

AN ANALYSIS OF INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICTS
IN CILICIA DURING THE INDEPENDENCE WAR YEARS
1918-1922

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Title: An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War
Years 1918-1922

This thesis examines the historical and socio-economic reasons behind the emergence of ethnic conflicts in Cilicia during the Independence War years. The years between the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1922 not only witnessed the French occupation of Cilicia but also the rise of the Turkish nationalist movement aspiring to establish hegemony over the same lands. Cilicia, hosting a variety of communal groups of Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, Circassians, and Arabs, became the stage on which imperial and national power blocs competed to gain the allegiance of local groups, which they envisioned as vital for the consolidation of their institutional power. For this reason, the reasons for the various ethno-religious groups either giving consent to the French occupation or opposing it by joining the ranks of the Turkish nationalist movement are given careful consideration in order to understand their agencies in choosing their sides. The thesis, therefore, reviews critically the literature, which evaluates the ethnic violence of this period as a fight between the nationalisms of the various ethno-religious groups involved in the conflict, who either sought for the patronage of the Great Powers or the Turkish/Ottoman state in achieving their ends. The thesis, on the other hand, portrays how violence was employed by all international, national, and local actors involved in the conflict, but more importantly, became a means through which the different classes of different ethno-religious groups of the region articulated their interests and negotiated their positions against the changing central authority. Finally, by displaying the shifting allegiances of various communal groups of the region, both to the French occupation and the Turkish nationalist movement, the thesis concludes that rather than the ideological motivations of religion or nationalism, classist and regional concerns were more on the agenda of the ethno-religious groups in choosing their sides in the violent conflicts of the period.

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Başlık: Kurtuluş Savaşı Sürecinde Kilikya'da Meydana Gelen İnter-Komünal Çatışmaların Bir Analizi 1918-1922

Bu tez Kurtuluş Savaşı döneminde Kilikya/Çukurova bölgesinde meydana gelen etnik çatışmalara odaklanarak, söz konusu çatışmaların tarihsel temellerini ve sosyo-ekonomik sebeplerini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Kilikya bölgesi 1918-1922 yılları arasında Fransız işgaline uğramış, fakat aynı zamanda bu dönemde yükselen Türk milliyetçi hareketiyle Fransız işgal yönetimi arasında bir hegemonya savaşına tanıklık etmiştir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu yönetimi boyunca Türk, Kürt, Ermeni, Rum, Çerkez ve Araplardan oluşan farklı komünal grupların bir arada yaşadığı bir bölge olan Kilikya, bu dönem boyunca emperyal ve ulusal güç blokları arasında bu bölgede yaşayan farklı komünal grupların bağlılığını kazanma yönünde bir savaşa da sahne olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, bu tez, farklı komünal grupların işgale destek verme veya karşı çıkarak Türk ulusal hareketinin saflarına katılma yönünde gösterdikleri tercihlere odaklanarak, onların inisiyatifini oluşturan faktörlere yoğunlaşmaktadır. Bu sebeple de, bu tez bu dönemde meydana gelen etnik çatışmaları farklı etnik-dini grupların milliyetçi talepleri arasında meydana gelen bir çatışma olarak algılayan ve bu grupların ya Büyük Devletler ya da Türk ulusal hareketi tarafından desteklendiğine vurgu yapan literatüre mesafeli yaklaşmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu tez de şiddetin gerek uluslararası, gerekse ulusal ve yerel aktörler tarafından diğerine karşı kendi pozisyonunu koruma ve güçlendirme aracı olarak uygulandığı iddia edilerek, özellikle de farklı etnik dini gruplar içinde farklı sınıfların değişen merkezi otorite karşısında kendi çıkarlarını artiküle etme ve kendi pozisyonlarını konsolide etme çabasının bir parçası olarak algılanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, farklı etnik-dini grupların gerek Fransız işgal yönetimine gerekse Türk ulusal hareketine değişken bağlılıklar sergiledikleri gösterilerek, din ve milliyetçilik odaklı ideolojik motivasyonlardan çok sınıfsal ve yerelci ajandaların bu grupların safını belirleyerek çatışmalara katılmakta temel rolü olduğu saptanmıştır.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Between the years of 1918-1922, Anatolia witnessed the diplomacy and military warfare of the victorious powers of World War I and the Turkish independence movement to take root and gain ascendancy in these years. When evaluating the aims and actions of both sides, various historians have noted the continuity in the aims of the Allied Powers (England, France, and Italy) in partitioning the lands of the Ottoman Empire according to the secret agreements made during World War I, which ruled for creating colonial spheres of influence in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish independence movement, therefore, could be evaluated as the attempt to forestall foreign intervention and sustain national hegemony upon the same lands.

Referred most often as the *Milli Mücadele* (the National Struggle) or *Türk İstiklal Savaşı* (Turkish War of Independence) period, this time span not only demonstrated the independence struggle organized under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal against Allied occupation, but was also characterized by ethno-religious conflicts as various Muslim and non-Muslim groups of the Empire took up arms according to the Allied powers' and Turkish nationalists' hegemonic strategies over the lands of Anatolia. This thesis examines the Turkish War of Independence from the perspectives of the various communities involved in the conflict and concomitantly attempts to understand both the historical and socio-economic reasons behind the outbreak of ethnic/sectarian conflicts between Turks, Armenians, Kurds, Arabs, and Circassians. With this aim, the thesis focuses on one part of the Independence War as it occurred

between French and Turkish forces in the context of the French invasion of Cilicia¹ throughout 1918-1922.

The years between the end of 1918 and beginning of 1922 not only witnessed French seizure of former Ottoman territory, but also the rise of the Turkish nationalist movement aspiring to continue Ottoman hegemony over the same lands. Cilicia, a home to a variety of communal groups², became the stage on which imperial and national power blocs competed to gain the allegiance of local groups, which they envisioned as vital for the consolidation of their institutional power. The principle concern in this thesis is to portray this episode of warfare between French and Turkish regular armed forces with the participation of Turkish, Armenian, Kurdish, Circassian, and Arab irregular guerilla units from the perspective of micro-history.

In doing this, I intend to challenge the traditional account of the Turkish War of Independence which glorifies the heroic resistance of the Muslim communities to French invasion as well as the accounts which evaluate the series of violent clashes between local groups as a simple outcome of the French failure at efficient colonization. Therefore, by taking into consideration the macro diplomatic, military, and economic strategies of the French colonial administration and the Turkish nationalist movement, I

¹ Both French and British officials used the term ‘Cilicia’ to refer to the geography surrounded by the Taurus and Amanos mountains at the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea. The name designated the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia established in the region throughout the 13th century. The area included the province of Adana and the sanjak of Maraş and Antep within the Ottoman administrative system. The area later came to be referred as ‘Çukurova’ by Turkish authorities. Please see Map 1 and Map 2 in Appendix, p. 136.

² The thesis refers to the terms “Turks”, “Kurds”, “Armenians”, “Arabs”, and “Circassians” as objects of the communal groups under study in this thesis. However, these categories do not denote the entirety of “Turks” or “Armenians”, but certain organizations (government, political party), groups and classes within these communal groups that articulated their interests to be in the name of the nation or religion which they belonged. Therefore, rather than taking these categories to be representative of the claims of a homogeneous cultural entity, the thesis points out the specific actors within these groups when evaluating their actions.

intend to show the effects of these macro processes in Cilicia through depicting the ways local groups either adapted or showed resistance to these processes.

Cilicia became a French occupation zone by the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, according to which Britain and France divided the Middle East into four territories of control.³ Cilicia comprised the Northern Occupation Territory with the city of Adana as its administrative center. The cities of Urfa, Maraş, Antep, and Kilis, however, rather than being included in the jurisdiction of the French administration, were assigned to a newly established fifth zone (Eastern Occupation Zone) under the command of the British Deserted Mountain Corps based at Aleppo.⁴ Thus, both the French colonial policy regarding Cilicia and the Anglo-French agreements related with it, evolved throughout the occupation.

The two countries signed another agreement on September 1919, according to which Britain agreed to retreat from the Eastern occupation zone, causing France to occupy these territories by October. At about the same time, the French authorities in Paris and Beirut began to seek rapprochement with the Kemalist movement, and for this reason, Georges Picot, French high commissioner in Beirut, went to meet with Mustafa Kemal in Sivas, in order to settle the terms for the possible retreat of the French forces from Cilicia in return for the cessation of Turkish hostility. Contrary to their efforts, the

³ The agreement called for the French annexation of coastal Syria, Cilicia, Diyarbakır, Urfa, and Haifa with an extended zone of influence in interior Syria including Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Mosul; and British annexation of lower Mesopotamia including Southern Iraq with a similar zone of influence that would border on that allotted to France. Vahe Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie: aux Confins de la Turquie, de la Syrie et de l'Iraq, 1919-1933* (Paris: Karthala, 2004), p. 30. Please also see Map 3 in Appendix, p. 137.

⁴ Garabet K. Moumdjian, "Cilicia under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems," in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers Inc., 2008), pp. 459-460.

war between French and Kemalist forces ensued on January 1920 and was finally settled by the Ankara Agreement of October 1921, resulting in total French retreat from Cilicia.

The French began their occupation of Cilicia by December 1918, with the intention of instituting a mandate that would also stand by French economic and political interests in the region. However, from the moment that the French administration was established in the region, it ran up against the resistance of the Turkish nationalists. In response to this threat, the strategy of the French authorities in the Levant was to gain the support of local non-Turkish groups: Armenian, Alewi Arab, Kurd, and Circassian.⁵ The main pillar of French colonial policy, therefore, rested on repatriating Cilician Armenians to the territories they had been forced to leave during the deportations of 1915. According to Vahe Tachjian, the rationale behind the French administration in bringing back and settling Armenian survivors was to create a Cilicia in which the Armenians formed a relative plurality.⁶ This was also in line with France's strategy of establishing demographic equilibrium in the region, in which no one group formed an outright majority.

In this sense, the French colonial administration supported the relocation of Armenians with the aim of creating a population that would approve of and sympathize with French rule. Through gaining their support, the French would decrease the effect of the Turks on the local administration, eliminate the opposition of the local Turkish population, and further consolidate its hegemony. Robert Zeidner, on the other hand, claims that the French attempted to accommodate its colonial interests with those of the

⁵ Vahe Tachjian, "The Cilician Armenians and French Policy, 1919-1921," in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers Inc., 2008), p. 541.

⁶ Ibid., p. 544.

Armenian nationalists with the intention of creating a balance between the two.

Armenian nationalist aspirations, although divided along the programs of various political parties, were unified on the goal of creating an Armenian regime in Cilicia under some sort of foreign protectorate or mandate, and aimed for the facilitation of Armenian immigration and settlement in the region.⁷ Accordingly, many Armenians moved to Cilicia to help build a new autonomous state in which the leading role would fall to the Armenian community.

Much of the ethno-religious violence of this period has been evaluated with reference to the Armenian repatriation process. Hence, the French-Armenian cooperation during the occupation of Cilicia and the re-settlement of the Armenians in the occupation zone, have led Yücel Güçlü, Esat Uras, and Salahi Sonyel to argue that it was the involvement of the Great Powers in Ottoman internal affairs since the late nineteenth century context of the Ottoman decline coupled with Armenian nationalist demands for autonomy and secession that left the Ottoman Empire under external and internal threats. According to these authors, as the Armenian nationalists cooperated with European imperialist powers in the partitioning process of the Ottoman Empire, this left no choice for the Ottoman rulers but to pursue security measures against its Christian minorities to safeguard the survival of the state and the security of its public.⁸ Consequently, the Turkish independence movement was one last effort by the Turkish nationalists organized under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, to claim sovereignty over

⁷ Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus: The French in Cilicia and Vicinity, 1918-1922* (Ankara: Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, 2005), p. 239.

⁸ Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010); Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question* (Istanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988); Salahi Ramadan Sonyel, *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire* (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society Printing House, 1993).

their state and independence for their public in the face of cooperation between the imperialist powers and the Christian nationalities of Greeks and Armenians in bringing an end to Turkish sovereignty.⁹

When evaluating the Independence War in Cilicia, this trend of thought has put much of the blame on the violent actions of the “Armenian Legion”¹⁰, whom the French authorized as a military unit to administer the invasion and work as security forces against Turkish attacks, and Armenian revolutionaries (*komitacılar*) upon the local Turkish public. Both Turkish memoirs and academic studies of this period are full of reaction to and resentment against the oppression and cruelty (*baskı ve mezalim*) of the French colonial administration and Armenian terror directed against the Muslim/Turkish people.¹¹

⁹ Stanford Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of Liberation: 1918-1923: A Documentary Study* (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2002); Salahi Ramadan Sonyel, *Turkey's Struggle for Liberation and the Armenians* (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research, 2001).

¹⁰ The Armenian Legion was formed during World War I, when on September 1915, a French flotilla discovered and rescued over four thousand Armenian male survivors of the Turkish siege of Musa Dag. These refugees were later taken by the French to Port Said, where they were put under French custody. French naval officers in Port Said were soon impressed by the military capabilities of the survivors and asked Paris to recruit them for military action against the Turks. They were later sent to Cyprus where they received military training. The legion later played a vital role in the final defeat of the Ottoman Empire under the command of the British General Edmund Allenby, who led the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the conquest of Palestine and Syria in 1917 and 1918; Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, pp. 140-145.

¹¹ Abdulgani Ginici, *1920 Adana Ermeni Mezalimi Hatıraları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2011); Damar Arıkoğlu, Birinci Büyük Millet Meclisi Adana Milletvekili, *Hatıralarım* (İstanbul: Tan Gazetesi ve Matbaası, 1961); Recep Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova; Yiğitlik Günleri* (İstanbul: n.p., 1961); Kemal Çelik, *Milli Mücadele'de Adana ve Havalisi* (1918-1922) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999); Taha Toros, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çukurova* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 2001); Cezmi Yurtsever, *Ermeni Terör Merkezi Kilikya Kilisesi: Çukurova'da Türk Varlığının Sosyo-ekonomik Esasları, Türkmen Aşiretler, Derebeylik Rejimi, Bunalımlar, 1865 Çukurova Reformu ve Ermeni Terörizminin: Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını* (İstanbul: Bayrak Yayıncılık-Matbaacılık Koll. Şti., 1983). Cezmi Yurtsever further moves on to claim that Turkish People were subjected to genocide by Armenians; Yurtsever, *Çukurova'da, Türklerin Soykırımı Uğradığı Bir Yer Yeşiloba* (Ankara: Kök Yayınları, 1990); *Kalekilise: Haçın (Saimbeyli) Soykırımının Dehşet Yeri* (Ankara : Kamu Hizmetleri Araştırma Vakfı, 1995).

Richard Hovannisian, Vahakn Dadrian, and Taner Akçam, on the other hand, claim that Turkish historiography has worked to efface the role of the Ottoman state and its various rulers in organizing the violent acts committed against Armenians throughout the Ottoman Empire. They especially refer to the CUP's (Committee of Union and Progress) wartime policy of deporting Anatolian Armenians to Syria as "genocidal", initiated during the attempt to Turkify the country through the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population of Anatolia.¹² One phase of this genocidal policy was to eradicate Armenians from their homelands through deportation and massacre, and another phase was to expropriate their public and private property; and both were done in order to achieve an ethnic homogeneity of Turks who would serve as the basis of a future Turkish nation-state and would become economically empowered by taking control of the property left behind by non-Muslims. Levon Marashlian additionally suggests that there was continuity between the CUP's and Turkish nationalists' mentality and intentions concerning the Armenians as in his claim, the Turkish nationalists eradicated the remnants of the Empire's Armenian population and finalized the expropriation of their properties throughout the Independence War.¹³

This thesis intends to show the limits of the existing literature in accounting for the emergence of ethnic-religious conflicts between various Muslim and non-Muslim communities of the Ottoman Empire, from the late nineteenth century context of the

¹² Richard Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide: Cultural and Ethical Legacies* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2007); Vahakn Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008); Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).

¹³ Levon Marashlian, "Finishing the Genocide, Cleansing Turkey of Armenian Survivors, 1920-1923," in *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide*, edited by Richard G. Hovannisian (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999).

Ottoman decline until the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, with a specific focus on the Independence War years. It is suggested that Turkish historiography overstates the role of the “international context” in order to highlight the role of Great Power imperialism and its support for the nationalist demands of the Christian populations of the Empire as the main instigator behind the outbreak of ethnic conflicts. In this way, they rationalize any role of the Ottoman state and the Muslim public in instigating and participating in violent actions against the Christian populations of the Empire as a means of self-defense.

The genocide scholarship, on the other hand, by pointing out “Turkish nationalism” as the guiding factor for the CUP’s leadership to commit genocidal policies against Armenians, falls short of assessing the plurality of factors that actually determined Ottoman/Turkish state policy, rather than mere “state ideology”. As will be suggested throughout the thesis, “Turkish nationalism” was only one of the factors that drove the violence forward; in fact, a re-reading of the inter-communal violence through a localist perspective allows us to see that all international, national, and local actors engaged in acts of ethnic relocation and massacres against each other in order to achieve their differing political ends.

As for the thesis of “Great Power involvement in Ottoman internal affairs”, it will be suggested that, it was one important factor in altering inter-communal stability and relations in the Empire. As suggested by the paradigm of the Eastern Question, from the late eighteenth century context onwards, the Great Powers engaged in a power struggle to safeguard their political, economic, and strategic interests vested in the Ottoman Empire. Largely stemming from the anxiety of the Ottoman decline and its inability to secure stability in the Balkans, Eastern Anatolia, and the Arab provinces of

the Empire, the Great Powers' concern and the competition between them rested on the strategic issues of the control of the Balkans, the Turkish Straits, and the Near and Middle Eastern routes to India and the East, which overall necessitated the effort of dealing with the rise of the nationalisms of the various non-Turkish populations of the Empire first in the Balkans, then in Anatolia, and the Arab provinces.¹⁴

Either stemming from the effort to preserve the territorial integrity of the Empire, as in the case of England and France, or to benefit from its dissolution as in the case of Russia, their struggles and interplays secured a space for the Ottoman Empire to keep its territorial integrity up until World War I. However, this did not mean that all the actions of the great powers resulted in the preservation of the status quo of the Ottoman Empire. Both the Serbian (1804-1835) and Greek (1821-1832) nationalist uprisings were supported by Russia in the former case, and Britain, France, and Russia in the latter case, ending in the independence of both countries from Ottoman rule. In the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro achieved independence and Bulgaria its autonomy. The various conflicts stemming from the Eastern Question came out of the framework of Ottoman decline, but more importantly, from the perceived threat of the change of power balance in the international system which resulted in the shifting allegiances between the Great Powers in the effort to preserve or extend its own benefits for the containment of the other's regional ambitions in the lands of the Ottoman Empire.

It was in this diplomatic context that Britain and France pressured the Ottoman state to pass reforms to deal with its political, economic, and social weaknesses. In both

¹⁴ A. L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc., 1996), p. 75.

countries' perspectives, maintaining a strong Ottoman Empire would serve the purpose of detaining Russian expansion in the Caucasus, Crimea, and eastern Anatolia. Within the time span of 1839-1876, referred as the Tanzimat Period, Ottoman statesmen passed various edicts, laws, political, and economic reforms to reorganize and strengthen the Empire by creating a centralized and modern state. Within the imperial decrees of the *Hatt-ı Şerif* of 1839, *Hatt-ı Humayun* of 1856, and the Ottoman Constitution of 1876, the Ottoman sultan granted that his subjects would receive fair and equal treatment from the state irrespective of their religious affiliation.¹⁵ While the *Hatt-ı Şerif* of Gulhane promised that the security of life, liberty, and property would be granted to all subjects regardless of their religion, the *Hatt-ı Humayun* promised equal treatment of all adherents of different religions in specific matters such as educational opportunity, appointment to government posts, and the administration of justice as well as in taxation and military service.¹⁶

The intended aims and outcomes of the Tanzimat reforms have been analyzed by scholars to assess both the intentions of the Ottoman statesmen issuing the reforms and the extent they were received and adapted by the subjects of the Empire. Various

¹⁵ The political and legal status of non-Muslim minorities was ascribed within the administrative framework of the 'millet system' wherein non-Muslim communities were granted autonomy in organizing their clerical, educational, and judicial affairs. Each millet chose its leader who acted as a state official and was responsible to the sultan to adjudicate in matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance as well as collecting taxes. Religious autonomy, however, did not grant legal equality or just treatment. They were exempted from military service, their testimony against Muslims in court was not accepted and non-Muslim men were forbidden to marry Muslim women. Certain imperial edicts prohibited non-Muslims from riding horses and bearing arms as well as building their houses higher than those of Muslims. It is against this background of both the toleration and humiliation of non-Muslim subjects within the millet system that the aims and effects of the Tanzimat reforms should be assessed. C. E. Bosworth, "The Concept of Dhimmi in Early Islam," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), pp. 37-51; Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), pp. 69-88.

¹⁶ Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963).

scholars have claimed that the Tanzimat Reforms were issued reluctantly by the Ottoman statesmen who were either forced to make concessions under European pressure without the firm belief in their application or used them as mere diplomatic tools to deceive European powers of the Ottoman reforms process in order to forestall foreign intervention in Ottoman internal affairs.¹⁷ Thus, the Hatt-ı Serif of 1839 was proclaimed at a time when Muhammad Ali of Egypt threatened the Empire's integrity and when the Ottoman government needed European support. The Hatt-ı Humayun of 1856 was issued under diplomatic pressure as a means of avoiding the foreign supervision of Ottoman reforms after the Crimean War. In a similar manner, the constitution of 1876 was issued when European diplomats gathered in Istanbul to prepare a reform program for parts of the Empire.¹⁸

Roderic Davison claims that the four Tanzimat statesmen –Reshid, Ali, Fuat, and Midhat Pashas- who were the main planners of Ottoman reforms and grand viziers had a fair acquaintance with Western political ideas and practices, and each of the four in his struggles with the administration of the unwieldy empire, came to believe that a degree of westernization was necessary to strengthen the Empire. In this sense, although international crises conditioned the time and manner of reform proclamations, they did not alone determine the content of the reform promises or the views of the Ottoman statesmen. More importantly, what united all the reformer statesmen of the Empire was their belief that only the creation of a genuine Muslim-Christian equality through the notion of a united Ottoman citizenship and patriotism could save the Empire from

¹⁷ Taner Timur, *Osmanlı Kimliği* (İstanbul: Hil, 1994); Edward Freeman, *The Ottoman Power in Europe* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1877).

¹⁸ Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century," *The American Historical Review* 4 (1954), p. 850.

partitioning either through nationalist rebellion or the diplomatic and military interventions of the Great Powers.¹⁹

The Tanzimat statesmen's project of gaining the allegiance of the Christian subjects through creating a uniform notion of Ottoman citizenship, however, did not result by the intended consequences. The most important reason was that the reform process met with resentment and reaction both by Christians and Muslims, and various social groups within these religious groups. Some of the religious leaders of the non-Muslim millets opposed the reform process as it endangered their personal status as religious leaders and the authority they exercised over their millets assured through the Ottoman theocracy and the millet system. Albeit in a different manner, Muslim religious leaders forming the ulema and clergy classes of the Empire as well as powerful provincial leaders –tribal leaders, landowners, and urban notables- contested the reform process for fear of losing the political, economic, and psychological superiority they exercised over non-Muslims.²⁰

It was the failure of the Ottoman state's reform process and the implementation of the ideal of 'Ottomanism' within the societal level that led to the further destabilization of the inter-communal stability of the Empire. In the face of Greek and Serbian secessions and more to come, the Ottoman statesmen especially failed to assess the demands and grievances of the majority of the Armenian population. This was especially true for the Armenian peasants who made up 70-75 percent of the total Armenian population and lived in the eastern provinces of Anatolia. Their grievances

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 850-853.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 854-864; Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 38-39.

mostly stemmed from the maltreatment and injustices committed by the local state officials as well as local Kurdish and Circassian tribal leaders who either raided their property and land, or in certain cases usurped their land which in turn compelled the peasants to pay taxes both to Kurdish landowners and the Ottoman state.²¹ It was mainly their grievances that the Armenian religious leaders, political representatives, and revolutionary parties came to address from the 1860s onwards.

As the Armenians became increasingly disillusioned with the Ottoman reform agenda, the Armenian patriarchs began appealing to the Great Powers to pressure and seek the implementation of reforms concerning mainly the security of life and property of Armenian peasants as well as demands to rightful and just administration by local officials. Armenian political demands came onto the agenda of the Great Powers following the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War, which ended with Ottoman defeat. In its aftermath, the Armenian patriarchate in Istanbul sent a memoranda to the Armenian exilarchate in Etchmiadzin, the Russian czar, and the British prime minister either demanding full autonomy of Turkish Armenia from the Ottoman state or pressure from the Great Powers to the Sublime Porte to carry out reforms in the presence of Russian military units. The second demand was realized through the San Stefano Peace Treaty signed between the Ottoman and Russian authorities in March 1878. The San Stefano Treaty was revised due to British fear and concern about possible extension of Russian sovereignty in eastern Anatolia. This resulted in the signing of the Berlin Treaty in July of the same year.²² Many diplomatic historians have remarked that the Armenian

²¹ Tessa Hofmann and Gerayer Koutcharian, "The History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations in the Ottoman Empire," *Armenian Review* 39, no. 4 (Winter 1986), pp. 7-9.

²² Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, pp. 439-461.

Question was “internationalized” with this treaty by the implementation of the sixty-first article in the final declaration:

The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application.²³

In the aftermath of the Berlin Treaty, periodic pressure on the Porte to implement the reforms led many Ottoman Christians to appeal to the powers with no real chance of success, while angering the Ottoman authorities, who became increasingly sensitive to signs of perceived internal disloyalty. Moreover, the majority of the Armenians lived in eastern Anatolia where Britain wanted to impede possible extension of Russian sovereignty, and therefore wanted to maintain within the Ottoman Empire; nevertheless they were encouraged by British and Russian pressure for reforms, and having lost their initial faith in the Ottoman reform agenda, they increasingly began to resort to these powers.²⁴

It was in this diplomatic context that Abdulhamit II began to see the remaining Christian communities as a lost cause and based his efforts on gaining the allegiance of its Muslim subjects more closely to the throne.²⁵ Moreover, European pressure to enforce reforms and the Ottoman rulers’ efforts to circumvent them set the stage for the development of an internal Turkish response which in turn led to the escalation of the

²³ M.S. Anderson, *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923* (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), p. 112.

²⁴ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 38.

²⁵ Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, p. 40.

