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“Every nation, if it is to survive as a nation, must study its own history and have a foreign policy”
—C.J. O’Donnell, *The Lordship of the World*, 1924, p.145

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from my hands the Americans nevertheless opened the door to this man. But that conversation I had had with him, where his temperament had produced such blunt candidness, demonstrated for me the insurmountable nature of the challenge we faced in the new Germany. Another and even more significant fact was how few writers could be found who were genuinely concerned at the pernicious persistence of Hitlerite phraseology in the daily German language. One of the best German journalists of the time once brought me an essay denouncing the persistence of Nazi phrases and concepts in the language and demanding a return to uncontaminated German. It was an excellent essay by a man motivated by the best of intentions, but we couldn't print it precisely because even it was unknowingly saturated with Hitler-German.

It would be unjust to claim that the difficulties we faced were exclusively or even mainly due to faults on the German side, as our greatest difficulties, of both a personal and political nature, resulted from the behaviour of the U.S. Military Government, a topic which forms the subject of the final chapter of this book. □

**ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO,
NOVEMBER 13, 1918:
THE LAST FALL OF "CONSTANTINOPLE"**

Dr. Yusuf Turan Çetiner

[The following article was written by Yusuf Turan Cetiner to commemorate the fall of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, to the British Empire a century ago. Turan Cetiner is the author of 'Turkey and the West: From Neutrality to Commitment (University Press of America, 2015).

Istanbul - or "Constantinople", as the British persisted in calling it - was to be the prize held out to the Tsar for the loan of his 'Russian Steamroller' that would roll all the way to Berlin. Whilst French and British armies sealed off Germany from the West and the Royal Navy controlled the seas around it, that Steamroller advanced from the East. However, the Steamroller was stopped and it began to roll back, crushing those who sent it on its way on Britain's bidding. That left the Tsar's prize unclaimed and in Britain's lap upon the winning of its Great War. For 5 years the British Empire held the great city with the Royal Navy's guns trained upon it. In response to the occupation Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) removed the capital deep into the Anatolian heartland, beyond the range of the British Navy. He began the Turkish resurgence which saw off the Greek and Armenian pawns and then came face to face with the British occupation. Winston Churchill threatened war from the Empire but then the British backed down, abandoning Istanbul to its rightful owners. Business was soon after concluded at Lausanne and the Royal Navy sailed away. Later, when they started to pass across the Bosphorus, it was as if they were sailing among a forest of steel. Then Lt. Col. Cevat heard the following words from Mustafa Kemal: "They shall go, just as they have come." Thrilled with these words, Cevat replied: "God will grant it to you my Pasha. You will drive them out." A smile appeared on Mustafa Kemal's face and he said: "Let's see it."

In the article Turan Cetiner presents information not generally known about in this part of the world. *Irish Foreign Affairs* is very pleased to present it to our readers.

Pat Walsh]

On May 29, 1453, following a siege which had begun on April 6, "Constantinople" fell to the Ottomans who were led by the 21-year-old Mehmed (the Conqueror), the seventh Sultan of the Ottoman Empire who defeated the Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI Palaiologos. Since that day, the names Islâmbol, İstanbul, Istanbul and Konstantiniyye were used interchangeably in Ottoman documents up until the Empire's dismantling in the immediate aftermath of the Great War.

Westerners continued to refer to the city as "Constantinople" well into the 20th century and most certainly during the Great War too. After 465 years, the "Queen of Cities" was once again captured by the Allies when Allied armada anchored in the Bosphorus on 13 November 1918, symbolizing the taking over of the city by a literally Christian coalition the members of which always referred to Istanbul as "Constantinople". The inference in the continued use of the name "Constantinople" was that the city was rightfully part of the Christian World and would be taken back at an advantageous opportunity. All the indicators were pointing to the fact that opportunity had arrived.

The capital of the Ottoman Empire remained under Allied occupation for nearly five years. The liberation of İstanbul by the armies of the National Assembly of Turkey, led by Mustafa Kemal came on 6 October 1923. The way in which the Ottoman capital was referred to was shaped by a political nostalgia and a twisted perception of its cosmopolitan society which wasn't a monolithic bloc in reality. From this viewpoint, the last fall of "Constantinople" and the liberation of İstanbul has remained one of the less debated issues of the Great War and it has remained an obscure period in the aftermath of the Armistice Day.

Beginning the Great War

Britain's gradual advancement across Ottoman territory, its mastery of the sea and air and, finally, the occupation of the capital, ensured the complete Allied victory over the Ottomans. Overwhelmed by the technical superiority of the Allies, including their mastery of the new theatre of war, the air, the Ottoman situation was desperate and the Armistice signed at Mudros soon had the consequences of a thorough defeat.

