Religion and Politics in the Making of American Near East Policy, 1918-1922

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This study deals basically with the combination of religion and politics in American foreign policy in the Near East in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. The diplomatic activities regarding the protection of American religious, educational, philanthropic institutions, the safety of American interests and missionary activities and the safeguarding of a future for the Ottoman Armenians are examined in two parts: the first dealing with the spread of Protestant missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire, and the second, coping with the US political struggle for protecting American political, religious and commercial interests during the Paris Peace Conference through an analysis of diplomatic correspondence in the US archives.

Introduction

Following the American religious revivalism in the Second Great Awakening period between the 1790s and the 1830s in New England, New Hampshire and rural Connecticut, not only many conservative Yale Seminary graduates started to become ministers to expand religious fundamentalism to the easternmost regions of the U.S., but also a bunch of regional missionary, benevolent and moral and religious reform associations were established to spread various walks of Protestantism towards the West. Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian missionaries organized countless missions for American Indians in the Western half of the United States during the period; the Baptists increased the total Church membership from approximately 65.000 in 1796 to 814.000 in 1844.[1]

Key words:

religion, politics, American foreign policy, the Near East, diplomatic correspondence, Ottoman Americans, First World War

In the beginning of the Awakening, the missionary activity in the U.S. looked like a civilizing mission of the middle class people of New England for the people who, the evangelical Christians thought, were culturally, socially and economically different from themselves. However, the missionary activity soon turned to an evangelical zeal, the aim of which was to provide religious services and spread Christianity to the other peoples of the world. The American religious revivalism developed with the help of the religious ideology that the US were the chosen as the territory for the Protestants to be settled and to spread their denominations to the non-Christian peoples around the world. The London Missionary Society established with the ideology of American Puritanism in 1795 to evangelize India was followed by societies, associations and institutions in New York in 1796, Connecticut in 1798 and in Massachusetts in 1799 for the expansion of revivalist Christianity by evangelical churches and schools. The merge between societies produced in 1826 the American Home Mission Society in New York; and American Baptist Home Mission Society in 1832 in Oregon and New York. In 1809 the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews had a primary goal of expanding Protestantism among the Jews in the Holy Land.[2] The missionary activity was strengthened by the establishment in 1810 of a Congregationalist-Presbyterian society, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). The Board funded by the US governments "civilization fund" worked not only to evangelize Native Americans but also organized missions to India, China, Ceylon and the Middle East to expand Protestantism as well as American commercial activities.

The US policy of expanding the American sphere of influence was basically founded on utilizing the civic, religious and philanthropic institutions in accordance with the American interests throughout the world. American political, economic and/or commercial interests were to be represented, furthermore developed worldwide by the missionary organizations, which in turn were to be protected by the US diplomatic activities and political protection. Another dimension of providing diplomatic security to American interests throughout the world was to offer protection to the communities that were available for carrying out the necessary functions of US policies abroad. Therefore, the minority communities here and there were attracted to the US interests by the Protestant missionary activities, which became one of the key instruments of American diplomacy.

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I. Religion: The Expansion of American Evangelism in the 19th and the Early 20th Centuries in the Ottoman Empire

The arrival of the US Protestant missionaries to the Middle East in 1820 added yet another component to the

religious mixture of the Ottoman Empire. The social organization of the Ottoman Empire was based on the recognition of each religious community within its place vis-à-vis the state, and Christian communities, whether Catholic or Orthodox, had their autonomy in their internal affairs as the Muslim and Jewish communities. The Catholic missionaries, the Jesuits and Franciscans, were active starting from the 16th century especially in the Levant until 1773 when the Jesuit order was dissolved. While the influence of Catholic missions continued to remain limited due to the conflict between Catholic and Gregorian sects, the Protestant missionary activity aimed to expand not only individual Protestant piety, but also to increase the Anglo-Saxon influence over the religion and culture of societies abroad. Therefore, Catholic churches and the Orthodox Patriarchate in the Ottoman Empire reacted against the work of Congregationalist missionaries and produced traditional churches' and Catholics' pressure over the state to limit (and if they could do so, to prevent) Protestant impact over their respective communities. However, the Protestant missionaries had more that religious aims; they had the greatest impact over Ottoman Christian populations.

The Americans presented Protestantism in a simplified manner excluding the rites, rituals and the use of charms and relics. In lieu of unintelligible language of the traditional churches, the American interpretation of Christianity was based on the use of the Bible in the vernacular language of the Middle Eastern communities. The missionaries excluded the use of traditional materials in the worship as well as de-emphasized the clerical hierarchy by ruling out the monopoly of traditional clergy in their churches. They started to evangelize the Nesturians, Greek Orthodox, Assyrians, and especially Gregorian and Orthodox Armenian communities. The priests, bishops, archbishops and patriarchs of the Ottoman communities considered the American Protestantism as a threat to their own power and authority over their own church members.[3] Despite the failure of American missionaries in converting Orthodox Christians to Congregational Protestantism due to the conflict between the clergies of each denomination, the Protestant Church was accepted as another "millet" (community) by the Ottoman authorities in 1850.[4] The ABCFM's evangelical activity in the Ottoman Empire produced, in 1906, 520 Protestants in Jerusalem, 956 in Damascus, 2128 in Beirut, 13.144 in Aleppo, a significant number of which comprised the converted Armenian population.[5]