Turkish-Armenian conflict.²⁶ From 1890's onwards, Armenian reform demands were with the various ruling ideologies and strategies of Abdulhamit II and the Young Turks who either pursued or condoned the large scale massacres aimed at the economic, cultural, and psychological weakening of the Armenians; with the calculation that this would bind Muslims more closely to the throne. Taner Akçam and Nesim Şener additionally claim that "Turkish nationalism" became the official ruling ideology of the Committee of Union and Progress after the CUP military takeover of 1913, which in turn led to further radicalization in the management of ethnic conflicts from integration to exclusion, and finally to large scale-deportations and massacres for purposes of Turkification.²⁷

In fact, as suggested by Donald Bloxham and Ryan Gingeras, there were a variety of factors that influenced Ottoman state policy from the reign of Abdulhamit II to the end of CUP rule in 1918. Globalization of trade relations and migration had consequences for all states across the globe, while for the Ottoman Empire this process resulted in external political, military, and economic engagements of the Great Powers with the Empire; the development of subject Christian nationalisms within the Empire; and the influx of Muslim refugees into the Empire from the Caucasus and lost Ottoman lands in the Balkans which introduced an embittered, anti-Christian constituency and increased competition for land and resources; leading overall to further intensification of inter-communal strife.²⁸ Ryan Gingeras has further stated that looking at the role of state

²⁶ Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, p. 113.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 82-109; Nesim Şener, "Ethnic Conflicts in Anatolia and the Establishment of the Turkish Republic 1918-1923" (PhD diss., Middle East Technical University, 2002), pp. 16-49.

policy and ideology regarding all these developments without the complexities of the local society is a gross mistake because only through localist lens we get to see the overlapping and shifting allegiances between global (Great Power imperialism), national (Ottoman state policy), and local (subject nationalisms) forces.²⁹

Accordingly, I would like to adopt the theoretical framework offered by three scholars, Ussama Makdisi, Hans Lukas Kieser, and Ryan Gingeras who have portrayed in three respective regions of Lebanon, Eastern Anatolia, and South Marmara in the Ottoman Empire; how the combined influence of European imperialism together with the Ottoman state's centralization efforts transformed the inter-communal stability of the Empire as they created new economic, political, and social spaces through which local groups could rearticulate their identity claims.³⁰ The identity claims, in this sense, centered around the effort of defining the group's relation to the changing central authority, which aimed for the transformation of power relations in society in terms of the organization of patronage and property relationships. As pointed out by Ryan Gingeras, mass violence in all of these regional contexts ensued with the creation of new systems of patronage upon the renegotiation of older political and economic orders and the claims of various communal groups to take place in the new order.³¹

²⁸ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 21; Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity and the End of the Ottoman Empire 1912-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 1-12.

²⁹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, pp. 1-12.

³⁰ Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History and Violence in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Hans Lukas Kieser, *İskalanmış Barış: Doğu Vilayetleri'nde Misyonerlik, Etnik Kimlik ve Devlet 1839-1938* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005); Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*.

³¹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, p. 6.

Within this theoretical framework, I would suggest that the province of Adana provides an appropriate location to assess the interaction between global, national, and local forces. First of all, the region went through a tremendous social transformation wherein the political, economic, and cultural transformations of the Ottoman state's Tanzimat reforms and Great Power penetration can be observed.³² Ottoman state policy altered the socio-economic structure of the region through two policies. Firstly, throughout 1865, Cevdet Pasha abolished the arbitrary rule of Turkic and Kurdish nomadic tribes who de facto ruled the area in the absence of effective Ottoman state control. The tribes were settled either through force or peaceful negotiation where the tribal leaders and derebeys became landowners or notables, as they began to derive their status and income from the position ascribed within the bureaucratic system of the Ottoman state.³³ Second, various tribes migrating from the Caucasus, collectively called Circassians, were settled in the area after the Crimean War of 1856 and Russo-Turkish War of 1878. Within this process, the Circassians became either small landowners or agricultural laborers.

Meltem Toksöz claims that the Ottoman state's settlement and migration policies coupled with the land registration efforts paved the way for the development of cotton agriculture in the region which in turn resulted in the creation of trade contacts with the outside world as the commercialization of agriculture led the world trade powers to

³² Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: the Making of the Adana-Mersin region 1850-1908* (Boston: Brill, 2010); Stephan Astourian, "Testing World-System Theory, Cilicia (1830s-1890s): Armenian-Turkish Polarization and the Ideology of Ottoman Historiography" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996).

³³ Andrew Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1973).

invest in agriculture and industry.³⁴ Correspondingly, throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Mersin along with İzmir, became the most important trade port city of the Empire as the effects of the Ottoman economic integration into the world market was greatly felt there. From the 1890s onwards, the region became the place where France, Germany, Britain, and American missionaries competed for economic and cultural hegemony.

The large scale socio-economic change instigated through capitalist transformation led also to social and economic stratification both between and within ethno-religious groups. Thus, it has been commonly asserted that the 1909 Adana incidents resulting in violent clashes between Muslims and Christians and the 1915 deportation and massacre of Armenians were initiated as a result of the reaction of the Ottoman state as well as the local Muslim public to the socio-economic empowerment of Christians, especially the Armenians. What is crucial for the period under study in this thesis is that in the aftermath of World War I, the French sought to repatriate deported Armenians for the purpose of facilitating economic growth in Cilicia as this would also pave the way for French economic development.

When the Armenians returned to their homeland, they sought to gain back their lands, households, and properties with French assistance as the majority of the Turks and the Muslims had feared and strived not to lose the socio-economic empowerment granted by the deportations. Therefore, it can be claimed that ethno-religious conflicts ensued once again within the competition over land and property, conditioned by the overall framework of French colonial and Turkish national hegemonic aspirations over Cilicia.

³⁴ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, pp. 1-26.

Final remarks have to be made about the demography and ethno-religious composition of the province of Adana. By 1914, the province, apart from the city capital of Adana, contained the sanjaks of Kozan, Cebelibereket, and Mersin. The population of the province numbered 411,023 in total, consisting of 341,903 Muslims, 50,139 Armenians, 8,537 Greeks, 5,036 Protestants, and 66 Jews.³⁵ A census conducted by the Armenian Patriarchate in the same year declared on the other hand, that the province had a population of 430,000, consisting of 252,000 Muslims, 130,000 Armenians, 30,000 Greeks, and 18,000 others.³⁶ French official estimates of the local population of Adana was based on the census carried out by an English firm prior to World War I which stated that the total population of the city was 400,000, consisting of 230,000 Muslims and 154,000 Christians. The Muslim population was made up of 100,000 Turcomans and Kurds, 100,000 Arabs, 10,000 Circassians and 10,000 Turks; and the Christian population was made up of 120,000 Armenians, 28,000 Greeks, and 5,000 others.³⁷

The Armenians living in Adana are said to be the oldest inhabitants of the region since they migrated there after the Seljuk invasion of Armenia and formed the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia between 1198-1375. The Mamlukes later took control of the region up until Sultan Selim I brought the region under Ottoman control after the battles of Mercidabık and Ridaniye with the Mamlukes in 1516. Cilicia thereafter remained under Ottoman rule until the end of World War I except for the brief interval of Ibrahim

³⁵ Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. 172. Please also see Table 1 in Appendix, p. 137.

³⁶ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, p. 82.

³⁷ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 82.

Pasha's³⁸ occupation (1832-1840). It has been argued that the transformation of Cilicia from a region of insignificant agricultural production to larger agricultural settlements with cotton production can be traced back to Ibrahim Pasha's rule, whose most important achievement was the organization of sedentary life around cotton production.³⁹ Arabs from Syria and Egypt along with some Africans migrated to the area upon his initiative. As Ibrahim Pasha's efforts paved the way for the region to become integrated to the world economy, Cilicia would attract Christian Arab immigrants from Syria as well as Greeks, who increasingly migrated to the region from Kayseri, Niğde, Cyprus and Chios.⁴⁰

The next chapter moves to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century context to display the socio-economic transformation of the city and inter-communal relations structured by it with reference to the transformative effects of the Tanzimat reforms and the region's incorporation to the world capitalist economy. Then, the discussion will move to the World War I context and focus on both the reasons for and consequences of the Armenian deportations of 1915-1916 on the region. The development of French colonial policy regarding the region will be detailed with reference the World War I conditions. Chapter 3 will examine the process of French settlement in the region. The chapter will firstly focus on the steps that the French colonial administration took to consolidate its hegemony in Cilicia, then the focus will be on the reactions that the various communal groups generated to the occupation either in the form of consent or

³⁸ Ibrahim Pasha was the son of Muhammad Ali of Egypt, who rebelled against the Ottoman state and invaded Syria and Southern Anatolia for eight years until European powers intervened and forced him to retreat to Egypt.

³⁹ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, pp. 40-55.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 46; Astourian, "Testing World-System Theory, Cilicia," pp. 104-109.

opposition. In Chapter 4, the onset of the war between France and Turkey will be reviewed with its various reasons and consequences. Finally, the conclusion will reflect on both the reasons and actors of the violence of this period.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL SETTING

The Geography of Cilicia: Mountains and Marshlands

Cilicia, encompassing roughly the territories of the western regions of the province of Adana and Aleppo, is surrounded by a series of mountain ranges which provide a natural border to the region with Syria and Central Anatolia. Surrounded by the Taurus mountains to the northwest, the Anti-Taurus mountains to the northeast and the Amanus to the east, the region is also divided into two parts: a lower or western alluvial plain watered by the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers and an upper or eastern plain following the Ceyhan and its tributaries. Most of the upper plain had a rocky structure and lacked flat upland areas suitable to agriculture. Plus, the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers frequently flooded leaving both of the plains quite swampy. The floods, while making the soil more fertile, would leave behind swamps which would breed mosquitoes and malaria in the summer heat and would force the inhabitants to give up cultivation in the lower plain and seek summer homes in the mountains.⁴¹

This was mainly why the political and social life of Cilicia was structured by a pastoral nomadic economy, where nomads living in the hill country and settled peasants living in the lowland had to share the land. Eberhard claims that the migration patterns of the nomads from the foothills to the alluvial plain from summer to winter lent itself to the formation of a symbiotic relationship between the sedentary (mostly Armenian) and nomadic (Turkic and Kurdish) populations, where the settlers would use the same land

⁴¹ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, p. 23; Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 12-13.

for agriculture during winter and the nomads during summer for grazing their cattle, fertilizing the land. Moreover, the nomads were good customers who bought city products as well as staple items for the winter and sold wool, butter, and cheese, which they had produced in the summer camps.⁴²

The geographic structure of Cilicia, while favoring the preponderance of a pastoral nomadic economy, also conditioned the formation of a political structure based on the rule of a military aristocracy with peasant subsistence. Throughout the era of Ottoman rule between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, the direct rule of Cilicia was performed by several local families known as lords of the valley, or “derebeys” in its common usage. The derebeys of Cilicia drew their power and prestige both from their ancestry and the administrative titles granted by the Sultan. In fact, the Ottoman state treated them simultaneously as rebels whom it sought to divest of power and as legitimate local authorities whom it expected to perform the duties of collection of taxes, conscription of soldiers and maintenance of public order. However, it could get neither in the absence of effective Ottoman state control in the area. The weakness of the local administration in Adana as well as the armed forces of the state favored the de facto rule of the derebeys, whose power, unlike that of the pashas and the urban notables, was concentrated in the mountains, which afforded them a natural defense against a greater attacking force.⁴³

Based on this context of the lack of Ottoman state authority and the arbitrary rule of the derebeys, one should not, as Meltem Toksöz claims, characterize the relationship

⁴² Wolfram Eberhard, “Nomads and Farmers in Southeastern Turkey: Problems of Settlement,” *Oriens* 6, no.1 (June 1953), p. 37.

⁴³ Andrew Gould, “Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7, no. 4 (October 1976), p. 486.

between the sedentary and nomadic populations of Cilicia as one of constant intrigue and battle. Arguing in line with Eberhard, Toksöz claims that nomads co-existed peacefully with the Armenian and Greek small-farmers and merchants, who did not mind using the same lands with nomads as nomads also proved to be the foremost buyers of their products.⁴⁴ This did not mean, on the other hand, that the nomadic tribes did not engage in acts of brigandage, but the central authority interfered to prevent brigandage only insofar the peasants complained that their crops had been destroyed by tribes.⁴⁵ Therefore, one should assume that the peasants and nomads cohabited at least without major battles.

The relationship between the settled peasants and nomadic tribes changed fundamentally when the Ottoman state undertook to apply the Tanzimat reforms in Cilicia by eliminating the political power of the derebeys through sedentarizing the tribal population they controlled. The next section examines how this process was carried out.

Fırka-ı Islahiyye and Forced Settlement

Establishing direct control of the Ottoman state in Cilicia was a difficult task for the Tanzimat reformers due to the resistance it generated from the derebeys and the great number of the nomadic population they controlled. As the Porte was concerned with the suppression of brigandage, collection of taxes, conscription of soldiers, and promotion of agriculture in the region, this all necessitated the settlement of the tribes and subject their labor and manpower to the direct control of the state.⁴⁶ By the beginning of the

⁴⁴ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, p. 35.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

1860s this need became more urgent due to a variety of factors. First of all, 8,755 Nogay Tatars were settled in the province in 1859 as they migrated there from Crimea after the Crimean War.⁴⁷ Circassians migrating from Caucasia were also settled in the region as they fled Russian rule after the Seyh Samil Rebellion. By the middle of 1861, it is estimated that a total of 19,918 refugees were settled in the region.⁴⁸ The major concern of the Porte was to protect the refugees from tribal attacks.

Moreover, the approach of the American Civil War (1861-1865) caused a shortage of cotton supply in USA and a rapid increase in cotton prices, which compelled Europe to look elsewhere for its cotton. Encouraged by the interest of Europe, the Porte granted a five-year tithe exemption to those planting cotton, lifted duties on the import of cotton gins and the export of cotton, provided free seed and use of machinery to cotton growers, and awarded medals to the producers of the best cotton.⁴⁹

All of these factors led the Porte to take up a comprehensive and decisive reform program in Cilicia which would encourage cotton cultivation with the aim of increasing the state's tax revenues as well as ending the oppression of the peasantry by the derebeys. Thus, apart from exiling the derebeys and settling tribes, the Reform Division had the goal of enforcing the 1858 Land Code and 1864 Provincial Code issued by the Porte, which called for land registration and the establishment of effective local bureaucratic mechanisms in the region. Cevdet Pasha became the leading figure of this

⁴⁶ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 66.

⁴⁷ Abdullah Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri, 1856-1876* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1997), pp. 124-125.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

⁴⁹ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 68.

reform program and he arrived in Iskenderun on 27 May 1965 with the Reform Division (*Fırka-ı Islahiyye*) consisting of 9000 infantry, 2000 cavalry and six pieces of artillery.

By early August, the Reform Division had established control over Cilicia through the use of both conciliatory and forceful methods. To eliminate the power of the derebeys, the reformers had planned to exile them to the Balkans while bestowing them with official titles and generous salaries as an inducement to surrender beforehand.⁵⁰ By November, the commanders of the Reform Division returned to Istanbul as they had faced with very little resistance from the tribes and other elements of the population and more importantly, most of the derebeys had surrendered without much resistance.

The most important result of this process was sustained economic growth in the region from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards. This was due to the fact that a great majority of the settled population in Cilicia could take advantage of the growing interest both of the state and foreign capital. The Turcoman and Kurdish tribal families profited from this process as they became landowners and notables using the local bureaucratic mechanisms for promoting their own agricultural and commercial interests against those of the central state.⁵¹ The Armenian merchants became the intermediaries for the export trade of the region as they traded everything and they lent money to the resourceless peasants.⁵² Christian Arab, Greek, and Armenian merchants benefited from the expansion of world trade as they adopted the strategy of importing and selling agricultural machinery for enrichment.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, p. 61.

⁵² Ibid., p. 111.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 172.

Consequently, by 1908, Cilicia became a region of shared hegemony between large landholders, export merchants, foreign capitalists, and local bureaucrats leading overall for the region to acquire relative autonomy vis a vis both global and state forces.⁵⁴ The next section focuses on how capitalist transformation and the socio-economic stratification it generated prepared the ground for the outbreak of violent conflicts between the Muslim and Christian communities of Cilicia in 1909.

The 1909 Adana Incidents: Conspiracy or Outburst?

The inter-communal clashes between Armenians and Muslims in 1909 that took place in Adana and its vicinity occurred in two waves: From April 14-16 and 25-27. These dates also coincided with the counter-revolution held up by forces loyal to the Sultan Abdulhamid II's regime against the CUP rule in Istanbul. On 12 April, the First Army Corps accompanied by religious clerics (softas) headed to Sultanahmet Square demanding the restoration of Sharia. On 17 April, the Action Army organized by CUP leaders left Salonica and entered Istanbul on 23 April, taking control of the city after a short duration of minor battles.⁵⁵

Although the inter-communal clashes started on the city center of Adana on 14 April, it quickly spread to the various kazas and villages of the whole region of Cilicia including Misis, İncirlik, Ceyhan (Hamidiye), Osmaniye, Tarsus, Sis (Kozan), Erzin, and Dört Yol.⁵⁶ The second round of clashes broke out in the Armenian quarter of Adana

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), pp. 143-148.

on the 24th of April immediately following the arrival of Ottoman troops from the capital that were sent there to settle the unrest. Throughout the second round, killings occurred only within the city of Adana while the Armenian section of the city was burned together with many foreign missions, including schools and orphanages. Afterwards, witnesses frequently accounted how the whole city of Adana was in smoking ruins.⁵⁷

The violence of 1909 in Adana could not be suppressed by the local security forces. On 17 April, General Mahmud Sevket Pasa, who had led the Action Army from Salonica to Istanbul, sent 850 soldiers of the Second and Third Regiments to Cilicia who later took part in the clashes by 24 April; although it has never been proven that they did so relying on orders from the center.⁵⁸ On 18 April, the first French warship arrived in Turkish waters on its way to Mersin, followed by British, Russian, German, American, and Italian vessels. Their intervention, however, was limited to the landing of observation missions, to courtesy calls to the local officials, and to humanitarian assistance through religious institutions.⁵⁹ When the violence ended, an estimated 20-25,000 Armenians and 2,000 Muslims had been killed and a large number of Armenian shops, houses, and churches destroyed.

There is no agreement on the possible causes of this violence, although there are one-sided assessments of the events from Armenian and Turkish scholars. Esat Uras, for

⁵⁶ Hence, in places like Haçin, Feke and Zeytun where Armenian presence was dense, Armenians could defend themselves by weapons and suffered no loss of lives and property. Meltem Toksöz, "Adana Ermenileri ve 1909 'iğtişası'," *Tarih ve Toplum* 5 (Spring 2007), pp. 150-151.

⁵⁷ Nazan Maksudyan, "New 'Rules of Conduct' for State, American Missionaries, and Armenians: 1909 Adana Massacres and the Ottoman Orphanage," in *'L'ivresse de la Liberte' La Revolution de 1908 dans l'Empire Ottoman*, edited by François Georgeon (Paris: Peeters, 2012), pp. 137-138.

⁵⁸ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 6.

⁵⁹ Raymond H. Kevorkian, "The Cilician Massacres, April 1909," in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers Inc., 2008), p. 347.

instance, has argued that the violence was a conspiracy organized by Armenian revolutionaries to instigate a national rebellion in order to re-establish the medieval kingdom of Cilicia.⁶⁰ Vahakn Dadrian, on the other hand, has claimed that the mobs were organized by the conspiratorial forces of the CUP who collaborated with the local and reactionary forces to organize and direct the massacres.⁶¹

The same of line of thought can also be observed on the judgments of the actors and perpetrators of the violence. Hence, both sides claim that the wave of clashes either began upon the murder of two Armenians by Turks or two Turks by Armenians.⁶² Mehmed Asaf, who was the *mutasarrıf* of Cebel-i Bereket at the time, points out Bishop Muşeg as the main instigator of the Armenian ‘rebellion’, who along with 15-20 Armenian *komitacıs* had visited every city and sanjak of Adana prior to the incidents and made various speeches to the Armenian community to incite them to rebel against the government. He then went to the city of Adana and propagated to the public to join the rebellion.⁶³ Raymond Kevorkian, on the other hand, claims that the violence that consumed Cilicia after 14 April was a planned act by Muslim clerics, notables, police, and high officials who incited the Muslim public against Armenians and circulated false rumors that Armenians were armed and preparing to rebel against them. Hence, 14 April was devoted to the destruction of Armenian shops in the marketplace since the Muslim

⁶⁰ Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, pp. 810-829.

⁶¹ Vahakn Dadrian, “The Circumstances Surrounding the 1909 Adana Holocaust,” *The Armenian Review* 41, no. 4 (1988), p. 5.

⁶² Toksöz, “Adana Ermenileri ve 1909 ‘iğtişası’,” p. 150.

⁶³ Mehmed Asaf, *1909 Adana Ermeni Olayları ve Anılarım*, edited by İsmet Parmaksızoğlu (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982), pp. 7-9.

street stalls had been carefully sealed, and to the massacre of Armenians living isolated in the outskirts of Adana.⁶⁴

Bedross Der Matossian, as a critique of this historiographical trend, has emphasized that the Adana Massacres should be viewed as an integral part of the ongoing power struggles in Anatolia and the Arab provinces generated by the major change of the political context brought by the Young Turk Revolution of July 1908.⁶⁵ In his account, the most immediate result of the Revolution was the emergence of competing public spheres within the Empire which allowed for the publishing of numerous publications by different ethnic groups and consequently led to the free expression of their ethnic identities and aspirations.⁶⁶ Hence, the emergence of a multiple and contentious public sphere in Adana would allow not only for the expression of ethnic identities but also would become what Bedross Der Matossian describes “a vehicle through which the existing political, social and economic anxieties would be manifested through two waves of massacres which took place in conjuncture with the revolution.”⁶⁷

The expression of these anxieties came in many ways. First of all, the Young Turk Revolution caused a change in the dynamics of power within Adana. Local officials and the notables they supported were dismissed from power and they were replaced by CUP officials or people loyal to the CUP.⁶⁸ This caused resentment on the

⁶⁴ Raymond H. Kevorkian, “The Cilician Massacres, April 1909,” p. 342.

⁶⁵ Bedross Der Matossian, “From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2011), p. 154 and 163.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 155.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

part of the notables affiliated with the Abdulhamid regime and led to the expression of their anger at CUP and their Armenian “collaborators” in the context of the Counter-Revolution of March 1909. Secondly, the constitutional freedoms given to Christians after the Revolution allowed for Armenian nationalistic celebrations of this freedom which were expressed through newspapers, public demonstrations, and theatre plays. Muslim resentment about the freedoms enjoyed by the Armenians was actually the ground wherein rumors circulated that an independent Armenian kingdom was going to be established in Cilicia.⁶⁹

Above all, economic jealousy on part of both the Muslim notables and agricultural workers against Armenian wealth is considered to be an important motivation behind the violence inflicted on the Armenians. As stated before, Armenians played a dominant role in both trade and industry in Adana which in turn triggered envy on part of the Muslim community. The time of the massacres had also coincided with the time for ploughing cotton and harvesting barley in the region when every year an estimated number of 30,000-40,000 migrant workers would arrive on Adana from other parts of Anatolia.⁷⁰ Thousands of impoverished workers in Adana were also drawn into to the fighting for no other reason than to loot and steal Armenian property.

Meltem Toksöz renders a different reading of the role of both the political and economic context in preparing the ground for the Adana massacres.⁷¹ Her main claim is

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 156.

⁶⁹ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, pp. 60-61.

⁷⁰ Matossian, “From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution,” pp. 156-157.

⁷¹ Meltem Toksöz, “Multiplicity or Polarity: A Discursive Analysis of Post 1908 Violence in an Ottoman Region,” in *Untold Histories of the Middle East : Recovering Voices from 19th and 20th*

that we cannot explain the outburst of violence in the context of Adana with reference to the immediate effects of the Young Turk Revolution and the Counter Revolution of March 1909. Indeed, the relation between the province and Istanbul was not as direct as the scholars portray it as shown by the fact that only in August the government ended its legal proceedings, admitted responsibility for the violence, and compensated for the losses of the Armenians.⁷² Hence, it cannot be assumed that the province of Adana experienced the revolution and its aftermath in the same way as did the cadres in Istanbul.

For this reason, Toksöz claims that we should consider the dynamics of the region itself which had experienced sustained economic growth since the 1890s due to its autonomous status vis-a-vis the Empire. In this sense, the economic and social stratification generated by capitalist growth caused clashes between Muslims and Armenians only when the region lost its relative autonomy in economic development by 1908, to be tied to the development of a national economy which in turn disrupted the regional distribution of power. Toksöz claims that the first decade of the twentieth century dealt a serious blow to the region's economic development and its autonomy and when this autonomy was threatened by the 1908 constitution, the heavy Armenian presence became a peculiarity which in turn, had to be dealt with bloody massacres.⁷³

In fact, the reaction of the central state when interrogating and persecuting the participants of the violence of 1909 reveals the complexity of both the aims and outcomes of the actions of the local and state actors involved in the clashes. Thus, only

Centuries, eds. Amy Singer, Christoph Neumann and Selçuk Akşin Somel (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 215-228.

⁷² Ibid., p. 218.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 216-218.

after a five-month long investigative process, the military tribunal, formed upon the orders of the central state, reached its decision in August. As a result, six Armenians and nine Moslems were hanged in Adana as provocateurs of the massacres, while both the officials and notables blamed by Armenians for their accomplices were arrested and received sentences ranging from, forced public service to short-term imprisonment to exile.⁷⁴ Therefore, it can be claimed that the people blamed by both sides received sentences although in unequal terms. More importantly, Cemal Bey (who was going to be the Cemal Pasa of CUP after 1913) was appointed as the new *vali* of Adana, and immediately upon his arrival, he blamed the previous local government for their role in the massacres and considered it as a black page in Ottoman history. He established commissions to compensate for the damages in Armenian shops and houses and upon his initiative; the Armenian neighborhood was re-built under the name of Çarçabuk neighborhood.⁷⁵ On September 1909, Cemal Bey also ordered and financed the construction of an Ottoman orphanage to extend his own guardianship to the Armenian orphans.⁷⁶

Overall, as defended by Meltem Toksöz and Bedross Der Matossian, the Adana Massacres should be viewed as an integral part of the ongoing power struggles in Anatolia and the Arab provinces generated by the major change of the political and economic contexts brought by the Young Turk Revolution of July 1908. In Cilicia, this change of context had resulted in the altercation of power relations in favor of

⁷⁴ These names included Cevad Bey, the vali; Mustafa Remzi Pasa, the military commander; Ihsan Fikri, president of the Young Turk club of Adana; Abdul Kader Baghdadi Zade, influential notable; and Kadri Bey, commissioner of police. Kevorkian, "The Cilician Massacres, April 1909," pp. 366-367.

⁷⁵ Toksöz, "Adana Ermenileri ve 1909 'iğtişası'," pp. 154-155.

⁷⁶ Maksudyan, "New 'Rules of Conduct' for State, American Missionaries, and Armenians: 1909 Adana Massacres and the Ottoman Orphanage," pp. 145-146.

Armenians who gained political and cultural freedoms brought by the new constitution and were also economically empowered through agricultural investments and trade throughout the Tanzimat period. While the notables and officials affiliated with the Sultan Abdulhamid's regime used the chaotic situation generated by the Counter-Revolution to re-assert their position vis a vis CUP and their Armenian collaborators, the officials and notables of the new CUP regime also took advantage of the chaotic situation to exert their authority in the local context by taking conflicting positions of either joining the massacres or trying to appease both sides.

