

**500 YEARS IN  
TURKISH – LIBYAN  
RELATIONS**

**By**

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***To the memory of my father  
and his colleagues who served  
the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic  
and the independent Libyan State***

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## FOREWORD

The thought of a book on Turkish and Libyan relations that could shed light on facts that may not have been made public was on my mind first when serving as a diplomat in Libya. As a witness to hard times for the people of Libya, I was convinced that 500 years of Turkish-Libyan relations deserved to be told from an inner perspective. In fact, my work was made difficult by lack of material and those available were quite restrictive and at times biased. I had to postpone my ambition to get hold of more until very recently.

I am truly grateful to the writer, Mr.Orhan Koloğlu, who shares his painstaking research efforts of long years in this book. His work fills some of the most important gaps found in Turkish-Libyan relations. Koloğlu's impressive curriculum vitae is given in detail in the book, so I will only point out here to his deep-rooted ties with Libya, and his passion for knowledge and enthusiasm for research. He is also well known in relevant academic circles for his readiness to share his findings and exchange information.

Libya is in a central position between the East and West Mediterranean. All parties who want to play a part in the Mediterranean balance of power have to take into account its geopolitical location. It has also been on the traditional north-south African continental trade routes, details of which are well defined in this book.

Libya was the last of North African territories detached from the Ottoman Empire. After sharing common heritage for centuries and fighting side by side against the invaders, Turks and Libyans found it equally hard to part with each other. The ties that bond them together, lying at the core of the resistance in Libya, have been costly to intruders.

I feel obliged to honour all the noble efforts of the former Turkish and Libyan warriors and officials who fought together. Their sacrifice went on after the fall of the Empire. Some of the old comrades even took part in the Turkish War of Independence, together.

Koloğlu's book also sheds light on "Turkish-Arab Relations" and the concept of "Islamic solidarity". Within this context, Turkish-Libyan relations have their links with the conflicts in the region, particularly the ones in the Middle East. I hope the book will help the reader to better understand regional conflicts by providing important clues on missing links.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Ihsan Yücel, who has been helping since the initial stages of the preparation of this book. He was instrumental in each phase of this work, from translation to repeated proofreading and from copyediting to publication, in close cooperation with the author.

I have to add here my appreciation and gratitude also to Mr. Bülent Karadeniz, presently Acting Chairman of the Strategic Research Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, who has devoted his precious time and energy in completing this project, even after I had left it unfinished, due to my retirement in May 2006.

Ankara, April 2007

**Murat Bilhan**  
**Former Ambassador And**  
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## PREFACE

Civilisation, a shared work of thousands of years, and a common heritage for all humankind, keeps up its hopes to reach to a global peace. In the aftermath of great sufferings-which still are unavoidable-civilisation's efforts for a world without war are now carried on into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Mediterranean basin, as a region placed at the epicentre of major conflicts and the scene of relations between Turks and Libyans, is destined to play a central role in the realisation of these hopes. And, Libya, in terms of its history and strategic location, bears a potential that can contribute to efforts that can shape this ultimate goal of peace.

Our aim in this study is to cast light on the events that have evolved over centuries in and around Libya, mainly as a North African territory of the Ottoman Empire. The fall of the Empire and the rise of colonialism are two inter-woven global events with their effects on Libya. Subsequently, Libya first became a colony and later won the status of an independent state.

There is an intense interaction between the Libyan history and the present state of affairs in the Near/Middle East. The Ottoman Empire took its place in the annals of history long since, but some sources still hold it responsible for the recent conflicts in the region, as seen in the Balkans. The key to the on-going quest for peace may lie in a study of the links between the longest lasting Islamic State, the Ottoman Empire, and the people living today in its domains spread on three continents. In this line, politics in the Mediterranean from the perspective of the Turkish-Arab relations is addressed; current economic and political events in Turkish and Libyan relations are referred to, as well.

Ultimately, the intent is not to accuse or absolve any side. Lessons learned are essential elements in the efforts to achieve a lasting world peace. The path that leads to these lessons passes through a detailed research in the archives by way of cross checking documents, and applying all elements of reliability and objectivity. We have strived towards this end so that an evaluation of historical events and claims may be made as fairly as possible.

As a final remark, I am pleased to thank particularly Mr. İhsan Yücel, former Director of Department at the Centre for Strategic Research, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who worked in full dedication to give the finishing touches to the English text.

**Orhan Kolođlu**  
(Istanbul, 2007)

## I. THE PRE-OTTOMAN ERA

### Libya before the arrival of the Turks:

The word "Libya" in early history was a geographical expression. As written by one source:

*As used by the ancient Greeks, it referred generally to North Africa, comprising the southern littoral of the Mediterranean from the Nile Delta to the Atlantic, and also its desert hinterland and oases. The name derives from a single tribe established in eastern Cyrenaica early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. There is reason to think that the territory as a whole showed a considerable degree of uniformity of race and culture (...) The physical type of the people was clearly Mediterranean, and contrasted with the Negroid races inhabiting the desert to the south. Their way of life was that of shepherd nomads loosely organized into tribes and confederations (...) They had their own kingdom (...) Later, Libya was colonized by the Greeks, and eventually passed under Roman control. It subsequently came under Muslim-Arab domination, followed by the Ottoman suzerainty.<sup>1</sup>*

The word "Libya" ceased to circulate in the post Greek and Roman periods, when North Africa remained divided under different rulers. Tripolitania (Ottoman Trablous al gharb), Cyrenaica = Barca<sup>2</sup> and Fezzan were distinct entities. Separated by the Gulf of Sirte, Tripoli, at all times, was known to be part of Maghreb, and Cyrenaica of Mashrek. On the other hand, Fezzan was always conceived to be independent from both Tripoli and Cyrenaica.

The word "Libya" reappeared with the partitioning of Africa by the Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The French had occupied Algeria (1830) and Tunisia (1881), and the British Egypt (1882). They used "Libya" to define Tripoli, Cyrenaica and Fezzan regions under Ottoman rule. Italians were considering "Libya" as their *terra promessa* = *promised land*, their rightful Roman Empire heritage. While the Italians called the war of 1911-12, "War of Libya", Turks called it "*Trablus Savaşı*" or "War of Tripoli"<sup>3</sup>. On January 1, 1934, "Libya" was made the official name of the Italian colony composed of the three regions. In fact, the Qaramanli period may be seen

as the beginning the unification process of these provinces. This process went on in the second period of Ottoman sovereignty through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, there is no reference made to the word "Libya" in the Ottoman administrative nomenclature. Throughout the text, for convenience, the term "Libya" is used to cover all periods.

As Braudel points out, the historical role played by the area must be conceived within the context of its geographic and climatic peculiarities. Part of the Mediterranean littoral from the south end of Tunisia up to the Nile Delta, at a distance of around 2500 kilometres, is deficient in water resources, arable lands, and underpopulated. In addition, lying mostly flat, the coastal line does not present much shelter for ships. Consequently, Tripoli, with its ideal port location, which serves both the local bedouin of the Sahara and the international trade, has an important role to play in the history of Libya.

In this study, *Ali Abdullatif Ahmida's* outstanding work is used to evaluate the social structure and living conditions of the people who lived in Libya until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first chapter of the book starts with a Libyan proverb: "*If Abu Zayd al Hillali did not cultivate his own land, then why would he care if another land became a desert?*" This self-judgement denounces the bedouin of the Sahara for showing indifference towards the agriculture and settled life. Ahmida continues with analyzing comparatively the classical concepts of historians and anthropologists on the early settlers of the area: (a) some place the responsibility with the Hillali Arab tribesmen, as formulated by the proverb. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, these tribesmen migrated from Arabia to North Africa in groups with populations of 200-300 thousand, destroying agricultural irrigation systems, urban life, and perpetuating nomadism as the dominant type of social organization that prevailed until the time of European colonialism; (b) the critics of this view argue that the decline of settled agriculture started much earlier, in the third century, but it is a reality that the Hillali migration added new energy to pastoralism in North Africa.

After considering both views, Ahmida concludes:

*"Regionalism and pastoralism persisted into the nineteenth century (...)*  
**Regionalism** refers to the political and economic autonomy of the regions

*of Cyrenaica and Fezzan from the weak State in Tripoli (...) Strong tribal alliances competed with each other and contested the central State in Tripoli (...) These characteristics emerged out of a long process of interaction between the desert ecology – soil and underground water – and nomadic migrations and conquests (...) These conditions limited the choices available to social groups, determining their mode of production (...) **Pastoralism** dominated the Regency's social structure with the exception of the people who lived in Tripoli city (...) It was a normal human reaction to arid-zone and desert climates (...) The need for herding animals obliges the search for well watered places (...) Only five per cent of the entire country is suitable for cultivation (...) Drought and famine occurred frequently (...) In 1784, famine took thousands of life in the city of Tripoli alone (...) There was [also] famine in 1856, 1859, 1881-82, 1888, 1901-03 (...) In short, Libyan agriculture promised little surplus. Conversely, the transit trade across the Sahara, between the more stable agrarian political economics of Europe and Central and West Africa, provided a more reliable source of income than the unpredictable agro pastoral production of the Regency."*

Ahmida puts the total population of Libya in the 19<sup>th</sup> century between one and one and a half million. In the Tripolitania region, 61% of the people were living a settled life, 23% were semi-nomads, and 16% were nomads. Apparently for other regions, the percentages of settlers and nomads are to be reversed. Nomads may have reached 70% in Fezzan and certainly over 50% in Cyrenaica.

In the middle Ages, North Africa was under the constant threat of Islamic-Christian conflicts ending in wars fought in or close by Spain. These conflicts included regular army clashes, as well as acts of piracy that spread all over the western Mediterranean, including the coasts of Italy and Sicily. Not only Tripoli, but also all ports of the Libyan coasts were important for both sides as operation and refuge bases. On the economical side, every port in North Africa had high importance as centre of commerce and barter for goods coming from Central Africa and the Sahara. For this reason, both Christians and Muslim rulers of the area coveted Libya. The establishment of Phoenician colonies along the Libyan

coast for the purchase of goods – gold, ivory, and feathers – and slaves from Central Africa and Sudan is also a mark of the historical appeal of this transit trade.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, local Libyan trade was of little importance because of the plain way of life and limited production capability of the Saharan people. They could only offer dates, salt, wax, in exchange for wheat, cloth, etc...

The nomadic people of the interior and the people of the coastal cities and ports had in most cases divergent interests. Thus, a dual system of balance of power (and interest) was shaping the Libyan politics:

- a. The nomadic tribes closely linked to the network of the caravan trade coming from the African interior.
- b. The people of the coastal cities and ports as part of the Mediterranean balance of power and trade,

Behind every important event in the history of Libya stands an element of internal and external political and economic change that has its marks on the interests of the above two groups and on their established relationships. In this context, it is to be recalled that Libya gained an important political role by its incorporation into the world of Islam in the 7<sup>th</sup> century (first century in the Hegira calendar).

In the interaction between Libya and the Mediterranean politics and trade, Tripoli, the main port in Libya, has played major roles:

From the strategic point of view, the area between Tripoli-Siracuse and Bone-Trepani forms a corridor that splits the Mediterranean.<sup>4</sup> For those who would try to dominate either the Eastern or the Western Mediterranean, Tripoli constitutes a strategic point that must be captured in order to pass across the other side. *'For this reason, do we have to be surprised?'* asks Braudel.<sup>5</sup> He connects majority of the wars taking place in this region during the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the domination of the Mediterranean; these wars include Tripoli (1511,1551), Djerba (1510,1520,1560), Tunis (1535,1573,1574), Bizerte (1573,1574), and Malta (1565). Moreover, Braudel propounds that Spain's great interest in capturing Tripoli in 1510 was because it needed a reliable route along the southern coast in order to transport the rich Sicilian wheat.

From the economical aspect, Tripoli has been the most practical and secure port in the transportation of Saharan trade goods centred in Fezzan for thousands of years. In 1354, Tripoli was called “the city rich in gold”, because it was the main export centre for Sudanese gold. The city continued to preserve this quality throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century and was notable for its trade relationships with the merchants of Marseille, Genova, Ragusa, Sicily, and Venice. Gold-powder, slaves, copper, salt, textiles always followed this route. Following the Spanish occupation, Piri Reis reported, “*Tribes bring horses to the city. They exchange each horse for 15-20 black Arabs. This is why Tripoli is a great trading centre.*”<sup>6</sup> According to Sanudo, the Spaniards, after capturing the city in 1510, obtained so many slaves that the oarsmen requirements of all European ships were fully met.<sup>7</sup>

Traditionally, when self-administered, a local council of city representatives ruled Tripoli. The head of the council and the city’s ten prominent personalities (sheikhs) used to meet in a place called the “Masjid al-ashara”.<sup>8</sup> Some called it a republic.<sup>9</sup> This was the characteristic of most of the leading commercial city-states in the Mediterranean between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>10</sup> Although the Libyans were able to run their government, it was difficult to prevent alien interventions, be it Christian or Muslim. It was not only the Italians and the Spanish who sacked Tripoli. The Libyans could not escape from the same fate when an internal strife broke out among the members of the *Beni Hafsi* family, the rulers of Tunisia. However, during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, although Tripoli was still under the domination of the Beni Hafsis, a second dynasty, the *Banu Sabit* or *Banu Ammar* succeeded in bringing almost full independence to the city. After the end of the long rule of the Hafsi Sultan Abu Faris (1393-1434), Tripoli was free of its foreign ties. Around 1477, the city was acting completely independent under a leader of its own. This self-rule was put to an end by the Spanish occupation in 1510. In a few words, the Libyans were able to develop a society capable of administering itself. They wanted to remain independent, but were not strong enough to resist covetous alien forces.

## **The Balance of Power in the Mediterranean at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century**

In this period, relations between Muslims and Christians were in the form of mutual blows and counter-blows:

Christian gains: In 1480, Ivan III of Russia was able to free himself from the Golden Horde's (Altınordu) control and to destroy it soon afterwards. The destruction of Islam in Eastern Europe thus opened the way to the conquest of Central Asia. In Spain, Granada, the last stronghold of the Muslims, fell to the armies of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. Many people fled persecution and took shelter mainly in the Maghreb. Having successfully rounded the Cape, the Portuguese appeared in the Indian seas, hence opening a new phase in world commercial history.

Muslim gains: Other Muslim successes of the time were the conquest of İstanbul and the advance of the Turks in the Balkans. These were followed by the conversion to Islam of increased numbers of societies and rulers in Indonesia, India, and Africa. One western scholar refers to the phenomenon of mass conversions to Islam during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century with the following words: *"The local rulers saw in it a source of unity and strength...by adopting the religion officially it secured admittance to the unity of Islam with its assurance of powerful allies and its expensive ardour."*<sup>11</sup>

As long as the Muslims dominated Spain, the entire Mediterranean Sea was virtually a Muslim lake. However, this situation began to change by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In this period, with Italy, Spain divided internally, and France engaged in the Hundred Years War against England, there was no dominating power. Towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, France and Spain made their first attempts at mastery of the area. In the meantime, Muslim refugees who fled to North Africa from Spain began to organize pirate fleets to attack Christian ports and vessels. Spain replied by attacking North African coasts and by establishing controls over local African rulers. Other Christian pirates were also active in the Mediterranean.



In the last two decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman Empire had to focus on consolidating its rule in the eastern Mediterranean. War with Venice and the Mamluks of Egypt continued; attempts to conquer the fort of Rhodes and the Italian peninsula (1480) were abandoned; and the war of succession between the two sons of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror weakened the State. As a result, both the Ottoman sultan and the Mamluks were not in a position to meet the calls for assistance sent by the Sultan of Granada, Abu Abdullah Muhammad, as required. Nevertheless, an Ottoman fleet commanded by Kemal Reis (Captain) set sail and attacked Spanish forts in the western Mediterranean, including Djerba, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic Islands.<sup>12</sup> Such attacks were far from deterring Ferdinand and Isabella from their purpose. In 1492, the last Muslim state in Spain collapsed, adding more fervour to the Christian attacks in general. *“In response to renewed Christian aggression, Muslim privateers who had been operating in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean regions turned to the western side of the sea.”*<sup>13</sup>

The 16<sup>th</sup> century began with a frightening threat to the Muslim world coming from the Portuguese and the Spanish. The former, who had settled in India in 1502, blockaded Basra (north of the Arabian Gulf) and the Red Sea with the intention of redirecting Indian trade to the routes they controlled, i.e. South Africa. The attack on the Muslim world was of a dual nature:

*“While the Portuguese push was largely economic in origin, there was also a determined religious emphasis; with the Pope assigning it the task of encircling the world of Islam from the rear, and helping restore Christianity in the Middle East and India, while Spain did the same in the New World.”*<sup>14</sup>

This blockade had an immediate negative impact on the finance of the Mamluks. Most seriously affected were the ports of Suez, Alexandria (entrepôts for the Red Sea trade), Basra, Aleppo, and Tripoli of Lebanon.

An Italian, *Ludovico di Varthema*, observed and reported the panic in the trade circles to the public opinion in the West. In 1502, he visited Egypt, participated in pilgrimage ceremonies held at the Holy Cities (Mecca and Medina), and travelled to Yemen, Aden, Persia, India, Ceylon, Malaya

and Molucca. In 1508, he returned to Lisbon. In 1510, Varthema published his memoirs entitled "*Itinerario*". The economic difficulties encountered by the Muslims, after the disruption of the Indian trade by the Portuguese intervention are explained. It is also reported that the Portuguese were, in fact, planning to take Aden and move up towards the Red Sea to seize the holy cities, in order to strike what they thought would be a mortal blow at the heart of Islam.<sup>15</sup>

Fernand Braudel's work clearly reflects the Spanish aims to dominate the Mediterranean, their plans and achievements. He points out to their efforts to build the fortresses called *presidios* along the North African coast:

*" There were plans to make these strongholds economically viable, to create some kind of link with the vast interior, off which they would live. In the time of Ferdinand, and later Charles V, there was actually some attempt at an economic policy aiming at the development of these African positions in the hope of making them a centre for Catalan shipping and of obliging the Venetian galleys to put in there. However, all in vain (...) The commercial currents of the Maghreb, of themselves, bypassed the Spanish presidios and preferred to use as export outlets Tadjura, La Misurata, Algiers and Bone, none of which was in Christian hands."*<sup>16</sup>

At the time of the Spanish invasion, Tripoli was no longer a city rich in gold. The gold and slave trades were directed eastwards, towards Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. As another consequence of the Spanish administration's practice of terror, the native people were forced to leave the region. Braudel<sup>17</sup> indicates that the favourite pastime of the rulers was the razzias (raids), which spread wide terror in the name of Spain and prevented the establishment of vital good relations between the fortress and its hinterland. He even cites a report sent to the King of Spain from Francisco de Valencia, the commanding officer at Mers el Kebir, who claimed that the responsibility for drawing the Turks into the area lay with the razzias.

### Muslims in Search of Ottoman Protection

The first contact of the Libyan people with Turks occurred in 879 when a group of Oghuz mercenaries arrived to the area, under the command of Abbas bin Ahmad bin Touloun and ruled till Trablous for a short time. In the following centuries there always had been such groups who came from Egypt, imposed their short living administrations and gradually mixed with the local people. Particularly at the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, during the Crusades a comparatively long living 'presence' is witnessed.