The re-institution of Catholic missionary in the Ottoman Empire through opening up of the schools like Université Saint Joseph led the Protestant missionaries to concentrate their efforts on the emancipation of Catholic, Orthodox and Gregorian Christians of the Ottoman Empire from their own churches' pressures and on the liberation and "enlightenment" of these communities. Also these efforts coincided well with the Ottoman attempts at educational modernization mostly in French manner and in French medium, and the American Protestants started to focus on the field of education to challenge the Catholic missionaries' activities over the Ottoman Christians. The initial settlements of the American Protestant missionaries, Izmir, Istanbul and Beirut became educational centers for newly-established Protestant communities. The basic administrative and financial support for the American schooling and philanthropic activities in the Ottoman territories came from the American Evangelical societies. The ABCFM, the American Baptist Missionary Church, Bible Society, Presbyterian Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, American Tract Society, YMCA and the Episcopal Missionary Church were among the many to establish and rule American educational, benevolent and philanthropic societies in Turkey. The advantage of the

Protestant missionaries over other missionary activities stemmed from the fact that the American missionaries acted not only in the expansion of Protestantism but also the expansion of an American life-style through many institutions including hospitals and medical centers, orphanages, educational institutions for the adults, Sunday schools in their churches and many social activities like informal meetings and sermons.[6] The missionary activities were organized in three basic areas, education, publication and health services, each of which was carefully coordinated. The Protestant missionaries created a special system of education for the Ottoman Christian missionaries by opening up the first Protestant school in 1824 in Izmir. The number of the missionary schools was soon to reach 71 in 1860, 331 in 1900 and 450 in 1913. The number of students in Protestant educational institutions rose from 2742 in 1860 to 25.922 in 1913.[7] The Protestant education was extended to the Ottoman Christians, basically to the Ottoman Armenians, for several reasons: the missionary education at the primary and secondary levels required teachers for higher missionary education and local clerics for Protestant churches. But, more important than that, the missionary education was to spread Protestantism and a spiritual way of life among the local communities as well as to respond their demands for upbringing educated and qualified youngsters who would have the word in the national development of their communities. The first higher education institution, the Robert College, though not directly belonged, but strongly related to the ABCFM, was established in Istanbul in 1863, followed by the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut in 1866.[8] These schools were managed by a Board of Directors, composed by the businessmen, US and British consuls, and Protestant missionaries and the members of local Armenian churches; ruled by the local Armenian Protestants as in the case of the Central Turkey College and the Armenia (then Euphrates) College, and served mostly to the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire.[9] The American Protestant missionaries were definitely successful in spreading literacy among the Ottoman Christians. Almost half of the immigrants (46.7 %) from Syria to the US between 1899 and 1910 had their education in Protestant missionary schools. In 1912, there were 133.100 students in Armenian schools ruled by the Armenian Patriarchate with the help of the American missionary schools.[10]

The missionary activities and the American concern for the protection of the Ottoman Armenian community became basic obstacles in naturalizing the relations between the US and modern Turkey after the First World War. Added to the already available difficulties were the works of the Armenian groups established in the US for furthering the Armenian cause in the Ottoman territories. The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief was established in 1915 for raising funds for the refugees in the Anatolian countryside. The Committee adopted itself to the missionary activities and carried out a propaganda campaign favoring the Armenians, disfavoring the Turks, and protecting American commercial and philanthropic interests in the Near East. Supported by the former US ambassador to Istanbul, Henry Morgenthau Sr., the Committee became the Near East Relief to serve the Armenians and to advance American and Armenian causes in Turkey.[11] In the same period, some US-based organizations such as Armenia America Society and American Committee for the Independence of Armenia were working to secure an American mandate over the Ottoman Armenians, and if possible Turkey, while the diplomatic activities were carried out to protect the economic and commercial rights and privileges of American individuals and companies in Turkey. The American policies were made in the post-War period in such a mixture of concerns.

II. Politics: Armenian Question and the U.S. Near Eastern Policy

Diplomatic relations between the United States and the Ottoman Empire, which started with a comprehensive trade agreement in 1830, were interrupted on April 20, 1917 with the U.S.' declaration of war on Germany, the Ottoman partner in the World War I. However, the U.S. did not proclaim war against the Ottoman Empire because of a vigorous concern of protecting the interests of American commercial enterprises, and missionary, educational and philanthropic investments in the Empire. Even after the declaration of war against Germany, the U.S. policy-makers were in favor of maintaining good relations with the Ottoman Empire. The former ambassador to Istanbul, Morgenthau met with Lansing, the Secretary of State, and convinced him that Turkey might reach a separate agreement with the Allies because of bitter disagreement between Turkey and her German masters. President Wilson, approving the idea of maintaining the relations, decided to send Morgenthau to Palestine to investigate the situation of the Ottoman Jews. Since Morgenthau's mission required the participation of Jewish leaders, the British Government was asked for the participation of Dr. Chaim Weizmann in the mission. However, Lord Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary did not want to solve the Palestinian problem without complete defeat of the Ottoman Empire and gave Weizmann the duty of convincing Morgenthau to abandon his investigation project.[12] The British, depending on their secret agreements with France, Italy and Russia over the partition of the Ottoman Empire during the war, naturally were not in favor of the U.S. intervention in the Near Eastern question.[13]

After the Axis lost the War, it was decided by the Mudros Armistice on October 30, 1918 that all Ottoman possessions in Arabia, Syria, Iraq and Africa were to be placed under Allied military control, the Straits were to be open and all fortifications to be occupied by the Allies, who also had the right to occupy any strategic point against any threat to Allied security.[14] In fact, in the two weeks after the Armistice, Istanbul was under the *de facto* occupation of the Allied fleet of sixty vessels conducted by Admiral Calthrope, representative of the Allies in Mudros.