Hence, Mehmed Asaf points out to the ambiguity of the actors involved in the process as he narrates in his memoirs that Ali İlmi, who is narrated as the main provocateur in Armenian accounts, was in fact playing both sides by both provoking the Muslim public against Armenians and then provoking the Armenians against Muslims and he would also spy for Armenians in return for money.⁷⁷ More importantly, after the violence ended, the central state consolidated its authority throughout the region both through the investigative processes and the appointment of the new vali. The new vali, Cemal Bey, on the other hand, associated the massacres with the deficiencies of the 'ancien regime' and propagated his own position as one of conciliating both sides and dispensing justice. Therefore, it can be claimed that, in a chaotic environment brought by the Young Turk Revolution and the Counter-Revolution of 1908-09, both state and non-state actors resorted to violence either to protect, extend or alter their position vis a vis the different power blocs in the local context; while the Adana incidents created an opportunity for the central state to consolidate its authority in the province through the elimination of old officials and notables associated with the massacres and also through

⁷⁷ Asaf, *1909 Adana Ermeni Olayları ve Anılarım*, p. 19.

the establishment of new institutions that would consolidate the ideals of the CUP, as articulated in Cemal Pasha's actions, in Adana.

The Outbreak of World War I and the Armenian Deportations 1915-1916

When the Young Turks forced Abdulhamid II to put back into effect the *Kanun-ı Esasi* (the Ottoman Constitution of 1876), through the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, they had the intention of ending the autocratic rule of Sultan Abdul-Hamid II and establishing a constitutional, parliamentary regime. Only through establishing such a regime, they hoped, they could obviate the reasons behind the nationalists' desire for separation and the European imperialists' desire for intervening in the internal affairs of the Empire.⁷⁸ Indeed, the revolution was greeted with enthusiasm by both the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the Empire as the Muslims and Christians fraternized in the streets and much hope for the future was expressed by all. The hope was that the Revolution had brought liberty for everyone; for the Muslims and Christians, who were all brothers and citizens of the free Ottoman state.⁷⁹

The Dashnaksuitun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) and the CUP had collaborated to overthrow the Regime of Abdulhamit II while the Young Turks were still in opposition, and they continued to make political alliances for elections until 1912.⁸⁰ Even so, there were a variety of factors that contributed to the severing of CUP-Dashnaksuitun and Armenian-Turkish relations throughout this period until the breakout

⁷⁸ Erik Jan Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists: Identity Politics 1908-1938," in *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey*, edited by Kemal Karpat (Boston: Brill, 2000), p. 151.

⁷⁹ Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), p. 401.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 421-422.

of World War I. First of all, the 1909 Adana massacres destroyed whatever sense of confidence the CUP had managed to create among the Christians. The massacre and displacement of Muslims during the Balkan Wars, in return, caused CUP to suspect any Christian intentions and they increasingly began to suspect any non-Muslim revolutionaries of having anti-state rather than anti-regime goals.⁸¹ Donald Bloxham claims that the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the CUP internal coup afterwards, signified the death of any remnant of CUP pluralism. The wars casted Muslim-Christian relations into the sharpest relief, when during the war, Ottoman Greek and Bulgarian soldiers crossed sides to fight along their ethno-religious brethren.⁸² Accordingly, the state sanctioned deportations of small groups of Christians from the vicinity of military communication routes.

Taner Akçam claims that these developments during and after the Balkan Wars shifted the CUP mind to envisage the demographic structuring of Anatolia through cleansing Anatolia of its non-Muslim “tumours”⁸³. Vahakn Dadrian additionally states that the CUP leaders had already developed a destructive genocidal scheme directed towards Armenians prior to the time they had signed the alliance treaty with Germany on August 1914. In fact, CUP exploited this alliance “as a prop to proceed in the severest manner against the Armenians.”⁸⁴ Turkish nationalist historiography, on the other hand, mainly apologizes for the deportations, claiming that the CUP had to take

⁸¹ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 58.

⁸² Ibid., p. 63.

⁸³ Taner Akçam, *Armenien und der Völkermord: Die İstanbule Prozesse und die Nationalbewegung* (Hamburg: Hamburger edition, 1996), pp. 39-44. Quoted from Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 63.

⁸⁴ Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, p. 204.

security measures in the face of the Armenian revolutionary insurgency and the logistic and military support they provided to the Entente powers in the first stages of World War I.⁸⁵

According to Yücel Güçlü, Armenian agents collected military intelligence in Cilicia, passing it on to Cyprus through couriers landed from and collected by British intelligence ships cruising the Levantine coast. They also provided a steady stream of updated reports to the British command on the Ottoman railway junctions, military bases, supply depots, road and telegraph construction, and other potential useful military sites.⁸⁶ All this was done by Armenians to sabotage Ottoman war efforts and enable a possible Allied landing at the port of Iskenderun. Moreover, rumors circulated that the Armenians were planning an armed rebellion to establish an Armenian state with British assistance.

The CUP measures came accordingly. During March 1915, a number of inhabitants of the village Dörtöl were publicly hanged on charges of contacting Entente ships in the Gulf of Iskenderun. The male-population of the village was gathered up and put to road-building, and some deportations occurred afterwards. Most of its inhabitants of arms-bearing age had deserted the Ottoman army, which eventually made Dörtöl an object of suspicion in the CUP's eyes. In a similar manner, the population of Zeytun was deported in April after a small number of Armenian deserters attacked Turkish troops and then barricaded themselves inside a monastery in mid-March. Soon enough, most of

⁸⁵ Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*; Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File: the Myth of Innocence Exposed* (Mersin: Rüstem, 2001).

⁸⁶ Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia*, pp. 66-67.

the small “suspect” groups living near communication roads were deported which covered most of the Armenian communities living around Adana and Maraş.⁸⁷

It should also be pointed out that the deportations from Zeytun and Dörtyol occurred in April and May 1915 which preceded the decision for the mass-scale deportation of the Armenians from eastern and southern Anatolia; hence before the ‘radicalization’ of the CUP policy toward a genocidal scheme.⁸⁸ The first groups of Zeytun deportees were sent to Konya via Maraş, Bağçe, Osmaniye, Tarsus and Pozantı. On 24 April, however, Minister of the Interior Talat had instructed Cemal Pasa to stop deporting Armenians to Konya and instead he deemed areas in southeastern Aleppo province, Zor and Urfa more suitable. By May, the caravans from Zeytun were forced on to Der Zor where they were united with the Zeytun Armenians who had come via Konya, and unfortunately, the Armenians assembled at Der Zor were massacred on a large scale.⁸⁹ The Armenians from other parts of Cilicia, however, suffered less harm than the Armenians of Zeytun who passed to their desert fates relatively unmolested.

The Development of French Colonial Policy Regarding Cilicia

It was pointed out above that the main pillar of French colonial policy regarding Cilicia was the return of the deported Armenians back to the territories they had

⁸⁷ Donald Bloxham, “The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy,” *Past & Present* 181 (November 2003), pp. 174-175.

⁸⁸ Hilmar Kaiser, “1915-1916 Ermeni Soykırımı Sırasında Ermeni Mülkleri, Osmanlı Hukuku, ve Milliyet Politikaları,” in *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Türkiye’de Etnik Çatışma*, edited by Erik Jan Zürcher (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2005), pp. 130-131.

⁸⁹ Aram Arkun, “Zeytun and the Commencement of the Armenian Genocide,” in *A Question of Genocide, Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Fatma Müge Gökçek and Norman M. Naimark (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 236-238.

considered their homeland. This line of policy evidently developed during the Armenian deportations of 1915-1916, and was mainly solidified between Boghos Nubar -the president of the Armenian National Delegation between 1913-1918- and Georges Picot- a high rank French diplomat- during the negotiations for the Sykes-Picot agreement in the London embassy of France in October 1915. Throughout the negotiations, Boghos Nubar proposed to Picot that Armenians should be recruited under French officers to fight against the Turks with the guarantee that these troops should later become the nucleus of defense for an autonomous Cilicia under French protection after the war.

Boghos Nubar after this meeting noted that:

In order to make the appeal to Armenian volunteers more forceful and expect positive response, I emphasize that I myself have to be sure that at the end of the war, France taking over Cilicia according to the conditions agreed upon during our last meeting, will create an autonomous Armenia on that land, in order to provide for the Armenian nation to develop and the Armenian state to be restored under French protectorate. Mr. Picot agrees with me totally and authorizes me to give this assurance to the volunteers. I express my deepest gratitude, on behalf of all Armenians, who after such a long wait and unheard of sufferings, will see the fulfillment of their goals, thanks to France and its ally, England, proving that they are truly fighting for the liberation of the oppressed peoples.⁹⁰

It should be emphasized at this point that between 1870-1914, French diplomatic efforts did not exhibit a specific concern for the safety and prosperity of Armenians living in Turkey. In fact, as claimed by Zeidner, a search of the official archives in Paris had failed to show any evidence of specific commitments to Armenian nationalists by the French government.⁹¹ Throughout this period, what was more important for French foreign policy regarding the Ottoman Empire was protecting its Catholic missionary

⁹⁰ Vatche Ghazarian, *Boghos Nubar's Papers and the Armenian Question 1915-1918* (Waltham: Mayreni Publishing, 1996), p. 395.

⁹¹ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 16.

orders and economic interests, and therefore its diplomatic efforts rested on keeping up the Empire's territorial and economic integrity.

Between 1898 and 1918, however, France's foreign policy went through swift adjustments shaped primarily by the German *Weltpolitik* (World Policy), which enabled Germany to exercise considerable influence on Ottoman military and civilian leaders, win the concessions for the building of the Baghdad Railway, and finally establish a German-Ottoman alliance throughout World War I.⁹² This was mainly why, when World War I broke out, French foreign policy was rested on the sole goal of gaining victory against Germany as the weakening of German influence in the Ottoman Empire would result in France's regaining of its traditional hegemony over the Empire.

France's foreign policy was also radicalized during World War I, when after the military defeat in the Dardanelles in the summer of 1915 it finally resigned itself to a policy of partition and undertook a determined pursuit of territorial and financial compensation.⁹³ Consequently, the Sykes-Picot agreement which partitioned both Turkish and non-Turkish areas into spheres of influence for France and Britain was signed on May 1916, between French and English representatives. After this agreement, France's foreign policy ambitions were rearticulated in the attempt to save France's control of Syria and Lebanon and to fight against the threat of British, Russian, and Turkish access to the region. Therefore, the invasion of Cilicia offered France a strong base in Adana standing near the Baghdad Railway road, the geopolitical advantages of a

⁹² L. Bruce Fulton, "France and the End of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, edited by Marian Kent (London: Frank Cass, 1996), p. 158.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 159.

pressure point on British imperial lines of communication, an obstacle to possible Turkish aggression from the north, and a means to quick access to the Syrian interior.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF CILICIA - 1919

French Settlement in Cilicia

The Allied occupation of Cilicia was justified by the Allies with reference to various terms of the Mudros Treaty, signed as a truce agreement between British and Ottoman authorities on 30 October 1918. The most important of these terms were Article 5, which ruled “immediate demobilization of the Turkish army except troops required for the surveillance of the frontiers and maintenance of internal order,” and Article 7, which stipulated that “the Allies have the right to occupy any strategic points in the event of any situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies.” It should be noted at this point that the immediate reaction of the Ottoman Muslims to the armistice was one of relief and hope as it had ended the war which had put the country in extreme hardship and exhausted most of its military, economic, and financial sources.⁹⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher claims that it was not the armistice as such, but the Allied policies after its conclusion that turned the public opinion against the Allies and eventually led to the nationalist resistance.⁹⁵ It can also be claimed that the majority of the population did not expect, as what the occupation of large parts of the remaining Ottoman territories. This is also why most of the official Turkish historiography about

⁹⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Ottoman Empire and the Armistice of Moudros,” in *At the Eleventh Hour: Reflections, Hopes and Anxieties at the Closing of the Great War, 1918*, eds. Hugh Cecil and Peter H. Liddle (London: Leo Cooper, 1998), pp. 266-275.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 274.

the war claims that the invasion of Cilicia, among other places, was against the terms of the Mudros Treaty.⁹⁶

On the same day the armistice was signed, Mustafa Kemal, the commander of the 7th Army at the time, was called to Adana to take command of the *Yıldırım Orduları* whose headquarters' was stationed in Adana. The next day after his arrival, he was informed of the clauses of the armistice, to which he objected by sending four telegrams to Grand Vizier Ahmet Izzet Pasa in Istanbul and to the Ministry of War. These telegrams show us that Mustafa Kemal had actually discerned the real intentions of the Allies behind the clauses of the truce and bitterly protested especially Article 10, which provided for the "Allied occupation of the Taurus tunnel system" and Article 16, which called for "retreat of troops stationed in Cilicia along the north of the Pozantı-Haçin-Maraş line and be demobilized." Mustafa Kemal mainly protested that these articles were imprecisely defined and could easily be manipulated by the Allies. He firstly asked Istanbul the exact purpose behind the occupation of the Taurus tunnels, the nature of the forces anticipated to be deployed, and asked for the precise definition of the borders of Cilicia.

The British had ordered the Ottoman troops to retreat to the Payas-Kilis line and Mustafa Kemal claimed that the British were openly deceiving them by referring the province of Adana, 'Cilicia' which they actually intended to include within the borders of Syria, and this border was drawn to the east of Maraş.⁹⁷ This meant that they planned invade whole of Cilicia and would ask the Ottoman troops to retreat along the Izmir-

⁹⁶ T.C. Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Ankara, *Türk İstiklal Harbi IV'üncü Cilt Güney Cephesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 2009), pp. 51-52.

⁹⁷ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), pp. 18-19.

Konya line in the near future. He then warned the authorities that if any measures were not taken before the disposition of troops, there would be no possibility to resist British desires in Anatolia. Then, he requested to be dismissed from his post as his honour would not permit him to carry out the orders and he also did not want to be held accountable for not carrying them out.⁹⁸

Although Mustafa Kemal was dismissed from his post and left for Istanbul on 10 November 1918, he was able to initiate the first steps towards resistance. During his stay in Adana, Kemal met with Nihat Pasha, commander of the 2nd Army, and Ali Fuat Pasha, responsible for the demobilizing the troops in Iskenderun, and other prominent notables of the city. In one of these meetings, he declared that because the Allied Powers would not abide by the terms of the truce, Adana was in great danger, and therefore they had to organize a resistance group and dig trenches, and the necessary ammunition would be provided by him.⁹⁹ Damar Arıkoğlu claims that Kemal's efforts did not really motivate the people of Adana to resistance, as they were war-weary and materially and spiritually exhausted.

Ali Fuat Cebesoy, on the other hand, who was authorized by Mustafa Kemal to take the initial steps of resistance, worked to obstruct the term of the armistice which called for the demobilization of the Ottoman army and the disposal of its equipment, arms, and ammunition. Cebesoy later said that he had reinforced the local gendarmerie

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 18-20.

⁹⁹ “...Bu şekilde imzalanan mübareke maddeleri ağır şartlar ihtiva ettiğinden Mustafa Kemal Paşa Adana'nın ileri gelenlerini ve söz sahibi kimselerini nezdine dâvet ederek (durumu iyi görmediğini, itilaf devletleri ile akdedilen mübareke hükümlerine itilaf devletlerinin riayet etmeyeceklerini, daha ağır şartlar altında memleketi ezeceklerini, bu yüzden işgal kuvvetlerine karşı koymak ve hazırlıkta bulunmak için aralarında teşkilât kurmalarını, münasip yerlerde siper kazmalarını, lâzım gelen silâh ve malzemelerin tarafından temin edileceğini) istikbali görür gibi anlattı.” Damar Arıkoğlu, *Birinci Büyük Millet Meclisi Adana Milletvekili, Hatıralarım* (İstanbul: Tan Gazetesi ve Matbaası, 1961), pp. 71-72.

units with the soldiers and weapons of the demobilized army, worked to delay the evacuation of Cilicia for the resistance one month, did not turn in any equipment of the army that could be used for the resistance to British and hid the ammunition in safe places.¹⁰⁰

As anticipated by Mustafa Kemal and his colleagues, British and French troops began the occupation of Cilicia in December. On December 11, one battalion of the *Legion d'Orient* comprised of 400 Armenian soldiers, occupied Dört Yol. On the 17th, Colonel Romieu landed on Mersin on the with three Armenian battalions of the *Legion d'Orient* and the same day, General Hamelin, the commander of France's Syrian army, entered Adana, and was greeted with a ceremony. On 10 January 1919 the British forces occupied Antep, on 22 February, Maraş, and on 24 March, Urfa.¹⁰¹ The Allied Powers divided the occupation zone into four territories: South, East, West, and North; controlled from the centers of Jerusalem, Damascus, Beirut, and Adana.¹⁰²

In addition, these administrative heads were assigned under the direct orders of General Allenby and his Chief of Staff. While the Northern zone contained the province of Adana, the Eastern zone contained the sanjaks of Maraş, Antep, and Urfa. Based on the mutual agreement with British and French authorities, Britain was to assume military

¹⁰⁰ "...Kilikyada ilk iş olarak jandarma kadrosunu ordunun zabıt, efrat, silah ve teçhizatı ile ikmal etmiştim. Çünkü jandarma teşkilatı daimi surette bulunduğu muntıkada kalabilirdi. Fakat ordu kısımları terhis olunabilir, garnizonları değiştirilebilirdi. Bir işgal emri vakii karşısında Kilikyanın mühim yerlerinde mukavemet yuvaları hazırlamıştım....Şurada bir hatıra olmak üzere arz etmek isterim ki, kıymetli yedinci ordumuzu İngilizlerin ahitşiken teşebbüslerine ve hükümetin emirlerine rağmen kurtarabilmiş, Kilikyanın tahliyesini bir ay kadar geciktirmiş, mütareke şartlarına muhalif olmasına rağmen karşımızdakilere memleket müdaafasında kullanılabilecek hiçbir şey teslim etmeksizin bunları emin muntıkalara taşımıştık." Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 2000), p. 31 and 46.

¹⁰¹ Cemil Şenalp, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşında Fransız İşgal Bölgelerinde Sivil İşler/Askeri Hükümet Faaliyetleri* (İstanbul: Harp Akademileri Basımevi, 2006), p. 155.

¹⁰² Edouard Bremond, "The Bremond Mission: Cilicia in 1919-1920," *The Armenian Review* 29, no. 4 (Winter 1976-77), p. 346.

responsibility while the French would assume administrative responsibility in the occupied territories. Accordingly, Edouard Bremond arrived in Adana on 1 February 1919, as the Chief of Administration of the Northern Zone with the mission to administer through the medium of the Ottoman functionaries and the three Armenian battalions which was the main occupation force of France.¹⁰³

Bremond was assigned to take over a portion of the country that had been devastated by the war. The Ottoman Empire had survived the war through the total mobilization of its population and material resources for the needs of the army and these war-time measures mostly had harmed the peasants and the urban consumers of the society. The majority of the peasants was conscripted and was sent off to fight, and their animals were also requisitioned by the state. By the middle of 1915, there was shortage of basic consumer products of food, fuel and clothes in the market and beginning from these years, the consumers had to buy products at a 300 percent inflation rate every year.¹⁰⁴

Both the general conditions of the Ottoman war-time economy and the deportations of Armenians during the war had a detrimental effect on the economic life of Adana. Damar Arıkoğlu narrates that all the shops, stores, and workplaces had been closed after the deportations and they had even faced difficulties finding people for carrying out simple duties. Even worse, the streets were full of poverty-stricken, miserable people.¹⁰⁵ The French also faced the problem of the confiscated properties. An

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 345-347.

¹⁰⁴ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de "milli iktisat", 1908-1918* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982), pp. 326-351; Feroz Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908-1918," *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center) 11, no. 2 (Spring 1988), pp. 278-280.

Abandoned Properties Commission had been formed during the deportations to expropriate Armenian property. The commission had been ordered to categorize properties, calculate their size and report on what use they had been put. In effect, houses were vacated, sealed, and sold at auctions where only Muslims were allowed to bid. As a result of the expropriation process, a total of 696 buildings, including houses, large farms, estates, and churches had been confiscated in the province of Adana.¹⁰⁶

William Chamber, an American missionary in Adana between 1879 and 1924, wrote that after the deportation of Armenians, the churches had been confiscated by the government and the large Protestant church in Adana had been converted to a school for Muslim girls.¹⁰⁷ Bremond also reported that the Catholic missionary schools of St. Paul's College and St. Joseph whose property had been removed by the CUP and turned into Turkish schools, reopened during the French rule.¹⁰⁸ It can be deduced from these accounts that not only Armenian properties, schools, and churches were confiscated by the CUP, but most of foreign and missionary property was also appropriated for Muslim-Turkish use.

Therefore, when the French administration arrived in Adana, they had to deal with the repercussions of CUP's war-time policy while implementing a form of rule that

¹⁰⁵ "...Ermenilerin Suriye'ye nakli, Adana Vilayetimizi tam takır bir boşluk haline getirdi. Çarşı, mağaza, san'atkâr namına bir şey kalmadı. Dükkanlar ve işyerleri kapandı. Kalaycı, lehimci yokluğu bile müşküllerimizin başına geçti....Memleket çok perişan bir hale girmişti. Açlık, sefalet, maneviyat bozukluğu, fırınların önündeki mahşeri kalabalık, vesika ile verilen çamur gibi ekmeği almak için millet birbirine giriyor, ele geçiremeyenlerin feryadı, açlıktan bayılanlar, tabii bir hale geliyordu. Ekmek dilenenlerin had ve hesabı yoktu. Sokaklar aç ve sefillerin evi olmuştu." Arıkoğlu, *Hatıralarım*, p. 69.

¹⁰⁶ Uğur Ümit Güngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Colonization: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London; New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 112-116.

¹⁰⁷ William Nesbitt Chambers, *Yolculuk: Random Thoughts on a Life in Imperial Turkey* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Limited, 1928), p. 44.

¹⁰⁸ Edouard Bremond, "The Bremond Mission: Cilicia," p. 354.

would cater to French economic and political interests. The first step towards this end was initiated when they signed an auxiliary convention to the Mudros Treaty with Ottoman authorities on 30 February 1919. The fourth article of this convention stated that the weapons of the Ottoman gendarmerie to be relinquished to the control of the sanjak administration while the fifth article granted the colonial administration the right to dismiss any local official without consulting the Ottoman government. Most important of all, the sixth article stated that the Armenians who had been deported from their homeland would return to their lands while the Allied administration would assume the responsibility in returning their houses, lands, and personal properties or seek their reimbursement.¹⁰⁹

These articles purposefully conformed to what Bremond outlined as the aims of the French administration throughout the year of 1919: “The reconstitution of the Ottoman administration with functionaries favorable to the Allies; the establishment of control to the fullest necessary measure; the assurance of the security of the occupation forces; control of finances; the reorganization under our control (in accordance with Paragraph 4 of the ancillary convention) of the gendarmes and police.”¹¹⁰

Bremond contended that there had never been a system of direct administration in Cilicia, although Tachjian claimed that the measures cited above clearly portray the French desire to establish a direct colonial sphere of influence there. Although whether the French colonial administration desired to be a temporary mandate or a stable colonial power is a matter of contention, it is known that the aims of the colonial administration, outlined in Bremond’s own words, could only be partially applied and in certain cases

¹⁰⁹ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 60.

¹¹⁰ Bremond, “The Bremond Mission: Cilicia,” p. 351.

were met with stubborn resistance from large sectors of Muslims and Armenians alike and eventually led to their alienation from French rule.

The first two aims of the French administration, outlined as the constitution of Ottoman administration with functionaries favorable to the Allies and the reorganization under French control of the gendarmes and the police was performed right after the French occupation of the region. The most important reason for French action in this regard was that most of the CUP cadres had remained in power in the local administrative system and they immediately had organized a core of resistance to the French occupation.¹¹¹ Soon enough, Bremond dismissed all of the CUP officials in the region who were resisting the Allied occupation and disseminating anti-French propaganda.

The most effective resistance to this end was performed by the members of the CUP in governing positions, by the *valis* and the people they governed, who carried Turkish complaints to the French administration, but more importantly resisted, obstructed or even in certain cases rejected the application of Bremond's orders. Eventually, three valis served during Bremond's reign, Vali Nazım Bey, until September 1919; Vali Esat Bey, between September and December; and Vali Celal Bey, between December and May 1920. All three valis were prominent members of the CUP and had been appointed to their posts by the Istanbul government. However, none of them was able to withstand the French pressure to carry out certain orders and what they deemed as the unjust behavior of the colonial administration to the Muslim public. Eventually,

¹¹¹ Vahe Tachjian notes the names of the most prominent CUP members in Adana: Nazım Bey (the temporary vali), Mehmet Tahir Efendi (the müftü), Kadri Bey (head of the municipal council), Mehmet Suphi Paşa (deputy in the Ottoman Parliament), Yarbay Haşim Bey (colonel of the gendarmerie), Ali Murtaza Bey (attorney), Fuat Bey (principal inspector); Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 38-39.

resigned from their posts, or as in the case of Esat Bey, was dismissed from his post by Bremond himself.¹¹² The valis then left Adana and went to other regions of Anatolia where they joined the ranks of the Turkish nationalist resistance.

Bremond wrote that the most threatening resistance, though, came from Colonel Haşim Bey, commander of the gendarmerie, who had fought in the Ottoman army in Yemen during World War I, and according to Bremond, was still continuing his war against the Allies. His strategy was to fortify the forces of the gendarmerie with the locals of Cilicia which caused suspicion on part of the French, who feared that he could later deploy these forces against an uprising to their administration.¹¹³ The French sources assert that Haşim Bey planned a huge armed uprising on February 1919, which was avoided by early intelligence and his arrest and exile to Beirut.¹¹⁴ After this event, the gendarmerie was reduced to 2,200 men as the most suspicious members were ousted.

In establishing “control to the fullest necessary measure”, the French administration encountered serious difficulties. Among all, the Armenian legionnaires fell short of what was expected of them, as immediately upon their arrival in Iskenderun, they started clashing with the local Muslim public. Many of them sought to take vengeance for the sufferings Muslims had inflicted upon them during the deportations, when lives and valuables had been lost. They also wanted to rescue the Armenian women and children who had been abducted to Turkish households.

¹¹² Toros, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çukurova*, pp. 60-156. Taha Toros also tells us that Mehmet Tahir Efendi, the müftü of Adana was dismissed from his post by Bremond on September 1919; Ibid., p. 83.

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 51-57.

¹¹⁴ Edouard Bremond, *La Cilicie en 1919-1920* (Paris: n.p., 1921), pp. 16-17, Pierre Redan, *La Cilicie et le Probleme Ottoman* (Paris: n.p., 1921), pp. 78-81.

As early as 30 November, two weeks before the main body of the legion arrived, the French governor of Iskenderun reported to Hamelin that the legionnaires had perpetrated various acts of terrorism on the pretext of freeing Armenian women from Turkish houses. Then, on 5 December, a bayoneted corpse of a Muslim was discovered near Belen, and only one week later two legionnaires on outpost duty in the same town attempted to abduct an Armenian girl from a Turkish home.¹¹⁵ Stanford Shaw additionally claims that, following the occupation of Adana by the French armed forces, Armenians began killing one or two Muslims each night. Families which previously had converted to Islam were forcibly taken from their homes by Armenian soldiers and were sent to the headquarters of the Armenian delegation together with Muslim orphan children.¹¹⁶ Throughout January and February, the situation worsened. Armenians plundered the farm of Abdo Ağa and killed him along with sixteen of his workers, and on 25 February, Sarraf Vanlı Ahmet Efendi's house was raided by his neighbor Agop, and while Ahmet Efendi was bayoneted to death and his eight-year old son was wounded.¹¹⁷ Agop and his friends were arrested for this event, but later they were released from prison after having been found innocent.