The Mamluks of Egypt, mainly composed of Turks, were neither financially nor technically in a position to counter the Christian onslaught at the end of 15<sup>th</sup> century. They appealed to the Ottoman Empire, which responded by sending seamen, shipwrights, naval supplies, as well as guns and gunpowder, to help the Mamluks to rebuild their battle-wrecked fleet. However, the Mamluks were reluctant in asking for more, because they were concerned about falling under Ottoman rule. On the other hand, the Arab world did not share their concern; resting its hopes on the Ottoman Sultan. In 1516, the Sharif of Mecca, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, proposed to send a delegation to *Selim I*. The Mamluk Sultan, *Al-Ghawri* hindered the initiative. Nevertheless, it seemed that the Arabs were more receptive to Ottoman rule than Mamluk. It was certainly no coincidence when Sultan Selim, as he marched against the Mamluks, declared that he would free the Arabs from the Mamluks and defend the Islamic world from Christian threat.<sup>18</sup>

The Arab historian *Taghribirdi* explains in detail the enthusiasm of the Arab people in following Ottoman victories against Christians. The conquest of Istanbul was celebrated for days and nights in Egypt and all over the Muslim world.<sup>19</sup> *"Although the Mamluks held the empire with no danger of serious revolt, their rule was not popular and their subsequent defeat by the Turks was not regarded by the Arabs as a national misfortune."*<sup>20</sup>

The conquest of Egypt had automatically incorporated into the Ottoman Empire the lands between the Benghazi area and the Red Sea coast.

In Egypt, Sultan Selim also received the allegiances of the Sharif of Mecca and the ruler of Yemen who sought protection of their lands against Portuguese attacks. In 1519, a delegation from Tripoli came to Istanbul and asked the support of the Sublime Port against the Spanish. From India, the ruler of Gujarat sought similar protection. In both cases, Ottoman fleets were sent to their aid. In the following years, the Ottomans received more petitions for aid coming from lands as far as present-day Indonesia. Ottoman lands became the only shelter against aggressive Christian rulers, not only for Muslims, but also for Jews.

Modern historians unanimously agree that the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman state is the greatest in the history of Islam.

*Sauvaget* describes the power of the Ottoman state in the following terms:

*"The Sultans, who reigned over millions of square kilometres of land; having larger and more reliable budget sources than any of the European States including Spain with her gold mines; being endowed with a systematically organized administration rendering services beneficial to the loyalty of the people, whose discipline was considered of prime conventional merit; having the most perfect and disciplined military force, the most perfect artillery, a navy that dominated the whole Mediterranean; this made the whole of Europe take them into consideration."*<sup>21</sup>

Prof. Zeine, comparing the Ottoman Empire with previous great Muslim empires, concludes: *"The Turks are the third Islamic peoples of Middle East, the first two being the Arabs and Persians. But they established the largest and the strongest Muslim empire, known as the Ottoman Empire, since the rise of Islam."*<sup>22</sup>

As expressed by another prominent scholar, *"The Turks came as conquerors, but they were converted and assimilated, and brought new strength and vigour to a dying society and polity."*<sup>23</sup>

A further addition by a scholar, *"Islam was identified with the Ottoman Empire; Arab was wiped out from European horizons and replaced by Turkish Islam."*<sup>24</sup>

The incorporation of Arab lands, especially Mecca and Medina into the Empire meant that the Ottomans were now responsible to the Muslim

world for the protection of the holy cities. Even though there was no official transfer of the caliphate, and the Ottoman sultan had only taken the title of *Khadim ul Haramayn al Sharifayn* (the servant of the two holy cities), the Muslim world accepted him and his heirs as caliph. From this point on, the provision of a safe environment for all Muslims, willing to perform the rites of pilgrimage was in the hands of the Ottoman state.

The first time the Ottoman Empire focused on North Africa was when the Spanish Muslims' call for help reached them. The Imperial Navy, under the command of Kemal Reis, attacked Spanish coasts and islands in 1487. However, this could not have been an act beyond a demonstration of solidarity and could impede neither the fall of Granada (in 1492) nor the exodus of tens of thousands of Muslims and Jews from the Peninsula.<sup>25</sup> It is true that *Kemal Reis* revisited this region in 1510. There is also evidence that he sailed in the area a few times more and established contact with the Moroccan Arabs. It is obvious that the aim of these relations was not to settle in the region, but they helped to pave the way to other Turkish navigators. Details and features of the Mediterranean coastline were made available to the Ottoman Empire when Kemal's nephew, *Piri Reis* wrote his book titled *Kitab-ı Bahriyye* (The Book on Navigation). It was not only a guidebook, "known as the earliest guide to the Aegean and Mediterranean seas"<sup>26</sup>, but a reference source with its information on the Mediterranean basin, the Maghreb (the Atlantic Ocean), and the Indian seas, as well. The Porte made adjustments in its policies in line with the new historical, economic, and geographic data of the 1520s. Furthermore, a map of America drawn by Piri Reis showed that the Ottoman society was in contact with the overseas.

In line with the growing interest, the Turkish sailors went on expeditions to the Western Mediterranean. Later to be known as *Barbarossas*, *Oruç*, *Hızır*, and *İlyas* brothers (*Hızır* renamed *Hayreddin*) were engaged in a range of activities from trade to piracy with the support of the Tunisian and the Mamluk sultans, as well as the Ottoman heir to the throne. In 1514, they set up their headquarters in Halkul Vad (*Goletta*). Later on, *Oruç Reis*, who captured the city of Algiers, declared his own sovereignty. Yet, with no chance against Europe, he chose to submit to the

Ottoman sultan and serve under his command. The title of Governor-General (*Beghlerbey*) of Algeria was bestowed on him. Thus, their piracy activities were transformed into wars between the Ottoman Empire on one side, and Spain supported by the Crusaders on the other.<sup>27</sup> The Ottomans were successful in taking over Rhodes, but the Spaniards re-took Tunis. Finally, with the defeat of the Crusader fleet at Preveza in 1538, the Mediterranean Sea was placed under the control of the Ottomans.

Navigation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was no more than sailing from port to port by following the coastline. The open seas, as Braudel describes them, were as barren and unhindered as the deserts.<sup>28</sup> For this reason, the Libyan coast was a regular stopover for ships. In *"The Book on Navigation"*, Piri Reis explains the features and history of Tripoli, Misallata, Barca, Tobruk, and Sellum. We learn from this book that the citizens of Tripoli complain about the Tunisian rulers, their officials, and the unending internal power struggles. Prior to the Spanish invasion of Tripoli in 1510, Kemal Reis, accompanied by his nephew Piri Reis, sailed in the Libyan waters under instructions from the sultan. On their return trip to Istanbul, news of a petition sent by the people of Tripoli to the "Illustrious Sultan" asking him to appoint a governor to put an end to the instability in the city reached them. However, before the Sublime Porte could act, and before they could get to Istanbul, the Spaniards occupied Tripoli.<sup>29</sup>

It is clear that trade and life in Tripoli were negatively affected by the Spanish invasion. According to Piri Reis:

*... Tripoli was a great trade centre. Those places are no longer, what they used to be. After the infidels' conquest of the city, people fear to go there. From the port of Tripoli to Tadjura, it is 12 miles. The Arabs of this village used to take their charcoal to Tripoli, and sell it there, because there is no wood in Tripoli.*<sup>30</sup>

It is known that with the arrival of the Spaniards in Tripoli, the caravan routes were redirected towards other Muslim ports; as a result, the city was deprived of its income from gold powder and slave trade. Similarly, other settlement centres around Tripoli were also deprived of

their trade with the city and suffered heavy losses. The Tripolitarians, who established their new centre in Tadjura, sent a delegation to the Ottoman capital in 1519, and asked for support. The sultan named *Murad Agha* as begherbey and sent a navy and a military force with him to Tadjura. Until the occupation of Tripoli by Ottoman forces in 1551, conflicts went on in different parts of the Maghreb. Fleets set sail from the Tripolitanian coast to Corsica, the Balearic Islands, and the Italian coasts. The movement of the zone of influence was towards the hinterland in the direction of Fezzan in Africa.

Algiers, occupied by the Spaniards in 1520, was to change hands in 1525. The Mediterranean, as a whole, was the scene to a struggle for supremacy. Following the conquest of Rhodes by the Ottomans, the Knights settled across the Tripoli coastline in Malta, turning it into a stronghold for the Christian world. In 1530, the Spaniards, with no success in winning the support of the local population, decided to hand over Tripoli to the Knights. On the other hand, the Ottoman forces, deployed at a distance of only 16 kilometres from the city, received full support of the Arabs. The victory won at *Preveza* in 1538 against a Crusader fleet composed of Venetian, Portugal, Spanish, Maltese, and Papal ships, reinforced Ottoman dominance in the Mediterranean. Defeat of *Charles V's* Crusader fleet off the coast of Algiers in 1541 brought complete control of the Mediterranean by the Ottomans, except the Italian and Spanish coasts. France, in need of Ottoman protection against Spanish-German power, invited the Ottoman fleet to winter in Toulon (1543-44).

*Turgut Reis (Dragut)*, independent of the Sublime Porte, carried on piracy activities from his base in Djerba. He took under his control south of Tunisia and was engaged in continuous fighting with the Knights of Malta. As his power was limited against the Christian forces, like Oruç Reis, he decided to submit his services to the Sublime Porte. After the conquest of Tripoli, he was named as *begherbey*. In 1551, the Ottoman fleet together with *Murad Agha's* army, attacked Tripoli, and finally conquered the city on August 15. This victory, depriving the Knights of a very important base, enabled the Ottoman Empire to eliminate a continuous threat to its bases in Algiers and Tunisia. Subsequent to his defeat in the great naval combat

at Djerba (1560), Charles made futile attempts to contain Tripoli. On the other side, the Ottoman fleet failed in Malta (1565), and suffered a defeat at Lepanto (1570). Yet, the conquests of Cyprus (1571) and Tunis (1574) proved that the Ottomans were the supreme power in control of the Mediterranean. According to Braudel:

*“With Tripoli, the Turks possessed a valuable military position and a link with the Barbary States. The traditional port of the African interior, the town was restored to its former glory. When the Christians occupied the town, the Sahara trade had been diverted to Tadjura, near Tripoli. With the Turkish occupation, once more, gold dust and slaves travelled to the city rich in gold.”<sup>31</sup>*

## II. THE TURKISH PRESENCE IN LIBYA

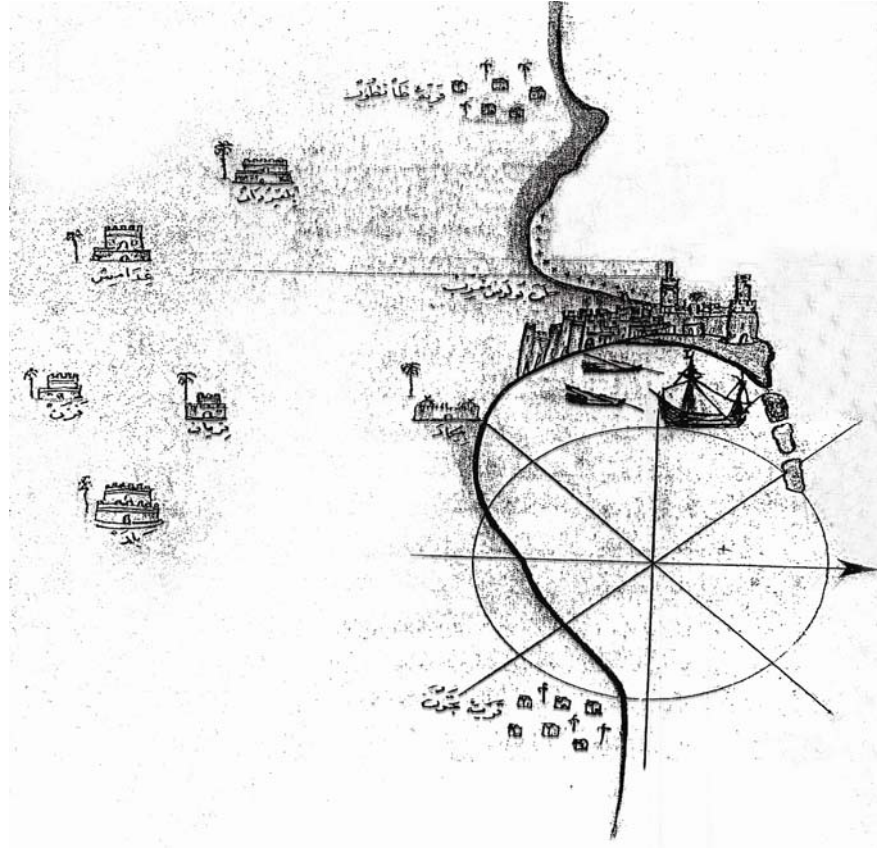
### The Role of Pax Ottomana

*Belhamissi* and *Abd al Jalil Tamimi* are among the historians of Maghreb who have thought up the phrase, “*the Turkish presence in the Maghreb*”. While the term “invader” was used to describe the advance of the European belligerents, the same did not hold in the case of the Turks. First, there were appeals made by the local population to the Ottomans for protection. Second, there was the factor of religious solidarity working in favour of the Ottoman side. They had the support of the local population against a common enemy. These differences in favour of the Ottomans placed them apart from the Europeans. With exceptions, Turks succeeded to build a sound base for unity and mutual accord. The following comments made in the opposite shores of the Mediterranean gives clues on the structure of the Ottoman administration set up in Libya. Both concern Maghreb as a whole, and thus are valid for Libya.

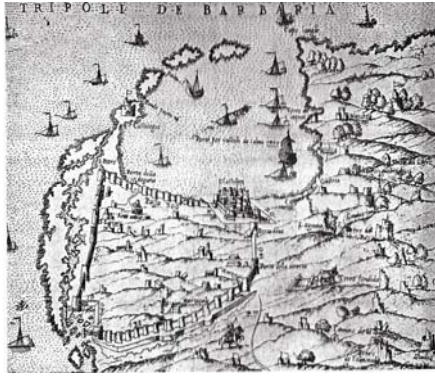
In his book “*Les Etats Barbaresques*”, Jean Monlaü writes<sup>32</sup> :

*‘It is a society unified from elements most dissimilar ....The flexibility which results from it, is remarkable; none of the dominant criteria, not even Islam, tended to exclude the others from the formulation of decisions, and this led to the paradox of a social body differentiated to the extreme, but in which neither classes nor castes really existed. In a sense, the system established in this way was ‘astonishingly modern’.*

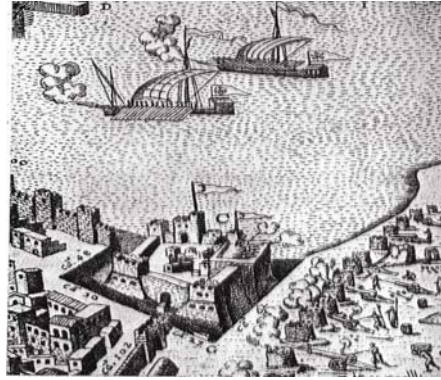




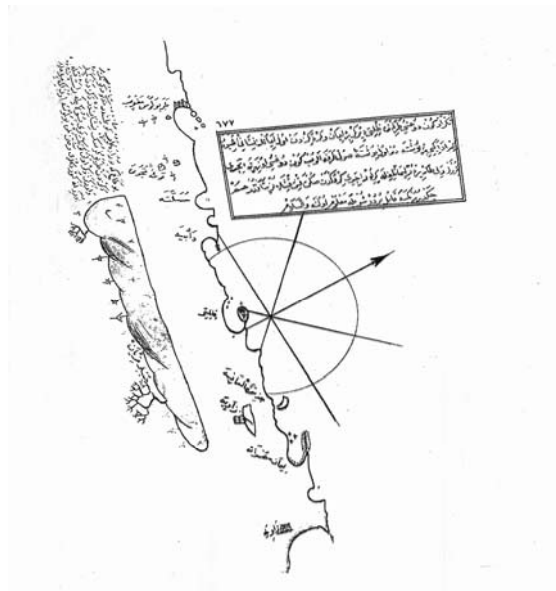
1. Thrablousharb in Piri Reis's book "Kitab-ı Bahriyye". The way it is represented proves that this is the most strongly fortified port in Libyan coast. Representation of far away oasis like Ghadames, Fezzan, Gharian and Djalo indicates that Tripoli was accepted as the main exchange center for the Saharan trade.



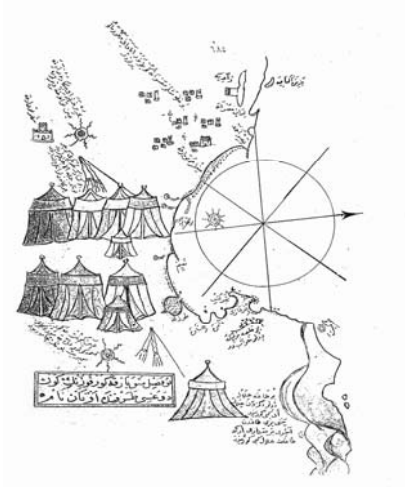
2. Tripoli just before the Turkish conquest during the Spanish rule (From a Venitian engraving of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.)



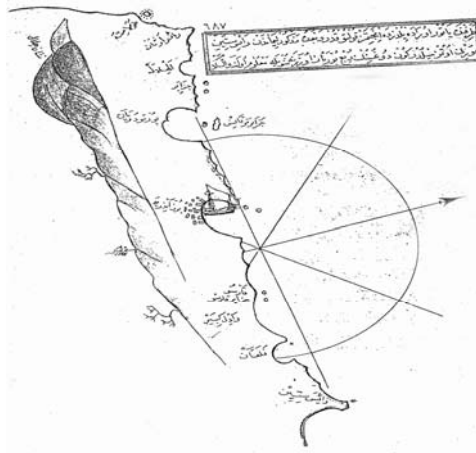
3. The fortress of Tripoli according to an Italian engraving of 1559, under Turkish rule.



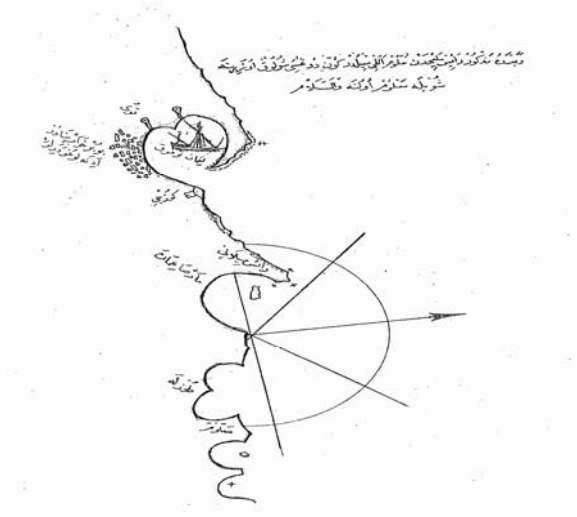
4. According to Piri Reis's book, Mısra is composed of villages with date groves. Each village is 4 to 5 miles away from the sea. He adds "There are no other villages on the coast till Alexandria"



5. Sirte Bay in Piri Reis's Kitab-1 Bahriye. Bengazi was a very small settlement at That time. Tents depict that the Arabs were all nomands.



6. Map of Barca-Cyrenaica area in the Piri Reis's book. He writes that there is no convenient port in the region and that corsaries hide their ships in the rock at Fidare.



7. Tomruk=Tobruk was one of the Rare place where sailors could find water. He warns also captians to be careful when casting anchor as the wind may change directions endangering the ships.

