) among the victims. Yeghia's acts to save women was considered an act of resistance and solidarity that therefore justified his position within the workshop, just as was the case for many other Armenians who, serving the perpetrators in different capacities, had access to some power and used it to help Armenians.[69] There is a need to develop the terminology and conceptual tools to better analyze the stories of these Armenian women and men while approaching such "gray-zones".

Another set of questions is related to the forms of mutual solidarity in these workshops. Did the Armenian workers form bonds of solidarity and therefore moments of resistance through mobilizing existing kinship ties or coming from the same region (*landsmannschaft*)? In her testimony, Srpuhi Chukurian mentions some names affiliated to each other either through blood or family (e.g. daughter, son, daughter-in-law) or through place of origin (from Bayburt, from the village of Metz Akrag, etc.). Should we think of these categorizations as a basis of bonds in the workshop? Or did the workers in the workshop reproduce power-hierarchies based on existing class-based differences from the pre-genocide era, such as Srpuhi Chukurian, who, coming from an important family, was able to supervise a section of the workshop? We may never compile complete answers to these questions,

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67 Yiğit Akın, "War, Women, and the State: The Politics of Sacrifice in the Ottoman Empire During the First World War," *Journal of Women's History* 26-3 (2014): 21-23.

68 Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 40.

69 A similar case was the Shalvarjians of the Adana region, who furnished the army with flour. They assisted many Armenians in the region through their connections and their actions are celebrated in the scholarship. Kevorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 97.

given the lack of evidence about the experiences of women in such workshops.[70] Yet, such questions, placing class and gender at the heart of some Armenians' experiences, will bring different dimensions to our knowledge of World War I behind the front lines.

Conclusion: The (Immoral) Economy of Forced-Labor

In conclusion, I would like to address a conceptual question with moral concerns that arises in tandem with the academic disinterest on these manufactories and workshops. The question is about the ways to approach the directors of these workplaces, which offered many Armenians better conditions and even survival. This ambiguity is not unique to the Armenian case. It existed also for some Jews in the Holocaust, who worked for the SS in textile factories, and were in better conditions, temporarily, compared to other victims.[71] What should be the ways to deal with the moral ambiguity in the deeds of the directors of military or civilian run workshops?[72] Can we trace "a conscientious stance" in them? [73]

For the textile workshop set up by Eczacı Mehmet, this was far from the case, as he was one of the perpetrators of the genocide in the region of Erzincan. Yet, some of the military commanders seem to have had mixed motivations. As Ümit Kurt showed a director of a small military workshop manufacturing boats for the Euphrates saved Armenian lives by giving them protection, shelter and food.[74] Likewise, the oft-cited memoirs of Yervant Odian refer to the workshop set up by the army in Deir-ez-Zor, where 400 Armenians worked and they, including as many as 50-60 children, were provided with food and shelter; in his words, "were it not for these workshops, the majority of these people would have died of hun-

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70 Felicja Karay, "Women in the Forced-Labor Camps," in Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman (eds.), *Women in the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 294-298.

71 In a controversial book, Michael Thad Allen mentions this aspect. See Allen, *The Business of Genocide: the SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 77.

72 Richard Hovannisian discusses this issue in the context of Muslims who intervened with different motivations and saved lives of Armenians, yet his discussion is limited to individual cases and does not extend to workshops discussed in this article. Richard Hovannisian, "Intervention and Shades of Altruism during the Armenian Genocide," in Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 173-207.

73 Burçin Gerçek, in her book on the righteous Muslims during the genocide, offers this term of "taking a conscientious stance" (*vicdanlı duruş*) as a better alternative to the "righteous." Burçin Gerçek, *Akıntıya Karşı: Ermeni Soykırımında Emirlere Karşı Gelenler, Kurtaranlar, Direnenler* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 26-27. For a discussion of righteousness during the Armenian Genocide, the related essays in the following edition can be consulted: Jacques Semelin, Claire Andrieu and Sarah Gensburger (eds.), *Resisting the Genocide: The Multiple forms of Rescue* (London: C. Hurst, 2011).

74 Ümit Kurt, "Birecik'te Ermeni Sürgünlerini Ölümden Kurtaran Cemil (Bahri) Köhne," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no.253 (Ocak 2015), 84-87.

ger."[75] Yet, the picture was more complex in both cases: the commander of the above-mentioned boat workshop had received orders from the government to employ artisans including Armenians, due to the need to increase production of boats on the Euphrates. Thus, what the director did was to interpret the order in a way to save some Armenians.[76] Likewise, Odian mentions the rumors among Armenians that the commander of the army workshop in Deir-ez-Zor, about whom "Armenians had no reason to complain...on the contrary they always enjoyed his protection," had been a staunch follower of the CUP and was brutal against Armenians in the Bitlis region at the beginning of the war.[77] Moreover, the material benefit from production for the market or planning a new career in business after the war, could have been the primary motivation for involvement in the organization of such workshops, as it was the case in some other workshops established in the same region upon official orders.[78]

I suggest that focusing on the economic value of Armenians' labor, both male and female, and the increasing demand for it during the war offers a way to examine and understand this ambiguity in deeds of conscience which saved *some* Armenians. In these instances, we have to keep in mind that they took place in the form of forced labor, in a workplace where *someone* had to do the necessary work. In other words, the directors did not disobey the orders and rules; they interpreted the orders in a way that *some* Armenians benefitted–although this may not be necessarily their primary concern of the people who set up the workshops. Moreover, rendering themselves for forced labor was a strategy by which Armenians received some degree of protection, if not a direct means of survival. This "protection" opened up the way for different forms of abuses including sexual abuse, in addition to forced labor, as it was the case of female workers in the textile workshop in Erzincan. Collaborating with the perpetrators which was a necessity for survival for many, was a choice for a very limited few–class and gender playing a major role in between. Odian mentions a certain *chorbaji* (notable), Missag, at Deir-ez-Zor who had lent his sock-making machine to the army workshop and worked there as a soldier.[79] Despite his relatively high standing in the society as a notable, Missag must have felt compelled to work in a military workshop and be a "soldier". His motivation was simple, as other Armenians in the military workshop reminded Odian: "…the civil authorities have no right to interfere with you."[80] This of course does not explain the massacre of boot-makers in the manufactory of Erzincan following the deportations from the town, or the same fate of

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75 Yervant Odian, *Accursed Years: My Exile and Return from Der Zor, 1914-1919* (London: Gomidas Institut, 2009), 400.
76 Burçin Gerçek, *Akıntıya Karşı:* 22, 237-239.
77 Odian, *Accursed Years,* 213-214.
78 Vahé Tachjian, *Daily Life in the Abyss: Genocide Diaries: 1915-1918* (New York: Berghanhn Books, 2017), 113-114.
79 Ibid., 177.
80 Ibid., 179.

soldiers in the manufactories in other places after the Russian advances or the experiences of women as forced laborers in textile workshops. Instead, it points out that the economic demands of the army did not always take prominence over administrative and political decisions, creating conflicts of interest between the military and civilian authorities.[81] The policies about Armenian forced labor can be understood better after finding and exploiting more sources to map out the histories and functions of such facilities and the individual experiences of workers in them.

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[81] For the conflict between civil and military authorities over the fate of 500 Armenians who were needed as laborers and artisans in Deir-ez-Zor, see: Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 282-283.

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The Ottoman Fourth Army's Orphanage Policy, 1915–1918

Hilmar Kaiser

For some years, it has become clear that the dominant paradigm concerning the extermination of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire fails to account for the absence of large-scale massacres of Armenian deportees in the area under the control of the Ottoman Fourth Army.[1] Moreover, the comparably high survival rates of Armenians in the region as opposed to the total slaughter in neighboring Deir-ez-Zor district suggest that Fourth Army Commander Ahmed Djemal Pasha had put into place a distinctly different policy. While the absence of wholesale massacres stands undisputed, some authors assert that the army's policies still remained within the parameters of the genocidal scheme. Thus, it is argued that the settlement of deportees was an integral part of the extermination process as was a forced assimilation policy.[2] Shortly, after the Ottoman defeat, an orphanage in Lebanon, Antoura, received particular attention. The Armenian intellectual and survivor Aram Andonian stated that the government had established an orphanage network covering many cities for turning Armenian children into Turkish speaking Sunni Muslims. He published a series of photos from the orphanage depicting Armenian children and Turkish administrators. Prominent among them

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1 This study updates and partly revises my earlier findings published in Hilmar Kaiser, "The Armenians in Lebanon during the Armenian Genocide," in *Armenians of Lebanon: From Past Princesses and Refugees to Present-Day Community*, Aida Boudjikanian, ed., (Beirut: Haigazian University Press, 2009), 31–56. See also: Idem, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies: Ahmed Djemal Pasha, the Governors of Aleppo, and Armenian Deportees in the Spring and Summer of 1915," *Journal of Genocide Research* 12 (2010): 173–218; Idem, *The Extermination of Armenians in the Diarbekir Region* (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2014), 198-211, 361-390; Idem, "Assimilating Armenians, 1915-1917," in *Aufarbeitung historischer Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit: Eine interdisziplinäre Auseinandersetzung mit dem Armenier-Genozid*, Melanie Altanian, ed., (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2018), 23-55; Idem, "The Armenian Deportees in Hauran and Karak Districts During the Armenian Genocide," in *Armenians of Jordan*, Antranik Dakessian, ed., (Beirut: Haigazian University Press, 2019), 39-105; Vahram L. Shemmassian, "Humanitarian Intervention by the Armenian Prelacy of Aleppo during the First Months of the Genocide," in *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 22 (2013): 127–52.

2 Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity. The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 271-272; Idem, *Ermenilerin Zorla Müslümanlaştırılması. Sessizlik, İnkâr ve Asimilasyon* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2014), 147-148, 178-182; Vahé Tachjian, *Daily Life in the Abyss: Genocide Diaries, 1915-1918* (New York, NY – Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 75, 176; Ümit Kurt, "A Rescuer, an Enigma and a Génocidaire: Cemal Pasha," in *End of the Ottomans: The Genocide of 1915 and the Politics of Turkish Nationalism*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Margaret L. Anderson, Seyhan Bayraktar and Thomas Schmutz, eds., (London: I. B. Tauris, 2019), 221-245.

was Halide Edib Hanim [Adıvar], a nationalist writer and activist of the "Committee of Union and Progress" (CUP), the former ruling party.[3] Her involvement seems to demonstrate that the orphanage project had a model character for the empire. This paper will challenge such assertions. The Fourth Army's orphanage policy was not in line with the anti-Armenian agenda of the dominant CUP faction. Instead, officers came forward in opposition to the central authorities.

Relief Work at Aleppo

Shortly after the Ottoman government had started general deportations in May 1915, uprooted Armenians began arriving in and around Aleppo. The central authorities had made no preparations for shelter and provisioning, simply leaving such matters to local administrators. With resources already strained by the war effort, the provincial authorities at Aleppo were overwhelmed but supported humanitarian efforts by the local Armenian community.[4] From the start, the relief network focused on children and orphanages which grew rapidly. Local Armenian and Swiss philanthropists established the first orphanage under Reverend Aharon Shiradjian with the support of governor Bekir Sami Bey in early August 1915. The network of personal acquaintances soon included Djemal Pasha and members of his staff as well.[5] The cooperation with the civil authorities at Aleppo suffered a damaging blow in September 1915 when Shukru Bey, the director of the Ministry of the Interior (Dâhiliye Nezâreti, hereafter: DH)'s "Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Immigrants," (*İskan-ı Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyeti*, hereafter: IAMM) arrived in the city. The official was in charge of the deportations and had come on a tour of inspection to overcome organizational problems. During his sojourn, he established a new regional deportation office which would work with the newly appointed governor Mustafa Abdulhalik Bey. The latter was a confidant of the Minister of Interior, Talaat Bey, and had during his tenure at Bitlis overseen the slaughter of the province's Armenian population.[6] Thus, relief work became increasingly dangerous for the local volunteers while the number of arriving deportees kept increasing. As Armenian volunteers were particularly in danger, missionaries assumed a more significant role. Meanwhile, overall conditions deteriorated

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3 Aram Andonian, *Documents officiels concernant les massacres arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie Turabian, 1920), 72f, 112f, 127, 128f, 136f.

4 Shemmassian, "Intervention"; Kaiser, "Resistance."

5 Aharon Shiradjian, "Nerga hay vorpanotse" [The Armenian Orphanage Today] *Darakir* 1 (13 December 1918); Dikran Yeretsian, *Vorperu Pouyne (1915-1921)* [Nest of Orphans, 1915-1921] (Aleppo: Ani A. Ekmekjian, 1934), 3-8. I indebted for the translation of Armenian sources to several colleagues among them Anna Ohanessian-Charpin and Bedros Torossian.

6 Hilmar Kaiser, "Shukru Bey and the Armenian Deportations in the Fall of 1915" in *Syria in World War I: Politics, economy, and society*, Talha Çiçek, ed., (London-New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 169-236.

further due to the outbreak of epidemics and ongoing famine. Given the limited resources and the attitudes of Shukru Bey and the new governor, conditions in some shelters soon defied description. In view of the humanitarian disaster, a German officer in the Fourth Army's general staff arranged for Djemal Pasha a visit to Aleppo and the deportee shelters. Having seen dying children and women, the commander was deeply moved and sanctioned the operation of orphanages under the army's protection in December 1915. Beatrice Rohner, a Swiss-German missionary of the "Deutsche Hülfsbund für Christliches Liebeswerk im Orient" (German Relief Association for Christian Relief in the Orient), took charge of the shelters which were to be temporary institutions until the authorities would find a lasting solution. The DH registered 530 orphans as part of the government's orphan program. Rohner had also accepted the position as the orphanages provided her with a legal status and organizational basis for clandestine or semi-clandestine relief work which would become to cover most of the Fourth Army region. [7]

The expanding orphan work depended on donations by Americans, often Armenian immigrants, which the "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions" (ABCFM) forwarded with the help of the U.S. and German consular service to Aleppo. Despite the assurances of Djemal Pasha, the Aleppo governor provided only insufficient supplies before stopping deliveries altogether. From the beginning Mustafa Abdulhalik Bey lobbied the DH demanding the deportation of the children. While the central authorities shared the governor's views, the plan's implementation experienced repeated delays. In December 1916, the Ministry of Education (Maârif Nezâreti, hereafter: MF) reported that various orphanages sheltered 1,286 children at Aleppo. At the time a wave of mostly Kurdish refugees from the eastern provinces reached Aleppo. Rohner suggested to take care of 200 refugee children. Mustafa Abdulhalik Bey informed her, however, that Djemal Pasha had ordered the transfer of the children to Damascus. Still, Rohner supplied clothing for thirty children who had been admitted to her hospital.[8] Soon afterwards, the Fourth Army asked the Aleppo governor to transfer Armenian orphans to Antoura, an Ottoman orphanage in Mount Lebanon. Thus, the authorities took seventy of Rohner's orphans and dispatched them on 13 February 1917. The governor explained to Rohner that her children were well dressed and nourished orphans. Abdulhalik Bey feared that in case he would have sent neglected children

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7 Auswärtiges Amt, Politisches Archiv (hereafter: AA-PA), Konstantinopel 101, J. No. II 1175, Rössler to Embassy, Aleppo, Mar. 4, 1917; Murat Bardakçı, *Talât Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrûkesi. Sadrazam Talât Paşa'nın özel arşivinde bulunan Ermeni tehciri konusundaki belgeler ve hususî yazışmalar* (Istanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2008), 88-89; Hilmar Kaiser, with Luther Eskijian and Nancy Eskijian, *At the Crossroads of Der Zor: Death, Survival, and Humanitarian Resistance in Aleppo, 1915–1917* (Princeton, NJ: Gomidas Institute, 2001), 54; Idem, "Humanitärer Widerstand gegen den Genozid an den Armeniern in Aleppo," in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Völkermord an den Armeniern*, Rolf Hosfeld and Christin Pschichholz, eds., (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2017), 244-264.

8 AA-PA, Konstantinopel 160, J. No. II 25, Rössler to Embassy, Aleppo, Dec. 16, 1916.

the government might question what he had done with the funds at his disposal. German consul Walter Rössler expected that the authorities would take more children. Indeed, in March 1917, the authorities took most orphans to Constantinople while dispersing some children in government institutions along the Anatolian Railway. Despite the setback, the relief network continued maintaining orphanages as destitute children continued to make their way to Aleppo. Importantly, Aharon Shiradjian's orphanage continued operation throughout the period enjoying Djemal Pasha's special protection.[9]

Hama

In 1915, Hama in Syria province housed a huge deportee camp at the city limits. The local Syrian Orthodox Community provided some relief through a soup kitchen. Arab residents, too, donated food which they brought out to the camp. With time, however, donations stopped and deportees had to buy their provisions. Luckily, deportees could leave the camp to buy provisions in the city while some Armenians had opened shops. Yet, little or no water was available and typhus spread. Starvation and epidemics took a terrible toll. Nevertheless, deportees developed own initiatives and Protestant preachers took a leading role in organizing the deportee camp. Many orphans had remained without help or shelter. Regularly, Protestant preachers found dead children in the streets who had died during the night. At times, families gave up children to locals in exchange for a promise of help. At first, orphan work started with the children being placed in caves near the city. The little food the preachers could provide was not enough and most of the children died. Thus, the group appealed to the authorities for assistance. Local military commander Osman Nouri Bey secured District Governor Feruzan Bey's consent for opening an orphanage although a permission could not be granted officially. A local Muslim notable provided a large house with a courtyard surrounded by a high wall which provided a measure of protection. For funds and medicine, Reverends Dikran Koundakdjian and Haroutiun Nohoudian appealed successfully to Rohner while an Arab merchant organized the transfers. Money alone was, however, no guarantee that the orphanage could obtain flour. At times, Feruzan Bey intervened personally with officials who had refused to hand-over allocated provisions. For his part, Osman Bey saw to it that police and security personnel did not harass the relief workers. The orphanage started with some fifty to sixty children and cared primarily for orphans up to the age of thirteen. The number of orphans rose quickly and three children had to sleep in each of the improvised beds. The children received some clean underwear

[9] AA-PA, Konstantinopel 101 J. No. II 1757, Rössler to Kühlmann, Aleppo, Mar. 16, 1917; Kaiser, "Widerstand," 256-262. Shiradjian, "Nerga hay vorpanotse" [The Armenian Orphanage Today] *Darakir* 1 (15 December 1918).

and a coat as a uniform. Some Protestant women who had been deported from Marash conducted informal schooling. Due to famine rations the orphans received only one meal per day. Hygienic conditions were also most basic. Unlike the Aleppo orphanages, the facility had no hospital or other medical arrangements. Children were barefoot and could bath only once a month in a public bathhouse. Still, the children remained by and large healthy. Within one year, only one child died.[10] When Reverend Koundakjian fell victim to the raging epidemics, Nohoudian continued relief work. Yet, relief funds sufficed to support alone the Protestant clergy and about 200 orphans. By the end of July 1916, Nohoudian cared for 332 orphans when the authorities conducted a campaign registering Armenians as Muslims. Moreover, officials began taking children from the streets. They had opened places in which they offered free food especially to older boys. Melkon Bedrossian and his sisters had heard the rumor that Armenian boys and girls, aged fifteen to sixteen years, could receive free bread from the government. Thus, about 150 Armenian children went to the distribution point in a walled khan and saved themselves in this way from hunger for about ten days. They were also shaved, a precaution against lice and typhus, and registered. When their parents and relatives understood that the authorities were preparing the deportation of the children, they rushed in to prevent their departure. Being taken away together with his two sisters and two cousins, Bedrossian remarked that he did not attempt to flee also because his mother could not provide enough food or basic protection. In a way, he was improving his situation. The authorities sent the group by train to Antoura. Soon rumors spread in the Hama orphanage that the authorities would take over the children. Apparently, baiting children had been either insufficient or the concentration of Armenian children at Hama was no longer wanted. Some boys ran away while others were contemplating an es-

[10] Vahram L. Shemmassian, *The Armenian Villagers of Musa Dagh. A Historical-Ethnographic Study, 1840-1915* (Ph. Dissertation University of California, Los Angeles, 1996), 225-228; Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide. A Complete History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 676-678; Armenian Assembly of America (AAA), Oral History Project, Santoukht Sirabian; Samuel Mgrdichian; Harry H. Serian, *The Life and Experiences of Rev. Harry H. Serian (Haroutune Nokhoudian). An Autobiography* (Beirut: privately published, 1968); 36-37, 39-43; Mary A. Heghin, *Olive Trees Grow again* (Altadena, CA: Seekers of Sekhimm, 1976), 86-90, 98-103; Vahan H. Hamamdjian, *Vahan's Triumph. Autobiography of an Adolescent Survivor of the Armenian Genocide* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse Inc., 2004), 74; Karnig Panian, *Goodbye, Antoura. A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 46-54, 66-70; Grigor Gyozalian, "Testimony" in Verjiné Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors* (Yerevan: National Academy of Sciences, 2011), 473-484; Tonik Gabriel Tonikian, "Testimony," Ibid., 468-471; Garabed S. Tilkian, *Musa Dagh Boy. Story of Survival and Service* (Los Angeles, CA: Abril Printing, 1992), 28, 31-32; Hovhannes Chirishian, "There is not a Turk who does not love to be bribed…" in Paren Kazanjian, The *Cilician Armenian Ordeal* (Boston, MA: Hye Intentions Inc., 1989), 171-173; Melkon Bedrossian, *J'ai ouvert les yeux et je n'ai vu que deuil et horreur,* MS [1978?]. I thank Anna Ohannessian-Charpin and Selim Deringil for making translations of the Armenian original available to me.

cape. Nohoudian, however, discouraged such plans as he believed that the children had a higher chance of survival in the government institution than in the deportee camp. By the beginning of August 1916, Ottoman authorities took the children from the improvised orphanage and sent them to Lebanon before soldiers plundered the place.[11] When Nohoudian refused registering as a Muslim, he was exiled to Kerak district. Nevertheless, orphanage work resumed until he succeeded in returning to Hama. Feruzan Bey and Osman Bey helped him to continue work for some time. Finally had to flee to Aleppo and Salihe Biredjiklian took charge of the orphanage.[12]

Tafila Region

In August 1915 Armenian deportees began arriving in Maan in Syria province's Kerak district. Many of them were sent eastward to the desert settlements of Tafilah, Buseyra, Shobak, Ayma, and Wadi Musa. Neither the weak Ottoman administrative structure nor the local economy were equipped to deal with the influx. Local Arabs extended some help but the situation quickly deteriorated. An epidemic decimated starving deportees and local villagers. By 1916, few of the surviving Armenians had enough resources to support orphans other than those of their own family. No established Armenian community existed and the deportees were unable to create an effective communal organization of their own. While many girls joined forcibly or voluntarily Muslim families, many more children died in the streets. At one point Armenian survivors in Busaira decided the abandon the place and seek better living conditions in other locations. They arranged their nightly departure in a way that both locals and Armenian orphans would

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11 AA-PA, Türkei 183/43, A 17939, Rohner to Peet, [Aleppo], "Report on Relief Work 1 January 1916 to 1 June 1916," June [?], 1916, copy, enclosure in Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, Aleppo, June 17, 1916; Beatrice Rohner, "Aleppo, May 3, 1916," *Sonnenaufgang* 18 (1915-1916): 78-79. ABCFM-NY, Relief Work, Rohner to Peet, Aleppo, Aug. 4, 1916, copy. Heghin, *Olive Trees*, 105-106; Tilkian, *Musa Dagh Boy*, 28; Panian, *Antoura*, 72-75; Sisag Hagop Varjabedian, *Hayeri Lipanani Meç* (Beirut: Imprimerie Vantek, 1951), 436. The reference pertains to the experiences Boghos Shahinian. I owe this reference to Anna Ohannessian-Charpin.

12 ABCFM-NY, Relief Work, Rohner to Peet, Aleppo, July 27, 1916; Rohner to Peet, Aleppo, Aug. 4, 1916, copy; Nohoudian to Rohner, Hama, Aug. 23, 1916, copy, enclosure in Rohner, Aleppo, Sept. 2, 1916, copy; AA-PA, Konstantinopel 173, J. No. 1926, Loytved to Embassy, Damascus, June 30, 1916; Konstantinopel 101, J. No. II 7248, Hoffmann to Embassy, Aleppo, Aug. 29, 1916; Zoryan Institute, Stanley Kerr Archives 40, Ohannes Tilkian, "Those Turbulent and Sad Years," n. d.; Serian, *Life*, 46-53; Ernst Sommer, *Die Wahrheit über die Leiden des armenischen Volkes in der Türkei während des Weltkriegs* (Frankfurt: Verlag Orient, 1919), 35; Yervant Odian, *Accursed Years: My Exile and Return from Der Zor, 1914-1919* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2009), 113-116; Paul Berron, *Erinnerungen aus dunklen Tagen* (Frankfurt: Action Chrétienne en Orient, 1929), 25; Talha Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria. Cemal Pasha's Governorate during World War I* (London: Routledge, 2014), 124-128; Kaiser, "Deportees," 85-86.

not notice. A group of children tried in vain to catch up with adults. Still, some survived the desert march and reached Tafila where the situation resembled that at Busaira. Orphans were sleeping in the street and fought with dogs over edibles. In November 1916, soldiers picked up about 50 orphans from the streets and took them to Deraa where Armenian children from other places joined the group. Locals took some of the girls while Muslim clerics converted the children and gave them Muslim names. Not surprisingly, children resented the conversion and secretly held on to their religion. At Damascus, officials sent teenagers to local government workshops where they would join other Armenians. The younger children, however, they dispatched to the Antoura orphanage.[13]

Unlike at Aleppo and Hama, the authorities in Kerak and probably also in Hauran district rescued Armenian orphans. Given the disastrous local conditions the children would most likely have died otherwise in the desert villages. So far, no official statistics are available on the number of orphans taken to Deraa and Damascus but survivor testimony suggests that several hundred children were taken. This was only a small portion of the orphans in the area but the children formed a significant number of those taken to Antoura.

Fourth Army Opposition

The forced nominal conversions were part of wider Fourth Army policy. Since September 1915 at the latest, Djemal Pasha had lobbied the central authorities to disperse and convert Armenian deportees. At the time, this project stood in contrast to official government policy as the DH had strictly forbidden collective conversions. Only on 21 December 1915, the government lifted this prohibition for Armenian deportees in the so-called settlement areas. In February 1916, Djemal Pasha returned to the issue and developed program for large-scale conversions. Following his earlier suggestions, he saw government hospitals, schools, and orphanages as the principal tools to convert Armenians. These institutions would also function as obstacles for foreign influence. Thus, adequate government funding was essential if Armenians were to be won over to Islam. On a different level, the proposal would have secured much needed financing for relief and the survival of Armenians.[14] The plan was, however, rejected as the government was

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13 Anna Ohannessian-Charpin, "The Descendants of Armenian Women in South Jordan" in *Armenians of Jordan*, 187-212. Gabaret Kalfayan, *Kirk Yelits Hayots* [The Book of Armenian Exodus] (Beirut: Donikian, 1955), 364, 366-367; Kaiser, "Deportees," 87-94.

14 DH.Şifre Kalemi (hereafter: ŞFR) 54-254, Minister to provinces and districts, July 1, 1915; 59-83, Talaat to Aleppo, Syria provinces, Urfa, Zor districts, Dec. 21, 1915; 509-15, Djemal Pasha to Talaat, [?], Feb. 14, 1916. Apparently, Djemal Pasha's Chief of Staff Ali Fuat [Erden] had played a significant role in formulating the army's Armenian policy. Falih Rıfkı Atay, *Zeytindağı* (Istanbul: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1932), 64; Idem, "Pazar Konuşması" *Dünya Gazetesi* (12 December 1967).

considering a more radical solution with regard to Armenians. In the summer of 1916, the Ottoman central authorities coordinated the full-scale slaughter of Armenian deportees in Deir-ez-Zor district within the Ottoman Sixth Army region. While refusing dispatching troops to Deir-ez-Zor district, Djemal Pasha undertook a last minute effort to prevent the atrocities on 1 August 1916. Once more, he emphasized that in his area of control he had neutralized politically dangerous Armenians while dispersing Armenians in a way so that they did not form a majority anywhere. This depiction of the situation was not entirely correct but the intervention failed anyhow. Still, the army had managed avoiding involvement in the massacres and continued implementing Djemal Pasha's directives. It was important that Armenians would not exceed ten percent of the local population in general. In an area along the railway line only two percent were permitted. This marked a departure from earlier central government policies. Djemal Pasha had succeeded in removing a ban for Armenians to stay in those areas. As the strip along the railway included the most densely populated districts within the Fourth Army region, the new rule represented a substantial increase in the number of Armenians that could 'legally' be settled. Moreover, the Fourth Army removed Armenian converts from the deportee lists thereby hiding their existence. This was, however, illegal since the DH insisted that Armenians had to be registered as such. They were regarded as members of dangerous group that had to be kept under close surveillance and denied basic rights.[15]

Antoura

It was under these circumstances that the Fourth Army opened the Antoura orphanage in a French Catholic institution 12 miles north of Beirut.[16] The authorities had seized and expelled the Lazarist owners at the end of 1915. Following the arrangements Djemal Pasha had made with Rohner for the orphans in Aleppo, he had been considering the opening of army orphanages. At the same time, the DH reiterated that only Armenian children under the age twelve could be allowed to government orphanages while by default older children were to be treated as common deportees. In case placing in government orphanages was impossible, the children had to be dispersed in Muslim villages. Thus, the central authorities made it clear that for them military bodies like the Fourth Army had no role in orphan policies. To bring this point home, the DH shared his instructions with

15 DH.ŞFR 527-19, Djemal Pasha to DH, Damascus (HQ), Aug. 1, 1916; Kaiser, "Assimilating"; Idem, "Shukru Bey," 196; Çiçek, *Syria*, 125.

16 See also Selim Deringil, "'Your Religion is Worn and Outdated.' Orphans, Orphanages and Halide Edib during the Armenian Genocide: The Case of Antoura," *Études arméniennes contemporaines* 12 (2019): 33-65. The article provides further details on daily life in Antoura that could not be included here. In his conclusions the author differs substantially from those presented in the present study.

Djemal Pasha's superior, Enver Pasha. By that time, the latter was urging the DH to take care of converted Armenian orphans and even offered to meet the expenses from the war budget. Talaat Bey assured him that the DH would place the children and cover the expenditure. Contrary to the DH's plans Djemal Pasha developed an own program and informed Enver Pasha on 5 June 1916 about his intention to open orphanages for deported Armenian orphans in Homs and Hama. In line with his earlier emphasis on conversion, Enver Pasha ordered that the orphanages had to be 'mixed' institutions, thus including Muslim children as well. Unlike the DH, the Supreme Army Command did not oppose the Fourth Army's orphanage scheme as long as these would promote assimilation. The compromise accommodated DH wishes but maintained the supreme authority of military commanders in their area of control.[17]

At first, Antoura remained a somewhat improvised project. The Armenian children sent from the Hama orphanage were not the only children brought to the new institution. Fourth Army officer also collected Armenian orphans in the Hauran, Kerak Districts, and at Damascus. Little is known from where Assyrian children came. Kurdish orphans were sent from Diarbekir. On arrival the children received a warm bath. Within a month about 500 children had arrived at the new orphanage. The director was Nihad Bey while headmaster Feyzi Bey was in charge of discipline. The administrators forced the children to pick an Islamic name for themselves or assigned one. Moreover, each orphan received a personal number. Feyzi Bey gave a long speech about religion, conversion, and warned the children to speak only Turkish although many did not know the language. He also beat up children. Thus, Karnig Panian ended in the orphanage hospital but neither a qualified doctor nor medicines were available. The few teachers were by and large incompetent and overwhelmed by the number of traumatized students. Rations were of bad quality and deteriorated with rising orphan numbers who reached six hundred. Due to a lack of hygiene and malnutrition children soon perished. Older boys became overseers. One small boy was punished for wearing a small crucifix. Given the circumstances, children fled from Antoura, others began stealing also outside the orphanage as they were starving. Orphans who were rendering a service to the administration fared better. Overseer boys even took bread and sold it to people outside the orphanage.[18]

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17 DH.ŞFR 63-142, Minister to provinces and districts, Apr. 30, 1916; DH.Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti 39-4/1, Enver to Talaat, May 9, 1916; Talaat [?] to Enver Pasha, May 11, 1916; Çiçek, *Syria*, 131; Emile Joppin, "Historie d'Antoura," *Bulletin annuel de l'Association amicable des anciens élèves d'Antoura* 12 (1947): 5.

18 Panian's account is contradictory as to the end of torture. While he maintained that Halide Edib Hanim had looked on when children were tortured, he credited her new administration with ending it. Torossian pointed out that many children came from communities that were at least in part proficient in Turkish. Stephen Trowbridge dismissed a religious agenda writing that the "considerable proportion of Kurdish children … clearly indicates that the main motives in this institution were racial and political rather than religious."

In the summer of 1916 Djemal Pasha invited a number of Turkish nationalist intellectuals he knew from the "Turkish Hearths" (TH) organization with which he was associated. Most prominent among the guests was writer and educator Halide Edib Hanim, a vocal critic of the government. Her relations with the dominant CUP faction were tense if not hostile. Shukru Bey, the Minister of Education, particularly opposed her. In 1916, she had denounced the massacring of Armenians in the presence of Ziya Gokalp Bey at a large TH gathering. The latter was a member of the CUP Central Committee, party ideologue, and one of those responsible for the extermination program. A heated encounter ensued, resulting in Gokalp accusing her of writing "Jewish" literature, alluding to her alleged Jewish heritage. In other words, she was not trustworthy which came very close to an open threat. Djemal Pasha's invitation offered a welcome respite. It also manifested the commander's own opposition to the massacres and his aversion of Gokalp. On the way to Syria, the group met apparently by chance Behaeddin Shakir Bey, a leader of the so-called "Special Organization." The latter had played an important role in organizing the mass-slaughter of Armenians in Erzerum and Trebizond provinces. Visibly upset by the encounter, Halide Edib Hanim denounced the operative as a murderer while the operative, for his part, questioned her character. The incident was a sort recommendation for Djemal Pasha who himself opposed Behaeddin Shakir Bey's crimes.[19]

In Syria, Djemal Pasha had begun opening Turkish model schools for Arab children in order to replace the foreign schools which the government had closed down. Early in 1916, Halide Edib Hanim's sister had gone to Beirut and started work in one of these government schools. Following this pilot project, Djemal Pasha asked Halide Edib Hanim to develop a plan for a more comprehensive school system which would cover Beirut, Damascus, and Mount Lebanon. Thus, Halide Edib Hanim conferred with Djemal Pasha and prominent locals, including Hussein Kazim [Kadri]. The latter had formerly been in charge of the Fourth Army's relief efforts on behalf of Armenian deportees but had resigned in protest because of obstruction by civil officials who were backed by Talaat Bey. Before her return to Constantinople in September 1916, Djemal Pasha took Halide Edib Hanim and some of the group to Antoura. She recalled that at that time about 400 children, including Turkish and Kurdish, were already in the institution.

Idem, *'Antoura: The Shelter of a Thousand Tragedies* (Jerusalem: Armenian Red Cross Commission to Palestine and the Near East, 1918), 4-7; DH.ŞFR 70-137, Minister to Diarbekir province, Nov. 29, 1916; 539-50, Bedri to DH, Diarbekir, Dec. 5, 1916; Harutyun Alboyadjian, "Testimony" in Svazlian, *Genocide*, 426-427; Halide Edib [Adıvar], *Memoirs of Halidé Edib* (London: The Century Company, 1926), 443; Panian, *Antoura*, 80-104, 110-120; Bedrossian, *horreur*; Bedros Torossian, "The Roles of Turkish and American Orphanages in Influencing Armenian Identities," *Haigazian Armenological Review* 36 (2016): 260.

19 Yahya Kemal [Beyatlı], *Siyasî ve Edebî Portreler* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1986), 35-37; Atay, *Zeytindağı*, 5, 60-61, 64; Idem, "Konuşması"; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 316-317, 387-388.

Many if not most were sick. Interestingly, she did not attribute the sickness to the treatment the children were receiving but to war conditions, a sort of *force majeure*. Panian recalled the visit. According to him, orphans protested against the small rations and forced an abrupt end of the inspection. Because of the embarrassment, Feyzi Bey introduced an even more brutal regime, including the use of bastinado. Bedrossian, however, described the inspection visit as a successful one. Moreover, he recalled the food served on the occasion which according to Panian had been denied to the children. At the end of December 1916, Halide Edib Hanim had accepted an invitation to oversee the newly created school system and returned to Beirut. She had declined to take over Antoura but saw to it that an acquaintance of hers, Loutfi Bey, was appointed as director.[20]

At the beginning of January 1917, Halide Edib Hanim accompanied the incoming director with his new staff to Antoura. Feyzi Bey was removed. The place was in disarray and filthy. More than five hundred of the eight hundred children were sick. Thus, the staff disinfected the entire orphanage and an army physician, also called Loutfi Bey [Kırdar], joined the institution. Two Catholic nuns joined the staff and worked in kitchen, infirmary, and dormitories. During the following weeks, she kept supervising the orphanage and its development. Apparently, food rations were sufficient by now. The curriculum continued to include Turkish language lessons, nationalist and religious indoctrination, and also military drill but was expanded by vocational training. Being dissatisfied with the director's performance she removed him and other staff while at the same installed the former physician Loutfi Bey as the new director. Meanwhile, staff still denounced children as 'infidels.' Workers also destroyed paintings and statues of Catholic saints. At times they burned books from the library for lack of firewood. Some children watched this with resentment and began hiding Armenian books while practicing their religion in secret. Moreover, Halide Edib Hanim became more directly involved in the running of the institution and stayed for longer periods. Apparently, she had accepted responsibility for Antoura well before the dismissal of the director. She claimed that within two months the place was transformed into an exemplary institution where she applied modern pedagogical methods. Still, she entertained racist stereotypes as to the qualities of the races the children belonged to. [21]

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[20] Loutfi Bey had been working for the Agricultural Bank. The bank had, however, not been notified about his move to Lebanon and wondered what was going on. MF.Mektubî Kalemi 1225-81, Ministry of Trade and Agriculture to MF, Apr. 11, 1917; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 390, 400, 428, 431-432, 436-437; Panian, *Antoura*, 85-88; Bedrossian, *horreur*. For a discussion of Djemal Pasha's projects in Syria, see: Çiçek, *Syria*. Kurt incorrectly claims that Hussein Kazim Bey was a member of a 'special committee' which even included a 'conversion unit.' Kurt, "Cemal Pasha," 237-238.

[21] Bayard Dodge praised Halide Edib as "probably the most capable and enlightened lady in Turkey." Writing that the "old religious prejudices were winked at and a good man was engaged as director" he suggested that conversion efforts stopped. There is, however, no oth-

Financing

At the time Halide Edib Hanim was taking direct charge at Antoura, Djemal Pasha made an effort to secure central government funding for the institution. On 7 February 1917, he informed the DH that the orphanage had an overall capacity for 2,000 children. It provided for converted Armenian orphans and Kurdish and Muslim orphans who had come from the direction of Erzerum and Diarbekir. 1,500 had already been accepted. IAMM Director Shukru Bey had promised 20,000 Turkish pounds (Ltq.) from the DH's budget for Immigrants for initial expenses. While the money had supposedly been transferred to Damascus, Djemal Pasha was unable to trace the sum. Consequently, the commander was meeting expenses from army funds but he warned that those would soon be exhausted. Talaat Bey confirmed the transfer of sum to Syria province and that expenses for Antoura should be drawn from the sum. Further transfers were possible as long as the expenses would be documented and approved by the Syrian provincial authorities. Much to Djemal Pasha's dismay, however, the Syrian authorities had spent 8,000 Ltq. for deportees within the province. The remaining 12,000 Ltq. were insufficient as the orphanage's annual budget had been calculated at 30,000 Ltq. Now, Djemal Pasha requested a transfer of said 30,000 Ltq., this time to Beirut. [22]

Aside from Djemal Pasha's efforts, Halide Edib Hanim did her own lobbying. She wrote to Djavid Bey, a leading CUP-member, with whom she entertained friendly relations. Congratulating the latter on his return to the post of Minister of Finance, she shared information on her projects and her thoughts on Djemal Pasha's assistance to Armenian deportees. In drastic words she described the extreme misery of Armenians orphans. She did not mention who had killed the parents but confided that she was shaken by the survivor stories and their suffering and that it was difficult to write about it. The orphanage could not compensate for the loss and the children still remained hungry. During her travels between Antoura and the schools she oversaw, Armenians implored her for help. Therefore, she asked Djavid Bey whether the new administration would be willing to relief the suffering and respect the human rights of the survivors. In other words, Djavid Bey was supposed to provide funds.[23]

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er information supporting this claim while the all survivor accounts contradict it. American University of Beirut, Archives, Howard Bliss Collection, series III, Box 18, file 3, item 5, Bayard Dodge, Relief Work in Syria During the Period of the War (A brief and unofficial account), [Beirut], 1918 (hereafter: AUB, Dodge, 1918); Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 442-449; Joppin, "Historie," 6-7; Kalfayan, *Kirk Yelits Hayots*, 367-368.

22 DH.ŞFR 545-24, Djemal to DH, Damascus (HQ), Feb. 7, 1917; 72-214, Talaat to Fourth Army command, Feb. 12, 1917; 72-215, Talaat to Syria province, Feb. 12, 1917; 549-44, Djemal to DH, Damascus (HQ), Mar. 24, 1917.

23 Halide Edib to Djavid Bey, Beirut, Mar. 14, 1917, in Bardakçı, *Evrak-ı Metrûkesi*, 149-151.

The lobbying efforts came at a moment when the central government was introducing far-reaching changes the administration of matters relating to Armenian deportees. On 11 February 1917, DH proposed to the Grand Vizierate moving the responsibility for funding the provisioning of Armenian deportees to the Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezâreti, hereafter: HN). Following the plan's acceptance, starting in March 1917 the DH would only be financing Muslim refugees and immigrants while the HN's budget would be responsible for all persons who had been deported in accordance with the deportation law of May 1915. Thus, Greeks and Arabs were also included. The funds would come from the war budget. On the same date, the DH ordered a detailed count of all remaining Armenians. [24]

In March 1917 the Ottoman government assigned a monthly subsidy of 12,000 Ltq. to Beirut province and 8,000 Ltq. to Mount Lebanon district for food aid and public soup kitchens as well as for orphanages. It was, however, obvious that the sum was totally insufficient as it could not meet the need of 200,000 famine afflicted people in the mountain district. The DH was certain that many would die of hunger. Thus, the Fourth Army suggested that 12,000 Ltq. should be paid to Mount Lebanon and a further 50,000 Ltq. would certainly be needed. In response, the government appropriated 6,000 Ltq. to Beirut province and 20,000 Ltq. to the mountain district. As the sum was not going to meet the need, the military considered transferring 20,000 Ltq. from the war budget. Evidently, the authorities were well aware of the pending disaster.[25]

On 22 March 1917 the DH transferred for the last time appropriations to the provinces which should cover both the expenses for Muslim refugees as well as deported Armenians, Greeks, and Arabs. Talaat Bey had not bothered to inform the Djemal Pasha about the changes who learned about these from Syria province. Thus, the commander spent 5,000 Ltq. within one month and requested information as to the amount that he was supposed to expend. The DH responded that no further payments from the Fourth Army budget to provincial authorities were needed as the HN would directly transfer funds to the civil authorities.[26]

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[24] Bâb-ı Âli Evrak Odası (hereafter: BEO) 4455-334063, DH to Grand Vizierate, Feb. 11, 1917; Grand Vizierate to Supreme Command, Feb. 14, 1917; DH.ŞFR 72-210, Talaat to provinces, Feb. 11, 1917; 73-29, Talaat to provinces, Feb. 15, 1917. For the returns see Bardakçı, *Evrak-ı Metrûkesi*, 108-145.

[25] BEO 4459-334384, Grand Vizierate to DH and HN, Mar. 12, 1917; 4461-334525, DH to Grand Vizierate, Mar. 25, 1917; Enver Pasha to Grand Vizierate, Apr. 3, 1917; 4462-334650, Grand Vizierate to HN, Apr. 4, 1917; 4462-334650, HN to Grand Vizierate, Apr. 12, 1917.