On 24 February, Bremond sent a report to General Allenby listing the acts of violence attributed to Armenians by the Muslim public which reported 27 acts of theft, kidnap, and assaults with weapons.¹¹⁸ Such acts of outrage committed by Armenian

¹¹⁵ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 154.

¹¹⁶ Stanford J. Shaw, "The Armenian Legion and its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia," in *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, edited by Türkkaya Ataöv (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2001), p. 161.

¹¹⁷ Çelik, *Milli Mücadele'de Adana ve Havalisi*, pp. 73-76.

¹¹⁸ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 41.

legionnaires, revolutionaries or individuals reached their peak when the fourth battalion of the legion engaged in an altercation with Algerians working for the French army on 2 February. A series of acts of retaliation and counter-retaliation turned into a full-fledged mutiny within the fourth battalion of the legion by mid-month. After looting much of Iskenderun to waste, and having assaulted several French officers in the process, the mutineers returned to barracks for some unknown reason.¹¹⁹ This final action of the legion drew the reaction of General Allenby who demanded that the legion be removed from his zone of responsibility. However, when General Hamelin advised him of the terms of enlistment for that unit, Allenby decided to send the reinforced Nineteenth Infantry of the British Army in India to the French command in Adana. The brigade commander, General Walter S. Leslie, thus assumed control over all of the Allied forces in that region.¹²⁰ Leslie's brigade brought a period of relative peace in Cilicia from 18 February until the withdrawal of British troops on 1 November 1919, and the Muslims felt much safer as Muslim soldiers patrolled their streets during the nights.

As for the fate of the Armenian Legion, the French completely disbanded the particularly unruly fourth battalion and several hundred men not involved in the mutiny of February were transferred to the three remaining battalions which thereafter were deployed to major towns along the railway, such as Mersin, Tarsus, and Adana, where they could be held in check by larger British formations.¹²¹ By April 1919, there were only 2500 legionnaires left of the 4000 at the beginning, and 1000 of the remaining were

¹¹⁹ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 156.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 159.

¹²¹ Ibid.

discharged. By November 1919, there were only 1500 legionnaires still active in Cilicia.¹²²

After the arrival of Leslie's Indian Brigade, the disbandment of the Armenian Legion, and the removal of Hasim Bey from the commandership of the gendarmerie, along with many local CUP administrators, the French colonial administration had managed to establish relative security and control in Cilicia, at least until the beginning of the war with the Kemalists in January 1920. The issue of the control of the finances still remained. The main impetus behind this end stemmed from France's urgent need of raw cotton and cereals which were to be exported from Cilicia. It was calculated that this amount would meet two-thirds of its needs. Post-war France was second among the European states in its consumption of cotton and when the war had generated a world-wide shortage of cotton, France, as a major producer of textiles and garments, urgently needed a reliable source of cheap raw material.¹²³

The actions towards this end, however, did not result in the intended consequences. During the first year of the French occupation, cereal production hardly reached 50 percent of the prewar production level, and only 5,000 to 6,000 bales of cotton were ginned.¹²⁴ This was because only one-half of all arable lands had been tilled in 1919 due to drought, and this figure dropped to one-twentieth the following year due to the onset of the Kemalist war against the French. Bremond and his staff, therefore, had to rely on custom and tax revenues to cover the wages and services. Collecting taxes

¹²² Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 41-45.

¹²³ Yücel Güçlü, "The Struggle for Mastery in Cilicia: Turkey, France, and the Ankara Agreement of 1921," *The International History Review* 23, no. 3 (September 2001), pp. 585-586.

¹²⁴ Cilicia actually produced 120.000 bales of cotton per annum before World War I. Moumdjian, "Cilicia under French Administration," p. 470.

from the local population, however, was almost impossible. Bremond stated that the Turkish functionaries, led by the Vali, naturally opposed in all possible ways of French control of finances. They resisted the payment of taxes and the *defterdar* even contrived to send monies collected to Konya (which was one of the centers of the *Kuvay-ı Milliye* organizing the resistance in Cilicia).¹²⁵ The local population had not paid taxes throughout the war years, and they continued to avoid taxes, while the French exempted the repatriating Armenians because of their refugee status.¹²⁶ Although Bremond tried to improve port facilities to raise customs income, which was their only reliable source of income, by November 1919, the customs revenues also fell short of their expectations.

Overall, it can be said that, by the end of 1919, although the French colonial administration took important steps in dealing with the CUP resistance in Adana, resolved the trouble caused by the Armenian legionnaires, and intervened in local affairs to stimulate economic growth and establish relative peace and security in Cilicia, it failed to establish a regime which would satisfy the demands of the colonized population. For Bremond, this was due to certain people pushing things to the extremes and becoming prodigious of their generosity to the point of neglecting the interest of the Allies.¹²⁷ Bremond's policies, on the other hand, was conditioned by his perspective of various ethno-religious communities he sought to rule, which reflecting the traditions of a colonial power, fell short of understanding the cultural, economic, and political contexts both the Muslims and Armenians envisioned their communal identity and political projects. In this respect, the next section analyzes the international diplomatic

¹²⁵ Bremond, "The Bremond Mission: Cilicia," p. 355.

¹²⁶ Moumdjian, "Cilicia Under French Administration," p. 471.

¹²⁷ Bremond, "The Bremond Mission: Cilicia," p. 351.

context which shaped the French officials' colonial policies and then evaluates the process of the repatriation of Armenians and other policies Bremond and his staff undertook to establish control over the various ethno-religious groups of Cilicia.

Repatriation of Armenians and France's Communal Policy

Throughout World War I, the Allied authorities repeatedly made promises to Armenians and other minorities in the Ottoman Empire that they would be freed from the Turkish yoke. As early as 24 May 1915, when the news of the deportation of Armenians had reached the Allies, Britain, France, and Russia issued a joint declaration which read: "In view of this new crime of Turkey against humanity and civilization, the Allied governments make known publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold all the members of the Turkish government as well as those officials who have participated in these massacres, personally responsible".¹²⁸ On November 1916, Aristide Briand, Premier and Foreign Minister of France wrote Senator Louis Martin: "When the hour for legitimate reparation shall have struck, France will not forget the terrible trials of the Armenians, and in accord with her Allies, she will take the necessary measures to ensure for Armenia a life of peace and progress." Two months later, he announced that the high war aims of France included "the liberation of peoples who now lie beneath the murderous tyranny of the Turks, and the expulsion from Europe of the Ottoman Empire, which has proved itself so radically alien to Western civilization."¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Richard G. Hovannisian, "The Allies and Armenia, 1915-18," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3, no. 1 (January 1968), p. 147.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

French diplomatic and military officials followed a pro-Armenian policy throughout the first years of World War I. This line of policy was strengthened when Georges Picot promised Boghos Nubar that France taking over Cilicia, would create an autonomous Armenia on that land, in return for the military aid provided by Armenian volunteers throughout World War I.¹³⁰ As articulated in the Sykes-Picot agreement, French foreign policy rested on the goal of creating direct and indirect colonial spheres of influence in Cilicia, Syria, and Lebanon, with the overall goal of extending France's control over the Near East. France's colonial policies, however, went through swift adjustments during World War I, when the USA entered the war on April 1917, and Woodrow Wilson announced the post-war aims of the United States through the Fourteen Points declared on January 1918. President Wilson's foreign policy called for the settlement of free trade, open agreements, democracy, and self-determination within the lands of all nations that had participated the war and, consequently, opposed European secret agreements calling for the partition and annexation of Ottoman territories.

The Fourteen Points, overall, accorded the right of self-determination to all the nations that had participated the war while the 12th point, related to the Ottoman Empire, assured "a secure sovereignty for the Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire" and "an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development for the minorities under Turkish rule."¹³¹ In response to the declaration of Fourteen Points, Britain and France issued a joint declaration on

¹³⁰ The Armenian Legion had played a vital role in the final defeat of the Ottoman Empire under General Edmund Allenby's command who led the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the conquest of Palestine and Syria in 1917 and 1918.

¹³¹ Laurence Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-1924* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 76.

November 1918 stating that the two powers would aid the establishment of governments in the Near East which would derive their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations and disclaimed any desire to impose on the populations of these regions any particular institutions.¹³² In addition, the international status of the Ottoman Empire and its occupied territories had to be determined in the Paris Peace Conference, which would receive delegations of all nations attending the war, victor and vanquished alike.

The hegemony of the Wilsonian Principles in the post-World War I diplomatic context, compelled Britain and France to readjust their colonial aims in terms of the interests of the indigenous societies they wished to rule. Sam Kaplan claims that although French policy makers initially wished for the political emancipation of Armenians from the Turkish yoke and favored establishing Armenian sovereignty in Cilicia; they also imagined this would happen after a protracted mandate that would cater to French economic and political interests in the region.¹³³ Robert De Caix, the editor of the pro-colonial *L'Asie Française*, and secretary to General Gouraud in Beirut alluded to this project when he stated the following:

Certain communities, which belonged once to the Ottoman Empire, have reached a degree of development such that their existence like independent nations can be provisionally recognized on the condition that advice and aid of a mandatory power guided their administration up until the moment that they will be capable of managing it themselves.¹³⁴

In a similar manner, Bremond declared his political vision for the province:

¹³² J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956), Volume 2, p. 30.

¹³³ Sam Kaplan, "Documenting History, Historicizing Documentation: French Military Officials' Ethnological Reports on Cilicia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 2 (April 2002), p. 350.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

The government of the Republic seeks neither to conquer Cilicia nor establish a Protectorate there; it has come there as an educator to bring liberty to everyone, in the most complete equality. It only pursues moral conquest, which will insure its professed work of instituting a durable influence for its culture, its commerce and industry. The goal we are pursuing is not in opposition to that of Armenians, who have hope in the future, thanks to the security we will guarantee them and to their qualities.¹³⁵

Thus, the French occupation of Cilicia could be justified only on the grounds that Armenians had to accept the French mandate in order to attain the enlightenment that would qualify them for future statehood. Bremond even believed that a French mandate of at least twenty-five to fifty years would be in the best interests of the Armenians themselves; thus ruling out any option of self-government, at least in the near future.¹³⁶ In this sense, while the new jurisdiction of the League of Nations allowed the mandatory powers to advance the occupied states toward eventual independence, it served as a convenient facade for the Allied powers to disguise their real intent to maintain direct control for an unlimited duration, allowing the two powers to extend their colonial empires.¹³⁷

It was against this background of colonial “imagination” that the repatriation of Armenians was carried out by the Allied authorities. When World War I ended, the survivors of the Armenian deportations found themselves refugees, scattered throughout Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt, and wherever their presence was a source of instability or disorder, the dominant powers unhesitatingly displaced them to other areas where they fit into the plans of the European states.¹³⁸ Hence, Britain was mainly

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 351.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 355.

¹³⁷ Tachjian, “The Cilician Armenians and French Policy, 1919-1921,” p. 539.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 541.

concerned that the scattered presence of Armenians would be a source of disorder and stability in its Muslim territories, and a financial burden on their government, which compelled them to seek for their disposal by sending them to Cilicia and elsewhere in Asia Minor.¹³⁹ For France, repatriation would serve the end of creating a demographic majority of Armenians, which would legitimize their cause for a French mandate.

The repatriation of Armenians was carried out from Aleppo, where the Armenian National Union's Repatriation Bureau organized and directed the refugee movement in collaboration with the Allied authorities. The Bureau informed them of the number of refugees, their intended places of destination, and the means of transport needed. It is estimated that a number of 100-120,000 Armenians were repatriated to Cilicia and other destinations in Anatolia, while 75,000 of them are recorded to have been repatriated to their intended destinations by the end of July 1919. The Allies transported the refugees to the city of Adana first and from there the refugees were to be relocated to their home towns and villages.

By 31 May 1919, 36,319 refugees had been dispatched throughout Cilicia: Adana, 10,056; Maraş, 4825; Antep, 4221; Haçin, 1518; Dörtyol, 1022; Sis, 691; Hasanbeyli, 690; Mersin, 663; and eight other localities, 2147. The remainder were dispersed among, Istanbul, Izmir, Konya, İskenderun, Aleppo, Antakya, Kessab, Beylan, Urfa, and Mardin. Another number of 3513 returned through other channels to unrecorded destinations while countless others left on their own.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Vahram Shemmassian, "The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees from the Arab Middle East, 1918-1920," in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers Inc., 2008), pp. 446-448.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 440.

By the end of July, in less than two months, the number of repatriated refugees more than doubled, reaching 74,341, and an additional number of 72,495 refugees awaited repatriation in various refugee centers and shelters. When the time reached December 1919, an additional number of 60,000 refugees departed to Cilicia; the French settled them in barracks and public buildings, the accommodation in Adana alone costing 4 million francs for the French.¹⁴¹ The French authorities also repatriated some 10,000 Muslims settled by the Ottoman state to replace the deported Armenians to their place of origin and other localities. Among them were 4500 Kurds, who had been settled in Adana, Cihan, and Osmaniye; and 2740 Muslims from Bosnia and Rumelia.¹⁴²

The repatriated Armenians started working as laborers in small industries that European firms and some well-to-do Armenians re-established after the war, such as shoemaking, glass, clay production, carpentry, weaving, and blacksmithing. Armenian women found jobs in small workshops opened by French, Swiss and American missionaries or by Armenian benevolent organizations. Armenian merchants also reestablished their import-export businesses. These enterprises all together employed hundreds of Armenians and spurred the local economy.¹⁴³

The Armenians also reinstituted their social and political institutions. French, Swiss, and American missionaries reopened their schools and administered several orphanages that sheltered thousands of children. The newly created Armenian National Union formed educational committees to oversee the reopening of schools, and by 1921,

¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 440-451. Please also see Table 2 and Table 3 in Appendix, p. 138.

¹⁴² Tachjian, "The Cilician Armenians and French Policy," p. 545.

¹⁴³ Moumdjian, "Cilicia under French Administration," p. 472.

a total of seventeen schools reopened in Adana alone.¹⁴⁴ The four Armenian political parties, the Social Democrat Hnchakian Party, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Reformed Hnchakian Party, and the Armenian Constitutional Party reopened their regional central committees in Adana, each publishing its own newspaper.¹⁴⁵ In addition, the central committees of the four parties formed an inter-party council that worked in conjunction with the Armenian National Union.

Although the majority of Adana's Armenian inhabitants were repatriated to the region with Allied assistance and their institutions were re-established to a considerable extent, the French officials still faced an additional task in legitimizing their hold on Cilicia as a mandatory power. As emphasized before, the Wilsonian tenets stated that any overseas occupation was only justifiable if it served the local populations' interests; however, the national group that constituted the "majority" in the area would be given the right to self-determination. Therefore, the French had to prove that the number of Muslims and/or Turks was small enough to justify the establishment of a future Christian-Armenian state.

This was a difficult task since the Ottoman censuses published both before and after the war, reported the population of Muslims as the majority group in fact at a 3:1 ratio. The census published by the Armenian patriarchate, although claiming that the total number of the Christian population actually exceeded the number shown in the Ottoman censuses, still portrayed the total Christian population as less than half of the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 474.

¹⁴⁵ Each political party published its newspaper as following: Tavros, Kilikia, Kilikia Surhandak (Cilician Courier), and Hay Dzayn (Armenian Voice). The Turkish newspapers published at the time were: Ferda, owned by Ali Hilmi Bey, an anti-Ittihadist Turkish liberal who was a member of the prewar Turkish Itilaf Party, and also a proponent of French mandate; Adana Postası, owned by Huseyin Ilham Pasa; Rehber owned by Istanbulizadeh Yusuf; and the pro-Kemalist Yeni Adana; Moumdjian, "Cilicia under French Administration," pp. 475-476.

total population. In addition, the Ottoman censuses did not differentiate the population along ethnicity lines. Muslims were counted as one category and Christians were differentiated as Armenians, Greeks, Protestants, and Catholics and other religious categories such as Jews. Therefore, in order to achieve the intended re-count, that is to prove that the Armenians were numerically dominant over other categories, Bremond and his staff resorted to distinguishing between ethnic groups within the Muslim community.¹⁴⁶ Hence, this line of thought can be traced from Bremond's letter on February 1920, written to M.de Peretti della Rocca, Plenipotentiary Minister:

As for the Muslims, if we make Turkish politics, the Turks will unite them completely against us. If, at the opposite, we do Muslim politics, giving the Turks only the situation that is for them, according to their number and their importance on commercial, industrial or financial, we can rally the majority of them. There are indeed in Cilicia Circassians, Kurds, Arabs. But there are very few Turks. If we made the state employees leave, it would be necessary to look to find a Turkish population. In the point of view of the principle of nationalities, Turks have nothing to do in Cilicia, where they are foreign oppressors unconnected with the people: the only thing in their favor is the use of their language, which was due to banning, for indigenous, of their own language, prohibition that was supported by violent means.¹⁴⁷

In order to reduce the number of Turks, Bremond envisioned a strict separation of language from ethnicity; where it was assumed that any individual who spoke Turkish did not necessarily count as a Turk. Thus, the Turks were limited to Ottoman Turkish speaking communities as government officials only; leaving them solely as governmental power, from which the rest of the ethno-religious communities had to be

¹⁴⁶ Sam Kaplan, "Documenting History, Historicizing Documentation," p. 352.

¹⁴⁷ Edouard Bremond, 6 April 2007, "Administrator of Cilicia (1919-1920)," Available [online] at <http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_bremond.htm>

rescued. The Turkish-speaking lay population, on the other hand, was called “Turkified Muslims”.¹⁴⁸

Thus, the reorganization of Cilician society along ethnicity lines necessitated the French officials to observe the daily practices and societal traditions of various ethno-religious groups. In two reports conducted on the heterodox Alewites and Hanefi Kurds of Tarsus, the French political officials reported that the Alewites had been more or less ‘Turkified’, while half of the Hanefi Kurds were seen as ‘Turkified’ while the other half went unqualified. However, the reasons behind this distinction were never clarified; it was only important to divide the Muslim population as much as possible and to disassociate them from the Turkish officials.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, these documentary procedures did not solve the problem of proving that Christians constituted the majority of the population. Most censuses the French conducted still showed that both the Armenians and heterodox Alewites were numerical minorities. To overcome this problem, Bremond adopted the argument of the Armenian nationalists, that most inhabitants of the region, irrespective of their current faith, had been Christian before the fall of the Cilician Armenian kingdom in the fourteenth century. Through documented reports, the French claimed that the Muslim groups of Adana formerly had been Christian Armenians.¹⁵⁰

In effect, the Ottoman Turkish officials came to represent for French officers the ancient regime, which they saw as religiously bigoted and feudal, oppressing Muslims and Christians alike, and within this image, Bremond and his staff casted France as both

¹⁴⁸ Kaplan, “Documenting History, Historicizing Documentation,” p. 353.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 352-353.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

emancipator of the Christian communities of Cilicia and the defender of the Western world from the union of Bolshevism and Islam. At the same time, they outlined a political division of labor for the region. The Ottoman Turkish speaking officials were excluded from this new order, while the Turkified and Islamicized public, re-identified as the original Christian inhabitants, would either emigrate or serve the Armenians, the heirs apparent of the province.¹⁵¹

This re-structuring of Cilician society according to French colonial desires compelled the French officials to seek favor and sympathy from the Circassians, Alewi Kurds and Arabs, as well as the Armenians. The main reason was, as stated, the French intention of consolidating itself as a mandatory power, and creating a demographic plurality of ethnicities that would favor French rule. In order to do this, the French administration sought to alienate them from the influence of the Porte and the Turkish nationalist movement. For this reason, Bremond firstly envisioned that the Circassians living all throughout the Ottoman Empire who did not favor the Turkish nationalist movement could be brought to Cilicia and the sanjak of Cebel Bereket could be assigned as their sphere of dominance. In addition, Colonel Andre, the governor of Cebel Bereket, promised the Circassian leaders that two new schools would be opened in his sanjak which would teach in Circassian only and offered additional advantages. In response to these French appeals, Circassians from neighboring cities such as Maraş, Aleppo, and Damascus migrated to Cilicia, while many others from far distant regions such as Bursa demanded to do so.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 356-357.

¹⁵² Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 86-89.

Gaining the consent of Alewites of Kurds and Arabs was not a difficult task for the French administration since the Alewites had been long discriminated in the Ottoman millet system, and relegated to a lower status than Christians and Jews. Since they belonged to a sect within the Muslim community that criticized certain aspects of Koran, the hegemonic Sunni interpretation of Islam perceived them as deviants within Islam and as a result they were excluded from affairs of the state and the millet system. The Alewites also refused to send their sons to Sunni schools in order to preserve their religious identity. Therefore, when the French arrived in Cilicia, many of the Alewites perceived them as a savior from the oppression of the Ottoman state. The French officials, in order to end this oppression, opened fifteen schools for them only, where the education was conducted in Arabic and French.¹⁵³

Overall, it can be claimed that the French intention of forging a society that was malleable to French political and economic interests found partial success in Cilicia. During their stay, the French managed to gain the consent of non-Turkish and non-Muslim sectors of society. While supporting the identity claims of Armenians, Alewites, Circassians, and Kurds, the French colonial administration also sought to grant the notables and leaders of these communities' important positions in the local administrative system of the province of Adana. In fact, the French sought to establish military units made of Circassians, Kurds, and Armenians, while the leaders of these communities were granted important administrative posts in the municipality councils, the judicial system, police, and gendarmerie. Nevertheless, most of the Circassians and Kurds gave up their support for the French rule and later left to join the Turkish

¹⁵³ Ibid., pp. 89-98.

nationalist resistance by the beginning of 1920 and while the Armenians gave full support to French rule from the beginning, French-Armenian relations also had deteriorated by the end of 1919. The reasons for this shift of amiable relations between the French and the communal groups that favored them are the subject of the next sections.

The 'Turkish' Resistance

The Cilicia region was claimed as part of Greater Armenia by the Armenian delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris. Following the occupation of the French and British troops of the region, the existing hostility between the Armenians and Muslims deepened. This was mainly due to the repatriation of Armenians who demanded that their movable and immovable goods be returned and their vengeance acts of vengeance and brutality against the Muslim population.¹⁵⁴ As Doğan Avcıoğlu notes “While the common people feared that atrocities would be perpetrated against them by returning Armenians thirsting for revenge, the notables feared not only for their lives but also for their property.”¹⁵⁵

Therefore, it can be claimed that the Muslim-Turkish resistance to French occupation mainly emerged out of the concerns of the newly rich class about losing their status and property as these men later assumed higher ranks within the Turkish nationalist resistance. Nevertheless, during the initial stages of the occupation, the resistance of the Turks was weak in Cilicia. The Society for Defense of Rights

¹⁵⁴ Şener, “Ethnic Conflicts in Anatolia and the Establishment of the Turkish Republic 1918-1923,” p. 191.

¹⁵⁵ Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni: Dün, Bugün, Yarın* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1968), p. 82.

(*Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti*) as was established in Eastern and Western Anatolia, was not established in Cilicia until the decision of the Representatives Committee to organize and fortify national organizations in the region.¹⁵⁶ However, as discussed above, Mustafa Kemal and Ali Fuat Cebesoy had seeded the initial steps of resistance in Adana, where they contacted the notables to organize a resistance and hid guns in safe places to be used later. As soon as the notables realized that Cilicia was going to be occupied, they wrote protest letters or *feryadnames* to Ottoman authorities and foreign consulates protesting French occupation. These letters were published also in the Istanbul press.

In addition, ‘Kilikyalılar Cemiyeti’ was established in Istanbul on 20 November 1918 by people from Adana who were living in Istanbul.¹⁵⁷ Throughout the occupation, the organization worked in conjunction with their contacts in Adana and informed Mustafa Kemal and his *Heyet-i Temsiliye* about French activities there. In a way, this organization operated as an intelligence network, sending information about French activities in Cilicia to Mustafa Kemal, which enabled him to envisage a resistance scheme to the French occupation. However, the activities of the organization were restricted to non-armed activities. The real initiative to initiate an armed resistance in Cilicia came during the Sivas Congress. During the congress, it was decided to institute the national forces (*Kuvay-ı Milliye*) in Cilicia and Captain Kemal and Lieutenant Osman were appointed as the commanders of the national forces in the region by Mustafa Kemal himself.¹⁵⁸ They operated under the pseudonyms Kozanoğlu Doğan Bey and Aydınoğlu Tufan Bey. These commanders were to operate under the command of

¹⁵⁶ Şener, “Ethnic Conflicts in Anatolia,” pp. 191-192.

¹⁵⁷ Çelik, *Milli Mücadele’de Adana ve Havalisi 1918-1922*, pp. 128-138.

¹⁵⁸ T.C. Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Ankara, *Türk İstiklal Harbi IV’üncü Cilt Güney Cephesi*, p. 72.

Mustafa Kemal, and according to a pre-planned resistance scheme handed to them by him.

It has been generally noted that what caused public resentment and led ultimately to the nationalist resistance in Cilicia was the employment of Armenians as a military force by the French as well as their appointment to administrative posts. These actions by the French administration in general were considered to infringe on Ottoman sovereignty and led to the fear that eventually an Armenian state would be established in Cilicia.¹⁵⁹

In fact, there was already an existing inter-ethnic tension in Adana which reached its peak in the 1909 Adana massacres and was “resolved” by means of the Armenian deportations. At least before or in the initial stages of the occupation, we see notables propagating to the public that they needed to oppose the occupation as it would empower the ‘internal’ enemies, and Armenians, encouraged by the occupation, would begin robbing and ransacking villages and cities, and murdering people. Their farms would be taken from their hands and their national honor would be stained.¹⁶⁰ When, for instance, Kozan was going to be occupied after the city of Adana, the notables of Kozan went to see Bremond and told him that they feared that the Armenians who would come along with the occupation would cause big trouble in Kozan and therefore they should not repatriate the Armenians there. When Bremond evidently opposed this offer, the

¹⁵⁹ Şener, “Ethnic Conflicts in Anatolia,” p. 191.

¹⁶⁰ “...İşgal silahlı iç düşmanların tecavüzlerine de yol açacaktır. Aile ve hane dokunulmazlığı kalmayacaktır. Ermeniler işgalden cesaret alarak yüz bulacak, cinayetler işleyeceklerdir. Şehirde, köylerde, yağmalar, soygunlar ve yangınlar olacaktır. Çiftliklerimiz elimizden alınacaktır. Namus-u milli lekeleneyecektir. Bu facialara meydan vermemek için işgal teşebbüsünü protesto ederek, muhtemel cinayetleri, kaçınılmaz haksızlıkları dünya kamuoyuna duyurmalyız.” This speech was made by Tevfik Ramazanoğlu, a member of the most influential family of Adana, and son of Kadri Ramazanoğlu, the head of municipality of Adana. Yusuf Delikoca, *Saim Bey* (Adana: Ekrem Matbaası, 2009), pp. 106-107.

same notables visited the British commander in Adana and demanded from him that Britain should occupy Kozan instead of France as they feared from the Armenians the French brought alongside them.¹⁶¹ Therefore, it can be claimed that it was not the French occupation as such, but the repatriation of the Armenians that caused much of the fear and anxiety among the Muslim public.