After pointing out the existence of rival “pressure groups” which can be compared with the communities of today, he adds:

*‘The difference with most of contemporary regimes is that, on the whole, a perfect tolerance governs the relations, which they maintain between themselves. Each one could organize its own tribunals, practice its own religion, and have nearly its proper laws all under the authority of its muqaddim. Next to the Maliki qadi there is a Hanafi qadi for the Turks, an Ibadi for the Mzabites, a rabbi for the Jews and ‘consuls’ for the European ‘nations’. Christians have their chapels, the Jews their synagogues and their rabbinical schools. The Mzabites have their particular Ibadi mosques and regulate between themselves their own affairs, just like the Jews, and even the Negroes whose qaid el ouçfan can be entrusted the defence, when they are slaves. (...) This picture is valid for big centres, but even elsewhere, the spirit is the same, with small varieties. The dominant line of this society resided in the juxtaposition of groups whose religious and particularly racial peculiarities constituted the main characteristic and the base for each one of a status of fact and of rights. On the religious level, Christians, Jews, Mzabites, and Turks form as much distinct communities indifferent from the ‘Sunni’ Muslims. Other communities like Kabyles who are from the non-subdued regions are kept in the background for political reasons.*

In an article on Algerian identity, Historian *Kamel Filali* declares:<sup>33</sup>

*There are two important turning points in the identity problem of Algerian history, the first in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the second in the 19<sup>th</sup>. Rather than name the first as the conquest by Muslims, we can call it the implementation of Islam, while the second is the occupation by colonialists (1830-1962) (...) The Islamic conquest was confronted at the beginning by the natives, who were Berbers, but was later accepted by them (...) It was the tolerant behaviour of Islam towards local traditions which facilitated this understanding (...) With the invasion, starting in 1055, of the Egyptian Hilalis (whose numbers were estimated between 400.000 and 1.000.000) this situation changed. Instead of tolerating the pre-Islamic practices, they*

*imposed a policy of Arabisation and tried to eradicate the Shia tendency from the Maghreb, which created the reaction. Although Ottomanisation had a Turkish character, the Ottomans maintained the continuity of the Islamic past and the status quo of the various sects. There was no adverse reaction of an ethnic or ideological nature. The administration of the regency (the state of the Dayı's = deys), despite being alien with both language and stigmatization of Caesarism (dictatorship based on a group or people) and belonging to the Hanafi sect, did not use religion for ideological purposes. Its policy based on ghaza (raid) and sea-jihad provided a legitimization for more than 300 years. As well as protecting the Shia of Algeria and fighting Christian rivals, the Turks introduced a unique culture based on tolerance created by the amalgamation of their experience in Europe, Balkans and Asia (...) Consequently, contact with Turks produced a kind of ethnic synthesis with the appearance of the Kuloghlus, the half-castes, which encouraged the emergence of a 'mixed' culture and the enrichment of the local one (...) It is a fact that while the Turkish presence did not interfere with Algerian identity, the colonialist ideology displayed a completely different approach. France, which invaded the country under the pretext of their legendary 'civilising mission', left behind, by refusing to respect the identity of Algerians, deep negative marks on their social psychology.*

Braudel prefers to use the term "Pax Turcica", to describe what others call "Pax Ottomana". The Turkish presence in Libya may best be evaluated within the context of this internal peace, which was the main source of solidarity within the Empire against external threat. It included more than 60 religious and ethnic communities dispersed over three continents. The Ottoman Empire was one of the main actors of the global power struggle where Libya played a role in its Mediterranean part. The Ottoman armies were venturing into the Indian Ocean against the Portuguese; into Europe up to Vienna against the Austrians; into Crimea against the Russians. Simultaneously, they fought against the Spaniards in the Mediterranean. The 16<sup>th</sup> century was witness to a change in world trade routes from the Mediterranean to the open seas as a process that would take centuries. The Ottoman Empire, subsequent to its possession of Tripoli, continued to spread out to gain full control of the Mediterranean. Even the failure at

Malta (1565) and the European coalition's victory at Lepanto (1571) were not to change this course.

A western commentator remarked that, "*the Battle of Lepanto proved the superiority of Christian arms, but its result proved that of the Turkish diplomacy, as the division between Christian allies persisted.*" This comment shows that Lepanto did not cause a change in the balance of power. In spite of Lepanto, the greatest single naval power in the Mediterranean was still the Ottomans. The conquests of Cyprus and Crete islands set aside doubts on the supremacy of their power. "*By these exploits Eastern Mediterranean became the Ottoman mare nostrum*" says Maria Pia Pedani. To the question "*Was the Ottoman State only a Ghazi state and the odjaks only centres of attack?*" Pedani replies negatively in her book "*Dalla frontiera al confine*"<sup>34</sup> insisting particularly on the concept of "sea frontiers":

*For many centuries the sea, too, was considered only a frontier, crossed by ships of corsairs, pirates, levends, and regular fleets. A research about the Adriatic, let us discover the existence of fast ties between the seamen of the Maghreb and those of Ottoman Albania. To accept the idea of a border with another country meant also to recognize the right of the other to exist. This was the final and finest achievement of a peace agreement. In the Muslim-Christian relations, the creation of common borders meant that both rulers had overcome a pure military logic and had accepted the possibility of living in peace with an infidel state.*

In 1742, a time when France and Britain still fought in naval wars, the Porte declared that all lands and seas to the east of a line drawn straight from Morea to the North African coast were under Ottoman sovereignty. Accordingly, the Ottoman fleet would attack any warship that crossed this line to the east; either on the coastal waters or on the high seas, and their crews would be enslaved. The Mediterranean was mainly under the control of the Ottoman navy. This control secured the free flow of commercial traffic with no distinction of nationality. It was interrupted only in the event of war or by pirate raids, and Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1798 was a turning point that marked its end.

The regions placed under Ottoman administration, particularly the three Odjaks (regencies) were an integral part of the Pax Turcica. The driving force of this integration was the Ottoman supremacy in the Mediterranean. The resurgence of autonomous administrations, however, did not point to a complete break from the Sublime Porte. European governments were aware of this fact. Whenever problems arose, they sought the Ottoman government's intervention. It is known that, upon instructions, Tripolitanian fleet took part in the expeditions of the Sublime Porte<sup>35</sup>. In addition, the coins issued by the odjaks contained the sultan's name. The oldest coin issued in Tripoli dates back to 979 (1571/72)<sup>36</sup>. In short, the Turkish presence continued in Algeria until 1830, in Tunisia until 1881, and in Tripoli until 1911. When the Ottoman sovereignty ended in these lands, the first step taken by the European colonialist powers was to eradicate all Turkish cultural, economic, and political roots.

### **Installation of the Odjak**

At the time of their rise in the 14 and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Ottomans employed a two step approach to set up their rule. At first, a land would be made a protected domain and later it would be fully incorporated into the state.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, in areas with harsh terrain like highlands or deserts, autonomy could be conceded to the local notables, sheikhs of tribes, sects, or orders, as long as they were willing to submit to the nominal authority of Sultan/Caliph. The main interdiction imposed was cooperation with foreign states. Exemption from tax was used as a distinctive feature in the formulation of the administrative structure. Syria and Egypt, as contributors to the Imperial budget were placed in the same category with the Balkans and Anatolia in terms of the tax system. On the other hand, the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen were exempt from tax.

The incorporation of Maghreb into the Empire, brought along with it the need to set up a completely new administrative structure. Apparently, in this case, communication would only be possible by sea routes, ruling out service of the land courier system of the Ottoman Empire. Sending troops there, in case of urgent need, would be difficult. As pointed out by Braudel, it was not possible for ships to cross the Mediterranean Sea in a preset

time. Due to the construction techniques of the period, ships were dependent on weather conditions and seasons. They would have to wait for days or weeks before crossing a channel or even setting sail. Journey from Tunis to Leghorn ranged from 6 to 20 days.

Two galleys from Algiers once made the journey to İstanbul in 72 days.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, a round trip of petition and its reply between Magreb and the Porte could take around 5 to 6 months or even more in case military preparations were involved. In addition, the couriers could fall prisoner if their ships were captured. The best solution seemed to be to go for a decentralized administration in Maghreb. There were communication problems also in some other regions of the Empire, such as Crimea, Eflak-Boghdan (actual Rumania), and some Arab sheikhdoms. The degree of autonomy granted to each region changed with its location or even social structure. Such liberties, though limited, in time, would give way to the development of new formulae in order to keep up with local changes. When first appointed, the beglerbeys were more dependent on the Porte, but, later, they were given more latitude, particularly in their dealings with other administrations and European states. The Porte tacitly approved such dealings. In a message sent to the Beghlerbey of Tripoli in 1797, it's expressed that, "*The Odjaks of the Maghreb have been free for a long time, and problems of peace and war with Christian states depend on their own choice.*"<sup>39</sup>





8. Portrait of Dragut at The Palace of Milano, Copied by Feyhaman Duran



9. Castle of the Beghlerbeys and Deys in Tripoli. At the right side the minaret of Dragut's mosque.



10. The mosque of Turgut Reis (Dragut) at Tripoli, and on the Libyan postage stamp.



11. The regency had direct diplomatic contact with European governments Mahmud Agha the first Ambassador sent to Denmark in 1757 (The painting is in the Danish Museum)

Maghreb played a completely different strategic role in the security and defence of the Empire. Most of all, it was a bastion for the defence of the newly conquered areas in the eastern Mediterranean. However, it was under the threat of naval attacks, as well as internal power struggles with likely European involvement. A reliable system was a need. The Odjak (hearth) system was introduced to meet such a requirement. In the Ottoman system, the most important institution was the Odjak of the janissaries, the main infantry force. In the case of Maghreb, however, the Odjak system had to give emphasis on naval forces, reinforced by land troops. Politically, it had to be administered by a beglerbey assigned from Istanbul for a period of two or three years. Obviously, the short tenure was meant to curb down any independent action on the part of the beglerbey. The Odjak would concentrate more on the coastal line and have looser links with the communities of the hinterland.

Communication difficulties and the need for urgent decisions caused to a gradual increase in the role played by the odjack. In the end, the beglerbeys had to be replaced by the system of *deys* (dayı=maternal uncle) later called "the regency" by the Europeans. The *dey* was elected among the elements in the Odjak. A closer look at the odjak system, with no class formation but rather with three social strata, gives a clearer picture on how the Maghrebine and Libyan societies functioned:<sup>40</sup>

Odjaklu (fellows of the Odjak) : Young Turkish men from Anatolia were the main source of the military cadres in Maghreb. Every two or three years recruitment was made in İzmir, the main port in Anatolia, and between two and three thousand young men were sent to the three odjaks in Maghreb. This was a deviation from the janissary recruitment where the Christian children were enrolled. The aim was to keep the majority in the odjak at a distance from the local intrigues. In principle, they served as warriors in battle-ships and not allowed to marry. A system of brothels was run under the supervision of the police chief, the *mazwar* (also called the qaid of the night) to meet their sexual needs.

It's estimated that in every ten recruit, five would die in action, three would fall captive and be forced to serve as oarsmen in European ships, two would survive as veteran with one disabled. In general, about

2500 odjaklu were stationed in Tripoli. They were placed under strict discipline.<sup>41</sup> The ruling class cadres were reserved for the Turks with the aim to keep under control inclinations by the early local rulers towards the European Christians. Christian pirates who changed sides and converted to Islam could also become Odjaklu, in most cases to escape from penalties in their own land. They were let in the Odjak for their competency in seamanship. A concern for their possible desertion was there, too. As stated by a phrase used at that time, they “*became Turks*” to further their own interests in one way or another. Not only the people, but also priests apostatized<sup>42</sup> showing the appeal and prestige of the Odjak.

Kuloghlu: Although, in principle, there was a ban on marriage for the Odjaklu, many of them married Arab women and had children. These half-castes were named “Kuloghlu” (son of the sultan’s employees).<sup>43</sup> After several generations of the Turkish presence, their numbers increased considerably. It is reported that, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there were between 50 and 60 thousand in Western Libya alone. By the time of Youssuf Qaramanli (the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), the army was composed of ten thousand Kuloghlu; by 1830, this number had reached thirty thousand. In 1881, there were 1.200 cavalrymen and 2.800 Kuloghlu irregular infantry in Tripoli.<sup>44</sup> By 1885, the number of cavalrymen remained the same, but the infantry went up to 4.000.<sup>45</sup> In Homs, the Kuloghlu numbered 200, all cavalrymen, under the command of the *Bashagha* (the chief of aghas), a post which was abolished in 1900. They were not permitted to join the Odjaklu strata, but were entrusted with outer city public security, road security, and collection of taxes. In return, they were exempt from payment of taxes. They enjoyed this status until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Native People: They were divided into two groups: the *reaya* who were taxpayers (Jews, mostly immigrants from Spain, were included in this group) and the *makhzen*, who were exempt from all taxes, except those obligatory according to the stipulations of the sharia, but had to be ready to carry out the orders of the administration. The *reaya* mostly lived in or around cities and oases, while the *makhzens* were mostly tribal nomads.

The aim of the Turkish presence in North Africa was not to colonise. Nor was it after taking over the trade or forcing the natives to leave the region, as done by the Spaniards. All merchants had trade opportunities and

freedom of movement regardless of ethnic community and religion. Comparatively, the peasantry and the artisans were subject to more strict fiscal rules. The respect shown for local customs went a long way towards avoiding conflicts with the native people. This did not mean that there were no clashes. Conflict was sometimes unavoidable with some nomadic tribes wandering around the vast Sahara, especially with the Libyan tribes, who were even more mobile than the Algerians and the Tunisians. Yet, it was possible to bring the nomadic fighting forces under control, by making use of their skills in the trade system them as cameleers, caravan guards and as defenders of caravan routes. This para-military force also helped to take under control the conflicts among the religious or economic-based rival tribal groups. These auxiliary forces were more effective than the Odjaklu to deal with most cases in the hinterland. Hence, the Turks succeeded to keep their authority in this region for centuries with no fear of threat coming from the desert, unlike the Spaniards in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the Italians in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is widely known that, after a long period of disorder, the Turks had brought peace and stability to central and western Maghreb. Yet, the Ottoman administrative system was not free from problems. There were abuses of authority and clashes between the people and the government cadres. Power struggles ending in bloody conflicts had their negative effects on the people. Such conflicts are touched upon in the next chapters.

The historians of the colonialist period have pointed the finger at the Oodjaks, and accused them of carrying out acts of piracy and getting involved in the slave trade. Actually, this is an attempt to exonerate one side. Distorting the image of the Odjaks unfairly have gone so far as to call them "barbarians", and even "bloodthirsty human beings". Recent studies are helping to clear this reflective approach. In fact, Turks were following the steps of the practices prevalent at that period in the Mediterranean. The issue was an interaction and the current autochthonous way of life was being adapted.

Separation of piracy from corsary (or privateering), and affirmation of the latter as a legal institution, is a rather recent perception. Odjak's

legitimacy is also confirmed in a detailed explanation found in the works of Fernand Braudel<sup>46</sup>:

*'Piracy in the Mediterranean is as old as history. There are pirates in Boccaccio and Cervantes just as there are in Homer. Such antiquity may even have given it a more natural (dare one say a more human?) character than elsewhere. The equally troubled Atlantic was frequented in the sixteenth century by pirates certainly more cruel than those of the Mediterranean were. Indeed in the Mediterranean, the words piracy and pirates were hardly in current usage before the beginning of the seventeenth century: privateering and privateers or corsairs were the expressions commonly used and the distinction, which is perfectly clear in the legal sense, while it does not fundamentally change the elements of the problem, has its importance. Privateering is legitimate war, authorized either by a formal declaration of war or by letters of marque, passports, commissions or instructions. Strange though it now appears to us, privateering had 'its own laws, rules, living customs, and traditions'. Drake's departure for the New World without any form of commission was considered illegal by many of his fellow countrymen. In fact, it would be wrong to suppose that there was not already in the sixteenth century a form of international law with its own conventions and some binding force. Islam and Christendom exchanged ambassadors, signed treaties and often respected their clauses. In the sense that the entire Mediterranean was an arena of constant conflict between two adjacent and warring civilizations, war was a permanent reality, excusing and justifying piracy; to justify it was also to assimilate it to the neighbouring and in its way respectable category of privateering. The Spaniards in the sixteenth century use both terms; they speak of Barbary 'corsairs' in the Mediterranean and of French, English, and Dutch 'pirates' in the Atlantic. If the word piracy was extended in the seventeenth century to activities in the Mediterranean, it was because Spain now wished to stigmatise as dishonourable all robbery on the inland sea, recognizing that the privateering of the old days had degenerated into nothing more nor less than an underhand and disguised war waged by all the Christian powers against her trade, dominion and wealth. The word piracy was applied to the Algerine corsairs, according to one historian, only after the capture of the Marmora by the Spanish (1614) when the corsairs of the town were driven to take refuge in Algiers. The*

word may have sailed in through the Straits of Gibraltar with the Atlantic ships; but this is only conjecture.

Privateering and piracy, the reader may think, came to much the same thing: similar cruelties, similar pressures determined the conduct of operations and the disposal of slaves or seized goods. All the same, there was a difference: privateering was an ancient form of piracy native to the Mediterranean, with its own familiar customs, agreements, and negotiations. While robbers and robbed were not actually accomplices before the event, like the popular figures of the *Commedia dell'Arte*, they were well used to methods of bargaining and reaching terms, hence the many networks of intermediaries (without the complicity of Leghorn and its open port, stolen goods would have rotted in the ports of Barbary). Hence, too the many pitfalls and over simplifications in wait for the unwary historian. Privateering in the sixteenth century was not the exclusive domain of any single group or seaport; there was no single culprit. It was endemic. All, from the most wretched to the most powerful, rich and poor alike, cities, lords and states, were caught up in a web of operations cast over the whole sea. In the past, western historians have encouraged us to see only the pirates of Islam, in particular the Barbary corsairs. The notorious fortune of Algiers tends to blind one to the rest. But, this fortune was not unique; Malta and Leghorn were Christendom's Algiers, they too had their *bagnios*, their slave-markets, and their sordid transactions. The fortune of Algiers itself calls for some serious reservations: who or what was behind its increased activity, particularly in the seventeenth century? We are indebted to Godfrey Fisher's excellent book 'Barbary Legend' for opening our eyes. For it was not merely in Algiers that men hunted each other, threw their enemies into prison, sold or tortured them and became familiar with the miseries, horrors and gleams of sainthood of the 'concentration camp world': it was all over the Mediterranean.

