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**YKSEKĐRETİM KURULU BAŐKANLIĐINA**

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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. □

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

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**Dr. Yusuf Turan Çetiner**

[The following article was written by Yusuf Turan Çetiner to commemorate the fall of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, to the British Empire a century ago. Turan Çetiner 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 Çetiner 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 Istanbul 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 Istanbul 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 1878<sup>1</sup> 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*”<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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.*”<sup>6</sup> 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/FO 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 Istanbul was on October 25.

The British raids in August were particularly severe, causing civilian casualties. The outrage in Istanbul 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 Istanbul 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, Uskudar, Eminönü, Galata, Unkapanı, Fatih, Samatya, Karaköy, Aksaray, Şehremini, Karagömrük, 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.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup> 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."<sup>9</sup> Istanbul 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, Istanbul 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.<sup>10</sup>

7 Mustafa Selçuk, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda İtilaf Devletleri'nin İstanbul'a Yönelik Hava Taarruzları" [Air Raids of Allies on Istanbul in the First World War], *Marmara Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 1, No: 2, Fall 2014 p. 105. Selçuk refers to the report of Eminönü Police Station. BOA DİLLUM 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 Istanbul, 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, Istanbul, 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 Istanbul were planned and viewed as technical matters and with destroying some military targets as well as crippling the morale of Istanbulites 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 Istanbul 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, Istanbul 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 Istanbul. 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 Istanbul 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."<sup>11</sup>

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 Istanbul, 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 Istanbul 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 nakdi* (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.<sup>12</sup>

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 Istanbul 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."<sup>13</sup> 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).<sup>14</sup>

It is equally important to note that despite the minimalized perception of discrimination or alienation among the Istanbulites, 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, Istanbul could hardly be considered as a hostile target the Allied bombing of which, however, had worked towards creating a counter-effect.

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 Istanbulites 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 Istanbul, 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.<sup>15</sup> 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 Güvenc-Salgırlı, "Structures of Knowledge in the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic, 1731-1980," *Journal of Philosophical Economics*, IV:1 (special issue, 2010), p. 191.

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.



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.<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup>

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."<sup>18</sup>

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)<sup>19</sup>. 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 Istanbul* 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."<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup>

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.<sup>22</sup>

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 Affair<sup>23</sup>) 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, *Aydınlarımızın 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.  
36

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

21 Ibid., pp. 125-126.

22 *Yeni Istanbul*, 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.<sup>24</sup>

### 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."<sup>25</sup>

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 Istanbul 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 Istanbul and its value as a military target.

Saved from the conscription waves and the hazards of war theatres, people of Istanbul 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."<sup>26</sup>

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

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 Istanbul. He was recalled to the capital following the discharge of the Lightening 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."<sup>27</sup> Next chapter for Istanbul was five years spent under the Allied occupation, during which the Turkish War of Liberation ensued. Allies' decision to formally occupy Istanbul which came on March 16, 1920 was nothing more than a statement of the obvious. It simply defined how the fate of Istanbul was finally defined without any poignancy and in its bitter truism.

Following the recapture of Izmir, 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."<sup>28</sup>

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 Ismet, [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'."<sup>29</sup>

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. □

24 Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and Other Instruments signed at Lausanne 24 July, 1923. <http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/does/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 Istanbul 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.

27 Utkan Kocaturk, *Kaynakçılı Atatürk Günluğu* [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* (GIB: Hutchinson & Co., 1969), p. 351.



did collapse, resulting in his book *Russia in collapse*, published in 1998.

## NO GREAT ADVENTURES

But to return to Alexander Dugin's theme of Russia's need for a great mission in the world, this ambition is precisely one of the aspects of Soviet policy criticised in the *Letter to the Soviet Leadership*. And in *The Problem of Russia at the end of the twentieth century*, written in 1994 just before his return to Russia, he criticises the empire building projects of the Tsars. Indeed he has little time for the Eurasian theorists of the 1920s, nor for the 'National Bolsheviks' - also admired by Alexander Dugin, founder with the novelist Eduard Limonov in the 1990s, of the 'National Bolshevik Party'. The National Bolsheviks hoped that they could return to Russia and come to terms with the Bolsheviks - that the Bolsheviks were working for Russian greatness, that, in the words of one of the leading representatives (who of course ended up being shot in the Gulag) Nikolai Ustrialov, Bolshevism was like a radish - red on the outside, white (Great Russian patriotic) on the inside. In *Russia in Collapse*, Solzhenitsyn calls the Eurasians 'nothing but a decadent aspiration and sign of moral weakness.' If put into practise, the 'Russian specificity' would be lost in a Muslim majority. Later in the same book he attacks the journal *Verche* (Assembly), launched by Vladimir Osipov as an organ of militant Russian nationalism: 'These new theorists of misfortune are united in trying to find how to save Russia through "eurasianism" or how to rid themselves of Christianity through Neo-Paganism.' He almost certainly has Dugin in mind.

Solzhenitsyn's project was the very modest one of simply restoring a decent life in Russia which involved in his view first of all reducing the territory as far as possible to the Slav Orthodox heartland. He would have wanted to include Ukraine in this Slav heartland but recognised their right to secede if that is what they wanted (in practice this question of secession became more complicated because of the large numbers of Russians living in the seceding entities). The main task was to rebuild Russia from the bottom up, not worrying about democracy at the national level, with the formation and conflict of political parties which he saw as an entirely pointless division of the national effort, but establishing at local level the equivalent of the nineteenth century *zemstvo*, or even - he wasn't afraid to use the word - 'soviets', provided that these soviets would be in reality what the old soviets were on paper - organs through which decisions could be made at local level by representatives elected as individuals not as members of a party. He greatly admired the local level democracy that he saw in the cantons in Switzerland, but also in the US. Above all, he wanted to restore the interest in and commitment to rural life, to restore the taste the people once had for working the earth, a taste destroyed first by collectivisation then by a rationalisation of the *kolkhoz* (collective farm) system introduced by Khrushchev, gathering them together into ever larger units.

All this is obviously much less exciting, and perhaps less apparently relevant to our own preoccupation with finding a force that can confront the Anglo American aggression that weighs on the world at the present time but I tend to see it as much more positive than Dugin's great geopolitical project. If it is happening. But I don't know if it is happening or not. What is happening rather confirms Dugin's view that Russia has no choice - it has to have an ambitious foreign policy. The aggression of NATO in Georgia and in Ukraine, the prospect of losing Crimea as a base for the Black Sea fleet, have compelled Russia into adopting a more 'aggressive' stance towards the world, as the US-UK-France-Turkey-Qatar-United Arab Emirates-Saudi aggression in neighbouring Syria eventually forced a very reluctant Vladimir Putin to intervene there.

But on a perhaps more positive note something that is happening within Russia and that I do regard as very positive is the renewal of the life of the Church and in particular of the monasteries, the mood that is reflected in the passage I quoted earlier from *Everyday Saints*. Whatever the politics of the society, whether they are liberal or authoritarian, a society that encourages the monastic life and regards the Saint as the highest human type is a society that is radically different from the sort of society we are living in. And that is, it seems to me, how 'Mother Russia' can best resist the debilitating force which, for the purposes of the present discussion, we are calling 'liberalism.'

*Substance of a talk given in Belfast, June 2015*

*More material on the issues raised in this essay - in particular on Dugin, Heidegger and Solzhenitsyn - can be found in the 'Politics and Theology' section of my website - [www.peterbrooke.org](http://www.peterbrooke.org)* □

## The Battle for Baku, 1918

By Pat Walsh

August/September 2018 marks the centenary of the Battle for Baku, one of the more obscure events of the Great War of 1914 that nonetheless was something of lasting historical importance - even after its result was seemingly nullified a few months after by the British Great War victory. It is also a fascinating story of geopolitics, double-dealing and betrayal.

In September 1918 a combined army of Ottomans and Azerbaijanis captured the strategically important city of Baku on the Caspian Sea from a motley alliance of Russian Soviets, Cossacks, British Imperialists and Armenian Dashnaks. Even the Ottoman's allies, the Germans, opposed the advance.

The Government of the Azerbaijani Republic, the first democratic government in the Moslem world, took control of its capital, and began the process of state formation.

A few months later at the end of 1918, with the defeat of the Ottomans and their forced evacuation under the terms of the Mudras Armistice, the city of Baku came into the possession of Britain, the victorious power of the Great War. However, the fact that the Azerbaijanis had repossessed the city and established it as the capital of a declared republic, on top of British War declarations of "rights of self-determination" and geopolitical objectives in relation to Bolshevik Russia, meant that the Paris Peace Conference had to recognise the substance of the result of the Battle for Baku.

So how did the Battle of Baku come about and what was it all about?

First of all it was about British relations with Russia. Russia has for centuries been Britain's main geopolitical concern in the world. Only in two periods since 1815, when Britain's Balance of Power policy has determined making war on Germany with Russia as a temporary ally, has Russia not been a primary global enemy and object of policy. That was what the 19th Century Great Game was all about and the mantra that "*By Jingo... the Russians shall not have Constantinople.*"

In 1907 the Liberal Imperialist agreement with Russia settling outstanding affairs and partitioning Persia, signalled the procurement of the Tsar as a temporary ally in the Great War of *Germania Deledda Est*. The Tsar would give lend of his army - the Russian Steamroller - so that Germany could be properly encircled, and ground into dust by the attritional force of the Royal Navy, England's primary weapon of war, with Russian and French military forces doing the squeezing on land.



However, the German State, organised in an effective manner for defence, proved a tougher nut to crack than anticipated and it was the Great War anti-German alliance that fractured first. The Tsarist State began to collapse from early 1917. However, the Caucasus front only crumbled after Lenin, delivered by the Germans in his sealed train, gave the signal for disengagement by the Russian peasants through his Decree on Land. Then, Britain's Eastern War front began to dissolve.