[26] The allowances for Armenian deportees who had been registered with the authorities were meager at best. Starting in July 1917 an adult would receive 0.03 Ltq. and children 0.015 Ltq. per day in paper bills which had much depreciated in value by about fifty percent in comparison to coins. DH.ŞFR 74-234, Talaat to provinces and districts, Mar. 22, 1917; 552-34, Djemal to DH, Jerusalem, Apr. 22, 1917; 75-244, Mustafa Abdulhalik to Syria

While the news was likely to have represented some welcome savings for the Fourth Army, the commander had not yet succeeded in securing the 30,000 Ltq. for Antoura's annual budget from the central authorities. The DH had informed him that Beirut would supposedly cover half of the sum which was not reassuring given the famine raging in the province. Djemal Pasha appealed to Talaat Bey that the money was urgently needed as closing the orphanage would badly reflect in public opinion not only on the central authorities but also on the Fourth Army. Importantly, the army commander threatened he would be forced to resign from his post and return to Constantinople. The DH replied that it would not occupy itself directly with orphanages. Instead, the administration of such institutions pertained by law to local authorities. Thus, for the time being all that could be provided was 10,000 Ltq. which had been wired to Syria. Once the sum had been spent new funds would be transferred. In an attempt to appease the general, the DH commended Djemal Pasha for his efforts and acknowledged the exceptional importance of Antoura, particularly given the situation in Lebanon. The commander, however, was unimpressed. The new arrangement would have created a measure of control by civil authorities over the orphanage. It would also form a precedent by which civil authorities could challenge his ultimate authority. Thus, he insisted that Antoura depended directly on the army command and that financial arrangements had to take this into account. In response, Talaat Bey curtly advised the Fourth Army, not Djemal Pasha in person, that DH funds could not be expended on Armenian deportees. Moreover, as Antoura did not fall under the jurisdiction of the MF's orphanage directorate, the military would have to pay for the institution's expenses. In other words, the DH had reversed its decision to provide funds through the provincial authorities. Moreover, Talaat Bey had dismissed Djemal Pasha's threat to resign. Djemal Pasha understood that there was no chance to overcome the DH's opposition. For a last time, he reiterated the known arguments, adding that anyhow the government would have to pay for the upkeep of the children in one way or another. But most important was that the army had kept thousands of children alive while the DH had been issuing conflicting decisions. Consequently, it was the commander who alone had overcome all difficulties in order to save these children from misery and death. Therefore, he could only ask for a transfer from the HN. In case this would not be forthcoming, the Fourth Army would shoulder the financial burden alone. The pitched battle over Antoura's finances showed that the Fourth Army was unwilling to give way to DH demands concerning the treatment of and authority over Armenian deportees even if it meant losing central government financing. [27]

province, Apr. 26, 1917; 75-245, Mustafa Abdulhalik to Fourth Army Command, Apr. 26, 1917; 77-168, Mustafa Abdulhalik to provinces and districts, June 20, 1917.

[27] DH.ŞFR 550-37, Djemal Pasha to DH, Jerusalem, Apr. [23], 1917; 75-271, Abdulhalik to Fourth Army command, Apr. 30, 1917; 550-59, Djemal Pasha to DH, Jerusalem, Apr.

The Collapse of the Antoura Project

Halide Edib Hanim spent the summer 1917 in Constantinople where she promoted her schooling project in the press and with the TH. She did, however, remain silent about Antoura. On her return to Lebanon she claimed that the educational work at Antoura was developing successfully. Facilities had been improved. Cleanliness and what she labelled as 'harmony' were obvious. Montessori classes had been introduced to meet the needs of the smaller children. In sum, she presented the institution as haven for children who were enjoying their time as good as the loss of parents would allow them to do so. This would, however, not last long [28]

By January 1918, following Ottoman military setbacks, it became clear that the school system and, sooner or later, also Antoura would be closed down. The central authorities began planning the staff's and Halide Edib Hanim's evacuation. Faced with the probability that Antoura might be closed, she contacted Djemal Pasha who had resigned from his post and returned to Constantinople. She had decided to stay until March 1918 in order to keep open the schools so that final exams could be conducted. Concerning Antoura she opposed to hand it over to the civil authorities as she considered the MF's staff in Syria incompetent. On the other hand, Halide Edib Hanim warned that handing over the majority of the children to foreigners would be a grave mistake since Turks had killed their parents. Thus, the orphanage should be immediately transferred to Constantinople where the institution could be run by her staff or that of the MF's Orphanages Directorate. Her staff could organize the transfer as long as the authorities would provide the necessary means. If a transfer was out of question, the orphanage should come under the administration of the Mount Lebanon district authorities and administered by a capable person preferably assigned by Djemal Pasha. [29]

In February 1918, the authorities announced the closing of the newly set up Ottoman school system in Lebanon and Syria as the military situation further deteriorated. On 4 March 1918, Halide Edib Hanim and her team left Lebanon with her husband Adnan Bey, the Minister of Health, organizing accelerated transfers. Apparently, preparations for the transition in running of the institution were lacking. Thus, Beirut provincial authorities were wondering what needed to be done. Only on 30 March 1918, after the group's return to Constantinople, Halide Edib Hanim

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[May] 3, 1917; 76-69, Talaat to Fourth Army Command, May 9, 1917; 553-115, Djemal to DH, Jerusalem, May 12, 1917.

28 Kâzım Şinasi, "Suriye Mektepleri. Halide Edib Hanımefendi ile Mülâkat," *Türk Yurdu* 6, 12-13 (1917), reprint: (Ankara: Tutibay Yayınları, 2000): 178-181; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 452-453.

29 DH.ŞFR 83-77, Adnan to Mount Lebanon district, Jan. 10, 1918; 576-41, Ismail Hakki to Ministry of the Interior, Beida, Jan. 17, 1918; 576-47, Halide Edib to Djemal Pasha, [?], Jan. 19, 1918, enclosure in, Ismail Hakki to Djemal Pasha, Mustafa Abdulhalik, Beida, Jan. 20, 1918.

sent some vague reassurances claiming that efforts for the orphanage were under way and results would soon be communicated.[30]

Halide Edib Hanim claimed to have had secured provisioning until the end of July 1918. In fact, the German military serving in Syria donated provisions for relief institutions in Beirut and Antoura and shipped the food with German trucks from Damascus. Antoura's new director and some staff were to stay as long as the military situation would permit. Importantly, Halide Edib Hanim also claimed that she had made arrangements with Howard Bliss and Bayard Dodge of the Syrian Presbyterian College for handing over of Armenian orphans to the Red Cross while Muslim children should have been sent to Constantinople. This was, however, not true. Of the 17 to 18 years old boys, 90 Kurds were sent to unknown locations while 15 Armenians were sent to Constantinople.[31]

Loutfi [Kırdar] remained in charge but the situation at Antoura quickly deteriorated and food became scarce again. Many children, among them Panian and Bedrossian, fled in search of food as death from starvation or diseases threatened.[32] When Halide Edib Hanim learned at the beginning of August 1918 that conditions at Antoura had deteriorated she asked the governor of Beirut, Ismail Hakki Bey, to intervene. In case Loutfi Bey was responsible, she considered his removal if the governor would advise her to that effect. Ismail Hakki Bey reassured her that problems had been overcome and the Fourth Army was securing the provisioning of the institution. Moreover, the governor would personally inspect the orphanage and, if necessary, act in line with the suggestions concerning Loutfi Bey. In response, Halide Edib Hanim indicated her willingness to return to Beirut the following year if the situation would permit her to do so. In her memoirs, she remained silent about the problems at Antoura and dismissively claimed that there was "not much to tell" for the remainder of the war.[33]

Further military setbacks triggered the evacuation of the orphanage's last Turkish educational personnel. Only some military and local staff remained. Soon, the Ottoman front in Syria collapsed and almost all remaining staff disappeared one night. As food supplies had stopped, Manah Effendi, a local Arab Sheikh who served on the orphanage's staff, tried to fill the gap and supplied bread with his own funds. The pharmacist had remained behind and made it clear to the children and especially to those boys who had been overseers that they could speak again Armenian and use their real names. Soon chaos broke out with children

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30 DH.ŞFR 84-156, Adnan to Ismail Hakkı, Constantinople, Feb. 25, 1918; 85-86, Adnan to Djemal, Constantinople, Mar. 11, 1918; 85-267, Adnan to Ismail Hakki, Constantinople, Mar. 30, 1918; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 471.

31 Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 461-462, 469; AUB, Dodge, 1918; Bedrossian, *horreur*.

32 Bedrossian, *horreur*; Panian, *Antoura*,

33 DH.ŞFR 90-2, Halide Edib to Ismail Hakkı, Constantinople, Aug. 1, 1918; 591-35, Ismail Hakki to Mustafa Abdulhalik, Beirut, Aug. 3, 1918; 90-55, Adnan to Ismail Hakkı, Constantinople, Aug. 6, 1918; Ali Fuat Erden, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Suriye Hâtıraları* (Istanbul: Halk Matbaası, 1954), 123; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 473.

rampaging through the institution. The older orphans took advantage of the changed situation and took revenge on a Kurdish worker who had been abusing them and beat him up. Clashes between Armenian and Kurdish children took several lives and also one of the overseer boys was beaten to death. When the former Lazarist college director returned to Antoura on 7 October 1918, he saw that the improvised Arab administration had failed and famine conditions reigned. Thus, he appealed for help to Bayard Dodge of the Syrian Protestant College. The latter became instrumental in the dispatch of Red Cross staff which arrived 17 October 1918. Now the situation stabilized and the extent of the children's sufferings became clear. According to Mary Heghinian only ten of about 200 orphans from Hama could be located. The others had been abducted, given away or died. Stephen Trowbridge conducted a count on arrival:

	Armenian	*Kurdish*	*Syrians*	**Total**
Girls	82	69		
Boys	374	115		
			29	
	456	184	29	**669**

The fact that about 68 percent of the remaining children were Armenians indicated that Djemal Pasha had succeeded in keepings its operations in line with his original plan of providing shelter for them. Kurdish children represented with 28 percent a strong element of the orphan population which legitimized to extent the institution's designation as a refugee shelter. Apparently, the Ottoman authorities had evacuated all Turkish children. After some time, the authorities sent most of the Kurdish children to Damascus and further on to Constantinople.[34]

French military authorities allowed the continued operation of the institution provided that it would be turned over to the French College some time in 1919. They appointed Stewart Crawford, a professor of the Syrian Protestant College, as the orphanage's new director. As he did not move his office to the institution, an experienced missionary, Bertha Morley, ran the orphanage for the most part after 1 December 1918.[35] While a military physician was to visit the orphanage at regu-

[34] AUB, Dodge, 1918; Panian, *Antoura*, 147-150. Alboyadjian, "Testimony"; Bedrossian, *horreur*; Joppin, "Historie," 9; Stephen Trowbridge, "How Turks Conduct an Orphanage. ʾAntoura: The Shelter of a Thousand Tragedies," *The Missionary Review of the World* 42 (1919): 288; Heghin, *Olive Trees*, 106; Harriet Morley, *Not by Bread Alone. The Life of Bertha B. Morley written for her foster family* ([Joplin, MO]: College Press, 1967), 23.

[35] Morley had joined the Red Cross Mission in the hope of finding some of her former students whom the Ottoman authorities had deported in 1915. ABCFM reel 632, Morley to Barton, Hartford, Conn., Feb. 2, 1918; Harriet Morley, *Life*, 21-25. For Morley's work in 1915 see Bertha Morley, *Marsovan 1915. The Diaries of Bertha B. Morley* (Ann Arbor, MI: Gomidas Institute, 2000); Hilmar Kaiser, "Armenians and Missionaries in Times of Crisis: Marsovan 1915," in *The New Approaches to Turkish-Armenian Relations*, Şafak Ural, Feridun Emecen and Mustafa Aydın, eds., (Istanbul: Istanbul University, 2008), 179-233. In his memoirs Panian avoided any mention of Morley or other American staff.

lar interval, sanitary conditions had considerably deteriorated. About 100 children were sick in the infirmary. Skin and eye diseases were rampant as were malaria cases. Armenian was to become the primary language of instruction while French and English were optional. Armenian teachers volunteered to work without pay at Antoura. Religious education was supposed to follow the doctrines of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The plans depended, however, on a thorough renovation of the facility, including plumbing, and securing not only school supplies but also medicines, sugar, milk, clothing, tableware. Despite these problems many children had recovered by December 1918. After some time, Antoura began accepting other orphans who took the places of those children who had joined relatives. Soon, capacities were overstretched and Morley had to stop taking in children. By the end of March 1919, Antoura sheltered 657 children. When Antoura closed in June 1919, Morley adopted ten Armenians children and one Kurdish boy.[36]

For her part, Halide Edib Hanim turned to damage control and tried to maintain the image of a benevolent educator. Coming from an elitist background she had risen to prominence with the assistance of American missionaries who promoted her as the archetypical progressive Turkish woman. Within the Turkist movement she had acted as spin-doctor engaging in what might be labeled "explaining Turkey" to foreign correspondents and diplomats. In 1916, she had already used her missionary contacts to have a laudatory article about her and her school work being placed in the American-sponsored "Levant Trade Review."[37] At times, however, her calculations turned out to be wrong. In 1917, trying to downplay the conversion and assimilation program she had told American missionary Harriet Fisher that these were just secondary concerns. Most important would be to feed the children. The latter knew, however, that the rationale was false as chil-

[36] Hoover Institutions, American National Red Cross records, 107, 4; Trowbridge to Barton, Nov. 15, 1918; Hoover, 107,5, Nicol to Bacon, Beirut, Nov. 8, 1918; Nicol to American Red Cross Commission, Beirut, Nov. 9, 1918; Nicol to Commission, Beirut, Nov. 11, 1918; Nicol to Commission, Beirut, Nov. 26, 1918; Hoover, 107, 9, Morley to Trowbridge, Antoura, Dec. 9, 1918; Morley to Sanborn, Antoura, Dec. 17, 1918; 107, 1, Morley to Butterfield, Antoura, Apr. 1, 1919. Alboyadjian, "Testimony," 426-427. Among Morley's adopted children were Hovhannes Shahinian, the brother Boghos, and Alboyadjian. When interviewed in Yerevan during the Soviet period, he praised Morley but carefully avoided mentioning that he had been her adopted son.

[37] William M. Ramsay, *The Revolution in Constantinople and Turkey. A Diary* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), 176, 179-181; William E. Curtis, *Around the Black Sea* (New York, NY: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911), 417-418, 424-425; Isabel Dodd, "Halidé Edib Hanum," *Levant Trade Review* 5 (1915-1916): 388-389; George A. Schreiner, *From Berlin to Bagdad. Behind the Scenes in the Near East* (New York-London: Harper and Brothers, 1918), xii, 25-28, 32-33, 36, 181, 327-329, 369; Henry Morgenthau, *United States Diplomacy on the Bosphorus: The Diaries of Ambassador Morgenthau 1913-1916* (Princeton, NJ – London: Gomidas Institute, 2004), 30.

dren had been taken from Rohner's orphanage.[38] At Antoura, Halide Edib Hanim repeatedly posed with dignitaries for photos promoting her work. The children were presented as being well-cared for in an exemplary institution. Shortly after her final departure, the college staff presented a photo album to Howard Bliss. The images presented happy and orderly children attending classes, the clean facilities, and the staff, including a Muslim religious instructor. One photo depicted German trucks delivering provisions while another showed destitute children in rags. Apparently, the album was to document the children's progress from arrival at Antoura to their present condition. Once more, the deception failed. Having seen photos of her and Djemal Pasha at Antoura, Trowbridge wondered "Did they realize what the outside world would think of those photographs?" Following the Ottoman defeat, Halide Edib Hanim asserted herself as a public face of the CUP which had reorganized as the Turkish nationalist movement. Still, her Antoura orphanage followed her with Armenians denouncing her deeds. Thus, she felt it advisable presenting herself as having been a strong opponent of converting and assimilating Armenian children. In her memoirs, she attributed the assimilation program exclusively to the by then deceased Djemal Pasha. [39]

Damascus

The orphanage at Damascus became the second major orphanage project of the Fourth Army. In 1915, relief efforts in the city developed slowly as it lacked a sizeable Armenian community. When increasingly larger numbers of Armenian deportees arrived at Damascus, local German Consul Julius Loytved started some relief work. Ninety percent of the deportees were in dire need of financial assistance. Protestant preacher Vahram Tahmisian, himself a deportee from Caesarea, played an important role in this context. Djemal Pasha had allowed him to settle in Damascus. U.S. Jesse Jackson at Aleppo supported Tahmisian's efforts as well. This was essential for discreetly obtaining funds from the ABCFM through Rohner.[40] Given Ottoman central government opposition to relief work, however, Tahmisian had to halt work until he could continue with Loytved's help in a more clandestine fashion. Loytved had entertained more ambitious plans like establishing an orphanage, a bath, and food distribution with the help of a German mis-

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38 Harriet J. Fischer, "Statement" in *"Turkish Atrocities": Statements of American Missionaries on the Destruction of Christian Communities in Ottoman Turkey, 1915-1917*, James Barton (compiler), (Ann Arbor, MI: Gomidas Institute, 1998), 164-165.

39 AUB archives, Antoura Album, Mehmet Ismet [?] to Bliss, Mar. 21, 1918; Trowbridge, *Antoura*, 3; Aghavnie Yeghenian, "To the Editor" *New York Times* (17 September 1922); Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 429; Deringil, "Orphans," 49-50, 60.

40 AA-PA, Konstantinopel 100, J. No. 3240, Jackson to Morgenthau, Aleppo, Feb. 8, 1916, copy, enclosure in Peet to Mordtmann, Constantinople, Mar. 17, 1916. Clara Richmond, "The Turkish Atrocities," in *Atrocities*, 126.

sionary. He abandoned these, however, when Djemal Pasha confided to him that the central government had prohibited all foreign relief work. Given latter's assurances of his good intentions, Loytved suggested that the commander should open an orphanage. The latter accepted the proposal and ordered the opening of an orphanage. Moreover, he promised the distribution of foreign relief funds through trustworthy officials. The money would complement the Fourth Army's own relief efforts for Armenian deportees. Djemal Pasha had raised the modest financial support for Armenians in and around Damascus from one piaster per day to two for adults while children received 1.5 piasters. Some were allowed to work others were not. Moreover, military authorities executed in an exemplary manner a gendarmerie officer who had abused deportees. Djemal Pasha also met with German Ambassador Paul von Wolff-Metternich in Constantinople and gained some standing with German diplomats. Thus, the embassy approved the cooperation as long as the consul could keep an eye on distributions. Since the cooperation focused on Damascus, Tahmisian remained in charge for distribution in Hauran.[41]

Meanwhile, Djemal Pasha put Hussein Kazim Bey in charge of his relief project. The official secretly warned Loytved that the central authorities were deporting Armenians to Deir-ez-Zor in order to kill them. Loytved understood that Hussein Kazim Bey's agenda was identical with his own and recommended that German relief funds should be secretly passed on to the official. In other words, the clandestine sections of the relief network at Damascus included a high-ranking Ottoman officer of the Fourth Army's general staff. Like at Aleppo, however, civil authorities tried to obstruct the work in line with the DH's agenda. Thus, Hussein Kazim Bey resigned after only a short tenure with Tcherkes Hasan Bey succeeding him on 5 September 1916. By appointing this sworn enemy of the CUP, Djemal Pasha made sure that the he would not cooperate with DH's officials and follow the party line. Aside from general relief work for deportees, Hasan Bey organized an orphanage and shelter for women. Both institutions were supported by public funds and cared according to Armenian clergy for about 1,700 people. The DH approved a hospital, schools, and an orphanage for Armenian children on 10 December 1916. Like Antoura, the institution had to include Muslim refugee children and thus be 'mixed.' Apparently, the DH expected that

41 DH.ŞFR 505-111, Azmi to DH, Damascus, Jan. 18, 1916; AA-PA, Türkei 183/41, A 4546, Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, Aleppo, Jan. 31, 1916; 183/43, A 17939, Rohner to Peet, [Aleppo], "Report on Relief Work 1 January 1916 to 1 June 1916," June [?], 1916, copy, enclosure in Rössler to Bethmann Hollweg, Aleppo, June 17, 1916; Konstantinopel 100, J. No. 3240, Mordtmann, Pera, Mar. 20, 1916; J. No. 3240, Metternich to Loytved, Pera, Mar. 20, 1916; J. No. 3409, Loytved to Embassy, Haifa, Mar. 25, 1916; J. No. 3602, Loytved to Embassy, Damascus, Mar. 28, 1916; J. No. 5791, Peet to Mordtmann, June 19, 1916; Konstantinopel 172, J. No. 1320, Loytved to Embassy, Damascus, Apr. 21, 1916; J. No. 1377, Loytved to Metternich, Damascus, Apr. 17, 1916; J. No. auf 1172, Metternich to Loytved, Pera, Apr. 19, 1916; Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (hereafter: HHStA), PA XII 463, Ranzi to Burián, Damascus, Feb. 15, 1916; Paul Berron, "Ein gut Bekenntnis vor vielen Zeugen," in *Sonnenaufgang* 22 (1919-1920): 20.

the institution would be administered in line with the government's assimilation policy.[42] But this did not happen. Unlike Antoura, the institution did not turn into a repressive tool. Instead, the place was a shelter which provided much needed assistance. Rations were deemed good and Armenians described the facilities as being 'beautiful.' Strong competition existed among deportees for one of the places in the orphanage. Although the orphanage expanded to other locations in order to accommodate more children, the new capacities remained insufficient. The staff was Armenian, mostly women. Some Armenians worked as overseers not only at the orphanage but also at a shelter where women produced yarn from wool. Avedis Ordakian, a young boy, had survived the deportation to Damascus and stayed for two years in "Hasan Bey's orphanage." When authorities closed the school for orphans, they threw the children onto the streets where they remained until the arrival of Arab and British forces. Abram Abram, born in 1900, remembered Hasan Bey as a "good man." When the civil government tried to convert the children, he fled and stayed with Armenians in Damascus.[43] As these recollections indicated, the conditions for the children in the orphanage deteriorated considerably during latter phase of Damascus governor Hasan Tahsin Bey's tenure. A killing famine was raging in the city. One survivor estimated that of approximately 1,500 orphans in the city only 500 survived. The authorities closed the orphanage and threw the children in the streets. Tcherkes Hasan Bey succeeded in collecting about 60 orphans and provided for them from his private funds for several months. When he handed the children over to local Armenian apostolic clergy, he again provided funding.[44] Following the Ottoman defeat in 1918,

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[42] AA-PA, Konstantinopel 172, J. No. 1800, Loytved to Metternich, Damascus, May 30, 1916; DH.ŞFR 69-222, Minister to Syria province, Dec. 10, 1916. Çerkes Hasan [Amca], "Tehcîr'in İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," in *Alemdar* (19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28 June 1919); Idem, "Meşrutiyet Devrinin 'Çerkez Hasan'ı Hayatını Anlatıyor," in *Akşam Gazetesi* (26 January 1955). On Tcherkes Hasan Bey's conflict at Deraa see Kaiser, "Requiem for a Thug: *Aintabli* Abdulkadir and the Special Organization," in *End of the Ottomans*, 87-88.

[43] Menasse Sevagian estimated that a total of 2,000 women and children were covered by the army's program. He also recorded forcible conversions. HHStA, PA XII 463, Ranzi to Burián, Damascus, Nov. 28, 1916; Armenian Assembly of America, Oral History Project, Hripsime Karamanian; Tcherkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcîr'in İç Yüzü," *Alemdar* (19, 20, 22 June 1919); Hoover Institution, Palo Alto, CA, American National Red Cross Records, 110, 9, American Red Cross Orphanage Damascus, Representative Armenian Children's Stories; Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 406-7; Malachia Ormanian, *Kholk yev khosk* [Reflections and memories] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1929), 354; Menasse Sevagian, "Tamasgos yev Hayere kaghakin angumen yedk" [Damascus and the Armenians after the fall of the city] in *Arev* (6, 8, 11, 13 November 1918). Djemal Pasha inspected the Damascus orphanage in the presence of Hasan Bey. Andonian, *Documents*, 80.

[44] Chilingirian who had worked closely with Tahsin Bey described the latter as rather humanely disposed towards Armenians. He did not address the question of responsibility for the orphans' death. Antranig N. Genjian, "Hayere Damasgosi metch (Azadakrumen aratch u verch)" [Armenians in Damascus (Before and after the liberation)], *Yeridasart Hayasdan* 16 (22 November 1919); Yeghishe E. Chilingirian, *Ngarakrutyunk Yerusaghemi-Halebi-Tamaskosi*

Tcherkes Hasan Bey implicated former Damascus governor Tahsin Bey in the death by starvation of 150 Armenian orphans. The children had died in the orphanage because the civil authorities had not delivered the assigned rations. As witnesses he named eight Armenians among them former Catholic Armenian bishop of Angora as well as a colleague from his commission in Damascus and Tahsin Bey's successor as governor of Syria, Mehmet Refet Bey.[45]

Conclusion

The case of the Damascus orphanage demonstrated that the Fourth Army's orphanage policy differed fundamentally from that of the Ottoman government. It was a relief institution providing much needed shelter to defenseless children. In other words, it was exactly the kind of orphanage Halide Edib Hanim falsely claimed she had been running at Antoura. The orphanages were in part the result of the army's failed lobbying for a change in the government's anti-Armenian policies. Djemal Pasha proposed the deportees' conversion, the central authorities, however, opted for massacre. The opposing views clashed in August 1916. At a time, the DH coordinated the Deir-ez-Zor massacres, the Fourth Army opened orphanages.[46] It registered Armenians as Muslims thereby removing many from the DH's administrative radar screens. The army's relief efforts interfered with the operations of the civil authorities and were bound to encounter opposition. The struggle over finances brought the differences out into the open. In the end, Djemal Pasha had to make a choice. He either had to accept civil authority control of the orphanages or finance the institutions from the army's budget and keep Talaat Bey's men out. The commander chose the second option. Given the financial constraints of the time, Djemal Pasha and some of his officers entered unlikely arrangements with western and by extension Armenian relief workers. Both operated at least in part illegally if the DH's orders were to be considered. Hussein Kazim Bey even gave away top-secret information in order to muster German support for opposition against the Deir-ez-Zor massacres. Despite his

Kaghtaganagan yev Vanagan Zanazan Tibats yev antskeru [Description of different events and matters of deportees and monastic life. Jerusalem, Aleppo, Damascus, 1914-1918] 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: n. p., 1927), 25, 44.

45 AAA, Guerguerian Collection, reel 19, Dossiers of Turks Responsible for the Armenian Atrocities, Dossier No. 15, Sheet No. 1. See also: United Kingdom, National Archives, Kew Gardens, Foreign Office 371/6500-6501/132/3557, Rumbold to Curzon, Constantinople, 16 March 1921, No. 277/1983/24, Tahsin Bey. Sevagian, "Tamasgos." Tahsin Bey had been a chief perpetrator of the Armenian Genocide. Kaiser, "Tahsin Uzer: The CUP's Man in the East," in *Ottomans*, 93-115.

46 The story of one boy, Levon from Adrianople, personified the opposing policies of Talaat Bey and Djemal Pasha. He survived badly wounded the Deir-ez-Zor massacres. After hiding with Kurds, Fourth Army officials brought him to Antoura. Once, he left in futile search for his family. When he returned to Beirut, officials sent him again to the orphanage. Trowbridge, *Antoura, 8-9*.

evident record, Djemal Pasha carefully avoided making statements that could compromise him. Being aware that his intervention in civilian affairs was problematic, he presented himself as a successful commander who also implemented much needed changes in Syria.[47] While this was politically expedient, it also a created a grey-zone which made it difficult to clearly identify his policies.

Antoura became an area where the distinction between relief and repression became blurred. The earlier staff brutally abused children, even tortured them. Thus, the army brought about a change in personnel. Halide Edib Hanim and her staff were apparently employing less violent methods but they hardly differed from their predecessors in regard to the ultimate goal. Despite all of her professions during and after World War I, Halide Edib Hanim was an ardent Turkish nationalist and for her the children's conversion was an integral part of the project destroying Armenians' identity. For Halide Edib Hanim the destruction of the Armenian community was imperative. She did not, however, promote outright murder. A fact which made it possible for her to work with the Fourth Army. Her 1918 appeal to Djemal Pasha for assuring continued control over Armenian children whose parents had been, as she put it, killed by Turks exposed her deceitful behavior. At Damascus, Tcherkes Hasan Bey ran an orphanage which operated differently.[48] These different approaches resulted from the absence of a carefully planned relief policy. Instead, Djemal Pasha's decisions were often improvised. This circumstance opened opportunities for the relief network but also for a nationalist like Halide Edib Hanim. It seems that these contradicting efforts were of little importance to the army commander as long as these served his overall purpose, the survival of Armenian deportees. This is borne out by a conversation recounted by Halide Edib Hanim. Apparently in the fall of 1916 Djemal Pasha dismissed concerns about conversions as these would be only a temporary measure to secure the children's survival until the end of the war. Moreover, the commander was hopeful that the children would return to their community and religion. At about the same time following complaints by Catholicos Sahag II, in another conversation with Bishop Kyud Mkhitarian Djemal Pasha clarified his position in a more drastic way: "Whatever I did until now I did not do it as the Minister of the Navy and Army Commander Djemal Pasha. But the close friend of the Catholicos, Djemal, did it. (…) I view this problem from a purely philanthropic perspective. Leave this miserable people alone. In essence it is about staying alive until the end of the war. Thus,[no matter] whether it is Islam, Judaism,

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47 Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri 1914 – 1918*, Vol 7 (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askerî Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt ve Denetleme Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2007), 327-330; Djemal Pasha, *Hatıralar* (Istanbul: Selek Yayınları, 1959), 315-316.

48 At his funeral in 1962, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople acknowledged his efforts. Müfid Ekdal, *Eski Bir İhtilalciden Dinlediklerim* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), 45-46.

being an infidel [i.e. Christian], a monkey or turning into a donkey, it is [good] enough to survive. Have you understood? Go tell that to your Catholicos."[49]

In the end, Djemal Pasha's strategy succeeded to a remarkable degree. Neither Talaat Bey and his DH, nor epidemics and a killing famine, succeeded in wiping out the Armenians in Syria. In 1918, just like Halide Edib Hanim had feared, Armenian community organizations took over the orphanages and the former Fourth Army region became a center for an Armenian diaspora which served as a basis for Armenian reconstruction efforts.

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[49] Adıvar, *Memoirs*, 429; Kyud Mkhitarian, *Husher Yev Verhishumner, 1918-1935* [Memories and Remembrances, 1918-1935] (Antelias: Catholicosate of Cilicia, 1937), 76-78; Tachjian, *Abyss*, 157. Kurt's interpretation of this source appears to be flawed: "It was puzzling that Cemal's list in this quote, though eclectic about the ways Armenians were 'free to live', does not include 'as Christians'." Kurt, "Cemal Pasha," 236-237.

and matters of deportees and monastic life. Jerusalem, Aleppo, Damascus, 1914-1918] 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: n. p., 1927).

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Part 2:
Demographic Changes, Minorities and Gender in the War

In the Towns of Western Anatolia at the Time of the Great War: Greek Responses to the Ottoman Boycott and the Forced Population Movement

Ayşe Ozil

This essay explores the responses of the Ottoman Greek subjects of western Anatolia in the face of an economic and demographic campaign raised against them at the time of the Great War, namely the Ottoman economic boycott (1909-1914) and the forced population movement into the interior (1915-1918).[1] Scholarship has mostly examined the political and ideological perspectives on these issues and the resulting destruction. The focus has largely been on the Muslim organizers and perpetrators and the position of the Greek administrators including religious and state authorities.[2] This examination aims to contribute to this literature by discussing the matter on the ground, in other words by exploring the experiences of the people who were exposed to nationalist policies and specifically the ways in which individuals or communities acted in the face of the campaigns. Despite violence, destruction, and loss, the paper demonstrates the strength and resilience of the Greek Christians of western Anatolia at this time. It shows that concentrating on what happened on the ground compels us to rethink about the trajectory of the Anatolian Greek society in the early twentieth century.

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1 This is a revised and expanded version of a paper I published in Turkish as Ayşe Ozil, "Cihan Savaşı'nın Eşiğinde Siyaset, Toplum ve Gündelik Şiddet: Osmanlı Ekonomik Boykotu, 1908-1914", in Ümit Kurt and Güney Çeğin (eds.), *Kıyam ve Kıtal: Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), pp. 135-147.

2 See Zafer Toprak, "İslam ve İktisat: 1913-1914 Müslüman Boykotajı", *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 29/30 (1985), pp. 179-199; Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, "1913-1914 Rumlara Karşı Boykot ve Hüseyin Kazım Bey'in Risalesi", *ÇTTAD*, vol. 13 (2006), pp. 91-107; T. Akkuş, "Bir İktisadi Siyasa Projesi: Milli İktisat ve Bursa", *ÇTTAD*, vol. 12, no. 16-17 (2008), pp. 119-141; Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris), 2014; Taner Akçam, *Young Turks' Crimes against Humanity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), Ch. 4; Sia Anagnostopoulou, *Mikra Asia, 19os ai-1919* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1998), Ch. 4; Evangelia Ahladi, "İzmir'de İttihatçılar ve Rumlar: Yunan-Rum Boykotu (1908-1911)", *Kebikeç*, no. 26 (2008), pp. 175-200; Evangelia Boubougiatzi, "Oi Diogmoi ton Ellinon tis Ionias, 1914-1922", Ph.D. Thesis, Panepistimio Dutikis Makedonias, 2009; Tess Hofmann, Matthias Bjornlund, and Vasileios Meichanetsidis (eds.), *The Genocide of the Ottoman Greeks: Studies on the State-Sponsored Campaign of Extermination of the Christians of Asia Minor (1912-1922) and its aftermath* (New York: Aristide Caratzas, 2011), among others.

For Ottoman Greeks of western Anatolia, war began several years before belligerents took up arms in 1914. In the early twentieth century, particularly with the rise of Turco-Muslim and Greek nationalisms and the growing political struggles over the continuously contracting imperial borders, the Ottoman empire became the site of new forms of tension and violence. We know of this story mostly from the Balkans and less so for Anatolia and only later. Yet, particularly with the intensification of international political developments in the years leading up to the Great War, the Ottoman heartlands were drawn into the nationalizing battlefield.[3]

In 1909, as a response to the unification of Crete with the Greek Kingdom, Ottoman Muslims initiated a boycott against Greek trade and business run in the empire.[4] In August 1909 in Izmir, boycott committees[5] announced that they would not allow for goods and transport services that belonged to Greek nationals.[6] It was not long before reports of attacks and looting began to come in. In the provinces, the boycott was particularly severe in towns and villages to the north of Izmir. In Burhaniye, among others, it was reported as an attack against not only goods, but also people.[7] In June 1911, "the boycott goes on", wrote the Greek consul of Bursa to Athens, "despite my oral and written presentations at the provincial government, Ottoman authorities continue their arbitrary treatment of Greek nationals making it very difficult for the latter to remain in these lands. The governor does not think it his duty to order for the anti-Greek posters on shop windows to be put down… Recently in Kios [Gemlik] they have taken over the water supply of the land of S. Kavounidis."[8] Declared against trade and business of Greeks nationals who resided and worked in Ottoman lands, the boycott covered Greeks of Greece, but it also affected Ottoman Greeks who had extraterritorial status of the Greek state. More significantly, it was extended towards

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3 For a recent appraisal that juxtaposes the experiences of the different parts of the empire during its last transformative phase, see Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski (eds.), *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015); and *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, no. 4 (2013) [special issue].

4 This was wider policy at the time also applied against Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Italy, see Mehmet Emin İlhan, "İzmir'de Avusturya Boykotajı", *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 161 (May 1997), pp. 19-26; Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914", in Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 840-841; Doğan Çetinkaya, *1908 Osmanlı Boykotu: Bir Toplumsal Hareketin Analizi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004), among others.

5 Boycott committees were composed of a mixed group of individuals involving merchants, members and sympathizers of the Committee of Union and Progress, and varied local Muslims. For an overview of the make-up of these committees, see Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement,* pp. 111-119.

6 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA) – Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı (Ottoman State Archives), DH.MKT 2904/51, 2/8/1327 (19/8/1909). See also Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar, 1908-1914* (İstanbul: Libra, 2009), esp. pp. 292-93.

7 BOA, DH.MUİ 131/76, H2/9/1327 (17/9/1909).

8 Istorika Archeia tou Ypourgeiou Eksoterikon (IAYE) (Greek Foreign Ministry Archives), 46/1/2, 19/4/1911.

the main segment of the Ottoman Greek population, i.e. local Greeks who were subjects of the empire.[9]

On the eve of the Great War, this long-lasting economic confrontation was accompanied by a similarly intense and destructive policy, which targeted the people directly. Largely based on the broader political aim of Turkification, in Spring 1914 many Greek Christian communities inhabiting the coastal areas of western Anatolia were expelled or forced to flee out of their towns. They sought refuge mostly in the adjacent islands which belonged to Greece at this time. From 1915 onwards, following on the same policy of nationalization yet also raising a concern about military security in the western Anatolian littoral, Greek inhabitants of the coastal areas were deported to the inner parts of the region where they were to stay until the end of the war. Many parts of the western coast were devoid of Greek communities during this time, while some segments of this population also fled to the Greek islands.[10]

Scholars have mostly explored these developments on the political and ideological level. Focusing on Young Turk policies, nationalist discourses and action, the effects of propaganda, and class warfare, these studies have greatly enhanced our knowledge of the perpetrators of the developments, specifically central and local governments, the Committee of Union and Progress, its leaders, members, and sympathizers and Muslim activists. Likewise, we know of the position of the Greek authorities, including religious and state leaders, and the destruction that the communities encountered.[11] This paper turns the attention to the responses, modes of action and reaction of the people in the towns and villages who were on the receiving end of the boycott and/or who were later moved out of their towns and villages. It explores this rather neglected side of the issue and considers what the effects of the Young Turk policies were among the Ottoman Greek communities. The investigation traces the experiences of the Greeks under boycott and in deportation (particularly focusing on the forced movement to the inner regions after 1915) to demonstrate the ways in which they lived through the economic and demographic upheaval in western Anatolia in the final years of the Ottoman

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9 Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar*, pp. 309-319.

10 In 1919, a number of Ottoman officials and leaders were subject to legal questioning with regard to the Greek deportations in the Izmir region. Celal (Bayar) (the secretary of the Izmir branch of the Committee of Union and Progress in 1914), Talaat (Grand Vizier), Dr. Nazım (member of the head branch of the Committee of Union and Progress) and Rahmi (Izmir governor) were in this group, Celal Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım: Milli Mücadele'ye Giriş* (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1972), vol. 5, 1568-69. For an examination of the deportations, see Taner Akçam, "The Greek Deportations and Massacres of 1913-1914: A Trial Run for the Armenian Genocide", in G. Shirinian (ed.), *The Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Ottoman Greek Genocide* (Bloomingdale: The Asia Minor and Pontos Hellenic Research Center, 2012), pp. 69-88; Matthias Bjørnlund, "The Persecution of Greeks and Armenians in Smyrna, 1914-1916: A Special Case in the Course of Late Ottoman Genocides", in G. Shirinian (ed.), *The Asia Minor Catastrophe*, pp. 89-113.

11 See above footnote no. 2.

empire. By treating the boycott and the deportation in relation to one another, the paper also aims to offer a wider view of the historical developments concerning western Anatolian non-Muslim communities. The examination ultimately seeks to shed light on the varied and intricate ways in which nationalist ideology and nationalizing state structures operated on the ground.

Greek Christians, State Nationality, and the Economic Boycott

As a new mode of economic/political sanction, boycott emerged in the nineteenth century in parallel to both the development of the modern state and the transformation in the idea and practice of nation and nationality. Indeed, boycott has been closely tied to modern state nationality which denotes a specific legal relationship between the individual and the state. It is at the same time a product of the nationalizing orientations of modernizing states which were beginning to view themselves in this period as representatives of a particular ethno-religious group over others.[12]

Since boycott is basically the sanction of a state (or a state-approved group) over another state through the subjects of the latter, the Ottoman anti-Greek boycott began as a boycott of trade and business of the Greeks of Greece who resided and worked in the Ottoman Empire.[13] This category, however, quickly expanded to include Ottoman Greeks who had become nationals of the Greek state or had Greek extraterritorial status.[14] Greek extraterritoriality was an ongoing issue ever since the emergence of the Greek Kingdom. Even though individuals with Greek papers would never form a large percentage in the overall Orthodox Christian population of the empire, extraterritoriality of its own population which was connected by religion, and also in some cases by language, to the first nation-state that broke off from the empire was symbolically, politically and fiscally significant. Furthermore, those who received Greek nationality were often influential members of society, such as leading merchants or the social elite.

From the 1830s onwards, in response to this matter Ottoman administrative authorities categorized the Greek nationals who lived in Ottoman borders as "authentic Greek nationals" and separated them from Ottomans who received Greek

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12 Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, pp. 3-4; Ayşe Ozil, *Orthodox Christians in the Late Ottoman Empire: A Study of Communal Relations in Anatolia* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 108.

13 Ahladi, "İzmir'de İttihatçılar ve Rumlar", pp. 189-190; Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar*, pp. 292-93.

14 Mostly in the port towns of the Ottoman empire, various professionals, businessmen and merchants mainly from among the Ottoman Greek communities received the nationality or the extraterritoriality of the Greek state, i.e. the legal protection of the Greek state, as they continued to live and/or work in the Ottoman empire, Ozil, *Orthodox Christians in the Late Ottoman Empire*, pp. 98-102. See also Cihan Osmanağaoğlu, *Tanzimat Dönemi İtibarıyla Osmanlı Tabiiyyetinin Gelişimi* (Istanbul: Legal Yayınları, 2004), pp. 173-176.

nationality. In the eyes of the Ottoman state, its subjects could not easily become Greek nationals, even when they had papers of the Greek state and claimed extra-territoriality. This policy was based on keeping the population base of the empire intact and in connection to this, avoiding loss of tax-payers. Endowed with the task of converting more people to Greek nationality, Greek consuls, made a similar categorization and kept track of how many locals received Greek papers in addition to the "authentic Greeks" who lived under their jurisdiction.[15]

Despite the introduction of this two-partite division, the space was now open for arbitrary conduct, on the part of both the individuals and the authorities, depending on social, political, or economic circumstances. To which category a Greek Orthodox would belong was ultimately not a given. The availability of Greek nationality had introduced a new dimension to being a Greek Christian in the Ottoman world and at the juncture where the older kind of subjecthood met modern state nationality, there emerged a series of ambiguities about the identifications of people. It was also hard to match ethnicity, nationality, and residence according to pure and clear-cut forms in the large, open, and connected spaces of the eastern Mediterranean. In bourgeoning western coastal towns such as Ayvalık which was almost entirely composed of Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians and was closely tied to the wider spaces of the Aegean, it was not easy to disentangle people according to locality and nationality.

By the time of the boycott in the early twentieth century, Muslim leaders were no longer so keen on making the separation either. It would be difficult to argue for a wholesale erasure of categories and clearly not every Orthodox Christian had become a Greek national at this time, but they came to be perceived by the administration as if they were, could potentially be, or act in the interests of Greece. Particularly after the disastrous Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars in 1913, the boycott was increasingly directed against Greeks who were subjects of the Ottoman empire.[16] Muslim leaders and activists began to form a nationalizing and unifying outlook in their relationship with the Greeks. Attesting to the severity of the issue, continuous protests were raised at government departments. Individuals filed petitions or voiced their concern through the Greek representatives in the Ottoman parliament.

In November 1910, a group of inhabitants of Ayvalık wrote a petition to the Ottoman central government. Their concern was that the boycott, which had

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15 See, for example, IAYE, AAK H (1892-97, Panormos-Bandırma), 5 Jan 1894, 21 Mar 1894; BOA, HR.MKT 25/70, H21/5/1265 (14/5/1849).

16 Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar,* p. 309ff. For a summary of the anti-Christian policies of the Young Turks, see Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Socio-Economic History of Ethnic Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire", *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, no. 4 (2013), pp. 3-19. For a volume that brings together a number of scholars and ethnic groups, see Erik Jan Zürcher (ed.), *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Türkiye'de Etnik Çatışma* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005). See also Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği 1913-1918* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008), among others.

been declared as against Greek nationals, now extended to Ottoman nationals. According to their observations, particularly the boycott committee in Gömeç, a nearby town, was instrumental in the application of the boycott against Ayvalık's Ottoman subjects. They reported that a number of Ayvaliots who owned land near Gömeç were unable to approach their property for the collection of the harvest. And even if they could find a way to collect the harvest, porters, i.e. carriage drivers and camel riders, were prohibited to carry such loads to the town.[17]

This petition, which was just one among many other protestations and representations, suggests that Greeks did not remain as passive actors in the face of developments, but they rather reacted against the boycotting of their goods. While the transport workers were engaged in the application of the boycott, Greek landowners looked for ways to protect their produce and the trade thereof. With this aim, they used the various political and administrative channels available to them. As the boycott progressed, Greeks were not simply content with voicing their protests, and they began to respond in more varied ways and took diverse avenues of action. In further shedding light on the responses to the boycott, it is to these different modes of action that I now turn. In looking at their action, I also dwell on how their existing socio-economic standing affected the course of the developments.