Privateering often had little to do with either country or faith, but was merely a means of making a living. If the corsairs came home empty-handed, there would be famine in Algiers. Privateers in these circumstances took no heed of persons, nationalities, or creeds, but became mere sea-robbers. The *Uskoks* of Segna and Fiume robbed Turks and Christians alike; the galleys and galleons of the *ponentini* (as western corsairs were called in the waters of the Levant) did just the same: they

*seized anything that came their way, including Venetian or Marseille vessels...'*

As pointed out by Professor *Salvatore Bono*, an expert on the Mediterranean history,<sup>2</sup> the European/Christian and Turkish/Muslim sides both acted the same in their deeds of piracy and corsair. Bono cites numerous examples in support of his view.<sup>47</sup> He differentiates between corsairs and pirates, explaining that the former is an action carried out under the guidance and control of a government, and aims mainly to ward off enemy attack. Piracy takes place without the consent of an administrative institution, has no limits, and aims personal profit; accordingly, it can also be called banditry. Bono's work is particularly interesting, because he gives details and figures of Muslim slaves (referring them as Turks) in European ports, including even women and children. He estimates the numbers of Muslim slaves kept in the main ports as; 10-20 thousand in Naples, 2 thousand in Malta, 1 thousand in Livorno, and the number of Christian slaves; 20-25 thousand in Algiers, 7-10 thousand in Tunis, 1-1.5 thousand in Tripoli. He further explains:

*Both sides attacked ships, ports, kidnapped human beings and sold them (...) In European mentality and historiography, as well as in the memoirs of the people, there exists the belief that corsairs and pirates in the Mediterranean were only Muslims and that Europeans and Christians were their victims. Instead, taking a leading role in the activities directed against Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Sale and Tetouan, were the Knights of Malta and Santa Stefano, the city states of Tuscany, Genova and Naples, as well as the individual pirates who were active under their guidance. As they procured economic profits, they received unlimited support. Those working with the Knights of Malta were obliged to pay them 10 % of their income, with another 5 % going to other institutions.*

The knights and the Odjak, in terms of rules and regulations, and general conditions, differed, indeed, in minor points. *Venture de Paradis*, observer of Maghreb from 1757 to 1795, points to their similarities:<sup>48</sup>

1. *A ban on marriage,*
2. *In case of captivity as prisoner of war, the institution pays no ransom,*



3. *The highest position in society is held and rules for ordinary people do not apply.* (For instance, the Odjaklu could not be executed publicly, and if subjected to death penalty would be strangled instead of beheading),
4. *Children do not inherit their father's status,*
5. *A type of military democracy where the members chose their leader,*
6. *The knights depend on the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the odjak on the Sultan,*
7. *The Dey and the Grand Master have full rights over the people ,*
8. *Both institutions provide accommodations to members,*
9. *Knights are of noble birth, and the odjaklu are Turks,*
10. *Both have religious ties and share the goal of defending their religions.*

### **Tripoli under the Beghlerbeys**

The Ottoman commander *Sinan Pasha*, assigned to the conquest of Tripoli, arrived in Tadjura from Istanbul with a fleet carrying 6000 warriors and 40 cannons. With the support of modest local forces of *Murad Agha* - who had been ruling as beghlerbey for nearly 20 years in the name of the Ottoman Sultan - he laid siege to Tripoli. The Spaniards realized that they could not resist and agreed to leave the city unharmed on August 15, 1551.<sup>49</sup>

The immediate result of the conquest was an increase in commercial traffic. With the appointment of *Dragut (Turgut Reis)* to the post of Beghlerbey in 1556, economic growth reached its maximum. The successful contacts established with the hinterland played an important part in this growth. With the incorporation of Sfax, Monastir, Sousse, and even Qayrawan in Tunisia into its territories, Tripoli increased its wealth. A group of inhabitants of Sfax, mainly tradesmen, artisans, and farmers formed a rich social structure<sup>50</sup>. Another important contribution came from the Sahara. The transfer of rule from Christians to Muslims encouraged the ruler of Bornou, *Mai Muhammad*, to conclude an agreement with Dragut for the development of commercial exchange; this agreement was renewed in 1598.<sup>51</sup> Dragut was also successful in his defence against the united attacks of Europeans. A crusader fleet composed of Spanish, Papal, Genovese, Florentine, Maltese, Sicilian, and Neapolitan ships was destroyed near the coast of Djerba in May 1560; 47 ships were captured

and their commanders taken prisoners. Dragut wanted to occupy Malta as well, but died of shrapnel wound inflicted at the siege of the island (June 23, 1565). His tomb lies inside the premises of a mosque carrying his name in Tripoli. Considered sacred by the people, it was a custom for the new beglerbey to visit the tomb and offer sacrifices before assuming his office.

The occupation of Tripoli was the second important step towards complete dominance over Maghreb. The annexation of southern Tunisia to Tripoli was an important move in strengthening Muslim control, but without conquering Tunisia entirely, the security of Mediterranean could not be achieved. In 1570, the Ottomans took over Cyprus from Venetians, and Tunis from Spaniards. However, in 1571, a Christian fleet destroyed the Ottoman fleet, off Lepanto. The following year Spain occupied Tunis and placed *Muhammad Beni al Hassan* of the Hafsids on the throne. He was not the only Arab collaborator serving the Spaniards. An individual called *Yahya bin Yahya Suwayden*, claiming to be Mahdi, launched a revolt in Djerba, and later in Tadjura. He collected taxes and recruited soldiers in his own name, and was able to halt Ottoman forces with weapons he received from the Knights of Malta. Thousands died in the clashes. The local forces were not able to suppress the rebellion that went on for four years (1589-1592). The fighting ended with the intervention of Ottoman forces in Egypt and Tunis. Yahya escaped to the desert, but *Sheikh bin Nur* of the Mehamid handed him over to the Turkish administration and he was executed.

Turmoil in southern Tunisia had a dual effect on Tripoli. First, the arrival of migrants running away from the Spanish occupation caused tensions to rise; second, some parts of south Tunisia under Ottoman rule began to refuse to pay tax. In the end, in September 1574, the imperial fleet and land forces of Tripoli conquered Tunis in a joint operation. With the incorporation of Tunis into the Ottoman Empire, the Europeans gave up their plans to conquer North Africa, realizing that this would mean war.. Except some threats to use naval force directed at the local leaders to solve a particular dispute (at times to end by the arbitration of the Porte),

the Europeans were not to return to Maghreb as invaders for the coming two centuries.

When the local communities reached a *modus vivendi* on dealing with the external threat, they focused over the internal problems of the region. The three strata also went under similar internal struggles both within and among themselves. There was a close relation between the welfare of the Odjaklus and the daily life of the people. Due to the ship construction techniques of the period, the sailing season was limited to five or six months beginning from April or May. Thus, the odjaklus had time free for the rest of the year. Furthermore, contrary to the principles of the Odjak, they were tempted to acquire quick fortunes through piracy. In fact, only Odjaklus owned coffee houses in Maghreb. Additionally, many formed partnerships with local businessmen either by contributing in capital or by providing protection. Obviously, those involved in trade activities were only a minority; not all odjaklus had such opportunities, or attempted to make use of them, and the majority simply did what they could to ameliorate their living conditions.

The reasons behind the clashes between beghlerbeys and Odjaklus, which, in fact, mainly stem from conduct on part of beghlerbeys, may be explained by two factors. The first was the limited tenure of the beghlerbeys – a maximum of three years – prompting some of them to make a fortune before the end of their term. They would return to İstanbul and have to wait for their next assignment. The Odjaklus, putting their lives at risk in service, were resentful about the greed of the beghlerbeys. The second was legal intervention by some beghlerbeys to prevent the Odjaklu from levying tribute on the people.

It was difficult for the Porte to intervene in the clashes that broke out between the beghlerbeys and the Odjaklu due to known communication and logistical problems. In the Ottoman Archives, there are various documents written by beghlerbeys that call for the intervention of the Porte against the Odjaklus. These requests would be replied months later, mainly by decrees that reiterated the administrative rules and principles, such as; it is the Odjaklus who have the full right of control over the people; the

reaya have the right of direct appeal to the beghlerbey, and they can also ask for their complaints to be sent to İstanbul. Beghlerbeys were under the intense pressure of reaya complaints lodged against the Odjaklus. If the Sublime Porte found their complaints justified, the sultan would order an end to the cruelty of the Odjaklus. Interestingly, the people's hopes for final justice lay with İstanbul.

Daily life of the people under the Spanish occupation and the Ottoman period showed deep contrasts. In the course of the Spanish rule, which controlled only the coastal ports, the people of the hinterland were deprived of their trade income, but were relieved from paying taxes and tribute. The Ottoman rule, however, developed trade, but imposed taxes and tribute. When qaids nominated by the local people refused to implement the imposed taxes and revolted, a central defterdar (official put in charge of the treasury) was assigned in Tripoli. However, this time, malpractice by soldiers in charge of exacting tax began to be a problem. Although the administration covered their expenses, soldiers seized the belongings of the people (camels, sheep etc.) and sold them. These events contributed to the deterioration of the social order.

Another reason for the instability of the Tripoli region was the alterations made in the administrative borders. There were times when Tripoli was placed under the rule of the beghlerbey of Tunis. However, with *Tripoli's* return to self-administration the position of Southern Tunisian regions such as the sandjaks of Kafsas and Sfax became a problem. They were united with Tunis, but the beghlerbey of *Tripoli* submitted an application to *İstanbul*, asking for salaries of the military cadres to be paid from the tributes of *Kafsas* and *Sfax*. A seditious mood swept over the Tunisian territories. Because of this dispute, the unification of Sfax had to wait until it finally would be made a sandjak of *Tunisia*, again.

The rivalry between Tripoli and Tunis never ended. Both refused to comply with the sultan's decrees, which invited them to cooperate with each other. As most of the requests from the Porte were mainly on military problems, it may be thought that the will or influence of the tyrannical janissary leaders lay behind them. The tension between odjaklu and

beghlerbey reached to such an extent that, in 1584, the janissaries assassinated the beghlerbey, *Ramadan Pasha*. The Captain Pasha sent from Istanbul to suppress the anarchy recommended to the Porte to replace all military forces by sending a new contingent from the Ottoman capital. He asked for 300 janissaries and gunners, 100 grenadiers and caulkers, and 200 armourers and 450 personnel from various formations. In line with his suggestions, changes were made, but after a while, the old way of entering into intrigues reasserted itself. Continuous warnings from Istanbul could not solve the problem. From 1595 to 1615, Tripoli would go through a period of disorder as never seen before.

The Ottoman administration focusing mainly on trade, kept its relations with the people of the hinterland in a peaceful line. Particular care was shown not to take any risk of embarking on an adventure in the Sahara. For the people of the Sahara, good relations meant, as well as trade, the provision of arms, which could only be supplied by the Ottomans at the time. The Ottomans, mainly upon the request of the Saharan people, would act as mediator and find solutions to disputes among them. The events that paved the way to the incorporation of Fezzan into the Empire give an idea on the nature of relations between the administration and the Sahara:

*"Turks were not interested directly with Fezzan. An invitation came from Khawd, one of the two wives of Al Mustansir, chief of the Fezzan province. She lived in Sebha, the other wife in Murzuk. Mustansir divided his time equally between the two of them. Out of jealousy, Khawd sought the intervention of the chief of the Tripolitanian diwan and closed the doors of the city to Mustansir, who then died from grief. When Turkish forces arrived from Tripoli, Khawd refused to let them in, wanting to rule the Fezzan herself. However, she could not resist, and these troops occupied the area. Then, they headed towards Murzuk, which Mustansir's son had abandoned before seeking refuge in the Sudan. Consequently, all the caravan roads fell under the full control of the Turks. Acknowledging this reality, Idriss the Sultan of Bornou sent an ambassador to Istanbul to ask for the restitution of the fortress and the delivery of firearms. Fezzan recovered its autonomy in 1582, on condition to pay a yearly tribute to the beghlerbey of Tripoli."*<sup>52</sup>

### III. THE DEYS AND QARAMANLIS, 1603-1835

#### **Pre-eminence of the Deys** <sup>53</sup>

The external problems of Tripoli had more influence on its economy and politics compared to the internal ones. Wars fought in the Mediterranean and in the Sahara disrupted Tripoli's trade, its main source of income. More often than not, trade would stop completely, because merchant ships could not reach the port or because caravan routes had been diverted to other destinations. These disruptions of trade led to an immediate negative effect on the income of the Odjaklu. They would have to look for other means to carry on their living and that would often be the local people and in a rather oppressive form. At times of peace, it was possible to acquire a surprise income from privateering. Occasionally, the Odjaklu would fight over the booty among them. With no means to intervene instantly, the Porte had to recognize the outcome of such quarrels rather than to face the collapse of the political order, and any independence claims. Hence, a system of direct rule from Istanbul (the beglerbeyship) gradually gave way to a decentralised one. This transition was completed when the Deys finally won the struggle for power.

The Europeans planned that the Odjaks would be much more exposed to them, if they could be completely detached from İstanbul. They claimed that the odjaks were independent "republics", and called them "regencies". In reality, the Odjaklu, even at times of self-government, did not attempt to cut off their ties with the Sublime Porte. The number of treaties "contracted" between the European powers and the beglerbeys or the deys may point as if there was independence. In 1830, they signed their tenth treaty or contract with France. The preceding ones were signed in 1681, 1685, 1692, 1720, 1729, 1752, 1774, 1799, and 1801. In general, there is no reference made to the Ottoman Empire, but the titles used by the signatories leave no doubt on the dependence on the Porte. For instance, the treaty of 1752 is signed by "the governor of Trablous",

*Muhammad Pasha*; “the minister of the province of Trablous (Ayalat Trablous)”, *Sheikh Ali Reis*; “the undersecretary (Mustashar) of the province of Trablous”, *Hussain*; and “*Pasha* of Trablous”, *Youssuf*.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, the titles that reflect full Ottoman sovereignty indicate that the deys attained their power not by swift change but through a gradual process yielding its fruits in time without altering the social structure based on the three strata.

According to *Ibn Ghalbun*, the first Dey was *Suleiman* (Turkish sources give the name of *Sefer*). The power struggle of the deys began in the last decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and continued without interruption. In 1614, the Porte sent Admiral *Khalil Pasha* with a fleet to Tripoli to inquire into the complaints about *Sefer*. He was arrested, interrogated, all his fortune sequestered, and hanged in the end. The Odjak accepted *Sherif Pasha*, the new beghlerbey appointed from İstanbul. However, in 1625, he, too, was arrested and sent back to İstanbul. The new dey, *Ramadan*, stayed in power for three years, to be replaced by *Mehmed Saqizli*. Saqizli strived to put an end to the deterioration in the economic and social spheres caused by internal strife. His efforts are explained in the works of *Ibn Ghalboun*, a Tripolitanian historian. The income from privateering was in decrease due to changes taking place in the international scene. First measures taken by Saqizli were to bring the taxes to reasonable levels. Finding the janissary corps inadequate, he started to recruit the kuloghlus to meet the security needs of the region. In appreciation of his accomplishments, the Porte appointed him as beghlerbey and gave him the title of pasha. His successor, *Osman Dey*, elected by the Odjaklus, requested and received the title of beghlerbey from the Porte. At the time of *Osman Dey*, Tripoli took part in the Mediterranean expeditions of the Ottoman fleet in 1645 and 1667. In the early days of his administration, justice prevailed, but gradually oppressive and extortionist practices began. Eventually, *Osman* tried to take away the booty of privateering from the odjaklu. This move incited a revolt that forced *Osman* to commit suicide in 1672. The odjaklu elected a new dey.

The Porte learned about these dramatic events by a message sent to İstanbul together with precious gifts. The British consul was bewildered

with the behaviour of both sides. He had considered the uprising as the declaration of a 'New Republic'. His surprise was even more when the beglerbey appointed by Istanbul arrived in Tripoli. He was welcomed with full honours, and given the best residence. Yet, he would not be permitted to interfere in the affairs of the region. The odjaklu placed guards at the gates of the palace to prevent his contacts with the outside world.<sup>55</sup> The odjaklu were showing their devotion to the Sultan, but even more; they were aware of their dependence on the empire's protective shield without which they could be eliminated easily.

Istanbul was not always on the side of the winners; the complaints of the people were also taken into consideration. The case of *İbrahim Dey* who was dismissed because of a petition submitted by the people is an outstanding example. İbrahim, learning that the odjaklu were setting plots against his life, sailed to İstanbul, received an 'irade' for his appointment to beglerbeyship, and returned to his post with an official from İstanbul (1676). This official returned to İstanbul with a delegation of 30 Tripolitarians carrying a petition against İbrahim. The Divan, after studying the case in detail, decided to dismiss İbrahim in line with the people's request.

Could the Porte have been involved more actively in the administration of Tripoli? It is possible to explain the lack of more active involvement on the side of the Porte with the problem of communication, but in fact, wars fought in central Europe had become the main concern. The Porte found the withdrawal of the Europeans from North Africa, and the maintenance of the status quo with some concessions, adequate. When the last Spanish assault on Tunis ended in 1572, from then on, North Africa was free of invasion threats coming from the North Mediterranean. This was mainly due to internal struggles that prevailed in Europe. Yet, it did not mean that a European diplomatic and trade presence was not there. France appointed its first consul to Tripoli by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Britain's first consul arrived in Tripoli in 1584 with the purpose of buying olive oil. The British would pay a high cost for his involvement in the escape of a prisoner, as the ship concerned was seized and the



commander sentenced. The case was closed by the intervention of the Porte.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, piracy was still in force in the European countries but as a result of the the colonial policies pursued by the European governments, piracy gradually came under state control. At the official level, intense reactions were shown to piracy. Vigorous efforts were being made to protect all the sea routes to and from Europe. By the middle of the century, Mehmed Saqizli instituted a passport system to regulate trade relations with European merchants. Passports were issued to ship-owners paying tax to the odjak to provide immunity from odjak ship attacks, without which they could be target to privateering. As expressed by a source, *“The system of passports was advantageous to the Pasha, but not satisfying for the European nations, who considered their ships sailing to the Levant at the mercy of pirates, and among them the most dreaded were those of Tripoli.”*<sup>56</sup>

*Zeltner’s* above comment, based on the remarks of the European prisoners or travellers of the period, proves two points. First, the passport system was a coherent arrangement set up with the need to regulate the commercial traffic. However, Europeans who were applying very strict controls in their own ports were not willing to comply with similar regulations in ports abroad. They wanted a free hand in North Africa, as they had in the Americas, South Africa, and South Asia. In other words, the emerging colonialism was not willing to be subjected to regulations applied in all Ottoman domains, even at the risk of depredations of privateers.

In a way, this paradox was observed in the intensifying rivalry in the Mediterranean between France and the newcomer, Britain. The Italian cities - particularly Venice - were in regress, because of the quarter century long war over Crete with the Ottoman Empire (1645-1669). As Spain was not on the scene in Levant for a long time, European interests centring on North Africa largely were reflections of Anglo-French rivalry in colonialism, with the British holding the upper hand in America. The consuls of both countries frequently tried to provoke the odjak of Tripoli against each other’s citizens and ships. *Zeltner, who* studied the original

documents regarding the activities of these consuls, cites the following examples:

- 1657: *Oliver Cromwell*, after renewing the treaty with the Sublime Porte and signing accords with Algiers and Tunis, sends out a flotilla to Tripoli to free a British prisoner and signs an agreement.

- 1675/76: The British warships, to achieve the compensation of British subjects, blockade the entry of the Tripoli harbour. On January 14, 1676, in a surprise midnight attack, all Tripolitanian vessels are set on fire. The city suffers heavy shelling, and peace agreement is signed.

- 1680/81: Although the Porte, since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, has had good relations with France, the odjak becoming gradually more reliant on privateering due to the diminishing trade opportunities, eventually attacks French ships. The British, in their rivalry with France, further provokes the Tripolitanians against French interests. France, instead of attacking Ottoman ships, prefers to settle its dispute with Tripoli by a deal with *Kapudan Pasha* (the Ottoman Chief Admiral), but does not refrain from shelling Tripoli, killing 100 people and wounding 800. It turns into a diplomatic problem between Paris and İstanbul and ends when France agrees to pay compensation.

- 1683: Spanish fleet bombards Tripoli for damages given to its citizens. An agreement is reached for opening a consulate in Tripoli to protect the rights of Spanish citizens. When the beglerbey tries to cancel the agreement in 1689, a Spanish fleet is sent again to force its renewal.

- 1685: A French fleet bombards Tripoli in retaliation for attacks on French ships.

In the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the British consul made strenuous efforts to halt the deterioration of relations between Tripoli and Britain. Both France and Britain went on with the race to discredit the other in order to gain the support of the Tripolitanians. In 1689, the French tried to convince the Tripolitanians that the British fleet would not be in a position to make a port call during the year. On the other hand, the British consul, with the consent of Holland, gave the dey a guarantee of support against a French attack. The British and Dutch governments also accepted to pay the dey 30.000 piastres and to supply sails, cordage, and tackle for

his ships. French, disturbed by privateering, retaliated by bombarding Tripoli. In the end, peace was reached in 1693. France agreed to open its ports, Marseilles and Toulon to Odjak's ships for provisioning and to pay an indemnity. They supplied mortars, powder to the dey, and paid a generous price for Tripoli's cereals. A rumour went around that the French had offered a considerable sum of money to the dey to gain his support, and the dey had kept the money without informing the odjaklu. In line with the agreement signed with France, the odjak declared war on Britain. This time, it was Britain's turn to offer presents to buy the peace.