Major-General Lionel Charles Dunsterville (school friend of Rudyard Kipling and the model for "Stalky" in *Stalky and Co.*) who led the British defence of Baku, recalled in his 1920 memoir of events what the thinking was behind his mission, which originally was intended for Tiflis but which was diverted to Baku as the Ottomans advanced:

*"The object of the mission I was ordered to proceed to the Caucasus at the end of 1917, as well as the enemy plans that led to the dispatch of the mission, can best be set forth briefly under this letter of the alphabet."*

*One of the big items in the deep-laid pre-war schemes of Germany for world-domination was the absorption of Asia Minor and the penetration into further Asia by means of the Berlin-Baghdad railway. When Baghdad was taken by the British in March 1917, and the prospect of its recapture by the Turks appeared very remote, the scheme for German penetration into Asia had to be shifted further north and took the obvious line Berlin-Baku-Bokhara.*

*In this latter scheme it was evident that the Southern Caucasus, Baku and the Caspian Sea would play a large part; and the object of my mission was to prevent German and Turkish penetration in this area.*

*Fate ordained that, just at the time that the British thwarted the more southern German scheme by the capture of Baghdad, the Russian breakdown opened the northern route to the unopposed enterprise of the Germans. Until the summer of 1917 the Russian troops held firm, though it was obvious that the process of dis-integration could not long be delayed. Their line extended from South Russia, through the Caucasus, across the Caspian, through North-West Persia until its left joined up with the British right on the frontier of Persia and Mesopotamia, east of Baghdad. By the autumn of 1917 this line was melting away, troops deserted en masse and the entire army announced its intention of with-drawing from the struggle and proceeding home.*

*Thus in the neighbourhood of Erzurum the Turkish Army, acting unconsciously as the Advanced Guard of German aims, found nothing between it and the long-coveted possession of the Southern Caucasus, with the exception of a few Armenian troops, disorganized, without cohesion and equally impregnated with the spirit of the revolution. But, as the line of the Turkish advance lay through their homes, they were compelled to offer resistance. Tiflis, the capital of the Southern Caucasus, was likely to fall without serious resistance into the hands of the enemy, and the capture of this town would give the Turk-German armies control of the railway line between Batumi on the Black Sea and Baku on the Caspian, the enormously valuable oilfields of Baku, the indispensable minerals of the Caucasus Mountains, and the vast supplies of grain and cotton from the shores of the Caspian Sea.*

*The scene of conflict being too far removed from any of the main areas of the war — Baghdad to Baku is 800 miles — it was quite impossible to send sufficient troops to meet the situation.*

*The only possible plan, and it was a very sound one, was to send a British mission to Tiflis. This mission, on reaching its destination, would set to work to re-organize the broken units of Russian, Georgian and Armenian soldiery, and restore the battle-line against the Turkish invasion. The prospects were*

*considerable, and success would be out of all proportion to the numbers employed or the cost involved. It was attractive and practical.*

*The honour of command fell to my lot, and I set forth from Baghdad with the leading party in January 1918."* (The Adventures of Dunsterforce, pp. 2-8)

In late 1917, with the collapse of the Russian lines, an enormous vacuum began to appear in the Southern Caucasus. The Russian occupied areas of the Ottoman Empire and their Caucasian hinterlands, which had been under Tsarist administration for a century, were suddenly up for grabs. And the primary British concern became that the Germans and/or the Ottomans were going to push eastward.

The War plans and geopolitical anticipations of London were shattered with the disintegration of its Russian ally. The War that had been waged by Britain to curtail German commercial success and growth, and its rejuvenation of the Ottoman State, now threatened to lead to further German growth and Ottoman expansion eastwards. The victory of the great Moslem Ottoman State over the British Empire would have dire consequences for the "prestige" of England and its projection of racial superiority over the "Orientals".

Britain was forced to improvise, as best it could, by this unanticipated chain of events. The major object of Britain in these circumstances was a reconstruction of a Caucasian front to replace that manned formerly by the Tsar's forces to prevent an Ottoman advance. Anybody would do to man the new front. The important thing was to form it out of everybody and anybody, and worry about it later.

The best available material for such a front were the Armenian Dashnaks. They had rejected substantial Young Turk overtures on the outbreak of the Great War to instead go into insurrection against the Ottoman State, staking the future of their community on the gamble of being able to construct *Magna Armenia*, a great Armenian state stretching from the Caucasus into half of Turkey from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

The Armenians were the most militarised people left in the region. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians joined the Tsarist forces, including many Ottoman Armenians, whilst Dashnak bands operated behind Ottoman lines in harassing the Ottoman war effort and attacking Moslem settlements to prepare for the incorporation of land into a future Armenian state.

Whilst the Armenian Insurrection was initially successful and had even succeeded in capturing Van and Erzurum, the future capital of an Armenian state, in conjunction with the Tsarist armies, the Russian internal collapse left the Armenians holding the line alone against the Ottomans.

The Armenians remained the primary material for a reconstructed front for Britain. They had numbers, were militarily trained, armed and had a will to fight the Ottomans, now lacking in the Russian peasants. They were the first objects for financial and material support by Britain in late 1917. The British knew that the Armenians would not be enough by themselves to form a new front in Eastern Anatolia/the Caucasus. They were found to be unreliable in many instances, and without Russian control more concerned with deserting the front and going off to devastate Moslem settlements in the hinterland to prepare the ground for *Magna Armenia*.

It is important to understand that in the circumstances of late 1917/early 1918 Britain would support any Russian administration — even Bolshevik — that would continue to wage the Great War against Germany and the Ottomans. Kerensky was welcomed on the understanding that he could reinvigorate a fading Russian effort against Germany, through popular, democratic catch cries. However, as Basil Lockhart, the senior British Agent in Russia, noted, it was Kerensky's continued



that he had a preference for a Turkish occupation of Baku rather than a Bolshevik one. It is always hard to assess Lloyd George's motivation in things given his tricky nature. Strategic and logistical issues were probably much more important. Britain was maintaining large armies on a wide range of important fronts due to the expansion of conquered territory. Also supply was difficult from British occupied Baghdad when no railway existed to Baku.

The Central-Caspian Dictatorship had a weak social base in the city, however. The majority of its forces were Armenian, who had attacked the Azerbaijani majority in the city and conducted a massacre of 12,000 Moslems in Baku at the end of March, when Shaumyan controlled the Soviet. The March events had burnt Soviet bridges to local Moslems, who from that time onwards put their faith in a Turkish deliveration.

The Bolshevik and British courting, arming and training of the Armenians and their determination to use them as a military force in the Caucasus had big implications for the Azerbaijani people.

The problem for the Azerbaijani Turks (or Tatars, as the Russians and Armenians called them) was that to survive as a people they had to cohere into a nation under the shock of events during 1917-18. This meant developing a military expression to defend themselves against the Armenians, who were intent in taking as much of the territory they lived on as possible, despite the fact that everywhere outside of Erivan (where the Armenians had a 60/40 majority) there was an Azerbaijani majority.

The March massacres had been sparked off by the arrival of a small group of armed Azerbaijanis from the Native Division of the Tsar's army on a ship in Baku. The sight of armed Azerbaijanis was taken as a provocation by the small minority that ran the Baku Soviet and their Armenian allies. It signalled what might be to come so they decided to prevent the future through massacre of the majority.

There is evidence, from a conversation he later had with M.A. Rasulzade, President of the Azerbaijani Republic, that Stalin regretted the appointment of Shaumyan to head the Baku Soviet and held him responsible, as an Armenian nationalist, for the March events. Shaumyan would have probably conceded to the British Imperialists if it wasn't for Stalin's opposition. He had earlier agreed to the transit of British forces through Baku in February and had been working, along with Trotsky, with the British in Tiflis.

The surviving Azerbaijani population and those who had retreated for safety to the outer parts and outside the city in Abseron, awaited a reckoning with those who had attacked them in March. They numbered around 80,000 according to General Dunsterville. Their presence in the vicinity would make it difficult for a minority force to hold the city when the bit came to the bit.

Under the Batumi Treaty of June 1918 the Ottomans had promised the Azerbaijanis military assistance to uphold the domestic security and stability of the territory declared to be the Azerbaijan Republic on May 28. At that time Dashnak irregular forces under Andranik etc. were acting outside the provisions that the Armenian Erivan Republic had signed with the Ottomans at Batumi, were attacking Moslem settlements in pursuit of a Greater Armenia.

As the Ottoman forces advanced into the Ottoman territory that the Tsarist forces had held since 1916 and which the Armenians had controlled from late 1917 they found wells filled with the bodies of Moslem civilians, mass graves and terrible scenes of massacre. To advance and save the largely unarmed non-Armenian population behind the Armenian lines became an absolute imperative.

The Ottomans constructed a small force called the Caucasus Army of Islam whose purpose was to train up the largely unmilitarised Azerbaijanis into forming a functional fighting force under Ottoman staff. Only the Azerbaijani elite had played any part in the Tsar's armies as officers and the mass of society had remained apart from the Great War until it came to them. However, the events of 1917 and the Armenian military activities against the Moslem populace necessitated the growth of informal militias which now joined the first national military expression in gaining a capital.

Despite being called the Army of Islam, four-fifths of its officer staff were initially Christian and former Tsarists. It had a strong secular character and actively excluded Moslem clerics from its ranks.

It seems to have been the project of Enver, Talat and Cemal and was not widely welcomed by Istanbul. The Army of Islam that besieged Baku was an Ottoman force made up of around 14,000 men, about two-thirds Azerbaijani, and commanded by Enver Pasha's brother, Nuri, a young and inexperienced officer. It had shown its capability when the 20,000 strong Baku Soviet forces, including the Dashnaks, had attacked it and the Azerbaijani government-in-waiting in Ganje, but had been repulsed and driven back to Baku in July.

This offensive was important in cementing the Ottoman/Azerbaijani relationship. The Ottomans had, at first, not recognised Azerbaijani independent statehood and Nuri and his brother Enver seem to have desired a more hegemonic relationship with the Azerbaijanis. The more secular Azerbaijanis were also viewed with some suspicion by Istanbul. However, the successful repulse of the Baku Soviet forces by the Ottoman/Azerbaijani army at the end of June established a more equitable relationship and brought on the common purpose of liberating Baku from the Soviets/Dashnaks.

Major-General Dunsterville describes the complex military/political situation at this time in early July when the Baku Soviet army failed to hold an important sole bridge at the Kura River, which had the potential to block the Turkish advance on Baku:

*"The strength of the Red Field Army was calculated at about 10,000 men, and if they really had been soldiers and had had any fight in them the plan evolved by Bicherakov should have been successful. But as usual, revolutionary troops are only troops on paper, and in the field, where each man is out only to avoid being killed, they count for nothing."*

*The situation in the South-East Caucasus at this time was as follows: The Turkish Caucasus-Islam Army, about 12,000 strong, composed of about one-half regular Turkish troops and one-half levies from the local Mahomedan races in the South Caucasus, was advancing from the Tiflis direction along the railway line with a view of capturing Baku. They were much hampered by the bad state of the railway and rolling-stock and shortage of fuel for the engines. The Germans in Tiflis also were doing their best to prevent the Turks getting to Baku at all, as they had a private arrangement with Lenin, and through him with the Baku Government, that the town should be peacefully handed over to them. To see the Turks in Baku would be almost as bad as to see the British there."*

*This peculiar situation resulted in a most extraordinary state of affairs. In their anxiety to prevent the Germans obtaining possession of Baku, and also in their eagerness to take any chance of fighting the Bolsheviks, many Russian officers joined this Turkish force, and when we were later fighting against them in Baku we had Russian officers on our side, while the enemy had as many on his."* (The Adventures of Dunsterforce, pp. 167-8)

The Germans had made a secret deal with the Bolsheviks to prevent the Ottomans/Azerbaijanis from capturing the Baku oil fields for a



support for waging the War that finally did for him against the Bolsheviks.