The French colonial administration, though, took various steps to deepen this fear. First of all, there was the flag issue. The French colonial administration, right upon arrival, forbade the hanging of Turkish flags and replaced it with the French tricolor.¹⁶² In some places, the tricolor of the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus was raised alongside the French flag. The Turkish population viewed the French and especially the Armenian tricolors lining the streets as an intolerable insult to their national honor. Secondly, the French administration in Adana required all travelers entering or leaving the region to present passports, issued only by the colonel and his staff. Additionally, Bremond replaced the postal stamps for use in Cilicia with French stamps imprinted “Cilicia” on them.¹⁶³ Esat Özoğuz, serving as the vali for a short duration, said that Bremond asked to him to pass two decrees that would reinstate the capitulations which had been rescinded by the CUP and double certain taxes that were levied on the Muslim population.¹⁶⁴ According to Turkish accounts, these acts were not only an infringement

¹⁶¹ “...Fransızlar Kozan’ı işgal ediyorlar. Fakat bizler onların bu işgalini kabullenmiyoruz. Çünkü yanlarında getirdikleri Ermeniler Kozan’da büyük olaylar çıkaracaklar. Memleketimiz gün geçtikçe çok kötü durumlara düşecektir. Kozan yaşanmaz bir memleket olacaktır. Bu yüzden bizler Kozan’ı Fransızların değil İngilizlerin işgal etmesini istiyoruz. Bu nedenle de sizinle görüşmek istedik.” Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁶² Moumdjian, “Cilicia under French Administration,” p. 462.

¹⁶³ Şenalp, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşında Fransız İşgal Bölgelerinde Sivil İşler/Askeri Hükümet Faaliyetleri*, pp. 158-159.

¹⁶⁴ Özoğuz, *Adana’nın Kurtuluş Mücadelesi Hatıraları*, pp. 54-60.

on Ottoman sovereignty, but clearly portrayed the French intention of separating Cilicia from Turkish rule.

Bremond took further steps to offend the Turkish elite. First of all, the Turkish officials were dismissed from their posts in the local administrative system and replaced by Armenians, Arabs, Circassians, and Kurds whom the French administration considered as loyal to their rule. Recep Dalkır claims that the Administrative Council, Municipality Council, and the members of the Courts of Judgment were half “Armenianized”. If there were eight members, four would be ousted from power, and replaced by four Armenians.¹⁶⁵ The cadres of the police and gendarmerie were also arranged to consist of half Armenian and half Muslims. Dalkır claims, however, that Circassians, Arabs, and Kurds were preferred instead of Turks within the “Muslim” category.¹⁶⁶ Bremond also forbade the local elections both for the nationalist congress at Sivas in September 1919 and for the Ottoman parliament expected to convene at Istanbul the following January. He also shut the provincial *meclis* on 1 September 1919.¹⁶⁷

Besides, there was the issue of the arrest and exile of certain CUP officials and notables on charges of having participated in the Armenian massacres. A court was established to this end and although the Armenian accounts claim that no Turkish officials were convicted¹⁶⁸, the Turkish accounts suggest that the prisons were full of

¹⁶⁵ Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova*, p. 18.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁶⁷ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 244.

¹⁶⁸ Ruben G. Sahakyan, *Türk-fransız ilişkileri Haraberutyyunnere ev Kilikian 1919-1921* (Turkish-French Relations and Cilicia, 1919-1921) (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1970), p. 126. Quoted from Moumdjian, “Cilicia under French Administration,” p. 464.

innocent Turkish people who had been arrested arbitrary charges. Both Recep Dalkır and Damar Arıkoğlu suggest that any respected Turkish official or notable was arrested on mostly arbitrary and false charges, forced to pay excessive fees for release and ultimately forced to leave Cilicia, as they could not pay their debts.¹⁶⁹ Damar Arıkoğlu himself was arrested without specific charges, interrogated by French intelligence agents, and released twice before he finally fled Cilicia for Konya in late 1919. According to Turkish accounts, all these French acts were designed to intimidate and terrorize the Turks and eventually compel them to leave Cilicia.

Additionally, to encourage Armenian resettlement and restore their properties, the French administration passed four ordinances:

Ordinance 32 (April 3, 1919): Nullification of real estate sales carried out by the Agricultural Bank to the detriment of deported Armenians; Ordinance 54 (April 23, 1919): Nullification of sales of movable assets carried out by the Turkish administration to secure payment of the deportees' unpaid levies or taxes; Ordinance 88 (June 29, 1919): In specific cases, sequestration of real estate and personal property to be made the object of litigation before commissions of arbitration; and Ordinance 107 (August 9, 1919): Restoration of Christian women and children held by Muslims.¹⁷⁰

To put these measures into effect, arbitration commissions (*Tesviye-i Mesalih Komisyonu*) composed of an equal number of Turks and Armenians and presided over by a neutral individual, Greek, Arab or Catholic, were established. The task of the commission was to examine and resolve cases of litigation over property.¹⁷¹

There is, as expected, a two-sided assessment on the actions of this commission. Pierre Redan claims that the court successfully resolved the conflicts over land

¹⁶⁹ Arıkoğlu, *Hatıralarım*, pp. 78-81; Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova*, pp. 27-32.

¹⁷⁰ Tachijan, "Cilician Armenians and French Policy," pp. 545-546.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 546.

ownership and contended both parties.¹⁷² Recep Dalkır claims, on the other hand, that the courts were settled to confiscate Turkish property for the benefit of Armenian settlers. Hence, the Armenians would go and look over at the houses, gardens, and farms of other people, pick out the goods and belongings that they liked and then would apply to the court saying that those properties actually had been theirs, they needed them back, and they would additionally ask extra money for the reimbursement of their loss years ago. The commission would immediately accept their requests and the Turks were not allowed to appeal to the decisions of the commission. So, for Dalkır, the commission merely worked for the satisfaction of the Armenian greed, which was intent on destroying the Turkish economic presence.¹⁷³

Such accounts are, in general, very common among Turkish memoirs of the period. They suggest that all of the courts, police and gendarmerie worked in favor of the Armenians with “supposedly” neutral commissioners. If Armenians were in charge, they would use their positions to rob or imprison Turks on false charges and even when Muslim people were in charge they would conform to Armenian demands to curry favor from or seem sympathetic to the French administration and their Armenian ‘collaborators’. Therefore, the emphasis is heavily on the arbitrary nature of the institutions under French rule which worked accordingly to Armenian complaints and enabled them to arrest people that they disliked, or take the property they wanted from other people.

For Turkish memoirists, the punishments carried against Muslim/Turkish people were excessive and unjust, while no Armenian went punished for his “brutal” actions

¹⁷² Redan, *La Cilicie et le Probleme Ottoman*, p. 85.

¹⁷³ Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova*, pp. 21-22.

against Muslims. This situation, in turn, had left the Muslim/Turkish people in so much fear and desperation, that there was nothing else to lose but their lives, which in the end compelled them to fight for their lives. Therefore, while this section dealt with the various acts the French administration undertook to alienate large sectors of Turkish population from French rule and create resentment and reaction against them, the next section will narrate how the commanders sent from Sivas to the region organized and mobilized the nationalist resistance in Cilicia.

The Fight of Brigands

The first phase of the Independence War was fought by the national forces (*Kuvay-ı Milliye*) until the decision to institute a regular army by the Nationalist movement in November 1920. These national forces consisted of the soldiers of the army which was still left intact after the Mudros Treaty; although their number was reduced to twenty percent of what it had been before the truce. A second component of these forces was brigands (*çetes*) who had been outlawed by the central authority and sought refuge in the mountains and villages. The rest were volunteers, notables along with the people they controlled and peasants who were recruited to the army later.¹⁷⁴ As most of the resistance to French occupation occurred before the constitution of the regular army, the war against the French was fought with guerilla tactics under the leadership of the commanders sent to the region as a result of the Sivas Congress. Therefore, the role of groups of brigands was central in the war between the French occupation forces and the Turkish nationalist movement.

¹⁷⁴ Doğu Ergil, *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi* (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1981), pp. 67-68.

Amounting to the reasons and actors of the ethnic violence of this period, the Turkish sources commonly point out the atrocities committed by Armenian brigands, who were armed by the Armenian notables and the French administration, and who had ransacked Turkish villages, murdering people outright. The farms of Turkish notables were also targeted by Armenian brigands, where in certain cases notables were murdered along with their workers and families. All Turkish memoirists commonly emphasize that they were left in such a state of insecurity and fear as armed Armenians would patrol the streets and countryside at night and injure or murder people who they would catch as defenseless.¹⁷⁵ The Armenian and missionary accounts, on the other hand, point out to the role of Turkish brigands in instigating the violence of this period. They emphasize that Turkish brigands were active in the region since the beginning of the occupation and they immediately organized around preventing Armenian resettlement in the region. Hence, these brigands would also attack Armenian villages and commit wide-range massacres. William Chambers, the American missionary in the region, notes to his superiors, on November 1919:

The situation has suddenly been aggravated. Numerous bands, some very strong and very well armed, without any doubt under the instigation of the nationalist ringleaders has simultaneously made their appearance in different parts of Cilicia, and Armenian blood flows again. One of these bands operates in the environs of Djihan. On the 14th of October, it raided and pillaged the villages of Papakhli, Hamdili, Kerune, Kaupru, Yenidje and Merdjine. In the latter locality, all the inhabitants of the farm Hadji Artine agha Keklikian were put to the sword. (...) Another band attacked on the same day, the village of Sheikh Mourad near Adana, killing eleven of the Armenian inhabitants, among them, women and children, and wounding a great number.¹⁷⁶

Bremond notes that they had been dealing with bands that came from Aleppo

¹⁷⁵ Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova*, pp. 41-60; Arıkoğlu, *Hatıralarım*, pp. 73-92.

¹⁷⁶ William Nesbitt Chambers to James Barton, November 29, 1919.

throughout the summer of 1919. He also wrote about the Kürt Reşit Çetesi that ransacked Armenian villages and killed several people.¹⁷⁷ Hence, the actions of Kürt Reşit Çetesi appear in both French and Turkish sources. According to Arıkoğlu, the Kürt Reşit Çetesi was a criminal group that attacked and robbed the Turkish villages and fired on the French soldiers and gendarmerie, while cruelly killing Armenians.¹⁷⁸ Kürt Reşit was caught and exiled with the cooperation of the Turkish gendarmerie and Armenian volunteers. Damar Arıkoğlu noted, however, that the actions of this gang put on their minds the thought that opposition could be made against the French army. The gang was not caught for weeks, although it had been torturing the villagers in the countryside. So, they wondered what nationally self-conscious bandit forces could achieve.¹⁷⁹

As emphasized before, the bandits were some of the most effective weapons of the *Kuvay-ı Milliye*. In addition, banditry, in its criminal or social forms, was a widespread phenomenon both in Anatolia and Cilicia. Doğu Ergil claims that the bands were made up of men who had been outlawed by the state and pursued by the gendarmerie for various reasons. These people, who defied state authority, sought refuge in the countryside, in mountains and villages, living in cooperation with the villagers. The bands would subsist on the villagers' crops and in return, they would protect the villages they controlled from outsiders.¹⁸⁰ In certain cases, they would rob notables and distribute their money and goods to the villagers. In other cases, they would operate as pure crime gangs, robbing and ransacking villages for survival. Jean-David Mizrahi,

¹⁷⁷ Bremond, "The Bremond Mission in Cilicia," p. 341.

¹⁷⁸ Arıkoğlu, *Hatıralarım*, p. 81.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ergil, *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi*, pp. 84-88.

who analyzes the various purposes and activities of brigands operating in the Turkish-Syrian border by the beginning of 1920s, also categorizes three types of banditry that were common throughout the region. In his account, the first type of bandits would consist of men, who come together for sporadic actions, steal or attack voyagers, and their presence would result from the weakness of the center. Second type of bandits, would organize around a stable nuclei, and would often have cavaliers, attack more important targets, pillage entire villages and their actions would be at the level of threatening central authority. Finally, the third type of bands which he terms as 'political banditry' would consist of warlords and trained soldiers and their violence would be political violence.¹⁸¹

In the aftermath of the Great War, and in the situation of collapse of Ottoman state authority in occupied places, banditry in Anatolia rose to prominence. It is reported that the country descended into a state of anarchy where men with guns ruled the country. The situation was exacerbated when the deserters from the Ottoman army during the Great War, their number reaching half a million, joined them in Anatolia in order to escape punishment from the state.¹⁸² William Nesbitt, as early as 7 October 1918 reports that:

For some time reports here have been consistent concerning difficulties amounting to confusion as rife in political circles in Constantinople. It is asserted that a large part of the country is virtually in the hands of about a half million deserters from the Turkish Army, and they threaten the Central Government. They appropriate tithes and taxes, and commit other depredations throughout the country, but they do not seem to be so violent as the similar

¹⁸¹ Jean-David Mizrahi, "Un 'nationalisme de la frontière'. Bandes Armées et Sociabilités Politiques sur la Frontière Turco-syrienne au début des Années 1920," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 78 (April-June, 2003), p. 19.

¹⁸² Ergil, *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi*, p. 85.

class in Russia, although they will present a problem that would be difficult to deal with.¹⁸³

The nationalist movement adopted a dual policy against the problem of bandits and army deserters. On the one hand, for the reason that most of the institutional and manpower of the Ottoman army had been reduced due to the truce terms, bandits provided the movement with the man and gun power needed. And some bandits, for reasons on their own, preferred to join the movement, as in return for their cooperation with the nationalist leadership, they could break away from their illegal status and earn worthy positions within the newly established order.¹⁸⁴ Plus, the foreign occupation actually inhibited the brigands' access to the villages they controlled, and gave them another reason to resist the foreign armies as they sought to protect and expand their own economic source.

On the other hand, the nationalist leadership took severe measures against brigands associated with criminal activities or rebelled against the orders of the central authority as in the case of Çerkes Ethem and Ahmet Anzavur. The same procedure was valid for deserters from the army. While many deserters were incorporated into the ranks of the nationalist resistance in return for amnesty for their act of desertion, the Ankara government issued the "Law on Deserters" on 11 February 1920 and established the Independence Tribunals, which applied very strict measures against deserters. Between 1920 and 1922, they decreed about 1500 death penalties for deserters.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ William Nesbitt Chambers to James F. Barton, October 7, 1918.

¹⁸⁴ Ergil, *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi*, p. 88.

¹⁸⁵ Mehmet Beşikçi, "Between Voluntarism and Resistance: The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War" (Phd diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009), p. 385.

Accordingly, the nationalist historiography articulates the purposes and actions of the brigands in Anatolia during the Independence War within a two-sided perspective. On the one hand, the brigands and their leaders are praised for their contribution to the *Kuvay-ı Milliye*, especially in the initial stages of the Independence War, who is also narrated to do most of the fighting against foreign occupation. On the other hand, the brigand activity is associated with the ‘internal’ rebellions to the nationalist leadership in Ankara. The literature in this respect emphasizes that either guided by religious/reactionary or ethnic/autonomist motives and supported either by the Sultan and the Istanbul government or by the Allied powers themselves; various tribes and brigands rebelled against the nationalist leadership.¹⁸⁶ In his *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal also claims that the external and internal enemies were collaborating together against them, as Allied Powers (especially Britain) would utilize certain brigands to attack Christians in Anatolia, and then put the blame on the *Kuvay-ı Milliye*. Thereafter, the Allied Powers would propagate that the nationalist forces were actually massacring Christians, and then the Istanbul government would support them in their effort of degenerating the actions of the nationalist brigands.¹⁸⁷

Throughout the Independence War period, there occurred sixteen large scale rebellions against the Ankara government, and most of them are narrated to carry an ethnic/separatist or religious/reactionary character.¹⁸⁸ Among these rebellions, the case

¹⁸⁶ Cemil Hakan Korkmaz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın İkinci Cephesi: İç İsyanlar* (İstanbul: Altın Kitaplar, 2008), İbrahim Sadi Öztürk, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Mücadelesinde İç İsyanlar* (Ankara: Fark Yayınları, 2007), Necati Çankaya, *Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda İrticai Olaylar ve İç İsyanlar* (İstanbul: Töre Yayın Grubu, 2003).

¹⁸⁷ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk 1919-1927*, edited by Zeynep Korkmaz (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2005), pp. 196-1977.

¹⁸⁸ Öztürk, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Mücadelesinde İç İsyanlar*, p. 45.

of Çerkez Ethem and Demirci Efe is evaluated in another respect, as these brigand leaders did most of the fighting against the Greek army in Western Anatolia, and then rebelled against Mustafa Kemal during the phase of the institution of the regular army. According to Cemal Hakan Korkmaz, the parliament's decision of instituting a regular army and ending the phase of the *Kuvay-ı Milliye* forces had bothered these brigand leaders who drew their authority and power from their autonomous status vis a vis the central state and opposed being subjugated under the hierarchical order of the regular army.¹⁸⁹ After his rebellion and defeat in the hands of the regular armies of Ankara, Çerkez Ethem sought refuge in the Greek occupation zone and then collaborated with the Greek authorities against Mustafa Kemal and became a defender of Circassian autonomy.

The various causes behind the internal rebellions are not the main concern of this thesis, however, I intend to evaluate the roles of the brigands during the Independence War outside of the two-edged perspective the official Turkish historiography offers. Hence, a more historical and socio-economic focus on the reasons of Ahmet Anzavur and Çerkez Ethem's rebellions against the nationalist government will better serve this end. Ahmet Anzavur, for instance, is evaluated in Turkish historiography as the first to rise against the *Kuvay-ı Milliye* for religious purposes, who supported by Britain, the Sultan and the Istanbul government, rebelled in order to protect the status of the Sultan and the Caliphate against the nationalist ideals disseminated by the *Kuvay-ı Milliye*.¹⁹⁰ Ahmet Anzavur was a gendarme officer and a member of the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* with North Caucasian descent. In 1919, he was appointed as the *mutasarrıf* of İzmit. Çerkez

¹⁸⁹ Korkmaz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın İkinci Cephesi: İç İsyanlar*, pp. 27-31.

¹⁹⁰ Öztürk, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Mücadelesinde İç İsyanlar*, pp. 46-49.

Ethem was also an officer of the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* and both men aided the CUP during their war in the Caucasus during World War I.

However, when World War I ended, Ahmet Anzavur returned to his homeland only to find his villages physically destroyed and the people he knew to live in the situation of dire poverty. Days by, Anzavur increasingly began to hold responsible the CUP and his unnamed successor the *Kuvay-ı Milliye* for the ills of his nation. For Anzavur, the CUP consisted of landowners, bureaucrats, recruiters, traders, and bandits who grew fat while the nation was in economic ruin. He defined his act of revolt as an act of vengeance at those truly responsible for the hardships incurred by the Circassian community as well as other immigrant communities of Pomaks, Albanians, and others like them.¹⁹¹ In a similar manner, while Çerkez Ethem fought alongside the *Kuvay-ı Milliye* in suppressing the revolt of Ahmet Anzavur alongside many others, he also became disillusioned with the policies of the nationalist government in Ankara who, according to him, were sitting comfortably in their offices while he was running from place to place to fight with rebellors and Greeks. Plus, he was not even honored for his contributions to the movement by the leadership.

Overall, it can be said that both Ahmet Anzavur and Çerkez Ethem did not rebel against the Ankara government for merely ideological religious/reactionary or ethnic/autonomist claims or merely for individualist/egoist purposes. They and their followers were not merely tools of the imperialist powers or the imperial Sultan. Both leaders could articulate their personal and communal interests vis a vis the different power blocs competing for hegemony in Anatolia during the Independence War, namely the Great Powers, the Sultan, the Istanbul government, and the nationalist government in

¹⁹¹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, p. 99.

Ankara. This situation also explains why and how they could shift sides in a short span of time while their resentment and reaction against the CUP regime and what they conceived to be its successor in Ankara had taken the form of supporting the loyalist opposition and/or foreign occupation throughout the Independence War Years.

In a similar manner, in Cilicia, we see a variety of notables and brigands collaborating or resisting the French occupation, and, in the same manner, with the Turkish nationalist movement. In this sense, an overview of how nationalist resistance was mobilized in Cilicia offers a better perspective on the shifting alliances of ethno-religious groups towards the French occupation and the Turkish nationalist movement; and the violence they directed towards each other. As discussed above, Armenian and Muslim brigands were in conflict with each other throughout 1919, engaging in mutual attacks and counter-attacks. Indeed, the already existing inter-communal violence culminating in the 1909 Adana events and the 1915 deportations still continued. The French occupation and the Armenian resettlement only served to exacerbate the situation.

The French colonial administration coped with this problem by establishing judiciary and security forces with officials and notables loyal to itself. The Armenians, evidently, were the main object of this cooperation, while the French also endeavored to incorporate Circassians, Arabs, and Kurds to its administrative system. While the gendarmerie and police were filled with mostly Armenian, Circassian and Kurdish chiefs, the French officials also composed armed militia forces out of these groups in order to provide self-defense against Turkish attacks.¹⁹² As discussed before, certain

¹⁹² Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 90-93.

sectors of these groups had reasons of their own to have sympathy for the French occupation, while certain sectors of the Muslims and Turks had a reason to fear it.

The nationalist commanders sent to the region after the Sivas Congress applied certain methods and tactics in mobilizing the nationalist resistance in Cilicia. Osman Tufan Paşa, appointed the commander of Eastern Cilicia, describes in his memoirs in detail the tactics he employed to draw the gendarmerie, notables, and brigands who collaborated with the French occupation into the ranks of the nationalist resistance.¹⁹³ Osman Tufan Paşa, with the three notables that had arrived in the Sivas Congress from Kozan, firstly went to Develi in order to devise a plan to infiltrate in the occupied regions and organize an armed resistance movement. When he arrived there, he contacted two Turks, Cezmi, who worked as a spy for French officials and Ali Saip, who was the head of the gendarmerie forces in Feke both of whom worked for the French administration. Osman Paşa claims that Cezmi was working for the French in fear of punishment for crimes he had committed during the Armenian deportations. Ali Saip, on the other hand, had introduced himself to the French as the “Revandızlı Kürd” and a fierce anti-Turk. He had clashed with Turkish villagers, and had been wounded during the process, which made him a hero in French eyes. After this, he took the Armenian, Kurdish, and Circassian militia under his command and committed atrocities against Turkish peasants.¹⁹⁴ He had, for instance, burned a Turkish village and executed three innocent Turkish teenagers, saying they had ambushed and killed an Armenian soldier.

Osman Tufan first gained Cezmi on his side, and through him, sent news to Ali Saip that the nationalist forces were growing day by day and were going to punish the

¹⁹³ Osman Tufan Paşa, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Arma Yayınları, 1998).

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

traitors. Then, he contacted the brigands of the village who were intent on seeking revenge on Ali Saip. The village put up with the brigand to protect themselves from Armenian attacks, but after they murdered the Armenian soldier they were being pursued by the French officials. Osman Tufan told them if they promised to remain modest and calm and stop practicing brigandage (*namuslu, uslu olmaya, eşkiyalık etmemeye*) they could join the national forces and escape punishment.¹⁹⁵ He then asked them to talk about their plans for revenge on Ali Saip in front of the villagers, so that when Ali Saip heard of these plans, he would become even more frightened.

In the end, Ali Saip agreed to meet with Osman Tufan and he promised that he would work for the national forces by appointing Osman Tufan as a Circassian officer in the gendarmerie where he could build his own forces. Days later, he wrote a letter to Osman Tufan saying that the French authorities had heard that he had contacted the nationalists and therefore he wished to travel to Develi if he would be allowed to command a force of one thousand. Osman Tufan told him to move to Urfa in order to work for the benefit of the nationalist movement. Ali Saip was happy to accept since he knew certain tribes there that could help the movement. Ali Saip later became the famous leader of the Urfa resistance and one of the most important nationalist commanders fighting in the region.¹⁹⁶

Osman Tufan claims that Cezmi had collaborated with them because he was scared of the French while Ali Saip saw his personal benefit invested in the nationalist movement. Thus, Osman Paşa applied similar tactics when he tried to form an actual

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁹⁶ He also has a memoir published in this respect: Ali Saib Ursavaş, *Kilikya faciaları ve Urfa'nın Kurtuluş Mücadeleleri* (Ankara: Kütüphane-i Hilmi, 1924).

armed force. Firstly, he stationed his base in Andırın, where he could devise an attack on Karaisali, then Kozan and finally Haçin. While in Andırın, he sent letters to the gendarmerie, to the few Turks who were left there, saying that the nationalist army was coming that traitors were switching sides one after another, and they should switch sides when the time was ripe. Then, while chatting with the notables of the village, he said to Hacı Ahmet Ağa that he could take the horse of French commander Taillardat and to Ali Ağa that he could take the horse of Armenian officer Krikor when these people were captured. Ali Ağa was so excited by the idea of capturing the horse that the next day he ambushed the police station with his men. In result, French and Armenian officers escaped and the Turkish gendarme was captured. Osman Tufan told these captives to go back and tell the French that they had been held captive by the nationalists and had to escape back to the French zone. The next day, the Turkish gendarmerie shifted sides to the nationalist movement in order not to be captured like the ones the day before.¹⁹⁷ Thereafter, they made up the sole armed force Osman Tufan needed to initiate the resistance.

Osman Tufan also tried to incorporate the brigands operating in the region to the ranks of the national forces. Osman Tufan narrates that there were armed thieves operating around Andırın and one day they came to visit him, loaded with guns. Osman Tufan told them that they had to be ashamed of themselves that they were robbing the villagers while there was the enemy there who had animals and guns. Then, he showed them the French convoy which was carrying guns from Kozan to Haçin as a target. A few days later the gang appeared again with a civil uniform and with ties put on and told him that they had ambushed a French convoy. The next day, however, a notable from

¹⁹⁷ Osman Tufan Paşa, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları*, pp. 44-46.

the village, called Deli Hacı Ağa visited him and told him that the thieves had actually robbed his house instead of the French.¹⁹⁸

Osman Tufan also narrates that some brigands were operating in the region and they were collecting money from the peasants by claiming that they were ‘nationalist forces’, but actually they were not. He had appointed some wise leaders on top of them to advise them to act within ethical principles. Osman Tufan tells that the brigands did not totally conform to their principles, however, they were also afraid to oppose him as they were afraid that they would find no other place to shelter themselves. One of them, called the Kara Hasan gang, had requested from Osman Tufan to invite him to the attack they were planning on Osmaniye. For Osman Tufan, the gang was intent on robbing the place after they took control over it, but however, in order not to offend the gang, he put him on the mission of attacking the village of Yumurtalık. The gang was successful in gaining hold over the village, however, they also robbed the place afterwards.¹⁹⁹ Osman Tufan lastly talks about a Kurdish militia force who was working under the command of a Turkish commander Sıtkı Bey, who was also working for the French occupation. During a clash, Osman Tufan ambushed the militia and took them as captives. Through his conversation with them, he then realized that the Kurds were coming from the Caf and Hamavent tribes who had actually fought under his command against Russia during the Great War.