On November 30, 1918, in the immediate aftermath of the Armistice, the U.S. Secretary of State Robert Lansing instructed Lewis Heck, Secretary of American Embassy in Switzerland to return to Istanbul as a commissioner in order to gather information for the State Department, but without any official relations with the Ottoman government.[15] On August 28, 1919, Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol was appointed as American High Commissioner to conduct the consular -but not the diplomatic- relations of the States from the American Embassy in Istanbul. Therefore, the Swedish Embassy has discontinued to manage American affairs with the Ottoman officialdom[16], since the new American High Commissioner was to conduct the official business under the protection of the Allied military and naval forces occupying the Ottoman capital.

At the end of the War, the Allies were to implement their plan of the partition of the Ottoman Empire, so-called the sick man of Europe. President Wilson was one of the head figures of this plan with his famous address on January 8, 1918, the twelfth point of which was dealing directly with granting sovereignty to the Turks as well as autonomous development and self-determination to the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects. His

ideas were based on his vision of getting the Turks out of Europe including the capital city of the Empire. He was suggested by a report of the American Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference on Jan 21, 1919, stating that an international state should be established in Constantinople under the governance of the Great Powers, an Armenian state in the Eastern Anatolia under the U.S. mandate and a Turkish state in central Anatolia under the mandatory principles and without any power of governance.[17] In fact, for the American government, not the Turkish question, but the establishment of an independent Armenian state had the greatest importance in making the peace. In his message to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace at Paris, Secretary of State Robert Lansing stated on August 16, 1919 that should the Turkish authorities not take the necessary measures to prevent any massacres and atrocities by Turks, Kurds and other Muslims against Armenians, there would be a complete alteration of the condition of peace and the absolute dissolution of the Empire.[18] In fact, Professors Albert H. Lybyer and Colin Day, of the American Peace Commission, as well as Colonel T.E. Lawrence, were in favor of an American mandate over the Straits and the future Constantinopolitan state, with the hope of having an Armenian mandate.

The British opinion in the Peace Conference was in complete agreement with President Wilson's ideas. The British defended the implementation of the Fourteen Points of the US President, suggesting that it was required to recognize Armenia under one of the Great Power's mandate, Thrace and Smyrna under Greek control, and the separation of Cilicia, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia from the Empire. Each state's rights of self-determination were to be recognized and each were to be independent under certain limitations of Great Power supervision in the name of Conference and, ultimately, of the League of Nations. Additionally, Zionist Jews and Armenians were to have special consideration because of their unique situation and numerical strength in the Middle East countries. Since the Armenian mandate was to promote justice between the nationalists, to reconstruct the country and to establish political institutions for the independence, the Peace Conference itself should have intervened in the Armenian national state.[19]

At the Paris Peace Conference, on January 29, 1920, the British delegation circulated a draft resolution stating that Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Arabia must be completely detached from the Turkish Empire because the Ottoman authorities misruled and mistreated the subject peoples and the Armenians.[20] Despite the British declaration for the Armenian cause to attract the U.S. government's attention, for the British, all the questions of the Near East, in fact, were to be taken into account as a whole. Not only the Armenian case, but the problems of Arab territories of the Empire and the delicate situation of Palestine were well outlined in the British statement:

"The problems of Palestine are parallel in several respects to problems already discussed in relation to other Middle Eastern countries: (a) in Palestine, as in Thrace, the Straits, the Smyrna district and Armenia, the population is mixed and has not a common will; (b) though the great majority of the population is Arab, the Jewish agricultural colonist in Palestine like Armenians and Greeks in the areas above mentioned, are a minority which, on account of the historic past, its superior vigor and ability, the barbarous methods by which its numbers have recently been reduced, and its reservoirs of potential immigrants, from which its losses can be made good, is certain of a future which entitles it to consideration out of proportion to its present numbers; (c) the Christian, Jewish and Moslem Holy places in Palestine, like the waterway in the zone of the Straits,

constitute a world interest of such importance that it should take precedence, in case of conflict, over political aspirations of the local inhabitants.[21]

Lloyd George, the head of the British delegation, strongly supported that the Conference could best deal with the difficulties of Near Eastern problems through mandates conferred on single powers. However, President Wilson had indicated in the first draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations, on January 10, 1919, that territories formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire should be placed under some kind of trust under the projected League of Nations and not being the subject of annexation by any power.[22] The U.S. President did not share entirely the views of the British delegation and felt that it was not the appropriate time to discuss the partition of the Empire. Although there were rumors of an American mandate, President Wilson was not sure whether he would be able to convince the American people to accept one. It was suggested that American troops should even occupy Constantinople or Mesopotamia, but it was evident that they could not do so, since the U.S. was not at war with Turkey. Therefore, it would be unwise for the U.S. to accept any form of mandate until they knew how it was intended to work.[23]