So the Bolsheviks were supported, even after the conclusion of Brest-Litovsk and the ending of hostilities with the Germans on the understanding that they would continue to resist the Ottomans in the Caucasus because of Russian geopolitical concerns, particularly in retaining the oil of Baku for the Russian state.

Lenin, having dissolved the Caucasus front with his Decree on Land, found he had to reconstruct it to keep the Baku oil fields for the Russian State the Bolsheviks aimed to command. Both British Imperialists and Bolsheviks sought out the only substantial military force in the region for their respective interests – the Armenian Dashnaks – to man the line against Ottoman advance.

In January 1918 Lenin issued his decree 'On Armenia' declaring official Bolshevik support for an Armenian state and nominated Stepan Shaumyan, who led the Baku Commune, as Prime minister in waiting, of it. The Bolsheviks then began to repatriate and assemble the more than 100,000 Armenian veterans of the Tsarist army to the region. This represented a Bolshevik trumping of British War propaganda. The British War Cabinet, although it had urged in private the foundation of an Armenian state in the Caucasus in December 1917 as a barrier to Ottoman advance, had been careful not to formerly declare such a War aim.

Baku's oil was undoubtedly indispensable to the Bolsheviks. Trotsky remarked to the Central Committee that Baku was more strategically important than Moscow. Over 80% of Russia's supply came from these fields. Lenin was steadfast in his belief that the Bolshevik state would not survive without this oil. (During the Second World War three-quarters of Soviet oil still came from Baku. Hitler would have won the war without the Soviet tanks driven by Baku's oil. Newsreel footage from 1942 shows Hitler, alongside other Nazis enjoying a cake made in the form of a map of the Caspian region, with the letters "B A K U" decorating it, under the swastika. Hitler comments: "Unless we get Baku oil, all is lost." Stalin's army included more than 650,000 Azerbaijanis in its ranks who defended against Nazi expansion eastwards. And Hitler sacrificed a great army at Stalingrad to get hold of Baku's oil, in the turning point of the War.)

The oil of Baku was also coveted by Britain. It was recognised by Lord Milner that it was the best field in the world. However, to control Baku the Caspian needed to be controlled and it was an inland sea not greatly accessible by the Royal Navy without military forces to secure the ports. The prohibitive expense and logistical difficulties of a sustained and large military commitment was beyond Britain by late 1917 because the Germans/Ottomans had proved so costly to defeat.

Baku became more strategically important for Britain in late 1917 with the collapse of the Tsarist State. The territory that formed Azerbaijan was a land bridge between Europe and Asia, South of the Caucasus mountains, and the only route around the large Caspian Sea. To the South lay Persia (Southern Azerbaijan) which Britain had signed over to the Tsar's sphere of influence in 1907 but which it now wished to take itself. Further South was the main part of Persia/Iran, with its British zone of influence guarding the Gulf and the Indian Empire. To the South West British occupied Mesopotamia/Iraq.

In December 1917 Lord Milner signed an agreement on behalf of the British War Cabinet with the French Prime Minister, Clemenceau, dividing the territory in Southern Russia of one party to the Triple Entente up between the other two allies. France would take Ukraine and Crimea whereas England would get Georgia and Azerbaijan as spheres of influence after the anticipated Russian disintegration and the winning of the Great War.

Lord Milner insisted on an Eastern Committee being established and attached to the War Cabinet in March 1918 to give priority to strategic thinking about the region that had been lacking due to the understanding that it was a Russian sphere of influence for a century. *The Times* now described the Caspian as a vital British interest, on 29 September 1918. The general Southern Caucasus could operate as a buffer between the Turks and Russians after the War if Britain was able to construct states there. The famous geopolitics professor, Halford Mackinder, theorised this as part of his famous *Heartland* theory. But first, Britain needed to defeat the Germans and Ottomans before such a policy could be attempted.

In 1917 Britain saw this area as potentially the new German *Drang nach Osten*, replacing the feared Berlin-Baghdad Railway that British forces had prevented by conquering Mesopotamia. Berlin-Baku-Bukhara took the place of the pre-War bogey Berlin-Baghdad as the outlet for German commercial expansion to the east, and India, in the nightmares of British statesmen and geopoliticians. Ottoman military advance would facilitate this – despite the fact that Berlin was actually against an Ottoman Caucasus expedition, preferring the Turks to fight in Syria against the British.

While Bolshevism was the ideological opponent of English Liberalism the British continued to support the Bolsheviks if it meant the strengthening of a front against the Ottomans and Germans in a temporary alliance. For one thing the Bolsheviks were not thought to be likely to last in power, given the mountain of problems that confronted them and the White Russian forces that could be expected to weaken them, with British assistance.

Whilst supporting the Soviets in holding the line in the Caucasus, at the same time Britain sent in its agents to undermine the Bolsheviks. General Dunsterville made an alliance with the Cossack Colonel Lazar Bicherakov and incorporated his forces into his own. Bicherakov, although opposed to the Bolsheviks and Baku Soviet, was persuaded to support the expedition to Baku to defend Russian interests there. Bicherakov, a White Russian, took command of the Soviet army.

In July 1918 the Bolshevik-controlled Baku Soviet was split when a request was made of it to allow British forces to join the defence of Baku. The Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who wanted to continue the Great War generally, proposed a motion to accept the British offer. The Bolshevik leader, Stepan Shaumyan, asked Stalin's advice and he was told to reject the embrace of British Imperialism, which was seen as a more dangerous enemy in the long term than the Turks. There is some evidence that Stalin starved the Baku Soviet of men and supplies to prevent the Armenian, Shaumyan from conducting a more aggressive policy against the local population.

The Armenian Dashnaks sided with the SRs and Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks and the motion was carried. Armenians contacted Dunsterville to bring him into the city. Shaumyan and the 26 Bolshevik Commissars left Baku to wait on a future Red Army. However, they were murdered on the shores of the Caspian, either by SRs/Mensheviks, White Russians or British agents. Shaumyan and the Bolsheviks had earlier attempted to leave the city but had been returned by a Soviet warship from the Caspian. It all became a shambles with so many conflicting interests involved.

The Baku Soviet was dissolved and replaced by the Central-Caspian Dictatorship made up of Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Armenian Dashnaks. The first of the British forces arrived in Baku on 4 August. By 17 August General Dunsterville and his thousand strong force sailed into the city. This brought the number of defenders including Armenians, White Russians, Soviets and British to around 10,000 men.

Lloyd George resisted the sending of a larger British force for a number of reasons. One suggestion seems to have been



25 per cent. cut of Baku's oil. The Germans attempted to pressurise Istanbul to stop supporting the thrust into the Caucasus on the basis that it violated Brest-Litovsk. But to no avail. Istanbul continued to operate an independent policy in support of the Azerbaijanis.

The Germans actually assembled an army of 40,000 in Georgia to join in the capture of Baku and take over the administration of the city. But the Turks sensibly sabotaged the roads and railways to prevent the German ambitions. The Ottomans were willing to fight their German allies if they stood in the way of Baku's liberation.

Shaumyan made a big mistake in sending the Baku Soviet army onto the offence into Ganje. He should have conserved his forces for the defence of Baku. It was most probably the ambitions of the Armenians to capture this land that led to this error. The expectation would have been that the new Azerbaijani army could be easily routed. But this proved a fatal miscalculation and represented a real turning point in events.

The failure of the Baku Soviet force to hold the bridge at the Kura River left the road open to Baku for the Ottoman/Azerbaijani forces. In retreat the mainly Armenian Baku Soviet army conducted a scorched earth policy against local villages and their populations.

Dunsterville's force was the worst of all worlds for the defenders of Baku, particularly the Armenians. It was too small to effectively defend the city but was enough to encourage the belief in the defenders that it was worth resisting the Ottoman/Azerbaijani army.

Dunsterville, as well as having little respect for the fighting capabilities of the Baku Soviet forces also had not much time for the Armenians in the city, considering them to be incapable of organisation and not reliable fighters. He later called them "worthless cowards" in his memoir. He recognised that the more fearsome Dashnaks operated in the countryside, roaming around and attacking Moslem villages and sometimes engaging Ottoman forces in battle.

On their part the Armenians felt let down by the British force which was too little and too late. When Bicherakov, antagonised by the Central-Caspian Dictatorship's leadership, decided the game was up and withdrew his Cossacks from the city to Dagestan, any skilful defence of the city was removed. On 13 September Turkish troops broke through the Wolf's Gap and trapped the British forces with their backs to the Caspian.

By this time Major-General Dunsterville had concluded that the defence of Baku was hopeless and after obtaining the required permission from London his forces had decided to escape by ship to Persia. His Armenian allies were not so fortunate after the city fell on September 15. Probably 6,000 or more died in fighting and general acts of vengeance before order was restored by Nuri Pasha after the capture of Baku. Fearing retribution, 30,000 Armenians, half the resident population, left the city on boats.

The British War Office blamed the Armenians for the fall of Baku. It immediately fed this narrative into the English Press. *The Times* headline of 20.9.18 was "British Leave Baku: Defection of the Armenians". On the same day *The Daily Mail* headlined: "Baku Evacuated: Armenian Treachery to British". This prompted Arnold Toynbee to protest from the Propaganda Ministry about the danger of making public such views before the public.

The reaction in England to the fall of Baku is probably the reason why accounts such as that of Pasdermadjian began to appear in the Anglosphere, emphasising the military contribution of the Armenians to the defeat of the Ottomans and the winning of the Great War. However, the negative impression the fall of Baku produced, along with the witnessing of the reality of Armenian nation-building by British military men, would have tended to weaken the moral case of their Liberal enthusiasts against the pre-War traditional pro-Turk orientation that now began to resurface after the War propaganda had outlived its usefulness.

The Armenians had made for very useful propaganda material for the British War effort, particularly in the U.S. during the Great War. There was, after all, a long-standing Nonconformist Liberal fondness for the Christian Armenians and their suffering from the "cruel and merciless Turk". This was a handy point of confluence with Puritan America and its powerful Protestant missions in the Near East that influenced the President and Congress.

However, the experience of dealing with the Armenian Dashnaks on the ground gained by ordinary British soldiers resulted in a different attitude being taken to Armenian claims at the conclusion of the War. The Dashnak tendency to pursue Magna Armenia through wiping out local non-Armenian populations was distasteful at the least for the British, who, after all, had a large Moslem Empire to consider.

The British betrayed their Armenian allies when it suited them to do so. The Armenians had provided cannon-fodder for their Tsarist ally from 1914. After the 1917 Revolution and the dissolving of the Russian lines the Armenians had held the front against the Ottomans. However, in the post-War settlement they became surplus to Imperial requirements.

But what is new or unexpected about that?