Trade, Land Ownership, and the Greek Boycott Committee

Western Anatolian coastal zone was one of the wealthiest regions of the eastern Mediterranean in terms of agricultural production and trade, while Greeks controlled a considerable portion of this revenue-generating activity. It is not surprising, therefore, that the boycott was initiated in wealthier Greek dominated regions, while inner parts of western Anatolia which did not project similar levels of wealth and were home to lesser numbers of Greeks witnessed fewer, more sporadic and less continuous incidents of the boycott. What is more intriguing, however, is that because of this very reason, i.e. characteristics of these regions in terms of production, trade and population, it was not at all easy to carry out the boycott in practice.[18] In some of the wealthier regions, Greek dominance in economy and society put obstacles to an effective application of the boycott.

In April 1911, the sub-district (*kaza*) administrator (*kaymakam*) of Edremit, on the north-western Anatolian coast, stated in a government correspondence that goods arriving from the island of Lesvos across the channel to the town of Edremit would be burnt, unless this merchandise had the seal of the Midilli boycott com-

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17 BOA, DH.SYS 22/1-10, R23/8/1326 (5/11/1910). See also Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar*, p. 305; Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, *passim*.

18 Georgios Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion* (Athens: Syllogos pros Diadosin Ofelimon Vivlion, 2005 [1920]), pp. 206-207. A contrasting case is the attacks on the lands of Trikoupis which were outside the town where there was more visible Muslim presence (see below).

mittee. The presence of a seal would prove to Ottoman officials at the mainland port that the goods in question were approved by boycott agents before they were shipped off from Lesvos. Soon enough, however, it turned out that the order of the *kaymakam* to see the seal of the Midilli boycott committee could not be substantiated. The reason for this, hence the response that the *kaymakam* received from the local authorities is a most interesting one: The question was not whether the boycott committee was properly checking the goods or not, but that there actually was no boycott committee on the island to begin with.[19]

The absence of a boycott committee on the island of Lesvos could have a number of reasons. First of all, it was not a given for every region to have a boycott committee. It depended on the politics and organizational capabilities of the leading Muslim circles of nationalist orientations in the area. While scholars mostly concentrate on the areas with a boycott committee, it would be equally significant to inquire into why there was no committee in other places, particularly those with a wealthy and dominant Greek population. The above example suggests that the presence and the economic/political presence of the Greeks, the dominance of Greek producers and merchants should also be taken into consideration in examining the application of the boycott on the ground. This case is indeed telling about the difficulties in relation to the organization of a boycott in areas with a wealthy Greek population and the position of the Greeks in their struggle against activities potentially disruptive to trade.

The above example also implies that in order for the boycott to be effectively applied, specifically when the boycott was mainly against nationals from Greece, the participation of the Ottoman Greeks mattered. True, it was mostly Muslim porters who played a major role in the disruption of trade, as they refused to transfer goods and people to their destinations, a significant step in the trade chain. Likewise, Muslims, also mostly of lower classes, were actively engaged in the looting of Greek property. At the same time, however, the evidence above corroborated with other findings below suggests that the boycott demanded the support of the Greeks and this support, unlike the situation of Muslims, would come from the productive or the trading part of the commercial network.[20]

A series of complaints voiced by the Greek Christians at the Ottoman government demonstrate their instrumentality in the application of the boycott. In November 1910, Ottoman authorities in a correspondence between the Ottoman Interior Ministry and the district governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Karesi (Balıkesir), complained of local Greeks that they were not supporting the boycott against Greek goods. This was only one among a continuous series of complaints raised by the

19 BOA, DH.SYS 22/1-10, R15/5/1327 (28/5/1911).

20 Historiography has so far concentrated on the complaints by Ottoman Greeks with regard to the application of the boycott against nationals of Greece, but not on how local Greeks took a position against nationals of Greece, see Ahladi, "İzmir'de İttihatçılar ve Rumlar"; Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar,* p. 300.

government to the same effect. In early January 1911, the *mutasarrıf* of Karesi reported to the Interior Ministry that the local Greeks were now under boycott because it was feared that they would support Greek nationals. It was the *kaymakam* of Burhaniye who played a role in channelling the local Greeks to join the boycott by coordinating between the representatives of their communities from Ayvalık and the already active Gömeç boycott committee composed of Muslims. In Gömeç, the anti-Greek boycott was in application, involving destruction of goods and looting of merchandise. Gömeç, unlike Midilli, had not only joined the boycott but its committee was a vigorously functioning organization. Eventually, Greeks of Ayvalık declined to trade in Greek goods, blocked Greek ships from entering the town harbour, and raised a protest against the Greek consul in their town.[21]

In the autumn of 1910, during the time of the olive harvest, the boycott had greatly expanded in this area, leading to a series of protests by the Greek embassy at the Ottoman Foreign Ministry. One of the major incidents of the period occurred on the lands of Ioannis Trikoupis, a prominent landlord of the region, a Greek national from Greece who was connected to the local Greek community by marriage. Workers gathering the harvest in his olive groves were forcefully driven out of the area, causing disruption in the collection of the produce. Half of his harvest was ruined and some workers were molested, leading the landowner to ask for armed protection for the farm and the workers, which the Ottoman government was reluctant to provide. As these difficulties continued, Trikoupis started a series of negotiations to sell his harvest. Potential buyers, who were apparently none other than the boycott agents, suggested that they collect the harvest and give half of it to the owner. Eventually, Trikoupis sold the harvest for three quarters less than its regular price.[22]

According to the *mutasarrıf* of Karesi, not only Muslims but also Christians of Gömeç rigorously applied the boycott to the olive groves of Trikoupis and in the end it was a certain Konstantinos Kokkinis who bought the harvest. Kokkinis was an Ottoman national and a member of the boycott committee of Ayvalık. At the time when he bought the harvest he reached an agreement with Mahmutzade İsmail Efendi, a Muslim notable, who was the head of the boycott agents at Gömeç where Trikoupis had property. Two days after the sale, Kokkinis sold the harvest to İsmail Efendi.[23]

The ways in which the economic boycott developed in Ayvalık, Gömeç and environs demonstrate how under dire circumstances, Orthodox Christians of Ottoman nationality joined the boycott to protect their economic wealth and

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21 BOA, DH.SYS 22/1-10, R25/8/1326 (7/11/1910), R28/8/1326 (10/11/1910).

22 IAYE, 46/1/2, Kydonies, 8/21 and 24 Jan 1911; BOA, DH.SYS 22/22-5 R15/2/1326 (28/2/1911).

23 BOA, DH.SYS 22/22-5, R15/2/1326 (28/2/1911). For a wider examination of the above episodes, see Ozil, *Orthodox Christians*, pp. 111-116.

interests and some even raised new revenue by following up on the intricate commercial networks. Ottoman Greek subjects detached themselves from the Greeks of Greece and joined Muslims in blocking the trade of the latter. Indeed, Ottoman Greeks aimed not only to dissociate themselves from Greek nationals who were originally from Greece, but also to cut their ties from Ottoman Greek subjects who had Greek extraterritoriality.

Among those who were strongly affected by the boycott, one option was to seek refuge in a safer zone. Some indeed went to Greece state which was a principal actor in this long procession of events, others to Istanbul which they considered to be a less threatening environment as a big city.[24] This was indeed the ultimate aim of the boycott, i.e. to harm the living conditions of Greeks so as to make it hard for them to find existence in Anatolia. When the boycott began to cool down, however, people began to return to their home towns. Against the principal goal of the boycott and unlike the expectations of the Muslim national leaders, the departure of Greeks proved to be a temporary phenomenon and they reappeared in their local communities with the outbreak of the First World War.[25]

Forced Movement, the Great War, and Greek Christian Communities

The next stage of anti-Christian mobilization targeted the population more directly and aimed at a firmer removal of Greek communities out of their settlements in the Anatolian coastal region. While available scholarship mostly examines the forced movement of Greeks in spring 1914 from the western Anatolian zone out of the country and the Unionist policies and practices thereof,[26] this paper will concentrate on the later deportations to the inner regions which began in the following year. Based on military and security concerns during the war, or more particularly on account of the presumed possibility of their acting as a fifth-column, Greek Christian inhabitants of coastal towns on the Aegean and Marmara seas began to be sent to inner parts of western Anatolia from 1915 onwards. Soon enough they found themselves in Yenişehir, Bilecik, Bursa or one of the surrounding towns of the region.

Consider the case of Tirilye, a town on the southern Marmara coast almost entirely inhabited by Greek Christians, whose inhabitants were transferred to Bursa

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24 Benediktos Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", *Mikrasiatika Xronika*, no. 4 (1948), p. 98.

25 Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", p. 99.

26 For scholarship, see particularly Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity*, Chs. 3 and 4 and Matthias Bjornlund, "The 1914 Cleansing of Aegean Greeks as a case of violent Turkification", *Journal of Genocide Research* 10/1 (2008), pp. 41-58. For the movements out of the Edremit, Dikili, Bergama area, see Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, pp. 211-212; BOA, DH.EUM 13/22, 19/9/1332 (11/8/1914). For the larger Izmir area, see Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, vol. 5, p. 1568. For the case of a town to the south of Izmir, see those who were contemplating on leaving Milas, BOA, DH.ŞFR 431/94, R12/4/1330 (25/6/1914).

in July 1915. The town was devoid of its population for the remaining years of the war and the evidence suggests that the material wealth left behind by Greek Christians came under attack at this time. According to a Triglian who narrated the events years later, in preparation for their move in the second summer of the Great War, they had packed their valuables in the many churches of the town and entrusted the keys with the local Ottoman government officials. During their absence, these properties as well as landed wealth including shops and houses came under attack by Muslim armed men. Hence, the inhabitants, upon their return to the town at the end of the war, found that their churches were broken into and property inside them looted and sold off. Likewise, their houses were destroyed, and the valuable wooden parts of them taken away. The destruction was led by Young Turk militias of Mudanya, the central town of the sub-district to which Tirilye belonged. Among the looters were Muslim refugees from Bulgaria. Once the looting was done, the attackers left the town.[27]

Other than Tirilye, a number of other towns on the southern Marmara including the nearby Greek Christian populated Sigi were part of the deportations.[28] Only Mudanya, the district centre, evaded the move and the often accompanying looting of material wealth. Yet, there too a number of arrests were reported of Greek Christians on the grounds that they were sending supplies to the Greek navy or helping Greeks evade the Ottoman draft. Those who could leave the town for a place they considered safer did so. For them and for Christians of the southern Marmara coast more generally, this safer place was Istanbul.[29]

Not every town was affected immediately or in the same way. In some of the areas, it was a gradual and partial process. The town of Ayvalık and its surrounding islands (Moschonisia) remained free of the compulsory move and the accompanying attacks at this time.[30] Almost entirely inhabited by Greek Christians and combining economic wealth with a sophisticated social and cultural space, Ayvalık enjoyed a special position in the north Aegean region. The government tentatively held back on a possible forced movement in the town and the concomitant arrival of ambassadorial representatives from Istanbul proved crucial in impeding the exile of the Ayvaliots. The Great Powers sent their dragomans to inspect the reported attacks, looting, and the movement of the population in the wider area. Apparently, their presence proved consequential with regard to the safety of the town among the surrounding movements of Greek population.[31]

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27 Archeia tou Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon (AKMS) (Archives of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies), Oral Records, Bithinia, no. 164, Triglia (Tirilye). For Tirilye and the surrounding towns, see also Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", pp. 100-101.

28 AKMS, Oral Records, Bithinia, no. 157, Moudania (Mudanya).

29 AKMS, Oral Records, Bithinia, no. 157, Moudania.

30 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, pp. 211-212.

31 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, p. 214.

This situation, however, would not last long, and by September 1914, Ayvalık was also cut off from its environs, its harbour was closed and its Aegean connection sealed off.[32] This would soon be followed by a government order for the movement of its population to inner regions. Hence what had been experienced by other towns in the area a year before became a reality for the Ayvaliots, who were exiled to Bilecik and the surrounding towns in the summer of 1915. While some could flee to Lesvos despite the blockade,[33] others had to traverse inland.[34] In this first round, however, not all were removed. About half of the population of the town, stayed on. Together with the population of the surrounding islets and the villages, there were about twenty thousand people in Ayvalık in 1916,[35] a considerable figure given the overall number of Greek inhabitants in the area. Among the leaders of the town, the metropolitan bishop was among those who stayed, only to be deported in the second round in March 1917 along with another few hundred people.[36]

Regarding the experiences in exile in the inner parts of Anatolia, Greek Christians who were moved out of their home towns sought for accommodation in host areas in a number of ways. Some families shared a space with local Greek Christians. Others rented a house. As for some, their accommodation brought them face to face with another deportation that was going on in the same period. In Bursa, deportees of the town of Tirilye were shown to houses of Armenians who had just been moved out of the area. For Triglians, this was a new direct experience with regard to recent Armenian history and a parallel example in thinking about their own situation. As for the local Greeks of Bursa, with whom some Triglians shared or rented a house, deportation was not a new development. Years earlier, Greeks of the wider province had already begun to be fearful of their situation when they heard of the Armenian killings of 1896, and according to the reports of the Greek consul in Ayvalık, interpreted the events as a possibly wider anti-Christian sentiment on the part of the Hamidian government.[37] This perception would be corroborated by the Armenian deportations of 1915.[38]

At this time, however, the fears of Greeks in the province would not be, or at least not wholly, substantiated. Those who lived in the immediate hinterlands of the coastal regions or further inland, did not become the target of a forced movement and more significantly for the purposes of this article, those who were exiled

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32 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, p. 217.

33 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, p. 222; AKMS, Manuscripts, Aiolida no. 2, Panagiotis Bibelas.

34 Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", p. 101, fn. 1. AKMS, Manuscripts, Aiolida no. 2, Panagiotis Bibelas. Regarding difficulties in transport which involved walking and paying for carriages, see Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, pp. 226-227.

35 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, p. 224.

36 Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, p. 224. See also Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, vol. 8, p. 2487; Anna Panagiotarea, *Kydoniates: Astoi kai Profyges* (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1994), pp. 102-104.

37 IAYE, 1896 Γ 41, 21 Aug 1896.

38 Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", p. 101.

out of their towns on the coastal areas returned back to their home towns at the end of the war. True, the forced movement resulted in malnutrition, disease, and death, and upon return from exile, loss of material wealth. With the end of the war, however, not only the exiled population moved back, but also there were people coming back from the islands in pursuit of a recovery of their settlements and societies.[39]

A case of return comes from the towns of Ayazmend [Altınova] and Bergama in the north Aegean region. According to an Ottoman government correspondence in August 1914, the Patriarchate had filed a complaint about the continuation of the boycott in these two towns. After an investigation by the local authorities, however, it was reported that the Greek Christians of the two towns had already migrated and consequently the towns had no Greek Christians to boycott against.[40] Later, however, inhabitants of Ayazmend and Bergama appear to have returned since they were listed among the people to be deported from their towns at the time of the Population Exchange.[41]

Concluding Remarks

For the Greek Christians of Anatolia, particularly those who inhabited its western coastal regions, the latter years of the Ottoman Empire before and during the world war meant several years of experience with the anti-Greek economic boycott and the forced movement of their population to inner regions and out of the country. Both the boycott and the deportations culminated in social turmoil, demographic upheaval, and physical destruction. While this was the result of a wider policy of Turco-Muslim nationalism on the part of the Ottoman state, Unionist leaders, and some sections of the Muslim population, an examination of the responses of Greek Christians in the face of these developments demonstrates the limits of nationalist policies and suggests that this period was rather more nuanced than what ideological orientations imply in terms of dual confrontations.

Evidence from the anti-Greek boycott reveals that there were areas in which their active collaboration was required particularly where they were strong and powerful in the north Aegean trade. Looting could be done by Muslim militia, but a more structural disruption of trade depended on how the Greeks acted. In other words, Greeks used their economic strength and social dominance to prevent the proper and effective application of the boycott. At the same time, they actively used the Ottoman administrative channels to protest the boycott and made formal representations at the government level.

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39 Adamantiadis, "Ta teleutaia eti tis Ellinikis koinotitos Prousas", p. 103. Sakkaris, *Istoria ton Kydonion*, pp. 231-234. Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, vol. 8, p. 2488.

40 BOA, DH.EUM 13/22, H19/9/1332 (11/8/1914); DH.İ.UM 19/1 H23/6/1337 (26/3/1919).

41 *Exodos*, (ed.) F. D. Apostolopoulos (Athens: KMS, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 101, 138-141.

As for the forced movement of the Greek population from the western coastal regions of Anatolia, some groups spent the war in exile in the inner regions, while others left for Istanbul or the nearby Greek islands. Regarding those who were exiled to inner regions, entries in community registers kept by the local Greek Christian administrative authorities suggest communal solidarity while they were away from their towns. Entries do not imply a total disruption in communal activity among the inhabitants of these towns who were displaced at this time.[42] Furthermore, despite the different possibilities and strategies available to various segments of the population, what was common to them in the aftermath of the war was their ability to return and to build again despite losses. The experience of both the deportation and the economic boycott suggests that Greek Christians affected by these policies were not passive bystanders, but an adapting and resilient part of the population.

The way in which the economic boycott and the deportations developed in practice foreshadows some of the characteristics of the upcoming Population Exchange (1923), a similar yet more radical policy directed at society. Indeed, the long and difficult deliberations leading to the exchange make more sense weighed against the contexts and the consequences of the economic boycott and the forced movement. Among other difficulties in specifying the criterion for exchange, politicians considered it necessary to make sure that the parties did not return, hence they coined and applied the exchange as a compulsory movement of peoples.[43] It is upon the background of the returns that took place after the economic boycott and the forced movement that this particular feature of the exchange ultimately assumes its meaning. Furthermore, negotiators of the exchange found it difficult to specify the group to be exchanged according to the ethno-religious combinations desired by nation leaders, i.e. Greek-speaking Orthodox and Turkish-speaking Muslim. The experience of the boycott prefigured this difficulty. Neither was it easy and in some cases even possible to define who was included in the category of "Greek", in other words to specify the "Greek" of the "anti-Greek" boycott. There were many practical issues involved in categorizing the inhabitants of the Ottoman empire in terms of a particular combination of ethnicity, religion, and state nationality.

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42 See, for example, Genika Archeia tou Kratous (GAK) (Greek State Archives), Codex. No. 427, Triglia; Codex no. 458 Panormos (Bandırma).

43 For the difficulties involved in the deliberations leading to the convention on the exchange and in the ensuing displacement, see Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922-1934* (London: Routledge, 2006) and Renée Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003). After the exchange, for the difficulties encountered by the Christian exchangees in terms of language, culture and geography, see Renée Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1998).

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'Food for Liberty, Tolerance for Loyalty': The Ottomans and the Druze of Syria during World War I

M. Talha Çiçek

The outbreak of the First World War and the appointment of Djemal Pasha as the commander of the Fourth Army and governor general to Greater Syria signified the beginning of difficult times for the Syrians who lived in the cities, which was hardened by the circumstances of the war. He adopted a policy of 'iron fist' towards all the components of the Syrian society to establish a coercive state control over them by eliminating the local power-holders. In this regard, the members of the Arabist parties like *al-Ahd* and *al-Lamarkaziyya* were severely punished: some of them were executed in Damascus and Beirut while some others were forcefully deported to the Anatolian cities where they were projected to remain permanently in order to allow Istanbul to design the Syrian politics according to the Unionist perspective, which did not tolerate any of the opposition parties. The Arabists' blame was to demand the recognition of the cultural and political rights for the Arab population and advocate a certain degree of autonomy to the Arab provinces in more or less democratic way prior to World War I. In a similar way, to assert the complete authority of the central state over the Syrian lands, the autonomy of Mount Lebanon was practically terminated and the Zionist colonies were incorporated into the Ottoman administrative system while some of their leaders were sent into exile. In addition to these drastic measures, the ordinary people suffered greatly from a disastrous famine, a hyperinflation and extensive conscription, which weakened their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.[1]

However, in major contrast to the city dwellers, the Bedouin and Druze populations who lived in the rural areas and deserts enjoyed an extensive liberty during the war period. The former was treated by the Ottoman authorities and Djemal Pasha with an extensive tolerance, and a politics of reconciliation was adopted rather than coercing them to the empire's line of order. They owed such kind of a privilege to the high-level solidarity [*asabiyya*] among the tribal members and their warrior character, which was considered by Djemal and the other bureaucrats the potentiality of causing serious problems in case of a rebellion under the war circumstances. In addition, it was difficult to keep them in check for the empire since they were highly mobile and capable of escaping into the desert when pressed by the Ottoman army. Furthermore, they could be incited by the Entente – and Sha-

1 For details, see: M. Talha Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria: Cemal Pasha's Governorate during World War I* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016).

rif Hussein after June 1916 – and thus create major disturbances which would waste the energy of the army who intensified its efforts for the Egyptian expedition in the beginning and the defense of Syria towards the end of the war. The Druze were even more advantageous than the Bedouin: besides their warlike character and solidarity, they produced plenty amount of cereals and remarkably contributed to the feeding of the cities and the army. Even in the first year of the war, the widespread conscription of the agricultural labor for the army had increased the dependency of the civilians and army to the grains that the Druze people produced. For these reasons, the Ottoman government tried their best to please the Druze and they remained immune to Djemal Pasha's social engineering projects during the war period.

This chapter examines the Ottoman policy towards the Druze communities during the Great War and argues that they enjoyed a great freedom of action mainly due to their supply of a considerable portion of the food for the people and the army and the warlike character of their society. It further demonstrates that, contrary to the other components of the Syrian society, by virtue of the imperial tolerance toward the Druze, they remained loyal to the empire until the last moments of the war and did not celebrate the end of the Ottoman rule. When a local bureaucrat, as in the example of Abdulkadir Bey, the *mutasarrıf* of the Hauran, contradicted with this policy, he was transferred to another region not to cause a serious problem with the Druze.

Ottoman Mobilization, the Expedition against Egypt and the Druze Community

The Arab provinces experienced the most extensive recruitment of manpower in the Ottoman history of the Arab provinces to the Ottoman army during the Great War period. Both Muslims and non-Muslims fought in the various fronts of the empire from Gallipoli to the Canal. In addition, the Syrians had to tolerate great amount of confiscations of animal and cereals by the army for the expedition planned to conquer Egypt. However, due to the successful Pan-Islamist propaganda concretized with the ideal of 'saving the occupied part of the fatherland', i.e. Egypt, this undertaking did not create much tension among the Syrian Muslims and supported by the majority of them in the beginning of the war.[2]

The Druze too, desired to be conscripted in the beginning and great efforts were made by the Ottoman officials throughout the war to persuade them to contribute manpower to the Ottoman front:[3] as they were renowned with their warrior char-

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2 For a study on the canal expedition, see: M. Talha Çiçek, "The Holy War in Syria: Cemal Pasha and the Ottoman Plan to conquer Egypt in the First World War," *War & Society*, 2016, 35:1, 39-53.

3 For some references to the Ottoman efforts, see: PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd.17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.

acter, the Ottoman authorities were attracted to recruit them to the imperial army in the beginning of the war. However, the delicate circumstances of the war, in general, and the Druze's crucial position as the major grain suppliers for the province of Damascus and its vicinity, in particular, withheld the government authorities to forcefully conscript the members of this community as they did for the rest of the Syrian lands, Anatolia and Iraq.[4] Shortly after the proclamation of the mobilization on 2 August 1914, the most influential sheikh of the Hauran Druze, Yahya al-Atrash, visited Hulusi Bey, the governor of Damascus and confirmed his loyalty.[5] In response, a government delegation consisted of Hulusi Bey, Zeki Pasha, the commander of the Fourth Army, Amir Ali Pasha al-Djezairi, the Vice-President of the Ottoman Parliament, and Senator Abd al-Rahman Pasha al-Yusuf visited the Druze sheikhs and once again demanded them to contribute to the army.[6] Zeki Pasha addressed them as children of the Sultan, who would rely upon their loyalty to defend their country in case of the Ottoman Empire became involved in the war. After that, an award of honor, a gold watch inscribed with the Sultan's name and a robe of honor were presented to Yahya al-Atrash, and to other Druzes, awards, medals, and robes of honors according to each sheikh's position and importance. Becoming aware of the difficulty to recruit the Druze, Hulusi Bey announced that the government were pleased with the Druze, and 'they should henceforth be exempt from regular military service', while they were requested to form a volunteer corps.[7] In response to that, they offered to pay the *bedel* [commutation] tax and supply the army with provision. As the government was afraid of a Druze rebellion in case of coercing them to the military service, they had to concede that privilege without negotiating further.[8] The authorities must have been extra careful in their treatment of this community due to the fact that the Druze was not on good terms with the government stemmed from the brutal suppression of their rebellion[9] in the Hauran[10] in 1910-1911.

The government's approach towards the conscription of the Druze did not change following Djemal Pasha's appointment to the command of the Syrian Fourth Army where he enjoyed a broad authority over the civil bureaucracy, too. As they promised to the government authorities, they created a small voluntary

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4 For a study on the Ottoman mobilization, see: Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); for the Syrian lands, see: Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 169-180.

5 BOA, DH.EUM.EMN 91/19, 12 Ağustos 1330 [25 August 1914]: see also, HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus 3 September 1914.

6 HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 September 1914.

7 TNA, FO 195/2460, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Damascus, 10 September 1914.

8 HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 August 1914; HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 18 August 1914.

9 For some details on the Druze revolt of the Hauran, see: Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Ch. 7.

10 The Hauran is today located in southern Syria between Israel, Jordan, and Syria.

battalion consisted of 150 men under the leadership of Salim al-Atrash simply to demonstrate their loyalty to the empire. By this way, the government could claim an authority over them and could feel assured about their loyalty.[11] It is not clear, however, whether they participated in the fighting actively or not. Another voluntary group from the Druze of Lebanon was organized by Shakib Arslan, who was a prominent figure of the celebrated Arslan family of the Druze community in Lebanon, to fight against the British in the Ottoman expedition against Egypt. The troops went up to Nahl fortress in the vicinity of Maan, located today's Jordan, and joined the volunteers arrived from Mecca, but did not join the warfare at the Suez Canal. The Druze volunteers returned to Maan and remained there for a month following the first attack against the Canal, which took place on 2-3 February 1915. After that, Djemal Pasha ordered Shakib to proceed with his troops to Jerusalem. Twenty days after their arrival at the city, the Pasha informed him that the second expedition against Egypt was delayed and they should have returned to Lebanon up to a second call. Thus the service of the Druze volunteers had ended.[12]

Although it was the last active contribution by the Druze community to the Ottoman war efforts, they remarkably supported the Ottoman front and its hinterland by supplying provision to the army and the city-dwellers, and staying loyal to the empire against the Sharif and the British.

Djemal Pasha's Policies, Their Aftermath and the Druze

Djemal Pasha's arrival marked a significant change in the history of Syria as he adopted a tyrannical governance to transform the Syrian society according to the Unionist ideals which assume that the state must have had a strong control over the people. However, he did not change the traditional Ottoman policy against the Druze based on the principle of minimum intervention to them. The bureaucrats, scholars, deputies, notables and even the Arabist reformists in Syria were concerned about a Druze revolt when Djemal arrived and advised him to punish them in order to discourage them from uprising against the empire. Djemal states in his memoirs that he did not take their concerns into consideration and did not find it reasonable to antagonize such a warlike society.[13]

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11 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold,"Berufung des Fuersten Nuri Schalan nach Damascus", Damascus, 6 February 1915; HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian,"Ein Aufruf des Ordens der Nakshibendi; Politik der Regierung gegenueber den Druzen", Damascus, 15 February 1915.

12 Shakib Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Tali'a, 1969), p. 141-145; Prüfer also states that the Bedouin and the Druze stayed behind the army: Curt Prüfer, *Germany's Covert War in the Middle East*, entry 9th February 1915 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 80-81.

13 Cemal Pasha, *Hatırat*, 177.

The Ottoman treatment of the Druze during Djemal Pasha's tenure indicates that the Pasha remained faithful to his initial understanding up to the end of his governorate although he did not rely on Yahya al-Atrash, the most influential Druze leader in the Hauran. Immediately after his arrival, upon the invitation by the government side, the prominent Druze leaders came to Damascus, stayed several days and swore that they would remain more faithful than everybody to the Caliph. In addition, according to Djemal, the death of Yahya al-Atrash in the beginning of the war and his replacement with a much more pro-Ottoman Salim al-Atrash paved the way for a more trusted relationship between the Druze community and Djemal's government in this period. Besides him, Djemal notes that he was incomparably helped by the Druze leaders, Nasib and Abd al-Ghaffar al-Atrash.[14] In addition, Djemal cooperated with the Druze notables of Lebanon like Emin Bey Hamadah, who enjoyed a great influence among the Druze in this country, to gain their support. The German consul in Damascus reported towards the end of the war that he mediated between Djemal and the Druze throughout the Pasha's tenure in Syria. He continued his service following Djemal's departure from Syria and supervised Tahsin Bey to keep the Druze in the Ottoman side.[15] It seems that pre-war Ottoman habits of cooperating with the local notables continued in the Druze example during the Great War, too.

Many examples can be found regarding Djemal's sensitivity on being on good terms with the Druze communities. For example, Djemal was quite careful about avoiding to engage in any hostility with the Druze, when the Ottoman army organized an expedition in September 1915 against the agricultural tribes of Ledjah region, a stony place very close to the Druze villages of the Hauran.[16] The aim of the expedition was to capture the deserters from the army who took shelter in the tribal zones and employed by the tribal sheikhs as agricultural labor. Although many of the deserters and their protectors escaped to the Druze district and harbored by them, the army did not follow them not to antagonize the Druze against the government.[17] As a positive response to this government policy, the Druze were inclined to take care for the government troops and provided provisions to the soldiers and their animals.[18] The government's attitude did not differ when the Bedouin of the Dera'a district of the Hauran supported by the aforesaid deserters rebelled in October 1916 by attacking the stations of the Hijaz railways in many localities,[19] robbing the Army's cereals stores in Muzayrib and raiding

14 Cemal Pasha, *Hatırat*, 178.
15 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
16 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, 'Die militärische Expedition nach dem Ledjah', Damascus, 18 September 1915.
17 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian,"Die militärische Expedition nach dem Ledjah", Damascus, 18 September 1915.
18 Günay, *Suriye ve Filistin Hatıraları*, 26-27.
19 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian,"Der Aufruhr im Hauran", Damascus, 9 October 1916.

the military fortress at Busra.[20] The rebellion was easily suppressed by the Ottoman troops, but they did not advance into the Druze region to punish their previous action. In return the latter abstained from supporting the rebelled tribes. Damascus' Austrian consul reported that the Druze's negligence to take part at this uprising was due to Djemal Pasha's reasonable policies.[21]

The situation was comparable in cases of relatively petty offences. Mehmet Selahattin Bey [Günay], a lieutenant, who was commanding a battalion of the Ottoman gendarmerie consisted of the Camel Corps in the Hauran, narrated in his memoirs the following incident, which demonstrates the Ottoman government's sensitivity not to antagonize the Druze: In early 1915, some Bedouin tribes conflicted and an armed group of them robbed a great amount of camels, which belonged to Nuri Shalan, the sheikh of the great Ruwalla tribe. The robbers pursued by the Ottoman camel corps escaped towards the Druze region with the stolen animals. Colonel Zübeyir Bey, who ordered the camel corps to pursue the robbers, gave the soldiers the following instructions: 'Do not advance much towards the Druze [region]. Try to get back [the property] through different ways if necessary'. The Bedouin, who realized the impossibility to take the robbed camels with them, left them behind and absconded to the Druze region and the Ottoman troops did not follow them further due to the quoted order.[22] Selahattin states that he persuaded the Bedouin to terminate their attacks against the Druze in many cases and concluded disputes between the two sides using his good relations with the leaders of both communities.[23]

In August 1916, upon the outbreak of the Sharif Hussein of Mecca's revolt in Hijaz[24], Djemal paid a five-days visit to the Hauran and Djebel-i Druze to investigate the rumors that the Druze would have been incited by the 'separatists' [*erbab-ı mefsedet*] and to increase the Druze's loyalty to the empire by strengthening good relations with them. It was the first ministerial visit – since Djemal also held the ministry of Marine title during his tenure in Syria – to the Druze region in the Ottoman history and Djemal argued that his trip was very successful and eliminated the 'undesired' influences over this society.[25] The most renowned Druze sheikhs and the leaders of the prominent Druze families accompanied the Pasha from Dera'a to Busra [*Busr-ı Eski Şam*]. At the beginning of Djemal Paşa's tour, four battalions of the troops to be dispatched to Medina for the protection of the

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20 Günay, *Suriye ve Filistin Hatıraları,* 37-38.

21 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian,"Beendigung des Aufruhrs im Hauran", Damascus, 1 November 1916.

22 Selahattin Günay, *Bizi Kimlere Bırakıp Gidiyorsun Türk?: Suriye ve Filistin Anıları* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2006), 16.

23 Ibid, 30.

24 For a study on the Sharif's uprising, see: M. Talha Çiçek, "İttihatçılar ve Şerif Hüseyin: Mekke İsyanı'nın Nedenleri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar,* 16 (2013), 41-57.

25 BOA, DH.ŞFR. 528/52, Cemal to Talat. 30 Temmuz 1332 [12 August 1916].

city against the Sharif's attacks, waited in the wings at Dera'a. However, the Pasha realized that this military precaution would be misunderstood by the Druze and ordered their departure towards the holy lands.[26] Following this visit, contrary to his vision of centralist state formation, the Pasha 'advised' the central government to appoint some local notables, who had an influence over the Druze, as the *mudirs* to their villages [*nahiye*], who would be changed after the war.[27] In addition, a number of the students from the prominent Druze families were sent to Istanbul by Djemal Pasha for education at various levels, which, according to the Austrian consul in Damascus, greatly contributed to the Druze's loyalty to the empire.[28]

By mid-1917, with the British support, the Sharif's men increased their activities among the Druze to gain them to their sides. In June 1917, supported by Auda Abu Tayeh of the Huwaitat Bedouin, Hussein's brother, Sharif Nasir and his friends visited the Druze and Bedouin sheikhs around the Hauran and requested their support for 'the Arab revolt'. According to the German consul in Damascus, they were accompanied by 200 Indian cavalries and offered to the Druze 200,000 sterlings and 100,000 weapons to be used against the Ottoman government. But, in spite of gaining the support of some minor sheikhs, their enterprise in general did not succeed in gaining the sympathy of the Druze's majority as the prominent sheikhs like Salim al-Atrash remained on the Ottoman side. Al-Atrash defended the argument that a change in the Druze attitude would deteriorate their situation further. Some others spoke about benefits of supporting the British, but their speech was not influential. On 19 July 1917, Salim visited Damascus with 500 Druze, renewed his support to the Ottomans, and in turn was awarded with the title of Pasha and some other special honors.[29] When the Sharif's men made another attempt in June 1918, the Druze response was again negative: The Damascene notable and a supporter of the Sharifian rebellion, Nasib Bey al-Bakri, who fled from Damascus with Sharif Faisal to Hijaz, was sent to the Druze leaders by Sharif Ali, Hussein's oldest son, to negotiate with them to change their sides. Their response to the Sharif, which advised him to ally with the Sultan, was published in the Syrian newspapers.[30]

As reported by Ziemke, a German official in the Damascus consulate, in May 1918, the Druze's relations with the Ottoman authorities became even better towards the end of the war as they increased their autonomy from the government: Their exemption from the military service did continue and they were im-

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26 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, "Der Besuch des Oberkommandierenden Djemal Pasha im Druzengebirge", Damascus, 15 August 1916.

27 BOA, DH.ŞFR. 528/52, Djemal to Talaat. 30 Temmuz 1332 [12 August 1916].

28 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, "Beendigung des Aufruhrs im Hauran", Damascus, 1 November 1916.

29 BOA, DH.ŞFR. 557/92, Tahsin to Talaat, Damascus, 22 Haziran 1333 [22 June 1917]. PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd.41, Waldburg to Foreign Ministry , Constantinople, (Transmitting Consul Damascus), 20 July 1917.

30 HHStA, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian,"Die Haltung der Drüsen", Damascus, 6 June 1918.

mune to the over-taxation and requisitions, which was harshly implemented in many rural areas in Syria. Although the Druze district was annexed to the *mutasarrıf* of the Hauran and there was a *kaimakamship* in Suweida, an area populated by the Druze, only 20 Ottoman gendarmerie were present in the town at that time as a sign of the Ottoman sovereignty. The authority of the *kaimakam* Neşet Bey was almost next to zero. Ziemke likenedhis role as a diplomatic agent of the empire in the Druze district, who performed this mission with success. For these reasons, the Ottoman government enjoyed very good relations with the Druze and did not face any problem with them. The consul describes the Ottoman government's policy 'wisely' as they understood the autonomous character of the Druze perfectly. Both Djemal Pasha and later Tahsin Bey, the governor of Syria, implemented such policies towards the Druze. The latter planned to transform the *kaimakamship* into *nahiye* in the district, which would reduce the imperial authority further and give more freedom for the Druze. Contrary to the Pasha, who opposed the increase of any foreign power's influence on the Ottoman peoples, Tahsin cooperated with the Germans to keep them in hand and mediated for some German medals to the Druze sheikhs. This freedom of action and awards, however, were by no means unrequited: They made significant contributions to the urgent need for cereals to the army and civilians in a period when the famine prevailed over the Syrian lands.[31]

Becoming aware of the difficulties that the Ottoman government faced, the Druze increased their demands for further autonomy towards the end of the war. A delegation consisted of the Druze sheikhs visited Rıfat Bey, the governor of Damascus, in August 1918 to negotiate their demands with the government authorities. Firstly, they demanded the re-organization of the Hauran's administration by separating Djebel-i Druze as a liwa, which would stay under direct control of the Province of Damascus. Secondly, the tithe should have been reduced to a fair quota and fixed at a certain amount. Finally, they requested the abrogation of the existing court of justice, the creation of new courts and appointment of new judges from the Druze *ulema* in the new *liwa*. All the Druze families and leaders supported this list of proposals and were ready to sign a petition if the government was inclined to accept it. They implicitly threatened the governor stating that these regulations were necessary for the maintenance of their loyalty to the empire. Upon the delay of the central government's response, Rıfat proposed that their demands should, at least temporarily, be accepted as soon as possible due to the strategic nature of the geographic location of the Druze people and because of the frequent visits of the Sharif's agents to gain Druze support to their cause. The *mudirs* of the *nahiyes* could have been appointed as the head of the court, which

[31] PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd.17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918; for a report by the governor of Syria, confirming the remarks of the consul, see: TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiynu 13/12, Tahsin to Enver, 11 Mayıs 1334 [11 May 1918].

would be consisted of the Druze *ulema*.[32] It seems that these demands could not be negotiated further due to the collapse of the Ottoman rule in Syria after a short time.

In spite of the Ottoman apprehension regarding their attitude[33], the Druze remained loyal to the Ottoman government until the very end of the war. They finally renewed their loyalty on 24 September 1918 by sending Nasib al-Atrash to Damascus.[34] However, they did not refrain from benefitting of being located in a district between the belligerent armies. They speculated the grain prices between the British and Ottoman sides by contacting both sides and did not allow any price decrease although a good harvest was reported in 1918. They also agreed with the illegally created travel agencies and provided a safe passage for the travelers from the territories under the Ottoman control to the British zone. With their agency, some people bought the Turkish liras from the British territories, sold them in the Ottoman lands and vice versa, and made great profits with this business. Although the Ottoman and German authorities were exceedingly frustrated with these, none of them could dare to antagonize with such a warlike people who had, by August 1918, almost 30,000 people, ready to use arm.[35]

Abdulkadir Bey and Hacim Muhiddin: Two Governors of the Hauran, Ottoman Policies and the Druze Community

The wartime policies towards the Druze community would come short of being complete without an analysis of the relations between the Ottoman officials and the Druze on the local level. Therefore, this section will attempt to examine the acts of two governors, Abdulkadir Bey and Hacim Muhiddin [Çarıklı] regarding the Druze during their tenure in the Hauran. The activities of the two governors also reflect the differing attitudes towards the Druze from reconciliation to subjugation: the former represented 'violent' wing, who was appointed by Talaat, whereas the latter adopted a quite moderate approach and worked in harmony with Djemal during his governance. Abdulkadir's term of office maintained relatively short due to his inability to compromise with the Pasha's moderate policies while Hacim governed the district until the end of the Ottoman rule.

Abdulkadir was an old major and a dedicated Unionist and appointed to the Hauran in October 1916 presumably by Talaat Pasha and supported by the gov-

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32 BOA, DH.ŞFR. 591/41, Rıfat [the Governor of Syria] to Ministry of the Interior, Damascus, 6 Ağustos 1334 [6 August 1918].

33 For a report exemplifying this, see: BOA, DH.ŞFR. 596/3, İsmail Hakkı to Ministry of the Interior, Damascus, 21 Eylül 1334 [21 September 1918].

34 Tahsin Bey reported about their loyalty in the last day of the Ottoman rule in Damascus: BOA, DH.ŞFR. 597/6, Tahsin [the Governor of Syria] to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 1 Ekim 1334 [1 October 1918]

35 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 18, Brode to Bernstoff, Damascus, 22 August 1918.

ernor of Syria, Tahsin Bey, to 'regulate' the settlement of the Armenian deportees. But Cemal Pasha was not happy with this appointment and assigned Hasan Bey the Circassian to keep an eye on him.[36] Apart from their dispute on the policies regarding the Armenian deportees in Syria, Abdulkadir and Djemal conflicted on the policies towards the Druze, too. Selahattin Günay describes his activities in the Hauran as 'merciless' [*acımasız*]. He conveys that, while he visited toward late 1916 the gendarmerie station at Dera'a he saw that Abdulkadir Bey[37] had imprisoned one of the prominent Druze sheikhs and left by ordering the corporal employed in the station to hang him on the ceiling from his legs. He also threatened the corporal that if he did not perform this order, the same punishment would have been executed upon him. The corporal was so scared of the *mutasarrıf*'s order that his legs were shivering with fear. The former was probably aware of the sheikh's prestige among the Druze and thus, hesitated to implement such an 'inconsiderate' order. Meanwhile, both the sheikh and the corporal did not know about the crime that the former had committed to be subjected to such a harsh punishment. The *mutasarrıf* presumably wanted to demonstrate his power to the Druze. Selahattin was deeply worried that the Druze would rebel against the government if such an order had been executed and thus intervened. He convinced the corporal to treat the sheikh like other ordinary prisoners, to give him food and drink, and tell his commander to prevent the *mutasarrif*'s intervention in their internal procedures. They did so and did not allow Abdulkadir to enter into the police station at night to inspect whether his order had been performed or not. On the other hand, the sheikh, who enjoyed good relations with Djemal Pasha, informed him about the situation and complained about Abdulkadir. As a result, the commander of the Fourth Army, who adopted a policy of an extraordinary tolerance towards the Druze of Hauran, immediately ordered the *mutasarrif* to release the sheikh; he returned to his home within 48 hours.[38] Günay states that Abdülkadir's actions in the region created fear and hatred among the people against him. This situation and his disputes with Djemal Pasha presumably played a part in his recall. It may be seen contradictory that a low-ranking governor acted against the policy of an army commander, who possessed an extraordinary authority over both military and bureaucracy. However, these were not rare during

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[36] Both Kuşçubaşı Eşref and Hasan Bey the Circassian confirm the dispute between Abdulkadir and Djemal. On the other hand, it is obvious that Abdulkadir was on good terms with Talaat and his faction, which was also implied by Hasan Bey. For some details, see: İstanbul Şehir University Library, Taha Toros Archive; Letter from Eşref Kuşçubaşı to Asaf Tugay, 22 August 1962; Çerkez Hasan Bey, 'Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkez Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı', *Alemdar,* 19-28 Haziran 1919 [19-28 June 1919].

[37] For a recent study on his biography, see: M. Necat Özgür, *Bir İttihatçı'nın Biyografisi: Maslup Abdülkadir Bey* (Istanbul: Liber Kitap, 2016); the book is very poorly organized and implies that it is a collection of randomly selected documents on Abdulkadir. It can hardly be claimed that there is a narrative in the book.

[38] Mehmet Selahattin Bey, *Bizi Kimlere Bırakıp Gidiyorsun Türk?* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2006), 46.

the CUP [Committee for Union and Progress] period especially for the Unionist governors. Those who were affiliated with the Committee could act independently in the districts they governed.[39]

Following Abdülkadir's dismissal in March 1917, according to his own account, Hacim Muhiddin Bey was appointed to the Hauran as a compromise candidate between Talaat and Djemal and stayed there until the British troops invaded the region. Like many of his predecessors, Hacim Bey developed close relations with the local people, improved his Arabic that he learned while he was a high-school student and set up defensive voluntary forces under his command with the local people's contribution to fight against the British. Cevat Rifat [Atilhan], who fought in the region during the Great War, attributes the loyalty of the Druze and other Hauranese to the skilful policies implemented by Hacim Bey. Similarly, Sadi Koçaş points out Hacim Bey's successful policies to gain the people's support in Lawrence's failure to provoke a rebel among the Druze against the Ottoman government.[40]

Conclusion

The Ottoman policy towards the Druze of the Syrian lands in the Great War is a successful example of the cooperation with the local people without coercion by giving them some privileges. Together with the Bedouin, they were the only society that the Ottoman administrators developed a policy by taking their character into consideration. Therefore, they were quite close to the Ottoman government and remained as one of the most loyal groups of Syria during the war period. Although they did not make a notable manpower contribution to the Ottoman army, their share in warfare and in particular in the organization of a defence strategy against the British military progress from Egypt to Palestine as well as against the move of the Sharifian forces from Hijaz to Syria cannot be underestimated.