In the decades prior to the Great War, control or status of those lands comprising the Ottoman Empire had been of great importance to Britain. By the beginning of the 19th century, facing the advances of Napoleonic France and Russia, Anglo-Ottoman understanding had proven to be a plausible policy option to achieve this objective. Despite certain departures from this policy, such as the gaining of the possession of Cyprus through the agreement of the Sublime Porte (Bâb-ı Âlî, a metonym for the central government of the Ottoman Empire) in 1878 and the occupation of Egypt in 1882, both powers could still reconcile their existing interests.

Under the pressures of a chronically unpredictable political environment, recognition and consolidation of Britain's strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf by means of minimum expenditure and responsibility, rested upon protecting this status quo which was reinforced in the aftermath of the Crimean War. The Ottoman territories represented a giant buffer zone for Britain to be maintained against encroachment by rival Imperialist Powers. The strategic reorientation that Britain sought to achieve in the decades before the Great War was basically prompted by its perception of Germany as a major emerging rival. In view of its fast advancement into the Great Powers' rivalry, Germany had to be confronted and this had required Britain's rapprochement with, its traditional enemies, France and Russia.

The Balkan Wars came about as a result of Moscow's gaining a new vigour once the Anglo-Russian Agreement of

1907 was made. The 1907 agreement with Britain conveyed the impression to the Tsar that the British would no longer block advancement as they had in the time of Disraeli, through treaty of war. The Russian Foreign Minister concluded that it was the right time to drive the Turks from Europe and the Austrians from the Balkans. The Russian intentions were duly noted by the Sublime Porte, yet, there was little room for any manoeuvre as the Empire was under a great strain after the Libyan war and having lost its British ally there was no hope of assistance from abroad.

The Ottoman Empire was entering a period of change prompted by the need to respond to the forces of nationalism that were bringing the modern world of Western Europe to its doorstep. It was Young Turks – Les Turcs Jeunes or as said in Turkish, Jön Türkler, a coalition of reform groups that led a revolutionary movement against the régime of Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1908, who, under the shadow of his twice closure of the Ottoman Parliament in 1877 and 1878¹ was targeted by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).

The CUP was the political grouping of Young Turks, a strongly opinionated movement that sought to adopt elements of European nationalism to help bolster the Ottoman Empire against the external and internal threats that confronted it. The threats were symbolised by the Reval meeting of King Edward and Tsar Nicholas II in June 1908, as well as by various signs and suggestions of decline of the Ottoman Empire. The coming to power of the CUP in 1908 in a bloodless revolution and the formation of a new administration under the reinstated Constitution of 1876 constitutional monarchy began a serious attempt at modernization of the Empire.

When the Young Turks restored the parliamentary monarchy in 1908, Britain had a new opportunity to ameliorate its relations with the Sublime Porte. The CUP considered the Ottoman Empire as potentially “*Japan of the Near East*”² and expected that Britain would adhere to an alliance with the Porte just as it did with Tokyo in 1902. In 1909, when this proposal was made to Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, turned it down because he could not risk alienating Russia and possibly driving it into a rapprochement with Germany.³ The agreement with Russia had made the restoration of previous Ottoman-British relations less desirable than ever. Russia was the staunch enemy of the Sublime Porte, while its alliance with London was extremely important in order to push Germany out of the Great Power equilibrium. That said, this was certainly a just one part of a complicated pattern of rivalries and fears that culminated in the outbreak of the Great War.

The Early War Years and Air Targeting of “Queen of Cities”

By the spring of 1915, the war had stalled into a static trench warfare in the European theatre and the British War Cabinet was convinced that through attacking the eastern flank of the Central Powers, enemy forces would drain from the Western Front, making a breakthrough possible. However, assault on Gallipoli prove to be a poorly planned operation, which, stimulated another campaign in Mesopotamia.

The pendulum of war in the Middle East included the gains and the losses of opposing empires such as defeat of the Allies in Gallipoli, the surrender of General Charles V. F. Townshend in Kut-el Amara on April 29, 1916 to the Ottoman forces, as well as the outbreak of the Arab revolt against the Porte which commenced on 10th June 1916. As the war intensified, Prime Minister Asquith and the liberal imperialists were convinced that nothing less than the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and its division up to the victors in the war could justify the sacrifices demanded of the Allied publics. As such, former considerations on the decentralization to be imposed upon Istanbul to give Turkey some prospect of a permanent existence in Asia rapidly vanished.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement concluded in May 1916, amounted to an ambitious partition of the Middle East in advance of territorial spoils of war. Capturing of Baghdad on March 11, 1917 by the British, and the fall of Jerusalem on December 9, left the Sublime Porte in a position to try avoiding the inevitable only. Meanwhile, the Zionist movement was also getting increasingly determined to get international support for their cause which led to the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917. All these developments underscored that the ultimate victory in the Great War depended on the result to be obtained in the Western Front.