At the Conference, the Armenian delegation was led by Mr. Aharonian, representing the Armenian Republic, and Boghos Nubar Pasha representing the group called National Delegation of all Armenians, who presented their case of independent Armenian state on February 26, in front of the Council of Ten. The Armenians demanded Cilicia including the Marash and Adana Sanjaks with the port of Alexandretta on the Mediterranean, the port of Trabzon on the Black Sea, in addition to six eastern vilayets of Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, Diyarbakir, Harput and Sivas. Also included in the Armenian plan was the territory of the Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus, Erivan, southern Tiflis, southwestern Elisabetpol (Gümrü) and Kars, with the exception of northern Ardahan. They also demanded that it was necessary to place Armenia under the joint protection of the Powers with a twenty year mandate once it was liberated from the Ottoman Empire.[24] However, for the Council, the problems of Armenia were complicated by the fact that for generations the Armenians had been scattered, mostly by their commercial pursuits, to the far-flung corners of the Ottoman Empire and even the world, and there was hardly any region in which they constituted a clear-cut majority of the population.[25]

The Ottoman Delegation was also granted a hearing by the Supreme Council at the Paris Peace Conference on June 23, 1919. Instead of an Armenian independence, the establishment of the Constantinopolitan state and the partition of the Empire by the Allies, the Ottoman demands were focused on the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Empire and the sovereignty of the Sultan. The protection of the rights of minorities would be under the constitutional form of government in accordance with the Wilsonian principles. Also demanded were the appointments of American supervisors to governmental offices and ministries in the capital and an American Inspector-in-Chief in every province in the Empire. As for the Armenian Republic at Erivan, if this state was to be recognized by the Entente, the Ottoman delegation was going to discuss *ad referendum* the frontier line to separate the new Republic from the Empire. In addition, Damad Ferid Pasha stated in the memorandum that the Imperial government was ready to grant all facilities in its power to the Armenians who wished to expatriate themselves to establish the Republic. However, as regards to those who might have wished to stay in Turkey, they were to enjoy, like the other minorities, free cultural, economic and moral developments. The Ottoman government,

nevertheless, could not have accepted any dismemberment of the Empire, or any mandate of the Great Powers, neither in the Arab territories, nor in parts of so-called Armenia in Asia Minor.[26]

It was obvious that President Wilson wished to obtain a mandate for Armenia and an American high commissioner had been appointed. He asked for part of Cilicia and eliminated the option of accepting another mandate for Istanbul since this was one of the greatest problems of European powers.[27] By this date, in addition, the Supreme Council of the League of Nations met under the French Premier Clemencau at Paris on January 19, 1920 agreed that the government of Armenian state had been recognized as the *de facto* government. However, the acting Secretary of State, Polk notified Mr. Wallace, the U.S. ambassador in France, that the U.S. government had reached no definite conclusions as to the recognition of the Republic of Armenia, since the relations of the United States toward the Armenian state to be created under the Turkish peace treaty have been under consideration.[28] This decision to not recognize the Armenian state by the U.S. was sent by Mr. Wallace to Colonel William N. Haskell, Allied High Commissioner appointed to represent the United States, Great Britain, France and Italy in Armenia. However, since it was believed by the U.S. government that such a recognition would not be perceived by the Moscow government as the beginning of an attempt to dismember Russia, the new Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby sent a dispatch to the Representative of the Armenian Republic on April 23, 1920, stating that by the direction of the President, the government of the United States recognized, as of that date, the *de facto* government of the Armenian Republic in Erivan.[29] This action was taken, however, with the non-recognition of territorial frontiers which were subjects for later delimitations. This future arrangement of the frontiers was addressed on April 27, 1920, to President Wilson by the Supreme Council of the League of Nations as an appeal to accept the mandate for Armenia, including the question of the boundaries of the new state. For the Supreme Council, since the President was already familiar with the cause of "larger Armenia" , there remained on the shoulders of Mr. Wilson the solution of the question of what portions of the vilayets of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and Trabzon, still in the possession of Turkish authorities, could have properly and safely been added to the existing Armenian state of Erivan, and, what means of access to the sea should have been provided in order to ensure to the new Armenia a self sufficing national existence.[30] In other words, it remained to be settled how the exact boundaries on the west and south should have been inserted in the peace treaty with Turkey. The boundaries of Armenia on the northwest, north and northeast were expected to be solved by mutual agreements with the adjoining states of Georgia and Azerbeijan which were also recently recognized by the League of Nations in the same date with the recognition of Armenia.

Irrespective of the mandate and the boundaries, there were additional considerations which the Supreme Council wished to call to the attention of the U.S. government. Central to these additional issues was the promise and assurance of external aid in order to provide security and existence of the new Armenian state. Therefore, the United States was asked to participate in the aid program to Armenia as well as to undertake military responsibilities for its security. Although the American Relief Administration under the chairmanship of Colonel Haskell had already delivered ninety two thousand tons of flour and one hundred and eight thousand tons of food and supplies to Armenia and opened forty hospitals and seventeen orphanages, according to the Council, its immediate needs were "the

provision for the military forces required to defend it against external attack and provision for the financial means that will enable it to constitute an orderly administration and to develop its own economic resources".[31] By this date, arms and ammunition have already been provided by the Allied Powers to the existing forces possessed by Armenian Republic of Erivan, however, this was not enough to occupy and administer territories belonging to Turkey and to enforce the treaty of San Remo in making Turkish territories more accessible to Armenian arms. Therefore, the Supreme Council asked from the United States government the possibilities to raise volunteer troops in America as well as to provide aid, credits and loans. Although President Wilson expressed his willingness to undertake to act as mediator for the Armenian boundaries[32], the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker rejected sending American troops to Armenia. In his memorandum on June 2, 1920, depending on the report of General Harbord, Chief of the American Military Mission to Armenia, it was stated that it was impracticable to maintain in Armenia American forces of occupation estimated to be approximately 27.000, as to insure the protection of that state against invasions by force.[33] In fact, it was the right time for the U.S. to expect the risk of attack from the Bolshevik forces. By this time, a Soviet army of approximately 70.000 had been advancing southward through the Caucasus, had recently occupied Baku, and had entered Russian Armenia.