Wars fought in the continent kept the French and British involvement in Tripoli at a low level. The European activities in the Mediterranean region had to slow down all the more by the war of the Spanish succession (1701-1715). Hence, a more favourable atmosphere for piracy had formed.

Caught amid the internal clashes of the odjaklu and the European interventions, the stand taken by the common people, the reaya, needs to be reviewed. The people living in the city of Tripoli were willing to share the same fate with the odjak, because the continuation of the Saharan trade and the profits coming from privateering was crucial for their welfare. After all, they had access to various goods coming from Europe; the European materials exchanged or traded for Saharan products included cloth, vine, glass, sulphur, iron, bronze, copper, wood, and cables used ship construction. Even when they were exposed to severe administrative pressure, uprisings would not be seen among the people of Tripoli. The British consul, *Nathaniel Bradley*, in his report on the bloody events that surfaced among the odjaklus in 1672, wrote:

*"It was miraculous that during all these fights the good order of the city was not disturbed, life continued normally in these troubled times, not any prejudice were done to any simple people."*<sup>57</sup>

Quite obviously, Tripolitarians were not living in a perfect state of peace and calm. However, it is a fact that their interest laid in the continuation of the status quo. Indeed, they were closely concerned with the condition and efficiency of the fleet, their main source of income. Even

when they had only eight vessels, it was considered a very efficacious one. *Osman Pasha*, during his long beghlerbeyship in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, was able to increase the number of ships to 24, which also participated in the empire's expeditions against the Europeans in 1645 and 1667. The Porte gave high regard to the strategic value of the Tripolitanian fleet. İstanbul, when required, sent in its financial and material aid to the odjak's fleet with no hesitation. When the fleet was destroyed in 1681, it was rebuilt with İstanbul's technical and material assistance. The people of the city, resting assured that the Sublime Porte would stand by them at all times, failed not to show their full allegiance to the Ottoman system.

The administration's relations with the people of smaller settlements and the Saharan nomads took a completely different course. Feeling no pressure of a direct European threat, the sole concern of these settled communities remained to be their daily lives, tax collection issues left aside. They were under the strong influence of their religious leaders. There were occasional insurrections in the areas near the coastal cities, but these did not constitute serious threat. A disturbing opposition came from the Sahara, the main transit route for trade goods (slaves, gold powder, henna, wool, wax, dates, wheat, salt etc.). The people of the Sahara, discontent with their dependence on the beghlerbey and his tax impositions, held a desire for autonomy. Between 1625 and 1632, *Ramadan Dey* directed expeditions against the people of Fezzan, who refused to pay their taxes. In the 1640s, Murzuk asked the dey *Saqizli* to intervene in the unrest in Fezzan; an agreement stipulating payment of a tribute of 4 thousand *mithqals* (approximately 20 kilos of gold), half in kind and half in slaves, by Fezzan was reached. In 1682, an uprising by an odjaklu group against the dey at Djebel Gharbi gained the support of the local people and ended in the nomination of a new dey. In 1694 and 1695, the dey, *Osman Pasha* was successful in suppressing revolts in Fezzan and Murzuk. When an imprisoned rebel who took an oath of loyalty to the Ottoman sultan-caliph was nominated as qaid, order returned. There were also uprisings in Sirte and Garian in the last quarter of the century, but with no serious consequences.

The disputes among the three odjaks over their tribute and tax collecting regions tended to undermine the social order in Maghreb. In 1672, Tunisian forces attacked and laid siege to Tripoli. The ulema and the notables intervened to prevent fighting among Muslims and Tunisians withdrew without giving harm to the city. At another time, Tripoli supported an attack by the odjak of Algiers against Tunis. The Tunisians sought Istanbul's help, protesting that the Algerians and the Tripolitanians were causing more harm to the country than the enemies of Islam. The Sublime Porte invited the representatives of the parties in dispute to present their cases before the Divan. As a result, new beghlerbeys were appointed to both Algiers and Tripoli. In 1703, the Tunisian beghlerbey, *Murad*, launched an attack on Algiers with the support of Tripoli. The attack of the united forces on Constantine was unsuccessful. A year later, the new Tunisian beghlerbey decided to march on Tripoli, only to withdraw when an alliance between the Tripolitanians and his predecessor seemed likely; involving a deal on the latter's confiscated properties.

#### **Qaramanli rule, 1711-1835<sup>58</sup>**

There is a general consent that the years between 1685 and 1711 stand for a time of political turmoil in Tripoli. Control by the Sublime Porte gradually weakened, and reached at its low in 1683 when the Ottoman army was defeated at the gates of Vienna. The sultan and his government focused their efforts on how to stop the disintegration of the Empire's European domains. The short tenure of the deys and beghlerbeys during this turbulent period is a sign of the instability in North Africa caused by the weakening Ottoman rule. The deys and beghlerbeys who ruled in the name of the sultan are as follows:

*Hasan Abaza*, 1679 – June 11, 1683,

*Abdallah*, June 11, 1683 – August 30, 1684,

*Abdallah İzmirli*, August 30, 1684 – March 11, 1686,

*Tarzi*, March 11, 1686 – November 4, 1687.

After an exceptional period of relative stability marked by *Muhammad Sha'ib al*

Ayn's 14 and Khalil Bey's 7 years, short rulings restart:

*İbrahim*, 1708 – November 7, 1710,  
*İsmail Khodja*, November 7, 1710 – January 29, 1711,  
*Hadji Mustafa*, January 29, 1711 – July 11, 1711,  
*Abu Moussa Mahmud*, July 11, 1711 – July 27, 1711.

Being the fourth dey appointed within seven months, overwhelmed with the fear of losing his post, *Abu Moussa's* first action was to try to eliminate his possible rivals. The most eminent amongst them was *Ahmad Qaramanli*, a chief of the janissaries, originally from a town in Central Anatolia, which still bears his name (*Karaman*) today. The dey made a plan to eliminate Ahmad without arousing the suspicions of his followers. He sent him as a messenger to the qaid of a nearby city with a sealed letter ordering his execution. However, the plan failed when suspicious Ahmad opened the letter on the way. He immediately returned to Tripoli, contacted his friends, and in a surprise attack killed Abu Moussa Mahmud and was elected dey. The region was in utter disorder. The Arabs of the city, taking advantage of the weakness of the administration, were on the point of seizing Tripoli and expelling the Turks. Only two days after the election of Ahmad, *Poullard*, French consul wrote: "*The Tripolitarians say that they are ruined and that the Arabs will be the masters of the city.*"<sup>59</sup>

Ahmad's first priority was to suppress the three opposing forces around Tripoli. This struggle lasted for three years. Rebellious forces from rival odjaklus in Misallata and Djebel Gharbi joined the resistance against him. An empty treasury and Fezzan's refusal to pay its tribute increased the intensity of Ahmad's problems. He organized in 1717 and 1718, two expeditions to end the rebellion. The Porte sent an admiral to hold an inquiry into the rebellion. Before the admiral's arrival, Ahmad took his measures and eliminated all persons that could testify against him. In recognition of his success to bring the region under control, the Porte appointed him beghlerbey and gave him the title of pasha. Ahmad never attempted to disregard the authority of the Sublime Porte, but ruled relatively more independent than his predecessors rule.

One of his greatest achievements is the incorporation of the Barca-Cyrenaica region into his domain. It is possible to take this event as an initial step towards the formation of today's territories, and a move towards the concept of modern Libya. Ahmad had a strong fleet composed of seven ships, each equipped with 40 to 60 cannons, in addition to numerous other smaller vessels with sails and oars. He encouraged privateering in an attempt to solve his financial problems, at a time when privateering was giving way to colonialism in Europe. He was successful, but in retaliation, the French fleet bombarded Tripoli (1728). Around 1500 shells of heavy artillery fire left the city severely damaged. Despite the magnitude of the retaliation, privateering continued, but a year later the threat of another French naval attack forced him to accept all conditions put forward, indemnities included. Challenging all odds, Ahmad brought law and order, and economic development to Tripoli, which was to last until 1765. As Ahmad solidified his rule, he felt more independent. He was careful not to enter into direct competition with the sultan, but he could not resist using the title of *amir al muminin* (commander of the faithful) in the Friday sermons.

*Ahmad's* remarkable achievements guaranteed the election of his son *Mehmed* as his successor. Throughout his eight years as beglerbey, he also encouraged privateering that kept wealth flowing into the region. His fleet, at its strongest, composed of 16 ships (five polacres, two chebeks, and six galiotes) controlled the seas with such effectiveness that all nations involved in maritime activity in the Mediterranean were obliged to conclude treaties with Tripoli and pay taxes. Although the Ottoman side – particularly historians – called these agreements simply contracts (*mukavele*), the Europeans insisted that they were formal agreements signed with what they called the 'regency' of Tripoli.

When *Mehmed Pasha* died in 1753, his son *Ali Pasha* whom he had given the title of *serasker* (commander in chief of the army) replaced him. In the first decade of his rule, Ali followed his father's policies. A treaty with the Venetian Republic (1763) helped him to enlarge his area of influence. It is interesting to note that among the signatories of the treaty, Ali's son was given the title 'agha of janissaries and heir apparent'. This

treaty was a sign, which showed that Ali sought more freedom of action and independence without having to break entirely away from the Empire. However, the Tripolitanian privateers went beyond the limits of Ali's authority by seizing Venetian ships in violation of the treaty. Even Ali, could not persuade the privateers to restore the booty to owners. The reaction of the Venetian fleet obliged Ali to accept all conditions set by the republic. From this point on, economic instability in the region began to escalate again. Zeltner, referring to the economic reports of consuls, which he studied in the French and British archives, cites that the conditions in Tripoli were getting worse day after day. In his trade report for 1765, French consul De Lancey gave the total value of transactions from Fezzan-Ghadames-Timbuktu to Tripoli as 139.792 *findık altını* (FA), an Ottoman gold coin with a border design resembling the *findık* or hazelnut. The share of slave trade in this amount was 87%. In addition, 80% of the total revenues came from Fezzan, explaining why the odjaklu were so keen to control the hinterland.

Two years later, in 1767, the British consul *Frazer* gives very low trade figures. He claims that goods worth 47.105 FA were sent from Sahara to Tripoli, while exports from Tripoli to Fezzan and Gradates amounted to 34.085 FA. However, it was possible to close some of the 13,020 FA deficit with the income from the release of Christian prisoners. *Zeltner* concludes that commerce in Tripoli still seemed to be in good shape, despite the fall in trade figures. He explains that the large variation between 1765 and 1767 trade figures is a normal pattern of regional trade fluctuations. The inconsistency in the French and British Consul's figures may also result from the sources they have used. Moreover, the British consul gives the breakdown of Tripoli's foreign trade by place of origin as follows; "Imports: from the Levant 36%, Venice and Livorno 25%, and Fezzan and Ghadames, 38%. Exports: to the Levant 47%, Fezzan and Ghadames 30%, and Venice and Livorno, 20%. As these figures show, commercial relations with the Levant (Ottoman lands) represent main part of the transactions. Slaves were the main export material sent towards the Levant. Tripoli's imports from the Levant included linen, cotton products from İzmir, and carpets and shoes. From Europe came simple cloth napolitain, needles, cotton thread, glass beads, trinkets of various kinds,



coral, paper, arrowheads, tobacco, and salt. Materials coming from Sahara for exportation – in addition to slaves – were senna, date, natron, ostrich feather, gun arabic, gold powder.

The French consul, in his additional report in 1767, addressed to the Chamber of Commerce in Marseilles, asking the establishment of a French merchant house in Tripoli, and pointed out to the following:

*“The rarity of the gold and silver pieces increases each day in Tripoli. The Findik Altını does not have a fixed price any more (...) The coins in currency are from a very cheap material and they are highly overvalued, in such a way that they are not legal tender outside the State of Tripoli.”*

Two years later in January 1769, he states that because of uprisings and natural calamities like famine and plague, the trade situation is getting worse: *“I could not get the thousand Findik Altını, an instalment of his debt, because the Pasha has no money. His land is exhausted, he emptied the purses of the renegades in order to see the caravan of Tripoli off towards Mecca (...) The fleet is totally worn out, [and] composed of only four vessel.”*

The scarcity of money was again the subject of a report he wrote in 1773: *“The Pasha and his son, the Bey, and his ministers, closing their eyes to the extreme poverty of the people, have sent to Malta and Mahon loads of olive oil and grain which they had in store. It is the result of the urgent need they have for money.”*

There are references made by foreign observers on the poverty of the people and the corruption in the administration. No doubt, these charges reflect the facts, but there were more substantial causes behind the region's decline. First, the overflow of gold to Europe from Ottoman lands and its replacement by cheap silver from America had a negative affect on the Levant. The Ottoman government could not put a stop to the flight of gold coins from the country by restrictions. The growing economic crisis severely hit Tripoli, which had no goods to produce either for export or for local consumption. A new major factor in the third quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the first appearance of the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean to challenge the Ottoman Navy. The advent of the new fleet had an indirect negative affect on the activities of the Tripolitanian corsairs. Innovations in

sailing and military techniques were about to lead to an immense growth in worldwide maritime activities, as well. Tripolitanian ships not familiar with the new technologies used by the Europeans, began to lose their advantages for easy gain. The long drought in the region between 1768 and 1773 made the situation unbearable. An outbreak of plague killed 50 thousand people and many sought safety in Tunisia or Egypt. More was to come soon with another famine in 1784, and a new outbreak of plague in 1785 that would take a heavy toll of 25 thousand lives.

When the communities of the hinterland saw that the Tripolitanian administration could not cope with the acute problems of the littoral, they began to argue on the state of affairs in a restless mood. The *Awlad Suleiman* Tribes, united under the leadership of *Sayf al Nasr*, sheikh of the fraction of Jiba'ir, refused to comply with the present arrangements. This conflict surfaced in 1769. The bankrupt pasha was expecting the arrival of slaves from Fezzan to balance his budget, but as the slaves died in the plague, he was not able to service his debt for 4.2 thousand FA to French consul *De Lancey*. Knowing that the *Awlad Suleiman* owed the pasha 20 thousand FA, the consul had no angst. However, when *Awlad Suleiman* refused to make his payment to the pasha, he placed him under serious financial strain and caused problems that remained unsolved for many years. In 1779, *Sayf al Nasr*, upraised against the pasha with the support of one of his relatives, and claimed leadership of the odjak. Accordingly, the relations between Tripoli and the hinterland were brought to a halt and the economical situation worsened. If the *Awlad Suleiman* and the Arabs of Gharian had united, then they could eliminate Ali Qaramanli. However, as pointed out by Zeltner, with a mere waylaying experience in caravan roads, they lacked the required ability to cooperate. Al Nasr's revolt ended only in 1784, with the mediation of the French consul. In fact, realising that his revolt would get him nowhere Al Nasr asked the French consul's help to normalize his relations with Ali. The consul received the release of some imprisoned French sailors in return.

The French Revolution of 1789 caused a complete change in the economy of Maghreb and it marked the beginning of a new era. As the French gained full control of the Mediterranean trade, rivals like the British

had to depart from the scene. On the other hand, there were new actors in the region, such as the USA (1795) and Sweden (1798), who agreed to pay tribute to the odjak. There were periods of economic recovery for Tripoli when privateering revived, and the warehouses were slaves and goods filled the warehouses. These periods, which coincide with the times of internecine quarrels among Europeans, did not last long.<sup>60</sup> Treaties and contracts signed with foreign powers drastically reduced the sources of income. The salaries of the odjaklus could not be paid, and accordingly recruitment fell down. Young people – the normal recruiting pool – began to look elsewhere for means to make their livelihood. Only the incapable and disabled remained in military service. The administration had no power to ameliorate the situation. The people were increasingly concerned with their daily lives and their future. A number of notables came together to find a solution to the crisis and decided that the only solution was to appeal to the Sublime Porte.

The initiative of the notables encouraged *Youssuf*, the youngest son of *Ali Qaramanli*, to proceed with a plan to overthrow his father and to take his place.<sup>61</sup> Towards this end, he conspired with *Khalifa bin Awn Mahmoudiya* from the powerful *Awlad Nuwayr* tribe. First, he attempted to kill his main rivals, his elder brothers. Hasan was killed, but Ahmad escaped. In June 1793, in the main uprising, Ali Qaramanli was advised to step down to avoid bloodshed. At this point, in line with the requests of the notables, an Ottoman fleet of nine ships under the command of the newly appointed beglerbey *Ali Pasha Djezairi*, arrived in Tripoli. Ali Qaramanli fled to Tunisia where he prepared to regain power with the support of Hamuda Pasha, the Bey of Tunis. Ali Djezairi's first move was to seize Djerba from Tunis and incorporate it into Tripoli. Ali Qaramanli and Hamuda were forced to act in response. Although Ali Djezairi and his ties with odjak of Algier were sources of deep concern for Hamuda, he chose to avoid the Porte's warnings. In his report to Istanbul, he went further and denied giving support to Qaramanli, asserting that he would never think of going against the orders of the Sultan. Both sides sent messages to Istanbul in defence of their positions.

Finally, Ali Djezairi lost the power struggle and had to escape leaving the floor to *Youssuf Qaramanli* who declared himself the heir and commander of the army. He carefully avoided using the title of governor so as not to annoy the Porte. Youssuf's brother Ahmad was declared governor. After eight months of tranquillity, Youssuf took full control in his hands, forcing Ahmad to take refuge in Malta. Consequently, he arranged a people's petition favouring his nomination. The Ottoman admiral *Hussein Pasha* delivered the petition to the sultan together with Youssuf's personal letter and presents. Accepting the fait accompli, the Porte declared him beglerbey and pasha (1796). As a manifestation of support, a vessel equipped with 28 cannons was sent to him to strengthen his fleet.

Once he gained full control of Tripoli, *Youssuf* wanted to acquire more freedom, even independence. He gave the administration a more state-type look rather than a dependency. An ornate throne-like chair was installed in Youssuf's reception hall, and visitors had to kneel and kiss the ground in his presence. Youssuf obliged his own vizier and foreign affairs adviser to stand, while he received consuls. The French invasion of Egypt (1798-1802), which severely reduced the Porte's capacity to intervene in Maghreb and the war with Russia (1806-1809), encouraged him in his independent actions. Vessels of Ragusa, Sweden, Sardinia, Tuscany, and Naples were seized and tributes were levied on their owners. Relying on his close relations with France, the dominant force in the Mediterranean, Youssuf began to threaten all the other countries with interest in the region. His clash with the United States government played a particularly strong role on his future policies. Asking the help of the Dey of Algiers, Americans tried to conclude a peace treaty with Youssuf. Finally, the parties reached an agreement on the free movement of the American maritime fleet in return for tribute. But, a year later, the American side asked for a reduction, claiming that the amount was too high. The reply sent by Youssuf to his Algerian intermediary shows how he overvalued his power and importance:

*"The Americans have revolted (...) I am ready to make a mess of them (...) Thanks to our fighting forces, all nations except the Americans respect us (...) It is my binding duty to teach them their limits (...) I recommend them*

*to avoid such a sinister action (...) They are relying on the British, but I don't care at all about their role in this affair..."*

The United States responded to the above by sending a fleet, which bombarded Tripoli for 21 days. The suffering was for the people of the city, and the American side had to draw back without a result. However, their next move proved to be an efficient one. They planned Youssuf's exiled brother Ahmad's return from Malta to Maghreb to make him start an uprising in Derna. As the coastline was controlled by the American vessels, Youssuf had no chance to intervene in the uprising. Three years later, in 1805, he gave in to American demands, securing the cessation of the US support to Ahmad, who, then, had to take refuge in Egypt.