With the British naval blockade tightening, 1917 saw the adoption by the German General HQ (Große Hauptquartier) examples of unrestricted submarine warfare and again in the same year, resorting to unusual methods of war for the submission of the enemy was once more brought to the forefront by the German air raids on London. Prior to that Zeppelin raids were launched on the British cities and the use of aircraft constituted another step in this new form of warfare. Particularly, the air attacks of July 1917 caused dramatic casualties.

As the air warfare unleashed the idea of attacking the cities, Germany took the lead.⁴ Terrifying air raids on London by the Zeppelins could not be retaliated by the RFC. However, General Hugh Trenchard, the father of the RAF and the pioneer of British bombing took up the idea of Lord William Weir made in the Spring of 1917 to develop a strategy for a long-range bombing campaign against Germany.⁵

Trenchard’s strong embrace of strategic bombing was clearly displayed to the French in notes he wrote that were provided to Allied delegations for a meeting of the Inter Allied Aviation Committee in July 1918. He advocated that air raids against Germany were not reprisals. “*Instead, the word ‘reprisal’ should be removed from the military vocabulary*”. *From the military point of view, these were operations against ‘military objectives’ and ‘civilian morale’, as important as those of the infantry.*”⁶ In other words, Trenchard rejected any restraint in bombing policy. Under these circumstances, it was not a difficult choice for the British military experts to engage in similar attacks when and where possible. Istanbul was then nothing more than soft target where poorly equipped Ottoman Air Forces were stationed.

The first air raid on Istanbul was on April 12, 1916, when two British planes engaged targets in the city. This was followed by building air defence system for Istanbul which could not be implemented before 1917. The raids on Istanbul in 1918

1 Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 166.

2 Grey to Lowther, November 13, 1908 (Private), Sir (Viscount) Grey’s Private Papers, Turkey 1905-1910, PRO/F.O.800/79.

3 Feroz Ahmad, “Great Britain’s Relations with the Young Turks, 1908–1914,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4, July 1966, pp. 302–329.

4 Ian Castle, *London 1914–17: The Zeppelin Menace*, Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008, p. 9.

5 Andrew Boyle, *Trenchard: A Man of Vision* (London: Collins, 1962), p.219.

6 Cited in, Andrew Barros, “Strategic Bombing and Restraint in ‘Total War’, 1915-1918”, *The Historical Journal*, 52, 2 (2009), p. 424.

started on March 9 and the last British air raid to İstanbul was on October 25.

The British raids in August were particularly severe, causing civilian casualties. The outrage in İstanbul prompted by these attacks hitting civilian targets and the Ottoman Government's embittered response was further increased with renewed raids in September.

The greatest air raid on İstanbul came on October 18, 1918. During the first wave at 11:30, seven enemy planes menaced the city for twenty minutes, dropping their bombs on the most crowded streets. The second wave came in the afternoon at 13:30, this time with five planes. Around 70 civilians were killed during these attacks and 200 wounded. Almost, half of the casualties were non-Muslims. Central districts of Beyazıt, Üsküdar, Eminönü, Galata, Unkapanı, Fatih, Samatya, Karaköy, Aksaray, Şehremini, Karagümrük, Fener, Kumkapı, Kasımpaşa, Eyüp, Hasköy, Pangaltı, Arnavutköy and Beyoğlu were hit. The greatest number of casualties was in Mahmutpaşa, where the Friday bazaar was regularly held and the day time attacks claimed their greatest toll.⁷

The raids coincided with Lord Weir, an advocate of bombing cities, being appointed Air Minister to Lloyd George's government in 1918. At this time Hugh Trenchard implored the War Cabinet to let him "attack the industrial centres of Germany" too.⁸ He declared himself unimpressed with any sporadic bombing the German air force had done over England and "*the few occasions French machines raided the Rhineland cities, it was always emphasized that such attacks were in the nature of reprisals. Trenchard was against retaliation; his sole concern was to cripple Germany by means of a sustained air offensive.*"⁹ İstanbul likewise was not spared from this new air war strategy.

Trenchard argued for a new form of aerial warfare distinct from the retaliatory sorties of the German and French machines - a strategic campaign of bombing cities. He described the role that strategic bombers could play in war in a study prepared for the Allied Supreme War Council in 1918 specifying two main objectives for the strategic bomber - to destroy the enemy's morale and material. In order to achieve this he argued for attacks on enemy industrial centres where striking at the centres of production could do vital damage and achieve the maximum effect on the morale of the enemy by striking at what he saw as the most vulnerable part of the enemy population. This entailed area bombing. In June 1918 over 70 tons of bombs were dropped on German cities and in July 85 tons were dropped on Cologne, Coblenz and other Rhineland cities.