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39 For a detailed study on this subject, see: M. Talha Çiçek, "Myth of the Unionist Triumvirate: the Formation of the CUP Factions and their Impact in Syria during the Great War," in M. Talha Çiçek (ed.), *Syria in World War I: Politics, Economy and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 9-36.

40 Turgut Çarıklı, *Babam Hacim Muhittin Çarıklı: Bir Kuva-yı Milliyecinin Yaşam Öyküsü*, ed. Y. Hakan Erdem, (Istanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2005), 28-46.

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Ordinary Ottoman Women during World War I: The Response of Soldiers' Families to the War Mobilization

Elif Mahir Metinsoy

World War I was a "total war" which continued not only on the battleground but also on the home front. Therefore, civilians played a vital role for the mobilization of this war. Just like women of other combatant countries Ottoman women as well experienced an important change in their lives during World War I. This was a period during which women's lives and status in the Ottoman society underwent a radical transformation. Women started working in jobs that previously had been only practiced by men; they acquired new educational opportunities and they founded new associations, which both assisted war mobilization and Ottoman women's movement.[1] In many European countries and in the United States women's wartime new roles in the society and in war mobilization were used as a legitimate reason to demand women's political rights or to explain why women acquired these rights although there was a long history of women's struggle to gain political emancipation before World War I.[2] In the newly founded Republican Turkey as well women's contribution to the war mobilization during World War I and the National Struggle that followed it was long considered as an important factor for women's access to the right to vote. Consequently, Ottoman women's previous struggle for rights which could have provided a solid base for political rights have long been ignored in official and nationalist historiography.[3]

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1 For these associations, Serpil Çakır, "Osmanlı Kadın Dernekleri," *Toplum ve Bilim* 53 (1991): 139-159; Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını* (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1996); idem, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını: (1839-1923)* (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1997); Leyla Kaplan, *Cemiyetlerde ve Siyasî Teşkilatlarda Türk Kadını (1908-1960)* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1998).

2 Susan R. Grayzel, *Women and the First World War* (Harlow: Longman, 2002), 102-106; Véronique Molinari, *Le vote des femmes et la Première Guerre mondiale en Angleterre* (Paris: Éditions l'Harmattan, 1996); Leora Auslander, "Le vote des femmes et l'imaginaire de la citoyenneté: l'état-nation en France et Allemagne," in *L'histoire sans les femmes est-elle possible?: colloque organisé par Anne-Marie Sohn, Françoise Thélamon, Rouen, 27-29 novembre 1997*. Ed. Françoise Thelamon (Paris: Perrin, 1998), 73-86.

3 Indeed Turkish women did not attain their political rights only as an "endowment" of the Republican politicians or for their participation to war mobilization. For elite women's active role for Turkish women's political emancipation, Zafer Toprak, "Halk Fırkası'ndan Önce Kurulan Parti: Kadınlar Halk Fırkası," *Tarih ve Toplum* 51 (1988): 30-31; Ayşegül Yaraman, *Türkiye'de Kadınların Siyasal Temsili* (Istanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1999), 39-50; Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap: Nezihe Muhiddin, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, Kadın Birliği* (Is-

However, World War I was a catastrophe rather than an emancipatory opportunity for the majority of Ottoman women. Leaving aside the post-war developments in favor of women's political emancipation, many Ottoman women whose male relatives were conscripted to the army suffered numerous hardships during the war years. They were prone to various kinds of sufferings such as economic difficulties, poverty, malnutrition, hunger and different sorts of violence coming from both national and foreign men. During World War I, those women who have been officially called as "soldiers' families" by the Ottoman state had to negotiate for their economic rights and their security with the state bureaucracy and many women continued doing so long after the war.[4]

This article explores the response of ordinary Ottoman women, particularly soldiers' families, to the consequences of World War I mobilization by using new archival documents written in Ottoman script and by examining the wartime laws and regulations on soldiers' families. Based on these previously untapped sources and using the methods of the history from below approach, gender history and history of everyday life, it sheds light on the wartime experiences and survival struggles of a neglected group in the Ottoman-Turkish historiography, ordinary and poor Ottoman women. Furthermore, it reveals the impact of these women on the Ottoman war effort during World War I.[5]

Unfortunately the daily experiences and conditions of the Ottoman people on the Ottoman home front, especially the everyday life of the ordinary Ottoman women – most of whom were poor and alone peasants, laborers, and needy women of soldiers – during World War I, have not been explored in detail so far.[6] Historical accounts exclusively have paid attention to the political and diplomatic affairs, military incidents, and economic policies. There are very few accounts of wartime social conditions written in the 1920s and 1930s and mostly by foreign observers.[7] Social history of Ottoman World War I experience is studied in few

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tanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2003). For Ottoman women's movement, see Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi* (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1993).

4 For a preliminary study on this issue, Nicole A. N. M. van Os, "Taking Care of Soldiers' Families: The Ottoman State and the *Muinsiz Aile Maaşı*," in *Arming the State: Military Conscription in the Middle East and Central Asia, 1775-1925*, ed. Erik J. Zürcher (London: I.B. Tauris, 1999), 95-110.

5 For ordinary Ottoman women's World War I experience and role in wartime everyday politics, Elif Mahir Metinsoy, *Ottoman Women during World War I: Everyday Experiences, Politics and Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

6 Only recently, a few scholars studied the wartime interaction of Ottoman women with the state through their petitions and the Ottoman home front. See, for this interaction, Zeynep Kutluata, "Ottoman Women and the State during World War I" (PhD diss., Sabancı University, 2014); and for the destructiveness of state policies on the home front, Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

7 Ahmed Emin [Yalman], *Turkey in the World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930); Clarence Richard Johnson, ed., *Constantinople To-day or the Pathfinder Survey of Constantinople: A Study in Oriental Social Life* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1922); Rıfat N. Bali, ed., *A*

academic works, most of which were written after the 1980s.[8] As for the Ottoman women, the feminist literature and women's history accounts have largely focused on the middle-class and educated women in urban areas and their associational and publishing activities. However, the families of Ottoman soldiers who had experienced various hardship and sufferings on the home front remained silent in these accounts.[9] Nevertheless, these ordinary Ottoman women had had gained a new political importance during the war for various reasons, one of which was their everyday negotiation and resistance practices.

The Impact of World War I on Ordinary Ottoman Women

World War I had been one of the most extended and bloodiest wars of the twentieth century which had a profound impact on both soldiers and civilians. At the beginning of the war nobody guessed how long it would last. However, the new war technology, nationalist ideology and modern mobilization techniques along with many other factors made it a "total and general war" which was immense in terms of the war's destructiveness or social impact and which required both the conscription of millions of men as soldiers and the war effort of the civilians.[10] Especially conscription of so many soldiers became an important problem for all combatant countries. During the war more than 2,873,000 Ottoman men were conscripted including the gendarme and navy forces and they had to leave behind millions of women and children as dependents.[11] These women as soldiers' wives, mothers, daughters or sisters suddenly found themselves without the eco-

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Survey of Some Social Conditions in Smyrna, Asia Minor - May 1921 (Istanbul: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, [2009]); Eliot Grinnell Mears, ed., *Modern Turkey: A Politico-Economic Interpretation, 1908-1923 Inclusive* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1924).

8 For some examples of these academic works, Zafer Toprak, "The Family, Feminism, and the State during the Young Turk Period, 1908-1918," in *Première rencontre internationale sur l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie moderne*, ed. Edhem Eldem (Istanbul: Édition ISIS, 1991), 441-452; Feroz Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908-1918," in *The Modern Middle East: A Reader*, ed. Albert Hourani, Philip S. Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 265-286; Stéphane Yerasimos, ed., *Istanbul, 1914-1923: capitale d'un monde illusoire ou l'agonie des vieux empires* (Paris: Autrement, 1992); Mehmet Temel, *İşgal Yıllarında İstanbul'un Sosyal Durumu* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1998); Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Engin Berber, *Yeni Onbinlerin Gölgesinde Bir Sancak: İzmir (30 Ekim 1918 – 15 Mayıs 1919)* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999).

9 There are very few scholars of Ottoman-Turkish women's history who study the wartime experience of these mostly working-class or peasant women. Yavuz Selim Karakışla's academic works are exceptional in this sense. See for example, Yavuz Selim Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire: Society for the Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women, 1916-1923* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2005).

10 Ian F. W. Beckett, "Total War," in *Total War and Historical Change: Europe, 1914-1955*, eds. Arthur Marwick, Clive Emsley and Wendy Simpson (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), 25-29.

11 Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 211.

nomic and emotional support of their breadwinners and beloved ones. Therefore, for the first time, they faced several responsibilities and difficulties which had been so far mostly endured by their men. In Europe and the United States millions of women worked in ammunition factories and peasant women and girls at very young ages had to fill the agricultural labor gap since their husbands and male relatives were taken under arm. Many of them were forced to work beyond their strength.[12] Ottoman women, too, had to cope with the wartime hardships without the support of their male family members. They needed to deal with the state bureaucracy and the army more than ever before. While the Ottoman men were fighting against the foreign forces, their women, too, were fighting a running battle for their very survival.[13]

Being part of the "total war" women acquired new roles and duties in the society. It was very important to mobilize women and children on the home front as well since they constituted the largest civilian group left behind. Many of them were dependent to the income brought by their soldier husbands, brothers or sons. Their well-being was especially important to boost the morale of the soldiers. Nevertheless, their situation was so bad that using it as a weapon of counter propaganda, the Allied powers had tried to discourage Ottoman soldiers and urged them to desert the army with proclamations which alarmed them about the hunger, death or moral degeneration of their women and children living both in Istanbul and in the countryside.[14] Indeed the huge number of deserters of the Ottoman army was a very critical problem and neglecting the soldiers' families could cause further casualties in the army in terms of deserters. In 1917, it was estimated that 300,000 men had deserted from the army, and in 1918, this number increased to 500,000.[15] Nevertheless, according to some other estimates, there were from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 deserters in Anatolia and Arab provinces.[16] Furthermore, according to the Ottoman official casualty statistics the number of soldiers who were deserters, war prisoners, sick and missing had reached to the number of 1,565,000.[17] As a

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12 For women munitions workers, Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munitions Workers in the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). For peasant women, Anna Bravo, "Italian Peasant Women and the First World War," in *Total War and Historical Change: Europe, 1914-1955*, ed. Arthur Marwick, Clive Emsley and Wendy Simpson (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), 86-97.

13 Although Turkey did not enter into World War II, since millions of men were conscripted to the army, the economic hardships of the war were felt in a similar way by women and children in this war as well. See Murat Metinsoy, *İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türkiye: Gündelik Yaşamda Devlet ve Toplum* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2016), 462-509.

14 Sadık Sarısaman, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türk Cephelerinde Beyannamelerle Psikolojik Harp* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askerî Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1999), 80-81.

15 Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi: 1838'den 1995'e*, vol. 3 (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1974), 951; Emin, *World War*, 261-262; Affan Hikmet et al., *Milli Azadlık Savaşı Anıları* (İstanbul: TÜSTAV, 2006), 13.

16 A.L. Macfie, *The End of Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923* (London: Longman, 1998), 150.

17 Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 250.

result, although about three million men were conscripted throughout the war, the total number of soldiers in the Ottoman army did not exceed 800,000 at any time[18] and the percentage of Ottoman deserters was one of the highest among the combatant countries.[19]

Soldiers' families also played a rather important role to continue wartime production since they worked both in industry and especially in agriculture in rural districts. Consequently, in order to support its war mobilization the Ottoman State had to take care of this huge number of people by introducing new laws and developing social policies. Furthermore, many non-official Ottoman and foreign associations attempted to help Ottoman poor during the war years.[20] Nevertheless, due to the financial limitations of the Ottoman treasury and because of the increasing number of women and children who were in need, named as "soldiers' families" by the bureaucrats of the time, the wartime social assistance to these people remained largely negligible. This was especially observed for those poor martyr soldiers' families who received only the standard 100 piaster monthly payment as state-aid, which could sometimes be divided between seven or eight family members.[21]

The serious economic problems that ordinary Ottoman women had both in urban or rural areas were mainly due to wartime developments in the Ottoman economy. Wartime inflation, profiteering and black marketing and drops in industrial and agricultural production aggravated the financial situation of Ottoman women who had sent their husbands, brothers and sons to the front.[22] Many poor women as soldiers' families suffered from economic problems that could even result in their or their children's death. The Ottoman archives are replete with the records giving information about such aggravation of women's economic status. For instance, on 7 May 1918, twelve women from the İskilip district of Çorum in Ankara province wrote in their telegrams that each day seventy-eight people died in their district due to hunger. Despite this situation, the governor of Çorum wanted to deliver 130 tons of their cereals to other districts and as army tax. Therefore, these women requested the cancellation of this tax on the grounds that "the government could not allow that the families of those soldiers who were

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18 Şevket Pamuk, "The Ottoman Economy in World War I," in *The Economics of World War I*, ed. Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 117.

19 Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 250-251.

20 Safiye Kıranlar, *Savaş Yıllarında Türkiye'de Sosyal Yardım Faaliyetleri (1914-1923)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2013), 197-330.

21 See for example, Turkish General Staff Military Archives [hereafter ATASE], BDH, Kls. 2203, Dos. 27, Fih. 3-24, 30 Teşrîn-i Sânî 1336 / 30 November 1920; and ATASE, BDH, Kls. 2203, Dos. 27, Fih. 3-15, 29 Temmuz 1335 / 29 July 1919.

22 For inflation, see Zafer Toprak, *İttihad-Terakki ve Cihan Harbi: Savaş Ekonomisi ve Türkiye'de Devletçilik, 1914-1918* (Istanbul: Homer, 2003), 164-168. For war profiteering, Ziya Şakir [Soku], *1914-1918 Cihan Harbini Nasıl İdare Ettik?* (Istanbul: Muallim Fuat Gücüyener Anadolu Türk Kitap Deposu, 1944), 239-252.

fighting for the protection of the honor of the nation die because of hunger."[23] As this example shows, even peasant women could be victims of low agricultural production and hunger. This was particularly because the male agricultural force was largely conscripted to the army and their production means such as animals were requisitioned for war mobilization.[24] Nevertheless, those low-income women living in the big cities were even more vulnerable to hunger and shortages. Consequently, relatively higher number of poor women was deprived of their male breadwinners and these women fell into the trap of prostitution in order to have a daily bread for themselves or their family members.[25]

Aware of the wartime hunger, poverty or "moral degeneration" of many soldiers' families, even before World War I, the Ottoman State had started allocating pensions to the needy families of soldiers who were left without a breadwinner due to conscription of their men. During the Balkan Wars the monthly payment to each member of the family was decided as 30 piasters.[26] This amount did not change throughout World War I despite the wartime price increases in basic consumption goods. These pensions paid to soldiers' families without a breadwinner had such a low purchasing power that it could not even buy bread for a month due to wartime inflation. In some provinces like Sivas in central Anatolia or Mamuretülaziz in eastern Anatolia it covered only the price of bread for two to five days.[27] Furthermore, it was very difficult for many women entitled to this pension to receive it due to financial or organizational problems of the Ottoman State, red tape or corrupt bureaucrats who embezzled this money or used it as a power over soldiers' families. Indeed, there were many complaints about the rude behavior, verbal and physical violence, embezzlement or sexual assault of the civil servants and notables such as the district governors, district revenue officers or directors of recruiting offices directed against soldiers' families in need. Some of these denunciations were investigated seriously by the Ottoman government, due to also the adverse effects of such cases on the state's war effort.[28]

Women's family responsibilities further aggravated their economic problems. Many women as soldiers' wives were the only parent in many houses due to the conscription of their husbands as fathers of their children. This was also true for many grandmothers who had sent their widowed sons to the front. Therefore, they

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23 State Ottoman Archives (hereafter BOA), DH.İ.UM, 20-3/2-33, 29 Receb 1336 /10 May 1918.

24 Pamuk, "Ottoman Economy in World War I," 118-126.

25 For prostitution in Istanbul during the Armistice years, Johnson, *Constantinople*, 355-367.

26 "Hal-i Harb Münasebetiyle Taht-ı Silâha Celb Olunan Muinsiz Efrad-ı Redife ve Müstahfazanın Ailelerine Tahsis Olunacak Maaş Hakkında Kanun-ı Muvakkat," 22 Teşrîn-i Sânî 1328 / 25 Zilhicce 1330 [5 December 1912], in *Düstûr*, *Tertîb-i Sânî*, vol. 5, 34-35.

27 BOA, DH.İ.UM, 88-3/4-52, 30 Zilka'de 1335 /17 September 1917.

28 See for example, BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/153, 10 Cemâziyelâhir 1332 / 6 May 1914; DH.İ.UM, 83-2/1-13, 21 Cemâziyelâhir 1333 / 6 May 1915; DH.İ.UM, 88-3/4-31, 8 Cemâziyelevvel 1334 /13 March 1916; DH.HMŞ, 2/2-15, 17 Zilka'de 1335 / 4 September 1917.

were responsible for many children as dependents. In the big cities these women with dependent children suffered from housing problem, too, since they could not afford to pay their rents. In Istanbul rents rose 200 to 300 percent each year from 1914 to 1920 and even in the provinces they rose 50 percent in the second year of the war, 100 percent in the third and 200 percent in the fourth.[29] Just like the pensions paid to soldiers' families the rents of needy soldiers' families as well could be paid by the Ottoman army or National Defense Society in some cases. Eviction of soldiers' families was also restricted as long as war mobilization continued by a law which was introduced on 23 March 1915.[30] However, in practice many impoverished women found themselves out of their homes by use of force or they were obliged to move to those districts they had no social connection to support their wellbeing since these were the only districts decided by the army or National Defense Society that they could receive rent aid. Therefore, soldiers' families could sometimes resist the rent aid provided by the official or semi-officials organizations. For instance, in summer 1918 even when the National Defense Society decided to pay their rent for a new residence, four soldiers' families living in Aksaray had refused to leave their home where they could stay connected to their neighbors and the Laleli mosque that they used to receive help.[31]

For many reasons, work life also did not help ordinary women to find solutions to their economic problems. First of all, many women suffered from unemployment because they had no proper education or professional experience. Furthermore, even when they could find a job these women were low paid; they overworked or were exploited in the work place; they were victims of sexual or other forms of harassment; and they could suffer from patriarchal restrictions and sexist bias in work life. Throughout the war years, even the most educated women, who worked as teachers were dismissed immediately in case they were caught doing any kind of act which was considered as "immoral" by a very patriarchal state and society.[32] Working in agriculture was not a solution to relieve women's financial problems either. Peasant women had to carry the burden of higher wartime taxes. Besides, they were victims of war mobilization measures such as seizure of their animals or agricultural production means by the army. Since their situation was highly vulnerable, on 11 November 1916, the Commerce and Agriculture Ministry warned the Interior Ministry that local people could not do agri-

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29 Emin, *World War*, 150-151.

30 "Seferberlik Müddetince Efrad ve Zabitanın Tahtı İsticarında Bulunan Meskenlere ve Hukuku Tasarrufiyyelerinin Teminine Dair Layihai Kanuniyye," *Sene: 1334 Meclis-i Mebusan Enciimen Mazbataları ve Levayih-i Kanuniyye, No.: 428-501*, vol. 2, 388-391. See also, "Seferberlik Müddetince Efrâd ve Zâbitânın Taht-ı İsticârında Bulunan Meskenlere ve Hukuk-ı Tasarrufiyelerinin Teminine Dâir Kanûn-ı Muvakkat," 10 Mart 1331 / 7 Cemâziyelevvel 1333 [23 March 1915], *Düstûr*, *Tertîb-i Sânî*, vol. 7, 530.

31 ATASE, BDH, Kls. 2300, Dos. 67, Fih. 1-10, 23 Haziran 1334 /23 June 1918.

32 BOA, DH.UMVM, 159/11, 4 Receb 1337/5 April 1919.

culture, because they did not have draft animals and agricultural tools; similarly, migrants could not engage in agriculture because they did not have any land.[33] Furthermore, peasant women were among the group of civilians who had to do extra agricultural work for mobilization which turned out to be forced labor in practice in many cases.[34]

Soldiers' Families: Women's Negotiations Countering Wartime Policies

Facing such economic problems, women did not remain as passive and silent sufferers. Soldiers' families tried to negotiate with the state for their economic rights. Since the Ottoman State needed women's support for mobilization and its war efforts there were some fields that women could actually negotiate or exploit for their own needs. Women demanded food, pension, housing aid, employment, help for the education of their children and decrease in their taxes and fees. They also attempted to resist obligations with a quality of forced labor such as being forced to work in agricultural sector or carrying loads of cargo as types of work which peasant women were sometimes constrained doing at gunpoint.[35] All these negotiation processes constituted an important experience for the development of Ottoman women's relationship with the state and their current or future citizenship rights. However, although women's similar struggle for socio-economic rights were studied as a legitimate part of women's movement in many European countries and in the United States, the Ottoman-Turkish women's historiography in general neglected this issue.[36]

For this negotiation process women used several methods which were both formal and informal. Among the legal methods they used were writing petitions or sending telegrams to the state bureaucracy. In their petitions women always mentioned that they were "soldiers' families," "soldiers' wives" or "soldiers' mothers" and they often referred to their poverty, hunger and helplessness. These expressions were largely due to the severe reality these unfortunate women were trying to describe. Nevertheless, it was also part of the formulaic vocabulary typically used in the Ottoman petitions of the time. Similar expressions which helped to gain as much sympathy as possible were also used by women in other geographies and periods. Rather than being "a language of subservience" they helped manipulating

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33 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 23/107, 18 Muharrem 1335 /14 November 1916.

34 Ahmad, *War and Society*, 278-279.

35 See for instance, Işık Öğütçü, ed., *Orhan Kemal'in Babası Abdülkadir Kemali'nin Anıları* (Istanbul: Epsilon Yayınevi, 2005), 213-215.

36 For the account of this process of women's movements in the European context, see Gisela Bock, *Avrupa Tarihinde Kadınlar*, trans. Zehra Aksu Yılmazer (Istanbul: Literatür, 2004), 149-201; and Michèle Riot-Sarcey, *Histoire du féminisme* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2002), 54-75.

the authorities to achieve a desired end.[37] For convincing the authorities that they were in a desperate situation, and therefore needed help, women also used informal methods such as pleading, crying or making scenes in front of the bureaucrats' offices. The civil servants, inspectors and governors of both the capital and the provinces continuously reported on the crying women they saw every day in front of their offices who demanded pensions or wanted an increase in the amount.[38]

In those situations that women could not negotiate they used certain resistance methods to find a solution to their economic problems. They tried to cheat the authorities. They resisted high wartime taxes by hiding their crops or animals or trying not to do extra agricultural work. They tried to persuade their men not to go to war especially when no son or male breadwinner was left behind. Finally, in rare cases they openly resisted burdensome wartime taxes, obligations of war mobilization and malpractices of food distribution or other aids, which were social policies that initially intended to relieve poor women's sufferings but in time turned out to be insufficient and unequal. For example, on 26 June 1918, the Finance Ministry informed the Interior Ministry that some peasants in Diyarbakır some of whom were very probably women had openly refused to pay tithe tax, resorted to disobedience vis-à-vis the tax collectors and secretly harvested their crops against the law to evade agricultural taxes.[39]

In order to understand women's active assertiveness or self-defense attempts it is very helpful to examine women's problems concerning the payment of their pensions as soldiers' families. Those women and children who received pension of soldiers' families without a breadwinner increased as the war progressed and reached to the number 1,500,000 by 1917.[40] As a result of the weak financial system of the Ottoman state and the wartime budget deficit, ordinary women who were entitled to money had difficulty receiving it. The pensions and military pay allotments of soldiers' families were often paid with delays, and in some districts they were half paid.[41]

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37 Marcia Schmidt Blaine, "The Power of Petitions: Women and the New Hampshire Provincial Government, 1695-1770," in *Petitions in Social History*, ed. Lex Heerma van Voss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 62.

38 For women's protest, see BOA, DH.İ.UM, 88-3/4-23, 5 Rebîülâhır 1334 /10 February 1916; DH.İ.UM.EK, 18/11, 4 Şevvâl 1334 /4 August 1916; DH.İ.UM.EK, 30/101, 22 Cemâziyelâhir 1335 /15 April 1917. For reports on these women, BOA, DH.İ.UM, 3-1/1-27, 23 Zilka'de 1337 /20 August 1919; DH.İ.UM, 3-1/1-56, 13 Cemâziyelâhir 1338 /4 March 1920; DH.İ.UM, 20-27/14-8, 10 Receb 1339 /20 March 1921.

39 BOA, DH.İ.UM, 3-4/5-27, 24 Ramazân 1336 /3 July 1918.

40 "1333 Senesi Maliye Bütçesinin Kırkıncı Muînleri Taht-ı Silâha Alınan Ailelere Muâvenet-i Nakdiyye Faslına '100 000 000' Kuruş İlâvesi Hakkında Lâyiha-i Kanuniyye," *1332-1333 Meclis-i Mebusan Encümen Mazbataları ve Levayih-i Kanuniyye*, Devre: 3, İçtima Senesi: 4 (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1992), 279-280.

41 For delayed payments, BOA, DH.İ.UM, 4-1/56, 28 Ramazân 1334 /29 July 1916; DH.İ.UM, 4-3/9-56, 13 Cemâziyelevvel 1336 /24 February 1918; DH.İ.UM, 3-1/1-27, 23 Zilka'de 1337 /20 August 1919; DH.İ.UM, 3-1/1-39, 3 Rebîülâhır 1338 /26 December 1919; DH.İ.UM, 3-1/1-56, 4 March 1920; DH.İ.UM, 20-27/14-8, 10 Receb 1339 /20 March 1921;

Women who were deprived of their pensions frequently wrote petitions or sent telegrams to the state bureaucracy. For example, on 16 June 1917, a woman named Makbule sent a telegram from Fethiye on behalf of all deprived soldiers' families in her district to the governor of Menteşe (Muğla in today's Turkey). She notified him that they had not been able to receive their pensions for the previous five months. In order to persuade the authorities to take action, she had found it necessary to underline in her telegram that in addition to their husbands, brothers and sons that they had already been sent to battle, they were ready to send their remaining children and even go themselves to the battlefront for the sake of their respectful government. However, in addition to mentioning this she did not hesitate to request that their pensions were paid regularly and that they be rescued from their misery. Makbule appears to have been successful in her attempt. A few months later, on 31 December 1917, the Menteşe governor informed the Interior Ministry that these pensions had been paid on time for the previous months.[42]

Some women also blamed in their petitions those tax collectors who cut their pensions by misusing their authority. For example, on 4 March 1917, many peasant women from Kayalar village of Adapazarı sent a telegram to the government complaining that their pensions had been cut unlawfully by the village tax collector. The investigations following this telegram revealed that the pensions of these women had been cut on the grounds that they had harvested sufficient crops. However, during these investigations, alleging their illiteracy, these women had stated that they had not denunciated the tax collector themselves and that they had had no information about this part of their telegram. They argued that the denunciation part had been added to their telegram without their knowledge by a soldier passing by from Düzce to whom they had dictated the telegram. Although these women had denied their role in this accusation against the tax collector, very probably because they feared his vengeance, they nevertheless had insisted that they needed to receive their pensions. Despite these women's distancing from the denouncing section of the telegram text, investigations revealed tax collector Hafız Hüseyin Efendi's unequal treatment in allocating women's pensions; he was removed to another department; and the full payment of women's pensions was resumed.[43]

Women from the Karacadağ sub-district of Edirne, however, wrote without hesitation the name of the civil servant who had cheated them of their right to receive pension. In their collective petitions to the government, which dated 31 March 1917, Ümmühan, wife of soldier Mustafa, and eleven other women who

DH.İ.UM, 20-28/14-50, 19 Zilka'de 1339 /25 July 1921. For half paid pensions, see DOA, DH.İ.UM, 88-3/4-30, 9 Cemâziyelevvel 1334 /11 March 1916; DH.İ.UM, 88-3/4-43, 12 Şevvâl 1334 /12 August 1916.

42 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 45/64, 25 Rebîülevvel 1336 /8 January 1918.

43 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 107/82, 6 Receb 1335 /28 April 1917.

were also soldiers' wives criticized the former sub-district governor, İbrahim Efendi. They declared that he had abused his authority by cheating them and then had cut their pensions. Emphasizing that they lived in hunger at the Balkan frontiers as refugees, these women wanted the government to give them pensions at least until the harvest season. Petitions such as this prompted the highest state authorities to take measures, and consequently, the Interior Minister Talaat Pasha, requested that the Finance Minister Cavid Bey take care of them.[44]

As mentioned before, soldiers who learned about the poverty and hunger their families suffered could eventually lose their motivation to remain in the army and to fight for the fatherland. Indeed, many soldiers who heard about the miserable situation of their families were tempted to desert the army. In fact, large scale desertions constituted one of the primary factors that resulted in the Ottoman army's failures during the war period. Furthermore, especially the men of refugee families attempted to delay their conscription as long as possible to protect their families' from major harm. For instance, during the winter of 1916-1917, certain refugee families in Trabzon did not settle down, but lived in marsh areas to evade conscription. On 3 January 1917, the Trabzon governor reported that in this way, the migrants jeopardized their lives in winter conditions and caused harm to the state treasury. To smooth their settlement, the governor suggested the government postpone their conscription to at least June 1917.[45]

The long delays in payments of their families' pensions were also recognized as an important reason behind soldiers' desertions by the Ottoman government. Consequently, in 1916, the War Minister Enver Pasha demanded from the Interior Ministry that all civil servants who delayed the payments of the pensions intentionally were to be severely punished on the grounds that they had encouraged the desertions.[46]

This decision, however, was not taken so easily and it was an important evidence that everyday negotiation and resistance practices of soldiers' families could have political consequences. Women who had informed the authorities about their poverty played a critical role in inspiring the War Minister Enver Pasha's announcement. Moreover, when their petitions or telegrams to state bureaucracy did not solve their problems, unsupported soldiers' families launched open protests. For example, on 11 October 1915, *New York Times* reported a riot in Istanbul due to the high cost of living. A mob had wrecked and looted the new building of the Italian Embassy. Four thousand Muslim women, probably many of whom were poor soldiers' families, had assembled in front of the Sublime Porte and held an anti-war demonstration. The army forces and the police had charged and arrested some of them and achieved to disperse the mob. Since people regularly looted the bakers' shops, the police was forced to guard them. The newspaper also

44 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 30/101, 22 Cemâziyelâhir 1335 /15 April 1917.
45 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 26/59, 13 Rebîülevvel 1335 /7 January 1917.
46 BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 23/51, 9 Muharrem 1335 /5 November 1916.

narrated on 21 December 1915 that Turkish women had held protests against the high prices, all of whom had been dispersed by the army.[47]

Given women's problems, daily struggles and Ottoman State's approach to them as well as censorship over press were considered altogether, one can say that such news were not always groundless war propaganda. Although it is possible to claim that similar news in *New York Times* can sometimes be invented as war propaganda, Ottoman archive documents, too, report comparable riots of soldiers' families. For example, on 18 March 1916, the Aydın governor informed the Ottoman government about the riot of soldiers' families in Izmir. Women had attacked a bakery to loot bread and they had attempted to batter the fiscal director of their district. These women as soldier's families and also many state officials had not taken their pensions or salaries for the last three months. The governor informed the authorities that similar events could take place in different districts of his province due to the financial troubles of these families, who were in general made up of lower class women and children, and he demanded money from the government to prevent further riots. Consequently, the Finance Ministry immediately sent 40,000 Ottoman liras to Aydın province.[48]

Concluding Remarks

In brief, during World War I, ordinary women-folk of Ottoman soldiers actively responded the war mobilization through their everyday negotiation and resistance practices. This response had some important consequences in short and long terms. Despite their lack of means many Ottoman women as wives, mothers, sisters or daughters of Ottoman soldiers fought on the home front for their subsistence. For this fight of economic survival they used a variety of formal and informal methods. This effort of low-income and ordinary women gave way to two important developments. First, many women negotiated with the Ottoman state for their economic rights and as a result acquired experience in dealing with the Ottoman bureaucracy without the support and mediation of their men. This was a rapid and profound experience that sometimes made these women vulnerable to violent acts of corrupt bureaucrats or army officers. However, at the same time, this process gave ordinary women experience, confidence and awareness about their citizenship and legal rights and responsibilities. Second, women's negotiation process as "soldiers' families" with the state or their resistance to war mobilization measures for their subjective goals transformed ordinary Ottoman women into active agents of the war or at least an important factor to take into

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47 "Riots in Constantinople: Italian Embassy Wrecked – Famine-Stricken Mobs Seize Bread," *New York Times*, October 11, 1915; "Food Prices Pinch Turks: Disturbances Follow the Shipment of Supplies to Germany," *New York Times* , December 21, 1915.

48 BOA, DH.İ.UM, 4/1, 33, 20 Cemâziyelevvel 1334 /25 March 1916.

consideration by decision makers. Their well-being, security and consent to the war efforts were vital for the war performance of the soldiers at the battle front. Their complaints and demands became much more important than ever before. Their voices expressed through several formal and informal ways, along with that of the elite and middle class educated Ottoman women who gradually appeared in publishing and associational activities, became a component of public opinion, which had been previously monopolized by the Ottoman men-folk.

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A Different Kind of "Asienkämpfer": German Women at the Ottoman Fronts during World War I

Sabine Mangold-Will

Women and war – women in war: For about ten years at least, this subject has become a common topic of historical interest.[1] Especially the current research on World War One has shown that women played important roles in theory and practice of "Total War". Different from the older literature this new research refers not only to the destabilisation of social and gender order by war, but to the limits of women emancipation and their significant contributions to nationalise the nations during the war too.[2] War history written on women has usually searched for women in national contexts and recorded them only as civilians at the home fronts. In contrast, this article will focus on women at the front or "in the rear of the front"[3] at least; and it will focus on women who experienced the Great War outside their national state, in a foreign country, and therefore in a transnational social context.[4] To be concrete, this paper will zoom in on German women at the Ottoman fronts during World War One.

In the age of nationalism, women's commitment to war is usually legitimised by their importance for national salvation. But how did German women explain their participation in war when going outside and "fighting" beyond their own nation? What did German women do at the oriental fronts at all? And how did they connect their war experience at home with their experience in a foreign country and a foreign society, and how did this special experience influence their perception of war?

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1 A German version of this article was published under the title "Andere „Asienkämpfer": Deutsche Frauen an der Orientfront während des Ersten Weltkrieges," in Yavuz Köse (ed.), *Osmanen in Hamburg – eine Beziehungsgeschichte zur Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2016), 157-172.

2 For the role of women in the First World War see Herfried Münckler, *Der Grosse Krieg: Die Welt 1914-1918* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2013), 577-581. Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora: Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2013), 774-784.

3 Münckler, *Der Grosse Krieg*, 577.

4 For this new approach, which considers women as part of the "battle front" and emphasizes the high degree of their transnational mobility during the War, see Margaret R. Higonnet, "At the front," in Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Vol. III: Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 121-152. Also see – even if it's written very impressionistic – the narration of the "comrade nurse" and the numerous international engagements of the German Red Cross, its nurses and ambulance men in the Ottoman Empire in: Stefan Schomann, *Im Zeichen der Menschlichkeit. Geschichte und Gegenwart des Deutschen Roten Kreuzes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2013), 161-177.

For many years war experience and war perception have attracted great attention in German historiography; one of the main reasons for this was the question why in Europe (and especially in Germany) war remained a legitimate way of political action even after being exposed to the devastating results of the First World War. But the special experience and perception of this war at non-Western European or even non-European fronts have been neglected so far. Particularly the war of the "Asienkämpfer" (Asia Fighters) – those who experienced the Great War in the Ottoman Empire and the Near East – was never part of such reflections. The female Asienkämpfer and their perceptions remained out of the scope anyway.[5]

Thus the main purpose of this article is to inquire about German women's individual motives and motivations to go to the front or to take part in war service in the Ottoman Empire. How did they describe and explain their readiness to participate in war and make contributions in terms of their services in a foreign, culturally and religiously alien, but allied country? It is the aim of this paper to give women in war with their own voice back by asking how they legitimised and interpreted themselves what they did. That forces us to search for sources written by women and not on women. By doing this, it is aimed to show that German women had their own motives to go to the Ottoman fronts or to join war service in the Ottoman Empire, and that they developed a particular way to express their experiences. These motives, however, do not differ completely from male motives: German women participated in war in the Ottoman Empire because of their thirst for adventure and *wanderlust*, because of their drive to expand their scope of action, their social prestige, their sphere of influence and – simply – because of their basic need to earn money guaranteeing them a more independent life.[6]

To avoid any misunderstanding, this paper does not neglect the fact that women were – maybe for the most part or at least more than men – victims of war. But this view cannot explain why women remembered the First World War in the Ottoman Empire as a great opportunity, as "the most beautiful time of my life" which most of them should "never forget".[7]

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5 In 2014/2015, an exposition on World War I and German interests in the Near East by the Preußen-Museum at Wesel memorised for the first time the engagement of German and Turkish women as part of the Turkish Red Cresent during the War in the Ottoman Empire. See Veit Veltzke (ed.), *Playing Lawrence on the other side: Die Expedition Klein und das deutsch-osmanische Bündnis im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Berlin: Nicolai, 2014), 269. For travelling German women in the Ottoman Empire during World War I, also see: Oliver Stein, " 'Orientfahrten'. Deutsche Soldaten im Osmanischen Reich und der Krieg als Reiseerlebnis 1914-1918," in *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 57 (2016), 327-358.

6 For more information on the War experience of male Asienkämpfer and their motives see Oliver Stein, "Kulturelle Begegnungen mit dem Orient – Deutsche Offiziere im Osmanischen Reich während des Ersten Weltkrieges," in Veltzke (ed.), *Playing Lawrence on the other side*, 70-79 and Stein, " 'Orientfahren'".

7 Oberregierungsbahnrat Dieckmann, "Deutsche Frauen in Palästina," in *Orientrundschau*, 1933, 49.

So, in the following, it will be tried to give an inside look on the practices of German women in war service on the Ottoman fronts and how they spoke about it during and after the war. To make the points more illustrative the paper will focus on two female individuals representing two different groups of German women and their "oriental" war experiences: one female war auxiliary and one nurse. Both could be regarded as archetypes of German women articulating regularly their wish to "participate in war and share the men's world of experience near the front."[8]

"Sole ruler in our archives": German Women's Auxiliary War Service in the Ottoman Empire

In the early years of the First World War, no one in Germany thought about recruiting women into military service, not even as typists. This situation changed, however, in winter 1916. After the disappearance of the illusion of a rapid conclusion of the war, a growing shortage of men fit for military service as well as for sectors such as military bureaucracy and armament industries were felt urgently. Consequently, the German Reichstag passed a law about "Patriotic Auxiliary Service" in December 1916. Although women were – against the demands of German military bureaucracy – left outside the law and the duty to work, they nevertheless began to replace men fit for military service in industry and military offices.[9] In June 1917, female war auxiliaries, in German called *Etappenhelferinnen*, replaced male soldiers in non-fighting positions for the first time systematically.[10] In order to organise this "Woman War Auxiliary Service" a Women Agency and an Office for Female Work were established at the Berlin War Authority. The creation of these institutions signified a reaction to the uncontrolled recruitment of female secretaries and typists into military offices in late 1916. One of these regular female war auxiliaries in military service was a young mother of two, Liese Schmidt-Dumont.

Schmidt-Dumont was the scion of an old, well-respected Hamburg family and daughter of an advocate and member of the German Reichstag – the imperial parliament – representing the National Liberal Party.[11] In 1912 she married Franz

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8 Bianca Schönberger, "Mütterliche Heldinnen und abenteuerlustige Mädchen. Rot-Kreuz-Schwestern und Etappenhelferinnen im Ersten Weltkrieg," in Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (eds.), *Heimat – Front. Militär und Geschlechterverhältnisse im Zeitalter der Weltkriege* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2001), 108-127.

9 For more details of this changes in German labour market and female waged work see Sybille Krafft, "An der Heimatfront. Frauenleben im Ersten Weltkrieg 1914-1918," in Sybille Krafft (ed.), *Frauenleben in Bayern von der Jahrhundertwende bis zur Trümmerzeit* (Munich, 1993), 119-170, esp. 154-161.

10 See Schönberger, "Mütterliche Heldinnen," 110-112.

11 For Liese Schmidt-Dumont's biography see Camilla Dawletschin-Linder, "Ade Cospoli, ich will aber nicht denken, dass es ein Abschied für immer ist.' Eine Hamburger Familie im

Frederik Schmidt-Dumont who worked as a secretary at the Board of the Anatolian and Baghdad Railway in Constantinople since 1913.[12]

Other than most female war auxiliaries, she did not descend from the lower, but from the upper middle class. She was well-educated, and never thought of becoming a working woman. Although she and her family were well integrated into the German community in Istanbul, her and her husband's social position was not of a senior and an unchallenged one. This was because of the youngish age of the couple, but more importantly, it was due to the insecure professional situation of her husband who came from a well-educated, but middle class family in Altona near Hamburg.

When the German Mediterranean Navy Division looked for an assistant-clerk for its Department of War History in Constantinople, Schmidt-Dumont grasped the nettle in December 1916. Although she was pregnant, she evinced interest in the position when the German naval attaché Commander Wilhelm Tägert[13] told in a larger circle that he was looking for someone in the face of the want of regular male soldiers. In her diary she noted down: "Tägert talks about war auxiliary service and his wish to engage a lady for the fleet to put in order war papers in the commander's archives."[14]

We know the story from her diary only and it is remarkable *how* she wrote about this opportunity to change her life. Even in her personal, non-public papers she did not express openly what she really wanted. Her hopes and expectations were kept silent. Although it was her who encouraged Tägert with her exclamation "Oh, what a pity you didn't ask some months earlier, I myself would have liked to do it," she presented herself in her diaries being more or less forced to do the job: "Now" – she wrote – "he starts to persuade me." But finally her true emotions broke through and she confessed her real motives: "The inquiry lures me so much, for the first time earning money for myself, and what is more, in war service!"[15]

Choosing this phrase Schmidt-Dumont was able to declare her wish for an income for herself and attain personal emancipation in her self-image and foreign gaze while demonstrating this as an expression of national duty. The wish to earn money is transformed into an act of individual emancipation and – more im-

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Osmanischen Reich zur Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges," in Köse (ed.), *Osmanen in Hamburg*, 173-186 and Helmut Mejcher and Marianne Schmidt-Dumont (eds.), *Von Altona nach Ankara. Franz Frederik Schmidt-Dumont – ein hanseatisches Leben im Vorderen Orient (1888-1952)* (Berlin: Lit, 2010). There one can find the extracts from Liese's diary which the following chapter is based on.

12 For Franz Frederik Schmidt-Dumont's biography see Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, passim.

13 Wilhelm Tägert (1871-1950) has left his memories deposited in the Bundesarchiv in Freiburg. See www.nachlassdatenbank.de and Wilhelm Tägert and Jürgen J. Taegert, *Auf sieben Weltmeeren. Erinnerungen eines kaiserlichen Admirals* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2015).

14 Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 24.

15 Ibid.

portant – of national obligation: Not the amount of money is the relevant value but the service for the nation. This national value would legitimise her unusual and non-standard action in the public as well. The possibility to take part at the war service transformed her wish to earn money from an individual materialistic goal into a value-based normative habit. In spite of being blamed as a working woman who needs money, becoming part of the military bureaucracy integrated her into a national war community. In her diary, she called her first working day "the great day of the commencement of my duties"[16] With pride she states that she was "permanently employed with a monthly salary."[17] When Wilhelm II came to Istanbul in October 1917 to visit the Sultan, she even missed the Kaiser's reception in the city, "because I would not miss my duty on board."[18]

Although the Mediterranean Navy Division and all German ships waiting in the Marmara Sea sailed under Ottoman flag, the female typist Schmidt-Dumont didn't have any contact with the Ottoman military staff. Only in a single instance she made the experience that she did work in fact for the Ottoman Navy. After staying at home on a Sunday, she was welcomed the next day "with wry faces" and advised that she was serving at a Turkish ship "with Friday as the weekly holiday."[19]

But Schmidt-Dumont not only missed contact to the Ottoman military staff or Ottoman female war service auxiliaries, she also did not have any contact to the German military staff and other German female auxiliaries as well. Her boss, Captain (Kapitänleutnant) Bernhard Krüger,[20] commanding the *Yavuz Sultan Selim* – the former German ship *Goeben* – even was not amused having a civilian and female aid at all on board. Schmidt-Dumont wrote about him that he was "severe, silent and a bit suspicious of the civilian auxiliary, and compels me to swear to adhere to the rules of secrecy."[21] Like most military officials, Krüger and his staff seemed to fear not only the female competition, but also the violation and weakening of male military behaviour and the masculine canon of values in war society's social order.