The project of Magna Armenia was clearly both insane and unsustainable and the Dashnaks would not let it go. Only Liberal simpletons (including President Wilson) still clung to it by 1919. While Liberal idealists provided the moral narrative for Britain's Great War they did not dictate Britain's policy in the world. They were a froth on the substance of the British State, which was hard-headed and did not get where it was in the world from believing its own propaganda.

Nuri Pasha took the city of Baku in the name of the Republic of Azerbaijan and it became the *de facto* capital of the new state. At this point the Ottomans occupied all of Northern and Southern Azerbaijan (across the Aras river in present day Iran) and beat off a British push toward Tabriz in Persia. Georgia and Armenia had been rendered quiescent. And then the War was lost in the West and the Mudros Armistice required the evacuation of Ottoman forces from Azerbaijan.

Although the new Azerbaijani state only remained independent until the arrival of British occupation forces in mid-November a start had been made to state formation which the British facilitated over the following year in the interests of forming a series of buffer states against the Bolsheviks to the north after Denikin's defeat by the Red Army in the Russian Civil War.

Although Britain backed the White Russians with finance, material and military advisors, Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, always opposed sending British troops to Russia. He remained lukewarm towards the Whites during the Russian Civil War. The Whites, if victorious, would restore a strong and united Russia, and Lloyd George regarded a weak Russia, ruled ineffectively by the Bolsheviks, as a better outcome for British interests. The only thing that was consistent about British policy was the objective of weakening Russia, whatever the final government. The British Government failed to support the 3 Caucasus states they had assisted establishing and they fell to the Bolsheviks after Denikin was defeated.

In the space of two years Baku went from Soviet/Dashnak to Ottoman to British to Azerbaijani and finally to Bolshevik hands.

Although the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic was crushed by the Red Army in 1920, its 23 months of existence and experience of establishing an administration at Baku, after fighting for its capital, was a formative event in the national consciousness that could never be erased from the memory. As Mammed Rasulzade said: "*Bir kərə yüksələn bayraq, bir daha enməz!*" (The flag once raised will never fall!) □



## Centenary of Benedict's Lost Peace

By Pat Walsh

Last year marked the centenary of Pope Benedict XV's attempt to stop the Great War in 1917. It was the Pope's final great effort to halt the catastrophe that was destroying Christian Europe, as well as destabilising its Moslem hinterland. He failed against Britain's determination to see the Great War it had launched through to fruition, no matter what the cost to humanity.

Remarkably there has been no attempt to mark this important centenary. We live within the British narrative and the world that the waging of the Great War to the bitter end created. And we are increasingly reminded of this by events today.

Over a decade ago I wrote a series of articles in the Irish Political Review about Pope Benedict's attempt to stop the Great War in 1917. These were issued in pamphlet form by Athol Books with the title 'Britain's Great War, Pope Benedict's Lost Peace'.

In the time since it has become apparent to me that there was another reason why Britain rejected Benedict's Peace of 1917.

This was to do with the desire on England's part to promote revolution in Germany and destroy its social fabric before the conclusion of the Great War. The fact that Germany's social, political and economic structures were successfully unbalanced by Britain producing Hitler and the Nazis is perhaps a good reason why this feature of the Great War on Germany is seldom heard about today.

I was recently sent the editorial of *The Daily Telegraph* (15.8.1917) which discussed Benedict's Peace proposals. It suggests that the Catholic Centre Party and its leader, Mathias Erzberger were attempting to stop the War in collaboration with the Pope:

*"Germany, having failed to attain the peace she wants through her Socialists is now trying what can be done by means of her Catholics... Outside Italy... the largest compact and homogeneous Catholic community in the world is to be found in Germany... Catholicism has been a powerful buttress to German particularism. A thorough process of democratisation would probably sweep down the political barriers between the German States, and the Bavarian Catholics would then lose many of the autonomous powers they now possess... It was always one of the certainties of the war that a victory of the Allies would be followed by some kind of revolution in Germany."*

Britain was determined to conclude its Great War on Germany only when its objective of destroying the successful social, economic and political fabric of the country was attained. For that reason it turned down the chance of peace in 1917 while knowing the cost of this to Europe and its hinterlands – and it pressed on in grinding Germany down.

But what were the results of this British decision to continue the War?

Stephen McKenna, a disaffected English Liberal writing in 1921, honestly described the implications of the British decision to prolong the war in 1916:

*"When the belligerents took stock before settling down to the trench-warfare winter campaign of 1916-17, all must have felt that the war had reached its climax. The general exhaustion was so great that, even if hostilities had ceased, every country would have been crippled; if hostilities continued, they would continue on a scale of unlimited effort in which no reserve of strength would any longer be husbanded. Set free on her*

*eastern frontier, Germany must mass all her resources in one last effort to break through the western line; the Allies must hold out till the attempt had spent itself and then strike one last blow at a worn enemy; Germany must in turn prevent the allies from holding out by cutting their sea communications. If unrestricted submarine warfare ranged America on the side of the allies, it must have been felt that either the war would be over before any effective help could be given or else that, in the final, hopeless, death-grapple, a few million soldiers more or less would not substantially change the degree or character of Germany's defeat.*

*"Many of those who meditated on the war from its climax in 1916 to its end in the Versailles conference may wonder whether they did wisely in execrating and howling down anyone who shewed the courage to advocate peace before the sphere of war underwent its last desperate expansion. The government stood by its policy of a 'knock-out blow'; the knock-out blow has been dealt. Is anyone the better for it? The fire-eaters who proclaimed that anything less than the unconditional surrender of Germany would entail another German war within their generation now proclaim with no more doubt or qualification that Germany is preparing her revenge... The added two years of war, then, have not brought such security as Rome enjoyed at the destruction of Carthage; the added bitterness of those two years, on the other hand, has made more difficult any goodwill and any common effort to substitute a sane and better system of International relationship.*

*"Worst of all are the worldwide economic depression and political unrest for which the protraction of the war was responsible. Had negotiations been opened in 1916, the Russian revolution and its consequences might well have been averted; Germany, Austria and Turkey might have been left with stable governments and yet with enough experience of modern warfare to discourage any taste for further adventures; and Italy, France and Great Britain – in that order – might have been saved from insolvency. The war, if ended at that time, would have ended without American help; and peace would have been concluded without American intervention. This last result might by now be a matter for regret if thereby the world had been cheated of the equitable and permanent peace, such as President Wilson sought to impose on the militarist party of the Versailles Conference; but it would perhaps have been better for the terms to be drawn by M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George on Carthaginian lines than for the world to be tantalized by a glimpse of statesmanship that revealed the universal spirit and then to be jolted off with a compromise which embraced even the good faith of England." (While I Remember, pp. 171-3.)*

This was written in 1921 before the effects of the Great War had become clear. Who can honestly disagree with this analysis – that if peace had been concluded in 1915, 1916 or 1917 the world would have been a much better place than it subsequently turned out to be?

Europe was prevented from heading towards a desirable negotiated peace by Britain's persistence in its crusade to destroy Germany, primarily through the belief the Royal Navy could starve Germany into submission, given time and resilience amongst Britain's allies.

Once the Allies stopped the German defensive manoeuvre at the battle of the Marne, four years of trench warfare ensued. Although the Germans launched the most effective offensives



of the war, they were always strategically on the defensive and the possibility of a negotiated settlement lay entirely with the Allies. But the British Cabinet never for a moment contemplated a negotiated settlement, despite all the losses in men and materials they suffered and the fact that they did not seem to be making any territorial progress. They coldly calculated that the Allies could suffer heavier losses than the Germans and still win so long as they had a better rate of attrition proportionate to population than the Germans. England believed that, in the long run, the Royal Navy would do its work on Germany if the line could be held for long enough on land.

Britain's wavering French and Russian allies were convinced to continue the war to the bitter end as the result of an intimation that the United States would be likely to join the allies if Wilson was re-elected and gained the necessary influence in Congress.

Although President Wilson was re-elected to a second term in late 1916 under the slogan, 'He kept us out of war' he was already intending to enter the War on the Allied side. This was because Lloyd George had let it be known to Wilson that the peace settlement was only open to the belligerents – and many of the belligerents wanted a 'vengeful peace'. If Wilson wanted to be humanity's servant he had to join the victors to affect the peace and help Lloyd George prevent a 'vengeful peace'.

America's initial view of the war had coincided with that of the Pope – there was nothing morally at issue between the belligerents, it could only be bad to get involved in it, and a settlement should be made without the destruction of any of the nations fighting it.

But the U.S. at the same time set about making Britain financially dependent upon it – largely through J.P.Morgan's banking empire – by giving it the necessary credit to keep waging its war. The U.S. at the same time set about making Britain financially dependent upon it. Loans were in violation of American neutrality but Morgan's got around this by issuing \$2 Billion in credit to the Entente. American industry, in propping up London, became an adjunct of the British war effort. Of the five million pounds the British spent on weaponry and supplies each day two million pounds was being spent in the United States. By 1916 40% of Britain's war material was being supplied by the U.S.

Whilst this factor helped America in the medium term to undermine the British Empire's power and replace it on the world stage it also tended to place the U.S. in the position of having to make a necessary defence of its investments if there was danger of its client going under with its debts unpaid.

By 1916 France and Russia were broke and London was paying for its war on American credit. In March 1917 there was only 114 million pounds of gold left in the Bank of England's vaults to cover further loans. If this had been exhausted British finance would have collapsed and brought down a large section of American industry with it – and a catastrophic effect on the U.S. economy.

British credit largely financed the Great War. John Maynard Keynes was the paymaster to Britain's Allies. He gave a talk to the Admiralty in March 1916 in which he told them: "We bribe whole populations. It is our money that keeps the Allies sweet."

In October 1916 Keynes issued an important memo from the Treasury entitled 'The Financial Dependence of the United Kingdom on the United States of America'. It noted that up until that point Britain had been funding its Great War 3/5 by selling its gold and securities and 2/5 by obtaining loans on the international market.