The administration of Tripoli, with its maritime revenues from tribute or piracy coming to a stand still, had to turn to the hinterland to find new sources. However, this region was already wrought with financial problems. In 1803, the people of Gharian refused to pay their taxes and revolted. It was taken under control after a fighting of 21 days. In 1806, another uprising, this time at Sirte had to be suppressed. In 1810, Youssuf retook control of Ghadames, which he had lost five years ago to Tunisia with the consent of the people. The target of his next expedition in 1812 was Fezzan, ruled by the *Awlad Muhammad*. Five years later Youssuf sent *Abd-al Jalil*, the chief of *Awlad Suleiman*, with six thousand fighters to help his ally *Muhammad al Amin al Kanimi* in an excursion to control the innermost corners of the Sahara. The army returned with six thousand camels and a tribute of slaves.

As a result of the British blockade in the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, the position of the French was friendlier towards Maghreb. The Odjaks, on their part, had no choice but to meet this new approach with welcome. But, in 1798, the French expedition to Egypt left them in a very difficult state of mind. They were faced with the dilemma to remain loyal to the Porte or to establish good neighbourly relations with France. When Napoleon was removed from the scene in 1815, Britain sent its consuls to Maghreb, and held a naval exercise near the coasts of Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers. With Britain's re-entry, competition between the two European powers restarted.<sup>62</sup> This was the beginning of a new era in

the history of Maghreb, which began in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and lasted until the last years of the Qaramanlis rule.

It was in 1818 that piracy was banned and the slave trade abolished by the *Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle* at the international level. These resolutions had negative impacts on the economy of the 'regency' of Tripoli. Although the local resources were limited, the economic burden over the people began to mount. According to the French consul, share of the general taxes and tithe of lands paid by the people was nearly 2/3 of the total income in 1825, implying a rise of almost 1/3 in comparison to previous years.<sup>63</sup> To make matters worse, in the new shape taken by commerce in the Mediterranean, Tunis gained importance as a caravan route to the detriment of Tripoli.

The extravagant life style led by *Youssuf Qaramanli* also played a role in the collapse of his administration's economy. In his search for new sources, he tried to put into circulation devalued money, but the market refused to accept it. He then attempted to crush the autonomy of *Djebel Gharbi* (1821), in order to lay hands on its revenues. The sheikh *Ghuma bin Khalifah bin Awn al Mahmudi* (born around 1790), of the *Awlad Nuwayr*, had been witness to previous attempts by Youssuf to capture Djebel. After his uncle's assassination by the Qaramanlis, he became grand chief of the *Awlad Nuwayr*, and led a successful resistance. His military failures forced Qaramanli to search for cash. He borrowed heavily from the French and British businessmen and lenders. By 1830, Youssuf's debts to French lenders alone had reached 500 thousand US dollars. The French and British consuls threatened Youssuf by naval action to force him to service his debts. As remarked by Ettore Rossi: "*From then on Tripoli was at the mercy of the consuls, and its destiny is guided more by them than the pasha.*" It became almost a familiar practice for the French or British fleets to blockade Tripoli to secure debt servicing. Youssuf was forced to conclude extremely disadvantageous agreements, which drained his finances and restricted his actions for a long time. These were; renunciation of piracy; interdiction of the imprisonment of foreign citizens and the payment of indemnity along with the liberation of existing prisoners; granting of rights to the Europeans for full freedom of commerce; payment of all expenses of French naval forces in Tripoli. Under such circumstances, he had no other choice, but to impose new

taxes on his people. Even the kuloghlus, normally exempt from tax, were forced to make payments, triggering off a revolt against Youssuf.

This is how “*big trade became Europe’s Trojan horse*” in the destabilization of the region.<sup>64</sup> Tripoli was only the first of a series of bankruptcies in the Maghreb and the Middle East, which would trigger the surrender of Tunisia, Egypt, Sublime Porte, Iran and other territories, one after the other. Economically, politically, and militarily, Youssuf had no choice, but to accept European demands. Since 1827, France had been looking for a pretext to invade Algiers, which was already under its blockade. Two “big projects” advanced by France were circulating among the European powers. The first was related to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, but could not win the support of others. The second envisaged the creation of an Arab Empire by attaching Maghreb as a whole, Tripoli included, to Egypt.<sup>65</sup> *Mehmed Ali*, the governor of Egypt, who already had enlarged his domains by occupying Cyrenaica, approached the French project with precaution. The news of the 1830 French expedition in Algiers was given by Mehmed Ali’s official newspaper *Waqai Misriyya* in a neutral tone.<sup>66</sup> There was no word on the issues of “Islamic solidarity” and “Christian aggressiveness”. In addition, he did not permit the Algerian ships docked in Egyptian ports to return to Algeria to help the odjak. Moreover, he recommended the day to reconcile with France.

The swift change in Mehmed Ali’s attitude towards the sultan caliph is noteworthy. First, he acted cautiously not to look as if favouring a Christian power against the sultan caliph. But, later, he saw no hindrance in challenging the authority of the same sultan caliph by invading Syria and Anatolia, and that at the time of the French invasion of Algeria.

The French invasion of Algiers by a strong force of thirtyseven thousand soldiers landing from a fleet of 600 ships was enough to persuade the Dey to surrender. The first move of the French was to remove the odjak from the social structure of Algiers with immediate mass expulsion of ten to twelve thousand Odjaklus. They were sent to Ottoman territories. The French must have contemplated that these expulsions would help to secure submission of the natives.

The loss of the fleet at Navarino in 1827 kept the Porte from intervention in Algiers. This weakness on the part of the Porte also found a place in the form of a more conciliatory line towards Tripoli. At the same time, Youssuf, sensing the change in the political climate was ready to abandon his independent attitudes. In line with the Porte's recommendations, he reorganized the military force of the odjak based on the model *Nizam-ı Djedid* as had been done in the Ottoman mainland to replace the Janissaries odjak. In addition, with the instigation of the Porte and the consent of French government, Youssuf adopted a new customs system to help debt payment. The Porte, to commend his compliance with the recommendations, bestowed on him the title of 'Beghlerbey of Roumeli'.

In 1832, a disagreement with the family of the British consul *Warrington* broke out and took the form of a crisis. The British government asked for the immediate repayment of all British credits. Youssuf called all the notables to a meeting to seek a solution. Their decision was to collect the required amount from the people. But, when this proposal met a strong opposition, another one came forward; replacing elderly Youssuf with his grandson *Mehmed*. At first Youssuf resisted, but later he resigned in favour of his son. In a petition to the Porte, he asked the Ottoman government to recognize *Ali* as his successor. The Porte accepted his proposal and the relevant firman reached Tripoli by mid August 1833. However, the fight for power among the Qaramanlis did not come to an end. Europeans even recommended dividing the country between the two pretenders. Egypt had already occupied Cyrenaica, and now rest of Libya was facing further disintegration. Their alternatives seemed to be between submission to the Europeans or to Mehmed Ali. On the other hand, Tripolitarians opted for a third solution: to plead to the Ottoman sultan for his direct rule in Tripoli.

From the standpoint of the Sublime Porte, it was going through the most difficult period of its history. By now, the "*Question d'Orient*" had reached its final phase. At a time when Tripolitarians were looking for a way out, important developments were taking shape within the Empire :

- The elimination of the *Janissary Corps* (1826), and their replacement by a new army yet to be established.



- The complete destruction of the Ottoman fleet by the combined British-French-Russian fleets at Navarino (1827).
- The occupation of Edirne by the Russian army (1829) and the intervention of European powers to halt its advance on İstanbul.
- The Greek revolt and declaration of independence with the support of European powers (1821-1830).
- The occupation of Algeria by France (1830).
- The revolt by *Mehmed Ali Pasha*, the Governor of Egypt, and his victory against Ottoman armies and intervention by Britain and Russia to stop his advance on İstanbul (1831-1833).

Weary of the heavy pressure of the above setbacks, the Porte had only one card to play; the balance of interests. In this context, a policy of appeasement was seen as the best way of not giving rise to European reactions. Algeria and Egypt were already out of sultan's control; Tunisia was not attainable; and the French navy did not permit Ottoman military ships to enter Tunisian ports. Tripoli remained to be the only base for possible operations in North Africa. On the other hand, the Porte was still hopeful of an eventual withdrawal of the French army from Algeria. Hence, the Porte was not very keen to go for an immediate change in the decentralized administrative system of Tripoli. It appeared that consolidation of Ali Qaramanli's position would be sufficient. However, a policy change was to follow soon, as a result of the power struggle within the *Qaramanli* family. The notables of Tripoli appealed to the Sultan begging him to intervene directly. Furthermore, the Porte was also concerned with the situation in Tunis, which was tempted to follow *Mehmed Ali's* example towards more autonomy. The sultan and his ministers sought a solution to the autonomy demands of the Ottoman domain, and they found the answer in "the policy of centralization".

In July 1834, France, in a swift move, declared the incorporation of Algeria to its mainland. The Porte was forced to go forward with its plan on centralization. At this stage, Ali Qaramanli began to approach to France. At the request of Paris, *Ali* and *Ghuma* agreed to block any help that reached the Algerian mujahids through the pass of Djebel Gharbi. The French did not stop an Ottoman fleet sent to Tripoli assuming that it had come to Ali's aid. Quite the opposite happened, and to their surprise, Ali was arrested in

short time and sent to İstanbul. At the same moment, the decree on the appointment of the Ottoman governor was made public in the presence of the notables of Tripoli. This event marked the end of the rule of the Qaramanli. A new phase, rule of İstanbul, had been opened.

### III. THE SECOND OTTOMAN PERIOD

#### Defenders of Regionalism: Ghuma and Abd al Jalil

The Sublime Porte was fully aware of the European partition plans on the Ottoman Empire. The decentralized structure, granting autonomy to particular regions, continued as late as the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Ottoman administration, all through the 285 years that passed after the conquest of Tripoli, showed no will to impose its direct rule. There was no deviation from this policy even at the time of the beglerbeys. The sultans had always delegated power to their viceroys. But, starting from 1835, in line with the new policy of centralisation, Tripoli became an integral part of the Empire like all the other domains of the sultan. This rendered essential the setting up of a new kind of relationship between the government and the local people. The system of the odjak was abolished; 'regionalism', practice of thousands of years, had to be replaced with something new. As said by Ahmida, Youssuf Qaramanli failed because, "*he did not modernize his State and army, nor did he broaden his elitist Kuloghlu-controlled State by appealing to a larger population; in the face of these misguided policies, he also continued his extravagant lifestyle.*"<sup>67</sup> And, these were exactly the same points the new approach wanted to revise and reform.

The Porte explained its intervention as a step towards, "*introducing 'order and security' to the people [who] suffered because of the civil war.*"<sup>68</sup> It was also stated that a governor was appointed in line with the requests of the local people, but later on, a different interpretation was brought:

*"The administrators had to act in complete understanding with the imperial orders, with the aim of solving all the problems in the interests of the*

*people. Instead, they parted from efficacious and admissible methods, concluded agreements with friendly countries, and even had the audacity to venture in the fields of an independent government. These were the reasons behind the misfortunes and disasters that caused the people to suffer for years.”*<sup>69</sup>

Accordingly, “order and security” could be achieved only with the full compliance of the people.

There can be no doubt that the Porte had a clear reform program already in mind. As a first, the Ottoman government planned to put an end to foreign intervention in internal affairs of Tripoli, a practice of the Qaramanli period. Hence, it was thought that the best way to stop any intervention of financial origin would be to reimburse the European lenders. The second was, within the context of Tanzimat, to eliminate all tendencies of autonomy. Power was to be concentrated in the hands of the central government.<sup>70</sup> The course of events confirmed that the program was implemented line with this direction, as the Tuscan consul in Tripoli describes:<sup>71</sup>

*“These gentlemen of the French and British consulates, who enjoyed great influence with the previous governments of Tripoli and were able to impose in a certain way the law, are now –at least for the moment – like other consuls, without any privilege of immunity. Their initiatives are not listened to and they are obliged for this reason to comply with all the rules of the new administration without being able to reverse them. Some of the Maltese who were maltreated by Turkish soldiers closed their shops in sign of protest. In reaction, the Captain Pasha prohibited his soldiers and even the Tripolitanians to trade with Europeans and selling them anything.”*

A charge against the first governor, *Taher Pasha* is mainly directed on banning trade with the British, but no the details on the ban is given. In the reports of the Pasha, there is a reference to import of some “*forbidden materials*” by a special authorisation of the British consul. In fact, a British ship with a cargo of gunpowder was seized and its crew arrested. Apparently, the cargo was intended for the tribes of the hinterland. The consul, caught red-handed, found the way to defend himself by making counter-charges, and demanded the dismissal of the governor. There were

fiery quarrels that went on between diplomats and administrators. The British consul lost his credibility even at his own ministry, but it was Taher Pasha who was dismissed in the end. The Porte was in need of the diplomatic support of Britain against France and Russia in the face of the Egyptian threat.<sup>72</sup> To a large extent, economic measures taken by Taher Pasha were behind this event, which led to a loss of influence on the part of the Porte. One of the first measures Pasha took had been to increase the custom duties from 3% to 10%, hitting the European merchants in particular.<sup>73</sup> Tripoli was not a province that contributed to the budget of the State; on the contrary, it needed external sources for its subsistence. In a period when the central administration itself was under financial strain, there was no other choice but to raise the taxes. However, the European diplomats claimed that duty increases were contrary to the terms of the capitulations. By the mid 1820s, the Ottoman Empire was already feeling the heavy pressure of the capitulations. It was no longer able to take decisions that did not comply with the capitulations. Non-conformity claims could be of weak relevance with made up interpretations, but even these would be sufficient to change the steps taken. Consequently, the new Ottoman administration in Tripoli had no choice but to turn to the local people to seek new funds.

However, compared to the littoral, more problems were waiting the new centralised system in the desert. The people of the hinterland, as a result of their traditional tribal way of life, were used to act autonomously. Obtaining their consent in centralisation would not be so easy. With the growing pressure of economic problems, revolts seemed imminent; *Sheikh Ghuma* in Djebel Gharbi, *Sheikh Abd-al Jalil* in Orfele and Fezzan, *Sheikh al Mryyad* in Tarhouna, *Othman al Adghan* in Misurata, and some members of the Qaramanli family declared that they did not recognise the new authority and would not pay their taxes. Their dissent cost the Porte two decades of armed struggle to 'pacify' the countryside. Their expected resistance was the result of centuries of regionalism, which had bred amongst them a spirit of opposition in the interests of their local communities that may be defined as a kind of patriotism. However, as Ch. A. Julien has observed:

*"Their patriotism must not be confused with nationalistic sentiment. Patriotism springs out of the soil and is a sentiment at the same time elementary and powerful which obeys instinct more than reasoning. It is totally different from national sentiment which has to be elaborated and based on a collective requirement."*<sup>74</sup>

It is in this context that the resistance shown to the new system by the people of Djebel Gharbi and of Ghuma may best be appraised.

To prevent any connection between the regionalist reaction and the global threat stemming from Europe, was the main concern of the Sublime Porte. The way to halt events similar to the ones that took place in Algeria, Greece, Serbia, Egypt, etc. was to form a front of unity and solidarity in Tripoli. In line with this aim, the first four governors remained in a mainly discreet line. Only, *Mehmed Nedjib Pasha* imprisoned some Qaramanlis and sent them to İstanbul. He also arrested *Ghuma*, but kept him in Tripoli. His successor set Ghuma free, while fighting the Qaramanlis at Tadjura.

It did not take long for İstanbul to understand that measures taken would not be enough to end the opposition to the government in Tripoli. The justification clause of Admiral Taher Pasha's appointment, as it appeared in the official gazette *Taqwim-i Waqai*, is a reflection of this understanding; *"this province, being very large, and the application of a perfect order as well as the submission of all the people to the exigency of the imperial rule being necessary..."*<sup>75</sup> Later, the same paper shall not fail to criticise his failures and brutal behaviour, which will cause his dismissal. His successor's performance and destiny will not be any more different.

Regionalism began to give its main signs of a break up at the time of governor *Askar Ali Pasha*, in 1838. *Ghuma* and *Abd-al Jalil* expressed their will to go under the sultan's authority on condition to keep their local autonomy. However, Askar Ali turned down their conditions in order to close all possible doors that could lead to independent action by foreign support. He also insisted on tax collection from the rebellious tribes. The Sirte region and Ghuma surrendered, but Djebel carried on with its autonomy and organised *razzias* in Tunis and Tripoli. These *razzias* may

show that Ghuma and Abd al Jalil's motives were mainly driven by economic concerns.

The advice given by the Bey of Tunis to abide by the authority of Sultan produced no effect on them. In their reply, they marked: "*Our region never suffered [such] al hukm al-shadid (an oppressive regime) even in the past*". In fact, the people of the mountainous areas like Djebel-i Lubnan, Eastern Anatolia, and Albania etc. had also been in the same stance. The Porte always dealt with the challenge by granting laws that were more tolerant; even so at the peak of its power when a break away incited by foreign interference was not an issue. In short, the Porte was not experiencing a security problem particular to Maghreb.

In search of alliances, both Ghuma and Abd-al Jalil went along the example of the Qaramanlis and attempted to seek European support. In June 1833, prior to the arrival of *Askar Ali Pasha*, Tunisian Chief Minister *Mohammed D'ghies*, the French consul and some officers acting in a mission had expressed the support of their governments to Ghuma.<sup>76</sup> Other local leaders also, like Ghuma, agreed to renew their support to Ali Qaramanli, who met with the French to review the state of their affairs. It was a time when Algiers was already under the occupation of France, and there were news circulating that Tunis would share the same fate, and Egypt had plans on both Benghazi and Tripoli. They concluded that, tactically, the interests of the people of Djebel would be better served by financial, military, and naval assistance of the Ottomans in the short-term. According to Ettore Rossi, France was also supporting, in secret, Ghuma's attempts to obtain more autonomy from the Ottomans.<sup>77</sup>

While *Ghuma* was getting closer to France, *Abd-al Jalil* who had contacts already with the French was trying to do the same. In addition, by the end of 1840, Jalil had also entered into contacts with the British consul in Tripoli. He explained that his hostility was only directed to the governor and not to the Ottoman sultan whose supremacy he recognized. He further confirmed that he would not act without the mediation and guarantee of Britain. The French consul reports that a rift opened between the Governor and the British consul, who wanted to play an intermediary role between

the administration and the local people.<sup>78</sup> The consul, knowing that the British ambassador in İstanbul had asked the Porte to dismiss the governor in Tripoli, went forward with his plans to place the Jewish merchants and tradesmen under his jurisdiction. He claimed that he had instructions to place them under the protection of the British flag, in case of humiliation or maltreatment.<sup>79</sup> The Porte, in need of British support against threats coming from Egypt and Russia, was not in a position to resist to pressure. Meanwhile, an adventurer and a secret French agent known as *Subtil* contacted Abd-al Jalil with an offer to supply him with ammunition and provisions. Quite obviously, he also had contacts with the British and the Belgians.<sup>80</sup>

Maghreb, as a whole, was now placed at the target of imperialism. The aspirations of the European powers to this end even found their way in press reports. The Maltese newspaper *Portafoglio* regularly reported on the state of affairs and the British involvement in Tripoli :<sup>81</sup>

*“The British ambassador, Sir Stafford Canning, insists on the replacement of Askar Ali Pasha (...) As long as this country is governed by a Turkish Pasha, the Arabs will never recognize the Porte and it will never be able to extract tribute from them (...) This affair closely affects our trade, and for this reason we want it to reach a good end. “ (9 May 1842, no.210)*

*“The contempt of Askar Ali Pasha for the British consul has reached such a degree that reparation has become indispensable (...) The Pasha has been in a great rage since the British consul went to Sirte with a ship and had a personal meeting with Abd al Jalil and the other chiefs of the tribe.” (16 May 1842, no.211)*

*“The Pasha (...) while he treats the other consuls tactfully (...) has expelled the (British) dragoman by spitting in his face (...) Soon many warships will be sent to Tripoli (...) Abd al Jalil has gained courage since he met the British consul. Already he threatens the Pasha, who feels the danger. It is reported that Abd al Jalil has marched on Misurata with a strong army (...) The garrison of that city and some natives have suffered big losses. The last news of the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month informs us that the Arabs have defeated the Pasha and are very near Tripoli (...) At any moment a British naval force is expected off the coast of this city. “(16 May 1842)*

Furthermore, the newspaper in its issue of June 27, 1842 reported that Abd al Jalil had been killed in a clash, and his proposals, which, in fact, were simply dictations of the consul, had been recovered.