In consequence Schmidt-Dumont worked completely isolated from the military staff, sitting alone in a separate room. Her only colleague in the archives was a seaman recruit – in civil life a teacher – called Loewel whom she described as "very courteously but a bit goofy."[22] But Loewel was not goofy at all. As Schmidt-Dumont remarked, he ignored the work being originally a part of his duties after she was recruited: "In the meantime, Loewel has done nothing,"[23] she noticed

16 Ibid., 25.
17 Ibid., 24.
18 Ibid., 30.
19 Ibid., 25.
20 See Bernhard Krüger, *Schlachtkreuzer Goeben. Ein Sang aus ernsten und heiteren Tagen* (Hannover: Jänecke, 1918).
21 Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 25.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 30.

after a short vacancy. The young female volunteer Schmidt-Dumont interpreted this behaviour as a sort of inability. But in fact the sailor re-established the old gender order and military hierarchy when he abandoned business now assigned to the female typist.[24]

All fears of her superior and colleagues would have become true, could they have been able to read Schmidt-Dumont's diary: A paper she had to type was called a "long drivel"[25] and as Loewel went for a leave she called herself self confident the "sole ruler in our archives," put the records into a new order and took over Loewel's tasks completely: She got herself – she wrote in her diary – "a general idea of the current affairs, which were Loewel's duty until now."[26] From a female point of view war service offered indeed – if only for a limited time – the experience of emancipation. But men never shared this perception: in social interaction they re-established the old order very quickly.

"Our times are offering new miraculous opportunities of life and experience"[27]: German Red-Cross Nurses in Search of Adventures in the "Orient"

Amazons, fighting women, are well-documented for numerous ancient and early modern wars, even if their numbers were few in this modern warfare.[28] More numerous than them were the non-fighting women at the fronts: the Red Cross and the Red Crescent nurses who called themselves the "army of women,"[29] auxiliary soldiers in civil service near by the front. There, women were exposed to the violence of war indirectly when treating the wounded, and sometimes even directly when the frontline moved or airplane attacks stroke field hospitals. Other than the soldiers, women were denied to be driven by a pleasure of adventure; this kind of self-centred emotion and practice were considered to be typically male.[30] But fe-

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24 For more information about the problems of female war auxiliaries who threatened the „exclusive world of men" and thus were eliminated from collective war memories by doubting their patriotic motives see Schönberger, "Mütterliche Heldinnen," 115-118, esp. 116 and 119-122.

25 Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 25.

26 Ibid., 31. Hilde Mordtmann, the daughter of the German diplomat and orientalist Johannes Heinrich Mordtmann, called herself "sole ruler" too when remembering her war experience as nurse in an Istanbul hospital. See Hilde Mordtmann, *Als ich die Türken pflegte. Erinnerungen einer Einundzwanzigjährigen* (Weimar: Kiepenheuer, 1916), 13. The original cover of her book is reprinted in Köse (ed.), *Osmanen in Hamburg*, 258.

27 Annmarie von Auerswald, *Mondnächte in Palästina* (Berlin: Edwin Runge, 1920), 19.

28 For the history of World War One fighting women (with a bibliography) see Higonnet, "At the Front," 124f. and 144-152.

29 Wolfgang U. Eckart, *Medizin und Krieg. Deutschland 1914-1924* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2014), 105.

30 Regine Deutsch, "Weibliche Kriegsteilnehmer," in *Die Staatsbürgerin* (March 1916), 186-188, esp. 186.

male testimonies speak another language: Pure living to see, a simple "desire to see distant lands,"[31] being active beyond the convention of everyday life and even the "front-line fever"[32] were widespread explanations given by women themselves.

German and Ottoman armies both featured mobile hospital units, which were established at base or in the rear of the front.[33] To support them, both armies were looking for volunteering nurses, who belonged regularly to the Red Cross or the Red Crescent.[34] Partly because of a shortage of Ottoman nurses, partly because of political considerations – the German side was talking of an act of solidarity with the ally – the German Army in the Ottoman Empire supplied German Red Cross nurses to Ottoman mobile hospital units as well. These nurses were mostly recruited from the pool of German women already living in the Ottoman Empire. Liese Schmidt-Dumont, for example, also worked as an auxiliary nurse at the Harbiye Hospital for Ottoman soldiers in Constantinople after leaving the *Yavuz Sultan Selim*.[35] The most famous nurses on Ottoman fronts were the Kaiserswerther deaconesses, who had been present in the country already for decades.[36]

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31 Annmarie von Auerswald, "Erinnerungen aus türkischen Lazaretten," in *Der Asienkämpfer*, 1927, 146-148, the quote on page 148: "Drang in die Ferne."

32 Higonnet, "At the Front," 126.

33 For the military medical service in the Ottoman Empire during World War I – though neglecting the activity of nurses –see Eckart, *Medizin und Krieg*, 319-325F (about German military doctors in the Balkan states and in Palestine). Surprisingly there is no reference on the most famous German medical orderly officer, the author and journalist Armin T. Wegner, in Eckart's book. For Wegner who reported on the Armenian massacres and became famous for his photographs of the genocide, see Schomann, *Im Zeichen der Menschlichkeit*, 168-170 and Armin T. Wegner, *Die Austreibung des armenischen Volkes in die Wüste. Ein Lichtbildvortrag*, ed. by Andreas Meier, (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011).

34 For the Ottoman Red Cresent association, see Hüsnü Ada, *The First Ottoman Civil Society Organization in the Service of the Ottoman State: The Case of the Ottoman Red Crescent (Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti)*, (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2004); for the German Red Cross movement see Dieter Riesenberger, *Das Deutsche Rote Kreuz. Eine Geschichte 1864-1990* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012). A survey on "doctors, nurses, medical orderlies, and the volunteers in war nursing" and their relations with German army in World War I is given by Eckart, *Medizin und Krieg*, 100-114. For the volunteer war nursing at the beginning of the war see Annett Büttner, *Die konfessionelle Kriegskrankenpflege im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013), 417-423; Schönberger, "Mütterliche Heldinnen," 109f., and Astrid Stölzle, *Kriegskrankenpflege im Ersten Weltkrieg. Das Pflegepersonal der freiwilligen Krankenpflege in den Etappen des Deutschen Kaiserreichs* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013), 53 who detects that nursing staff could be lend national and international, or even asked volunteering for transfer. See the conference report on "Nursing 1914-1918: War, Gender, and Labour in a European Perspective 22.5.2014-24.5.2014, Ingolstadt," http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-5472 (12.02.2015).

35 See Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 9.

36 For more information on the Kaiserswerther deaconesses in the Ottoman Empire before and after the war (but unfortunately nothing during the war) see Uwe Kaminsky, *Innere Mission im Ausland. Der Aufbau religiöser und sozialer Infrastruktur am Beispiel der Kaiserswerther Diakonie 1951-1975* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2010). Further studies would have to examine the deaconesses' reports from the Ottoman Empire written during the war and now deposited in the Fliedner-Kulturstiftung's archive at Kaiserswerth. See for example *Dank- und Denkblätter aus der morgenländischen Arbeit der Kaiserswerther Diakonissen* 15 (1915), No. 172, 2-4, 17-34.

But besides them, German army and diplomats in the Ottoman Empire requested more women from Germany.[37] Often the request was denied with the explanation that these nurses were needed somewhere else, on the Western front or at the home front, more urgent. Even after the request of the German authorities in the Ottoman Empire became pressing, women were never forced, but only asked to go to the Ottoman fronts. So, those German nurses transferred from Germany to work for the Ottoman ally were volunteers. They decided to go to the "Orient" and to support the German-Ottoman alliance.

But all of these women were required to meet special conditions. When the "Committee for the establishment of soldiers' clubs (*Soldentenheime*) at the eastern and southern front" were looking for new nurses, it drew up a catalogue of criteria for the "not un-dangerous" task: the women had to be "completely healthy", "fit for the tropics" and "efficient and competent,"[38] and "very capable and independent personalities."[39] This means however that women who were selected for war service in the Ottoman Empire had to be (and were) strong and unconventional personalities with self-confidence, which distinguished them from other women – and even from some men. Thus, it may be not accidental at all that we can find two more or less famous artists among the Austrian and German Red Cross nurses working at the Ottoman fronts.

Sven Hedin, the popular Swedish author and travel writer, mentioned in his bestseller "Jerusalem" the famous Vienna actress Sophie Wachner nursing him during a crippling attack of Malaria in Damascus. In the eye of her patient, the Red Cross nurse Wachner appeared as a "guardian angel" fulfilling a human and "national mission" like in her "starring role" as "Joan of Arc." She saved not only his but a lot of others soldiers' and civilians' life in the common fight against Great Britain.[40]

The most famous Kaiserswerther deaconess living in the Ottoman Empire was Laura Morgenroth. See "Schwester Laura Morgenroth," in *Orient-Rundschau,* 1934, 34f. and her file in the Fliedner-Kulturstiftung Archive, Kaiserswerth, SCHW A 130: Laura Morgenroth.

37 See *Dank- und Denk-Blätter aus der morgenländischen Arbeit der Kaiserswerther Diakonissen* 14 (1914), No. 2, 5.

38 Fliedner-Kulturstiftung Archive, Kaiserswerth, DA 809: Soldatenheime in der Türkei 1916-1917, Ausschuß zur Errichtung von Soldatenheimen an der Ost- und Südfront to the Kaiserswerther Diakonie, 21. Juni 1916.

39 Fliedner-Kulturstiftung Archive, Kaiserswerth, DA 809: Soldatenheime in der Türkei 1916-1917, Ausschuß zur Errichtung von Soldatenheimen an der Ost- und Südfront, Vorsitzender des Arbeitsausschusses P. Thieme to Kaiserswerther Diakonie, 8. September 1917. One can learn from this letter that General Falkenhayn himself, the German commander in chief in Palestine, requested for 15 Kaiserswerther deaconesses for nursing German and Ottoman soldiers.

40 See Sven Hedin, *Jerusalem* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1918), 49-58. For further information on Sophie Wachner (1877-1918) see the obituary by Hermann Bahr, "Tagebuch," in *Neues Wiener Journal*, 29 (December 1918), 26/9036, 5. There one can learn that Wachner volunteered the four years of the war as a Red Cross nurse: "She returned home from battlefield where she has served four years as a nurse." Also see Annmarie von Auerswald, "Meine

Another of these extraordinary women volunteering for war service in the Ottoman Empire was the today unknown but successful female writer in the Republic of Weimar, Ann(e)marie von Auerswald. Little is known about her life, especially before the War; but we might assume that it was probably not very happy. Annmarie von Auerswald (1876-1945) was about forty years old when she went to the Ottoman fronts. She was a Protestant order's canoness living in a female convent called "Heiligengrabe," the Holy Grave, located in Brandenburg, 100 kilometres north of Berlin. In the memories of a younger convent's schoolgirl Auerswald was called a "cockoo's egg," meaning an illegal member of the convent, promoted and patronized by the abbess and appointed a minor sister against the convent's statutes in 1911. Only in 1923 was she elevated to the position of canoness.[41] Despite her aristocratic title Annemarie von Auerswald was a social outsider in her convent: She did not belong to the old aristocratic Prussian families and she was simply to poor to buy in as a member of the convent. After the war she became the director of the museum of local history established by her convent. In addition, she acquired reputation as writer and author of historical novels inspired by the Teutonic past and myths.[42] Like numerous other women spending wartime in the Ottoman Empire, she joined the *Bund der Asienkämpfer*, a "union of the German 'fighters in Asia'," in 1919.[43] In the union's journal she published several articles during the twenties.[44]

All we know about her time in Constantinople and in Palestine during the war is known from a variety of literary works. Her "oriental" memory texts consist of mixtures of autobiographical sketches, conventionalised travelogues and devotional books. Besides this, her language and semantics are adapted to the discourse of the well-accepted female role as "maternal heroes" protecting her from the reproach of being unfeminine.[45] Therefore one has to be aware of this special

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Fahrt ins heilige Land," in *Der Asienkämpfer*, 1929, 40-43, esp. 41. A photograph by Wachner in nurse's uniform in Hedin, *Jerusalem*, plate beneath page 48.

41 See Stift Heiligengrabe, *Ein Erinnerungsbuch*, 2 Teile, hrsg. v. alten Stiftskindern i. A. Nora Neese, geb. Wedel (Salzgitter: private print, 1992), XIII, 182, 478 and 516.

42 For more information on Annmarie von Auerswald see Simone Oelker and Astrid Reiter, *Lebenswerke. Frauen im Kloster Stift zum Heiligengrabe zwischen 1847 und 1945*, hrsg. im Auftrag des Kloster Stift zum Heiligengrabe (Bonn: Monumente Publikationen der Deutschen Stiftung Denkmalschutz, 2002), 36. Her photograph can be find in "Der Deutsche Schriftstellerinnen-Bund," in *Über Land und Meer. Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung* 40 (1906), 983.

43 See the list of members: *Mitgliederverzeichnis Bund der Asien-Kämpfer, Vereinigung der Asienkämpfer, Balkankämpfer und Orientfreunde*, 1929, 28, indivudual members: "Annemarie von Auerswald, Heiligengrabe bei Techo, Ostpriegnitz." For the "Bund der Asienkämpfer," see Sabine Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft. Deutschland und die Türkei 1918-1933* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013), 269-287.

44 Auerswald, "Erinnerungen aus türkischen Lazaretten"; Auerswald, "Meine Fahrt ins heilige Land"; Annmarie von Auerswald, "Arabisches Dorfleben. Erinnerungen aus dem Kriege," in *Der Asienkämpfer*, 1930, 65-67.

45 Compare Schönberger, "Mütterliche Heldinnen," 112-114, 119-121.

source problem while looking at Auerswald's motives to volunteer for war service in the Ottoman Empire.

Although Auerswald was a Protestant canoness, religious aspects played no explicit role in her self-representation. She named her book about the German military retreat from Palestine front as "Moon-lit Nights in Palestine."[46] Probably she was well aware that a lot of her German readers would associate "Palestine" immediately with their images of the Holy Land. But the term "Palestine" appealed not only to the religious, but also to the secular and politically interested audience.

On the second page of her book, however, she let her reader know immediately that she has not been to a Christian religious place or a political entity called the Ottoman Empire, not at all in an allied state, but in a "land of wonder and fairy tales." What she was looking for was the image of the "Orient" as an unearthly, transcendental, beautiful and better world: "Was there in fact still war in this world, which was filled up with such a solemn beauty?,"[47] she asked after the description of a marvellous moonlighted evening while the world around her was being destroyed.

In reference to public expectations she justified her nursery work in the Ottoman Empire not with her charitable duty as a Christian, but her function as a German "cultural missionary in a foreign country."[48] Thus she used an approved European imperial discourse – the one of the white men's burden, right and obligation to civilise the world – to legitimise her own unusual behaviour as a single women in war at foreign fronts. By doing this she confirmed the validity of this discourse to herself and her readers. A good example proving this reference to established narrations provides her description of the German nurses' work in the Ottoman military hospital in Constantinople. In one of her articles for the Journal of the "Asienkämpfer" she mocked the Ottoman male caretakers and guards with sharp tongue, criticized even the Ottoman chief physician and presented her Ottoman patients as pleasant and obedient children.[49]

But in the retrospective some self-critical aspects are mixed in too. The reason for this can be found in the irritation caused by the successful Turkish War of Liberation following the First World War. Instead of the Germans the supposedly "uncivilized" Turks defeated the western Allies and reversed their Paris Peace Treaty, the Treaty of Sèvres. Not without self-irony was Auerswald talking about her and the fellow-nurses' "minds and feelings covered up with European culture."[50] She even diagnosed the "unjustified arrogance of our western culture" lacking any understanding for the "tremendous efforts" of the Turks "in every field for catching

46 Auerswald, *Mondnächte in Palästina*, passim.
47 Ibid., 14.
48 Ibid., 25.
49 Auerswald, "Erinnerungen aus türkischen Lazaretten," 148.
50 Ibid., 146.

up the European development of the last centuries." These efforts, Auerswald concluded, would free "the Turks" from "Western dominance" and guarantee their political "victory."[51]

Besides these politically legitimized arguments, private motivations flashed up between the lines. Women like Auerswald were not humble and willing to sacrifice themselves at all. They wanted to be active and involved where "the music played." When the Red Cross nurses, among them Auerswald, were sent to Smyrna she wrote disappointed and with regret: "Being remote from big events did not please us and we were very glad when we were called back to Constantinople."[52] This sentence can be read as the remark of a self-confident woman who claimed to be more than an object of war. Corresponding with this, Auerswald's description of the German army's retreat from the Palestine front after the British victory in Gaza sounds like an adventure travel.[53] If one should credit her narration she appeared to have feared the individual "inactivity"; the retreat of the German soldiers doomed her to more than the military defeat. Among activist women like Auerswald to talk about female "inactivity" implied a virulent Gender wartime stereotype. Especially in the early months of the war when women and girls made requests for more participation at civil front service they were refused by those who feared about the possibility of the destruction of gender relations at family- and state-level: "Don't complain, when you are doomed to rest idly at home!"[54] Against this male attitude, Auerswald's text was part of a female counter discourse: "We did not stay back alone; we marched on with them. We were not only spectators, but involved actively."[55] How much the war was interpreted as an individual challenge can be seen in Auerswald's description of her retreat from the Palestine front. Obviously she felt no obligation to search for a political sense in what she was doing. Her self-presentation as a female activist was enough. About an exhausting stage during the retreat she only wrote: "Joy of sports! Brave human sense for a good playing game! Mankind is searching for the extraordinary! Not fear of death but creative enthusiasm makes the best."[56]

Even though Auerswald did never return to the Ottoman Empire or the Turkish Republic her stay at the Palestine front meant for her after the war the summit of her life. Her literary memories on the war in the Ottoman Empire were crawling

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51 Ibid., 148.
52 Ibid.
53 For similarities between war and travel descriptions see Charlotte Heymel, *Touristen an der Front. Das Kriegserlebnis 1914-1918 als Reiseerfahrung in zeitgenössischen Reiseberichten* (Münster: Lit, 2007).
54 "An Deutschlands Frauen," in *Das Kränzchen. Illustrierte Mädchenzeitung*, 1914, quote after: Krafft, "An der Heimatfront," 120.
55 Auerswald, *Mondnächte in Palästina*, 29.
56 Ibid., 40.

with phrases like "miraculous,"[57] "unknown"[58] or "impetuous experience,"[59] "incomprehensible"[60] and "unforgettable memories."[61] Once she is even talking about the war as the "starting point of all our experience"[62] – as if the war and the trip into the Ottoman Empire marked her birth, the beginning of her life. At least in retrospective, the participation in the war at the "oriental" fronts was synonymous with the opposite of an ordinary day experience at home. In Auerswald's perception and literary presentations the nurses in "oriental war" lived a true and fulfilled human life: extraordinary, active and remarkable. In "remembering" the oriental war not only "the moonlit nights in Palestine got alive" but the author herself too.[63] She concludes one of her essays with the following words: "The evening of no return came. But the now faraway and distant pictures once impressed the soul deeply. (…) Figures are passing by in my mind. I'm greeting them all, I recognize them, I life with them."[64] In sentences like this the female writer Annemarie von Auerswald realized the past as the living present. The aim of this memory policy can be seen in mapping the female individual in the national landscape. The "far and old images," Auerswald evoked after the war, have all one aspect in common: They described a unified, harmonious society, men and women fighting together for national freedom and liberty – as an abstract value and as the concrete goal of the German people. For women like the front traveller, author and nurse Auerswald these political values reflected her individual fight for personal freedom and liberty too.

Conclusion

German women at the Ottoman fronts were no victims – or so they claimed at least. As women elsewhere, German women in the Ottoman Empire experienced distress and need, illness and death during the First World War. But despite this, positive experiences connected with the war auxiliary tasks in the "orient" have dominated their memories. The volunteer auxiliary Schmidt-Dumont and the Red Cross nurse Auerswald experienced wartime in the Ottoman Empire as a lifetime of formerly unknown independence and autonomy. Schmidt-Dumont called herself "sole ruler," and Auerswald emphasized that she was not a spectator but an active participant in war.

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57 Ibid., 19.
58 Ibid., 54.
59 Ibid., 66.
60 Ibid., 59.
61 Ibid., 6.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., 66.
64 Auerswald, "Arabisches Dorfleben. Erinnerungen aus dem Kriege," 65-67, the quote: 67.

For both women, war experience was connected with the perception of rearranging gender roles: Schmidt-Dumont explained the national need of her auxiliary work with the inability of her "goofy" male colleague. Auerswald savoured satisfaction that she belonged to those who intervened actively and therefore were "heroes". In her language, the term was no longer suitable for men only, but for men and women alike with certain skills and qualities that distinguished them from "failures" of any gender.[65] Concerning nurses, these experiences of a new gender order became even more enforced by their encounters with Ottoman men whom they perceived as intellectually and professionally inferior to them.

Especially for the German Red Cross nurses with a religious background, war experience in the Ottoman Empire was connected often with imaginations of a transcendental peace that was based on Christian repertoire. In fact, women on Ottoman fronts were mostly spared from the cruel horror of war. They never saw soldiers dying because of gas attacks and rarely bodies teared to pieces, like the nurses at the western front. On the other hand, persecution and murdering of the Armenians were part of German women's Ottoman war memories. Schmidt-Dumont's diary and even Auerswald's literary texts are reflecting these events; both were well aware of the ultimate intention of these persecutions.[66] But even a keen observer like Schmidt-Dumont who spoke about the "annihilation of a whole nation," who saw the empty villages and knew that "deep fountains and raging rivers by the wayside, and Kurdish gangs rendering the Turks their work easier" calmed herself with the assurance that everything was done "in peace and quiet and without any violence."[67] Because of this rationalization they did not reveal these experiences in public, and the Armenian massacres did not influence their judgement of war in a profound manner. In fact, the personal female experience was not strong enough to change the official public explanation of war as a justified national necessity.

Both of the two evaluated German women passing their war times in military auxiliary service in the Ottoman Empire perceived their experience as a remarkable social distinction and as a tremendous social gentrification. In the public sphere of the "Asienkämpfer" – the Germans who fought at Ottoman fronts – women's commitments and their social valuation continued even after the war. As for men who fought in Palestine or in the Caucasus together with Ottomans this special oriental war bond did not pay dividends in terms of long-lasting social prestige: As it is generally known, Germany lost the war. But the Auerswald example show us how this special oriental-Ottoman war experience was given a new

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65 See Auerswald, *Mondnächte in Palästina*, 48: "Among all our 280 men there were not only heroes."

66 For the reception of the Armenian atrocities by Schmidt-Dumont and Auerswald see Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 15-17 and Auerswald, "Meine Fahrt ins heilige Land," 40.

67 Mejcher and Schmidt-Dumont, *Von Altona nach Ankara*, 16.

interpretation during the twenties in order to serve for personal and national gentrification. In her literary works the past war times in the Ottoman Empire and Germany's future melted together: The past was the future which should come. The Ottoman "fight for freedom"[68] and the united, strong, but reordered German overseas war community, including "hero" women should have been the model for a new German nation.

Those, however, whose war experiences involved so much adventure, personal freedom, cultural superiority, transcendental values, social valuation and experience of political unity would not fear the next war. For the German female Asienkämpfer Annemarie von Auerswald the way was straight: She became a convinced member of the National-Socialist movement[69], with a sentimental bias for the Oriental "miraculous world of wonders,"[70] being – in her perception – the counterpart and the model for her personal as well for the German national identity.

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68 Auerswald, "Erinnerungen aus türkischen Lazaretten," 148.

69 See Stift Heiligengrabe, *Ein Erinnerungsbuch*, 292.

70 Auerswald, "Meine Fahrt ins heilige Land," 41.

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How the Displacement of Giresun's Romei has been Avoided: An Inquiry about the Politics of the Rear Front, the State and Society during World War I

Nikos Sigalas

This article focuses on a controversy that occurred in early 1917 concerning the displacement of the Greek Orthodox population of Giresun: a port city of the eastern Black Sea coast. The displacement of populations during World War I in the Ottoman Empire have usually been the subject of macro approaches insisting on the role of the state, or of the Union and Progress (UP) regime, perceived as a coherent and uniform historical agent. These studies usually replace historical agency by ideology. The present case study challenges this view, suggesting a more complex understanding of the Unionist state and of late Ottoman society.

In what follows, ideology will be taken into account in relation to the specific power relations that contributed to the decisions for the displacements. We assume that the specific time and place of the displacements were relevant to these power relations. Therefore, the *time* we are dealing with is the phase of the war during which the region of Giresun was included in the rear front area; whereas the *place* with respect to which the power relations under question developed is this very *rear front area*.

Introduction

The Politics of the Rear Front

An important feature of our analysis is the notion of the politics of the rear front, which was introduced in a previous study[1]. This notion aims to describe the political implications of the formation, from the 19th century onwards, of a new form of territory: the rear front, which had its own geographical and economic organisation (transport and supply lines, camps and leisure areas etc.) and a particular legal status (martial law). In summary, such a territory is marked by the tendency to apply to civilians – and, more generally, to society – rules of life, of justice and of mobility that usually apply to the military alone. Let us give some examples: mobi-

[1] Nikos Sigalas, "La *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* sur le front du Caucase: De la politique du front vers la politique de l'arrière-front: prélude au Génocide," in *Marges et pouvoir dans l'espace (post)ottoman. XIX^e-XX^e siècles*, ed. Hamit Bozarslan (Paris: Karthala, 2018), 151-152.

lising the non-drafted civilians in order to work for the army; transferring civilians from one place to another like soldiers; forcing civilians to live in camps; putting civilians to death with summary procedures, or, even, when they are considered as (internal) enemies, without a procedure at all, as in the battlefield; requisitioning the harvest or the animals of the peasants etc. Such practices, which are occasionally authorized to the military commanders in wartime, transform the power structure of the rear front territory, which becomes, among others, an important political arena. The exceptional powers bestowed on the military commanders in wartime and the extraordinary measures authorised to them become the subject of political arrangements and/or controversies both in the capital and at the borders of the state, from the top level of the Ministers and the head of government to these of local public servants, merchants, religious leaders and bandits as well. The broader transformation of central and local politics owing to the formation of the rear front territory is what we call the politics of the rear front.

The Use of Ethnonyms

Most of the Greek Orthodox living in Giresun and in its hinterland during World War I had migrated there during the 19th century from the area of Gümüşhane, after the degradation of this region's silver mines in the 1820s. As far as they had not attended a Greek school, these people were used to calling themselves *Romei*[2] (sing. *Romeos*, dialectal form *Romeon*)[3], which was the main endonym of the Greek speaking Christian Orthodox population of the Ottoman Empire[4]. *Romeos* (Ῥωμαῖος, pl. Ῥωμαῖοι) means in Greek "Roman". In the Byzantine Empire, the ethnonym *Romeoi* was used for the people who were deemed to descent from Roman citizens of the time of the Edict of Caracalla (212 CE, when Roman citizenship was granted to the entire free male inhabitants of the Roman realm), such as the Greek-speaking inhabitants of the Greek Peninsula or the Arab-speaking Orthodox Christians of the Middle East[5]. Subsequently, the Arabs, and following them the Seldjuqs and the Ottomans, translated the name *Romeos/Romei* as *Rum* (*Rūm*)[6]. By the end the 18th century, the Ottoman administration started using the

2 We opt here for an approximately phonetic transliteration at the expense of the historical orthography.

3 George Drettas, "Des Romains et des Lazes. Les nomenclatures identitaires de l'espace pontique, " *Études balkaniques* 6 (1999): 168.

4 In some regions we find also the contracted forms *Romjos/Romji*, more common in Standard Modern Greek.

5 Ioannis Stouraitis, "Reinventing Roman ethnicity in high and late medieval Byzantium," *Medieval Worlds* 5 (2017) and Nikos Sigalas, "'Greek', Origin of the Term and other Related Terms," in *Encyclopedia of Greek Language and Linguistics*, ed. Georgios K. Giannakis *et al.* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, Forthcoming).

6 Nadia El Cheikh, "*Rūm* 1. In Arabic Litterature," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edn*, ed. P. Bearman *et al.* (Leiden: Brill, 1962-).

term *Rum* in order to identify the entire Greek Orthodox population of the Empire. *Rum* thus became, to a great extent, an exonym used by the administration in order to identify different people who were calling themselves *Romei*, *Armãni* (Aromainians), *Arbëror* or *Shqipetar* (Albanians), *Balgari* (Bulgarians) etc.[7]. It has also been used as an endonym for the Arab speaking Orthodox of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, as well as for the Turkish speaking Orthodox Christians of Anatolia. In the 19th century, and particularly during its second half, the ethnonym *Rum* was systematically translated as *Hellinas* (Hellene, Greek) in the frame of a nationalist discourse that was expanding together with a bourgeois way of living and the Greek school network[8]. Though *Hellinas* became an endonym for this "Hellenised" bourgeoisie, it could not easily substitute the ethnonym *Romeos* among the working urban classes and the peasants[9]. In the following lines we will try to respect the emic use of these ethnonyms.

Formation of a Rear Front and Displacement of Populations

The Romei of the Black Sea had not been subject to displacement until the Great Russian Offensive, launched by General Nicolai Yudenich on January 10, 1916 in Köprüköy, to the east of Erzurum, and ended with the occupation of Gümüşhane, on July 20, 1916[10]. In seven months the warfront moved approximately 250 km west, from Köprüköy to the line Tirebolu-Kemah. This frontline remained subsequently unchanged, and was practically inactive, until the collapse of the Russian front in early 1918 due to the October Revolution[11].

The formation of this new frontline had been followed by the more extensive displacement of the *Romei* that took place on the Caucasus Front. Both armies had felt the need to "secure" the warfront. First, the Russian Army, according to its standard practice on the Caucasus front, expelled the people living within a

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7 Paraskevas Konortas, "From Tâ'ife to Millet: Ottoman Terms for the Ottoman Greek Orthodox Community," in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy and Society in the nineteenth Century*, ed. Ch. Issawi and D. Gondicas, vol. 1 (Princeton: Darwin Press 1999).

8 Nikos Sigalas, "Ιστοριογραφία και ιστορία των πρακτικών της γραφής: ένα προοίμιο στην ιστορία του σχηματισμού της έννοιας ελληνισμός και στην παραγωγή της νεο-ελληνικής εθνικής ιστοριογραφίας," in *IV International Congress of History and Historiography of Modern and Contemporary Greece – 1833-*2002. *Proceedings*, ed. Pasch. Kitromilides and Triant. Sklavenitis, vol. 1 (Athens: National Research Foundation, 2005), 119-127 and *passim* and Nikos Sigalas, "Ελληνισμός και εξελληνισμός: Ο σχηματισμός της νεοελληνικής έννοιας ελληνισμός," *Τα Ιστορικά*: 34 (2001): 47-69.

9 Sigalas, "Ελληνισμός και εξελληνισμός," 49-56.

10 The dates are given in the Gregorian calendar.

11 Nikos Sigalas, "Occupation de Trébizonde et genèse de la question pontique : Politique et société sous occupation militaire," in *Enjeux d'empires et de nations sur le front caucasien : Regards neufs sur un front oublié de la Grande Guerre*, ed. Cloé Drieu and Claire Mouradian (Paris: CNRS Editions, forthcoming).

zone of a few km (approximately from 15 to 20) from the warfront, who were in this case mostly Romei.[12] The standard Russian practice in the occupied ottoman territory was to force the population, indiscriminately the Muslim and the Christian, to leave the operations zone[13]. Then the Ottoman Third Army displaced the entire Romei of the *kaza*s[14] of Görele and Tirebolu, as well as several other villages of Romei located to the north of these *kaza*s, near the front line. The displaced convoys departed between the end of November and the 15th of December 1916[15].

The Different Actors of the Displacements

The displacements were carried on in a district which was more remote from the warfront: the *kaza*s of Giresun and Ordu. An administrative document allows us to understand the legal framework of the displacement; it is a telegram sent from the *vali*[16] of Trabzon Mehmet Cemal Azmi Bey to the Ministry of the Interior. The vali informs the Ministry of the order he received on December 28, 1916 from the Third Army headquarters to "transfer the *Rum* of the coastal area, located eastward of the Melet Stream, westward of the line Karahisar-Suşehri-Zara and less than fifty kilometers from the coast, into areas belonging to the *vilayet*[17] of Sivas"[18]. The vali of Trabzon emphasises that "the entire *kaza* of Giresun, where the *Rum* people (*ahâl*) are numerous (*kes̲ret*) makes part of the evacuation (*tahliye*) zone". For this reason, "in order for the transfer (*sevḳiyât*) to be accomplished in perfect order without giving rise to any fraud and complaint, the Deputy *kaymakam*[19] of the above mentioned city, the Police Director of the vilayet and the Deputy Commander of the gendarmerie regiment, [who] are employed [to carry out the transfers] have been given clear and strict instructions concerning the transferred community's safety, its food supplies and its rights (*ḥuḳûḳu*)"[20].

As a matter of fact, the Romei of the abovementioned region immediately started to be displaced[21]. There was a single exception, but an important one: the

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Cf.* Peter Holquist, "The Politics and Practice of the Russian Occupation of Armenia, 1915-February 1917," in *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. R. Gr. Suny *et al.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 171.

14 *ḳażâ*: sub-district.

15 ΚΜΣ (Κέντρο Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών: Centre for Asia Minor Studies), *Η Έξοδος Ε΄* (Athens: ΚΜΣ, 2016), 43-144.

16 *Vâli*: governor or, better, after the 19th century's reforms, prefect, according to the French system.

17 *Vilâyet*: province, or department (according to the French system).

18 BOA.DH.EUM.3.Şb. 17/56. Cipher telegram sent on 17 Kânûn-i evvel 1332/30 December 1916 by the vali of Trabzon to the Ministry of the Interior.

19 *ḳâymaḳâm*: governor of a *ḳażâ* (sub-district).

20 *Ibid.*

21 ΚΜΣ, *Η Έξοδος Ε΄*, 121-234.

city of Giresun, with a population of approximately 11,000-12,000 Romei[22], whose displacement was avoided owing to the intervention of the Third Army Commander, General Vehip Pasha. The vali's telegram does not mention that the city of Giresun, which was the only place where the Romei were actually numerous, should be exempted from the displacement. But this document is not the original displacement order given by Vehip Pasha, but a telegram of the vali that summarises this order. As long as the original order is missing we cannot be certain whether the Romei of Giresun were originally meant to be displaced or not.

Consequently, what also remains unclear is whether Vehip Pasha opposed those who tried to displace the Romei of Giresun due to the methods they followed or because the transfer of these Romei was not mentioned in his original instructions. Whatever the reason may be, what is more interesting for us is that the displacement of the Romei of Giresun became a subject of dispute between the Third Army headquarters and the local public administration.

"A list was put up in the market"

The Orthodox Patriarchate's *Black Book*[23] – based on information provided by Lavrentios (Λαυρέντιος), the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Kerasus (Giresun) – offers the following account of the events:

> "On December 28, 1916 [January 10, 1917] a three-member commission came to Giresun in order to carry out the exile of the people. They acted in a rather different way [compared to the displacements of the countryside's Greeks]. The day before the first of January 1917 [on January 13, 1917 according to the Gregorian calendar] a list was put up in the market including the names of 65 families, among the most important [of the city], who ought to leave the city in the following three days because they were considered suspects (ὡς ὕποπτοι). A few days later another list, of 150 families, was posted. But due to the reaction of the St. Metropolis, another commission came from [the headquarters of The Third Army in] Suşehri to examine the reasons of the exile. This second commission acknowledged that the exiled families were innocent and thus the city was saved"[24].

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22 *Ibid.*, 119. According to a 1914 ottoman population estimate the *kaza* of Giresun numbered 24,183 Romei (along with 92,301 Muslims and 2,275 Armenians), Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914. Demographical and Social Characteristics* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 180. Therefore, roughly, half of the *kaza*'s Romei were living in Giresun.

23 The *Black Book* of 1919: Οἰκουμενικὸν Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος διωγμῶν καί μαρτυρίων τοῦ ἐν Τουρκία Ἑλληνισμοῦ* (Istanbul: Πατριαρχικὸν Τυπογραφεῖον, 1919) was prepared in three languages (Greek, French and English) by the Central Comity for the Greek Displaced Populations of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople. Though it is a propaganda publication, prepared in order to promote the Greek positions in the Paris Peace Conference, it is an important source of information, which needs of course to be compared with other sources.

24 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, p. 262.

The first commission was constituted by the Gendarmerie Commander of the vilayet (Küçük) Kâzim Bey (Yurdalan) from Erzurum, the Police Director of the vilayet Nuri Bey, and the employee of the General Directorate for Tribes and Refugees[25] Midhat Bey[26]. Orders concerning the displacement of the city's *Rum* were also given to the Deputy kaymakam Nihat Bey[27]. We remember that the vali Cemal Azmi Bey was reporting on December 30 to the Ministry of the Interior that "strict instructions" were given to the aforementioned Gendarmerie Commander, Police Director and Deputy kaymakam, "concerning the transferred community's safety, its food supplies and its rights (*ḥuḳûḳu*)", "in order for the transfer (*sevḳiyât*) to be accomplished in perfect order without giving rise to any fraud and complaint". This telegram of Cemal Azmi *Bey* was sent 11 days before the aforementioned persons set foot in Giresun (on January 10, 1917, according to the *Black Book*). As for the "strict instructions" allegedly given to the three functionaries to respect the rights of the transferred *Romei*, in order to avoid complaints, they were actually miscarried. Giresun's *Romei* complained and an inquiry commission (*heyet-i taḥḳîḳiye*) was sent to Giresun to examine their grievances[28].

A First Administrative Inquiry

According to the Archimandrite Panaretos Topalidis, the aforementioned inquiry commission was formed by the Colonel Alaeddin Bey and his aide-de-camp Nail Bey[29], who were sent from the Third Army's headquarters in Suşehri. Panaretos maintains that their expediting in Giresun was due to "telegrams and special envoys that the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Kerasus Lavrentios had sent to [the Third Army Commander] Vehip Pasha" in order to explain him the gravity of the situation[30]. Such a meeting is likely to have taken place in early January 1917 given that in a telegram sent on January 8, 1917, by Vehip Pasha to the Metropolitan Lavrentios, the pasha accepts to meet with the metropolitan or with a repre-

25 *ʿAşâîr ve Muhâcirîn Müdüriyet-i ʿUmûmîyesi*

26 Παναρετος Τοπαλίδης, *Ὁ Πόντος ἀνὰ τοὺς αἰῶνας*, (Drama: self-published, 1929), 194. Panaretos Topalidis was the Archimandrite of the Vazelona Monastery, in the *sancak* of Gümüşhane. His account of the historical events of his time is very precise, especially as far as people and chronologies are concerned.

27 Mustafa Balcıoğlu, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında ve Sonrasında Rumlar ve Topal Osmal," in *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'dan Cumhuriyet'e* (Ankara: Nobel, 2001), 192. More precisely, according to Balcıoğlu, with the displacement of Giresun's Rum were entrusted the Gendarmerie Commander Kâzim Bey, the Polis Director Nuri Bey and the Deputy Kaymakam Nihat Bey, *ibid.* The employee of the General Directorate for Tribes and Refugees Midhat Bey is not mentioned in Balcıoğlu's account. But Midhat Bey's participation in the displacement of Giresun's Rum is attested in other sources, see *infra*.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 194.

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*

sentative of his in Suşehri[31]. However, this specific meeting was arranged a few days before the displacement of the first group of Giresun's Romei[32] and probably concerned the displacement of the people who were living in rural areas. Even so, this telegram, as well as other documents reproduced by Panaretos in the same section of his book, illustrates the good cooperation between the Third Army Commander and the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Kerasus, whom we consider to be an important local actor.

However, another document raises doubt whether it had been Vehip Pasha who issued the initial order of inquiry concerning the displacement of Giresun's Romei and, more precisely, concerning the legality of the methods employed to this end by the public administration of the vilayet. This document is a telegram sent on January 23, 1917 by Vehip Pasha to the Minister of the Interior Talaat Bey, in response to a telegram that had been sent, earlier on the same day, by the latter to the former[33]. As far as we understand by Vehip Pasha's reply, in Talaat Bey's telegram were praised "the services that the vali of Trabzon Cemal Azmi Bey had provided, with a great sense of sacrifice, to the army since the time of the mobilisation". It was also stated that "while [the vali of Sivas] Muammer Bey had left the army starving, it was [the vali of Trabzon] Cemal Azmi Bey who had fed it".

By those praises Talaat Bey was obviously defending Cemal Azmi Bey against accusations related to his duties as a public official, which are not clearly mentioned in Vehip pasha's telegram of reply. Vehip pasha, in turn, seems rather reserved. Without commenting on the abovementioned praises, he was apparently avoiding to be involved in this issue, as he probably considered that Talaat Bey was trying to get out of trouble a political client of his. Tellingly, Vehip Pasha finishes this telegram, where the transfer of a certain number of high officials is discussed, as follows:

> "In conclusion, as far as protection is concerned, let me report [to Your Excellency] that there is not even a single solder of the Pack Train Service (*mekkâreci neferi*) who does not understand the serious problems in terms of military capacity caused by incompetence and favouritism. It would be sufficient to eradicate this [practice] in order to make room [for a different policy]. I am not asking for favours."[34]

More precisely, regarding Cemal Azmi Bey, Vehip Pasha argued in this telegram (apparently on the basis of information that Talaat Bey had provided him) that

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31 This telegram is cited in Greek translation by the Archimandrite Panaretos along with some other telegrams sent by the Third Army Commander to Laurence and a letter sent to the latter by the vali Cemal Azmi. Given their administrative character and their trivial content, we have no reason to doubt of their authenticity. *Ibid,* 196-197.

32 The first list, of 45 people, was said to have been put up in the market on January 13, 1917. Accordingly, the first group departed from the city three days later, on January 16, *infra*.

33 BOA.DH.ŞFR 543/112. Cipher telegram sent on 10 Kânûn-i sânî 332 / 23 January 1917 by the Third Army Comander Vehip Pasha to the Minister of the Interior Talaat Bey.

34 *Ibid.*

the affair concerned merely the public administration and was not a military matter. "Concerning the legal accusations on matters related to the duties of Cemal Azmi as a public servant", he wrote, "please! Neither I am aware of these [accusations] nor do I consider it necessary to ask for a detailed report on the matter". The Pasha repeated this argument in his final statement concerning Cemal Azmi in the same telegram: "although, from a military point of view, Cemal Azmi Bey does not deserve to be transferred, if his removal is owed to reasons that are related to the public administration I will not complain".

We thus conclude that the initial inquiry was neither ordered by the Third Army Commander nor by the Minister of the Interior, who even had unsuccessfully tried to make the former take the side of the vali. Actually the aforementioned telegram does not inform us who ordered the inquiry.

The Power to Displace

Anatomy of an Administrative Inquiry

As we read in a subsequent telegram, sent on March 4, 1917 by Cemal Azmi Bey to Talaat, who had by then become Grand Vizier and had been raised to the rank of Pasha, an investigation concerning the administration in Giresun was decreed by the former Grand Vizier, Sait Halim Pasha[35], putting Cemal Azmi Bey in "a very difficult position" (*pek müşkül bir mevḳide*)[36]. In the same telegram Cemal Azmi Bey mentions a "former head of the commission of inquiry", Rüştü Bey, a First Aide-de-Camp of the Army (*ordû ser-yâveri*), who "collected the seed of the intrigue while drinking glasses of alcohol in the Giresun Rum's houses."[37] However, in another telegram that he had sent a few days earlier to Talaat Pasha[38], Cemal Azmi Bey mentions the Colonel Alaeddin Bey as "the head of the inquiry commission sent by the Army, whose naivety the Rum took advantage of, partly succeeding in achieving their goal". More precisely, according to Cemal Azmi, "Alaeddin Bey announced to the headquarters of the [Third] Army that the complaints [of the Rum] were justified"[39].

Therefore, we may assume the existence of two different inquiries, the first being decreed by the Grand Vizier Sait Halim Pasha (sometime before January 23,

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35 Sait Halim Pasha was Grand Vizier from July 12, 1913 to February 2, 1917. He had been replaced by (Mehmet) Talaat Pasha, who occupied this post from February 4, 1917 to October 8, 1918.

36 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45. Cipher telegram sent on 4 Mart 1333/4 March 1917 by the vali of Trabzon Cemal Azmi Bey to the Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha.

37 *Ibid.*

38 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45. Cipher telegram sent on 1 Mart 1333/1 March 1917 by the vali of Trabzon Cemal Azmi Bey to the Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha.

39 *Ibid.*

1917) and the second ordered thereafter by Vehip Pasha. Although the two inquiries overlapped, they were different in scope: while the first concerned the functioning of public administration, the second was dealing with the complaints of Giresun's Romei regarding their displacement. Cemal Azmi was caught between a rock and a hard place, his policies being questioned both by the public and by the military authorities. He was personally offended and his career was at risk. But instead of trying to cope with the accusations, he turned more stubbornly against Giresun's Romei, whom he apparently considered being the main cause of his misfortune – as well as an easy scapegoat.