The problem emerging was that the gold and securities accumulated by the British Empire over the previous 200 years were running out in paying for the War. During the following 6 months, if the War was to be waged as vigorously as it had,

Keynes calculated that the gold and securities available to the Treasury would only fund 1/5 of the War, leaving 4/5 to be funded by loans. And then it would be nearly 5/5 through loans, by the end of 1917. This financial exhaustion was going to make Britain highly dependent on the goodwill of the U.S. in continuing its War. As Keynes noted:

*"A statement from the United States Executive deprecating or disapproving of such loans would render their flotation in sufficient volume a practical impossibility, and thus lead to a situation of the utmost gravity... Any feeling of irritation or lack of sympathy with this country or with its policy in the minds of the American public... would render it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to carry through financial operations on a scale adequate to her needs. The sums which this country will require to borrow in the U.S.A. in the next six or nine months, are so enormous, amounting to several times the entire national debt of that country, that it will be necessary to appeal to every class and section of the investing public."*

*"It will be hardly an exaggeration to say that in a few months' time the American executive and the American public will be in a position to dictate to this country on matters that affect us more nearly than them. It is, therefore, the view of the Treasury, having regard to their special responsibilities, that the policy of this country towards the U.S.A. should be so directed as not only to avoid any form of reprisal or active irritation, but also to conciliate and to please."* (10.10.16)

This raised the issue of War aims, since the possibility of having to conclude a peace was now raised for the first time. Lord Lansdowne, in a memo to the cabinet on 13 November, on the subject of what terms peace might be dictated to the enemy, emphasized the cost of the Great War and how it might affect the peace if the War continued into 1917 and beyond:

*"Shall we even then be strong enough to 'dictate' terms?... We have obtained within the last few days from the different Departments of the Government a good deal of information as to the situation, naval, military, and economic. It is far from reassuring. What does the prolongation of the war mean?"*

*"Our own casualties already amount to over 1,100,000. We have had 15,000 officers killed, not including those who are missing. There is no reason to suppose that, as the force at the front in the different theatres of war increases, the casualties will increase at a slower rate. We are slowly but surely killing off the best of the male population of these islands. The figures representing the casualties our Allies are not before me. The total must be appalling."*

*"The financial burden which we have already accumulated is almost incalculable. We are adding to it at a rate of over £5,000,000 per day. Generations will have to come and go before the country recovers from the loss which it has sustained in human beings, and from the financial ruin and the destruction of the means of production which are taking place."*

*"All this is, no doubt, our duty to bear, but only if it can be shown that the sacrifice will have its reward. If it is to be made in vain, if the additional year, or two years, or three years, finds us still unable to dictate terms, the war with its nameless horrors will have been needlessly prolonged, and the responsibility of those who needlessly prolong such a war is not less than that of those who needlessly provoked it."*

*"Many of us, however, must of late have asked ourselves how this war is ever to be brought to an end. If we are told that the deliberate conclusion of the Government is that it must be fought until Germany has been beaten to the ground and sues for peace on any terms on which we are pleased to accord to her, my only observation would be that we ought to know something of the data upon which this conclusion has been reached."* (Cab 37/159/32, 13.11.16)



This must have been a bombshell to those attending the Cabinet. Edward Grey in his reply said that it would be "premature" to look for peace and a "betrayal of the interests of this country" to advocate it as long as there was a belief Germany could be defeated; or the military situation was likely to improve in the Allies' favour; or that Germany was injured internally more so than England, making recovery more difficult for her. It was only if the situation was predicted to deteriorate for the Allies over the following months that it would be ever justified to "wind up the war at once on the best terms achievable." (Cab 37/160/20)

Shortly after this Asquith resigned as Prime Minister, giving way to Lloyd George.

This was the reason why the British continued to reject German peace offers and the Pope's initiative of 1917 – because it was felt that peace would be a defeat if it left Germany stronger, which it would do if Britain had not the ability to dictate peace terms to her. But by the same count Britain had to change the character of its Great War in deference to the fact that it was in hock to the U.S. And that meant it would need to do things that would have great implications for the world it would inherit, but would be too weak to assert itself upon.

President Wilson was influenced by a message from the American ambassador to England, Thomas Nelson Page, a strong Anglophile, that Britain would be bankrupt within two weeks, if the U.S. did not enter the war and provide her with funds. Also in the picture were cables from the U.S. embassy in Paris, warning that French morale was cracking. These were communicated to Congress. Wilson's support produced the "knockout victory" statement of Lloyd George in which he declared that the war must go on until Germany was crushed.

The Vatican knew the U.S. was not truly neutral in the first two years of the war and it deplored Washington's arms trade that facilitated the waging of the War longer and on a bigger scale than would have been otherwise possible. Benedict also regarded the Anglo-American tactic of carrying munitions on passenger vessels, like the Lusitania – using civilians as human shields – as reprehensible.

With America's resources fully available to it and Wilson removed as a moral opponent – in that he couldn't talk about 'an honourable peace' anymore – it is not so difficult to understand why the Pope's Peace Note of 1917 came an unwelcome time for Britain.

The Irish Catholic of April 2005 told us that: "On August 1, 1917, Benedict issued a peace proposal in which he urged the warring parties to unilaterally reduce their armaments."

The Pope's Peace Note, in fact, went a lot further than that. Why did the Irish Catholic seek to minimise information on this important proposal? Is it sheer ignorance, shoddy journalism or the result of a paralysed mind unable to deal with the great political questions, symptomatic of Ireland today?

The Pope's Peace Plan had its origins within the German side – since it was the Germans, rather than the Entente who desired a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The Times actually called it the "German Peace Move" in an editorial. There was nothing odd about Germany wanting peace at this of all moments – at the time of its greatest success in the war.

Germany had secured its defence by a military ability that the Entente had not bargained for. But it knew that from here on only a long and wasteful war of attrition could defeat it. It wanted to secure a peace at this point to prevent further loss of life and the inevitable political and economic destruction that a fight to the finish would end up in across Europe. So a number of elements in Germany supported the Vatican's efforts in going for a negotiated settlement.

Benedict believed Germany was the key because its strong military position could make the concessions necessary to satisfy Allied demands.

In Germany, a group of Reichstag members, led by the Catholic politician, Matthias Erzberger, passed a peace resolution in the Reichstag in July 1917. This offer did not make any demand for retaining the occupied areas of Belgium or France. The German peace offer seemed to offer possibilities, and the Vatican envoy to Germany, Eugenio Pacelli, (later Pope Pius XII), who conducted most of the Vatican's peace efforts during the War, was sent to explore with the Kaiser and his Chancellor, Bethman-Hollweg, what terms might be feasible. Apparently, the Germans agreed in principle to a limitation of armaments, withdrawal from Belgium and other occupied areas, disputed territories being decided by international agreement and the creation of international arbitration courts.

Having achieved an understanding with the Germans Benedict drew up his Peace Note to all the belligerent powers, setting out systematic proposals for bringing the war to an end and securing a just and enduring peace. He had it communicated to the Entente what Germany was willing to concede.

This is what *Fear Faire* said in the *Catholic Bulletin*, March 1939, about Benedict's peace proposals of 1917, in a time when Ireland knew something of history:

*"By the middle of the year 1917 the possibility of a sweeping victory for the Central Powers was gone. On the other hand, the Allies were facing such a strongly entrenched enemy and were themselves so war-worn, that they, too, had little hope of triumph, unless at the cost of long-prolonged struggle and incalculable losses. The time had come when both sides were weary of suffering and neither had high hopes. On August 1st, Pope Benedict issued his appeal to the warring nations to end what he described as a fratricidal conflict and negotiate a just and durable peace. He laid down the conditions on which alone a peace could be established. The moral force of right must rule in international affairs in place of the material force of arms. Conquered territories must be restored. Claims to indemnity must be put aside; the freedom of the seas must be guaranteed; armaments must be decreased, and international affairs must be adjusted in the future by arbitration. Where there were conflicting claims to given territories, as in Alsace Lorraine, in Poland, and in the Trentino, the decision must rest with the population of the area concerned, and the will of the people must be found by means of a plebiscite. These peace proposals are manifestly those which would have saved the world not merely from a prolongation of the war, but from the disasters which have followed it. Almost everybody now, even in the most stubborn quarters, realises that the Allies made a disastrous decision when they rejected the Pope's proposals. It was the Allies more than Germany who were to blame for the Peace Proposals being refused. It was President Wilson who replied to the Pope, on behalf of the Allied Powers, that peace could not be made with such a Government as Germany then possessed. The Allies would not deal with a Germany ruled by the Kaiser; and by refusing to do so they committed themselves to days to come to deal with a Germany ruled by a Hitler. Little they guessed what they had done when they flung the Pope's appeal to the ground and went on with the war for a year that was filled with hitherto unparalleled suffering. Little they knew, when at last they had beaten their enemies to their knees at the end of 1918, and when they were able to dictate a peace to their own liking, how much better they would have done to accept the just and unvengeful peace which Pope Benedict had recommended eighteen months before."*

*"So the peace that was no peace came. Benedict lived to see the Peace Treaty signed and the effort to crush Germany undertaken."*



The Germans and the Austro-Hungarians were favourable to the Pope's proposal, although Berlin avoided specific commitments until the allies had responded. But despite this blame is spread evenly for the rejection of the Peace Note on America, Britain and Germany. It is realised that no one else had the means to continue fighting on a substantial scale without the participation of these three.

It is said that Chancellor Bethman-Hollweg was overthrown at this time by the German army leaders – who were still fixated on a German military victory – and this scuppered the Papal initiative.

German war aims had been relatively modest until this point – basically recognition of Germany as a legitimate power in Europe which could go about her business without being threatened with destruction.

There were two views in Germany as to what should be done in mid-1917. One view was to go all out for peace on the basis of Benedict's plan because things could only get worse for Germany and its position. The other, held by some Prussian military leaders, like Ludendorff and Hindenburg, argued there was no way out of the situation but through a decisive military victory – as Britain would never make peace until it was decisively beaten. There was much to encourage this latter viewpoint in 1917 as the Russian enemy on the Eastern front was on the verge of collapse and if a blow could be struck in the West with transferred troops before American numbers arrived peace might be achievable on German terms.

The attitude taken by the Entente to Benedict's Peace Note determined that this latter view won out in late 1917/1918. It was, unfortunately, correct.

The new Provisional Russian government welcomed the Papal mediation. But the leaders of France and Italy, with largely Catholic, extremely war weary populations, were concerned. They wanted a fight to the finish to achieve their territorial aims set out in the secret treaties with England. But they hesitated to take direct issue with the Pope in view of his moral influence on their peoples. So France ignored the initiative, Clemenceau describing it as "*peace against France*."

The British merely acknowledged it and then decided to let President Wilson answer for all of them.

Wilson had a unique role – that of giving the proceedings of the Allies the character and tone of disinterested ideals of justice and liberty. By 1917 a lot of the gloss had gone off the Entente propaganda that had generated and sustained the crusade against "*Prussianism*" in its early days. But Wilson, with his liberal, neutralist and disinterested credentials, was a useful moral cipher to dress up Allied War aims. He gave the war a new aura of idealism just as the early idealism was fading. He projected the war as a struggle to make the world safe for democracy. Lloyd George referred to one of Wilson's speeches as "*one of the greatest sermons in the history of the world*."

Wilson was the alternate moral compass in the world to the Vatican and England was prepared to use him if that meant it won its War – by hook or by crook.

President Wilson saw the timing of the Pope's message as mischievous. Socialists had just convened a peace conference in Stockholm to appeal over the heads of rulers to the workers of the world. In Petrograd, the Bolshevik wing of the Russian revolution had already called for peace on the basis of no annexations and self-determination for all peoples, and pressurised the Provisional Government into going along with them.