In sum, in 1918, İstanbul was regularly subjected to air raids. Between 9 March and 25 October 1918, not less than a dozen air raids were made on the Ottoman capital. All air raids were night time attacks on March 9, July 9; 23; 27, August 20; 22; 26; 28, and September 13 and 23 except for the attack on October 18 and air skirmish on October 25.¹⁰

7 Mustafa Selçuk, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda İtilaf Devletleri'nin İstanbul'a Yönelik Hava Taarruzları" [Air Raids of Allies on İstanbul in the First World War], *Marmara Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 1, No: 2, Fall 2014 p. 105. Selçuk refers to the report of Eminönü'nün Police Station. BOA.DH.İUM.21-2/86 lef 118.

8 Boyle, *Trenchard*, p. 295.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 296.

10 Selçuk, *Birinci*, p. 100. In this one of the most detailed account of the air raids on İstanbul, the day time attack on 18 October is stated as the last of the air raids since the raid on October 25, 1918 did not reach the Capital. Cpt. Fazıl was the Turkish flying Ace who single-handedly engaged the enemy in this last air skirmish and was decorated for bravery.

Apparently, İstanbul, was an attractive target for the Allies for a few reasons. It was where Headquarters of the OHC and a few key military facilities were stationed. Besides, it hosted several important industrial, commercial and social targets. The air raids to İstanbul were planned and viewed as technical matters and with destroying some military targets as well as crippling the morale of İstanbulites in mind. Drop of propaganda leaflets and bombs at the same time was not uncommon either. This however, may only complete the discussion in part.

Conscription Policies and İstanbul's Place in the Ottoman War Effort

The value of İstanbul as a military target was of lesser importance when the population of the city was regarded as a whole, and as well as along with its national or ethnic identities. Erik-Jan Zürcher stated that throughout centuries, İstanbul with its outlying districts and a population of over a million, did not deliver a single soldier to the army.

Officers like Enver (later Pasha), and Niyazi (Bey -a salutation-, of Resna) had forced the Sultan Abdülhamid II to reinstate the 1876 Constitution on July 24, 1908 through the bloodless revolution of Young Turks. When the Young Turks came to power and began the second constitutional monarchy experience of the Empire after a break of three decades, they thought to use the universal conscription to achieve unity and equality among the different nations of the Empire.

The Young Turks, however had to fight a brief war against the forces of old rule in April 1909 in İstanbul. Armed elements of the conservative forces were discontent with the modernization attempts as the rumours included that army officers who had no formal education will be forced to retire and a rigorous modernization attempt would shake the foundations of centuries long traditions.

The success of the Young Turks in defeating the conservatives' armed opposition was owed to the Third Army or the "Army of Action" stationed in the Balkans and a strong infantry division of which was deployed in Salonika. Apparently, non-Muslim subjects of the Empire had shouldered this effort since the speech of Niyazi Bey, at the funeral of volunteers of this brief but crucial struggle in İstanbul had made it very clear. "*Brothers, here are men of every nation - Turks, Albanians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jews; but they died together, on the same day, fighting under the same flag. Among us, too, are men of every nation, both Mohammedan and Christian; but we also have one flag and we pray to one God.*"¹¹

Soon after they consolidated their power, in July 1909 military service was made compulsory for all Ottoman subjects. At the same time a number of Muslim groups such as, students in religious schools who had failed their exams, but also the inhabitants of İstanbul, lost their exempt status. In October 1909, the recruitment of conscripts irrespective of religion was ordered for the first time.

Although the representatives of the Greek, Syrian, Armenian and Bulgarian communities in İstanbul agreed to this in principle, the outcome was basically little more than frustration. Some suggested that the members of their community serve in separate, ethnically distinguishable uniform and in units officered by Christians, some of them like the Bulgarians stated that they wished to serve in the Balkan provinces only. The CUP did not accept any "counter-proposals" and concurrently, young Christian men who had connections abroad or wealth, opted to leave the country or get a foreign passport.