The Sèvres Treaty between Turkey and the Allies was signed by the Ottoman representatives on August 10, 1920. As was stated earlier, the main reason of this delay for Turkish peace was due to disputes over Ottoman lands relinquished to Russia and the future of the Armenian state. In order to break the deadlock over the boundaries of Armenia, the British ambassador Geddes sent a dispatch on August 6, 1920 to the Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, asking whether the President's decision as to the boundaries of Armenia might be expected in the near future since this question has become a matter of urgency owing to the imminent signature to the peace treaty with Turkey.[34] Although President Wilson did not draw the borderline between Turkey and Armenia before the signature of the Treaty, the long awaited Sèvres Treaty provided the Allies with their shares and spheres in the Ottoman territories, as well as giving the Armenians and the other subject peoples of the former Ottoman Empire everything they demanded in terms of independent statehood. While Part III, Section 6, Article 88 of the Treaty remarked that Armenia was recognized as an independent and free state by the Sultan's government, Article 89 stated that

"Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access for Armenia to the sea, and as to the demilitarization of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the said frontier"[35].

The Treaty did not mention anything about an American mandate over Armenia since the Congress had not accepted it because the reports of both King-Crane Commission and General Harbord's Commission regarding a greater U.S. mandate for Anatolia, Rumelia (Thrace), Constantinople and Transcaucasia were to bring the biggest share of the postwar burdens to the United States. In fact, the Harbord Report provided factual background for an American decision on the Armenian mandate proposal. This report, dated October 16, 1919, after examining the history and current status of Armenia favored the mandate with thirteen points of reservation. The Report emphasized the importance of

mandate for humanitarian reasons, however, it stressed that the estimated cost of $ 756.014.000 for a five year period was a strong factor against the mandate. Harbord's recommendations came to the White House just at the time when President Wilson was having his fight with the Senate over the entrance of the United States to the League of Nations and the ratification of the Versailles Treaty. Therefore, he could not have much influence on the U.S. decision on accepting the mandate.[36] In his letter on December 1, 1920 to Paul Hyman, President of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva, President Wilson wrote that the invitation to accept a mandate for Armenia had been rejected by the Senate and although the fate of the Republic of Armenia had always been a great interest to the American people, he was unable to authorize any material contribution or to employ military forces for the relief of Armenia without the approval of the Senate, whose actions could not have been forecasted by the Executive.[37] The assumption of mandate over Istanbul and Armenia was, therefore, not favored by the Congress, a point, which was clearly explained later by Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State in the Harding and Coolidge administrations between 1921-1925. For him, this "would directly and immediately involve this [the U.S.] government in one of the most vexing political and territorial problems of the world -the storm center of historic rivalries and bitter contests".[38] In fact, it is not wrong to say that the Wilson administration was right not to accept the mandate on the troublesome Turkish territories since the nationalist movement organized in Anatolia against the Allied occupation of Turkey was resisting any similar aggression of the Armenians in the eastern provinces as well. Like the attitudes of the Turkish nationalists against the British, French, Italian and Greek forces in the central, southern and western Anatolia, the feeling against Armenia gaining any territory in the eastern provinces was most bitter and stronger than ever before. No one in the High Commissions in Constantinople believed that the Turks would evacuate any territory ceded to Armenia and would have to be forced to make such evacuation.[39]

The Turkish nationalists under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal started to organize military resistance and wage war against the Allied occupation in order to succeed in reversing the defeat of the World War and avoid partition. But Ankara carried out a successful diplomatic campaign along with the military fighting. The military victories in the years 1919 to 1920 could never have been gained without an astute foreign policy, which paralleled military campaigns, aided them and won international recognition for the results of the military advances. The bases of foreign policy were determined by the creation of independent and sovereign Turkish state, a commitment to the maintenance of territorial unity and complete abolition of all such extraterritorial rights in matters of justice, taxation and economic exploitation, as foreigners had enjoyed, and remarkably abused, under the Ottoman Empire. Already from the days of the Sivas Congress in September 1919, which established the Representative Committee of the new nationalist administration and the Association for the Defence of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia as the bases not only for the national struggle against imperialism but for the future independent Turkish state, it was proclaimed that all Turkish territory inside the Mudros Armistice frontiers was regarded as an indivisible whole within which no foreign intervention should be allowed, nor any independent Greek or Armenian state. The Muslim majority, 'a veritable fraternity', would grant no special status to non-Muslim minorities such as the former Ottoman system had permitted. No mandate or protectorate over Turkey would be considered. Foreign scientific or economic assistance would be accepted only

if it were untainted with imperialism. The national will must control the Sultan's government, which should have convoked a National Assembly.[40] Though the Sivas Declaration still considered the Istanbul government of Sultan Mehmet VI to be the lawful one, it rejected Istanbul's policy of acquiescence and submission to the Allied demands. Mustafa Kemal later explained in his famous Speech in 1927 that his aim had already from the beginning extended to the creation of a new and independent Turkish state, since continued allegiance to the Sultan's government was unacceptable to him.[41] Therefore, Mustafa Kemal tried to force his foreign policy upon the new Istanbul Cabinet of Ali Riza Pasha, which was much more sympathetic to the nationalists than the former cabinet of Damad Ferid, who had been accused of subservience to the Allied, especially British, leadership.