In a missive sent to Vehip Pasha, the vali contested the inquiry commission's report claiming that "Giresun Rum's intrigues and damnable acts have reached a point where they are setting the [bad] example for the Rum of the rest of the vilayet"[40]. Being forced to admit that "the evidence (*delâ'il*) assembled on this matter by the commission of inquiry does not confirm [his] opinion", he pretentiously stated that "the existence of political currents lacks material evidence". Cemal Azmi's line of argument was that "some individuals [among the displaced Rum] had gradually fled their place of exile and had found shelter among the Rum of Giresun."[41] He concluded by asserting that the displacement of the Rum of Ordu and Giresun was necessary for the sake of the army and by urging Vehip Pasha to carry out this displacement using military employees, if the public employees were not to be trusted[42].

Vehip Pasha's response being apparently negative, Cemal Azmi Bey decided to face the alleged threat related to Giresun's Rum by his own means. As recounted in the Patriarchate's *Black Book*: "After a certain number of successive surveys of the city's population, the vali contended that the 70 % of the [Greek] inhabitants were coming from places where the [Greek] population had already been displaced or was not recorded in the Giresun's registry office. He thus declared them strangers and ordered their departure from the city. In order to avoid this pitfall, an appeal had been made to General Vehip Pasha, who, in several occasions, had readily satisfied similar requests of the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Kerasus"[43].

This endeavour being prevented due to the collaboration of the Orthodox Metropolitan with the Third army commander, the vali became furious against the latter, whom he now perceived as his main adversary. The enmity of Cemal Azmi towards Vehip Pasha is reflected in the two telegrams that the former sent in early March to Talaat Pasha. Those two missives were sent when a new inspector of the Ministry of the Interior, Fuat Bey, arrived in Giresun to re-examine the

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40 ATASE 1888/326 F. 6 cited in Balcıoğlu, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı," 193, the date is not mentioned in the article.

41 *Ibid.*

42 *Ibid.*

43 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 236. A full account of this endeavor is given in the oral testimony of Ioannis Chrysopulos, ΚΜΣ, *Η Έξοδος Ε΄*, 123-127.

issue. This was probably an initiative of Talaat Pasha, who, occupying now the post of Grand Vizier, was willing to assist his protégé. In the first of the two telegrams, Cemal Azmi was arguing that the inquiry's result could not change if in the new inquiry commission Colonel Alaeddin Bey, the chief of the commission that had been sent by the Third Army, participated [44]. Therefore, the Ministry of the Interior should ask for the replacement of Alaeddin Bey with another military and "then it will be obvious that the affair had been a trickery intentionally prepared by the Rum so as to avoid to be displaced in the interior of the country."[45]

In the second telegram[46], a relatively long report on the "Giresun affair", Cemal Azmi Bey tried to turn the tables on Vehip Pasha, presenting the latter as the main responsible for the misgovernment in Giresun. The telegram begins as follows:

> "Let me first fully explain this unfortunate fact: the position adopted by His Excellency, Vehip Pasha, is rather that of a defender of Giresun's Rum and of their Metropolitan. The aforementioned [Vehip Pasha] is a cursed and disruptive man who submits all the official communications and the guaranties that are related to the salvation of the country and on which the spiritual strength of the government is based to the harmful judgements of the metropolitans. Hence, he modifies and cancels orders he had himself given. Thus the damage inflicted upon the public employees of Giresun is extremely important. I assure your excellency [the Great Vizier Talaat Pasha] that in Giresun the Rum show contempt for the local government and its employees"[47].

By this introduction, the vali set the stage for the justification of the administrative abuses he was held accountable for. His line of reasoning was that, due to the protection provided to the Giresun's Rum by Vehip Pasha, the abuses of the former had reached so critical a point that extraordinary measures were required. In Cemal Azmi's own words:

> "Your servant, with the intention to avoid further damage to the government's authority, I sent to Giresun, with proper pretexts, the Chief of the Police and the Gendarmerie Commander of the *vilayet*. But the Rum of Giresun spread abundant news and declarations regarding this Police Chief and this Gendarmerie Commander, claiming that 'they walk around secretly'; and the director of the journal *Envâr-iül-vicdân* (The Lights of Conscience) [published an article entitled] 'Are they around?' As a result of this statement the existing inquiry order was given from the Grand Vizier, putting your servant [Cemal Azmi Bey] in a very difficult position."[48]

Envâr-ı vicdân[49] was a weekly journal published in Trabzon since November 23, 1909[50]. After the occupation of Trabzon by the Russian Army on April 15-16,

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44 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45 Cipher telegram sent on 1 Mart 1333/1 March 1917.
45 *Ibid.*
46 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45 Cipher telegram sent on 4 Mart 1333/4 March 1917.
47 *Ibid.*
48 *Ibid.*
49 And not *Envâr-iül-vicdân*, as Cemal Azmi wrote.
50 Melek Öksüz, "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Trabzonda bir Şirketleşme Teşebbüsü: Envâr-ı Vicdan Kollektif Şirketi," *Karedeniz İncelemeleri Dergisi* 21(2016): 129.

1916 the publication of the journal continued in Giresun. Its director and owner was Nâkibü'l-eşrâf-zâde[51] Zeynelabidin Efendi[52], a respectable Muslim whose voice could be heard from people in the upper echelons of the state. *Envâr-ı vicdân* was a pious Muslim Journal whose director and staff were familiar with the political life of the *vilayet*. They were certainly not "puppets" of the Romei and if they opposed the illegal powers given to Cemal Azmi's collaborators, they did so on their own account. Therefore, the measures undertaken by the vali in order to restore "the authority of the local government" had met the opposition of both the city's Romei and of some Muslim notables. But Cemal Azmi minimised this aspect in his narrative, and attributed the, unfavourable to him, result of the inquiry to the Rum, the chief of the first commission Rüşdü Bey and to Vehip Pasha. Cemal Azmi accused Rüşdü Bey for the embezzlement of "thousands of liras belonging to the Nation". According to the vali, the inquiry's result was biased because Rüşdü Bey had been informed that the credit concerning the inquiry could not be issued if there was not any call before justice or detention. Rüşdü Bey thus called to appear before the inquiry commission in Giresun, "heads of public administration, honourable from every point of view and dedicated [to their duty], whose entire being had been devoted to the salvation of the Fatherland and of the Nation, because the Rum had wished this to happen. […] Besides, people were not called to appear before the aforementioned inquiry commission according to the crimes they had committed but, openly, according to their moral convictions."[53]

Moreover, according to a typical oratory strategy, the patriotism and the sense of honour of the "falsely accused" employees is juxtaposed with the corrupted morality of the first chief investigator, illustrated by the fact that he was drinking alcohol with the infidels:

> "As a result of such an inquiry, the First Aide-de-Camp of the Army [Rüşdü Bey], who collected the seed of the intrigue while drinking glasses of alcohol in the Giresun Rum's houses and Vehip Pasha, the inconstant, wrote to ask for the deposition of three respected employees whose [presence in Giresun] not only did not have any negative influence [on the government] but, on the contrary, served to restore the government's damaged honour and authority and who had never failed in their duty or compromised their honour and could have served for many more years the public administration and the Ottoman fatherland. Therefore, due to an affair that was planned and executed with art, the most respected and distinguished employees of the vilayet were not allowed to [suitably carry on their career]"[54].

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51 A *Nâkibü'l-eşrâf-zâde* is a descendant of a *Nâkibü'l-eşrâf, i.e.* an official chosen among the descendants of the Prophet Mohamed (the *şeyyid* and the *şerif*) in order to control theirs titles and their conduct. The office of *Nâkibü'l-eşrâf* have been abolished in the early 19th century.

52 Öksüz, "II. Meşrutiyet Trabzonda", 134.

53 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45 Cipher telegram sent on 4 Mart 1333/4 March 1917.

54 *Ibid.*

And this long telegram finishes by the wish "to discover the reasons why the aforementioned Commander [Vehip Pasha] does not defend the rights of the public employees as much as he defends those of the Rum"[55].

A Vali Versus an Army Commander in the Rear Front

The conflict between the vali and the army commander concerning the displacement of Giresun's Romei challenges the widespread conception of the state as an impersonal and uniform plotter of the displacements. Through this dispute the state appears divided in different power groups with conflicting interests. Moreover, in contradiction to the widespread idea that holds the Minister of the Interior Talaat Bey responsible for the displacements, we saw that this ministry and its employees (the vali, the *mutasarrıf*[56], the kaymakam etc.) had not the initiative in this matter. As for the notorious General Directorate for Tribes and Refugees, which has the reputation to be the architect of the displacements[57], it is proven to have played only a marginal role this time.

The General Directorate's representative in Giresun Midhat Bey was among the employees who had been accused for abuses during the first inquiry[58]. Oral testimonies report that Midhat Bey also tried to blackmail the Romei who were not recorded in the Giresun's registry office, threatening them with displacement. But this attempt was prevented by Vehip Pasha[59]. The power to enforce the Law of Displacement (*Tehcîr Kânûnu*) was clearly in the hands of the military command. Even an influential vali such as Cemal Azmi, a member of Union and Progress who had participated in the coup of the Sublime Porte (January 23, 1913), was powerless vis-à-vis the military commander of the Third Army – and Talaat Pasha was apparently sitting on the fence.

During the war, due to the martial law, the military dominated the greater part of the Ottoman territory. The displacement law was, among other things, a means for the military to extend its power to the public domain. In displacing civilians, the military commanders were applying on them mobility rules that were made for soldiers. In this way, the military was actually expanding its domain of action, *i.e.* the rear front, and was at the same time restraining the power of the public administration. On the other hand, the power to displace civilians, as if they were soldiers, was an extraordinary power, which the public administration could not use in peacetime. This extraordinary power was the very issue in dispute between the vali of Trabzon and the Third Army Commander. Additionally, the use of this

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55 *Ibid.*

56 *Mutaṣarrıf*: sub-governor, or governor of a *sanjak* (district).

57 *Cf.* Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği 1913-1918* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008), 178-182 and *passim*.

58 BOA.DH.KMS. 43/45. Cipher telegram sent on 1 Mart 1333/1 March 1917.

59 ΚΜΣ, *Η Έξοδος Ε΄*, 123-127.

extraordinary power ought to be justified by the claim that a part of the civilian population was treasonous or seditious, *i.e.* dangerous for the security of the front. The particular type of the politics of the rear front that interests us here entails the accusation for treason, espionage or sedition in order to discriminate against individuals or parts of the population and to convert this discrimination into an extraordinary power.

In the specific region and timespan that we examine, Vehip Pasha did everything to affirm that the power to displace civilians was a monopoly of the military. His own displacement orders were severe and discriminatory. Muslims were very rarely displaced, only in some villages situated within the operation zone. On the contrary, he ordered the displacement of the Romei living between the Melet Stream and the front line (the Harşit Stream), *i.e.* a zone of some 90 km long and 50 km wide that numbered roughly over 30.000 Romei. This population, unlike the Romei of the region of Samsun, had not displayed any guerrilla activity and was entirely peaceful. But their displacement gave to the Third Army headquarters a more extended power over the vilayets of Trabzon and Sivas. During these displacements, Vehip Pasha was asking from Talaat Bey the immediate removal of the vali of Sivas Ahmet Muammer Bey (Cankardeş) in the following terms: "Only, in the meantime […] to announce unambiguously to Muammer Bey that he will be rapidly sent away from here"[60]. As for Muammer Bey's successor, Vehip Pasha had chosen – apparently on Talaat Bey's suggestion – the deputy vali of Ankara Süleyman Necmi Bey (Selmen) whom he had met in Ankara and he "considered an honour to work with"[61]. Finally, Vehip Pasha wrote in the same telegram about the *mutasarrıf* of Tokat Mustafa Cevdet Bey: "And if the replacement of the *mutasarrıf* of Tokat with an active person is ordered I am not asking for more."[62]

Tellingly, all the requirements of the Third Army commander were immediately met by the Ministry of the Interior. On January 1917 Muammer Bey has been assigned to the vilayet of Konya[63] and on February 1917 Necmi Bey became vali of Sivas[64]. As for the *mutasarrıf* of Tokat, Mustafa Cevdet Bey, he exchanged positions (according to an Ottoman practice called *becâyiş*) on February 17, 1917 with the *Mutasarrıf* of Maraş, İsmail Kemal Bey (Alpsar)[65].

In short, Vehip Pasha was behaving as the actual head of the aforementioned provinces' administration. And his attitude was apparently justified in Talaat Bey's

60 BOA.DH.ŞFR 543/112.
61 *Ibid.*
62 *Ibid.*
63 Sinan Kuneralp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali (1839-1922). Prosopoprafik Rehber.* 2nd ed. (Istanbul: Isis, 2003), 58.
64 *Ibid.*, 122.
65 Kemalettın Kuzucu, "Ermeni Meselesi Yüzünden Görevden Alınan Sivas Valileri" in *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, dir. Bünyamin Kocaoğlu (Samsun: İlkadım Belediyesi, 2017), 708.

view. At that time, the provinces in question were marked by the footprints of the displaced Romei, for whose displacement and destination Vehip Pasha was the only one accountable. The same provinces were equally marked by the movement of the Muslim refugees, the *muhâcir* from the occupied provinces, whose installation and food supply would be taken on by Vehip Pasha as well[66]. Finally, on these provinces depended the Third Army's food supplies – we remember that the vali of Sivas Muammer Bey was blamed for having left the army starving, while Cemal Azmi was credited for having fed it. As far as the aforementioned matters were concerned, the public administration of these provinces started to receive instructions, not anymore from the Ministry of the Interior, but from the Third Army Command. The vali, the *mutasarrıf* and the kaymakam of these provinces became virtually employees of the Third Army. At the same time, due to Vehip Pasha's authoritative personality, the autonomy – and the authority – of these functionaries became very limited.

It is exactly the degree of autonomy – and that of the authority – of the heads of the public administration that was at stake in the dispute between Cemal Azmi and Vehip Pasha. Due to his experience as a member of the UP – and even as a putschist of January 23, 1913 – Cemal Azmi was used to acting freely and, sometimes, beyond the legal norms, as far as his activities did not contradict the will of the main UP leaders. A close collaborator of his, the Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Trapezus (Trabzon), wrote that the vali "was taking risks when dealing with the vilayet's issues and had imposed himself upon everybody, especially for the rapidity with which he was resolving all the matters"[67]. In other words, Cemal Azmi was a "man of action", a model public official in wartime, according to Vehip Pasha's conception (*supra*). This is why the pasha initially stated that, from a military point of view, Cemal Azmi Bey did not deserve to be removed. But the situation rapidly changed when Cemal Azmi decided to displace at any cost the Rum of Giresun. Neither the fact of being a "man of action" nor the one of "taking risks" was appreciated this time by Vehip Pasha, because now Cemal Azmi's actions were not subordinated to the army commander's authority. First, uninformed, or feigning a lack of information, Vehip Pasha did not wish to be involved in an inquiry concerning "Cemal Azmi's duties as a civil servant". But soon, probably when he realised that the aforementioned inquiry concerned the Giresun's Rum displacement, he also sent an inquiry commission in the field.

Displacement was a military matter by virtue of the displacement law. The inquiry opened by the General Directorate of the Police had the power to punish the responsible for the abuses. But only the Third Army Commander could put an end to the ongoing displacement. Thus the role of the commission sent by the

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66 BOA. DH.ŞFR 560/9. Cipher telegram sent on 20 Temuz 1333/20 July 1917 by Vehip Pasha to the Ministry of the Interior.

67 Χρύσανθος (Metropolitan of Trapezus), *Βιογραφικαὶ ἀναμνήσεις*, ed. Γεώργιος Τασούδης (Athens: privately printed, 1970), 97.

Third Army was crucial. Existing evidence points out that the first two lists of Romei posted in Giresun's market were just the beginning of a broader displacement scheme prepared by Cemal Azmi and by his men of confidence. Besides, this was implicitly avowed by Cemal Azmi when he was writing to Talaat Pasha that "then it will be obvious that the affair was a trickery intentionally prepared by the Rum so as to avoid to be displaced in the interior of the country" (*supra*).

In other words, Cemal Azmi Bey has been actively involved in the politics of the rear front concerning Giresun. In this field he met the opposition of the city's Romei notables and even of Muslim notables, who appealed to the high echelons of the Sultanate to denounce his illegal methods. More importantly, he met the opposition of the man who was locally accountable for the displacements by virtue of the law, the Third Army Commander. Instead of trying to cope with the latter's authority and intentions, the vali rushed headlong into the politics of the rear front. But, due to his opposition to the locally powerful Vehip pasha, all of his endeavours to displace the Giresun's Romei were doomed to failure. Finally, in a long telegram that he addressed to Talaat Pasha, in order to clear his name and this of his close collaborators, he offers us a fairly typical sample of the defamatory discourse that is characteristic of the politics of the rear. There, the vali accused Vehip Pasha of being a puppet of the Orthodox metropolitans, an implicit accusation of treason, which could ironically have been made about Cemal Azmi himself concerning his close relations with the Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Trapezus[68]. Indeed, when in Trabzon, Cemal Azmi Bey was on excellent terms with Chrysanthos and was even behaving, on the latter's advice, as a protector of the vilayet's Romei – what he was now accusing Vehip Pasha to be. Moreover, when he was leaving Trabzon, before the advancing Russian Army, Cemal Azmi had entrusted Chrysanthos with the city's temporary government. On that occasion, Chrysanthos recalls, Cemal Azmi pronounced the following grandiloquent words:

> "We took this city from the Greeks and we are giving it back to them. I have confidence in your [Chrysanthos'] prudence and judgement and I am sure that everything is going to get along very well and that you will protect the Muslims who are left behind in the same way as the Christians, with your renowned generosity and love."[69]

Thus the question arises of what caused Cemal Azmi's shift in attitude – and in the final analysis in politics – towards the Romei between Trabzon and Giresun. However our study is not prosopographical and, what is more, we do not consider the individuals as immutable moral agents, such as they usually aim to present themselves in their own writings and such as they are often presented in nationalist historiography. The inconsistence of Cemal Azmi's attitude vis-à-vis the Romei is not in itself surprising. According to his friend, the Metropolitan Chrysanthos,

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68 *Cf.* Sigalas, "Occupation de Trébizonde".

69 Χρύσανθος , *Ἀναμνήσεις*, 126-127.

Cemal Azmi was not a Young-Turk ideologist, but someone who was giving priority to his career (*infra*). If the vali had focused on the Romei of Giresun the reason needs to be searched rather in the specific circumstances in that city – not necessarily among the city's Romei – than in Cemal Azmi's beliefs, intentions or character. What interest us here is to find out why Giresun became, after the fall of Trabzon to the Russians (April 18, 1916), more appropriate for the politics of the rear front against the Romei than Trabzon had been before. In other words, behind the discontinuities of individual attitudes we seek for the continuities and shifts in politics and for their sociohistorical context. There is evidence that tension had grown between local Muslims and Romei in Giresun in the summer of 1916, immediately after the fall of Trabzon to the Russians. On this period we will focus in the following section.

Flashback: Giresun Becoming a City of the Rear-Front

According to the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Giresun, Lavrentios, after the fall of Trabzon, Cemal Azmi had spent some time in Giresun, before departing for Ordu, his new headquarters. Before this departure "the vali ordered the kaymakam to obey the instructions of Ömer Efendi [Ali Hacı Hafizzade], a man in his confidence – as the kaymakam Reşid Bey himself confessed, being later pursued by the vali because he disobeyed this order"[70]. Ali Hacı Hafizzade Ömer Efendi was a Muslim merchant from Trabzon who had settled then temporarily in Giresun together with his brother Hakkı Efendi[71]. We remember that, in another occasion, Cemal Azmi avowed to Talaat Pasha that, in order to take in hand the city of Giresun he sent there, "with proper pretexts" (*münâsib bahânelerle*), the Chief of the Police and the Gendarmerie Commander of the vilayet. The two narratives have an intersection point: they show that the vali used to bypass the public administration by conveying illegal authority to his men of confidence. The "shadow government" formed by Ömer Efendi and his Brother Hakkı Efendi is held responsible for the abuses against some of the wealthiest Orthodox merchants[72]. These episodes occur in the summer of 1916, when, because of its geographical position, Giresun becomes an important city of the rear-front. From then on this city is subjected to the politics of the rear, which become exceptionally intense and eventually very profitable, for certain people.

With the establishment of a new frontline at the Harşit Stream, Giresun became the main city of this part of the rear front. The forces holding this part of the front were mainly militias: the remains of the militias of the Special Organisation (*Teşki-*

70 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 251.
71 Τοπαλίδης, *Ὁ Πόντος*, 193.
72 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 250-253 and Τοπαλίδης, *Ὁ Πόντος*, 193.

lat-ı Mahsusa), which had moved towards Batumi at the beginning of the war[73], as well as new militias recruited by Ahmet Avni Pasha and (Pirselimoğlu) Hacı Hamdi Bey in 1916 among the clans of the valleys of Of, Sürmene and Tonya[74]. These irregular forces, which were then officially forming the 37th Army Division, had a very strong propensity for desertion. Hence other irregulars were employed by their commander, Hacı Hamdi Bey, to bring the deserters back by force. To these deserter-hunters belonged Topal Osman, a guerrilla leader from Giresun, who had already started to be renowned for the cruelty of his methods.

Born in Giresun around 1883, Osman was a son of Feridunzade Hacı Mehmet, a local merchant, specialised in hazelnut trade between Ottoman and Russian Black Sea ports. Before the war Osman undertook different professions. He first worked as a boatman, then was involved in hazelnut trade, bought a *kahvehane* (coffee shop) in Giresun's port and became partner, together with his father-in-law, in a big sawmill founded by local Romei[75]. During the Second Balkan War, although his father had paid the *bedel* (exemption fee) of 45 golden liras, Osman had joined a volunteer's unity together with some 65 men from Giresun. He was then wounded in the right leg and remained lame, thus earning the nickname "Topal" (the lame)[76]. During the last months of 1914 he headed a local militia that was sent to participate into the unfortunate attempt of the Ottoman Special Organisation to occupy Batumi[77]. The unique available account of Topal Osman's brief presence in this front is very derogatory concerning his military qualities and courage[78]. During the war, aside from being a guerrilla leader, Topal Osman, as well as his antagonist Kâtib Ahmed, turned out to be a sort of urban gang leader, doing business in the city market and making money out of protection rackets and blackmail[79]. These two activities became very profitable in Giresun after the fall of Trabzon and the establishment of the Harşit front, mostly insofar as the Romei – more vulnerable to blackmail and therefore more in need of protection – were concerned. According to Ahmet Kemal Bey[80], the kaymakam who replaced Reşid Bey, as well as to some Giresun's Romei[81], Topal Osman, who was used to make money off Romei's vulnerability, was even transporting the latter clandestinely in Russia with his boats in exchange of important fees.

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73 Sigalas, "La *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* ", 154.
74 Sigalas, "Occupation de Trébizonde ".
75 Süleyman Beyoğlu, *Milli Mücadele Kahramanı Giresunlu Osman Ağa* (Istanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2009), 27-28.
76 *Ibid.*, 28.
77 Sigalas, "La *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*", 144-148.
78 Arif Cemil, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, (Istanbul: Arma, 2004), 168-174.
79 Concerning the antagonism between the gangs of Topal Osman and Kâtib (or Cancı) Ahmet in Giresun see ΚΜΣ, *Η΄Εξοδος Ε΄*, 78, 123 and 144.
80 Ahmet Kemal Varınca, "Topal Osmanın Giresun Macerası", *Meydan Mecmuası* 61, March 15, 1966, and Ahmet Kemal Varınca, "Topal Osmanın Giresun Macerası", *Meydan Mecmuası* 62, March 22, 1966.
81 *Cf.* ΚΜΣ, *Η΄Εξοδος Ε΄*, 134.

Topal Osman's actions in the summer of 1916 are recounted in some documents from the Turkish military archives summarised in an article by Mustafa Balcıoğlu[82]. According to Balcıoğlu's account, in June 1916 Topal Osman arrested a group of Rum spies, whom he delivered to the costal forces (the 37th Division). However, the methods used by Topal Osman during these arrests embarrassed the public administration: the vali of Trabzon and the *Mutasarrıf* (*sic.* for kaymakam[83]) of Giresun, who, irritated by the interference of Topal Osman in the local government's affairs and by the protection provided to him by the 37th Division, appealed to the Third Army Commander, asking for the removal of this person from Giresun. Topal Osman was subsequently summoned to appear before the military court of Sivas. Although Hacı Hamdi Bey attempted to avoid a court-martial, the Third Army headquarters did not change their decision and Topal Osman was finally tried on August 25, 1916 and stayed for some time (possibly 8 months[84]) in prison.

The same events are recounted in a different way in a letter of the Metropolitan Lavrentios, signed on December 15/28, 1916. According to Lavrentios, "a certain number of crooks of the committee [CUP], without the presence of any representative of the authorities, broke into the house of Iordanis Sourmelis, an honourable man and a rich merchant, and after having beaten him mercilessly, imprisoned him, together with four fugitives arrested in a small boat, accusing him of collusion with spies who had come from Russia and who, on the night of his arrest, were trying to go back to Trabzon using the shore near his house"[85]. Some days later "another respectable merchant was arrested, charged of preparing the escape to Russia of two Armenian doctors serving in the military hospital of the city". After spending two months in custody in Tirebolu and two further months waiting for the court-martial in Ordu, the two merchants were acquitted as the four fugitives confirmed "that they did absolutely not know them and that they slandered them only because they were beaten and intimidated"[86]. According again to Lavrentios, a third Merchant, Ioannis Deligiorgis, was brutally arrested a few days later by a gang of 150 men. Accused as well of espionage, Deligiorgis was brought to Tirebolu, where he died in custody from fear and exhaustion. Hacı Hamdi Bey, who examined this case, wrote a letter of sympathy to Deligiorgis' widow, inform-

82 ATASE 1888/362 F. 41 and 43 cited in Balcıoğlu, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı", 194.

83 Giresun was not the center of a *sancak* (district) but only of a *kaza*, therefore a *Mutasarrıf* of Giresun did not exist. The official in question was most likely the Kaymakam of Giresun Reşid Bey.

84 As reported by Ahmet Kemal Bey (Varınca), "Topal Osmanın Giresun Macerası", *Meydan Mecmuası* 61, March 15, 1966, 24, who succeeded to Reşid Bey as kaymakam of Giresun on February 7, 1917 (DH.ŞF 72/175, Cipher telegram sent on this date by the Direction of Staff of the Ministry of the Interior to the vali of Trabzon).

85 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 251.

86 *Ibid.*

ing her "of the total innocence of her husband", who had been a "victim of calumny", and "expressing his regret for his unjust death"[87].

These three merchants and the four "fugitives" may have been the "group of Rum spies" who were "arrested" by Topal Osman, according to Mustafa Balcıoğlu. As for the beatings and the intimidations reported by the Metropolitan Lavrentios, these must had been the "methods" on the ground of which Topal Osman was summoned to the court-martial of Sivas and stayed for a short time in prison. Unfortunately, the article of Mustafa Balcıoğlu lacks contextualisation and does not inform us sufficiently concerning the complaints that were made against Topal Osman.

As for the Metropolitan Lavrentios, he does not mention Topal Osman with respect to this affair. On the contrary he blames Ömer Efendi (Ali Hacı Hafızzade), the merchant from Trabzon who was dictating these politics to the kaymakam, as well as the local UP club (of which Topal Osman had allegedly been a member[88]) and more particularly the merchant Sarı Mahmudzade Eşref Efendi, an influential member of the club. The latter would have prepared "a list of 17 among the most respected and the wealthiest Greek merchants, who were to be arrested and to be exiled in the interior [*i.e.* far from the coast] because they were supposed to be dangerous for the security of the country!"[89] The metropolitan also refers to a dispute between the vali Cemal Azmi and the kaymakam of Giresun Reşid Bey, who "being ashamed by the unjust death of Mr Deligiorgis and given the absence of the slightest incriminating evidence against the rest of the enlisted merchants, categorically refused to arrest them. He thus fell into disfavour with the vali who removed him from office, replacing him with Nihat Bey"[90].

In view of Lavrentios's account, Topal Osman (whom the Metropolitan does not mention in this respect) appears to have played a rather minor role in this undertaking against the elite of the city's Romei. For, after Ioannis Deligiorgis' death – which had most likely caused the "over-zealous" guerrilla being court-martialled – the men of confidence of the vali tried to carry on with the arrest of other Romei merchants (the other members of the list). Then the kaymakam Reşid Bey refused to obey their instructions, entering into conflict with the vali.

This scenario seems to be corroborated by the fact that an administrative investigation was opened in autumn 1916 concerning the administration of Giresun. The investigation was still ongoing in the last days of November, when Cemal Azmi Bey wrote to the Ministry of the Interior to ask for the appointment of a new kaymakam in Giresun. The Ministry replied that such an appointment could not take place for the moment, because the inquiry was not finished and Reşid

87 *Ibid.*, 252.
88 As it is stated in some of Osman's biographies.
89 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 253.
90 *Ibid.*, 253.

Bey was still formally the kaymakam of Giresun; accordingly the *kaza* had to be governed by an acting kaymakam[91].

We certainly lack the necessary archival evidence to conclude on this affair. The abovementioned sources indicate however that in the summer of 1916, during the establishment of the Harşit front, local Muslims got increasingly involved in the politics of the rear. Apparently, the "shadow administration" established by Cemal Azmi Bey was crucial in this respect. The merchant from Trabzon whom the vali used in order to by-pass the kaymakam seems to have acted in collusion with the UP club, local merchants and gang leaders, all together targeting the city's wealthiest Romei merchants, on the pretext of the security of the front. The inquiry of autumn 1916, which put an end to the presence of the kaymakam Reşid Bey in Giresun, suspended these politics. They resumed however in January 1917, when the two successive lists of wealthy Romei were displayed in the market. The idea that the wealthiest merchants of Giresun were spies was aberrant in itself, but the resentment of the Muslim merchants forming the local UP club against the Romei merchants was typical of the social/ideological structure of Turkish nationalism, especially with regard to its relation to Greek nationalism.

Sociohistorical Background: Economy and Nationalism

We consider that the origin of the opposition between the two socio-cultural groups is to be found in the role played by the commercial capital in the development of nationalism. Since the second half of the 18th century, the intense activity of the Orthodox merchants had been a vector of cultural and linguistic hellenisation among different categories of the Romei living in the Ottoman Empire and in small commercial colonies abroad. In this very context, Greek nationalism was born[92]. In a subsequent phase, in the mid-19th century, the hellenising impact of the Orthodox commercial capital was brought into the centre of a new concept of nationalist theory and action: "Hellenism" (Ἑλληνισμός). "Hellenism" was represented as a historical force, which, due to its "mission to civilise the East", was deemed to proceed to the economic and cultural "conquest" of the Ottoman Em-

91 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 70/156. Cipher telegram sent on 5 Ṣafer 1335/26 November 1916 by the Direction of Staff (*Memurin Müdüriyeti*) of the Ministry of the Interior to the vali of Trabzon. The inquiry came probably to an end by the beginning of February 1917, as we understand from the fact that on February 7 Reşid Bey had finally exchanged positions (*becâyiş*) with Kemal Ahmet (Varınca), who was until then kaymakam of Boyabad (a *kaza* in the *sancak* of Sinop). BOA. DH.ŞFR. 72/175. Cipher telegram sent on this date by the Direction of Staff of the Ministry of the Interior to the Vali of Trabzon.

92 Leften Stavros Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (Hinsdale: Drysen Press, 1958), 274-279 and Nikos Sigalas, "Nationalisme," in *Dictionnaire de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. F. Georgeon *et al.* (Paris: Fayard, 2015), 855.

pire[93]. This financial-cultural utopia, of colonial inspiration, lays at the nucleus of the Modern Greek concept of Hellenism, which shifted from its ancient Greek homonym (and from its modern translations in Western European languages) in order to become both the cohesive thread of the Modern Greek national historiography and the main strategy of identification proposed by Greek nationalism[94]. In other words, Modern Greek "Hellenism" became the common denominator of the cultural universe of a literate orthodox bourgeoisie living in the commercial ports and the main urban centres of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. Nationalist ideology was giving coherence to this bourgeois community, which was, by the mid-19th century, increasingly emancipated culturally from the Ottoman Romei's traditional kinship structures[95].

Interestingly, "Hellenism", as a set of nationalist discourses and practices, was not subjected to serious criticism by Muslim Ottoman writers and journalists (contrary, for instance, to the Bulgarian ones) throughout the Hamidian era. The concept and its promoters started to be criticised during the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918) – when fierce parliamentary debates and their follow-up in the press gave rise to debates concerning the different populations' devotion and/or disloyalty to "Ottomanism" (*ʿOs̲mânlılık*: the common nationality of all Ottoman subjects). These criticisms, which first concerned the Patriarchate of Constantinople's rights over the Orthodox churches and schools[96], are epitomised in the retrospective statement of Talaat Pasha that "the idea of Ottomanism (*ʿOs̲mânlılık*) was dangerous for Hellenism"[97].

Ultimately, after the Balkan Wars, criticism became focused on the link between the Orthodox commercial capital and Greek nationalism, and, more precisely on some alleged Rum contributions to the Greek war effort (*e.g.* the armored cruiser Averof, bought in part due to the bequest of Georgios Averof, an Ottoman subject), which were considered to be a betrayal of "Ottomanism". The alleged treason justified the application of politics against the Rum subjects of the Empire that had been previously applied merely against foreign enemies (Austria-Hungary, in 1908, and Greece, since 1909), such as financial boycott or "economic war" (*ḥarb-i*

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93 Sigalas, "Ελληνισμός και εξελληνισμός," 51-55, Σπύρος Καράβας, *'Μακάριοι οι Κατέχοντες την γην'. Γαιοκτητικοί σχεδιασμοί προς απαλλοτρίωση συνειδήσεων στη Μακεδονία 1880-1909* (Athens: Βιβλιόραμα, 2010) and Sigalas, "Occupation de Trébizonde ".

94 Nikos Sigalas, "Hellénistes, hellénisme et idéologie nationale," in *L'antiquité grecque au XIX^e siècle: un* exemplum *contesté?*, ed. Ch. Avlami (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000) and Sigalas, "Ελληνισμός και εξελληνισμός".

95 Concerning the rather "Victorian" way of life and moralities of this society *cf.* Χάρης Εξερτζόγλου, *Οι 'χαμένες πατρίδες' πέρα από τη νοσταλγία: Μια κοινωνική-πολιτισμική ιστορία των Ρωμιών της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας (μέσα 19ου - αρχές 20ού αιώνα)* (Athens: Νεφέλη, 2010).

96 These questions were crucial in the frame of the confrontation between the Greek and the Bulgarian nationalism in Macedonia *cf.* Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, *İttihat-Terakki ve Rumlar 1908-1914*, (Istanbul: Libra Kitap, 2009), 187-240.

97 Hüseyin Cahit Yalcın, ed., *Talat Paşanın Hatıratı*, Istanbul: Yedigün Haber Ajansı, 1998, 15.

iḳtiṣâdî), an expression used in the Ottoman press[98]. This was a decisive moment for the Young-Turk political movement: by turning the "financial war" to the interior of the country, against the Romei merchants and businessmen, the Young-Turks and their partisans were betraying, in turn, "Ottomanism". They were also identifying as enemies a specific category of Ottoman subjects, the Romei merchants, making of them a potentially vulnerable group.

Throughout the 19th century, the Romei merchants and bankers, together with the Armenian and the Jewish ones, had mastered the process of integration of the Ottoman economy into the world economy[99]. The protection of the Christian powers, the *Tanzimat* reforms, as well as their own financial influence had for a long time shielded the non-Muslim merchants against the envy of the "losers of this process"[100], the Muslim merchants, who in 1913-14 "constituted the social base of the protest movements against non-Muslim communities"[101]. Although neglected by the majority of Ottoman economic historians, Muslim merchants have been an important social group throughout the 19th century. While non-Muslim merchants were the undeniable masters of foreign trade, the major part of the trade between the Anatolian heartland and the commercial ports had been in the hands of Muslim merchants[102]. The latter were people who could read and write, making up part of the provincial nobility (*eşrâf*) and were particularly active, together with some lineage chiefs[103], in benefaction activities as well as in the frame of political and patriotic organisations. In contrast to the non-Muslim merchants – as well as to the Muslim state officials – the Anatolian Muslim merchants had not adopted a bourgeois way of life, but were committed to more traditional Ottoman-Islamic customs. Thus Muslim and non-Muslim merchants were both economically and culturally opposed. In a city such as Trabzon, where foreign trade had grown spectacularly since the mid-19th century, the Muslim merchants were sending collective grievance letters to the government denounc-

98 Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, *İttihat-Terakki ve Rumlar*, 291, 295 and Doğan Çetinkaya, *Muslim Merchants and Working Class in Action: Nationalism, Social Mobilisazation and Boycott Movement in the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914* (PhD diss. Leiden University, 2010), *passim*.

99 Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 73-84, Reşat Kasaba, "Economic Foundations of a Civil Society: Greeks in the Trade of Western Anatolia, 1840-1876," in *Ottoman Greeks*, ed. D. Gondicas and Ch. Issawi and Haris Exertzoglou, «Investments and Investment Behaviour in the Ottoman Empire: the development of a Greek-Ottoman Bourgoisie,1850-1914», in in *Ottoman Greeks*, ed. D. Gondicas and Ch. Issawi.

100 According to the expression of Çetinkaya, *Muslim Merchants*, 20.

101 *Ibid.*, 26.

102 *Ibid.*, 29-30 where the author draws on work by Donald Quataert ("The Age of Reforms 1812-1914," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)) and Kemal Karpat (*The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 91-94).

103 *Cf.* Michael Meeker, *A Nation of Empire. The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2001), 282 and *passim*.

ing the arrogance of their non-Muslim fellows[104]. But the long lasting resentment of the Muslim merchants against the non-Muslim ones was not sufficient to mobilise the former during the 1913-14 boycotts in the Black Sea coast. According to the Metropolitan of Trapezus Chrysanthos, in 1913-1914:

> "The Young-Turk Committee tried to proclaim an economic boycott against the [Black Sea] Hellenes but it was opposed by the Turkish merchants, who said that 'we have [financial] obligations towards the Greek bankers – *i.e.* the Brothers Kapayannidis, the Brothers Phostiropoulos and Theophilaktos, all based in Trabzon – and if they take revenge on us it will be impossible to work'. These three banks and the related commercial houses dominated the whole Pontus region, from Rize to Sinop and from Trabzon to Erzurum and Bayburt"[105].

It seems that, despite the anti-Rum protests of 1913-1914, the non-Muslim capitalists of the Black Sea coast conserved their dominant position, both because the Muslim merchants did not respond to the boycott appeal of the UP and because the UP was not giving priority to the anti-Rum boycott in this part of the Empire. That the vilayet of Trabzon was spared by the 1914 anti-Rum boycott is indirectly confirmed by Doğan Çetinkaya's comprehensive study. This study includes considerable information concerning the boycott of Austrian (1908) and Hellenic (1910-1911) products both in Trabzon and in Giresun[106]. Yet, with the sole exception of the town of Rize (*infra*), the whole vilayet of Trabzon is absent from the section of Çetinkaya's study where the anti-Rum boycott of 1914 is discussed[107]. The 1914 anti-Rum boycott was widespread, on the contrary, in the neighbouring independent *sancak* of Canik[108].

Although we fully agree with Doğan Çetinkaya that nationalism cannot be studied only through state action and that social mobilisation needs to be taken into account, the role of a political party such as the UP in the 1913-1914 anti-Rum boycotts is too important to be neglected. Çetinkaya himself admits that "the state and the Committee Union and Progress had a much more active role in the Boycott Movement after the Balkan Wars"[109], but he does not draw conclusions from this observation. On the Aegean coast the anti-Rum boycotts were followed by anti-Rum pogroms, which caused the migration of over 100.000 people[110]. The UP acted in this case through its provincial organisation: the "respon-

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104 A. *Üner Turgay*, "*Trade* and *Merchants* in *Nineteenth-Century Trazbon*: *Elements* of *Ethnic Conflict*," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. B. Braude and B. Lewis, vol. 1 (New York & London: Holme and Meier, 1982), 299-301.

105 Χρύσανθος , *Ἀναμνήσεις*, 87.

106 Çetinkaya, *Muslim Merchants*, 60, 76, 91, 118, 128, 144, 168, 173-175, 180-182 and 186-187.

107 *Ibid.*, 189-236.

108 *Ibid.*, 299.

109 *Ibid.*, 159.

110 130,000 people according to Celal Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım: Milli Mücadele'ye Giriş*, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1967), 1568. *Cf.* Taner Akçam, *From Empire to Republic. Turkish Nationalism & the Armenian Genocide* (London-New York: Zed Books, 2004), 143-149, Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity. The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic*

sible secretaries" or "responsible representatives" (respectively: *kâtib-i mes'ûl* or *murahhaṣ-ı mes'ûl*)[111]. This time as well, some Muslim entrepreneurs, members of the local UP clubs, seem to have participated in the organisation of the events[112]. But the role of the UP provincial organisation members, these predecessors of the Soviet commissaries, who were meant to control the official provincial administration, was determinant. Of equal importance has been the participation in the pogroms of Kuşçubaşı Eşref Bey, a *fedai*[113] of UP who was at the same time Enver Pasha's political client[114]. Then again, public administration members also had their say in the process, as for instance the vali of Aydın Mustafa Rahmi Bey, who reportedly opposed the responsible secretary of the vilayet Celal Bayar during the organisation of the anti-Rum pogroms in the vilayet of Aydın[115]. Rahmi Bey was an influential member of the post-1913 UP and it was apparently difficult for him to accept the instructions of a "responsible secretary". Responsible secretaries' function is summarised as follows by Eşref Kuşçubaşı:

> "It was rather impossible to find among the civil servants resolute and brave officials having understood the ideals and objectives of the power [the UP] and, especially, being able to give to the country the new breath of life that it needed. For this reason the responsible secretaries were given even more importance. The General Centre [of UP] had pinned on them all its hopes that the state will recover from its illness owing to the recent [political] changes"[116].

Conclusion: Complicity as a modus operandi

We actually need to cease thinking of both the Ottoman society and the state as a block. The UP, each of its different factions, as well as the public administration, the army, people belonging to different social groups had their share of power.

Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2012, 67-94, Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, 191-216 and Emre Erol, *The Ottoman Crisis in Western Anatolia: Turkey's Belle Epoque and the Transition to a Modern Nation State* (London-New York: I.B. Tauris), 2016, 194-230.

111 Halil Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi Reisi Halil Menteşenin Anıları* (Istanbul: Hüriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1986), 166 and Celal Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, 1579.

112 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 198.

113 *Fedā'ī*: this Persian word (of Arabic origin), which means literally a person who scarifies himself, became part of the political vocabulary in the Middle East, Transcaucasia and the Balkans after the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1907. It was then adopted by both the Armenian Revolutionaries and the Young-Turks, who used it in a slightly different sense. For the latter a *fedai* was a political activist, entrusted with missions such as the assassination of political opponents and guerrilla activities.

114 Nurdoğan Taçalan, *Ege'de Kurtuluş Savaşı Başlarken* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1971), 70-72 and Çetinkaya, *Muslim Merchants*, 210-211.

115 This interesting allegation appears in the part of a manuscript of Kuşçubaşı Eşref that Celal Bayar reproduces without commentary in his political biography (Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, 1581-1582). The reported facts are therefore somehow confirmed by the latter.

116 Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım*, 1579.

Their historical agency was subjected to certain limits: in order to act, each one of them needed the collaboration, or at least the tolerance, of some of the others. Especially in the post 1913 period, due to a great uncertainty concerning what was really permitted, people belonging to – or representing – the different groups of the Ottoman state and society could not undertake political initiatives without the agreement, or the tolerance, of those belonging to some other groups. Complicity was the *modus operandi* by default of this regime, from the top level of the triumvirate Talaat-Enver-Djemal to party-society relations and, even, to the relations between the different social groups. And nationalism, in its increasingly radicalised form, became the principal form of legitimation of this unavoidable *modus operandi*.

As a matter of fact, an agreement, among, let us say, the leading Muslim merchants, the UP's provincial organisation and the head of the local administration to boycott the Rum merchants of the vilayet of Trabzon was not reached before the war. The only exception occurred in the town of Rize, where the small commercial community of Romei had been asphyxiated by the boycott. According to the Metropolitan Lavrentios, the boycott in Rize was organised by Cemal Azmi Bey, who was then the kaymakam of the *kaza* of Rize[117] and was on bad terms with the vali of Trabzon, Samih Rıfat (Yalnızgil)[118]. Lavrentios's account is confirmed by a telegram sent to Cemal Azmi Bey by the Minister of the interior on July, 2 1914, according to which "the guards of the Régie [119] and public officers had taken part in the picketing of Greek [Rum] stores"[120].