The above press campaign clearly displays the nature of British provocations and desires. The British had a candidate for the regency, as well. These reports may contain some exaggerations such as the approval of the abolition of the slave trade by the sheikhs, as in issue no.211. However, they are a sign of the will of the British to compete with France over the domination of Maghreb. Such language as “the Arab hatred of Turks” was widely used by the European circles in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Together with much older religious polemic against Islam and Muslims, the British introduced nationalist themes more in tune with the times. Within this context, regionalism was addressed and used as a tactic to further their interests. If Britain had considered helping Abd al Jalil seriously, it could stop his elimination by sending a fleet. Their approach hints that the primary objective was to demolish the ongoing solidarity between the local people and the Porte. In his yearly report, the French consul described all these events as “*a huge plan concocted with these sheikhs so that the authority of the British consul would prevail over the representative of the Sultan.*”<sup>82</sup>

Prior to Askar Ali Pasha, expeditions by Ottoman forces to Djebel Gharbi had all failed. It was easier to supply provisions and arms to Ghuma’s territory in comparison to Abd al Jalil’s. In his report dated 6 October 1841, Aubry Bailleul, French military ship commander interprets the events in detail:<sup>83</sup>

*“The Pasha obtained the submission of the tribes by prohibiting the transport of cereals (...) Ghuma has 8,000 warriors with him and controls totally Gharian (...) He stands totally at a distance from the Pasha and is in complete agreement with Abd al Jalil (...) He has asked for help from the Bey of Tunis, but has been refused (...) If the Pasha can cut off his communication with the sea, he will deprive him of his supplies and can have him at his mercy. This could open the way of conquest of Tunisia. To summarize (...) If Ghuma continues to receive supplies from the coast, the Pasha of Tripoli will be prevented from materializing his projects. [For this*



*reason] the occupation of Djerba is important to Askar Ali Pasha (...) The consul of Britain is the driving force behind all the intrigues which seem to have been unnoticed in Istanbul and which are very mysteriously conducted in the region. Mr. Warrington does not agree, but he has confessed to me that, the provinces which possess big wealth, with the intention of subduing to the European commerce and civilization, had engaged him to support with all his means the development of Abd al Jalils' power, whom he recommended to me as a man of the future. According to him, Abd al Jalil has all the necessary qualities to rule a country that asks for nothing more than the establishment of relations with the Europeans, and particularly wants to remove forever the insurmountable yoke of the Porte's Pashas. Warrington, who has been British consul for the last 30 years, complained about the abstention of the French consul from contribution in the commercial affairs (...) And he added that, the two nations' open support to Abd al Jalil is enough to achieve this aim. Because, he is the most powerful of all the sheikhs and qualified as Sultan to take away a large country from the authority of the Porte and restore it to its old relations."*

After making further comments about British intrigues, the commander ends his report by recommending exactly the same formula as the British; the promotion of nationalism instead of regionalism:

*"It is necessary to try to revive the thought of an Arab nationalism freed from the Turkish yoke, of which Abd al Jalil, allied to France could one day become the leader (...) And the Arabs should be made to understand that a war against the French would be madness and bring ruin, depopulating the country and delaying the era of commercial transactions (...) The Arabs should also be advised to avoid relations with the British which always ends in the domination of a country where they first enter for trade. The example of Mehmed Ali must not be forgotten."*

As shown by these lines, the Europeans were quite conscious of the fact that the Crusader mentality ought to be avoided in the new era of capitalism; Muslims must not be antagonized and forced to come together. A different approach had to be found in order to avoid a conflicting course. The most convenient way was to export the dominant national feelings in

Europe and to use them to dismember the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the last barrier standing on the way of the imperialistic expansion would be removed. The tactic having worked perfectly with the Ottoman Christians, it seemed logical to try it with the Ottoman Muslims.

In the race for sheikhs, winning Ghuma, who controlled the overland route to Tunisia and Algeria, was of vital importance for all sides, including France. Indeed, every person who wanted to travel in the region had to receive a safe conduct from Ghuma.<sup>84</sup> After defeating Abd al Jalil, Askar Ali Pasha was able to isolate Ghuma's forces and control his lines of supply. Even the dismissal of Askar Ali by British consul's intrigues, was not enough to save the sheikh who was forced to accept Ottoman authority. Confident that the new Ottoman governor would accept, Warrington proposed to arrange the surrender of Ghuma and to bring him to Tripoli on a British vessel.<sup>85</sup> However, it was obvious that once Ghuma was under their military protection, the British would never deliver him to the Ottoman authorities. In the end, the governor's choice was to set the conditions of the surrender under the guarantee of the Tripolitanian notables. Warrington was shocked when Ghuma and four other sheikhs were sent to İstanbul; this was the end of his plan to play Ghuma against the Porte. The governor was accused of breaking the terms of the surrender arrangement by sending Ghuma into exile. The reply of the governor to the accusation is found in the words of the French consul:<sup>86</sup>

*"The Governor attracted Ghuma to Tripoli where he was received with all honours and then escorted to İstanbul (...) The Pasha washes his hands of any imputation of treachery, stating that Ghuma knew when coming to Tripoli that his destiny would be decided at the Porte."*

After the exile of Ghuma, Ottoman army occupied Djebel, executing a dozen chiefs who continued to resist. Their heads were displayed in Tripoli as a means of dissuading the rest of the insurgents. The opening of the main route from Tunis to Algeria was accomplished, but it was too late to help the mujahids at Constantine who had already surrendered to the French.

Contacts between the British and Ghuma continued throughout his 12 years of forced stay at Trabzon (a port city on the Black Sea coast). The British consul in Trabzon, under instruction from his embassy, kept in touch with the sheikh to serve as a courier between the sheikh and Djebel Gharbi.<sup>87</sup> In 1854, Ghuma escaped from Trabzon and headed for Djebel Gharbi. The escape was arranged at a time of turmoil caused by the Crimean War (1853-1856). He reached Djebel Gharbi, and organized a new armed resistance against Ottoman rule. The French lost no time in approaching him, and offered their support, as André Martel explains:<sup>88</sup>

*"In Tripoli and in Tunisia, discontented circles tended to seek help by approaching the consuls. As at that time the British were supporting the existing authorities, for the sake of maintaining Mediterranean equilibrium, these opposition figures turned towards the French (...) In Tripoli Rocha and later Botta [the French consuls] intervened in favour of Ghuma (...) Public opinion in the two regencies believed that he enjoyed the support of France. "*

Moreover, Martel adds that this support for Ghuma in Tripoli was associated with the rights of Arabs in general and was played against the sultan in various cases. However, in the case of the rights of Muslims of Algeria, the same role was not granted to the Porte. The Porte was aware of "Ghuma's contacts with the French emperor and the British queen". Tuwayr adds that Ghuma had even contacts with the Americans for the same purpose.<sup>89</sup> According to the Porte, *"there are some efforts to divert the attention from the main problems, i.e. the Crimean War and especially the Eastern Question in general, by creating unexpected troubles."*<sup>90</sup>

Ghuma died in 1858, aged more than 70, in a clash between his forces and the Ottoman army at Djebel. His death marked the end of all opposition to the Sublime Porte's policy of centralization imposed on the Libyan entity composed of Tripoli (including Djebel Gharb), Fezzan and Cyrenaica. Ghuma, the last hero of regionalism, became a legend amongst his people. His words, poems, and eulogies were transmitted from one generation to the next. One of these sayings explains that the esteem he still enjoys stems from his identification with his people's aspirations

rather than his quality as a leader. “*Ad-darb lil Makhamid wa as-sana’ li Ghuma*” (the fight fell on the Makhamids and the praise on Ghuma).

In the opinion of Algerian historian *Ahmad Tawfiq Madani*, opposition to the Ottoman administration in Maghreb had important negative consequences. He explains the hardships the Algerian combatants encountered when no help reached them, and transmits, in detail, the letters sent to the sultan, viziers and even to the governor of Tripoli by Algerian mujahids, *Hamdan ben Othman Khodja*, *Ahmad Bey of Constantine* and *Amir Abd-al Qadir*. Finally, he gives his opinion:<sup>91</sup>

*“History proves, through these documents, that the Ottoman Empire displayed remarkable political and diplomatic activities in this field. All the States knew – more than the Ottomans themselves - that Ottoman power (...) could not provide for the needs of Algeria, in terms of men and arms since 1827 (...) The first reason for the Algerian resistance’s failure was the declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire by Mehmed Ali Pasha, Governor of Egypt, acting under the influence of French political and military figures (...) After ten years of fighting (1831-1841) the result was null (...) The real winner of this murderous war was France, which sought by this policy to divide the Ottoman Empire into two parts, to weaken and even to annihilate it.”*

Obviously, the roles played by Ghuma and Abd al Jalil cannot be compared to the role played by Mehmed Ali, in scale. The main difference lies in the scope of their actions. While Mehmed Ali aimed to play a first-rate role in the international arena, Ghuma and Abd al Jalil had only local aims. There was also a disparity between the aspirations of the local contenders. Ghuma was content with autonomy without refusing vassalage – even if it is fictitious – while Abd al Jalil was more ambitious, and did not hesitate to appropriate the titles of “sultan” and of “amir al muminin”.

#### **The Impact of Tanzimat<sup>92</sup>**

The administration was compelled to seek solutions to close the gap between the Empire and Europe. As an outcome of these searches, the Ottoman reforms known as Tanzimat were brought in. The main reason

behind the long delay in the reforms was a sense of superiority that prevailed on the Ottoman side all through the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Need for reforms only surfaced in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The printing press, a translation office, and reports by Ottoman ambassadors on European progress were some of the early signs of Tanzimat. The first important steps were taken in the military field. The propulsive factor was the need to make changes in military tactics and arms against superior European forces. At first, changes were introduced in a cautious mode. Attention to Islamic precepts and values were given so as not to give rise to any conflict. In the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the character of the Ottoman Empire as the caliphal power and protector of Islam began to be more strongly stressed in its dealings with foreign governments. This was coming mainly as a reply to Russia and France, who were claiming to defend Christians while fighting the Ottomans. On the internal scene, as modern institutions and regulations, essential but at times unpopular, began to be set, the Porte felt the need to stress on the Islamic nature of the state, more often, with the aim to neutralise mass opposition.

Could the Ottoman Empire deal with its problems without Tanzimat? Today, some Muslim intellectuals argue that it was not a requisite. However, a look at the realities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century gives us a different picture. The Ottoman Empire may be criticized for delaying the reforms, but not for initiating them. As explained in the previous chapter, the European powers had already started, by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to make their plans for the dismemberment of the Empire. The main reasons that delayed the total dissolution of the Empire for almost a century were:

*1) disputes among the colonial powers over the partition of the "Sick Man of Europe", 2) Steps taken to implement Tanzimat, which took international norms as the basis of reform. These measures also brought along with them membership to the European Entente (the Concert of Europe) and granting of the territorial status quo.*

The initial reaction shown by some Muslim circles against Tanzimat may be met with a certain degree of toleration. However, if an assessment is made today from the *longue durée* view of history, we are left with no

alternative but the reforms. The Ottoman State had to proceed on with the reforms in order to defend its unity and to maintain its security. The only way to gain respect in the international community was passing through these reforms, as well.

The first reforms in Libya were introduced in the last years of the Qaramanlis. The reform in the military structure was the adoption of the *Nizam-ı Djedid* (new order) system in parallel with the mainland where it had replaced the *Janissary Corps*. At the beginning of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the full reorganisation of the administrative structure was completed. The participation of all citizens, Muslim, and non-Muslim, in the administrative decision process marked the end of the social structure built on the three strata. Obviously, this could not have been an instant full participation, but the initial steps had been taken.

The most radical decisions came in the field of the *slave trade*, to the dismay and anger of local and Central African entrepreneurs. The first measures to abolish the trade were taken in 1846, and were followed by the official closing of slave markets. The Porte, in line with the principles of universal human rights, instructed its Governor in Tripoli to end to all practices of the slave trade in a firman dated November 4, 1847. The Porte's stand was to opt for a slow change and attempt to combine western and Islamic concepts on the slave trade. The measures took a more effective form in 1854. Finally, the governors of Tripoli, Egypt and Baghdad, in line with a firman dated January 27, 1857, outlawed the slave trade with all its forms. From then on, the Ottoman administrators particularly the governors of Tripoli and Benghazi would have to deal with contraband trade in slaves.



12. Map of Africa in the first Atlas published at Istanbul in 1804. ‘Idjalet-ul djoghrafiyya wa djedid atlas’ by Mahmut Raif and Yakovski. It is interesting to note that the name ‘Libya’ is used for Cyrenaica and the remaining part is Trablous. Both are separated from the Sahra-I Kebir with a very sharp line which proves that Ottoman Empire as well as the Regencies were not very keen to enlarge their domain towards the south before the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



13. North Africa and the caravan roads. From the 15<sup>th</sup> century till 19<sup>th</sup> these roads will change according to the international balance in the Mediterranean Sea. The arrowed line indicates the borders of the hinterland of Libya which was officially proposed to the European powers with the Porte’s diplomatic note of the 30. October 1890.



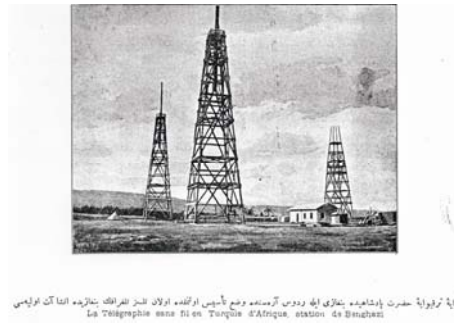
14. "Trablousgharb" newspaper, the first one published in the province.







طرابلس عرصة آت باهني : ساهههكي لوجو مشر و سهاشا زاده اكرم بكه برجهدي  
قزاقان سكهيلادي ، سوههكي لوجو ايه برجهي بارنده ايكهني كان حيوالايه ساهي  
الايوسي اراهه ابيزور .



سايه ترفوايه حفرن اوشاعويه نغلاي ايه رودس ازمسده وضع اابيس اولنده اولان ساهر لفرافكه نغلايه اناك اولهسي  
La Telegraphie sans fil en Tunisie d'Algerie, station de Benghazi

16.Horse race at Tripoli.At right the winning Arabian horse which Ekrem Bey the son of Marshal Redjeb Pasha rode; at left the second of the race with her owner Agha Youssuf.

17.For overcoming of communication with the capital of the empire the system of radio was Installed at Bengazi in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century



برج الساعة وقد شيد هذا البرج سنة 1870م



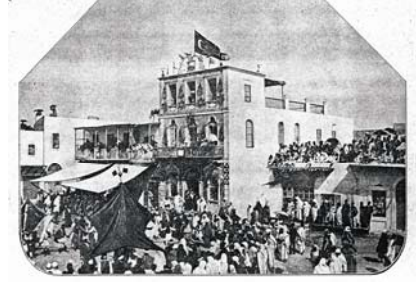
18.Clock Tower constructed at Tripoli In 1870

19.Hamidiyya Avenue (Today called Sharia el-Fatih min September) where the School Of Science and Industry was established In 1895 and the Ziraat Bankası (Agricultural Bank) in 1908



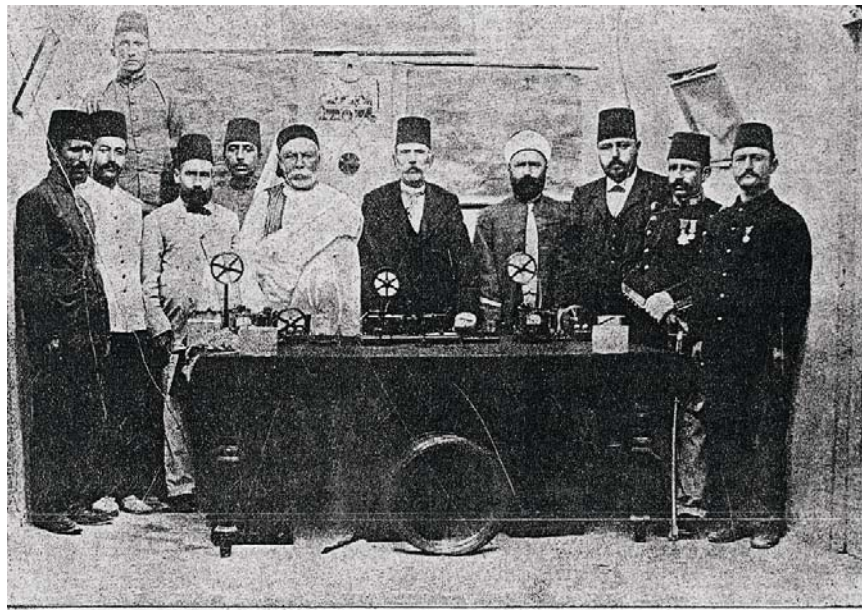
( طرابلس غرب منظر من : اهالي " مملكت ايم مقدسه اعلان شادمانى ايلسى )  
Un jour de fête à Tripoli de Barbarie

20. Participation of Tripolitarians to a religious ceremony in 1895



بنغازيه دائرة بلدية يتكاتفه ولات هارون حضرت پادشاهى مصافى روز مسوده اجرا اعلان تبريک  
La Municipalité de la ville de Benghazi à l'occasion de la fête Impériale.

21. Municipality of Bengazi in the occasion of the imperial festival



سايه ترقياويته حضرت پادشاهيده بنغازيدن سرتيه تمديد اولنان تليفراف خطنك مخبريه رسم مباشرتى  
L'inauguration de la nouvelle ligne télégraphique de Bengazi à Sert.