The Pope was saying many of the same things Wilson had said before he opted for war (he had called for "*peace without victors*" in a statesmanlike pronouncement early in 1916). But these former pronouncements were things of no use to the War-like attitude that was now necessary to cultivate in Americans for the fight of good over evil.

Wilson's reply to the Pope's Peace Note that there could be no discussion with the German Government, only with the German people, and then the war would end in a couple of hours after regime

change, suggested the Great War was all about establishing democracy in Germany and nothing else.

America's entry into the War and Wilson's moral rejuvenation of the Allied cause put paid to Benedict XV's Peace Note – the last chance Europe had of averting catastrophe.

It was very unlikely that Germany would have won the war, even if the United States had not come in on the side of the Allies. Germany was eager to negotiate a fair peace arrangement at the time when Lloyd George's "*knock-out victory*" declaration put an end to all prospect of successful negotiations.

Had sincere peace negotiations, along the lines proposed by Benedict XV, taken place the result would have been the "*peace without victory*," which Wilson described in his statesmanlike pronouncement early in 1916 when the U.S. was officially neutral. There would have been a negotiated peace treaty made by relative equals – militarily demonstrated by the stalemate in the war. This would certainly have been far preferable to the Treaty of Versailles and its effects. A negotiated peace would have saved the world from the last catastrophic years of war. It would have rendered unnecessary and impossible the brutal blockade of Germany for months after the 1918 Armistice – a blockade that starved to death hundreds of thousands of German women and children. And it would also have made impossible the rise of Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism – all products of the disintegration of the social fabric, effected by the war and blockade – and the coming of a second world war.

But Britain did not want another "*moral force of right*" in international affairs. It wanted to maintain itself as the "*moral force of right*" by winning the War and determining the post-war outcome. It wanted to use the "*material force of arms*" unilaterally in future, just as it had done, when and where it sought fit, and not let any international body tell it otherwise – as it demonstrated in relation to the League of Nations in the 1930s.

It did not wish to restore the conquered territory it had grabbed from Germany in Africa, or that it had taken from the Ottomans in the Middle East. It wanted to impose indemnity on Germany to pay for the war (and escape from its own American loans as far as it could – Bull the Biker, as the *Catholic Bulletin* called Britain in the 1930s.)

It did not want "*freedom of the seas*" restricting it severely during the war and rejected Wilson's call for it in his Fourteen Points. When Britain talked of the "*freedom of the seas*" it meant its freedom to police the seas in its own interests determining how much freedom should be allowed to other nations and what size of navies they could have.

It did not want arms limitation, except if exceptions could be made for it to police its empire, by bombing Arab and African villages off the map, if they did not pay their Imperial taxes for the privilege of British authority.

And it mostly did not want plebiscites and democracy determining the fate of territories – as witnessed by its behaviour in Ireland in 1918 when the local population decided they did not want Britain any more. Elsewhere in its vast and expanded empire obstacles were put up against other reluctant subject peoples exercising this right.

Another reason Britain did not want plebiscites and democracy determining the fate of territories, except where it suited disrupting another power – was because it had already made secret arrangement for the sharing out of spoils which it did not want democracy interfering with.

We cannot predict how history would have turned out if Benedict's Peace initiatives had been acted upon by Britain. But we know what did happen when they were rejected. So we can conclude one thing. The future of Europe, including the expansion of Bolshevism, the growth of Fascism and Nazism, the Second World War, the concentration camps, the Soviet occupation of Europe, the Israeli state built on the plantation of Palestine, the destabilisation of the Middle East etc. were the responsibility of those who rejected Benedict's efforts in 1917. □



# T.C. DIŐIŐLERİ BAKANLIĐI

Arařtırma Genel M¼d¼r Yardımcılığı

E-YAZI

**Tarih** : 25.12.2018-2018/55433056-ARTY/22778605  
**Konu** : Birinci D¼nya Savařının son yılına iliřkin y¼z¼nc¼ yıldıńn¼mleri konulu makaleler  
**Dosyası** : 500.20/Yayınlar  
**Kimden** : ARTY  
**Dağıtım** : Dıř Teřkilata  
**Eki** : One Hundred Years Ago, November 13, 1918, Cetiner.pdf, The Battle For Baku, 1918, Pat Walsh.pdf, Centenary of Benedict's Lost Peace, Pat Walsh.pdf

1.Birinci D¼nya Savařının 100. yıldıńn¼m¼ çerçevesinde ¼zellikle savařın son yılına dair ¼lkemiz açasından ¼nem tařıyan tarihi olayların dıř literat¼rde yeterince yer bulamaması muvacehesinde, Ottawa B¼y¼kelçiliğimiz Birinci M¼steřarı Yusuf Turan ¼etiner'in kaleme aldıđı "One Hundred Years Ago, November 13, 1918: The Last Fall of "Constantinople" adlı makale ile İrlandalı tarihçi Dr. Pat Walsh'ın yazdıđı "The Battle for Baku, 1918" ve " Centenary of Benedict's Lost Peace" bařlıklı makaleler ¼ aylık olarak yayınlanan "Irish Foreign Affairs" adlı derginin Aralık 2018 sayısında yayınlanmış olup, s¼zkonusu makalelerin metinleri ekte, ¼zetleri ise izleyen maddelerde sunulmuřtur.

2.

One Hundred Years Ago, November 13, 1918: The Last Fall of "Constantinople" Y. Turan ¼etiner

İstanbul'un M¼ttefik G¼çler tarafından 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde savařın sonucuyla ilgisiz, hukuken dayanaksız ve bahanelere dayandırılmış olarak fiilen iřgale bařlanması yeni bir tahlilini amaçlayan makale, bu tarihsel olayın gerçekte "Konstantiniyye'nin 20. y¼zyılda son kez fethi" olarak planlanmış bir askeri hareket kapsamında deđerlendirilmesi i¼in bir¼ok neden bulunmakla birlikte, Batılı tarih anlatısında bundan ka¼ınıldıđına dikkat çekmekte, bu suretle, tarihin bir dezenformasyon olarak naklinin amaçlandıđını ortaya koymaktadır.

Makale, Dr. Walsh'un, Osmanlı İmparatorluđu'nu yıkmak i¼in "b¼y¼k armađan" olarak nitelendirdiđi İstanbul'u Rusya'ya savař pazarlıđı i¼inde veren Britanya İmparatorluđu'nun, Rusya bu "armađan"ı ele ge¼iremeyince, avucuna d¼řt¼đ¼ anda beř yıl silahların g¼lgesinde elinde tuttuđunun Batı'da bilinmeyen bir olay olarak bırakıldıđını vurgulayan sunuřuyla bařlamaktadır.

Makale, 29 Mayıs 1453'ten sonra y¼zyıllarca, Isl¼mbol, Istanbul ve Konstantiyye olarak farklı yerde anılan İstanbul'un, Batılılar i¼in 465 yıl boyunca sadece "Constantinople" olarak adlandırıldıđını, Hristiyan d¼nyanın bir parçası olduđu g¼r¼ř¼n¼n hi¼ deđermediđini ve M¼ttefik g¼çlerin g¼z¼nde iřgal fırsatı bulunduđunda 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde teredd¼s¼z iřgaline bařlanan tek Merkezi G¼ç bařkenti olarak bu suretle ele ge¼irildiđini, bunun siyasi nostaljiyle bařlayıp, ¼arpık bir algı izlerken, İstanbul'un olađan¼st¼ kozmopolit yapısına aldırıř etmediđini, yerleřmiř bir bađnazlıđının emrindeki bu yasadıř iřgalin 6 Ekim 1923'de İstanbul'un kurtarılmasıyla sonlandırıldıđını vurgulamaktadır.

Makalede ¼ne ¼ıkartılan hususlar:

Konu : Birinci D¼nya Savařının son yılına iliřkin y¼z¼nc¼ yıldıńn¼mleri konulu makaleler  
Tarih : 25.12.2018

Erdem MUTAF  
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ARTY-IV

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Elçi, Genel M¼d¼r Yardımcısı



- Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Britanya İmparatorluğu'nu 19. Yüzyıl Avrupa güç dengesi içinde karşıt olarak görmediği, ancak Britanya'nın kararlılıkla Osmanlı İmparatorluğu karşısındaki ittifakı kurduğu, Çanakkale ve Kutt-ül Amare zaferlerinin, savaşı sonlandırmayı önemsemeyen liberal emperyalist Britanya hükümetini Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun tamamen çökertilmesi planlarına sevk ettiği, İstanbul'un savaşın gidişatı ile ilgili askeri değeri sınırlı olmasına rağmen buraya yönelik saldırıların da bu suretle başlatıldığı,

- İstanbul'a yönelik saldırılar için hava kuvvetlerinin seçildiği, 12 Nisan 1916'dan 25 Nisan 1918'e kadar düzinelerce hava saldırısının çok sayıda sivilin ölümüne neden olduğu, yalnızca 18 Ekim 1918'de yapılan hava bombardımanında 70 sivilin öldüğü, bunlardan yarıya yakınının gayrimüslim olduğu, nüfusunun yarısı gayrimüslim olan başkentte, gönüllüler dışında gayrimüslimlerin askere alınmadığı, İstanbul nüfusunun yüzlerce yıl askerlikten muaf tutulduğu, 1909 yılından itibaren askerlik hizmetinin gayrimüslimleri de kapsamaya başlamasına rağmen, bedel-i nakdî ödenmesi, farklı tabiiyetlere geçilmesi gibi yöntemlerle bu zorunluluğu aşanlar olduğu, askere alınanların neredeyse tamamının amele taburlarında geri hizmet gördüğü, böyle bir demografiye sahip İstanbul'un hava saldırılarına tabi tutulmasının bir paradoks teşkil ettiği,

- İngiliz General Hugh Trenchard'ın şehirlere hiçbir kısıtlamaya tabi olmaksızın hava saldırıları düzenlenmesini "stratejik bombalama" olarak 1917 yılının başında askeri terminolojiye dahil eden ilk kişi olduğu, bu kararın İstanbul'da da izlendiği,

- İstanbul'da gayrimüslimler kadar Müslüman tebaanın entelektüellerinin de aydınlanmacı fikirleri izlediği, sosyalizm ve liberalizm arasında üçüncü bir yol olan dayanışmacılığın zemin kazandığı, ancak bu özgürlükçü ortamın azınlık yayınları arasında kışkırtıcılığın artmasıyla istismar edildiği,

- İstanbul'un işgalini aynı bahanelerle 15 Mayıs 1919'da İzmir'in işgalinin izlediği, özellikle İzmir ve çevresini işgal hareketini genişleten Yunan ordusunun Lozan Anlaşması'nın 59. Maddesi'nde savaş suçu işlediğinin hükme bağlanmasıyla kesinleşen fiillere giriştiği,

- İzmir'in 9 Eylül 1922 tarihinde kurtarılmasının ardından İngiliz işgal kuvvetleri komutanı General Harrington'ın İstanbul'dan savaşmadan çekilme kararının alınmasını desteklediği, İngiliz Başbakan Lloyd George'un dominyonlardan asker talebinin sonuç vermemesinin Britanya'nın Yunanistan'ı kullanarak yürüttüğü vekalet savaşının daha fazla boyutlanmadan sona ermesini beraberinde getirdiği olmaktadır.