The members of the militia, then told him that their tribes had been deported from Süleymaniye to the region. Osman Tufan, then told them about the heroic acts of the leaders of these tribes against Russia. He also said that if they switched sides, he

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 43-44.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 72-73.

could take them under his command, and grant them guns and weapons. He then released the captives without giving them any harm, and after the capture of Kozan by the nationalist forces, the Kurdish militia switched to their sides.²⁰⁰

The memoirs depict how through methods of intimidation and material benefit Osman Tufan managed to earn the loyalty of some of the Kurdish, Turkish, and Circassian notables and brigands who had collaborated with the French occupation. More importantly, however, they show that either in the case of “traitors” or people who supported the Turkish nationalist movement, people were guided by materialistic motives rather than pure religious or ethnic/nationalistic inclinations. Officials who supported the French occupation, as in the case of Ali Saip, were motivated by the status and power offered by the French; while some, as Recep Dalkır notes, worked for the benefit of the Muslim population although they collaborated with the French, hence playing both sides.²⁰¹ After the Turkish success in the Maraş uprising, 1200 Turkish soldiers who made up of 70 percent of the gendarmerie deserted their positions to join the Turkish nationalist movement.²⁰² Osman Tufan also talks about Çerkez İbrahim Bey, who was also working for the French, but was reluctant to change sides, as he looked down on the aims of Sivas and Osman Tufan, and thought the nationalists could never grant him an influential position as did the French.²⁰³

The same situation was also valid for the brigands. Osman Tufan’s memoirs show us that while some brigands were incorporated into the nationalist forces as these

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

²⁰¹ Dalkır, *Milli Mücadelede Çukurova*, pp. 37-39.

²⁰² Tachijan, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 140.

²⁰³ Osman Tufan Paşa, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları*, p. 54.

brigands wanted to strengthen themselves against Armenian attacks, some were using the opportunity of the war to ransack and rob more villages. So, while the notables weighed their choice according to preserving or extending the status and power offered by the French administration vis a vis the nationalists, the brigands weighed their choice according to the wane of a gunned power. But, more importantly, Osman Tufan's memoirs show that the notables and brigands from all ethnic/religious groups involved in the war had *shifting* alliances to the French administration and the nationalist government.

In the previous section, I narrated how the French occupation took various steps to alienate certain groups among the Muslims and Turks from its rule in the initial and later stages of the occupation. Then, I discussed the certain tactics the nationalist leaders employed to draw people to their side. The next section, examines how French-Armenian relations the friendly at the beginning, evolved throughout the occupation and discusses the reasons why the friendly relations deteriorated.

The Shift in French Policy

This section examines the reasons behind the shift in French policy throughout 1919 from one seeking to establish a direct colonial sphere of influence in Cilicia to leaving the area to Turkish sovereignty with French supervision, and finally the chain of events that led France to totally retreat from the region, handing the control to the Kemalists. As emphasized before, France had been accorded the right of occupying the region through the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 with Britain, where Cilicia, along with coastal Syria and Lebanon became a French zone of direct influence. However, as also discussed before, the entry of the USA into the Great War in 1917 and the

declaration of Wilson's Fourteen Points thereafter necessitated the disqualification of secret war-time arrangements and the readjustment of the colonial aims of Britain, France and Italy concerning the Near East for the benefit of the colonized people. In this sense, the cardinal point of American foreign policy during the Paris Peace Conference was the contention that all agreements or treaties that conflicted with the Armistice terms were abrogated because all the Allies had agreed that the peace treaties should be based on the Fourteen Points.²⁰⁴

At the beginning of the Paris Peace Conference, there was a fair amount of agreement between the Great Powers on basic issues concerning the status of the Empire. All appeared ready to exclude the Turks from Europe and to establish some form of international control over Istanbul and the Straits, preferably that of a great power. All agreed that the Arab portions of the Ottoman Empire should be liberated and that some sort of national recognition should be granted to the newly freed nationalities, albeit under the watchful care of the Great Powers. All were in accord with the creation of an Armenian state, and all recognized that this state would need a great deal of outside aid and advice of an economic, military, and political nature.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the questions of which great power would actually assume mandates over which areas, and even when they did, how could the great powers reconcile their interests with the wishes of the people of the Near East, had yet to be determined throughout the Conference, causing much friction and dispute between the Great Powers.

²⁰⁴ Paul C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sevres: the Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974), p. 21.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

An overview of French and British foreign policy aims in the Near East will better illuminate this point. France and Britain differed sharply concerning the disposition of Arab lands. As the Sykes-Picot agreement granted France the right to occupy Cilicia, Lebanon and coastal Syria, it also determined that inner Syria, including the cities of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo as France's indirect sphere of influence. The British military officials, on the other hand, had made promises to the Arab leaders, Sherif of Mecca, Hussein and his son Emir Faisal, that in inner Syria and in also certain parts of Iraq, an independent Arab state or a confederation of Arab States would be established after the war with Allied aid.²⁰⁶ Due to this agreement, Emir Faisal appeared as the representative of the Arab Delegation in the Paris Conference, defending Arab unity and independence for all territories south of the Alexandretta line. Faisal indicated Arab willingness to accept economic ties with the West, but not exploitation or political subservience.²⁰⁷

Emir Faisal's claims, to an extent supported by Britain, caused much of the conflict between France and Britain since France regarded Syria, including Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo, as areas of their control, either directly through annexation or indirectly as part of a political and economic sphere of influence in the guise of a League mandate.²⁰⁸ Britain, on the other hand, had militarily dominated the wartime campaigns and post-war occupation in the Middle East. Therefore, the British were eager to consolidate their preeminent position through friendship with the Arabs, and were reluctant to evacuate Syria until they were sure that their claims to Palestine and those of

²⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 52-53.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

Arabs to control Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo would be recognized.²⁰⁹ Hence, the British were so opposed to any real French control in the Near East that some of the members of the British peace delegation openly advocated United States administration of the coastal areas of Syria.

It was not however only Arab nationalist claims that complicated France's postwar aims in the Near East. The Armenian delegation, headed by Boghos Nubar, demanded from the Council of Ten an immense Armenian state that would touch upon the Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian Seas. It would include the Republic of Armenia and the seven Turkish provinces of Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Kharput, Sivas, Erzurum, and Trabzon, except for those areas south of the Tigris and west of the Ordu-Sivas line. All of Cilicia, including Iskenderun, was also demanded.²¹⁰ In addition, both Boghos Nubar's peace delegation in Paris and the Armenian leaders in Cilicia consistently opposed the French annexation of the region in any form. They instead preferred an American mandate over all of United Armenia because they saw it as a protection against Balkanization by the victorious European powers of the vast area that they claimed for the emerging Armenian state.²¹¹ Britain was already known at Paris and Beirut to favor an American mandate over all Armenian territories.

Complicated by British rivalry and Armenian and Arab claims, Clemenceau, the prime minister of France, offered to yield the region to an American mandate on the condition that France retained a hold over the strategic port of Iskenderun. Three months later, Bremond reported to Georges-Picot that his Armenian charges had become

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 48-49.

²¹¹ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 228.

disillusioned with French rule in Cilicia due to the failure of Paris to set up an autonomous Armenian regime there. He also stated that Mihran Damadian, the political representative of the Cilician Armenians, had waged a violent anti-French campaign and pro-American propaganda among the Armenians of the region.²¹² Hence, France's hope of gaining the allegiance of the Armenians would be stabbed by another development, during the tour of the King-Crane Commission²¹³ on 20-21 July in Cilicia. Among the committees of notables from various ethno-religious groups appearing before the commission, only the Greeks and Christian Arabs opted for French rule. The Armenians, on the other hand, opted for attachment to the Republic of Armenia, under an American mandate.²¹⁴

Two additional developments exacerbated French frustration in trying to gain Armenians to the French cause. A special civil mission from Yerevan arrived in the United States on 9 October 1919 to ask for material assistance in extending its authority over Turkish territory claimed for Armenia. Three days later, during General Harbord's trip in Anatolia, one of his Armenian interpreters joined this mission as the representative of Nubar's Armenian National Delegation. And, six weeks later an Armenian military mission appeared in New York. The most prominent member of that

²¹² Ibid., p. 229.

²¹³ The King-Crane Commission, officially called the 1919 Inter-Allied Commission in Turkey, was an official investigation led by the United States government, designed to resolve Anglo-French discord concerning the disposition of the non-Turkish areas of the Ottoman Empire. The Commission's main mission was to inform American policy about the region's people and their own opinion regarding their desired future of governance under the League of Nations Mandate System. The Commission began working on June 1919 and visited Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Anatolia. Its report was produced in June 1919 though it was not published until 1922. Although the commission's report did not have a direct effect on the official policy of the Allied Powers, it had a tremendous effect in the public opinion of Britain, France, and USA and therefore indirectly affected their policy-making. Paul C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sevres*, pp. 64-83. Please also see Harry N. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission: an American Inquiry in the Middle East* (Beirut: Khayat, 1963).

²¹⁴ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 229.

group, Andranik, bitterly attacked France before a mass meeting in New York on 7 December for pressing its case in Cilicia despite Armenian opposition.²¹⁵ All of these frustrations experienced at Paris by late 1919 eventually led Clemenceau to tell Lloyd George that “The Armenians were a dangerous people to get mixed up with. They required a great deal of money and gave very little satisfaction. He was in favor of letting them have a republic, or whatever else they wanted. France was unwilling to spend any money in Armenia.”²¹⁶

There were additional factors which by the end of the summer of 1919 eventually led France to alter its policy concerning the status of Cilicia. As stated in the introduction, France made the September agreement with Britain which stipulated the withdrawal of British troops from Syria and Cilicia (Antep, Maraş and Urfa had been occupied by British forces until that time), beginning on 1 November 1919. The area east of the Sykes-Picot line would be turned over to the Arabs; the area to the west would go to the French. Until the boundary between Palestine and Syria was determined, the British would continue to occupy outposts in accordance with the boundary they claimed.²¹⁷ Moreover, in December, Georges Picot, French High Commissioner in Syria, visited Mustafa Kemal in Sivas for unofficial peace talks. In this meeting, Picot offered Mustafa Kemal the restoration of Adana, Antep, and Urfa to the Turkish hegemony in return for economic concessions. Mustafa Kemal, however, demanded the immediate termination of the French occupation. Then, Picot assured him that the French government supported the independence of the Ottoman State and that they would

²¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 230-231.

²¹⁶ Helmreich, *From Paris to Sevres*, p. 203.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 141.

eventually withdraw from those territories, and would strive to persuade the other Entente Powers to follow their example.²¹⁸

The Picot-Kemal negotiations were an unofficial meeting and therefore fell short of providing a pre-settled peace. Picot's assurances to Mustafa Kemal, however, signaled the shift in French policy towards sacrificing Cilicia to the Turks in return for consolidating their hegemony in Syria and Lebanon. Thus, apart from the factors cited above, the international diplomatic context, the competition between the Great Powers, and Arab and Armenian nationalist claims over the former lands of the Empire, there were additional factors that ultimately led French authorities to seek rapprochement with the Kemalists. First of all, the French-British pact of 13 September, which stipulated the British retreat from and French occupation of east of Cilicia (Antep, Maraş, Urfa), met with bitter resentment and protest from Mustafa Kemal, who demonstrated his opinion by flooding the Allied high commissioners in Istanbul and their respective capitals with a long barrage of telegrams and letters to protest the insult to Turkish sovereignty within the French intent to occupy areas east of Cilicia.²¹⁹ These messages not only came from Sivas but from virtually all of the chapters of the Society for the Defense of Rights scattered around Anatolia. The Turkish officials in east of Cilicia also protested the arrival of French units there and even organized mass demonstrations to express their hostility.

²¹⁸ Salahi Ramadan Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement* (London ; Beverly Hill, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1975), pp. 25-27.

²¹⁹ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 250

More importantly, the armed cooperation between Arab and Turkish nationalists²²⁰ led to the simultaneous outbreak of Sharifian and Turkish guerilla raids against the French in October and November to the east and south of Cilicia. By late October, Bremond was so alarmed by the frequency of such events that he sent a conciliatory telegram to Sivas with an assurance to Mustafa Kemal that the French had no intention of extending their authority into the Anti-Taurus range. Kemal replied with an expression of satisfaction with this promise. However, he also added that in order to restore their traditional friendship, the French must declare their regime in Cilicia as temporary and deny rumors of their intent to occupy Maraş, Antep, and Urfa.²²¹

Hence, from the beginning of the Allied occupation of the Empire, there was a lack of correspondence between the policies of Paris, Beirut, Adana and Istanbul. In fact, from their arrival at the beginning of November 1918, the French authorities in Istanbul pursued a conciliatory policy towards the Porte and Turks in general. Vice Admiral Jean F. Amet (high commissioner from 13 November 1918 to 29 March 1919) informed a correspondent of *Le Moniteur Oriental* only one week after his arrival that “traditional friendship for Turkey remains a pillar of French policy” and that “peace between France and Turkey is at hand”.²²² Defrance (high commissioner from 30 March 1919 to 9

²²⁰ James Gelvin notes that in August 1919, a group of prominent Aleppans who described themselves as anşar (partisans) of Mustafa Kemal and who had pro-Turkish sentiments, distrust of Anglo-French intentions and alienation from Damascus, began plotting a Syria-based military campaign against the French that would cooperate its operations with the Turkish nationalist movement. Gelvin claims that their efforts were not successful, though in early November, militia leaders, leaders of the Arab club, anşar, and local and provincial administrators founded the city wide Aleppo committee of national defense. Hence, the most important function of this committee was the financing and promotion of guerilla activities against the French. The committee was also supported financially and tactically by Mustafa Kemal. James Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 129-135.

²²¹ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 250.

²²² Ibid., p. 256.

February 1921) repeated his recommendation to Paris that France should assume a mandate over all of Turkey at least three times between August and December, hence opposing the scheme of partition.²²³ Clemenceau and Pichon in Paris, however, knew only too well that such an offer would face tremendous opposition from Britain, USA, and Italy. Nevertheless, by the end of the summer of 1919, Paris also began to support the territorial integrity of Turkey under Allied arrangement which would exercise tight control over financial, judicial, police, and military affairs.²²⁴

The accomplishment of this aim, on the other hand, depended firstly on Mustafa Kemal's malleability to French interests and the issue of the Greek invasion. Actually, the Greek occupation of Western Anatolia on British initiative and with their support was the main reason behind the French concern in trying to keep the territorial integrity of the Empire, because if the Greek invasion were successful in restoring Greek hegemony in the region, then Britain would extend its zone of influence in Anatolia at the expense of French influence.²²⁵ Finally, the general elections of November 1919 in France resulted in the victory of the colonialist party, which assumed power under Millerand on 20 January 1920. Zeidner reports that, from as early as 17 October onwards, the conservative newspapers of France campaigned for a quick settlement in Turkey based on preserving the integrity and independence of the whole of Turkey under some sort of international supervision.²²⁶ Apparently, the colonialist party also shared this sentiment.

²²³ Ibid., p. 265.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 267.

²²⁵ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 113.

²²⁶ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 273.

Due to all of the international and national factors cited above, starting from the end of summer of 1919, the “new” French policy became apparent, but would be still subject to swift changes until the end of 1921 when the formal Ankara peace agreement was signed between French and Turkish parties. However, it can be claimed that by the end of 1919, French authorities were intent on leaving Cilicia to nominal Turkish sovereignty with French supervision in financial and police affairs. The onset of the Turkish uprisings in Maraş, Urfa, and Antep throughout the first months of 1920, on the other hand, would affect the course of international diplomatic affairs in Paris, the aims of the nationalist policy in Ankara and the trajectory of ethno-religious violence in Cilicia. The next section deals with the onset of the Franco-Turkish War in Cilicia throughout 1920-21 and describes its effects in terms of the complex and often altercating relationships between the international, national, and local levels of policy; which overall portray a complex picture of the reasons and the actors of the violence of this period. Understanding the complexity of this picture, I believe, will also offer a more vivid picture of the causes of the violence of this period.

CHAPTER FOUR - THE ONSET OF THE WAR

The Maraş Uprising

The Maraş Uprising started on 21 January 1920 and lasted until 10 February, when the French military commanders in Maraş decided to retreat from the city. This section narrates the chain of events that led to the “Turkish” uprising and identifies the various factors that led to the French decision of retreat from Maraş and therefore to a de facto Kemalist victory. More importantly, the escalating inter-ethnic tension during the battle of Maraş will be reviewed in terms of the consequences of French and Kemalist policies, regarding the region which overall destabilized inter-communal relations to a detrimental point.

As discussed before, British authorities had agreed to retreat from the Eastern Region during the negotiations of the 13 September Agreement, according to which France agreed to occupy these territories with its own military force. Following this agreement, the French occupation of Antep, Maraş and Urfa took place on the 29-30 of October and was finalized on 4 November when British forces left Antep for a long journey to Egypt.²²⁷ Inter-communal strife already had been prevalent throughout the region before the French occupation. In fact, most of the marauding bands that penetrated Cilicia and caused trouble to the French administration there had come from this region, Antep, Maraş, and Aleppo.²²⁸ The French officials in Cilicia had a great concentration of Allied troops in Cilicia, which enabled them to chase the bands

²²⁷ Yaşar Akbıyık, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Maraş)* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990), pp. 65-74.

²²⁸ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 341.

throughout the summer and fall of 1919, and also effectively disarm the local population of the region.

The British throughout its occupation of the Eastern zone, had refrained from disarmament operations and as a result most of the Turkish, Kurdish, and Arab tribes had been left heavily armed when the French arrived there.²²⁹ In addition, Kılıç Ali, who had been sent to the region by Mustafa Kemal had arrived in the region in early November. He brought a battery of machine guns with him and set up his headquarters in Pazarcık, less than 40 kilometers east of Maraş. By 5 January, Ali reported to Kemal Pasha that he had established close relations with the Muslim notables of Maraş and completed the formation of a local chapter of the Society for the Defense of Rights. The chapter had its own militia unit, given the mission of the defense of local Muslim population. The gendarmerie commander at Maraş had already distributed 800 rifles with over 80,000 rounds of ammunition to the new militia. In addition, Colonel Hüseyin Selahattin Bey, commander of the Third Corps at Sivas, had stockpiled almost 800 military rifles and a great deal of ammunition at Elbistan, 70 kilometers north of Maraş in order to arm this unit.²³⁰

Meanwhile, the Armenians of the town were also making their preparations for the armed struggle, which appeared imminent. Abraham Hartunian noted in his memoirs that, as the Armenian community of Maraş, they were faced with the threat of death as the British were leaving, and they were left without protection from Turkish attacks. Therefore, they literally begged the French General in Adana to protect them and upon their request, the French army arrived in the region with Armenian legionnaires, two

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 342.

days before the British left.²³¹ When the French arrived in the region, the Armenians of the town took additional measures by cooperating with the French and the warlike Armenians of nearby Zeytun, and they formed their own league of defense.²³²

Hence, there were a variety of factors that triggered the fear and resentment of both the Muslims and Armenians of the region against each other. The Turkish population of the area was quite aware of the tight measures taken by the French colonial administration in Cilicia and feared that the French occupation of the region would be a permanent one and would ultimately result in the breaking off this region from the rest of the Empire. The employment of Armenian legionnaires²³³ as part of the occupation unit also exacerbated their anxiety as the Muslim population feared from their vengeance. More importantly, the Turkish officials and notables feared that they would be punished for their role in the Armenian massacres, which would result in the loss of their status and property.

There is much evidence to believe that these fears were realistic, as the Turkish sources also confirm the point that the British occupation, unlike the French, refrained from intervening directly in the administrative affairs of the region and more importantly, had been reluctant to punish the Turks for their crimes during the deportations.²³⁴ The British administration, overall, did not undertake a project to

²³¹ Abraham Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep: a Memoir of the Armenian Genocide*, trans. Vartan Hartunian (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 128.

²³² Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, pp. 342-343.

²³³ The Turkish sources state that, the French forces which occupied Maraş consisted of 400 Armenians, 1000 French and 500 Algerians. Yaşar Akbıyık, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Maraş)*, p. 71; Yalçın Özalp, *Gazilerimizin Dilinden Milli Mücadelemiz* (Ankara: Kahramanmaraş Belediyesi, 1986), p. 27.

support widespread Armenian settlement to the detriment of Muslims and did not initiate a project to re-grant the confiscated properties of Armenians that had been given to the Muslims to their initial owners. Thus, both the administrative system and the property regime of the town had been kept intact during the British occupation. The Armenians, on the other hand, feared for their security and survival which they thought could only be secured through foreign occupation and patrolling.

For all these reasons, the frequency and intensity of inter-communal conflict increased as the French arrived in the region. Robert Zeidner cites the observation of Dr. Mabel Elliott of the American hospital at Maraş, who claimed that beginning with the arrival of French at Maraş, “scarcely a night had passed without the sound of gunfire somewhere in the city.”²³⁵ Hence, from the beginning of November onwards, there occurred a variety of incidents which escalated inter-ethnic conflict to the point of widespread violence. The first of these incidents occurred when Colonel Andre, who was appointed governor of Maraş in November, ordered the removal of the Ottoman flag from the town’s fortress. In response, a massive Turkish uproar began upon this ‘flag incident’ which eventually compelled Andre to leave the town altogether.²³⁶

Moreover, as the French, alarmed by the increasing Muslim hostility, began to send reinforcements to Maraş from Antep and İslahiye during December, Kılıç Ali ambushed these French columns before they could reach the city. One such column included a contingent of the Armenian Legion which had set out from Antep to the west

²³⁴ Akbıyık, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Maraş)*, pp. 45-47; İsmail Özçelik, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Urfa) 30 Ekim 1918-11 Temmuz 1920* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1992), pp. 64-76; Bilgehan Pamuk, *Bir Şehrin Direnişi: Antep Savunması*, (İstanbul: IQ Kültür, 2009), pp. 87-102.

²³⁵ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 343.

²³⁶ Akbıyık, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Maraş)*, pp. 123-131.

in order to join larger column en route to Maraş from Islahiye on 12 January. Camping that night at Araptar, on the road from Antep to Belpinar, the legionnaires committed a wide variety of atrocities against the Muslim villagers there. In reply to the cries for help from the villagers, several bands of armed Kurds attacked the column repeatedly on the following day. As a result, the French suffered heavy losses in men, supplies, and weapons.²³⁷

After all of these incidents, the French commander in Adana, General Dufieux, found French authority to the East so shaky that he ordered his deputy at Antep, Brigadier General Querette, to move his headquarters to Maraş. When Querette arrived on Maraş on 14 January, he found the ethnic elements of the city already entrenched in their fortified positions. Most of the French troops had occupied the old garrison next to the American missionary enclave on the hill overlooking Maraş on the North. The majority of the Armenians had taken refuge in their largest churches and they were also supported by a few detachments of French troops. Other Armenians had gathered in large stone mansions that formed a center of defense in the Armenian quarter. In a similar manner, the Muslims had gathered around strong points within their own quarters. Indeed, there were many other signs that signaled that a state of siege had already begun. Networks of defensive trenches surrounded all of these positions, all shops had been closed and the streets were deserted.²³⁸ Meanwhile, Kılıç Ali's ambushes to the South, continued as Querette sent more reinforcements from Antep, and the French began to burn and loot suspect villages near the site of Ali's ambushes.

²³⁷ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 344.

²³⁸ Ibid., pp. 345-346.

In order to take control of the increasing inter-ethnic hostility, Querette invited the leaders of the Muslim notables to his command post at the garrison shortly before noon on 21 January. He briefly threatened reprisals unless Kılıç Ali's attacks ceased and the Turks, in return, told him to commence his reprisals. In return, Querette dismissed a few of the attendants while informing the rest that they were under arrest. Just as the dismissed notables left the garrison, a massive Muslim fusillade reverberated throughout the entire city. The battle of Maraş had begun.²³⁹

Throughout the 22 days of battle, the city had witnessed an enormously destructive battle, where according to eyewitness accounts, between one-quarter to one-half of all the buildings were destroyed. The human losses amounted to 10,000; the majority of them Armenian. Although the Armenian and Turkish accounts differ, the violence of this period cannot be fully grasped by taking into consideration both the intentional and contingent factors that led to the terrible violence. The Armenian and American missionary accounts claim that roughly 5,000 Armenians were massacred by Turkish militia forces in the city center during the battle and another 3,000 perished from starvation and cold while they were trying to escape the city with the retreating French army.²⁴⁰ Vahe Tachjian also claims that a few hundred Armenians were killed by French soldiers during the war when they tried to trespass the French defense line to escape from Turkish attacks. Apparently, the French soldiers had thought that Armenians would risk the security of the French defense line.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 347.

²⁴⁰ Richard G. Hovannisian, "The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the 'Marash Affair'," in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers Inc., 2008), pp. 506-512; Stanley E. Kerr, *The Lions of Marash: Personal Experiences with American Near East Relief, 1919-1922* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1973), pp. 99-142.

Yaşar Akbıyık, on the other hand, contends that 2,000 Turks died during the battle and although fewer in numbers, some Turkish peasants had suffered from atrocities committed by French and Armenian soldiers in the surrounding villages of Maraş. According to him, the French soldiers slaughtered many of the villagers' mules and horses of villagers for food, burned some villages and killed several people who resisted their acts.²⁴² In addition, while Akbıyık refutes the claim that Armenians were massacred during the war, he also ironically cites the documents of the ATASE (Ministry of War Archives) of the Turkish Republic, which verify that Kılıç Ali and his militia planned to kill Armenians by burning the churches in which they had taken refuge.²⁴³ Both Stanley Kerr and Richard Hovannisian claim that most of the Armenians died when the Turkish militia set on fire the five major Armenian churches in the city while the people inside were burnt alive.²⁴⁴ The same procedure was also applied to Armenian houses.

Various factors ultimately led to the decision of the French retreat and their inability to protect the Armenians from Turkish attacks. First of all, the French army in Maraş lacked not only adequate amounts of man and fire power, but also wireless radio equipment and even carrier pigeons, which made communication and coordination of operations between scattered French troops both in Maraş and Cilicia almost impossible.²⁴⁵ Kılıç Ali's guerillas had cut all of the wires emanating from Maraş on 21

²⁴¹ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 129

²⁴² Akbıyık, *Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi (Maraş)*, p. 165 and 213.

²⁴³ Ibid., pp. 180-206.

²⁴⁴ Hovannisian, *Postwar Contest for Cilicia*, p. 509; Kerr, *Lions of Marash*, pp. 99-142.

²⁴⁵ Hovannisian, *Postwar Contest for Cilicia*, pp. 505-506.