11 Harry Griswold Dwight, *Constantinople Old and New* (London: Longmans, Green&Co., 1915), pp. 446-447.

Those who could leave, change their nationality, or pay the much higher *bedel-i nakdî* (the cost of exemption), along with well-to-do Muslims were continued to be exempted from the compulsory military service including in WWI years. For centuries, the Janissaries - *Yeniçeriler* which had been recruited from among the Christian peasantry in the Balkans and whose members converted to Islam in the European provinces were the only channel for a non-Muslim to join the military and climb the ranks for a better life. The Janissaries were disbanded in a tumultuous way in favour of a new army with European standards in 1826, to end the centuries old tradition of recruitment of poor Christian children into army. 1856 Edict which emphasized equality of the Ottoman subjects before the law provided a new incentive to conscript Christians which then represented no less than 30 per cent of the population. This however, short lived when the collection of a military service exemption tax from the Christian and Jewish communities was introduced by the state.¹²

In an atmosphere dominated by Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Bulgarian declaration of independence in 1908, Italy's declaration of war and invasion of Italy in 1911, loss of Albania, Macedonia and part of Thrace, including Salonika and the European lands of the Empire which had once stretched into Hungary, with the exception of a small enclave in Thrace by 1914, the limited conscription system applied in İstanbul must indeed provide a less thought picture of the capital.

Meantime, not all the non-Muslims were looking for escape routes, or getting involuntarily conscripted, there were indeed volunteer non-Muslims in defence of the Empire. Without overlooking the loyalty of many non-Muslim to the Ottomanism ideal, it can be emphasized that Ahmad particularly points out to the case of Jewish elite and states that "by August 1918, the last German offensive having failed, the survival of the Ottoman Empire was in doubt. But even in these circumstances the Jewish elite did not desert the sinking ship."¹³ Eventually, the Ottoman government found it more preferable to not to test loyalties and placed its Christian subjects in non-combatant duties. The number of soldiers in Ottoman Labour Battalions were said to be around 100.000. To set an example as to the composition of these units, number of soldiers in the labour battalions of the 1st Army's European divisions were 15,052 (%58,1 Greeks, Armenian %22,3, Jewish %4,5, Muslim, %12,4).¹⁴

It is equally important to note that despite the minimalized perception of discrimination or alienation among the İstanbulites, let alone the chauvinist or jingoist feelings' getting any upper hand in the capital, there was hardly a sense of mobilization in the city. As commonly agreed, building a military atmosphere or a sheer fighting spirit in a city the majority of which populated by non-Muslims was against any possible expectation. And coupled with its habitants' traditional avoidance of military service, as well as its prevailing dissimilarities with London, Paris or Berlin, İstanbul could hardly be considered as a hostile target the Allied bombing of which, however, had worked towards creating a counter-effect.

12 Erik-Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System in Theory and Practice, 1844-1918," *International Review of Social History*, 43 (3) (1998), pp. 443-446.

13 Ahmad also adds that the Jewish political elite had never been monolithic, and its commitment to Ottomanism or Zionism would have been a matter for individual choice. Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2014), p. 111.

14 Cengiz Mutlu, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Amele Taburları* [Labour Battalions in the First World War] (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2007), pp. 50-52.

The necessity of the first all-out war of the world had encouraged a tendency towards a greater internal cohesion with the remaining loyal residents of the city regardless of their roots. And many of them had used the opportunities provided in the war and once more proved their membership in the larger society through an unconditional patriotism. When the war had taken a negative course for the Ottoman Empire, equalization of the İstanbulites prove to be so strong that actions that may fall into a category discrimination remain limited when compared to war torn cities of Europe. In İstanbul, the unchanging level of integration was the recipe for the cohesion in the city which remained unaltered throughout a period of five years under Allied occupation too.

Press and the Intelligentsia in İstanbul

After the Young Turk Revolution, freed from censorship and the scrutiny of domestic intelligence, İstanbul had started to enrich its cosmopolitan life with contemporary freedoms. A new socio-political life to encompass numerous age-old ethnic and faith communities was flourishing and various advancements to push back the thriving processes of social alienation and disintegration were on the horizon. The multi-ethnic and multi-cultural atmosphere of the city had always made it conducive to progress and another vigorous attempt had just started. Quite importantly, the atmosphere of the revolution was articulated in the intellectual field, an effort which was recognized as the birth Ottoman sociology.

Ulm-u İktisadiyye ve İctimaiyye Mecmuası [The Journal of Economic and Sociological Sciences] which was established by a group of critics and intellectuals, Ahmet Şuayb, Mehmet Cavit and Rıza Tevfik, was one of the symbols of this fundamental change. It put forward what the administration system of the country lacked, so to give a new hope to the cosmopolitan inhabitants of İstanbul.

From the works of Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer to Emile Durkheim's *Qu'est-ce que la sociologie*, various contemporary discussions were regularly held. Solidarity was the prevailing outcome of these discussions and Solidarism was the proposed alternative, a third way, to socialism and liberalism, believing in a classless and harmonic society.¹⁵ Apparently, the CUP had found its ideology in this new climate and a series of new definitions for people, citizen, nation and nationalism were formed and deployed. All these endeavours underscored that İstanbul was going to be kept as one of the cradles of civilization.