Highly influential on the Turkish foreign policy, Mustafa Kemal also gained a clear nationalist majority in the elections for the new parliament held in December 1919. Mustafa Kemal was elected as the deputy from Erzurum, however, he hesitated to go to Istanbul to attend parliamentary meetings because of the danger to him both from the Sultanate and the Allies. Despite this, the new Istanbul Parliament led by Rauf [Orbay], a close friend of Kemal and a member of the Representative Committee since the beginning, voted and confirmed the nationalist demands accepted in the Sivas Congress as the National Pact. The Allies were thus notified of the Turkish demands which, in Kemal's view, had to serve as the basis for peace negotiations.[42] The Pact emphasized complete -territorial, political, judicial and economic- independence; nothing like the capitulations would be accepted. There has been no mention now of foreign assistance as there had been at Sivas. The territorial claims extended from Armistice frontiers to include Kurdish areas as well, while plebiscites were demanded for Kars, Ardahan, Batum and Thrace. Only regions with an Arab majority were specifically excluded. Minorities in Turkey would have no special privileges beyond the rights commonly recognized in the minority treaties of the peace settlement. If Istanbul, seat of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, were secure, regulations on traffic through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles could be made jointly by Turkey and other interested parties. These principles were declared by the National Pact as the minimum conditions for a just and lasting peace.[43]

In fact, the British occupation of Istanbul on March 16, 1920, the recognition of Armenian state in the Turkish territories, and the partition of the Empire by the Allied statesmen at San Remo, were the main reasons for the creation by the Turkish nationalists of the Government of the Grand National Assembly (GNA) in Ankara on April 23, 1920. The Assembly, in the next day of its opening, elected Mustafa Kemal as the President of the GNA and also as the head of the Council of Ministers elected by the GNA. The Government did not declare the Sultan deposed, but called him an Allied prisoner whose acts were, therefore, invalid. Moreover, the decisions that sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the nation and the Grand National Assembly is the sole representative of nation were taken. Thus, the GNA implied by these declarations that it never recognized any agreement previously made by the Sultan's government with the Allies. From this time on, the GNA assumed the responsibility to act on behalf of the nation, to declare war and to sign peace, to conclude treaties and to receive diplomats, despite the Allied recognition of Istanbul governments. Allied Powers were again officially notified that the GNA alone represented the people of Turkey and that it would preside over the present and future destiny of Turkey so long as the unjustified occupation of Istanbul continued.[44] In addition, the National government in Ankara that represented the vast majority of the Turks never recognized the Sèvres Treaty signed by

the Sultan's Istanbul government, and was fighting against the Allies in the West and the Armenians in the East. The Armenian government declared war on Turkey on October 10, 1920 with the assistance of Georgia, however, during the fall and winter of 1920 Turkish troops with the help and cooperation of its only ally, Moscow, excluded all Western Powers and Armenians from the settlement in the area, despite the rivalry between Ankara government and the Soviet Union over the control of Eastern Anatolia. Azerbaijan was by then Soviet-dominated, and the last British troops had evacuated Batum in July. Upon the rejection of Ankara's ultimatum by Armenia regarding the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the region, General Kazým Karabekir, an outstanding Turkish military leader, delivered an attack from Erzurum in late September that swept through Kars, Ardahan and Alexandropol in six weeks. These had been centers of the American Near East Relief Organization working for aid, funds, independence and statehood for the Armenians. Moscow then engineered a coup to capture the Armenian government, which was wholeheartedly accepted by the Armenians to forestall any further Turkish advance. General Karabekir signed Ankara's first international treaty at Alexandropol on December 2, 1920, which returned Kars to Turkish control and again made possible direct land connection with the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile President Wilson completed his task of drawing the frontier between Turkey and Armenia with the creation of the greater Armenia, which included Trabzon as the major sea port, and Erzurum, despite its overwhelming Turkish majority.[45] However, before the opening of negotiations between the Armenian government at Erivan and the nationalist government at Ankara, and even before the appointment by Wilson of a mediator between the Armenians and the Kemalists, it was officially declared on December 2, 1920 that the Armenian Republic at Erivan joined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Armenian Cabinet formed a week before was overthrown and a new Armenian government was formed with a joint committee of Bolshevik commissaries and the members of the Armenian nationalist Dashnak Party and was immediately recognized by Moscow. During the peace conference between Turkey and Armenia at Kars, the local government at Alexandropol was made Bolshevik and the Armenian frontier towns of Foulkspril and Delijan were also occupied by the Russian troops.[46] The cooperation between the Turkish nationalists and the Russian Bolsheviks, therefore, had led to the abrogation of the Western plans for the creation of an independent Armenian state under the U.S. mandate to act as a buffer zone between Russia and the Middle and Near East on the one hand, and between Turkey and the central Asian Turkic states on the other, in spite of the existence of Soviet republics themselves, being such a buffer for the latter. As a result of the correspondence between the acting Secretary of State, Davis, the U.S. ambassador in France, Wallace and the President of the Council of the League, Hymans, it was decided not to send the Armenian boundary decision of President Wilson to the press for publication.[47]