January. For all these reasons, not until 31 January could General Dufieux in Adana learn of the outbreak of the battle in Maraş, from a survivor of one of Kılıç Ali's ambushes.²⁴⁶ When informed of the critical situation of the French in Maraş, he immediately ordered Lieutenant Colonel Robert Normand to direct a relief expedition and ordered reconnaissance flights by the first airplane he received from Beirut. On the night of 7 February, Normand's expedition entered Maraş, and the next day, bombarded the Turkish positions and then broke through Querette's headquarters in the North.²⁴⁷

Upon his arrival, Normand claimed to have orders to evacuate the French garrison unless General Querette had the situation fully in hand within forty-eight hours. Then, he ordered Major Corneloup, whose companies commanded the approaches from Antep and Islahiye, to withdraw from the Southern quarters. When Corneloup did so, Normand met with Querette to urge a complete evacuation, explaining that General Dufieux had informed him that the security of the troops should be the paramount concern, followed by the humanitarian consideration to protect the Christian and loyal Muslims elements as far as possible.²⁴⁸ When Querette hesitated, Normand insisted that no more troops would arrive, that arms and ammunition would soon be exhausted, and that the military situation could not justify risking the loss of an entire garrison for the sake of defending an isolated post.

Meanwhile, on the same day of 9 January, when Normand and Querette met and agreed to retreat from Maraş altogether, a letter from Turkish leaders proposing a truce reached Querette. On the next day, a Turkish truce delegate came to discuss terms.

²⁴⁶ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 348.

²⁴⁷ Hovannisian, *Postwar Contest for Cilicia*, p. 510.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 510-511.

Zeidner claims that the Turks were prepared to surrender Maraş upon three conditions: The French should first remove all their Armenian troops, grant amnesty to all the Muslims who had taken up arms, and provide food and shelter to everyone regardless of ethnicity. In the meantime, Turkish bands were already leaving the city, but Normand had made his decision made and found it not so logical to order back to their abandoned positions. Thus, during the night of 10 February 1920, the French columns began marching out of the city.

In order to exit the city without facing any hindrance by the Turks, the French commanders tried to keep the evacuation a secret from Turks, Americans, and Armenians alike. On the final day before departure, however, the news spread rapidly among the Armenians in the American compound and other buildings near the French positions. Panic-stricken by the news of the French retreat several thousand Armenians fled into the night, to escape with the retreating French troops.²⁴⁹ Misfortunes followed. On the second day of the retreat, a severe snowstorm ensued and continued for three days. The severe winter conditions and the temperatures below the freezing level, made the march of the entire column painfully slow. Most of the marchers were on foot and as they lost their last measure of strength, they dropped themselves into the snow. Hence, among the four to five thousand Armenians who had managed to escape the city, only 1,500 refugees reached Islahiye, frostbitten and forlorn. As Armenians had returned back to their homes, imbued with the hope of re-establishing their lives, they were once again faced with a severe tragedy. The French had literally abandoned them.

²⁴⁹ Hovannisian, *Postwar Contest for Cilicia*, p. 511.

The Reactions to and Consequences of the Maraş Affair

The French retreat from Maraş caused both surprise and turmoil on the part of the French and British officials as well as their presses. For one thing, General Dufieux in Adana, who had authorized Colonel Normand with auxiliary forces to aid the French forces in Maraş, had not instructed him to evacuate the city, and was furious when Normand did so. Normand had been assigned to an investigative mission in December by General Gouraud who had instructed him to explore the Eastern Region, gauge the demographic dynamics, and the people's favorability to French rule. He also had been assigned to communicate with the Turkish authorities and form a relationship based on mutual trust.

Vahe Tachjian contends that Normand's decision to evacuate Maraş revealed the new French policy put into effect by the High Commissioner in Beirut, who was intent on granting Cilicia to Turkish sovereignty in return for certain economic concessions. Hence, in order to avoid fighting on two fronts, with Faisal in Syria and Kemal in Turkey, the French authorities in Paris and Beirut were ready to sacrifice Cilicia in order to consolidate their hegemony in Syria and Lebanon.²⁵⁰ General Dufieux and Colonel Bremond in Adana, on the other hand, were still intent on restoring and keeping French hegemony in the region. Later, these two different versions of colonial policy triggered additional tensions between Beirut and Adana that would lead Gouraud finally to call to Beirut and dismiss Colonel Bremond from his post as administrative chief of Adana, on 29 August 1920.

²⁵⁰ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 121-125.

Thus, the French retreat from Maraş also signaled the end of any French attempt to restore its political hegemony in the region. In military terms, the retreat was followed by the evacuation of Urfa on 11 April 1920. While they were retreating, the French forces were ambushed by the Turkish forces and 200 French soldiers were killed, while the rest was taken captive. Leading up to May, Turkish forces besieged Pozantı, Haçın, Sis, Ekbez, and Antep. The Kemalist forces repeatedly attacked the Baghdad railroad in order to impede transfer of the French soldiers and ammunition.²⁵¹

While the French defeat at Maraş triggered a chain of events that eventually led to Turkish hegemony over the region, it also had far-reaching consequences for the course of the Turkish Independence War and Allied strategies of settling a peace treaty for the Empire in general. In this sense, one immediate consequence of the Maraş uprising was the Allied recognition of Mustafa Kemal as the legitimate leader of the nationalist movement. Before the Maraş uprising, the Allies, under British guidance, had treated Mustafa Kemal as more of an adventurous rebel than as the de facto leader of a broad national movement. After the Maraş incident, however, all of the Allies realized that, like it or not, he and his movement embodied the only source of genuine authority throughout most of Turkey.²⁵²

This situation, in return, led Lloyd George and Curzon to argue in the London Conference of 1920 that the Maraş rebellion had comprised a direct challenge to the Allies. Attributing the event to collusion between Mustafa Kemal and the sultan's government, they also demanded stern action against alleged conspirators. Lloyd George then proposed the occupation of key Ottoman facilities in the capital city itself: all

²⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 132-133.

²⁵² Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 351.

military posts and major communication facilities, plus the ministries of war and navy.²⁵³ Thus, in order to confront the sultan's government, and show off Allied power, the British officials decided to occupy Istanbul.

The occupation was followed by the invasion by British troops storming the Ottoman parliament and arresting of the "dangerous nationalists" among its members. In order to save face, the sultan dissolved the parliament. This chain of events, in return, led Mustafa Kemal to summon the rest of the parliament to reconvene in Ankara, far from the threat of Allied interference. Consequently, Istanbul was delegitimized as the place of rule, and Ankara emerged as the sole guardian of Turkish sovereignty and independence. Therefore, it can be claimed that one very important outcome of the Maraş uprising was the creation of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara in April 1920.

Meanwhile, the San Remo Conference was held from 19 to 26 April between France, Britain, Japan, and Italy to decide on the final settlement of peace terms with the Ottoman Empire. The decisions taken at this conference served as the basis for the Articles of the Sevres Treaty signed between the Allied powers and the Ottoman government on August 1920, but were rejected by the Grand National Assembly in Ankara. During this conference, it was decided to establish mandate states in the Arab lands, a sphere of Kurdish autonomy in the South east of Anatolia, and independent Armenia in Eastern Anatolia. Thrace and Izmir were granted to Greece. It was also agreed that Syrian and Lebanon and certain parts of Cilicia should be assigned as French

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 353.

mandates. The west of the Ceyhan-Seyhan river, as well as Maraş and Diyarbakır were allocated to Ottoman sovereignty.²⁵⁴

After the conference, as France earned the right to exert mandates in Syria and Lebanon, the policy of reconciling with the Kemalist movement took a more dramatic turn. Thus, in order to oust Emir Faisal from power, the French officials, needed to concentrate its forces in Syria, and this led them to consider making peace with the Kemalists, more than ever, although this would also lead to sacrificing more territories in Cilicia to Turkish sovereignty. In this diplomatic environment, negotiations for a truce agreement began between Robert De Caix, general secretary in Beirut to Gouraud, and Mustafa Kemal in Ankara. After ten days of negotiation, a truce agreement was reached between two parties, in May 1920. The main terms of the armistice were as follows: hostilities would cease as from midnight 29 May for a period of twenty days during which Pozantı, Sis, Antep, Maraş and Urfa would be evacuated by the French forces and patrolled by the Turkish gendarmerie; prisoners of war and detainees would be exchanged; the French government and business concerns would receive preferential and concessions in Cilicia in return for which the French would take no action against the nationalist movement, the political aims of which they would unofficially support.²⁵⁵ The armistice finally broke down when on 8 June, the French landed forces at Zonguldak and established a second front. Two days before the expiry of the truce, Kemal notified General Gouraud that hostilities would begin on all the fronts on 18 June at midnight.

²⁵⁴ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 134.

²⁵⁵ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923*, pp. 76-77.

When the hostilities commenced, the French endeavored to retain their position in Adana, Antep, Birecik, and Kilis. In the meantime, their forces entered Syria and ended the regime of Emir Faisal on July 1920. When the French forces were relieved from Sherifian attacks, they were able to concentrate more of their efforts on Cilicia. The hostilities between Turkish and French forces continued until 21 May with minor changes in the two sides' military positions. The French still controlled much of the alluvial plain of Cilicia, surrounding Adana.²⁵⁶

However, when the Sevres Treaty was signed in August 1920, but rejected by the Grand National Assembly, the French once again endeavored to end all hostilities in Cilicia in order to protect the northern borders of Syria. A peace agreement was finally signed on 11 March 1921 between Aristide Briand and Bekir Sami in London. According to this agreement, France sacrificed more territories, granting all of Cilicia, Antep, Kilis, and Urfa to Turkish sovereignty. Nevertheless, the agreement was still rejected by the Grand National Assembly, compelling the French authorities to re-settle another peace agreement.²⁵⁷ Finally, a peace agreement was signed between the two parties between the French diplomat Henri Franklin Bouillon and the foreign minister of the Ankara government, Yusuf Kemal Bey on 20 October 1921.

When Franklin Bouillon arrived in Ankara on 19 September, the Nationalists had defeated the Greeks in the Battle of Sakarya which had lasted from 23 August to 13 September and had halted the Greek advance to Ankara. Confident of this success, and with the Greeks in retreat, Mustafa Kemal, deployed all of the forces against the French in Cilicia. Mustafa Kemal also knew that France could not administer its mandate in

²⁵⁶ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 136.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

Syria without an agreement with its neighbor. All of these factors, in return, pressured the French officials to settle for harsh terms.²⁵⁸ As a result, France recognized full Turkish sovereignty in all of Cilicia, Antep, Urfa, and Kilis. In return, the Turkish government acknowledged French sovereignty in the French mandate of Syria. With the grant of certain economic concessions and guarantees for the security of minorities, the French armies finally retreated from Cilicia on January 1922.

The next section examines the effects of this two-year lasting war on the inter-communal violence in Cilicia. Hence, the constant shifts of policy both at the international diplomatic and nationalist policy levels had detrimental effects to the communal policies of the Cilician inhabitants. During the two years of war, due both to the reluctance of the French commanders to engage in an actual war with the Turkish nationalists as well as the lack of enough soldiers, the Armenians were left to their own fate by the French to defend themselves against Turkish attacks. Therefore, disappointed in the shift in French policy towards reconciling with the Turkish nationalist movement, the Armenians took several political and military measures to ensure their presence and hegemony in Cilicia. For this reason, they engaged in a severe self-defense operation during the siege of the city of Haçin, which lasted eight months, and engaged in two coup attempts against the French administrative center in Adana in an attempt to declare Armenian independence. The next section will detail this process.

Violence Escalating - the Summer of 1920

After the Turkish success in the Maraş uprising, the majority of the Muslim communities who had initially supported the French occupation switched sides as the

²⁵⁸ Güçlü, *The Struggle for Cilicia*, p. 595.

image of French power and prestige in their minds had been destroyed. This was especially true for the Circassians and Kurds, who deserted their positions in the French gendarmerie and moved to places along the borders of Cilicia and the Eastern region which were under Turkish control. The Alewi Arabs, who lived mainly in the city center of Adana, were less affected by the ongoing war in the Eastern region. They mainly supported the occupation as Cilicia's possible unification with Syria would give them the chance to unite with their relatives and neighbors in the adjacent territories. Therefore, some continued to support the French, while others remained neutral, and still others worked for both sides. However, during the summer of 1920, the Alewi Arabs and Armenians became embroiled in a violent conflict, causing most of the Alewi Arabs to flee to territories controlled by the Turkish forces.²⁵⁹

The defeat of the French forces in Maraş also triggered a counter-migration of Armenians the area to the Cilician plain where the French troops still exercised control. The majority of these refugees settled in Adana, which led to a sudden increase in the Armenian population of the city. As Vahe Tachjian states, before the Maraş incident, there had been 22-25,000 Armenians in Adana. Bremond noted in the middle of 1920 that Armenian refugees numbered 60,000 and half of them were from the Eastern territories.²⁶⁰ The increasing number of Armenians caused more trouble for the French authorities in Adana, as they began to dominate numerically and became a harder population to control. What troubled the French most was the issue of their protection. If Adana was lost to Turkish forces, more massacres would take place, as had happened in

²⁵⁹ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, pp. 131-132.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 138.

Maraş. As 1920 progressed, the city of Adana and its vicinity increasingly became the targets of Turkish attacks.

For this reason, on February 1921, the French high commissioner decided to form militia units from the Christians living in the city. Armenians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Greeks as well as some Alewi Arabs were armed by the French administration and put under the command of Christian and French commanders. Throughout February 1920, the militia units conducted operations in Adana, Sis-Kozan, Cebel-Bereket, Mersin and Tarsus under the authority of French commanders.²⁶¹ However, sending approximately 500 militia soldiers to distant regions from the city center of Adana, made the job of controlling them increasingly difficult for French commanders. Most of the Armenians were members of the various Armenian political parties, and they stuck more to their political agendas rather than the agenda of the French commanders.²⁶² This situation, in return, altered the inter-communal dynamics of Adana, making it a more insecure place for Muslims to live, as Christians were armed while the Muslims working in the gendarmerie forces had deserted their positions.

When in June 1920, 7500 more Armenians fled from Sis-Kozan to Adana, the situation grew out of control. Upon their arrival, these new refugees attacked the houses of the Muslims to make them their own, and some even used force to throw Muslims out of their houses. During the truce period of 30 May and 18 June, more violent clashes between the Muslims and Christians of the city occurred. Thus, when news of the San Remo Conference was printed in the media two weeks before the truce was signed between French and Turkish authorities, Boghos Nubar sent a note of protest to

²⁶¹ Ibid., p. 141.

²⁶² Ibid.

Millerand, regarding the return of Cilicia to the Turks. The close proximity of timing between public announcements on the terms of peace for the Porte and of the truce in the South, convinced Nubar and many of his compatriots that the cease-fire to take effect on 30 May was merely a preparatory step to imminent French evacuation. According to Zeidner, the way was open to Armenian action towards sabotaging the truce. During the first half of June, six Turkish villages between Adana and Ceyhan were attacked by Armenian militia forces.²⁶³ Panic-stricken, an approximate number of 5000 Muslims left Adana during June to territories controlled by the Kemalists.²⁶⁴

Yet, inter-communal hostilities did not cease. During the next month, 20,000 more Muslims left Adana for the countryside as a result of the events termed as ‘Kaç-Kaç olayları’ in the Turkish literature. The chain of events started when on 10 July, a rifle shot was heard in one quarter of Adana and almost immediately rifle shots were heard in other quarters. During these incidents, Armenian militia forces killed ten Alewi Arabs and kidnapped twenty of them as revenge for the kidnappings and deaths of ten of their compatriots beforehand, whom they had blamed on the Alevi Arabs.²⁶⁵ And, just one week after the exodus of Muslims took place, Armenian militia groups set fire to the deserted Turkish quarter of the city and began burning and pillaging the vacated homes of the Muslims.²⁶⁶ According to Colonel Bremond, all of this violence had been organized by the radical nationalist Hincakyan Party in order to intimidate the Muslims and compel them to leave their homes. As a result of these incidents, the French

²⁶³ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, pp. 459-460.

²⁶⁴ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 151.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, p. 461.

authorities released the Muslim prisoners who had been caught by the Armenian militia, and arrested the Armenians who were suspected of having been involved in these incidents. Six of them were hanged, while the rest were imprisoned.²⁶⁷

In August, when news of the Sevres Treaty reached the Armenians of the region, and that most of Cilicia was going to be left to the Turks, Armenian-French political relations deteriorated to the worst point. On August 3 and 5, the leaders of various Armenian political organizations engaged in a series of abortive coups, designed to establish several Armenian republics in the region. The first of these decrees was declared on 3 August, in the name of the establishment of the independent “Armenian Republic of Cilician Mesopotamia” by a Cilician newspaper editor named Varadjian. The borders claimed for this state lay along the Baghdad line, between the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers, with the Gulf of Iskenderun forming the southern frontier.²⁶⁸ The French authorities intervened in this process, arrested Varadjian and sent him to exile. This declaration of independence was not supported by the Armenian National Union, which functioned as a sort of Armenian parliament, but was supported by the four Armenian political parties, Tasnaksutyun, Veragzmial, Hincakyan, and Ramgavar.²⁶⁹

On 5 August, a more organized attempt at a coup was led by Mihran Damadian, the president of the Armenian National Union. Arriving at the Adana government house (*konak*), early that morning with his cabinet, he proclaimed himself president of the autonomous Armenian Republic of Cilicia.²⁷⁰ The group of Armenians who participated

²⁶⁷ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 151.

²⁶⁸ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, pp. 461-462.

²⁶⁹ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 153.

²⁷⁰ Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, pp. 462-463.

in the coup also occupied the command center of the gendarmerie, and the telephone and post administrative units. Bremond immediately ordered his soldiers to remove them from the building, and put an end to the coup the same day.

Vahe Tachjian states that these two coups were designed by Armenian politicians in Adana to affect the French policy of leaving Cilicia to Turkish sovereignty.

According to the organizers of the coups, their actions would draw the attention of the French press to Cilicia, initiate a discussion on the situation of the Cilician Armenians who had been left to their own fate and abandoned by the French authorities. The reaction of the French press and the commanders in Cilicia, however, was the opposite of what they had sought. The French press severely condemned these declarations of independence and defended the decision that France should make peace with the Kemalists immediately. On 21 September, Colonel Capitrel, who had replaced Bremond, ordered the banishment of ten Armenian politicians from Cilicia whom they thought had played leading roles in organizing the coups.²⁷¹

By that time, it can be claimed that any French sympathy towards the Armenian cause in Cilicia had vanished. The October 1920 issue of *Missionary Herald* reports that a 15 September dated letter from their representative in Adana, stated that the French administration by that time began organizing the exodus of Armenians from the region while encouraging Turkish settlement:

Today, the Armenians were thrown into consternation by the warning that they should register their refugees in preparation for their transport to other places such as Dort Yol, Alexandretta, Smyrna, Constantinople, Erivan or America. The threat is made that if they do not comply, the bread ration which the French have been giving will be cut off. Veiled threats of force have been made.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie*, p. 154.

²⁷² *Missionary Herald*, October 1920.

The report goes on to say that: “The proposition to send away the Armenian refugees seems to be a concession to the Turks at the expense of Armenians. The French are encouraging the Turks to come back. The possibilities are tragic.”²⁷³ Yet, under these circumstances, another episode of massive inter-communal violence between Armenians and Muslims was going to take place in Haçin. The next section will narrate that episode.

The Haçin Siege

On March 1920, the Turkish forces had moved to take the town. In the middle of March, the Armenians of the town decided to evacuate Haçin. However, Colonel Bremond rejected this decision and asked the Armenians to resist the Turkish attacks until the French forces gained a favorable position in the war. On 10 April, the city was besieged altogether by Turkish militia forces and the chance of evacuating the city became impossible. After this point, the French forces did not send any reinforcements to save the Armenians. Once again, they were left to defend themselves and without any aid from the French, the Armenians resisted for eight months. On October 1920, the Turkish forces got hold of the town and thousands of Armenians were massacred outright.²⁷⁴

The Haçin siege deserves special attention here, because it witnessed a fierce struggle between the Armenian and Turkish militia forces. Each side claimed that it was subjected to mass killings by the other. In the absence of any French forces during the siege, the war was fought only between Turkish and Armenian militias. Tachjian claims

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 136-137.

that the siege occurred at a time when French diplomacy was focused on soothing the tensions with the Kemalists by signing an agreement and was worried that any operation to rescue the Armenians would anger the Kemalists.²⁷⁵ A more radical interpretation is suggested by Selahattin Sert, who claims that the French commanders had deliberately condoned the killings of Armenians of Haçin.²⁷⁶ In his perspective, the French commanders not only refrained from sending help, but by leaving the Armenians in their own ‘death’ camp, they even avoided seeking peace terms with the Turkish commanders for the Armenians of Haçin, and did not even bring the subject to the table at the truce talks in Ankara.²⁷⁷ So, the French sought to get rid of the Armenians, who had caused trouble to them with their own demands to form their own state.

Although Sert’s interpretation of French intentions might be radical, he claims that Haçin was a “death camp” for the Armenians because the Turkish side intended to it to be so. When the town was totally encircled by Turkish forces, the Turkish militia, understanding that no help would come from the French, became intent on punishing the Armenians altogether for their crimes both before and during the war. An eyewitness account by a missionary during the siege emphasizes the same point. Blanche Remington Emmy claims that at the beginning of the siege, an airplane had passed over the town, but made no attempt to land. It passed on and circled over the villages. That evening an order came from the French that all the women and the children, together with the Americans, and the orphans were to proceed at once to Sis, the next town. The

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Selahattin Sert, *Fransızların Ermenileri Yok Etme planı: Kilikya, 1918-1922: Haçin Ölüm Kampı* (İstanbul: Kum Saati Yayınları, 2005).

²⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 424-435.

males, however, were commanded to remain in Haçin to defend the city.²⁷⁸ She, then, states that if this order had come a month sooner, it might have been carried out. But to send helpless women and children alone at this time seemed like sending them to certain death, or worse still, into the arms of the waiting brigands. The French had offered to send a protecting force part way to meet them, but did not offer any food or animals for the journey.²⁷⁹

A week after later, the airplane returned. It dropped a packet of letters and papers stating that if Haçin would prepare a place for the French forces to land, they would return the following day. They wrote of their increased forces, which, they said, were now sufficiently strong to drive back the Turks and settle all disturbances in two weeks' time. The next and the last time the plane appeared, it made no attempt to land, and did not drop any messages.²⁸⁰ Time after, Dogan Bey, the Nationalist Commander for Cilicia, sent through Cevan Bey the letters that the French airplane brought for the people of Haçin, but dropped by mistake into the Turkish lines. In these letters, little hope was expressed that the French would be able to send a force to Haçin. Cevan Bey, said: "It would be best for the Armenians to come to our terms, for long ere this moon hath run its course they will experience terrible and crushing defeat. When our victorious troops enter the city, every inhabitant will be massacred: no one will be spared-not even the women and children."²⁸¹ Another Turkish soldier stated that "We

²⁷⁸ Blanche Remington Evy, *At the Mercy of Turkish Brigands, a True Story* (1922) (Whitefish: MT, Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2010), p. 102.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 160.

must exterminate the Armenians, they have caused us so much trouble in the past that we cannot permit them to live longer. Death only can expiate their crimes.”²⁸²

Osman Tufan, on the other hand, wrote in his memoirs that they had fired on the houses during the offensive and when they got hold of the town, they burned it altogether as a punishment. He also claimed that all of the Turks who had been living the city had been massacred. According to Osman Tufan, the Armenians had put them in cages and starved them to death. Each day, a woman, a child, a man, would be killed in front of their eyes, and the corpse would be left among them. A woman was hang alive from her waist by a French flag from a high building and exhibited to the Turkish forces when they arrived there. Not a single Muslim family survived the siege.²⁸³

The Haçin siege is described in both Armenian and Turkish accounts which cite the severity of the violence each side committed against the other. Most of the Armenian population of the city, their number amounting to 8,000 had died during the war or were massacred following the end of the siege. Only about 400 Armenians managed to escape to safety in the French zone. The Turkish population, who was living in the town, and in the surrounding villages, was subjected to atrocities. In the end, the town of Haçin was totally physically destroyed. When the siege ended, the Turkish offensive had won a symbolic success by taking over an Armenian dominated town, which had gained popularity through preserving its centuries long autonomy vis a vis the Ottoman Empire. The Armenians, on the other hand, had lost any hope of establishing an autonomous Armenian entity in Cilicia under French aid. Through the reactions the French showed to the abortive coups and to the Haçin siege, the French message was clear: any Armenian

²⁸² Ibid., p. 130.

²⁸³ Osman Tufan Paşa, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları*, pp. 93-94.

action that would threaten imminent French evacuation of Cilicia, would be met with harsh terms.

The French Retreat and the Evacuation of Armenians

Around the time Maraş fell in October 1920, it was becoming increasingly clear to the Armenians that France was getting ready to leave Cilicia for good. In September 1920, Colonel Bremond, who had strived for two years to create a French-protected Armenian state, and showed signs of resisting the anticipated pull-out, had been recalled to France by the order of High Commissioner in Beirut, General Gouraud. As the Armenians of Cilicia become disillusioned with the ideal of creating a national home in Cilicia, they began migrating to Dörtyol, which was included within the boundaries of Syria under the French mandate as defined by the Treaty of Sevres. After the Treaty, the French authorities themselves encouraged refugees from different areas of Cilicia and the Eastern territories to settle in Dörtyol or those parts of the Eastern Territories that were supposed to remain within the borders of their Syrian mandate.²⁸⁴

The Armenian refugees who had fled to the Dörtyol region since mid-1920, were once again disappointed when in March 1921, during the negotiations in London, France made more territorial concessions to Turkey, including the entire Dörtyol district. The new border was confirmed through the Ankara Agreement of October 20, 1921, which drew up the final agreement on the French withdrawal from Cilicia. In addition, contrary to the London Agreement, the Ankara Agreement did not contain a clause providing tangible guarantees of the rights of non-Turkish minorities in Cilicia. Upon news of the Ankara Agreement, the Christian population of Cilicia, especially the Armenians, were

²⁸⁴ Tachjian, *"The Cilician Armenians and French Policy,"* pp. 550-551.

overcome by a wave of panic. Everyone was determined to leave Cilicia before the evacuation of the French troops had been completed and the new Turkish administration took over on the appointed date of 4 January 1922.²⁸⁵

After concluding the agreement, Franklin Bouillon personally travelled to Cilicia in hopes of persuading the population not to leave. General Gouraud in Beirut, tried to convince the region's inhabitants to stay put with the promise that the French government had done everything required to safeguard the rights of minorities. However, these efforts were inconclusive, as the threatened population was determined to leave before the Turkish troops arrived. Accepting the inevitable, the French authorities decided to organize the exodus themselves by establishing a commission to register the emigrants and put them on ships. During November and December 1921, the Christians populations of Cilicia, particularly the Armenians, fled Cilicia to settle in Syria and Lebanon.²⁸⁶ The Turkish armies finally entered the city on 4 January 1922.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 552.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 553.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the possible historical and socio-economic reasons behind the emergence of ethnic conflicts between the various Muslim and non-Muslim communities of Cilicia throughout the years of the Independence War. Foremost, it presented a local history of inter-communal relations, focusing on a specific region and time period in the Ottoman Empire. Cilicia, stood out in my analysis, as it hosted a variety of ethno-religious groups throughout the Ottoman Empire, consisting of Muslims (Turks, Kurds, Arabs, and Circassians), Christians (Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, and Chaldeans), and Jews. Secondly, this region had already witnessed ethno-religious violence during the 1909 Adana Incidents during which Muslims and Armenians had violently clashed and between 20-25,000 people, mostly Armenians, had died.