In the absence of a history of alienation or discriminatory acts, yet with various elements backing the unity of the society in İstanbul and for some, cultivating a quiet indifference towards war and politics, very few paradoxes remained ready for exploitation by the Great War and the resulting occupation of the city. Whereas, these paradoxes did rise as seen in some journals of the time.

Concurrently with the war's rapidly approaching end, the press in İstanbul was embarked upon a new form of debate which was never seen before. On March 18, 1918, the daily, *İkdam*'s all of a sudden coverage of the democracy in England and the freedom of thought in France, arch enemies of the Ottomans and openly expressed anti-censorship stand caused a stir in the capital. Opponents of the CUP who were already back from exile were confused the most. These, however, were the signs of a policy change of the CUP and could only be explained

15 Sanem Güvenç-Salgırlı, "Structures of Knowledge in the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic, 1731-1980," *Journal of Philosophical Economics*, IV:1 (special issue, 2010), p. 191.

in accordance with a new political objective of achieving an "honourable general peace", replacing the "ultimate victory". The CUP, having seen the freedoms introduced by 1908 Revolution culminated in anarchy, had decided to prepare for an exit in a way it might be harmed the least.¹⁶

Not surprisingly, this new language of the press prompted unexpected thoughts as well. According to a coalescing group of defeatists, romanticists, some minority groups as well as a well-intended few, who were dispirited by the ailing Ottoman Empire, a vaguely defined longing for democracy, as some journals increasingly mentioned, was on the horizon with the approaching English occupation. An ambiguous notion of democracy was therefore prevailing since there was no thorough knowledge and accompanying discussion of what such a foreign rule had brought along in geographies as distant as Ireland and India. The romanticism towards the England ruled world was mixed with opportunistic feelings by some at the same time as others had already embarked upon a selfless patriotism. The picture of life in Istanbul under air attacks was complicated and often perplexed.

When the lifting of censorship except for military affairs was announced on June 9, 1918, the press in Istanbul greatly welcomed this decision. Commentaries in the press, such as *Atı*, stated that the lifting political censorship was an expression of trust in the maturity of the nation and its representative and interpreter, the press, which in return was fully conscious of the interests of state and nation.¹⁷

On September 30, 1918, an armistice between the Entente Powers and Bulgaria was signed at Salonika. London expected that the Sublime Porte would make peace proposals in early October. The terms of an armistice had already been drafted in London and with a few amendments, they were approved in Versailles on October 7 by a conference of the Prime Ministers of Britain, France and Italy.

Next day, it became known that the CUP government had resigned and that the new government at Istanbul would soon embark upon informing the United States of its desire to negotiate for peace. On 13 October, the Ottoman Charge d'affaires at Madrid requested the Spanish Government to ask the President Wilson to take upon himself the task of re-establishing peace. "Before President Wilson could ascertain the wishes of all the Allies, a further Turkish offer of peace was received, conveyed by Major-General Sir Charles Townshend, taken prisoner at Kut, who was released for the purpose and arrived at Mitylene on the 20th October."¹⁸

Finally, on October 30, the terms of an armistice were agreed upon and signed on board *H.M.S. Agamemnon* at Port Mudros. Although there was no stipulation in the agreement about occupation except in places where there was an imminent threat to Allied security (Article 7)¹⁹, British troops began landing in the capital by November 13, 1918, soon to be followed by the French and other Allies. While neither Berlin, Vienna, Sofia or Budapest was occupied, Istanbul was treated differently.

It was inevitable that the Allied victory and Britain's proclaimed intention of ending "the Turkish yoke" would prompt nationalist intentions among the minorities of the Ottoman Empire and a scramble for an expected redistribution of the spoils of war. By the turn of November, 1918, under the

atmosphere of armistice, separatist ideas of the Greek press in Istanbul were increasingly expressed in various articles. Many of these were communicated to the Turkish population by the Turkish journals. Along with journals in Armenian, when *Neologos* published an article titled "The Turks and Greeks" in Greek, it remarked the beginning of a new chapter of Istanbul under Allied occupation. Turkish journals of *Hadisat* and *Yeni İstanbul* quoted this article in Turkish which, in certain respects, was a testimony to vexed feelings of some Greeks.

The article put forward that a Turkish Journal in Izmir had stated that if the Rums [used in lieu of Greek in the Empire then] "are discontent under the Turkish rule, they can get the hell out of here."²⁰ Indeed, this and similar agitations or bitter remarks were connected with a justifiable fear of Greek revanchism which would soon prove to be true in view of the Greek landing in Izmir on May 15, 1919. Whereas, they were not only exploited but contributed to emerging lines of division of the society.