During 1921 and 1922, the war of Turkish nationalists continued in Asia Minor against foreign occupation and especially against the Greek advance moving through Central Anatolia, coming as close as 70 kilometers to Ankara. The friendly relations between Ankara and the Russian Socialist Federated Socialist Republic were concluded on March 16, 1921 with the signature of Treaty of Friendship which confirmed Turkey's northeastern border arrangements.[48] Through this treaty, the Kemalist government of Ankara was strengthened against the Allies diplomatically, and with the Soviet logistic and financial assistance, militarily. At

this juncture, interesting strategic developments started to divide the Allies into separate camps. France concluded a separate Agreement for the Promotion of Peace with Ankara[49], providing the withdrawal of French forces from occupied Cilicia behind the Syrian borders, and a special administrative regime for the district of Alexandretta. This allowed Ankara to pull the Turkish troops from the Cilicia region and to transfer them to a more heated war zone in Western Anatolia. In August 1922, the reinforced Turkish army defeated the Greeks and expelled them from Turkish territory within less than a month. Kemalist Turkey thus won the war which helped lead not to the restoration of the former sick man of Europe, but to the establishment of the Republic and the survival of the Turkish people as an independent nation.

While the Turkish national liberation war was progressing in Anatolia, the Armenian question played a prominent role in the United States' 1920 presidential campaign and became an important part of the foreign policy of the Harding presidency until his death in August 1923[50]. The Republicans were against accepting a mandate and the Democrats were in favor of every possible and proper aid for Armenian autonomy and independence. As was the case for Wilson, church groups, missionaries and philanthropic associations, along with the active Armenian lobby formed by the American Armenian societies, loaded the Harding administration with petitions on behalf of the emancipation and liberation of Armenia, a pressure which embarrassed particularly Charles E. Hughes, since he was once the head of the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia. However, the American concern for the Armenian state and people at the political level was replaced by the worries for the protection of American interests, the US missionary activities and particularly by the possibility of future access to Mesopotamian oil. The latter concerns, namely securing oil concessions in Mesopotamia added more to the intermingling of U.S. religious and political interests in the beginning of the 1920s, which forced the new administration to concentrate its attention more on the Middle East, in order to gain a possible access to Mesopotamia by defending the rights and status of American religious, educational, philanthropic and missionary activities.

Notes:

[1] Bret E. Carroll, The Routledge Historical Atlas of Religion in America, N.Y. and London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 62-65.
[2] Bruce A. Masters, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: the Roots of Sectarianism, Port Chester, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 147-148.
[3] Robert L. Daniel, "American Influences in the Near East before 1861", American Quarterly, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring 1964), p. 77.
[4] The social organization of the Ottoman Empire based on the denominational representation of Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox and Roman Catholic communities provided a vacuum for the Great Powers of Europe to intervene in internal affairs of the Empire. Russian Empire declared itself as the protector of Orthodox community while the French played its card for the Catholic, mostly Maronite population in Greater Syria. The acceptance of the Protestant "millet" by the Ottoman Empire gave a big chance to the British to enjoy the role of the big brother of the Protestant community, since the US hesitated to interfere in the social and political affairs in another country in such a remote distance. Another reason for the British supremacy over Armenian Gregorian and Protestant populations of the Ottoman Empire was the American ideology of religious liberty and the defense of American missionaries the separation of the state and church. For a detailed analysis of the relations between the state and Ottoman millets, and Great Power intervention in the Ottoman affairs, see: Enver Z. Karal, Osmanli Tarihi, Vol. V: Nizam-i Cedit ve Tanzimat Devirleri, 1789-1856, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1947; Matthew S. Anderson, The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations, N.Y.: St. Martin's, 1966; Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the Functioning of a Plural Society, N.Y.: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982.
[5] Masters, Ibid., p. 151.
[6] Seçil Karal Akgün, "Mormon Missionaries in the Ottoman Empire", Turcica: Revue d'Etudes Turques, Vol. 28 (1996), p. 347.
[7] Uygur Kocabasoglu, "Osmanli Imparatorlugunda 19. Yuzyilda Amerikan Yuksek Okullari", Bahri Savci'ya Armagan, Ankara: Mulkiyeliler Birligi Vakfi Yayinlari, 1988, pp. 305-306.
[8] Ibid. p.306.
[9] The details of the missionaries' educational activities and their school system are out of the limit of this study. For more information see: Uygur Kocabasoglu, Kendi Belgeleriyle Anadolu'daki Amerika: 19. Yüzyilda Osmanli Imparatorlugu'ndaki Amerikan Misyoner Okullari, Istanbul: Arba Yayinlari, 1989; Secil Karal Akgun, Amerikali Misyonerlerin Ermeni Meselesinde Rolu, Ataturk Yolu, Vol. 1, No. 1 (May 1988), pp. 1-12; Omer Turan, "Missionary Activities in Turkey From the Ottoman to the Republican Period" in The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization, Vol.I, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayinlari, 1999, pp. 513-519.
[10] Masters, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World, Ibid, p.151. Comparing the number of students in the other Ottoman schools may give a better opinion about the functions of American missionary activities: In the Empire in British Protestant schools had 12,800 students in 1912. The government schools had 81.226 while the schools under the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople had 184,568 students, the French schools had 59.414, and Russian educational institutions had about 10.000 pupils. Ibid, p.151.
[11] Robert L. Daniel, "The Armenian Question and American-Turkish Relations, 1914-1927", The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. 46, No.2 (Sep. 1959), pp. 254-255.
[12] Frank Jewett, "Why We Did Not Declare War on Turkey", Current History, V.14 (April-September 1921), pp. 989-990.
[13]Kamuran Gürün, The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed. N.Y.: St. Martin's Press, 1985, pp. 240-241; for the texts of the secret agreements between the Allies, see also, J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record, 1914-1956, V. II, Princeton, N.J.: van Nostrand, 1956, pp. 11-12, 18-22, 23-25.
[14]Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record, Ibid, pp. 36-37.
[15] Metin Tamkoç, "The Question of the Recognition of the Republic of Turkey by the United States", The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, 1960, I, Ankara: SBF Yayinlari, 1961, pp. 94.
[16]The Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1920, V. I (Washington, 1936), pp. 210-218; the Correspondence between the Department of State and the Swedish Embassy at Istanbul. The Papers will be mentioned, from now on, with the abbreviation of FRUS, year and volume.
[17] Harry N. Howard, The King-Crane Commission: An American Inquiry in the Middle East, Beirut: Khayat, 1963, pp. 10-11, and for the text of the recommendations of the American Delegation, Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East.., pp. 40-45.
[18]Tamkoç, "The Question of the Recognition of the Republic of Turkey...", pp.96-97.
[19]Howard, The King-Crane Commission: n American Inquiry in the Middle East..., pp.10-15.