The effects of the 1915 Armenian deportations were also severe in the region, as they not only eliminated the physical presence of the Armenians, but also destroyed the economic infrastructure and well-being of Cilicia as most of the crafts and trades were carried out by them. The focus has been in the Independence War Years because throughout these years, in the situation of the collapse of Ottoman state authority after World War I, Cilicia was occupied by France, and following it, the rise of Turkish independence movement sought hegemony over the same lands. Thus, the struggle between two power blocs also witnessed the struggle of various ethno-religious groups in either supporting the occupation, or resisting it by joining the nationalist resistance organized under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.

The thesis also portrayed the overlapping and shifting allegiances between global (Great Power imperialism), national (Ottoman state policy), and local (subject nationalisms) forces. It was claimed that the Turkish historiography singles out the role of Great Power imperialism and its support for the nationalist claims of the subject peoples of the Empire as the main cause behind the ethnic conflicts. In this account, as the Great Powers manipulated the identity claims of various minorities of the Empire to autonomy and secession, they worked to destroy the already existing inter-communal coherence of the Empire. The Armenians and Greeks had been rebelling against the Ottoman/Turkish state in order to carve out a national space for themselves since the 19th century and they were supported to a great extent by Great Power patronage in achieving their aims. Later, certain sectors of Kurds, Arabs, and Circassians accompanied them during World War I and the Independence War Years, by either siding with the loyalist opposition of the Sultan and the Istanbul government, or supported foreign occupation by siding with the Allies. In both senses, they constituted a threat to the Turkish nationalist movement, and for these reasons, the official Turkish historiography frames the Independence War as a struggle against the imperialist goals of the Allied Powers and their internal collaborators, or to put it in more official terms, against “external” and “internal” enemies.

Great Power involvement in Ottoman internal affairs, as stated in Chapter I, dated back to the late 18th century, when the interplay between the Great Powers over the interests of gaining profit and prestige, territorial expansion, the dismemberment of Ottoman territories, the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, and the containment of other states’ regional ambitions; although ranging from power to power and over time,

constituted what we know today as the Eastern Question.²⁸⁷ Within this framework, the Armenian Question was internationalized within the Berlin Treaty of 1878, when Britain took up the initiative of the Armenian reform process in the Ottoman Empire, in order to prevent Russian seizure of Turkish Armenia.

The question came up again on the agenda of Great Powers when after the Balkan Wars, Russia appeared in diplomatic circles as a protagonist of Armenian reform. Thus, in order to appease its own Armenian nationalists, by promising them to support the reform process in Turkish Armenia, and guided by other strategic concerns of extending its sphere of influence in Persia and Transcaucasia through control of Turkish Armenia, Russia became the champion of imposing the Armenian reform process.²⁸⁸ This situation, in return, created several crises between the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance over the issue of which power would assume control over the reform process. The CUP government, in return, tried to come up with its own reform plan in order to escape foreign intervention in the issue. The crisis was finally overcome when a final reform plan was outlined which called for the supervision of foreign experts, appointed by the Turkish government.

The outbreak of World War I altered the strategies of the Great Powers and the Ottoman state altogether. Alarmed by Russian-Armenian military collaboration in Eastern Anatolia, the CUP took radical measures of deportation and massacre targeted against the population of Armenians as a whole. In response to the deportations and large-scale massacre of Armenians on 24 May 1915, the Allied Powers issued a joint

²⁸⁷ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 12.

²⁸⁸ Roderic H. Davison, "The Armenian Crisis, 1912-14," *The American Historical Review* 53, no. 3 (April 1948), pp. 481-505.

declaration: “they will hold all of the members of the Ottoman government, as well as such of their agents, as are implicated, personally responsible for the Armenian massacres.”²⁸⁹ When World War I ended with the Ottoman surrender within the Moudros Treaty, all of the Allied Powers were committed to “punishing the Turks”, “kick them out of Europe” and “establish spheres of autonomy and development for the minorities under Turkish rule.”

France’s colonial strategy regarding the occupation of Cilicia and Armenian resettlement within its confines was shaped within this international diplomatic context. As outlined in Chapter 2, France’s colonial interests necessitated the support of keeping the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, as France had concern over protecting its economic interests and Catholic missionary orders vested in the Empire, especially in Syria and Lebanon. However, when throughout the initial stages of World War I, partitioning of the Empire became inevitable, France went through a negotiation process with Britain and arrived at the Sykes-Picot agreement, wherein Cilicia, along with coastal Syria and Lebanon was made a French occupation zone. It was in this context that the Armenian issue suddenly came onto the agenda of France, as during the Sykes-Picot negotiations, the French representative, Georges-Picot, also made an agreement with the representative of the Armenian National Union, Boghos Nubar, stating if Armenians would aid the Allies militarily against the Ottoman Empire, then in return, the French would aid them in establishing an autonomous Armenia in Cilicia. While one part of this agreement necessitated that Armenians would work as soldiers under French command, the other part necessitated that the French would carry out the repatriation of 100-120,000 Armenians who had been deported from Cilicia.

²⁸⁹ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, p. 137.

In Chapter 3, the French colonial aims and strategies after the occupation of Cilicia were discussed in detail. After World War I, France and Britain's plans concerning the partitioning of the Middle East went through an adjustment, as the declaration of the Wilsonian Principles called for the readjustment of their colonial aims in terms of the indigenous societies they wished to rule. In order to consolidate itself as a mandatory power, France had to create a majority of population that would favor French mandatory supervision. The project of repatriation of Armenians was carried out to this end. But the French aim here was not only the re-settlement of Armenians in Cilicia. As outlined by Sam Kaplan, Colonel Bremond's colonial envisioning of the region depended on reducing the number and power of the Turks whom he saw only as a foreign and oppressive governmental power from which the other minorities had to be rescued from their rule. Within this aim, Circassians, Kurds, and Alewi Arabs were given status and power within the local administrative system alongside Armenians. In addition, Bremond ordered the opening of schools that would teach in Circassian, Kurdish, and Arabic only and granted spheres of autonomy to these groups in various *sanjaks* of Adana. Overall, of course, France's communal policy rested on the aim of creating a population of Cilicia which would succumb to France's economic and geostrategic interests in the region.

However, France's communal policy broke down when with the onset of the war, and the Turkish success during the Maraş uprising, most of the Kurds, Circassians and Arabs who had initially collaborated with the French occupation switched sides to the Turkish resistance. At about the same time the Turkish resistance was being consolidated in Cilicia, near the end of 1919, French policy went through a shift from occupying Cilicia to granting it to Turkish sovereignty. As French officials began

negotiating with the Turkish officials to end hostilities in Cilicia, they also left the Armenians whom they had promised to defend against Turkish attacks, to their own fate. For this reason, most of the Armenians who had been repatriated to Cilicia by the Allies, had died during the war or were killed by the Turkish forces. The few survivors who were left fled back to Syria, before the French retreat.

This is actually why, as outlined in Chapter I, Levon Marashlian, alongside the genocide scholars, claimed that the Turkish nationalist movement shared the same mentality and ideology with the CUP concerning the Armenians, and therefore, the movement commanding Turkish and Kurdish brigands massacred the returning and remaining Armenians during the Independence War. As also pointed out by Erik Jan Zürcher, the Independence War was actually mobilized by the soldiers, bureaucrats, and notables who already had been affiliated with the CUP prior to and during World War I.²⁹⁰ As also discussed in Chapter 3, Mustafa Kemal and Ali Fuat Cebesoy were already present in Adana prior to the occupation, and they took steps to plan a resistance by contacting with the notables of Adana and hiding the ammunition of the demobilized army in safe places to be used later by insurgents.

The notables of Adana also started propagating to the public that they should resist the French occupation, because the Armenians would be resettled with them, and they would immediately start making trouble by employing violence, attacking the Muslim public and would take their farms and houses from them. But, this propaganda was only carried by politically conscious elite of Turks, who had gained their status mostly within their position within the CUP regime, and their propaganda found little reflection in Cilicia, at least during the initial stages of the occupation. It was only when

²⁹⁰ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Milli Mücadelede İttihatçılık* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003).

the returning Armenian legionnaires and brigands engaged in violent ‘vengeance attacks’ on the Muslim public, that the common people of Adana began fearing for their security. Besides, as outlined in Chapter 3, when the French administration took a variety of measures to alienate certain sectors of Turks and Muslims from French rule, the ‘opposition’ to French occupation could find appeal in Cilicia. As emphasized in this respect, the French colonial administration either dismissed from their posts or arrested and exiled most of the CUP officials those suspected of having had a part of the Armenian massacres, or who were suspected of resisting the French occupation. In addition, the law enforcement offices of the police, gendarmerie, and judicial system were filled with Armenians and Muslims who favored the French occupation. An arbitration commission was founded to grant back the Armenian properties from Turkish hands, and the French also took measures to intervene in the finance system of Cilicia, by trying to put back into effect the capitulations as well as doubling the taxes which were levied on the Muslim population. All these measures, in return, alarmed the Turkish/Muslim notables that the French occupation was merely a means to impoverish Turks and intimidate and terrorize them into leaving Cilicia.

During the British occupation of Antep, Maraş, and Urfa, however, the notables were reluctant to join the side of the Turkish resistance, as the British administration did not show any effort of intervening in the local affairs of the region or take steps to confiscate Armenian property from Turkish hands. The notables of this region did not send any delegates to the Sivas Congress, and ironically the heroic resistance of Maraş, Antep, and Urfa only started when the French began occupying the region. As discussed in the thesis, the notables of this region feared that the French administration would take the same measures as directed against the notables of Adana and any sign of French

hegemony in the region, as shown in the ‘flag incident’ met with resentment and reaction from the people of the region.

This thesis also focused on the various techniques the nationalist commanders sent to the region from Sivas applied to draw into the ranks of the nationalist resistance the notables and brigands who were working for the French occupation. In this sense, when the nationalist commanders arrived in the region, they firstly aimed to channel the already existing resentment and reaction to the French occupation in to the ranks of the nationalist resistance and secondly, the commanders also aimed to draw to the side of the nationalist movement the Turkish, Circassian, and Kurdish soldiers and notables who had collaborated with the French administration. It has been laid out in Chapter 3, how through methods of intimidation and material benefit Osman Tufan Paşa had managed to convince certain notables and officers to work for the nationalist forces. It has been pointed out that while some notables supported the French occupation throughout its end, some played both sides, while some shifted sides as in the case of Ali Saip. In all cases, notables were merely weighing their choice according to the social status and power offered by the occupation administration vis a vis the nationalist government. Hence, the same situation was valid also for the brigands operating in the region. While some Muslim brigands politicized around the effort of protecting their area of control against Armenian resettlement and brigand activity, and joined the nationalist forces to this end, some were using the opportunity offered by the war to ransack and rob more villages and notables. To this end, it has also been pointed out how brigands changed sides accordingly with their interests.

This is mainly why the claim of this thesis has been to focus on socio-economic and historical factors to explain inter-communal violence rather than the mere macro

policies of the ‘Great Powers’ or the ‘Ottoman/Turkish state’. In fact, as suggested throughout the thesis, that the alliances of ethno-religious groups both collaborating with the Great Powers and the Ottoman/Turkish state have not been rigid and stable, so the policies of the Great Powers and the Ottoman state. Hence, the violence of the Independence War years has been a long-term effect of the region’s history and the centralizing policies of the Ottoman state since the Tanzimat period. Accordingly, this thesis narrated in Chapter 2, the historical evolution of inter-ethnic relations in Cilicia with reference to the socio-economic transformations triggered by the Ottoman state’s Tanzimat reforms and the region’s incorporation into the world economy. It had emphasized that until the Tanzimat reforms, the region had been structured by a pastoral-nomadic economy where the rule of the central state was absent and settled and nomadic tribes shared the land with mutual relations of farming and trade. Later, in the second-half of the nineteenth century, Cevdet Pasha and his *Fırka-ı Islahiye* eliminated the rule of the derebeys, and instituted the administrative mechanisms of the central state in the region. In order to promote cotton agriculture, the tribes were forcibly settled and landed property was instituted. The organization of sedentary life around cotton production, in return, had paved the way for the region’s incorporation into the world economy, wherein both Muslims and Christians benefited from the economic growth generated by farming and trade options.

The inter-communal coherence of Cilicia was altered through the Young Turk Revolution and Counter-Revolution of 1909, as the notables of the ancient regime, ousted from power by the revolution, channeled their reaction to the new regime by targeting CUP’s Armenian “collaborators”. The variety of actors and the complexity of the reasons of this inter-communal violence between Muslims and Armenians within a

two-week time interval of April 1909 has been narrated in Chapter 2, while both the officials and notables of the ‘ancien regime’ who triggered the Counter-Revolution, the officials of the CUP who gained power through the Young Turk Revolution; and Armenian religious and political leaders have been blamed for instigating the violence. When the violence ended, an estimated number of 20-25,000 Armenians and 2,000 Muslims had been killed and a large number of Armenian shops, houses, and churches were destroyed. Thus, Armenian lives and property was once again targeted, when during the first two years of World War I, the CUP government ordered the deportation of Armenians from the region upon the fear of a possible Allied landing at the port of Iskenderun with the aid provided by Armenians. Moreover, rumors were around that Armenians were planning an armed rebellion in Zeytun to establish an Armenian state with British assistance. After the deportations, Armenian property was confiscated for Turkish/Muslim use.

Therefore, when after World War I, France occupied the region with the project of the repatriation of the Armenians and re-granting their property, inter-communal conflicts once again built on the pre-existing social and economic fault lines of the region. This time, the officials and notables affiliated with the CUP was targeted both by the French administration and the Armenian notables and militia. And when faced with the threat of their lives by the vengeance acts of the Armenian legionnaires and brigands, let alone their property and status, the officials and notables escaped Cilicia to join the ranks of the nationalist resistance. Concomitantly, the Independence War in Cilicia was fought against the Armenian resettlement process, and the ‘oppression and cruelty’ of the Armenian legionnaires and brigands to the Muslim public which became an inevitable reality in the daily lives of the Muslims of Cilicia.

Overall, I would suggest that the violence portrayed in this thesis was not solely the work of the Armenian legionnaires and brigands who have favored French patronage, as suggested by the Turkish nationalist historiography; or the work of Turkish and Kurdish brigands who favored the patronage of the Turkish nationalist movement, as suggested by the genocide scholarship. In fact, regular and irregular forces were employed both by French and Turkish parties, composed of Armenians, Turks, Kurds, Circassians, Arabs, each attempting to ‘hold their own’ against each other. Hence, the employment of paramilitary violence was a means both used by statist and localist forces, both by the notables and outlaws of the region, in order to negotiate their position against the changing central authority. This is mainly why Ryan Gingeras claims that the War of Independence was in fact a civil war without a clear, binary set of protagonists and antagonists.

The evidence suggested in this thesis proves this point as it portrays that different ethno-religious groups and different classes within these groups had swaying allegiances both to the foreign occupation and to the Turkish resistance, and suggest that neither ethnicity nor religion was the primary determining factor in the formation of the identity claims of this period. Class, material interest, and regional associations determined to a great extent the loyalties especially of the Muslim inhabitants of Cilicia during the Independence War Years, rather than the fight for Islam or the Turkish nation. This was also true for the Armenians of the region who had supported the French occupation from the beginning, upon the promise that the French occupying the region, would establish an autonomous mandate in Cilicia wherein the leading role would fall to the Armenian community. However, upon realizing that the French officials in Adana had their own colonial goals at the expense of Armenian claims, and when by the summer of 1920, the

shift in French policy towards conciliating with the Kemalists upon leaving Cilicia to Turkish sovereignty became evident, Armenians political parties and militia forces organized around preventing Turkish-French conciliation and safeguarding their presence in Cilicia. The declarations of independence, the violent attacks on Muslims, and the self-defense operations they engaged in Maraş, Antep, Urfa, and Haçin were to serve this end. Thus, the collaboration between the ‘imperialist’ occupiers and their Armenian ‘collaborators’ was not as stable as the official Turkish historiography portrayed it, neither their mutual aims.

For all these reasons, I would suggest that ethnic conflict has been centered around the competition over land and property. As the macro interventions of both the Ottoman/Turkish state and the Great Powers altered the class and patronage relationships and the property regime of the region, they also created new economic, political, and social spaces through which local groups could re-articulate and promote their own material interests vis a vis the changing central authority. Hence, the 1909 Adana Incidents can be evaluated in the light of the reaction of the Muslim public to the socio-economic empowerment of Armenians granted by the Tanzimat reforms, which through the settlement of tribes and constitution of private property around cotton production, enabled Armenians to acquire large landholdings and enhance their position in trade and industry in Cilicia. In 1915, the CUP government in Istanbul intervened in the local dynamics of the region by ordering the deportation of Armenians and confiscating their property. Hence, when the French arrived in the region with the claim of resettlement of Armenians and granting back their property, ethnic conflicts once again ensued over the competition over land and property. While certain sectors of Muslims and Turks strived not to lose the socio-economic power granted by the

deportations, Armenians and certain sectors of Muslims and Turks used the opportunities granted by the French occupation to enhance their social status and power vis a vis their local rivals. As emphasized in the introduction, mass violence occurred in Cilicia once again throughout the Independence War with the creation of new systems of patronage upon the renegotiation of older political and economic orders and the claims of various communal groups to take place in the new order.

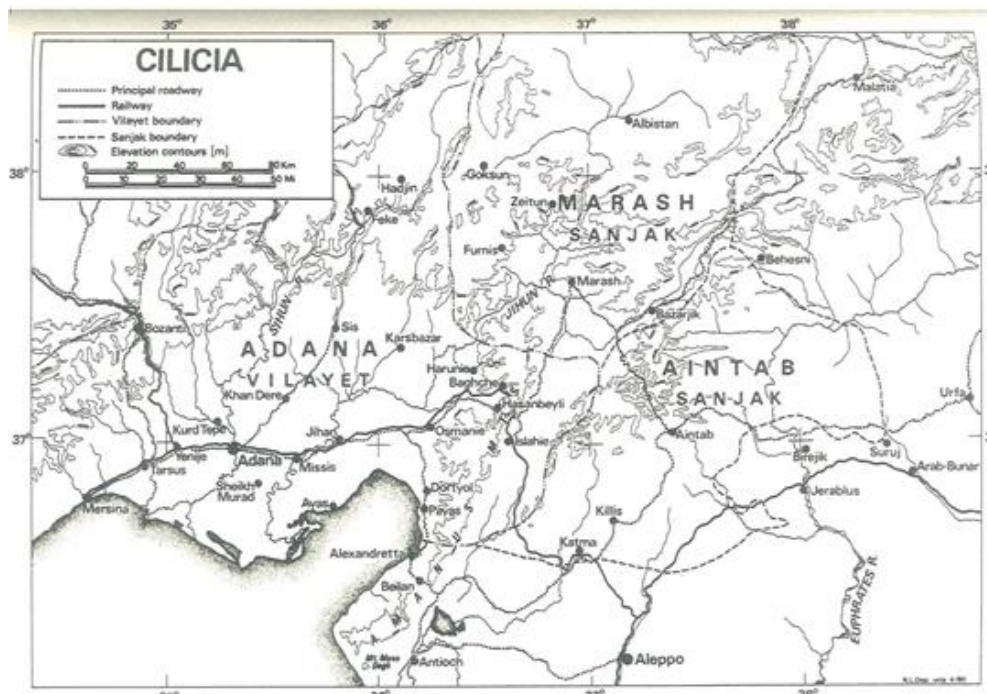
On the other hand, I would also like to point out the shortcomings of this thesis in arriving at its conclusions. I mostly relied on missionary reports, and memoirs of the Turkish/Muslim, French and Armenian actors involved in the conflicts of the period under study. However, for a more comprehensive and detailed account on the local conflicts of this period, an archival study both in the local and imperial centers of the province of Adana and Istanbul needs to be done. By means of archival study, both the relationship between the central government and local actors can be detected. Besides, the social and economic fault lines that actually triggered the local rivalries, that is the transformations in the land and property regime, and the political structure of the area under study needs to be verified from archival documents as well as local newspapers and publications. A research of this kind, I hope, will be the object of future studies.

APPENDIX

A. Maps and Tables



Map 1 - Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cilicia>



Map 2 - Source: Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, *Armenian Cilicia*, p. 501.



Map 3

Source: <http://northeastedition.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/sykespicot.jpg>

I.17.A. Osmanlı Nüfusu, 1914 (devam)

İdari Bölge	Müslümanlar	Rumlar	Ermeniler	Yahudiler	Rum Katolikler	Ermeni Katolikler	Protestanlar	Latinler	Süryaniler	Eski Suriyeliler
3. Adana	71.617	3.104	14.956	20	71	888	1.006	71	441	
Ceyhan	16.068	110	299	3		13	36	5	2	
Karaisali	27.771		20							
Yumurtalık	6.694	60	520							
A. Kozan	20.763		3.859			62	146			
Haçin	16.972		11.042		3	1.103	1.405			
Feke	13.170	1.879	2.308				632			
Kars	16.989	16	1.108				99			
B. Cebelibereket	13.193	16	675			4	80		1	
Dörtyol	15.495	272	6.672	3	8	8	366	11		
İslahiye	10.927		500							
Bağçe, Bulanık	14.643		3.691				600			
Hassa	8.810	33	770		1	269	285			
C. Mersin	27.844	2.273	790	35	73	42	68	1	23	
Tarsus	60.947	774	2.929	5	281	122	313	86		
Toplam, Adana	341.903	8.537	50.139	66	437	2.511	5.036	174	467	

Table 1

Source: Kemal Karpat, *Osmanlı Nüfusu (1830-1914)*, p. 210.

Summary of Repatriated Refugees
(January 1-July 20, 1919)

<i>Destination</i>	<i>From Aleppo</i>	<i>From Adana</i>	<i>From Toprak- kale</i>	<i>From Tarsus</i>	<i>From Mersin</i>	<i>From Other Places</i>	<i>Total</i>
Constantinople	5,001	1,245	40	--	2,000	317	8,603
Angora	1,696	453	37	243	400	385	3,214
Brusa	1,794	417	20	217	1,000	199	3,647
Smyrna	511	328	--	--	--	151	990
Konia	7,908	827	20	235	600	300	9,890
Adana	15,702	--	--	388	700	400	17,190
Aleppo & vicinity	3,991	345	508	251	--	1,425	6,520
Diarbekir	769	--	--	--	--	--	769
Aintab	5,607	--	--	--	--	--	5,607
Marash	7,987	--	--	--	--	--	7,987
Alexandretta	3,759	--	--	--	--	--	3,759
Various	6,255	--	--	--	--	--	6,255
TOTAL	60,980	3,615	625	1,334	4,700	3,177	74,431

Table 2 – Source: *Armenian Cilicia*, p. 455.

Armenian Refugees in Aleppo Awaiting Repatriation
(July-August 1919)

<i>Districts to Which Repatriation is Required</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Male Children</i>	<i>Female Children</i>	<i>Total</i>
Diarbekir & vicinity	170	260	230	880	1,540
Kastemuni, Boyabad	13	6	4	4	27
Everek & vicinity	111	207	233	177	728
Sivas	155	442	400	378	1,375
Afion-Karahisar	59	48	24	30	161
Kharpert & vicinity	79	318	199	219	815
Bordur & Sparta	12	13	16	12	53
Erzerum & vicinity	220	445	239	255	1,159
Adabazar	90	170	15	25	300
Smyrna	15	6	3	3	27
Banderma, Balekesir	72	150	40	48	310
Bitlis & vicinity	120	97	96	97	410
Aintab	714	452	150	312	1,628
Marash	207	215	182	135	739
TOTAL	2,037	2,829	1,831	2,575	9,272

Table 3- Source: *Armenian Cilicia*, p. 456.

B. Photo Album



Adana- The Stone Bridge-1920

Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos_3.htm



Adana- Left Bank-1920

Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos_3.htm



ADANA (Cilicie) - La Fontaine - Quartier Grec

Adana – The Fountain- 1920

Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos_3.htm



Mersin-1919

Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos.htm



French Soldiers in Cilicia – 1919
Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos.htm



General Dufieux and his staff – 1921
Source: http://www.eliecilicie.net/e_photos_2.htm



Mihran Damadian with Armenian Notables and Scouts- Mersin, 1921
Source: *Armenian Cilicia*, p. 494.

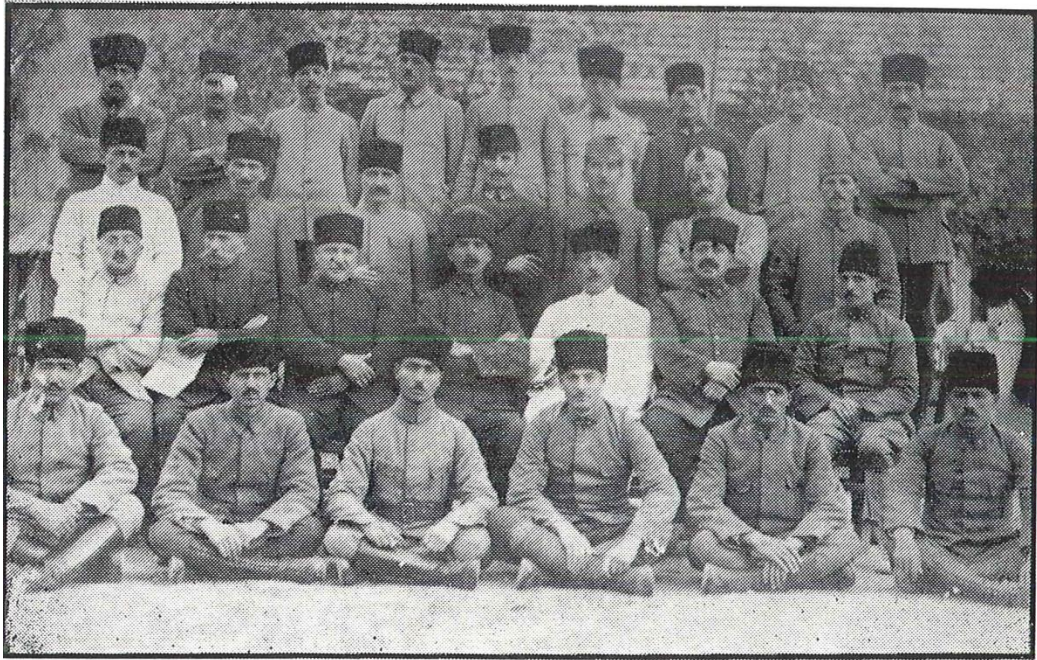


Armenians Soldiers and Commanders
Source: *Armenian Cilicia*, p. 26.



Turkish notables of Adana

Source: Yusuf Ayhan, *Mustafa Kemal'in Pozantı Kongresi ve Adana'nın Kurtuluşu* p. 68



Turkish soldiers

Source: *Mustafa Kemal'in Pozantı Kongresi ve Adana'nın Kurtuluşu*, p. 87.

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