Accordingly, *Neologos*, very much encouraged by the new circumstances said,

the Greek nation is the first son of this land who never left in the hardest times and will not leave it in such a time when even the Turks accepted the principles [of Wilson]. Therefore, despising our nation and expressing a ferocious hatred does not loosen our affiliation to the Turkish nation. Above all, once Turkey accepts the program [of Wilson] on granting autonomy to Christian nations living in the country to administer their historical and national rights, making decisions on us rests upon the vote civilized nations. Then the duty of us and the Turks, is not to incite each other but to defend its nation's rights.²¹

Despite its giving room to an ostensible understanding with the Turks, however, *Neologos* soon joined other hardliner Greek journals of the capital which started to publish introductions of the commanders of the occupation forces and similar news. A caricature published in *Neologos* depicted a cannon ball fired by Wilson, turning to Venizelos, and landing on the dome of Hagia Sophia left very little to imagination as to this publication policy choice.²²

The Allied invasion of Istanbul on November 13, 1918, at a time when the exhausted nations of Europe could see no reason in fighting yet another battle (later crystallized by the Chanak Affair²³) and were tired of war and desirous of demobilization, was a disastrous act with great effects on the Turkish people. That said, the darkest years of the Turkish nation were still to come. The Greek Army's invasion of Izmir on May 15, 1919 which followed the occupation of Istanbul was another terrible episode of the unended Great War in Turkey.

The British Prime Minister David Lloyd George instigated Greek invasion met with a certain defeat on September 9, 1922 and the Article 59 of the Lausanne Treaty found a definitive war guilt in the invading Greek Army's conduct of - Britain's proxy - war on Turkey.

Article 59

Greece recognizes her obligation to make reparation for the damage caused in Anatolia by the acts of the Greek Army or administration which were contrary to the laws of war.

16 Orhan Koloğlu, *Aydınlıklarımızın Bunalım Yılı* [The Year of Depression of our Intellectuals] 1918 (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2000), p. 47.

17 Ibid., p. 44.

18 Brigadier General Sir James E. Edmonds, *The Occupation of Constantinople 1918-1923* (transcribed by Neil Wells) (Sussex: The Naval & Military Press Ltd., 2010), p. 1.

19 Ibid., p. 2.

20 As published in *Hadisat* and *Yeni İstanbul* on November 9, 1918, *ibid.*, pp. 125.

21 Ibid., pp. 125-126.

22 *Yeni İstanbul*, 11 November 1918, *ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

23 For one of the most detailed accounts of this episode, see, David Walder, *The Chanak Affair* (GB: The Macmillan Company, 1969).

On the other hand, Turkey in consideration of the financial situation of Greece resulting from the prolongation of the war and from its consequences, finally renounces all claims for reparation against the Greek Government.²⁴

Conclusion: Some Thoughts on İstanbul and the Memory of 1918

There are various accounts of Turkish memory of 1918 many of which identified the Turkish population of the Ottoman Empire as victims of a war that the Sublime Porte did not start but its ruling government of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) failed to save the country from.

Triggered by events such as the seizure of war vessels of *Sultan Osman* and *Reşadiye*, ordered by the Sublime Port and built at Armstrong and Vickers shipyards on July 28, 1914, days before the outbreak of the war and the signing of the Turco-German Alliance Agreement, the CUP's inevitable siding with Germany darkened the prospects for a resilient constitutional monarchy which the CUP had originally aimed to build. In July 1914, the fundamental intention of the Sublime Porte was to survive the War and it was the Turks, rather than the Germans who initiated the proposal of an alliance for defensive purposes. But it was indeed "after having their offers of alliance rebuffed by Britain, France and Russia."²⁵

Throughout the course of events, the CUP adopted policies stretching from a mixture of Ottoman Imperialism and a loosely defined Ottomanism encompassing all faiths and nationalities within the empire, to jihadism and lastly to Turkish nationalism. This represented a short, but a highly volatile period of time the effects of which had gradually reached to empire's capital. Four years of waging a devastating war from European to Middle Eastern theatres and remaining the prisoner of an alliance throughout these years from which no escape could be found, resulted in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

In 1918, the gap between the rest of the lands of the Ottoman Empire and İstanbul was apparent. Less than half the capital's population was Muslim. The rest were a mix of Greeks, Orthodox Armenians, Roumaninas, Albanians as well as Sephardic Jews whose ancestors had escaped from Spain centuries before and Polish Jews fleeing the Tsarist oppression. The Greeks dominated the commerce and Europeans ran the most important industries. As such, there was a strong dichotomy between the general outlook of İstanbul and its value as a military target.