[20] FRUS, Paris Peace Conference (PPC), V. III, pp. 785-786; 795-796; V.XI, pp. 1; 5.
[21] Howard, An American Inquiry in the Middle East, p. 18.
[22] Harry Howard, The Partition of Turkey: A Diplomatic History, 1913-1923, Norman, Oklahoma: the Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1931, pp.218-219.
[23]*FRUS, PPC, V. III*, p. 788.
[24]Howard, An American Inquiry in the Middle East..., pp. 26-27, and FRUS, PPC, V.IV, pp. 147-157.
[25]Howard, An American Inquiry in the Middle East..., p. 27.
[26]Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East..., pp. 60-61; Howard, An American Inquiry in the Middle East...,pp. 28-29.
[27]*FRUS, PPC, V. VII*, pp. 14, 193-194, 198, 200-201.
[28]*FRUS, 1920, V. 3*, pp. 775-777.
[29]*Ibid*., p. 778.
[30]*Ibid*., p. 780.
[31]*Ibid*., pp. 781-786. The monetary value of American aid to Armenia totaled $ 21.012.000 of which only $ 560.000 came from the British government. Ibid., p. 786.
[32]*Ibid*., p. 783.
[33]*Ibid*., p. 785.
[34]*Ibid*., p. 787.
[35]*Ibid*., p. 796.
[36]For the text of the General Harbord's Report, see: FRUS, 1919, V. 2, pp. 841-889 and The U.S Congressional Record, 66. Congress, 2nd Session, V. 59, Part 8, (May 25 - June 5, 1920), pp. 7877-7886 and for the texr of the King-Crane Report, see: FRUS, PPC, 1919, V.XII, pp. 745-863.
[37]*League of Nations*, V. 4 (1921), Boston; World Peace Foundation Pamphlets, 1921, pp. 193-194. In fact, President Wilson already knew what attitude the Senate would take in relation to the assumption of the mandate. The Senate's reservation to Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, relating to the territorial sovereignty and political independence reads as follows:"The United States assumes no obligation to preserve the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country by the employment of its military or naval forces, its resources, or any form of economic discrimination, or to interfere in any way in controversies between nations, including all controversies relating to the territorial integrity or political independence, whether members of the League or not..." Dexter Perkins, "The Department of State and American Public Opinion", The Diplomats, 1919-1939, ed. by Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1953, p. 285.
[38]Charles Evans Hughes, "Recent Questions and Negotiations: An Address Before the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, January 23, 1924", Foreign Affairs-Special Supplement, V.2, N.2 (December 1923), p. 350xiii.
[39]Letter of Admiral Bristol, the U.S. High Commissioner in Istanbul to the Secretary of State on September 18, 1920, FRUS, 1920, V. 3, p. 788.
[40]Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, A Speech Delivered by Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927, Leipzig: K.F. Koehler, 1929, pp. 131-132.
[41]*Ibid*., p. 27.
[42]*Ibid*., pp. 306-310.
[43]Hurewitz, Ibid., pp. 74-75.
[44]Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne", The Diplomats, 1919-1939, pp. 181-182
[45]*FRUS, 1920, V.3*, pp. 789-804, letter from Bainbridge Colby on the Wilson's decision to Ambassador Wallace in Paris, on November 24, 1920.
[46]Telegram of Moser, American Council at Tiflis to the acting Secretary of State, Davis at Washington, on December 4, 1920, Ibid., p. 806.
[47]*Ibid*., pp. 807-809.
[48]Hurewitz, Ibid., pp. 95-97.
[49]*Ibid*., pp. 97-100.
[50]*Congressional Record, 66. Congress, 2nd Session*, V. 59 (1919-1920), Part.3 p. 2934, Part 4 pp. 3907, 4108, Part 6 p. 5660, Part 8 pp. 7549-7553, 7876, 8071; 67. Congress, 1st Session, V. 61 (1921), Part 4 p. 4202; 67. Congress, 2nd Session, V. 62 (1921-1922), Part 1 p. 475, 690, Part 5 p. 4500, Part 6 p. 5760, Part 9 pp. 8773-8779, Part 11 p. 11267.