As previously mentioned, Cemal Azmi's attitude towards the Romei was characterised by a remarkable lack of coherence. According to the Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Trapezus, Cemal Azmi "was in essence an 'Old-Turk' [παλαιότουρκος: attached to the Empire's traditional principles] who became a Young-Turk, because only as such he could prevail and act"[121]. Cemal Azmi Bey was in effect a committed member of the UP, always eager to prove his loyalty to the committee's leadership. This commitment made of him the meticulous organiser of the slaughter of Trabzon's Armenians[122]. But at the same time, once in Trabzon, due probably to the advice, and even to the influence of Chrysanthos, Cemal Azmi Bey opted for protective politics towards the Romei of the vilayet[123]. The genocide of the Armenians had implicitly undermined the position of the Romei of the vilayet, that of the Romei merchants in particular, who started to become slandered and blackmailed. On July 28, 1915 the Ministry of the Interior was writing to the vali that

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117 Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη βίβλος*, 250.
118 Χρύσανθος, *Ἀναμνήσεις*, 91.
119 Régie des Tabacs: the tobacco monopoly.
120 Quoted by Çetinkaya, *Muslim Merchants*, 229.
121 Χρύσανθος, *Ἀναμνήσεις*, 92.
122 Raymond Kévorkian, *Le Génocide des Arméniens* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 2006), 584-613.
123 Sigalas, "Occupation de Trébizonde".

Abdurrahman Bey, the employee who was collecting the military service exemption fee (*iʿâne-i ʿaskeriye*), was alleged to have attempted extorting the immense sum of 15.000 liras from each one of the wealthy Rum Bankers of Trabzon: Phostiropoulos, Kapayannidis[124] and the two brothers Theofylaktos. According to the same information, when the aforementioned businessmen refused to pay, Kapayannidis was arrested, accused of being a spy for Britain[125].

Thus, during the days that the Armenians were deported and massacred, the government was to a certain extent providing legal protection to its Rum subjects. Due to this protection and the good cooperation between the vali and Metropolitan Chrysanthos, the Romei of the vilayet of Trabzon had been *grosso modo* safeguarded against great calamities until the Russian occupation of Trabzon and the establishment of the Harşit front, in the summer of 1916.

From the moment that Cemal Azmi was forced to depart from Trabzon, his attitude toward the vilayet's Romei was modified. Without Chrysanthos at his side, and being on bad terms with Lavrentios, the Metropolitan of Chaldea and Kerasus, he endorses – or simply tolerates – politics of discrimination and expropriation of Giresun's wealthy Romei merchants, which stem from the pre-war boycott mobilisations. This policy was pursued conjunctly by members of different groups: some among the local Muslim merchants, who were at same time members of the local UP club, the Trabzon Merchants that Cemal Azmi entrusted with the surveillance of the *kaza*'s administration and local gangs. All were encouraged to do so having in mind the expropriation of the deported and massacred Armenians, as well as the opportunities for profit offered by the war economy, an "economy of Turkification" for some, of monopolies, for others[126]. To illustrate how much the people in question were engaged in war economy, it is sufficient to say that, according to the kaymakam Ahmet Kemal[127], Topal Osman made a fortune from his association with the commander of the Harşit front, Hacı Hamdi Bey, in the hazelnut trade[128], whereas the commander of the Third Army, Vehip Pasha, bought the Beşgöz flour factory, in Havza (*sancak* of Canik)[129], at a time when the flour monopoly was an important subject of controversy between the army and powerful civilian members of the UP's General Centre[130]. Finally, these politics of discrimination and expropriation have been favoured by the proximity of the warfront and of the ensuing relevance of the

124 Miswritten as "Pâpâyanîdis".

125 DH.ŞFR. 54A/158. Cipher telegram sent on 15 Temuz 331/28 July 1915 by the Ministry of the Interior to the vali of Trabzon.

126 *Cf.* Mustafa Ragıb Esatlı, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin son günleri. Suikastlar ve Entrikalar* (Istanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2007), 77-166 and *passim*.

127 Who replaced Reşid Bey as kaymakam of Giresun see *supra*.

128 Ahmet Kemal Varınca, "Topal Osman'ın Giresun Macerası", *Meydan Mecmuası* 62, March15 1966, 24.

129 BEO.DH.KMS 48/48.

130 Esatlı, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin*, 92-139.

discourses and practices that we called the politics of the rear, in the frame of which discrimination against a given group was common practice.

We saw that Cemal Azmi Bey and his men of confidence were sanctioning these discourses and practices. The people that they first tried to displace from Giresun (the over 200 people contained in the two lists put up in the city market) were among the wealthiest Romei, considered as suspects for the security of the front. The first attempt of displacement having been prevented, Cemal Azmi Bey wrote to Vehip pasha that the Romei of Giresun should be displaced because they were seriously threatening the security of the front and he maintained this claim until March 1917, when the issue was about to be re-examined by a new inspector (*supra*). In other words, after the fall of Trabzon (April 18, 1916), Cemal Azmi stubbornly endorsed a certain form of politics of the rear. Therein he met the opposition of the kaymakam Reşid Bey, who seemed to have been annoyed by the legal abuses arising from the politics in question. But the kaymakam was not a serious adversary for the vali, who succeeded in getting rid of Reşid Bey by "exchanging" him with Ahmet Kemal Bey. More importantly, his choice to get involved in the politics of the rear gradually brought Cemal Azmi into a head-on confrontation with the man who was jealously guarding the monopoly of these politics: Vehip Pasha.

Cemal Azmi's conflict with the Third Army Commander escalated during the first half of 1917. We do not know what the result of the "new" inquiry about the "Giresun's administration issue" (mentioned in the telegram that Cemal Azmi sent to Talaat Pasha in March 1917) has been. In any case, the active career of Cemal Azmi as vali came abruptly to an end a few months later. On July 26, 1917, the three non-occupied *kaza*s of Trabzon's vilayet (Tirebolu, Giresun and Ordu) were annexed to the independent (*i.e.* not belonging to any vilayet) *sancak* of Canik[131]. Therefore the existence of the vilayet of Trabzon remained only nominal and Cemal Azmi Bey was not given a new administrative post until the end of the war.

By this administrative act the new *mutasarrıf* of Canik, Mehmet Raşid Bey was entrusted with the administration of a vast rear region, including an important population of Romei. Moreover, Mehmet Raşid Bey was asked to pacify the regions of Bafra and Samsun, where particularly ruthless politics of the rear front had been applied during the first half of 1916. Responsible for these politics were the previous *mutasarrıf* of Canik Kemal Bey, the army commander Refet (Bele) and the infamous Bahaeddin Şakir Bey, who had been especially sent there as responsible for the displacements on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior. In a long letter sent on May 12, 1917 to Talaat Bey, Bahaeddin Şakir confirms all the deeds attributed to this triad in the *Black Book* of the Patriarchate: the displace-

[131] Rıza Karagöz, "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Canik Sancağında İdari Yapılanma", in *Geçmişten Geleceğe Samsun*, ed. Cevdet Yılmaz (Samsun: Samsun Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2006), 1: 77-78.

ment of over 20.000 people and the burning of several villages, even though they had been deserted by their inhabitants[132].

The lot of the Romei of the *sancak* (district) of Canik is the topic of a different study. There the Ottoman administration had to face a seditious guerrilla activity, which needs also to be taken into account. This was absolutely not the case of the *kaza*s of Tirebolu, Giresun and Ordu, where the Romei's propensity to sedition was only imagined. Yet the politics of the rear front pursued there either by the army headquarters or by unauthorised members of the public administration, by members of the UP club, Muslim merchants and local gangs were justified by referring to this supposed propensity. However, in 1916, those different members of the state and of society did not reach an agreement concerning the politics of the rear front which were to be pursued regarding the Romei of Giresun. Instead, they disagreed on the matter of these politics, subjecting the Romei's fate to local power conflicts. This was in sharp difference from what had happened in 1915 during the genocide of the Armenians. At that time, the interference of different actors was not only tolerated but also encouraged by the authorities, both at the military and civil levels. The consensus between the main authorities, central or local, and an important part of society, which participated or tacitly tolerated what was happening, was an important feature of the Armenian genocide. Without this consensus the extermination could not have reached its extended dimensions. Inversely, the absence of a similar consensus in the case of the Romei of the Trabzon vilayet, the conflict between different sectors of the state and of the society concerning the pursued politics, reduced the destructiveness of these politics.

More precisely, in the case of the Armenians, not only was the displacement of the entire Armenian population of the eastern vilayets a central governmental decision, but the politics of extermination pursued by Bahaeddin Şakir and, under his supervision, by the UP provincial organisation, were entirely tolerated by the Third Army Commander, Mahmud Kâmil Pasha[133]. In this context of anomy, those who wished to blackmail the departing Armenians or to appropriate the Armenian women and children were free to do so. Quite different was the case of the displacement of the Romei of the *kaza*s of Tirebolu and Giresun: the displacements were decided at a local level by Vehip Pasha, who intervened vigorously in order to impede any interference of public officials or of civilians in the politics of the rear front – going probably sometimes as far as to "call off his own orders", in Cemal Azmi's words.

To end with, a major difference between the experience of the Armenians in 1915 and that of the Romei of the *kaza*s of Tirebolu and Giresun in 1916-17 was that while the former had been completely powerless against a broad criminal

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[132] BOA.DH.EUM.KLH. 3/39A, F. 9-16 cited in Ahmet Efiloğlu, *Osmanlu Rumları. Göç ve Tehcir 1912-1918*, Istanbul: Bayrak Yayıncılık, 2011, p. 296, *cf.* Πατριαρχεῖον, *Μαύρη Βίβλος*, 293-304.

[133] *Cf.* Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime,* 183-226 and Kévorkian, *Le Génocide*, 354-386 and *passim*.

consensus, the latter maintained some scope for negotiation with the ottoman state and the Muslim society. In the summer of 1915, during the deportations, Armenian of all kinds, peasants, townspeople and clergymen, have been excluded from the local state and society networks. They were tacitly set outside the ottoman political community and had implicitly lost their rights to protection. What Armenians could hope for at the most from non-Armenian ottomans was clandestine expressions of solidarity. The situation was different concerning the Black Sea Romei in 1916-1917. Even if they became more vulnerable after the genocide of the Armenians, the Black Sea Romei continued to participate into state-society networks. Using all the available administrative channels, as well as by means of their Muslim acquaintances, patrons, clients and friends, some among these Romei managed to obtain a better lot for themselves and for a group of their fellows. Unfortunately this scope for negotiation was narrow, and only few groups and individuals succeeded to benefit from it. Many were displaced and a lot of them died from epidemic typhus, exhaustion and malnutrition.

People use to think of the state as a superior mind that controls their fates. This was equally the case of many Greek Orthodox of that time, especially among the more literate ones, who used to believe that the UP state had a concrete and coherent plan concerning the lot of "Hellenism in Turkey"[134]. However the state is most of the time less prepared to face the contingencies of history and, above all, less homogenous than people are inclined to believe. This was even more the case of the UP state, which has been dominated by antagonisms between different factions at all levels of the civil and military administration; let alone the antagonisms between the different institutions, every one of which was dominated by one of the party's factions[135]. Under these circumstances all the actions of the state needed to be based on some sort of temporal consensuses between the different factions, institutions and social groups: a kind of temporal "social contracts" as Franz Neumann caustically used to say in class concerning the way the four groups that dominated the Nazi state were interacting with each other[136]. The genocide of the Armenians was the result of a criminal consensus of this kind. On the contrary, during the displacement of the Romei of the *kaza*s of Tirebolu and Giresun the only consensus that had been reached at the higher level of the state hierarchy concerned the respect of the authority of the local military commander. With the Russians in Trabzon, all expectations were founded on Vehip Pasha, whose military virtues had been proven a year before, in the Battle of Gallipoli. This is probably why, before the beginning of the displace-

134 *Cf.* Γιώργος Σιγάλος, ed., *Ερζερούμ 1916. Ημερολόγιο Δημήτριου Αυγερινού για την εκδίωξη των Ελλήνων του Ερζουρούμ*, (Athens: Εκδόσεις Αρμός, 2011), 163.

135 *Cf.* Sigalas, "La *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*", 125-127.

136 Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 63, *cf.* Franz Neumann, *Behemoth. The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (London: Victor Gollancz ltd, 1942), 383.

ments, Talaat Bey was firmly asserting to Cemal Azmi Bey that he should not displace anyone without the "special permission" of the army commanders[137].

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[137] BOA.DH.ŞFR 68/160. Cipher telegram sent on 19 Eylül 1332/2 November 1916 by the Minister of the Interior Talaat Bey to the vali of Trabzon Cemal Azmi Bey.

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Part 3:
Memory, Respresentation and the End of the War

The Ottoman Religious and Moral Censorship of the Armistice Istanbul Press

Ayşe Polat

The control on periodicals and public acts in Istanbul during the post-World War I years was significantly shaped by the contemporary political conditions and the interests of different political actors. Accordingly, the historiography of the post-World War I Istanbul has emphasized the political dimension of the censorship during the Armistice period, the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the establishment of the Turkish Republic, from 1918 to 1923.[1] Even though the political censorship constituted one major axis of the diverse postwar sovereignty claims in Istanbul, a related but overlooked dimension is the censorship of the Ottoman Turkish press on religious and/or moral grounds. The point is not to suggest that religious and moral concerns operating within the censorship apparatus were apolitical. However, the aim of this essay is to underline the centrality of moral and religious factors beyond immediate governmental and state-structural political transformations in the post-World War I Istanbul.

The evidence to investigate the Ottoman religious-moral censorship apparatus, particularly one prevailing during the Armistice years, is buried in the records of two councils: the *Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi* (Council on the Inspection of Printed Qur'ans and Islamic Religious Publications) and the *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye* (Abode of Islamic Wisdom). They were attached to the *Meşîhat* (the office of the Sheikh al-Islam), but operated within the overall Ottoman bureaucratic administration. These two administrative bodies governed, respectively, Islamic publications and matters perceived as pertaining to public morality.[2] This essay briefly introduces the functionings of the *Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi* and *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye* and their enrollment in the approval and censorship of publications in Istanbul. Subsequently, a historical contextualization is undertaken in order to underscore the contestation over the press

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1 See, for example, Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation 1918–1923* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 45–50; Ender Korkmaz, "Mondros Mütarekesi Döneminde Sansür," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları*, nos. 19–20 (2011): 40–50; Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri ve Politikaları* (Ankara: Basın ve Yayın Umum Müdürlüğü, 1943), 205–226; Alim Kahraman, "Mütareke ve Milli Mücadele Yılları Edebiyat Dergilerinde Sansür," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi* 31 (2004): 186; Erol A.F. Baykal, *The Ottoman Press (1908–1923)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 124–129.

2 For a detailed examination of these two councils, see Ayşe Polat, "Subject to Approval: Sanction and Censure in Ottoman Istanbul (1889-1923)," (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 2015). Also see Ayşe Polat, "Osmanlı'da Matbu İslam'ın Onay ve Denetimi: Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi," *FSM İlmi Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi*, no. 11 (2018).

among various actors during and after World War I in Istanbul. The dynamics of the religious and moral censorship of the press and the Ottoman negotiations with the Allied powers to have independence in control of the religious content of periodicals are explicated. Lastly, the jurisdiction of these two Meşîhat councils is compared by paying specific attention to individual items censored by them.

Two Meşîhat Councils: Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şerʿiyye Meclisi *and* Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye

The *Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şerʿiyye Meclisi* (hereafter TMŞM) emerged circa 1910 out of the consolidation of two separate councils, founded in 1889, to inspect and approve printed Qurʾan and Islamic books.[3] In the case of printed Qurʾanic codices (Ar. plural *masahif*), the council members, some of whom had committed the Qurʾan to memory and recited it best, examined the accuracy of each printed Qurʾanic codex (Ar. singular *mushaf*). In the case of other books submitted, the council approved or rejected their print and dissemination through religious measures, such as the compatibility of the content of the proposed book with the Sunni Islamic doctrine, as well as "non-religious" contemporary conventions of publishing, such as the exemption from print or translation errors.[4]

The TMŞM was an important actor among the multifarious censorship bodies controlling the Istanbul press in the aftermath of World War I. Among various censorship bodies of the post-World War I Istanbul, it was designated to control the Islamic religious content of the periodicals. Even before the war, its jurisdiction was extended over time from inspecting Islamic books to periodical publications.[5] Yet, particularly striking for the Armistice period is that its enthusiasm to oversee periodicals was only strengthened. Furthermore, its inspection of periodicals' articles on Islam was not determined primarily by the political conditions of the Armistice years. The council looked for the accuracy of Arabic script, the orthography, references to the Qurʾan and *hadith* (prophetic tradition), the translations into Turkish as well as judged the validity of the religious arguments proposed.[6]

To put it differently, TMŞM's sanctioning of periodicals was an extension of its approval of printed Islamic texts. However, under the specific conditions of the Armistice years, it seems, the stakes of having control over the religious arguments, doctrinal and traditional truthfulness and authenticity of materials pertain-

3 See Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 85–91; Polat, "Osmanlı'da Matbu İslam," 93–96.
4 For an extensive discussion of the criteria used by the council in sanctioning publications, see Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 102–114.
5 Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 67–70; Polat, "Osmanlı'da Matbu İslam," 104–106.
6 See Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 94–102; Polat, "Osmanlı'da Matbu İslam," 105–114.

ing to Islam were only heightened. Even the ritualistic concerns about Islamic publications attained further significance under the specific contemporary circumstances. The most illustrative case is the increased usage of papers that contain Qur'anic verses as wrapping paper in daily life. It is a topic whose full discussion exceeds the limits of this essay, but it seems to have occurred primarily due to paper shortage as part of postwar conditions of scarcity of goods. The Meşîhat received a number of petitions demanding the elimination of such improper usages, and TMŞM tried to eliminate such incidences by putting restrictions on citing the Qur'an or hadith periodical publications.[7]

Since the Ottoman government was still considered as the center of the caliphate (at least by some), the governmental bodies, including the Meşîhat, were keen to preserve control over the ritualistic and doctrinal aspects of the Ottoman periodicals. In this respect, even though TMŞM's sanctioning of the Islamic content of periodicals during the Armistice years dates back to the last decade of the nineteenth century, and is part of the gradual broadening of its oversight of Islamic publications from merely books to periodicals; the council itself as well as the higher Ottoman administrative units under which it served, from the Meşîhat to the Ministry of the Interior, insisted upon to have full governance over the religious content of the periodicals in the aftermath of the World War I.

In addition to this Islamic print council, TMŞM, another Meşîhat council had a substantive position in the Ottoman censorship and governance apparatus of the public morality during the Armistice years in Istanbul. [8] The latter was called *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye* (hereafter DHI). It was established in March 1918 specifically as a post-World War I institution which began to operate around August 1918.[9] Its members were diligently chosen from the highest echelon of the *ulema* and Muslim intellectuals to address theological, polemical, as well as daily matters pertaining to religion and society.[10] It acted as a deliberative council whose president and the nine presiding members discussed the matters-at-hand.[11] DHI had

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7 See Polat, *Subject to Approval*, 72–83.

8 For studies on this council, see Zekeriya Akman, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Son Döneminde Bir Üst Kurul: Daru'l Hikmeti'l İslamiye* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2009); Sadık Albayrak, *Son Devrin İslam Akademisi* (İstanbul: Yeni Asya Yayınları, 1973). While these studies examine *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye* as a high Islamic scholarly institute, Polat in her dissertation emphasizes the specific nature and working of it, associated with the sociohistorical context of the World War I and its aftermath. See Polat, *Subject to Approval*, 198–199.

9 Akman, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin*, 34, 41. Also see Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA) MV 249/84 (5 May 1918); BOA DUIT 58/83 (28 February 1918).

10 Some members of the *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye* are: Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi, Hüseyin Avni, Haydarizade İbrahim, Ahmet Rasim Avni, Mustafa Safvet, Mustafa Sabri, Ömer Ferit, [Bediuzzaman] Said, Mehmet Akif. For a comprehensive list of members and their brief biographies, see Akman *Osmanlı Devleti'nin*, 115–135. For a brief analysis of their personal and scholarly backgrounds, see Polat, *Subject to Approval*, 209–213.

11 Akman, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin*, 45.

three sub-committees that were devoted to *kelâm* (Islamic philosophy/theology), *fıkıh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and *ahlâk* (morality).[12] However, from the council's records it becomes evident that its primary engagement concerned morality—not in the sense of ethics as abstract philosophical deliberations but as governance of socially embedded post-war events, experiences, and developments. This essay will not address the entire spectrum of DHI's engagements in numerous postwar social and governmental issues;[13] but will rather focus on its role within the censorship of the Ottoman press during the Armistice years.

One main difference between the TMŞM and the DHI regarding their jurisdiction within the censorship apparatus of the Armistice Istanbul is that the latter's purview covered not only printed materials but also public acts and conduct. Relatedly, the DHI*'s* enrollment in inspecting printed publications targeted primarily not their religious, Islamic arguments but their moral content, which was assessed by the council as infringements of public morality. Yet, during the Armistice period, both Meşîhat councils established and implemented various means of regulation, approval, and rejection in order to control printed publications and public behavior. Furthermore when their prepublication censorship mechanisms failed, they sought legal enforcement against the transgressing publishers and authors. The two councils' religio-moral governance was considered vital by the Ottoman authorities for their postwar political claims to independence and sovereignty as well as for their social envisions to rebuild public order and society after a devastating war.

The Press and War Efforts

Regarding modern warfare, exposing the public to the battlefield, to war news and pictures, had started with British photographers' coverage of the Ottoman-Russian Crimean War of 1853 but developed fully during World War I.[14] As such since the mid-19th century the press was used to inform local as well as global publics about the ongoing wars. However, newspapers, journals, and other kind of publications were also expected by combatant states to propagate enthusiasm for their war efforts among the reading public. In certain cases, governments issued even official newspapers for this end. Even though, as asserted by Erol Köroğlu, the Ottomans lagged behind European states and empires' World War I propa-

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12 See Meşîhat Archive, Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1786, [no record number] (24 August 1918), n.p.

13 For the engagements of the council as a postwar institute, see Polat, *Subject to Approval*, 192–238.

14 Ulrich Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 2001), 251.

ganda machinery;[15] the *Harb Mecmuası* (War Journal) issued by the Ottoman War Ministry between 1915 and 1918 illustrates Ottoman governmental efforts to strengthen public support and shape public opinion about the ongoing war.[16]

Publications in general and the printed press in particular constituted one key domain of contestation for every combatant state. To control the press coverage of the war, to oversee the propaganda or counter-propaganda efforts, and to keep the press under surveillance in any case were considered crucial to achieve desired outcomes during and after World War I. Accordingly while the war ended in 1918 the contestation over the press did not stop; rather it was only strengthened. Neither the winners nor the losers of the war gave up on their efforts to dominate and to oversee the content of the printed press in the aftermath of the World War I. To the contrary, the deep and widespread devastation the war created in each belligerent country, the rise of new states and governments, the formation of new alliances, and the ongoing post-war internal and international political tensions amplified the significance of the press for every post-World War I nation and state.

In the case of the Ottoman Empire, the press took on being one of the prime sites of post-World War I contestations. The power struggles among numerous actors were manifested in the press in the efforts to shape and to dominate the printed publications. As Nur Bilge Criss emphasizes, the political rivalry between the Ottoman imperial authorities and the Allied forces, the Ottoman government and the emerging Turkish nationalist movement in Anatolia, as well as the Committee of Union and Progress and its opponents, including Freedom and Entente Party, all unfolded in the printed press.[17]

Henceforth, although the immediate aftermath of World War I brought release from the censorship of the war years,[18] a strengthened censorship apparatus was subsequently reestablished. Only a month after the signing of the Mudros Armistice in October 1918 the Ottoman government implemented new censorship

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15 Erol Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity: Literature in Turkey during World War I* (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 5.

16 *Harp Mecmuası* illustrated the victory of the Ottoman army with pictures and news-sharing, and contained stories about individual male and female Ottoman subjects contributing to the war either on the battlefield or at the backstage. It also sought to propagate about the civilized nature of the Ottoman combatant acts in the World War I by publishing images of the fair treatment of the prisoners of war by Ottoman authorities as opposed to those undertaken by other combatants.

17 Criss, *Istanbul Under,* 45–47. Also, see Refik Halit Karay, *Minelbab İlelmihrab: 1918 Mütarekesi Devrinde Olan Biten İşlere ve Gelip Geçen İnsanlara dair Bildiklerim* (İstanbul: İnkılap ve Aka Kitabevi, 1964). For a comprehensive overview of the Turkish press between 1918 and 1922, including short introduction to newspapers and journals printed and to the leading authors, see Uygur Kocabaşoğlu and Aysun Akan, *Mütareke ve Milli Mücadele Basını: Direniş ile Teslimiyetin Sözcüleri ve "Mahşer"in 100 Atlısı* (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2019).

18 Ayhan Aktar, "Debating the Armenian Massacres in the Last Ottoman Parliament, November-December 1918," *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007): 248.

regulations on the press, and governmental regulations on the press continued throughout the Armistice period. [19] It was not only the Ottoman government that sought to regulate the Istanbul press in this period but also the Allied forces, which occupied the imperial capital first "de facto" immediately after the war, then "de jure" as of March 1920.[20] The Allied (particularly British) exile of more than one hundred Ottoman journalists immediately after Istanbul's occupation evidences the key role attributed to the press, as well as the importance assigned to the establishment of control over the printed publications. [21]

The Ottoman government and the Allied forces were involved in the close oversight of press materials, and their political conflicts for authority and governance in Istanbul were carried out in press regulations and censorship. In the immediate aftermath of World War I, the Ottoman administrative attempts to preserve an autonomous governance of newspapers and journals failed as the Ottoman state had to recognize the formation of a press commission composed of both Ottoman and Allied representatives.[22] Even more significant, after the de jure occupation of Istanbul by the Allied forces, a formal dual censorship mechanism was established, which partitioned the jurisdiction over the press between the Ottoman governmental authorities and the Allied powers' high commissioners, thus breaking the integrity of Ottoman sovereignty over the press. However, the Ottoman imperial administration still sought to carve out a niche for its autonomous control and oversight of the Istanbul press.

Before examining the Ottoman government's efforts for this end, it should be highlighted that the journalists and editors of the periodicals in Istanbul developed their own strategies in the face of both Ottoman and the Allied forces' censorship apparatus. They developed resistance techniques against the censorship mechanism in such following ways: to display censorship by printing the censored part in blank in the periodical column, to change the name of the restricted or banned journal and continue to issue it with a new title, or to publish the periodical outside of Istanbul and then secretly have it circulate back to Istanbul. [23] Undoubtedly these practices did not go unnoticed by the Ottoman and the Allied censorship organs. On the contrary, they targeted and sought to take counter measures, sometimes by specifically pronouncing these acts illegal. Yet, journalists, editors, periodical owners did not easily comply either. The press in the eyes

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19 Korkmaz, "Mondros Mütarekesi," 42–44; İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat,* 84–88.

20 Nur Bilge Criss uses the terms *de facto occupation* and *de jure occupation* to distinguish between Istanbul's occupation by the Allies after the Mudros Armistice and its formal occupation as of March 16, 1920. See Criss, *Istanbul Under*, 2.

21 Alpay Kabacalı, *Başlangıcından Günümüze Türkiye'de Matbaa, Basın ve Yayın* (Istanbul: Literatür Yayıncılık, 2000), 151.

22 Korkmaz, "Mondros Mütarekesi," 42. This press commission was formed on January 21, 1919.

23 On these practices, see Kahraman, "Mütareke ve Milli," 179; Korkmaz, "Mondros Mütarekesi," 48, Baykal, *the Ottoman Press*, 124–126.

of multiple publishers and distinct control enforcers remained one major arena of power and resistance; of the implementation of regulations and censorship and their neglect and circumvention.

Ottoman Struggle for Semi-Independent Religious Censorship

A series of correspondences among Ottoman state ministries and bodies bring to the forth tensions embedded within the censorship apparatus in rule during the Armistice years in Istanbul. These state documents disclose the discrepancies between the formal established mechanisms and the room left open for negotiation, and the ways in which Ottoman administration tried to achieve, at least, a semi-autonomous control over the press, by claiming the religious-moral domain as falling under its own sovereignty. The post-World War I political circumstances made it clear to the Ottoman administration that it could no longer maintain complete independence in examining and overseeing the periodical publications. Yet, the Ottoman government seems also to be aware that it could demand autonomous, or at least semi-autonomous, rule over the Islamic content of publications. The Allied occupation of Istanbul does not appear to entirely unarm the Ottoman government from enforcing control and censorship over the Islamic content of periodical publications.

The chief religious bureaucratic organ of the Ottoman government, the Meşîhat, declared to internal actors (from other Ottoman administrative bodies to private presses) as well to external forces that it fell under its purview through the TMŞM *Meclisi* to examine the religious content of periodicals. The Meşîhat, through its correspondences with the Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*) reiterated to publishers in Istanbul, in 1920, that the article six of the Law on Printing Presses *(Matbaalar Kanunu)*[24] obligated any printed Qur'anic verse and hadith in books as well as periodicals to be submitted to the TMŞM for approval.[25] Furthermore, the Meşîhat demanded that the Ministry of the Interior, in line with the Criminal Code's (*Ceza Kanunnamesi*) third addendum to its article ninety-nine, take punitive action against any printer or publisher that did not submit their articles to be

[24] Baykal translates *Matbaalar Kanunu* as Law on Printing Presses. See Baykal, *the Ottoman Press,* 152. This Law on Printing Presses should not be confused with the Press Code/Law, even though the two were related. The earliest state regulation about printing houses date to 1857 *Matbaa Nizamnamesi* (Printing House Regulations). It was reformulated under the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II as *Matbaalar Nizamnamesi* (The Printing Houses Regulations) in 1888. It went through a major transformation during the Second Constitutional Period, as it was called *Matbaalar Kanunu (Law on Printing Presses)* in 1909. See Fatmagül Demirel, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kitap Basımının Denetimi," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları Dergisi* 4 (2004): 89–104.

[25] About the regulation, see BOA BEO 4620/346446 (6 March 1920); BOA DH.I.UM E119/71 (16 April 1920).

inspected by the TMŞM.[26] To put it differently, even if its pre-publication control failed, the religious bureaucracy was committed to achieve post-publication censorship and sanctions. The Ottoman regulatory bodies of the press pursued legal action against the authors and editors of the periodicals in which articles that they considered to disturb the principles of the religion of Islam appeared.

As for the question of to what extent the Allied forces in Istanbul approved an autonomous Ottoman religious censorship apparatus, it seems the Allied authorities had embraced a more hands-off policy in this domain. To put it differently, even though the Allied powers did not recognize the Ottoman demands for full autonomy vis-à-vis religious censorship of the press, they seem to reserve more room to the designated Ottoman organs for religio-moral censorship than other, for instance, more explicitly political matters. Both the Ottoman government and the Allied forces in Istanbul were more open to compromise and cooperation for the Ottoman agents' overseeing of the religious content of the Istanbul periodicals. For the Allied powers, it is likely that in order to reduce the prospects of resistance from the public against their rule in Istanbul they stayed away from being directly and explicitly involved in governing the Islamic content of publications. As for the the Ottoman administration, it seems to have taken good advantage of the standards European powers applied in their home countries and elsewhere in sanctioning religio-moral domain. The Ottoman administrative agents played tactically well by calling upon the implementation of European standards about the protection of religious sentiments and public morality in their efforts to legitimize the Ottoman control and sanctioning of religio-moral publications and acts in post-World War I Istanbul.

The following correspondences between the Ottoman administration and the Allied forces will illustrate and verify the above proposed arguments of this article about the semi-autonomous nature of Ottoman religious-moral censorship over the periodicals during the Armistice period. It will disclose the highly complicated working (and indeed also failure) of the Ottoman censorship mechanisms in postwar Istanbul. As will be seen, the Ottoman censorship agents did not only tackle with the Allied forces' censorship apparatus but also with the Ottoman Turkish publishers that occasionally exploited the presence of a dual censorship system between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied forces in Armistice Istanbul in order to avoid the obligatory print approval mechanisms of the former.

One Periodical Series, Multiple Negotiations and Contestations

The TMŞM corresponded with several Ottoman state bodies due to the publication in the Ottoman newspaper *Tevhîd-i Efkâr* (Unity of Ideas) of a series of essays

[26] Meşîhat Archive, Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi Defterleri 5/5, Genel No: 5293 (3 April 1920), 107; BOA BEO 4713/353448 (19 June 1922).

on the Qur'anic narrative of the Jesus Christ.[27] It is neither the first nor the last instance in which the TMŞM criticized Ottoman periodicals' owners for failing to submit their publication to its approval.[28] The TMŞM continuously underscored that no author, printer, or publisher was exempt from the regulation set by the Council of State in the article six of the Law on Printing Presses, which obliged periodicals to seek the permit of the council before the print of their publications. Yet, the correspondences about this specific incident among different state bodies demonstrate the involvement of multiple actors in regulating the Ottoman Turkish periodicals during the Armistice years. As will be detailed out below, it also specifically reveals the bargaining between the Ottoman and Allied powers' censorship agents in Istanbul and the ways in which the Ottoman journalists sometimes took advantage of the presence of multiple authorities by taking permission from one to avoid that of the other.

After the publication of essays on the Qur'anic Jesus in the *Tevhîd-i Efkâr,* the TMŞM corresponded first with the Ministry of the Interior and underscored that the article six of the Law on Printing Presses obliged publishers to seek this council's approval before printing articles on religion, especially those that encompass Qur'anic verses and *hadith*. The TMŞM emphasized that the *Tevhîd-i Efkâr* did not seek its consent, even despite the fact that the Press Directorate had numerous times informed publishers about the regulation imposed by the Law on Printing Presses. The TMŞM expressed its "regret" in observing such unapproved publications.[29] The Ministry of the Interior, on the other hand, asserted that all necessary announcements were made to newspaper offices. The Press Directorate confirmed it by explaining that circumstantial factors might have led to *Tevhîd-i Efkâr's* publication, such as its license holder's ignorance of this regulation, as well as a lack of complete clarity in the decree concerning whether pre-publication approval was mandatory or not. The TMŞM refuted any unclarity and reminded that the Council of State had clarified that the article six of the Law on Printing Presses require pre-print sanctioning of periodical publications.[30] However, even after the Council of State's legal clarification, essays on the birth of Jesus continued in *Tevhîd-i Efkâr,* and they seem to disregard the council's decisions. It is because even though Milaslı İsmail Hakkı's essay *had* been submitted for approval, it was

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27 The esssays are the following: Ömer Rıza [Doğrul], "Milad-ı İsa Aleyhisselam," *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 26 December 1921; Mehmet Ali Ayni, "Milad-ı İsa Meselesi," *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 4 January 1922; Ömer Rıza, "Milad-ı İsa Meselesi, Ömer Rıza Bey'in Mehmed Ali Ayni Bey'e Cevabı," *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 6 January 1922; Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, "Haml-i Meryem Meselesi," *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 7 February 1922.

28 For instance, see its criticism of the periodical Mahfil and its owner Tahir'ül Mevlevi in Meşîhat Archive, Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi Defterleri 5/5, Genel No: 5293 (12 June 1922), 217.

29 Meşîhat Archive, Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi Defterleri 5/5, Genel No: 5293 (11 January 1922), 180.

30 Ibid.

printed in its original form despite TMŞM's disapproval. Yet, it should also be noted that these authors and editors of periodicals did not completely ignore the council's rulings. All these essays on Jesus in *Tevhîd-i Efkâr* complied with TMŞM's regulation forbidding the use of the full Arabic script of Qur'anic verses and *hadith* in newspapers. These essays included only translations or shortened Arabic versions of the cited Qur'anic verses.

Even though authors and editors did not completely observe the council's regulations on periodicals, *Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi* did not halt attempts to establish and pursue its sanctioning either, and accordingly, in this incident, the council asked the Ministry of the Interior to punish *Tevhîd-i Efkâr* in order to "set an example" for other periodicals.[31] The act of printing an article that had been deemed inappropriate, *Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi* asserted, flouted the Ottoman government's authority, as well as that of the caliph himself, and demonstrated a contempt for the involved administrative departments, that is, the Meşîhat and the Ministry of the Interior.[32]

Nonetheless, the Press Directorate underlined the difficulties that emerged due to the dual censorship. Periodicals were bypassing the permission of TMŞM by receiving the approval of the Allied powers' censorship agents.[33] Concerning the publication of these *Tevhîd-i Efkâr* articles, the Directorate of Internal General Affairs (*İdare-i Umumiye-i Dâhiliye Müdiriyeti*), which operated under the Ministry of the Interior, wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and brought the issue of subjugating periodical publications to the sole control of the Ottoman authorities. The Directorate of Internal General Affairs implied that the article series were published through the permission of the Allied forces' censorship commission and demanded that measures be taken to stop the publication of religious articles without the Ottoman approval.[34]

Granted that the Allied censorship was inevitable, the bureaucratic administrative units within the Ministry of the Interior tried to assign complete control over at least the Islamic content of publications to Ottoman authorities. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected to appeal to the Allied commissioners about a semi-autonomous Ottoman censorship on the grounds that its previous correspondences with the Allied forces made it clear that they would not accept any such demand.[35] However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assured the Meşîhat and the Ministry of the Interior that it would send an official notification to all publishing houses, newspaper offices, and to censorship units and remind them that

31 Ibid., 183. Also see BOA DH.İUM. E 123/35 (19 March 1922).
32 Ibid, 183.
33 BOA DH.İ.UM 19-19/1-49 (19 January 1922).
34 BOA DH.İ.UM 19-19/1-49 (12 February 1922).
35 BOA DH.İ.UM E 123/35 (19 March 1922).

those violating religious and moral principles in printed publications would face legal penalties.[36]

While the two Ottoman ministries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that of the Interior, had different anticipations concerning the autonomy the Ottoman parties would be granted, the response of Allies' high commissioners turned out to be more positive than expected. In line with the Ministry of Foreign Affair's presumption, the Allies' high commissioners stated that they could not accept Ottoman autonomy concerning the religious censorship of the press, since it would contradict the terms of dual administration, which was agreed by the Ottomans and themselves. However, the Allies' high commissioners also expressed that their censorship agents would be instructed to facilitate the administration of such internal matters by Ottoman authorities.[37] In other words, the Allied officials implicitly defined religious or Islamic matters an internal issue whose regulations they were more willing to grant to local authorities.

Likewise, the Ottoman authorities seem to have negotiated with the Allied powers, particularly the British, with the same reasoning that the latter carried out in their practices here and elsewhere. That is, the Ottoman government deployed the very same legal categories that the British applied at home and in its colonies when governing public matters pertaining to religion.[38] The Ottoman state underlined that the legal framework granted the Ottoman administration the right to punish anyone "publishing materials against religious commands and prohibitions, and principles of faith, as well as printing pictures, articles, journals, and books that violate public decency and destroy morality."[39] Offending religion and religious sentiments and infringing upon public morality were considered unacceptable by both the Ottoman government and the Allied powers, and the Ottoman administrators took advantage of these common legal precepts in order to establish their own semi-independent (vis-à-vis the Allies') control, censorship, and restriction over the religious and moral content of the press and public behavior in post-war Istanbul.

In sum, these correspondences, promoted by the publication of Jesus essays, were entangled in the appeals of different Ottoman ministries and their negotiations with the Allied forces. Although the formally established dual censorship mechanism between the Allied forces and the Ottoman administration in Istanbul prevented a complete Ottoman independence in controlling and regulating periodical publications, the Ottoman authorities achieved (or was tolerated by the Allied powers) to have more autonomy in guarding the religious content of news-

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36 BOA DH.İ.UM 123/32 (4 March 1922).

37 Ibid.

38 For Britain's use of the category of not offending the public's religious sentiments, see Julia Stephens, "The Politics of Muslim Rage: Secular Law and Religious Sentiment in Late Colonial India," *History Workshop Journal* 77, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 45–64.

39 BOA DH.İ.UM E 123/35 (19 March 1922).

papers and journals. The TMŞM reaffirmed its jurisdiction over periodicals' Islamic arguments. Yet, the Armistice censorship mechanism in Istanbul embodied numerous complexities, which some publishers took advantage of by circumventing the approval of one censorship organ vis-à-vis the endorsement of another. Even if they were not always effective, journalists developed their own tactics to fight against, to ignore, or to bypass the censorship imposed by the Ottoman government as well as the Allied powers. Henceforth, it would be meaningful to underscore the gap between TMŞM's censorship capacities in theory (in legal frameworks) and in practice.

Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şer'iyye Meclisi's *Overall Censorship of the Press*

Six periodical essays are identified in this study that TMŞM asked to be censored. The council may have censored more articles than these six ones (either in the pre- or post- publication phase). However, the examination of the several archival record books of the council pertaining to this period has revealed only these six essays. Four of them are the above-mentioned series of articles by Ömer Rıza, Mehmet Ali Ayni and Milaslı İsmail Hakkı on the birth of Jesus and the pregnancy of Mary in the newspaper *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*. The other essays targeted by the council are "Madness in Our Social Life" *(İctimai Hayatımızda Cünun)* by the physician Cevdet Nasuhi and "The Sect of Baha'ism, Religion of Nations" "Mezheb-i Bahâ'ullah; Din-i Ümem) by Abdullah Cevdet.[40]

These six articles reveal, first, the functioning of the religious censorship undertaken by the TMŞM during the Armistice years. Second, they demonstrate different cases in which the council intervened in terms of religious and Islamic censorship. In the case of the article "Madness in our Social Life," what was at stake was a section in the midst of the essay that implied that being religious and insane might, at least sometimes, be associated.[41] The essay was criticized by the council not because of its claims about Islam per se but religion in general which affiliated religiosity with a delusional mind. In the case of essays about the birth of Jesus published in *Tevhîd-i Efkâr,* the matter was conflicting interpretations of the Qur'anic passages about Jesus and Mary. The three authors, Ömer Rıza, M. Ali Ayni, and M. İsmail Hakkı, debated whether Jesus was conceived "miraculously" or by "natural" ways, i.e. conception through sexual intercourse, and disputed the

[40] For a detailed analysis of this article, see Ayşe Polat, "A Conflict on Baha'ism and Islam in 1922: Abdullah Cevdet and State Religious Agencies," *İnsan ve Toplum* 5, no. 10 (2015).

[41] Cevdet Nasuhi, "İctimai Hayatımızda Cünun," *Tedrîsat Mecmuası* 59 (February–March 1921): 979–989.

clarity versus ambiguity of relevant Qurʾanic verses.[42] In other words, whereas the article "Madness in our Social Life" included a general critique of religious mindset; the essays on Jesus articulated on the meanings of Qurʾanic passages, debating how to delineate between their "true" and "false" understandings particularly with respect to using human reason versus received interpretations in approaching the divine text.

As for the other essay addressed by TMŞM, it is the leading materialist Abdullah Cevdet's essay on Baha'ism as a religion of peace as opposed to Christianity and Islam. This essay caused significant public critique and brought TMŞM and DHI together in their purview of religious censorship of the periodicals. [43] It deserves mentioning that the two Meşîhat councils had their own disagreements, particularly concerning some aspects of the Qurʾanic orthography and *hadith* cited in Islamic publications.[44] Nonetheless, in the case of Cevdet's essay, both displayed very similar reactions to Cevdet's praise of Baha'ism as a universal, humane religion and his condemnation of Islam and Christianity as religions of war and conflict.

The TMŞM did not go into the details of the objectionable content of Cevdet's essay, nor did it articulate a full refutation. Instead, it underlined once again the legal obligations of publishers and authors to submit articles with religious content to its examination and demanded that the Ministry of the Interior initiate legal proceedings against Cevdet because of his violation of the law.[45] As for the DHI, while it did not comment on other articles criticized by the TMŞM, it provided a detailed condemnation of Cevdet's essay on Baha'ism, which included also criticisms of Cevdet's journal *İctihad ("Religious Innovation").* The DHI considered Cevdet's writings as "insulting Islam, the official religion of the state," and likewise demanded the enforcement of relevant penal decrees.[46]

The TMŞM asserted in all of these different cases of press publications that such writings offended religious convictions and made a negative impact on the public's Islamic thoughts.[47] The council did not offer extensive explanations about its criticism of these articles, nor did it reply back to the arguments pro-

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42 For a detailed analysis of this article series, see Ayşe Polat, "The Human Jesus: a 1922 Ottoman Periodical Debate," *Mizan: Journal of Interdisciplinary Approaches to Muslim Societies and Civilizations* 2:1 (2017).

43 Abdullah Cevdet [Karlıdağ], "Mezheb-i Bahaʾullah, Din-i Ümem," *İctihad* 144 (1 March 1922): 3015-3017. On Cevdet, see Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Blueprints for a Future Society: Late Ottoman Materialists on Science, Religion, and Art," in *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy,* ed. Elizabeth Özdalga (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005).