Saved from the conscription waves and the hazards of war theatres, people of İstanbul was predominantly busy with meeting their ends, only in a tougher way as was the case in other European capitals. The difficulties for the ordinary Turk who was literally a minority in the Empire's capital, however, was more serious. As a Turkish journalist wrote, "We have remained mere spectators while our commerce, our trades and even our broken-down huts have been given to the foreigners."²⁶

As for the usual marriage of wealth and culture in the city, war had taken its toll in İstanbul. The ruling Government of the CUP was evidently not immune from the ever encroaching corruptions in an economy which was increasingly getting

24 Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and Other Instruments signed at Lausanne 24 July, 1923. <http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/pdf/1923/ts0016-1.pdf>

25 Pat Walsh, *Britain's Great War on Turkey*. Belfast: Athol Books, 2010, p. 97.

26 For general information on the population İstanbul and the quotation, see, Margaret Macmillan, *Paris 1919* (NY: Random House, 2003), pp. 370-371. Atatürk (young Mustafa Kemal) was only nineteen (1902) when he was in the Ottoman Military College which was on the north side of the Golden Horn, in the modern part of the city with its opera house, cafés, restaurants, banks, shops etc. "He enjoyed the city, but found it dangerous to governments." Ibid., p. 371.

harder to control. Prosperous segments of the society were fairly disoriented in this atmosphere. In addition to the opportunist entrepreneurs and well-connected businessmen, another group of wealthy families which opposed the CUP and yet paradoxically still maintained a good life engulfed in the international capital of the city - as generally thrived around the opponents of any given régime which went through similar times - was the cradle of a class of epigonic intellectuals.

On November 13, 1918, the day of the landing of British troops, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was back in İstanbul. He was recalled to the capital following the discharge of the Lightning Armies of Syria-Palestine Front. He was accompanied by his aide, Lt. Col. Cevat. He and his aide arrived at Haydarpaşa Main Station and tried to pass across the Bosphorus in a small military boat. However, it was the day of the arrival of Allied armada of 55 strength to include the famous Greek battleship of *Averof*. The transportation in the Bosphorus was stopped and Mustafa Kemal had to wait this to end in a teahouse which lasted for 3-4 hours. He was heard saying that it was a mistake of him to be back to İstanbul and he had to find a way to go to Anatolia.

Later, when they started to pass across the Bosphorus, it was as if they were sailing among a forest of steel. Then Lt. Col. Cevat heard the following words from Mustafa Kemal: "They shall go, just as they have come." Thrilled with these words, Cevat replied: "God will grant it to you my Pasha. You will drive them out." A smile appeared on Mustafa Kemal's face and he said: "Let's see it."²⁷ Next chapter for İstanbul was five years spent under the Allied occupation, during which the Turkish War of Liberation ensued. Allies' decision to formally occupy İstanbul which came on March 16, 1920 was nothing more than a statement of the obvious. It simply defined how the fate of İstanbul was finally defined without any poignancy and in its bitter truism.

Following the recapture of İzmir, on September 18, 1922, Mustafa Kemal announced to the Grand National Assembly that all Greek opposition in Anatolia was over. "Only the British forces in the Straits Zone and the Greeks in eastern Thrace remained. War between Turkey and Britain was only narrowly averted, largely because the British military commander, General Harrington, and Mustafa Kemal kept cool heads."²⁸

On the morning of October 2, 1923, "soldiers and crowd all moved towards the quay... Almost the last soldier to embark was Harrington himself. He had exchanged a number of friendly letters with İsmet, [second in command of the Turkish Army] and left a final message for him which included a soldierly reference to the service of both British and Turkish troops in Crimea. The General had hoped to meet Mustapha Kemal, and had indeed made plans for a meeting on a warship in the Black Sea, but 'the Foreign Office had stopped it'. Harrington stepped out of his official Rolls-Royce and it was left on the quay. The ship's sirens hooted and a naval band played 'Auld Lang Syne'."²⁹

The city was left to Turkish forces on October 6, 1923 which were directed by the Grand National Assembly and its President, Mustafa Kemal Pasha. Turkish troops took the control of the city in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne signed on July 24, 1923, just a few months before the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey on October 29, 1923. □

27 Utkan Kocatürk, *Kaynakçalı Atatürk Günlüğü* [Chronology of Atatürk with Bibliography] (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2007), pp. 118-119.

28 Justin Mccarthy, *The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923* (NY: Routledge, 1997), p. 385

29 David Walder, *The Chanak Affair* (GB: Hutchinson&Co, 1969), p. 351.