Makale, İstanbul'un işgal edildiği 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde Suriye-Filistin Cephesi'nden günler süren yolculuğunun ardından başkente dönmüş Mustafa Kemal Paşa'nın Haydarpaşa İstasyonu'nda saatlerce süren bekleyişin ardından (55 gemilik işgal donanmasının çelikten bir orman benzetmesine neden olduğu) Boğazı motorla geçerken söylediği "Geldikleri gibi giderler" sözüne yaveri Yarbay Cevat Bey'in "Size nasip olacak, siz bunları kovacaksınız Paşam" diyerek mukabele ettiği diyalogun ilk kez İngilizce literatüre dahil edildiği bir geri dönüşle sonlandırılmaktadır. (Sözkonusu çeviri Dr. Walsh'un da sunumunda yinelediği, alana yapılan bir başka katkı teşkil etmiştir.)

3.

"The Battle for Baku, 1918, Pat Walsh



Makale, 1918 Eylül'ün Osmanlı – Azeri kuvvetlerinin Bakü'yü Rus-Sovyet, Kozak, Britanya Emperyal güçleri ve Taşnaklardan oluşan koalisyonu yenerek kurtarmasını, kısa süre korunabilen bir zafer olarak gözükmekle birlikte, sonuçları bugün dahi hissedilen tarihi önemi haiz bir olay olarak irdelemektedir. Walsh, bu çerçevede yüzyıllarca devam edip, 19. yüzyılda “Büyük Oyun” olarak adlandırılmaya başlanmış Britanya-Rusya rekabetinin Britanya'nın Rusya'nın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu aleyhine genişlemesini engellemeye çalıştığı, “the Russians shall not have Constantinople” sloganına konu politikanın, Britanya için Almanya'ya karşı müttefik bulmak öncelik halini aldığı, İstanbul'u Rusya'ya “Glavniy Priz” (Büyük Armağan) olarak bırakmaya dönüşmesi üzerinde ilk olarak durmaktadır.

Walsh Almanya'nın Lenin'in sahaya inişini desteklemesinin Çarlığın savaş siyasetini ilk olarak Doğu Cephesi'nde çözdüğünü, Rusya'nın işgal ettiği Osmanlı İmparatorluğu toprakları ve Kafkasya etki sahasında bir güç boşluğu doğmasının “Şarklılar” karşısında prestij kaybetmek korkusuyla Britanya'nın dikkatini süratle celbettiğini kaydetmektedir.

Walsh, Britanya dış politikasının Almanya'yı rakip ve yeni tehdit olarak belirlemesinin, 1907 Reval Anlaşması'yla Rusya ile ittifak kurulmasının önünü açtığını, bunun da Rusya'nın Ermeni unsurları kışkırtmak dahil saldırganlığı önündeki engelleri kaldırdığını, Rusya'nın Jön Türklere önemli açılımlar sunduğu, ancak ayaklanmayı tercih eden ve ciddi ölçüde silahlanmış bir kesim olan Taşnakları gözüne kestirdiğini, Britanya'nın Ermenilerin Rusya'nın kontrolünde olmasını tercih ettiğini, Britanya'nın Çarlık Rusyası devrildikten sonra Bakü petrollerini ele geçirmek istediğini gördüğünü ve bu nedenle Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ile mücadele edecek Bolşeviklere yardımı, Bolşevizm'in Liberal emperyalizmin ideolojik karşıtı olmasına rağmen sürdürdüğünü vurgulamaktadır.

Taşnakların, Britanya Emperyalizmi'nin yanında, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'na devamı savunan Sosyal Devrimciler ve Menşeviklerden, Bolşeviklere kadar farklı kesimlerinin çatışma sahasına girdiğini kaydeden Walsh, Britanya'nın sefer gücünün 17 Ağustos 1918'de Bakü'ye girmesinin, burada kurulan Sovyet Bakü yönetiminin Merkezi Hazar Diktatörlüğü'nün eline geçmesiyle sonlandığını belirtmekte, sözkonusu yapıda ağırlık kazanmış Ermenilerin 12.000 Müslümanı katlettiğini, bu olayın Müslümanların Sovyetlerle bağ kurmasının önüne geçerek, yüzlerini Türk güçlerine çevirmesine neden olduğunu ifade etmektedir.

Britanya gibi, Bolşeviklerin de Ermenileri silahlandırmaya yöneldiğini dile getiren Walsh, 1918 Haziranında yapılan Batum Anlaşması kapsamında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti'ne askeri yardım sözü verdiğini, Osmanlı Kafkas İslam Ordusu'nun 1916 yılından itibaren Çarlık güçlerinin, 1917 yılından itibaren Ermenilerin elinde tuttuğu bölgelere girdiğinde su kuyularına atılmış, toplu mezarlara gömülmüş Müslümanlar ve feci katliam manzaralarıyla karşılaştığını, Bakü'yü kuşatan Kafkas Ordusu'na karşı duramayacağını anlayan İngiliz tümgeneral Dunsterville'in gemiyle İran'a kaçtığını, Ermenilerin Britanya güçlerinin sayıca az olmasını mağlubiyetin nedeni olarak açıklarken, Londra'nın Ermenilerin dağılmakla suçladığını, nitekim İngiliz gazetelerinin bu manşetlerle çıktığını vurgulamaktadır.

Walsh, Nuri Paşa'nın Bakü'yü Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti namına kurtardığını, Britanya'nın bundan sonra Sovyetlere karşı üç Kafkas devletini tampon bir yapı olarak desteklemeye çalıştığını, ancak Beyaz Rus general Denekin'in yenilmesiyle Bolşeviklerin kontrolü ele geçirdiğini, Azerbaycan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti'nin 1920 yılında ezilerek 23 aylık varlığına son verilmesine rağmen Bakü için savaşıp, Bakü merkezli bir idare kurmanın hafızalardan hiçbir zaman silinmeyecek, milli bilinci inşa eden büyük bir olay olduğunu, bunu Mehmet



Emin Resulzade'nin "Bir defa yükselen bayrak, bir daha inmez" sözüyle ifade ettiğini belirtmektedir."

4.

"Centenary of Benedict's Lost Peace, Pat Walsh

Papa Benedict'in 1917 yılı Temmuz ayında savaşın sona erdirilmesi için Almanya Parlamentosu'nda ortaya çıkan bir hareketi izlediği belirtilen makalede, bedeli ne olursa olsun Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nı zaferle sonuçlandırmanın Britanya'nın amacı olduğu, Londra'nın özellikle Almanya'nın sosyal, ekonomik ve siyasi dokusunu yıkarak sonuca ulaşmaya çalıştığı, bunun ise Hitler ve Nazizm'i ürettiği kaydedilmektedir.

Makale Papa Benedict'in çıkışının, Reichstag'daki Katolik politikacı Matthias Erzberger'in barış yapılmasını amaçlayan bir karar geçirmesini izlediğini, Almanya'nın Belçika ve diğer işgal edilen topraklardan çekilme, ayrıca tartışmalı bölgelerle ilgili olarak uluslararası anlaşmalar ve tahkim yoluyla çözüm sağlama konusunda da ilke kararı aldığını, ancak, Britanya'nın savaş seçeneğinin devamını zorladığını açıklamaktadır.

Walsh, Papa Benedict'in Almanya'da oluşan barış yönelimini dikkate aldığı gibi, girişimlerinin ABD Başkanı Wilson'ın 1916 yılı başında yaptığı "zafersiz barış" çağrısıyla da uyumlu olduğunu, mamafih Britanya'nın elde ettiği güç tekeli ve toprakları, ayrıca, Almanya'ya ödeteceği savaş tazminatını yitirmemek, bir yandan da ABD'ye olan borçlarından sıyrılmanın yolu olarak gördüğü savaşı kazanmak düşüncesinden vazgeçmediğini belirtmektedir."

Bilgi ve istifadelerine



# 1. One Hundred Years Ago, November 13, 1918: The Last Fall of "Constantinople"

Y. Turan Çetiner

İstanbul'un Müttefik Güçler tarafından 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde savaşın sonucuyla ilgisiz, hukuken dayanaksız ve bahanelere dayandırılmış olarak fiilen işgale başlanması yeni bir tahlilini amaçlayan makale, bu tarihsel olayın gerçekte "Konstantiniyye'nin 20. yüzyılda son kez fethi" olarak planlanmış bir askeri hareket kapsamında değerlendirilmesi için birçok neden bulunmakla birlikte, Batılı tarih anlatısında bundan kaçınıldığına dikkat çekmekte, bu suretle, tarihin bir dezenformasyon olarak naklinin amaçlandığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Makale, Dr. Walsh'un, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu yıkmak için "büyük armağan" olarak nitelendirdiği İstanbul'u Rusya'ya savaş pazarlığı içinde veren Britanya İmparatorluğu'nun, Rusya bu "armağan"ı ele geçiremeyince, avucuna düştüğü anda beş yıl silahların gölgesinde elinde tuttuğunun Batı'da bilinmeyen bir olay olarak bırakıldığını vurgulayan sunuşuyla başlamaktadır.

Makale, 29 Mayıs 1453'ten sonra yüzyıllarca, Islâmbol, Istanbul ve Konstantiyye olarak farklı yerde anılan İstanbul'un, Batılılar için 465 yıl boyunca sadece "Constantinople" olarak adlandırıldığını, Hristiyan dünyanın bir parçası olduğu görüşünün hiç değişmediğini ve Müttefik güçlerin gözünde işgal fırsatı bulunduğu 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde tereddütsüz işgaline başlanan tek Merkezi Güç başkenti olarak bu suretle ele geçirildiğini, bunun siyasi nostaljiyle başlayıp, çarpık bir algı izlerken, İstanbul'un olağanüstü kozmopolit yapısına aldırış etmediğini, yerleşmiş bir bağnazlığının emrindeki bu yasadışı işgalin 6 Ekim 1923'de İstanbul'un kurtarılmasıyla sonlandırıldığını vurgulamaktadır.