44 See Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 114, 120–133.

45 Meşîhat Archive, Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şerʻiyye Meclisi Defterleri 5/5, Genel No: 5293 (13 March 1922), 202.

46 Meşîhat Archive, Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1786, Record number: 13 (9 December 1919), n.p.

47 Meşîhat Archive, Tedkîk-i Mesâhif ve Müellefât-ı Şerʻiyye Meclisi Defterleri 5/5, Genel No: 5293 (5 September 1921), 163; Ibid (11 January 1922), 180.

posed in these essays. Writing such refutations was not within the purview of the council's *modus operandi*; its task was to approve or to reject and thereby to ask for the restriction or censorship of proposed books, booklets, or essays. The council commented more on the violation of its legal authority in the publication process than it did on the problems it saw in these different essays. Since these essays were each already printed, it is apparent that, despite the drafting of legal regulations, the TMŞM was not able to subjugate each author and periodical to its approval. Yet, the council continued to pursue the enforcement of its authority and control by demanding penalties due on those that violated the legal laws and decrees.

Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye's *Moral Censorship of the Press*

Regarding the functioning of the two Meşîhat councils, it needs to be underscored that apart from this essay on Baha'ism, they followed their separate domains of jurisdiction. In distinction to the TMŞM, the DHI's engagement with the press concerned to a greater extent the moral rather than the religious content of the periodicals.

The DHI engaged in the moral handling of periodical publications' serialized novels, satirical cartoons, information-sharing since they matched with its overall agenda of controlling, regulating, and responding to the demands about public behavior and conduct in Istanbul. The council's primary involvement in periodicals' articulations on public morality matched with the practical issues it was enrolled concerning acts and behavior committed in Istanbul's public spaces. The latter encapsulated various matters from drinking to entertainment venues, women's veiling to soldiers' behavior in cities. However, both periodical publications as well as this range of public conduct fell under the purview of the legislation of the DHI, which was created to safeguard and reinstitute public morality in Istanbul in the aftermath of World War I.[48] As studies on social and public order and gendered morality during and after World War I in the Ottoman context are increasing,[49] the functioning of this specific Meşîhat council will be better evaluated.

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48 For an extensive discussion of *Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye's* engagement with and governance of public morality regarding both publications and public acts, see Polat, *Subject to Approval,* 239–295.

49 See Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Yeni Hayat: İnkılap ve Travma 1908–1928* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2017); Elif Mahir Metinsoy, *Ottoman Women During World War I: Everyday Experiences, Politics, and Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Deniz Dölek-Sever, *Istanbul's Great War: Public Order, Crime and Punishment in the Ottoman Capital, 1914–1918* (İstanbul: Libra, 2018); Çiğdem Oğuz, "The Homeland Will Not Be Saved Merely by Chastity:" Women's Agency, Nationalism, and Morality in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association,* 6, no. 2 (2019); Stefan Hock, "To Bring About.a "Moral of Renewal:" The Deportation of Sex Workers in the Ottoman Empire During the First World War," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 28, no. 3 (2019).

An illustrative example of DHI's role in the Armistice period moral censorship apparatus is that of its criticism of the satirical journals *Karagöz* and *Ayine*. Even though the council did not provide any specific examples from these satirical journals it is very likely that what was at stake were *Karagöz* and *Ayine's* cartoons about women, their apparel, and the depictions of the entertainment life in Istanbul.[50] In the same record that the DHI criticized *Karagöz* and *Ayine* and other similar periodicals' "indecent" (*âdâba aykırı*, lit. "decency-violating") publications, the issue of mixed-gender attendance at cinema halls and concerts was raised. DHI appealed to the Ministry of the Interior to impose restrictions on all such acts.[51] This record demonstrates the links the DHI built between the world of publications and everyday life and conduct during the Armistice-period Istanbul and the functions it assigned to itself and to other governmental agencies in regulating, restricting, or censoring acts, practices, and conduct that were considered to neglect, to contradict, or to jeopardize "general moral [standards]" (*ahlâk-ı umumiye*) and "public decency" (*âdâb-ı umumiye*).[52]

The DHI's same archival record entry about these publications also includes matters pertaining to the publication of a Qur'anic exegetical work and Muslim orphan children's forced conversion to Christianity. It lies beyond the scope of this article to discuss and analyze all these related but also distinct domains that the council was committed as a post-war governmental institution. However, it is fundamental to emphasize its role in regulating public behavior in the name of preserving or (re)affirming public moral order, which encompassed both the fictionalized, caricaturized world of publications as well as lived out, actual practices and domains of Istanbul and its citizens and dwellers during the Armistice years.

Another illustrative example in this regard is the DHI's pursuit of a post-publication censorship of a serialized novel *Tacire-i Facire* (the Prostitute Merchant) by Celal Nuri [İleri] about a prostitute woman. A detailed examination of the novel and Nuri's thought are undertaken elsewhere;[53] however, the relevant point

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50 On social satire and women in Karagöz, see Sibel Kılıç, "Contribution of *Karagoz* Humour Magazine (1908–1955) to Sociocultural Transformations of the Turkish Society," *Journal of International Social Research*, no. 16 (2011); François Georgeon, "Women's Representations in Ottoman Cartoons and the Satirical Press on the Eve of the Kemalist Reforms (1919–1924)," in *A Social History of Late Ottoman Women: New Perspectives*, ed. Duygu Köksal and Anastasia Falierou (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

51 See Meşîhat Archive, Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1786, [no record number] (5 December 1921), n.p.

52 These phrases appear frequently in a great number of Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye's records and essays. For just a few examples, see Meşîhat Archive, Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1786, record number 53 (2 August 1919), n.p.; Ibid., record number 375 (5 February 1920), n.p.; Ibid., [no record number] (5 December 1921), n.p.; Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1787, record number 40 (27 July 1922), n.p.

53 Ayşe Polat, "The Late Ottoman Novel as Social Laboratory: Celal Nuri and the "Woman Question," in *Ottoman Culture and the Project of Modernity: Reform and Translation in the Tanzimat Novel*, ed. Monica M. Ringer and Etiennce Charrière (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2020).

to be emphasized here is that the serialized novel was asked to be censored immediately after its issue which depicts prostitution as a "desirable option" rather than a "forced necessity." The novel narrates in the beginning the way the female protagonist was forced into prostitution, and yet, at its last published installment, it starts to portray prostitution as an art to be taught to young girls.[54]

Under war and post-war circumstances, prostitution had increasingly turned to a social reality, and indeed, even though the DHI did not approve prostitution, it did not reject its licensing either, including that for Muslim women.[55] The DHI was part of the Ottoman state's religious bureaucratic apparatus and as such it would not completely reject practices undertaken by other state departments, which in this case meant, opposing to state-certified prostitution. Furthermore, it also speaks to the fact that under the post-war circumstances the DHI was aware that prostitution emerged as the one and only option for some women to earn their livings. It is likely that the council saw the benefits of regulating prostitution in the face of the impossibility of completely eliminating it. Yet, when in the *Tacire-i Facire* the practice of prostitution was presented as an art, and honor and chastity were portrayed as mere socially imposed norms and values, then the council considered governmental intervention to censor the novel as obligatory.

It is plausible to assert that similar to the way the TMŞM implicitly or explicitly appropriated the contemporary binding legal categories upheld by the Allied powers to authorize its censorship of the periodicals to guard against injuries of public's religious sentiments, the DHI, too, appealed to emerging international conventions to protect public morality against obscene publications and acts, which is a topic that deserves further investigation especially within the developing spectrum of studies on the socio-legal dimensions of the World War I and its aftermath.

Conclusion

Substantial political confrontation endured after the World War I in Istanbul between the Ottoman government, the Allied powers, especially the British and the French, as well as the emerging Ankara government in Anatolia. The scholarship on post-1918 Ottoman period has focused until recently primarily on large-scale political transformations about European imperialistic ambitions, the end of the Ottoman Empire, and the rise of the Turkish nation state. The social historiography on the period deserves to be studied further and the radical compartmentalization of different political actors needs reassessment.

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54 Celal Nuri [İleri], "İleri'nin Tefrikası: 23, Tacire-i Facire," *İleri*, 31 December 1919.

55 Meşîhat Archive, Daru'l-Hikmeti'l-İslâmîye Defter 1786, [no record number] (24 September 1921), n.p.

Through the jurisdictional acts and activities of the TMŞM and the DHI, this article substantiated the continued vitality of the Ottoman bureaucratic apparatus between 1918-1922, a period that is generally depicted in historiography as the collapsed empire. It provided a concise introduction of these two Meşîhat councils and their basic *modus operandi* under post-World War I conditions in controlling Islamic publications and public morality. It would have exceeded the limits of this article to explicate at length each matter (e.g. prostitution, drinking, entertainment, or gender segregation and Muslim women's acts in the public sphere) that was, in the aftermath of World War I, discussed in juxtaposition with reestablishing public moral order, as well as to analyze in detail each periodical publication disapproved or censored by these Meşîhat councils. The purpose of this article has been to provide an overview of the press articles criticized by the TMŞM and the DHI in order to explain their roles within the complex, overarching censorship apparatus functioning in post-World War I Istanbul.

Confrontation and contestation as well as negotiation and bargaining endured among multiple actors in this period, but it was not merely about politics. For both Ottoman governmental bodies and journalists the social was as crucial as the explicitly political. Ottoman governmental bureaucrats as well as civil actors, intellectuals and Istanbul dwellers considered social matters pertaining to the understandings of Islam and morality in the public sphere genuinely important. That is to say, the social, religious, and moral issues and anxieties did not get completely buried under the political transformations that were directly affecting and changing the nature of the state.

The Ottoman Empire as a modern, centralizing, bureaucratic state had devised institutional control and censorship mechanisms over publications and public acts earlier than the World War I period. However, the World War I and its aftermath endorsed for both different segments of the civil society and the state the significance of having control over the religious–moral. To put it differently, Ottoman citizens and Istanbul dwellers as well as different Ottoman state bodies and ministries considered an effective governance of the Islamic publications and public morality crucial. In this respect, Ottoman administrators also played tactically well by carving out the religio–moral realm as a niche to claim complete sovereignty against the Allied powers in Istanbul. While the latter did not grant the Ottoman agents full autonomy and control over the religious and moral domains they were more willing to acknowledge the Ottoman rule in matters pertaining to Islamic publications as well as public morality.

Within the overarching power contestations of the period, the Islamic and moral realms were identified as more fitting to be left to the Ottoman control. The Ottoman agents were particularly careful and judicious in drawing out to the standards and legal frameworks pursued by the Europeans to legitimize and validate their claims about protecting Islam and public morality. The development of legal norms and conventions to protect religion and public morality deserves

further investigation; but the evidence presented in this article illustrates the mutual Ottoman and European usages of them.

Even though briefly, this article has also addressed the fact that while strict control and censorship mechanisms were applied on publications, the journalists sought to find their ways out. Periodicals' authors and editors took advantage of the complicated dual censorship mechanism in Istanbul, such as by publishing their papers with the permission of Allied commissioners' approval to circumvent the Ottoman administrative authorization, or by publishing censored columns blank as an act of resistance against both the Ottoman and Allied censorship bodies.

In the aftermath of the World War I while the political boundaries were being redrawn new societies, moralities, and religiosities were also emerging. The increased aspirations to control, to regulate, and to censor the press and public acts reflected the drives of the modern state and society to shape socio-political transformations. Accordingly, until the end, the Ottoman bureaucratic administration struggled to preserve its religious and moral sovereignty over Istanbul's intellectual and social public sphere, which was carried on by the Turkish Republic.

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The Pasha's Official Photographer(s)

The Picturing of the Fourth Army's Suez Campaign

Issam Nassar

Collective Memory of the War in Bilad al-Sham

The collective memory in *Bilad al-Sham*, or the Greater Syrian region, of the Great War, 1914-1918, speaks of the horrors of everyday life. It narrates a time of famine, partly resulting from the British naval blockade, and of a period of total economic devastation, itself the result of the heavy taxation and war economy. And perhaps, more importantly, the forced conscriptions, imprisonment, and the hangings of "deserters" and Arab nationalists left a traumatic image of the times in the *imaginaire* of the region's inhabitants. The attack of the locust in 1915, further contributing to the famine, still lives on in the collective memory, as that year is known in local histories as the *Year of the Locust*. The military ruler of Syria in the period was no other than Djemal (Cemal) Pasha, a powerful leader within the clique dubbed as the ruling triumvirate in Istanbul. A chief figure in *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, or the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), Djemal is remembered in history, mostly for being one of those held responsible for the Armenian Genocide by the decedents of the victims–though he disputed it in his memoirs. Djemal was born in the Aegean Island of Lesbos, known by its Turkish name at the time as *Midilli,* which the Ottoman Empire lost to Greece in 1912 in the first Balkan war. In the army he rose to the rank of major and was appointed inspector of Roumelia Railways. With the staging of a Coup d'état by the military wing of the CUP in 1913 following the murder of Nâzım Pasha, the Minister of War, Djemal raised to prominence as one of the effective rulers the empire.[1]

In his memoirs, Djemal Pasha recorded that ten days after the sultanate entered the War, he was told by Enver Pasha, the Minister of War, that the news from Syria points to a general disturbance in the country and great activity on the part of the revolutionary Arabs.[2] Enver, keen on launching a campaign against the British forces in Egypt, instructed Djemal Pasha to take command of the Ottoman Fourth Army in preparation for that task and in order to quell a possible revolt in the region. Accepting the assignment, Djemal wasted no time in taking up his post in Syria, thus starting a period described by the Arab nationalists as

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1 For an account by Djemal Pasha himself of the murder of the Minister of War, see *Muthakarat Cemal Pasha* (Memoirs of Djemal Pasha [in Arabic]), book 1, ed. Muhammad al-Sai'di (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 2013), 49-50.

2 Djemal Pasha, *Memoirs of a Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923), 197–237.

one of the most brutal in the history of the region. The Pasha implemented swiftly ruthless policies that earned him the title of *al-saffāh*, or the shedder of blood, from his Arab subjects.

The appointment of someone of Djemal's status to the Syrian front was an indication of the significance of this region in the war efforts of the empire at the time. Oddly, this fact is not reflected in much of the scholarship on the war itself or on Ottoman war efforts.[3] Perhaps the miserable failure of the Suez Campaign, launched from southern Palestine, and taking place in a region no longer regarded as significant in the current Turkish nationalist historical narrative, partly explains the scarcity of scholarly interest in Syria and Palestine under Djemal's rule, especially in English and Arabic, since a series of military histories of the war fronts exist in Turkish.

Memoirs and diaries written at the time record the miserable conditions of the region as troops marched towards Sinai. In an entry in his journal on Sunday, 27 September 1914, the Jerusalemite educator Khalil Sakakini did not celebrate the Ottoman march on Suez, contrary to the image we get from the photographs:

> We heard today that the army units currently present in Jerusalem will march to the south in the morning. No one has any doubt that the war is coming. People in Jerusalem are worried, and see nothing but dark days to come. Tomorrow the soldiers will walk on their feet under the hot sun, carrying heavy burdens on their backs, crossing great distances with no shade, or water to drink. They will cross the desert and will suffer from heat and hunger before they reach the Egyptian borders where they will face the enemy.[4]

The account of musician Wasif Jawhariyyeh corroborates the sentiment expressed by Sakakini regarding the arrival of the war in Jerusalem in 1914 when he writes that "food prices dramatically rose due to the army's tyranny and despotism. They [the soldiers] confiscated foodstuffs stored in foreign establishments."[5] A few months later, another Jerusalemite, Private Ihsan Turjman, described the mood in the city regarding the Suez campaign. Writing in his diary on Sunday, 28 March 1915, close to two months after the start of the campaign, Ihsan reports a conversation he had with friends that day:

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3 Two books were published recently in English fill the gap in studies: Edward J. Erickson, *Palestine: The Ottoman Campaigns of 1914-1918* (South Yorkshire: Pen and Sward Books LTD, 2016) and Talha Çicek (ed.), *Syria in World War I: Politics, Economy, and Society* (London: Routledge, 2015).

4 Khalil Sakakini, *Yawmiyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al:kitab al-thani* (The Dairies of Khalil Sakakini, book two: The Orthodox Renaissance, the Great War, and Exile in Damascus, 1914-1918 [in Arabic]), edited by Akram Musallem (Jerusalem: Institute of Jerusalem Studies, 2004), 103.

5 Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar (eds.), *The Storyteller of Jerusalem: the Life and Times Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1904-1948* (Northampton: Interlink Publishing, 2013), 93.

> … our conversation revolved around this miserable war and how long it is likely to continue, as well as the fate of the state. We more or less agreed that the days of the state are numbered and its dismemberment is imminent.[6]

A sense of doom was already in the air clearly in such accounts, even before the Suez Campaign started only to worsen as the war dragged on for years.

Photography of the Campaign

One interesting fact regarding the arrival of Djemal Pasha in the region relates to the fact that he, and the Fourth Army, appear to appoint official photographers who embraced the task of documenting the campaign. I am not aware of any army photographs taking in the Syrian region before the arrival of the Pasha. However, photography itself as a practice has had a long history in the Syrian region with studios widespread in the main cities such as Beirut, Damascus, Jaffa, Jerusalem, and others.[7] For the Ottomans, this was perhaps the first photographed major military campaign during a war. To start with, war photography had a rather short history if compared with photography of other subjects–archeology, dignitaries, travel, biblical, among others. There were photographed wars before, but those were at the time of infancy of the photographic invention. The first known photograph of a war was during the Mexican-American War of the 1840s.[8] But the Crimean War of the 1850s and the American Civil War of the 1860s were essentially the most photographed wars before the First World War. In both of those wars, the photographers had the liberty to reorganize the depicted scenes, bring corpses close to each other and stage an entire act in order to convey the sense of devastation and the violence of the war.[9]

Still, despite the fact that the Great War was heavily photographed, a ban on photographing military locations, fronts, and such activities was in place in a number of warring countries. Fear of espionage, carrying a camera near a military installation was deemed dangerous and therefore was banned. In France, the public was banned altogether from photographing for the duration of the war. Anyone who possessed a camera was ordered to hand it in to the authorities. The British

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6 Salim Tamari, *Year of the Locust: A Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

7 For further information on local photographers in the Arab cities see: Issam Nassar, *Laqatat Mughayirah: Early Photography in Palestine (1850-1948)*, (Beirut: Kutub, 2006); Stephen Sheehi, "A Social History of Early Arab Photography," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 39 (2), 177-208.

8 The photograph from the Mexican American War taken in 1847 can be seen online at http://militaryhistorynow.com/2012/06/12/how-early-photographers-captured-historys-first-images-of-war/ (accessed March 25, 2018).

9 Alan Trachtenberg, "Albums of War: On Reading Civil War Photographs," in *Representations*, No. 9, (Winter, 1985), pp. 1-32.

banned the use of cameras at all war zones.[10] Furthermore, the hardship of the war, the spread of famine, the loss of crops and poverty in general made practicing the hobby of photography seem rather frivolous. Photographing war themes was then left to professional photographers that were officially sanctioned to undertake such assignments.

The Ottoman Fourth Army, as far as the archival records attest, never issued a ban on soldiers carrying cameras, but we do not know of any pictures taken by soldiers at the time. Perhaps the enlisted soldiers had no interest in photography, which at that time was a rather costly hobby. This was very likely the case as many, if not most, of the conscripted men came from rural areas. Still, in contrast to the Ottoman Eighth Army, which was also stationed in Syria, Djemal Pasha's Fourth Army appear to have been keen on photographically documenting its activities. And the army headquarters obviously did hire photographers in the region to document its activities, especially on the Palestine and Suez fronts. In fact, a number of the active photographers in Palestine at the time claimed to be the Pasha's official photographers and even used such a designation in advertising their works. They included photographer Khalil Raad, Palestine's first Arab photographer, and the photo department of the Jerusalem based missionary group known as the American Colony. However, Djemal clearly employed, or perhaps benefited from the work of photographers attached to certain Ottoman agencies such as the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. But nothing in his memoirs indicates that he had an official photographer.

Khalil Raad's photographic collection, housed in the archives of the Institute for Palestine Studies, includes several photographs of the Pasha during his visits to Palestine. The same is true of the collection of the American Colony that is housed at the Library of Congress. In particular, one of two albums that belonged to photographer John Whiting (1882-1951) is fully devoted to Ottoman military preparations in Palestine for the Suez campaign. As a photographer at the Colony, it is possible that Whiting took some, if not most, of the photographs in the album. The album includes several photographs of the Pasha with the rest of the activities of the Fourth Army in southern Palestine and Sinai. Organized more or less chronologically, the album's first photograph, occupying an entire page and dated 3 May 1915, is of Djemal Pasha mounted on a horse at the shore of the Dead Sea. Although the Pasha appears in no more than a dozen photographs, the entire album seems to follow his itinerary in Jerusalem and southern Palestine. The same is true of the part of the Raad collection devoted to the war. Spanning a longer period of time than Whiting's, Raad seems to have been at hand to photograph whenever Djemal visited Palestine.

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10 *Caitlin Patrick*, The Great War: Photography on the Western Front *at* http://www.ucd.ie/photoconflict/histories/wwiphotography/ (accessed March 25, 2018).

Figure 1: WWI Poster showing a Red Cross nurse holding a wounded soldier. Library of Congress [cph 3g08369 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3g08369; reproduction no: LC-USZC4-8369].

Figure 2: WWI British Recruitment Poster Featuring Secretary of War Kitchener. Library of Congress [ppmsca 37468 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.37468; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ppmsca-37468].

During the war, photography was used on all the fronts of the war as indicated above. However, while images of soldiers in the trenches are plentiful on the western fronts, no similar photographs are known among the pictures of the Fourth Ottoman Army. Official, media, and army photographers photographed extensively on most fronts leaving us with an abundance of pictures of the leaders of all the warring countries as well as carefully staged photographs. This was also the case in Ottoman photography of the war, and most certainly that of the Fourth Army. However, unlike the case on other fronts of the war, where the photography of leaders, war heroes, nurses, and military installations, were employed in state-sponsored propaganda efforts, such as the poster campaign promoting war mobilization,[11] the Ottomans did not seem to have used images for such a purpose. World War I posters (figures 1 and 2) showing leaders, soldiers and nurses appeared in the various capitals and cities of the European participants in the war, but similar posters taken of Ottoman troops and leaders seem to have been completely nonex-

[11] The Library of Congress has a large collection of WWI posters, though mostly from the United States, in which it is clear that photographs were often used in posters. The collection is available online at: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/

istent, although the Ottoman War Journal, *Harb Mecmuasi*, published photographs from the fronts on its pages, including a few from the Suez Campaign (figure 3). Only a handful of postcards depicting Ottoman troops or leaders were available at the time, but the Germans, not the Ottomans, produced all of those.

Portraits of the Pasha

It is interesting to note that a number of photographs of Djemal Pasha show him posing in a style similar to the one used in German propaganda posters. The Pasha appears on such photographs as if he was mimicking the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. The Kaiser, whose left arm was six inches shorter than his right, always posed for the camera in a way that concealed his deformity. He was described by one contemporary author as "an actor […] holding his crippled left arm on a sword hilt, often covered with a gracefully draped, bright-lined military cloak."[12] That is how the Kaiser appeared in photographs. (Figure 4) Despite the fact that Djemal Pasha had no issues with his left arm, as in the case of the Kaiser, he often appeared in photographs posing in an identical manner to the Kaiser, holding on a sword's hilt in his left arm, leaning to the right, thus highlighting his extending right arm. (Figure 5)

Still, in contrast to the Kaiser, the Pasha's chest was not filled with medals. But we find the Pasha in this pose even in a photograph of him outside of the studio– which means presumably the photographer had less latitude in how he posed. The following photograph of the Pasha with the German Capt. Von Frankenburg fully illustrates this point. (Figure 6)

This majestic pose, of both the Kaiser and the Pasha, brings to mind the portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte that was painted in 1806 by Robert Lefevre, despite facing in the opposite direction.[13] To some extent, the first photograph in the Whiting album shows the Pasha in a similar pose, although he was riding a horse on the shores of the Dead Sea in 1915. (Figure 7)

In this context of portrait images, it might be worth pointing brining in Roland Barthes' argument in his short book *Camera Lucida* where he explored how once a person becomes the subject of a photograph, that photograph alters his/herself perception. In describing his experience while sitting for a formal photograph, Barthes maintained that he "feel [himself] observed by the lens [and] everything changes. I [Barthes] constitute myself in the process of posing."[14]

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12 Edward Leyell Fox (ed.), *Wilhelm Hohenzollern & Co*. (New York: Robert M. McBride and Company, 1917), 27.

13 The painting can be accessed online at: http://necspenecmetu.tumblr.com/post/13622521221/robert-jacques-francois-faust-lefevre-portrait-of

14 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 10.

صاني ١٨ حرب مجموعه‌سي صحيفه ٢٨٣

كورنيور ، بر چوق يوكلي حيوانلر كبدوب كلبورلرده‌ى . اوزاقدن، يكى عسكرلر سياه بر يول كورديلر . صوردقلرى وقت بو يولك مصره، نيل مبارك دوغرو پايلان يكى خط اولديغى اكلاشلدى . ذاتاً كندىلرىده بو يولك انشاسنه پاردم ايتك ايچون گلشلرى . ايلرده كندىلرينك تنظيم ايتديكى خطلر اوزرنده ، كندى واقوفلرينك ايجده سويش قاله انگليزلرله حرب ايتمك كبده‌جكلردى . استراحت ايچون يكى كلشلرى بركون سرپست براقديلر . ايرته‌سى كونى آرتق ايلرينه باشلامشلردى .

مينا هيرسنده: بر كشف قولى

مينا هيرسنده: بر عثمانى اردوگاهى
« بورتكال صاليبى ايكى قارين »

تشخيص ايتدى . سياه نقطه‌لر بالاشيوردى . عجبا هيچ اميد ايله‌ديكى يوقيدى هر وقت مصادفه‌ايتمديكى زمردعثمانلو شنك قادنلرينك كورلميسى اولاسين ...

فاضل فريد قورقاردى . بوطارق الطبيعه جانورلره بيلير ، اوزرينه‌ده آتيله بيلردى . اونك توفنكى ايله سونكوسى واردى . اونجه يه قدر مدافعه ايده‌جك ، اكر اولمه‌جكده اولسه قدير الهى دكلى ؟ نه‌دن قورقسين؟... برچوق شيلر ذهنندن كچديكى حالده كوزنى قوشدن بر ثانيه آيرمامشدى . قوشك كورلميسى ده يره بالاشدقجه خفيفله‌شيوردى . بردن‌بره وجودينه برصارصلمه كلدى ويواش يواش پرمايندى . بردفعه دها قوم اوزرنده سچرادقدن صوكرا آرتق حركتسز قالدى . فقط متصل خومورداتيوردى . فاضل فريد، برقوم نه‌جكلكك آزقه‌سنه باقمش شو اوچان جانورى حيرتله تدقيق‌ايديوردى . ايسته! شيمدى‌ده كوزلرندن برنى آچدى . قيميزى برآهستلق بر مدت قارا كافى ايچنده پارلامه باشلادى . بر ايكى دقيقه صوكرا اوده غائب اولدى . فكرار كوزنى قپامشدى .

فاضل فريدك پارمقلرى ، غيراختيارى ماوزرينك تپكى بولدى .

فقط بو نه ؟ قولاغنه بر صدا گلمشدى . دقتله قولاغنى قابارتدى . صداتك قوشدن طرفه گلديكنى واجبى برلسان قونوشديغى ايچه فرق ايتدى . حيرت! .. عجبا بو جانوار، شكار اولدرق آزقه‌سنده بر آدمى طاشيوردى ؟ امكانى ممكن اولديغى قدر بالاشدى . بر انسان شكلنك قوشك كووده‌سندن آيريلوب يره آتلادىغى ايكنجى برشكلك دها بر نجى بر

مينا هيرسنده: دبّة السبع ده عثمانى بطاريه‌لرينك دوردقلرى جرانبه‌سى

رايلر طاشيورلر، بر بر لرينه ربط ايديپورلر، القرده چكيچ چالپشيورلردى .

ايچه قارا كافى بر كچه ايدى، فاضل فريد نوبتى قالمشدى . ثابت نظرلرى كچه‌لك قارا كلمه‌سنه ديكيلمش، القرنى توفنكيله‌ناملوسته‌دايامش ، كچه‌لك طلمتى ايچنده دهاقوى، كوچوك بر كولكه‌لى حركتسز دور . پيوردى . حساس اولان فاضل فريد قومارك نفسه‌سنى واضحاً فرق ايديوردى . آره صره اسن بر روزكار اهتزازه كتيرديكى قوم دانه . لرنى برينه سورتديرمدكى معدنى بر صدا حاصل ايديوردى ، پوسس خفيف بر لحن و حزين برحالت ايله واسع چوكك پوشنى ايچنده عكس اهتز اولپوردى . فاضل فريد ديكله‌دى . بو رقيق نغمه‌لر اوكا مملكتنك برشرقيسنى دوشندرمشدى . بو روحان سكوتى بالكز اوزاقلردن كلن برچاقاك، كاه بر صرلانك اولوماسندن باشقه هيچ بر شى اخلال ايقه‌يوردى .

اى شيمدى ... ايشته باشقه بر صدا ... بوده آهنكدار ، فقط يكسق .. عادتا برنوع فيصيلدى . يوسس‌ده فاضل فريده ، حاى پايق ايچون مانعاله قويديغى صو ابريكنك قاينادىغى وقت پارديغى آهسكى خاطر . لاغدى . فقط بوحس چوق سور . مه‌دى ، صدا كينه‌كچه شدتله تيوردى . فاضل فريد صاغ ايتدى ، بر خيلى دكله‌ديكى حالده هيچ بر شيئه باكزه‌مه‌مدى . نه پازين ! بلكه اوزاق چوقلرده دهشتلى بر فورطنه واردى . . بونه ؟ بردن‌بره فيصيلدىنك كوكدن كلديكى فرق ايتمه‌سيمى ؟ كوزلرى بر مدت قارا كافى دلمكه چالشدى . الك نهايت كوكده سياه بر نقطه‌لك داغلرله برلرينه‌يوك داغلرله رسم ايتديكى

Figure 3: Page from the issue of April 1915 of *Harb Mecmuası*. With a photograph from the Sinai campaign

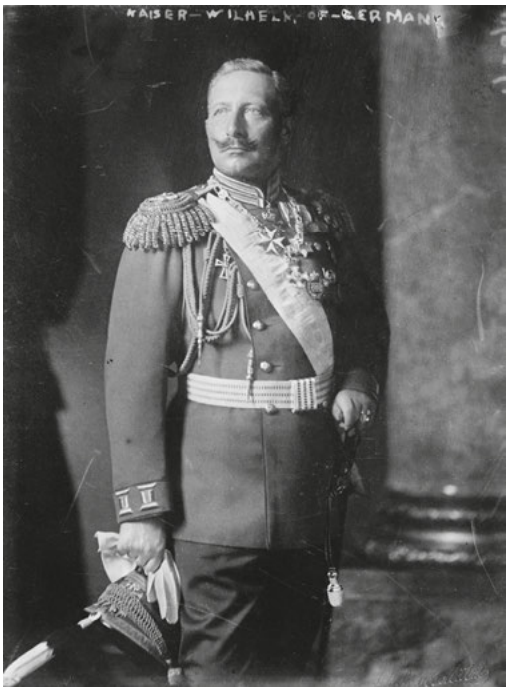

Figure 4: The German Kaiser. Library of Congress [ggbain 06179 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.06179; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ggbain-06179].

Figure 5: Portrait of the Pasha. Source: Underwood & Undwerwood, N. Y.

In other words, instead of being his usual self, Barthes was forced to assume a pose, thus transforming his own body into another body, the one that will be fixed forever in the picture. At the same time, the transformed body in the studio portrait becomes itself–in other words, an important point of reference for the photographed person to mimic. It is a case of life imitating photography. The subject, with the help of the photographer, chooses the image that he or she wants to project, and will then aspire to reconstitute his or her own person into the image thus created. The desire expressed by a customer of the Sagar Nagda's studio in India is a good example of this: she wants to come out in the photograph better than she is in reality.[15] Thus the person who appears in the photograph is not the person who was, but an "other," the person, as he or she would like to be. The Pasha must have been fond of his photographic portraits that he also carried himself as if he was the Kaiser of Ottoman Syria. However, the psychology of the Pasha remains to be a topic worthy of study, but is not the focus of this chapter.

[15] Quoted in Christopher Pinney "Notes from the Surface of the Image: Photography, Post colonialism, and Vernacular Modernism," in Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson (eds.), *Photography's Other Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 214.

Figure 6: Djemal Pacha & Capt. Von Frankenburg. From the George Grantham Bain Collection at Library of Congress [ggbain 18812 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ggbain.18812; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ggbain-18812].

In one of Raad's photographs of the Pasha (figure 8), the grandeur is less powerful and the Pasha appears in a more humble manner. The photo appears to mimic the ones mention above as the Pasha is shown in full military uniform with a medal pinned to his chest siting at an angle with his face slightly tilted. He is not

Figure 7: Djemal at the shore of the Dead Sea. This is the first photo in the album of Whiting, Source: Library of Congress [http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mamcol.059; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ppmsca-13709].

looking directly into the lens, but slightly toward what could be the raised hand of the photographer likely aiming to give the spectator a clear view of the subject's eyes.

Scrutinizing this portrait of the man who figures in the annals of Arab and Armenian histories as the butcher, the viewer could possibly discern dissimilar levels of representation. Roland Barthes once described his reaction when looking at a photograph of Jerome, Napoleon's youngest brother taken in 1852. Barthes expressed his great amazement at gazing right into "eyes that looked at the Emperor."[16] To the Ottoman population, especially in the Syrian provinces, Djemal was an emperor, and there is some evidence that he saw himself as one for all practical purposes. Looking directly into his eyes during his dictatorial stint amounted to a death wish on the part of the insolent viewer. But here we are, a century later and through the magic of photography, able to do it as often as we wish without fear or trembling.

Because of its age, the photograph of Djemal appears as nothing more than a relic from the past. It is just an old photograph produced a century ago using old methods of developing and printing. In that sense, its initial significance relates not to its subject, but to its physical existence as an artifact. It is simply a fairly

16 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 10.

Figure 8: Portrait of Djemal Pasha by Khalil Raad. Source: Institute for Palestine Studies.

well made portrait of a middle-aged man. Seen as such, the picture coveys to me as a viewer the human side of its subject. A century-old photograph of a man is a photograph of a person now dead that once posed for the camera with perhaps the hint of a smile. The intervening distance in time and space, how the photo was acquired, the context in which it continues to exist today – as an archival or collectable object – give it a meaning connected not to what or who it depicts, but to its condition as an artifact worthy of a study in itself.

A discrepancy exists between what the photograph meant in its time and what it could mean to us today. The subject, if he could stare back at the present-day

spectator, cannot understand his/her reaction to his image. After all, the picture was important in his day because it was *of him*. But for all the initial indifference of today's spectator to the dictator's power and position, Djemal continues to stare and thus has the power to eventually compel the viewer to acknowledge his presence and return his gaze and look at *his* image. The picture presents its viewer with one simple fact about the subject: that he is there in front of the camera, looking at the lens, and therefore at the viewer as if telling him/her something.

In the picture, we see a man in his forties, perhaps, with sharp eyes, in a military uniform. Nothing in the picture betrays his reputation as the shedder of blood as he is remembered in the annals of history for the execution of Arab nationalists in Beirut and Damascus; nor does anything hint at his role in the Armenian genocide. In its own terms, the picture shows a man with the posture and demeanor of a normal person, a fact that does not match his reputation. Is it simply an act of deception on the part of a clever photographer with a gift for humanizing cruel subjects? Or was the photographer not skilled enough to stage a grandeur image? Or perhaps, the photo indicates how a shrewd politician and cruel man's ability to pose, to act, to project an image that belies his true (evil) nature?

As I gaze at the photographs of the Fourth Ottoman Army, I am aware of the fact that I am looking at what was before me, before I was born, yet I remain conscious of the fact that what is depicted are events that altered the course of numerous lives of people who live now in the areas depicted in the images. My use of the term "altered" here in reference not to what is, but to what could have been, or what Ariella Azoulay, calls "potential history." The war's disastrous end changed the Syrian region in significant and irreversible ways. Therefore, the tension of history that Barthes was possibly referring to has a constant presence in the process of my gazing at the photographs. This tension, in my case, is between what the photographs depict, and a certain nostalgia about a past that is different from the present, not only in the sense of periodization, but also in the sense of ever wondering about what could have been. To his Syrian subjects, Djemal Pasha was the Butcher, but to a speculating person from a different generation, he represents elements of a potential history that never was. Not that he himself would have necessarily been part of that history, but the transformations of the period in themselves could have developed differently from what had transpired.

In his essay, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin pointed out that "[d]uring long periods of history, the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence." Our sense of perception, he added, "is determined not only by nature, but by historical circumstances as well."[17] Indeed, what we have at hand in front of us is not what once

[17] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 222.

was. Rather, it is an image that exists in the here and now, which constitutes, at the same time, a historical testimony of a time long gone, captured thanks to an archaic photographic process. In this sense, what we see in the picture has more to do with our knowledge of the period than with any information it conveys. Our perception of the image before us also contains an element of sad nostalgia, not in relation to the victims of the subject, but in relation to the past he inhabits: his portrait represents a time that he will never be able to relive. Eduardo Cadava has written that in "photographing someone, we know that the photograph will survive him – it begins, even during his life, to circulate without him, figuring and anticipating his death each time it is looked at."[18] It is no wonder, then, that we should feel a sense of melancholy when gazing at the subject's photograph – but not for his times and his brutality.

In other words, the photograph has that mesmerizing *phantasmic* quality for it possesses what Benjamin called the photographic *aura.* The early camera (Khalil Raad's in this case) not only captured the image of the man, but also constructs an aura for the photograph it produced. The setting, the shades of color of the photograph, the subject's garment, and the background are just some of the many elements that create the aura. The picture is not a reproduction of an original art object or artifact; it is the art object or artifact itself. Hence, the creation of the aura is part of the act of taking pictures, particularly studio portraits.

In his later work, Benjamin, in what seems to be a reversal of the position he took in the essay referenced above, attributes to the camera, as the tool used in portrait photography, the power to create "auratic characteristics" that are lacking in paintings.[19] In contrast to painted portraits, it is the subject of the studio portrait that captivates the viewer, not the skill of the producers.[20]

There are other pictures of Djemal Pasha in Raad's collection. In a group photograph taken out-of-doors, instead of in Raad's studio, we see him standing with his staff, in full military uniform and shining boots, in front of what seems to be an official building. (Figure 9) The three members of his staff stand a step behind him; their positions immediately convey the hierarchical relationship. While two of the aides appear somewhat at ease, the third has a more rigid stance. Djemal himself has assumed an authoritative pose, left foot confidently forward, with his hands behind his back, causing the viewer to wonder whether he is holding something, perhaps a stick or a whip. His eyes, like those of his subordinates, are focused on the lens, but he projects an authority that seems to extend to the photographer and the camera.

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18 Eduardo Cadava, *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 11.

19 Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1999), 507-530.

20 Carolin Duttlinger, "Imaginary Encounters: Walter Benjamin and the Aura of Photography," *Poetics Today*, 29:1 (Spring 2008), 84-85.

Figure 9: Djemal with his staff by Khalil Raad. Source: Institute for Palestine Studies.

Contemplating the pose and the image, one feels the tension of the moment. The photographer is keen to present the leadership status of the main subject, while the staff is visibly aware of their lower rank and station. The image captures the power

Figure 10: Khalil Jawhariyyeh in uniform, Beirut circa 1915. The Wasif Jawhariyyeh collection, Institute for Palestine Studies.

Figure 11: Jamil Taqtaq in military uniform in Jerusalem circa 1915. Source: Arab Image Foundation, Beirut.

relations that Djemal almost certainly wanted to convey: himself as the focal point of the image, a successful military commander, very much at ease and in control. The photograph represents a stark contrast to his first portrait discussed above. The Pasha's humanity is lost in this pose, but his authority prevails. This image is more consistent with his reputation as a butcher and shedder of blood. Surely he must have been satisfied with the photographer's job.

Soldiers without Battles

Studio portraiture, as it seems, was rather popular in the cities of the region among conscripts. Individuals appear to have been keen on making sure there is a picture of them in the household before they are taken to the front. Khalil Raad was one of the many photographers in the region to take such portraits. Others included Johhanes Krikorian, Miltiades Savides, and Tomayan in Jerusalem, Issa Sawabini in Jaffa, Sarrafian brothers in Beirut and the Derounian brothers in Damascus, among many others. This genre also includes both studio portraits of men in the army. (Figures 10 and 11)

Figure 12: Ottoman troops in formation in southern Palestine, photo by Khalil Raad. Source: Institute for Palestine Studies.

However, as far as the on the ground activities of troops, we find that both collections examined here contain pictures of soldiers in trenches and in camps in southern Palestine. Some pictures simply show military formations. (Figure 12) But others attempt to present what appear to be soldiers in action.

The staged scenes are the ones showing soldiers in trenches. They are of actual soldiers and actual locations from the Suez campaign. But clearly they are staged battle scenes for the benefit of the photographer's lens. Lined up in trenches on their stomachs and pointing their guns at what seem to be enemy targets, the soldiers appear to be careful not to block each other from the camera's view. They keep low, possibly to suggest that they are trying to avoid enemy fire, but the angle from which the photos were taken suggests that the camera was placed on a higher level, with its operator standing in full view. If enemy fire were a real concern, then a photographer standing in clear view of the enemy outside the trenches would have been in grave danger. The soldiers are arranged in neat rows, and the fact that they all assume positions that do not block other soldiers is another indication that the pictures were taken with plenty of time to arrange their subjects, and during non-combat moments. The smiling faces or relaxed postures of some of the soldiers also reveal the absence of stress associated with combat. (Figure 13)

Still, the careful planning of the images does not deem them fake or unworthy of our consideration. To start with, they are pictures on location and the individuals appearing in them are genuine soldiers who were stationed at the particular

Figure 13: Ottoman troops Maneuvers near El Arish, 1916, from the Whiting Albums, Library of Congress [ppmsca 13709 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.13709; reproduction no: LC-DIG-ppmsca-13709].

photographed places. Their military status is apparent; the weapons they hold are the ones they used in combat; and the trenches were dug up in anticipation of battle.

Going back to the collective memory of the war in the region, it is clear that we have an almost alternative reality of hard times as well as a sense of doom in the air. But the photographs discussed in this chapter fail to reflect that other reality. Rather, it illustrates the Fourth Army and its leader as if they were well prepared for the battle, well organized and well fed. In the photographs soldiers appear wearing army uniforms, healthy, in what appears to be an alternative reality in contrast with the accounts provided by the memorialists mentioned above. The pictures certainly do not depict the soldiers as "walking on their feet under the hot sun, carrying heavy burdens on their backs, crossing great distances with no shade, or water to drink," nor does it show them suffering from heat and hunger in the desert as Khalil Sakakini stated in his diary.

While it is a given that individual photographs capture their subjects at specific times when the photographer happens to be there, it is the album, that of Whiting, as a whole that is the most intriguing. For it is what frames, reorganizes, and reorders things, thus creating the storyline and the narrative. While the individual photographs could be ordered in various ways to form endless possible of narratives, the album in hand offers only few plausible interpretations. Individual pho-

tos, once distributed, sold or archived, have lives of their own regardless of the photographer's initial intentions. The album was organized and ordered in a particular fashion by someone other Whiting himself, as it was a gift to him, and the individual photographs had been assigned captions, and dates when those were known.

By Way of Conclusion

The assumption of photography's incontrovertibility is in question. The memorizing gaze of the camera was clearly selective, to say the least. The work of the two "official" photographers, Raad and Whiting, left the reality of the period, as seen and felt by the population of Palestine, completely out of the frame, and hence, out of the pictorial record. The Cubist canvas that the war was, had failed us as historians, if seen by us, spectators, from the vantage point of the images of the campaign. The photographs discussed above not only missed their mark as records of war and disaster, but also went even further by presenting the campaign as a sure victory and life during the war as almost prosperous and tranquil.

At the same time, if we are to assume that the photographic intention behind the pictures was propaganda, then we must not forget that such photographs were not easily available to the general public. If marketing the war was the intention, then the question remains open regarding the extent in which those images were actually employed in any possible publicity campaign by the army of the sultanate. In the absence of evidence that confirms that the photographs were ever made public at the time, the conclusion must be drawn that in terms of actual propaganda, the pictures were not significant as effectually propagandistic, at least as far as the Ottoman public was concerned. The possibility remains that the photographs might have had an indoctrinatory effect that was limited to elites and leaders in Istanbul. Still, they are images of great importance to historians today, for they show the mindset of the Young Turks at the time and can be very helpful in studying the war period visually via its landscape and its failures that were kept out of the frame. Above all, the photographs represent the liminal time that separates two imperial periods in Palestine: The Ottoman and the British-Zionist.

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