Makalede öne çıkartılan hususlar:

- Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Britanya İmparatorluğu'nu 19. Yüzyıl Avrupa güç dengesi içinde karşıt olarak görmediği, ancak Britanya'nın kararlılıkla Osmanlı İmparatorluğu karşısındaki ittifakı kurduğu, Çanakkale ve Kutt-ül Amare zaferlerinin, savaşı sonlandırmayı önemsemeyen liberal emperyalist Britanya hükümetini Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun tamamen çökertilmesi planlarına sevk ettiği, İstanbul'un savaşın gidişatı ile ilgili askeri değeri sınırlı olmasına rağmen buraya yönelik saldırıların da bu suretle başlatıldığı,

- İstanbul'a yönelik saldırılar için hava kuvvetlerinin seçildiği, 12 Nisan 1916'dan 25 Nisan 1918'e kadar düzinelerce hava saldırısının çok sayıda sivilin ölümüne neden olduğu, yalnızca 18 Ekim 1918'de yapılan hava bombardımanında 70 sivilin öldüğü, bunlardan yarıya yakınının gayrimüslim olduğu, nüfusunun yarısı gayrimüslim olan başkentte, gönüllüler dışında gayrimüslimlerin askere alınmadığı, İstanbul nüfusunun yüzlerce yıl askerlikten muaf tutulduğu, 1909 yılından itibaren askerlik hizmetinin gayrimüslimleri de kapsamaya başlamasına rağmen, bedel-i nakdî ödenmesi, farklı tabiiyetlere geçilmesi gibi yöntemlerle bu zorunluluğu aşanlar olduğu, askere alınanların neredeyse tamamının amele taburlarında geri hizmet gördüğü, böyle bir demografiye sahip İstanbul'un hava saldırılarına tabi tutulmasının bir paradoks teşkil ettiği,

- İngiliz General Hugh Trenchard'ın şehirlere hiçbir kısıtlamaya tabi olmaksızın hava saldırıları düzenlenmesini "stratejik bombalama" olarak 1917 yılının başında askeri terminolojiye dahil eden ilk kişi olduğu, bu kararın İstanbul'da da izlendiği,



- İstanbul'da gayrimüslimler kadar Müslüman tebaanın entelektüellerinin de aydınlanmacı fikirleri izlediği, sosyalizm ve liberalizm arasında üçüncü bir yol olan dayanışmacılığın zemin kazandığı, ancak bu özgürlükçü ortamın azınlık yayınları arasında kışkırtıcılığın artmasıyla istismar edildiği,

- İstanbul'un işgalini aynı bahanelerle 15 Mayıs 1919'da İzmir'in işgalinin izlediği, özellikle İzmir ve çevresini işgal hareketini genişleten Yunan ordusunun Lozan Anlaşması'nın 59. Maddesi'nde savaş suçu işlediğinin hükme bağlanmasıyla kesinleşen fiillere giriştiği,

- İzmir'in 9 Eylül 1922 tarihinde kurtarılmasının ardından İngiliz işgal kuvvetleri komutanı General Harrington'ın İstanbul'dan savaşmadan çekilme kararının alınmasını desteklediği, İngiliz Başbakan Lloyd George'un dominyonlardan asker talebinin sonuç vermemesinin Britanya'nın Yunanistan'ı kullanarak yürüttüğü vekalet savaşının daha fazla boyutlanmadan sona ermesini beraberinde getirdiği olmaktadır.

Makale, İstanbul'un işgal edildiği 13 Kasım 1918 tarihinde Suriye-Filistin Cephesi'nden günler süren yolculuğunun ardından başkente dönmüş Mustafa Kemal Paşa'nın Haydarpaşa İstasyonu'nda saatlerce süren bekleyişin ardından (55 gemilik işgal donanmasının çelikten bir orman benzetmesine neden olduğu) Boğazı motorla geçerken söylediği "Geldikleri gibi giderler" sözüne yaveri Yarbay Cevat Bey'in "Size nasip olacak, siz bunları kovacaksınız Paşam" diyerek mukabele ettiği diyalogun ilk kez İngilizce literatüre dahil edildiği bir geri dönüşle sonlandırılmaktadır. (Sözkonusu çeviri Dr. Walsh'un da sunumunda yinelediği, alana yapılan bir başka katkı teşkil etmiştir.)

## 2. "The Battle for Baku, 1918, Pat Walsh

Makale, 1918 Eylül'ün Osmanlı – Azeri kuvvetlerinin Bakü'yü Rus-Sovyet, Kozak, Britanya Emperyal güçleri ve Taşnaklardan oluşan koalisyonu yenerek kurtarmasını, kısa sürekörünabilen bir zafer olarak gözükmekle birlikte, sonuçları bugün dahi hissedilen tarihi önemi haiz bir olay olarak irdelemektedir. Walsh, bu çerçevede yüzyıllarca devam edip, 19. Yüzyılda "Büyük Oyun" olarak adlandırılmaya başlanmış Britanya-Rusya rekabetinin Britanya'nın Rusya'nın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu aleyhine genişlemesini engellemeye çalıştığı, "the Russians shall not have Constantinople" sloganına konu politikanın, Britanya için Almanya'ya karşı müttefik bulmak öncelik halini aldığı, İstanbul'u Rusya'ya "Glavniy riz" (Büyük Armağan) olarak bırakmaya dönüşmesi üzerinde ilk olarak durmaktadır.

Walsh Almanya'nın Lenin'in sahaya inişini desteklemesinin Çarlığın savaş siyasetini ilk olarak Doğu Cephesi'nde çözdüğünü, Rusya'nın işgal ettiği Osmanlı İmparatorluğu toprakları ve Kafkasya etki sahasında bir güç boşluğu doğmasının "Şarklılar" karşısında prestij kaybetmek korkusuyla Britanya'nın dikkatini süratle celbettiğini kaydetmektedir.

Walsh, Britanya dış politikasının Almanya'yı rakip ve yeni tehdit olarak belirlemesinin, 1907 Reval Anlaşması'yla Rusya ile ittifak kurulmasının önünü açtığını, bunun da Rusya'nın Ermeni unsurları kışkırtmak dahil saldırganlığı önündeki engelleri kaldırdığını, Rusya'nın Jön Türklere önemli açılımlar sunduğu, ancak ayaklanmayı tercih eden ve ciddi ölçüde silahlanmış bir kesim olan Taşnakları gözüne kestirdiğini, Britanya'nın Ermenilerin Rusya'nın kontrolünde olmasını tercih ettiğini, Britanya'nın Çarlık Rusyası devrildikten sonra Bakü petrollerini ele geçirmek istediğini gördüğünü ve bu nedenle Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ile mücadele edecek Bolşeviklere yardımı, Bolşevizm'in Liberal emperyalizmin ideolojik karşıtı olmasına rağmen sürdürdüğünü vurgulamaktadır.



Taşnakların, Britanya Emperyalizmi'nin yanında, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'na devamı savunan Sosyal Devrimciler ve Menşeviklerden, Bolşeviklere kadar farklı kesimlerinin çatışma sahasına girdiğini kaydeden Walsh, Britanya'nın sefer gücünün 17 Ağustos 1918'de Bakü'ye girmesinin, burada kurulan Sovyet Bakü yönetiminin Merkezi Hazar Diktatörlüğü'nün eline geçmesiyle sonlandığını belirtmekte, sözkonusu yapıda ağırlık kazanmış Ermenilerin 12.000 Müslümanı katlettiğini, bu olayın Müslümanların Sovyetlerle bağ kurmasının önüne geçerek, yüzlerini Türk güçlerine çevirmesine neden olduğunu ifade etmektedir.

Britanya gibi, Bolşeviklerin de Ermenileri silahlandırmaya yöneldiğini dile getiren Walsh, 1918 Haziranında yapılan Batum Anlaşması kapsamında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti'ne askeri yardım sözü verdiğini, Osmanlı Kafkas İslam Ordusu'nun 1916 yılından itibaren Çarlık güçlerinin, 1917 yılından itibaren Ermenilerin elinde tuttuğu bölgelere girdiğinde su kuyularına atılmış, toplu mezarlara gömülmüş Müslümanlar ve feci katliam manzaralarıyla karşılaştığını, Bakü'yü kuşatan Kafkas Ordusu'na karşı duramayacağını anlayan İngiliz tümgeneral Dunsterville'in gemiyle İran'a kaçtığını, Ermenilerin Britanya güçlerinin sayıca az olmasını mağlubiyetin nedeni olarak açıklarken, Londra'nın Ermenilerin dağılmasıyla suçladığını, nitekim İngiliz gazetelerinin bu manşetlerle çıktığını vurgulamaktadır.

Walsh, Nuri Paşa'nın Bakü'yü Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti namına kurtardığını, Britanya'nın bundan sonra Sovyetlere karşı üç Kafkas devletini tampon bir yapı olarak desteklemeye çalıştığını, ancak Beyaz Rus general Denekin'in yenilmesiyle Bolşeviklerin kontrolü ele geçirdiğini, Azerbaycan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti'nin 1920 yılında ezilerek 23 aylık varlığına son verilmesine rağmen Bakü için savaşmış, Bakü merkezli bir idare kurmanın hafızalardan hiçbir zaman silinmeyecek, milli bilinci inşa eden büyük bir olay olduğunu, bunu Mehmet Emin Resulzade'nin "Bir defa yükselen bayrak, bir daha inmez" sözüyle ifade ettiğini belirtmektedir."

### 3. "Centenary of Benedict's Lost Peace, Pat Walsh

Papa Benedict'in 1917 yılı Temmuz ayında savaşın sona erdirilmesi için Almanya Parlamentosu'nda ortaya çıkan bir hareketi izlediği belirtilen makalede, bedeli ne olursa olsun Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nı zaferle sonuçlandırmanın Britanya'nın amacı olduğu, Londra'nın özellikle Almanya'nın sosyal, ekonomik ve siyasi dokusunu yıkararak sonuca ulaşmaya çalıştığı, bunun ise Hitler ve Nazizm'i ürettiği kaydedilmektedir.

Makale Papa Benedict'in çıkışının, Reichstag'daki Katolik politikacı Matthias Erzberger'in barış yapılmasını amaçlayan bir karar geçirmesini izlediğini, Almanya'nın Belçika ve diğer işgal edilen topraklardan çekilme, ayrıca tartışmalı bölgelerle ilgili olarak uluslararası anlaşmalar ve tahkim yoluyla çözüm sağlama konusunda da ilke kararı aldığını, ancak, Britanya'nın savaş seçeneğinin devamını zorladığını açıklamaktadır.

Walsh, Papa Benedict'in Almanya'da oluşan barış yönelimini dikkate aldığı gibi, girişimlerinin ABD Başkanı Wilson'ın 1916 yılı başında yaptığı "zafersiz barış" çağrısıyla da uyumlu olduğunu, mamafih Britanya'nın elde ettiği güç tekeli ve toprakları, ayrıca, Almanya'ya ödedeacağı savaş tazminatını yitirmemek, bir yandan da ABD'ye olan borçlarından sıyrılmanın yolu olarak gördüğü savaşı kazanmak düşüncesinden vazgeçmediğini belirtmektedir."