22. Inauguration of the Bengazi-Sirte Telegraphic line



23. Barracks at Bengazi Constructed during the reign of Abdulhamid



24. Parade of the Ottoman units in the streets of Tripoli



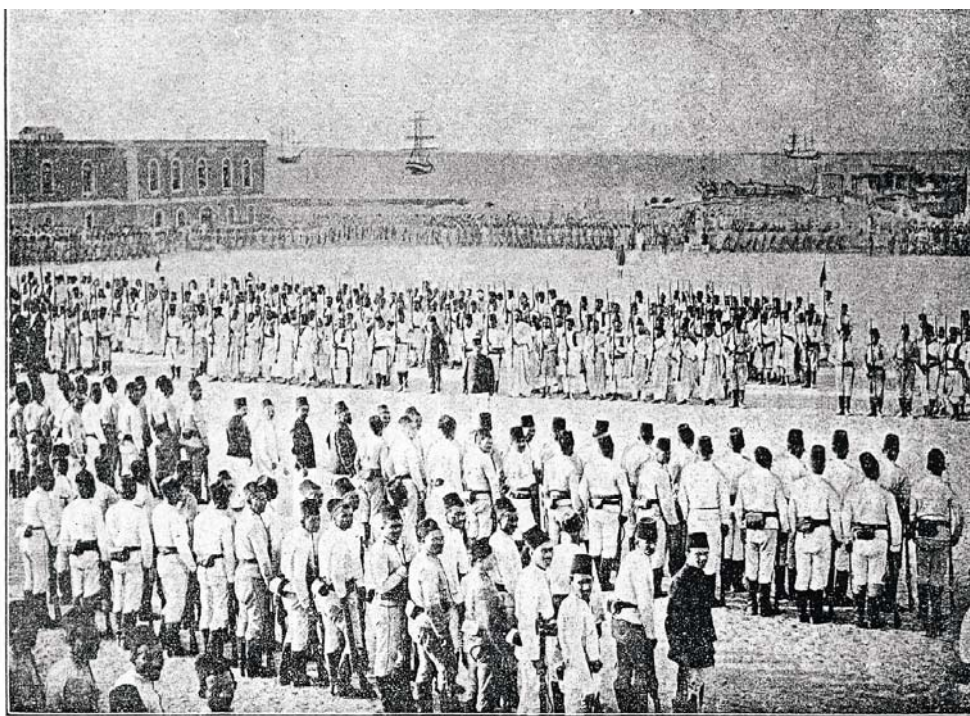
سایه موقتیوایه حضرت <sup>۹۷</sup>عبد الحمید خان غازیده طرابلس غربده تشکیل اولنان حمیدیة محلیه سواری آلابی  
آلابی فرسان (المجیدیة) الذی تشکیل فی طرابلس الغرب فی ظل موقیات الحفرة السنية السلطانية  
Le régiment de cavalerie «Hamidié» récemment organisé dans la Tripolitaine

25.A 'Hamidiyya' cavalry regiment organised from the local people, mainly "Kuloghliis" which were trained for defending the country in case of an attack, in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



قول اوغلی عسکری تعلیماری

26.Military training of Kuloghliis



طرابلس غربيده (برهان الدين) قشله هاپوني ميداننده بوكره تشكيل بيوريلان حميديه محليه بياده طاپورى افرادى  
افراد طاپور المساكى الحميدية المحلية الذى تشكل فى هذه المرة بطرابلس الغرب وهم امام قشلة برهان الدين الهايونية  
Le contingent du bataillon d'infanterie Hamidié, réuni sur la place d'arme de la caserne  
Burhaneddine dans la Tripolitaine

27. Infantry battalion exercising at the parade ground of the Burhaneddine Barracks at Tripoli,

Tripoli was made the administrative centre of an *eyalet* (province) and later on a *wilayet* (governorate). Homs, Djebel Gharbi, and Fezzan were placed under its control as *sandjaks*. There were also smaller administrative units below the *sandjaks* called the *kaza* (district) and *nahiye* (sub-district). On the other hand, Benghazi, as an independent *mutasarrıflık* (between governorate and district), was to be administered directly from İstanbul. Provincial councils, chaired by the *wali* (governor) and composed of his adjoint; the chief judge; the *defterdar* (official in charge of the local treasury); the *maktoubdjou* (general secretary to the Wali), and 16 people's representatives including two Jewish citizens, were set up. The council met weekly to discuss the province's problems. Some new notions like "citizenship" and "participation in the management" entered into the daily life of the people. The smallest settlements, the villages or neighbourhoods, were made *Muhtarlık* headed by the *Muhtar* (in Arabic the *muhtar* -or *mukhtar*). They served the citizens on site and kept close touch with them. Mahamed-Hadi Hashmi describes the Mukhtars as 'the men with real connections to the administration' and explains their role as follows:

*"They aim to rally the population of agglomerations, not of nomad tribes. The mukhtar informs not only the administration, but also the people of the decisions of the administration concerning new regulations and developments. In accordance with the law dated 1 January 1871, mukhtars worked in cooperation with all the state mechanisms."*

Throughout the Qaramanli period Tripoli had a *sheikh al balad* (sheikh of the city) appointed by the pasha to serve as mayor. With the reforms, civic functions began to be carried out by the *belediye* or municipality, which was set up in Tripoli. The same change also took place in towns like Gaharian, Beni Oulid, Tarhouna, Misurata, Zlitan, Zwara, Benghazi, Derna etc... Elections for municipal councils, to decide on issues like street maintenance, rubbish dump, public health, fire fighting, markets, and price of bread, were held. When the Italian occupation began, Paolo Cicero had very positive views on the work of these councils: *"The commune reached a high degree of development and of good management, even though it provided only modest services to the population."*

This observation shows that the system worked quite well, but did not produce the expected results. One reason may be Tripoli's weak economy. On the other hand, there is a huge amount of budgetary surplus in the figures given by the *salname* (yearbook) of 1877. Tripoli's revenues are estimated to be 100.480 and its expenditures 52.397 liras. This stems from a practice of overestimation on the part of the administration. In reality, hardly 2/3 of the taxable income could reach to the state's treasury. As shown by the discussions held in the Ottoman Parliament, with low turn out ratio in estimated revenues, the deficit in the Libyan budget was chronic. The Porte had to allocate funds mainly for the investments and military expenditures in the Libyan budget.

However, the Porte went bankrupt and in 1875 declared its failure to service the interests of its debts to the European lenders. It had to face the financial control of the *Public Debt Administration (Düyun-u Umumiye)*, an institution run by the European powers. The heavy financial problems did not stop the Porte to built modern institutions in Libya:

-The first printing press was installed in 1866, publishing the wilayat's official newspaper *Trablousgharb*, both in Turkish and Arabic, as well as books and reviews. Privately owned printing press was set up after 1908. *The School of Science and Industry* had its own press facilities that also served the individuals.

- The School of Science and Industry was one of the modern educational institutions that had been established in Tripoli before the Italian occupation. There were also a *military rushdie* (junior high school), a *civil rushdie*, 25 Ottoman, 9 Jewish, 7 Italian, and 4 French primary schools. One of the primary schools in Tripoli was for girls. In Benghazi there were 1 Jewish, 2 Italian, 2 French and 12 Ottoman primary schools.

- Tripoli had a modern hospital with 250 beds. The municipality run another hospital with 50 beds. A quarantine system was introduced. Turkish doctors conducted medical researches that provided valuable information on the medicinal characteristics of the region and its people.

- A modern postal system was established. Telegraph lines were laid between Tripoli and Malta in 1861. Later, it reached Homs, only to be partially destroyed by rebellious tribes. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a wireless link with Europe and Anatolia had been established.



Wali *Ahmed Rasim* succeeded in bringing vigour to the stagnant economy of Tripoli. Rasim's tenure between 1878 and 1893 was the longest among his colleagues. His aim was to make the region economically self-sufficient. The economy was reorganised in line with new challenges. New export crops were needed, and in this context, he encouraged sericulture by the plantation of thousands of mulberry trees. Looms were introduced to create a cottage textile industry. There were about 1700 looms for cotton, 350 for wool, and 150 for silk. He took into regard the complaints of the people, and improved the system of tax collection. In 1884, he created a chamber of commerce, banned the use of foreign exchange, and fixed the value of the Ottoman currency. The *Ziraat Bankası* (the Ottoman Agricultural Bank) and the *Emniyet Sandığı* (a loan institution) started up their branches in Tripoli. The *Banco di Roma* will open its own branch at a later period, in 1908.

There are a number of reports on the state of affairs in Libya prepared by governors and other high officials, who served during the reign of Sultan *Abdulhamid II* (1876-1909). These reports found in the Ottoman Archives, reveal their determination to improve the social and economic conditions in the region. They are substantial observations on the situation of the people and the country. *Nazif Pasha's* report, dated 13 June 1881, starts: "*The existing conditions are not suitable with the particular position of the region, which is an outpost of the army and this can bring inconveniences in the future.*" Pasha adds that his report is worded after discussing the region's problems with all civil and military cadres, and the prominent and influential personalities, as well.

An important aspect of the Tanzimat is the major changes made in the military field and its concepts. A division headquarters was set up in Tripoli, and all soldiers sent from İstanbul. Governor Ahmed Rasim built fortifications for the artillery at strategic points along the coastline. However, the weapons deployed could not be updated and the Ottomans fell behind the Europeans in terms of the range of the guns. Hence, in

1911, the Italian navy would find the opportunity to bombard the city of Tripoli from a safe distance, and to land its forces without resistance.

For the defence of the region, the people had to be given military training. However, it was not easy to subject the once exempt people to compulsory military service. Decree no. 75 of 19 Shaban 1302 (1885) sent to administrative units, asked for the training of the people in the use of new arms, mainly rifles. *Aziz Samih* states that between 40 and 50.000 rifles were sent to Tripoli. The interest of the people in training gradually faded away when the political tensions calmed down. In addition, people wanted to keep the arms, whereas the government insisted to store them in military depots with concerns of misuse or trading. Furthermore, the Kuloghlu who formed the newly *Hamidiyye regiments* found the regular military discipline too strict to follow, and these units had to be dissolved. The fear of serving in the far corners of the empire was one of the main reasons of opposing compulsory military service. In the end, it was the wali himself who paid visits to the communities to explain that serving abroad was not an issue at all. Such rumours were mere fabrications put forward by the Italian propaganda.<sup>93</sup>

*Nazif, Namık Pasha* (1885), *Hussein Husnu* (1886), *Mehmed Hilal* (1887), *Ahmed Rasim* (1891), *Mehmed Kamil* (1892), and the special envoy of the sultan *Sadık al Muayyad* sent detailed reports dealing with the same chronic problems of the region. Some of these were; water sources, the drilling of wells, road and port construction, improvement of the communication lines (the telegraph), agriculture, education, the tax system, and handicrafts. Their reports also show that most targets could not be achieved due to financial constraints.

The impact of reforms on the history of Libya is described in the following words of a contemporary Libyan scholar, M.H. Hashmi:

*“In that period, Libya had an administrative structure inspired by the Turkish model, but it was not appropriate given the demographic and economic situation of the country (...) The steps taken by the administration have to be interpreted as arising from the desire of the Ottoman State to stop European infiltration, satisfy public opinion, and*

*suppress the political currents that were beginning to come into view. However, their results were minimal and could not reach the desired objectives, because, on one hand stood the disorder and corruption that reigned in the Ottoman administration and on the other, the ignorance of the realities and the geographic situation of the country. Indeed, Tripoli was a remote wilayat of the empire at a time when transportation and means of communication were still archaic. The population across the entire province did not exceed two inhabitants per square kilometer, and the modern transportation means that could have linked the four corners of this immense territory to each other lacked.”*

At this point, Hashmi refers to Mohammad Farad, an Egyptian observer who visited Libya in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century :

*“Indeed, Mohammad Farid, in his visit to Tripoli, observed these characteristics, which, according to him, favoured a decentralized policy rather than a centralized one. If the Ottoman government did not contribute to the economic progress in Libya, it at least had the merit of securing its unity, defining its geographical and political limits, and protecting it as a Muslim territory from European tutelage. Considering this outcome, the Turkish presence was an important factor in the creation of modern Libya. Still, like all their predecessors, the Turks were strangers in a country which since antiquity had not found in it the means to establish an authentic Libyan government.”*

#### **Libyans in the Ottoman Parliament<sup>94</sup>**

The communities living in the Ottoman domains were first introduced to the right of freedom of speech by a constitution that was proclaimed in 1876. In line with the constitution, parliamentary elections were held. A democratic process had taken start and the parliament would be serving as a platform where democratic skills could be advanced. The municipal and wilayat council elections held would improve further the democratic way of thinking of the people.

Libyan issues in the Ottoman Parliament may be summarized in four periods: <sup>3</sup>

1- March 23, 1877 - February 14, 1878: *the first constitutional period*

2- December 17, 1908 – June 3, 1911: *the second constitutional period, (time of peace).*

3- October 14, 1911 – August 1, 1912: *war period*

4- May 1, 1914 – 1920: *post-Ouchy peace period.*

Along with the first and last of these periods, Libyan issues were rarely placed on the parliamentary agenda. Since, minutes of the meetings were destroyed in a Parliamentary fire, only summaries of the meetings, as published by the press, are available; however, there is no reference to Libyan issues. Three deputies represented Trablousgarb in the first parliamentary period: *Mustafa el Hamdani Effendi, Suleiman Kapudan Effendi* and *Hadji Ahmed Galib Bey*. The third term included the discussions concerning the Italian invasion, which will be dealt upon in a further chapter. As to the fourth period, the Ottoman State renounced its entire rights (except religious ties) over Libya and the country's representation in the parliament ceased. Libya's destiny was rarely on the agenda. There was only *Suleiman al Baruni*, who continued his post as member (*ayan*) of the Senate.

The second period, after the proclamation of the Second Constitution in 1908, was scene to intense debates held on the economic and social problems of Libya, as well as its stand vis-à-vis Italian aims. The following deputies attended the December 1908 – June 1911 Parliament:

Trablousgarb: *Ferhad Bey, Sadık Bey, Mahmud Nadji Bey.*

Homs: *Mustafa Bey bin Kaddara.*

Djebel al Gharbi: *Suleiman al Baruni.*

Fezzan: *Djami Bey.*

Benghazi: *Omar Mansur Pasha, Youssuf Shetvan Bey.*

Djami Bey's election was disputed, because he was not a native of Fezzan but a military officer from İstanbul. *Hadji Hussain Effendi* of Fezzan won the new elections, but decided to resign because of his commercial

affairs, Finally, Djami was re-elected. Youssuf Shetvan's deputyship was also contested under accusations of spying for Sultan Abdülhamid. The election was repeated, and Shetvan re-elected.

On January 18, 1912, the Parliament was dissolved to give way to new elections. The new Parliament that convened on April 18 was also dissolved on August 1, 1912. The deputies for this term were as follows:

Trablousgharb : *Ferhad, Mahmud Nadji, Mukhtar Kaa'bar,*  
Djebel al Gharbi : *Suleiman al Baruni, Feizullah Zubayr,*  
Fezzan : *Djami,*  
Benghazi : *Omar Mansur, Youssuf Shetvan, Abdulkadir.*

Some economic and social problems debated at the Parliament are summarized in the following paragraphs:

Grand vizier, *Hakkı Pasha*, in his address on March 20, 1910, explained the situation in Libya (which he described as "an integral part of the country") with the following words:

*"Although the Ottoman Empire is very much in need of understanding and help, this is more the case for the Trablousgharb province. The wilayat of Trablousgharb and Benghazi together have an area more than one million square kilometres. This is twice the size of France. Compared with this country its population should be 70 million, but instead there are not even 1.5 million people. You can imagine how limited the financial resources are when the population is so low."*

Another speaker added that although Libya represented one seventh of all Ottoman lands its population was less than one twentieth. The Director General of Revenues, the Ministry of Finance, who reminded on April 11, 1911, the deputies that prior to the British and French occupation the area was prosperous. the remarks of the Grand Vizier: *"[At that time] 984,000 piastres could be collected, but now no more than 250–300,000 is possible."*

On March 8, 1909, Omar Mansour gave more details on the economical situation:

*“In the past, the people of Djalo could pay high taxes, because they were able to make commerce with Sudan. However, as part of Sudan is now under British occupation and the other part French, the importation of other materials is not permitted. People have not been able to earn any money for 20 years. The taxes of the district used to be 375.000 piastres, and it was easily collected 20 years ago... Today one third or even one quarter of that amount can be collected and even then only with difficulty. For this reason, the people are leaving the area. They are wandering about in a miserable state. Already the district has tax arrears of two million piastres. As the people have no other source of income but dates, the palm-date tax must be reduced. The people cannot pay their arrears on this tax.”*

On March 22, 1909, Mustafa supported this proposal for tax reduction:

*“The taxes of Trablousgharb are fixed. Consequently, when possibilities of paying them diminish, justice and fairness in their collection also decreases. It will be welcome if the 50 per cent arrears of the period 1884-1904 can be pardoned.”*

In the coming months, the Libyan deputies referred to the incapacity of Libyans to pay their taxes and the high rate of unemployment:

*“There has been drought in Trablousgharb for three years. Now rain and hail has caused torrents that have destroyed 300 houses in Sahel, 26 in Misallata. In Menshie 230 houses, including gardens and animals have been destroyed. Financial help is necessary.”* (Sadık, Nadji, Mustafa, Barouni, motion dated February 7, 1910)

*“For road construction in Trablousgharb, an allocation of five to ten thousand liras is necessary. This will also provide jobs to the people. They are eating bread made of dried barley.”* (Sadık, June 20, 1910)

*“Because rain is once in eight to ten years in the sandjak of Benghazi, cultivation is not always possible. A kıyye of bread [app. 1280 grams] is sold for three piastres. For this reason, the people, basically poor because of the famine and high cost of living are in a very grave state. It was customary for the mutasarrıf to distribute 50 medjidie to the poor beduin.*

*However, since his salary has been reduced, this cannot be done anymore. [This situation] has to be rectified.*" (Omar Mansur, Youssuf Shetvan, motion dated May 25, 1910)

*"It rains only once in eight to ten years in Benghazi. Famine is continuous. It is difficult to subsist. More than half a million tribesmen are in distress."* (Youssuf Shetvan, June 2, 1910).

Omar Mansour also asked the government to help the Jews:

*"As you know, when a state is interested to promote commerce in a country first it directs there her own Jews. Some European countries entered Ottoman Africa, but when they noticed that the local people were not supporting them, they used Jews to promote commerce. Jews opened schools, business centres, and in short tried to improve all living conditions. A school could only be build by the donations of the people, but government help was needed for it to function. I even asked the Minister of Education to help the Jewish schools."* (June 11, 1910).

It is evident that the deputies showed deep concern for the problems of the region. In 1909, the government allocated 8000 liras to purchase 50.000 kilos of barley for the people in need. Later on, a further 6000 liras was added to this amount, but still it was not enough to solve all the problems. On question of funds for road construction, the government took the view that in a country where the general means of land transport was the camel, building roads would not be economic. Instead, as stated by the Grand Vizier, development of the port of Tripoli would significantly contribute to the expansion of Mediterranean trade. In addition, the deputies discussed agricultural development along the coast and the drilling of artesian wells. As a measure against the exodus of people from Fezzes and Ghadames, taxes were cancelled. Furthermore, a law arranging the relations with the nomads and the tribes of the Sahara, in accordance with the demands of the Libyan deputies, was passed. It was going to be enforced in 1912, but the war with Italy rendered it null and void.

In addition to issues related with general problems, local problems were also discussed at length:

- The importance of construction of a telegraph line to Ghadames to ensure the safety of the caravans.

- Construction of a telegraph line between Derna and Sollum.
- A request to give the trees planted on state lands to their tenders.
- A proposal for tax reduction on exported animals.
- Revitalization of the Benghazi port construction project.
- Payments to the Sanussi zawiyya's sheikh.
- Post allowances to compensate climate conditions in Fezzan.
- The activities of public works functionaries in Trablousgharb.
- Changing the administrative status of Kufra into a subdivision of a province and Sollum into a sub-district.
- The appointment of imams to mosques in Benghazi, and payment of their monthly salaries.
- Reorganizing the judiciary in Benghazi, Trablousgharb, Homs, Misurata, and Zawiya.
- Repair of the collapsed dome of the Benghazi mosque.
- Legal measures to protect the Trablousgharb olive trees.
- A demand to cancel taxation on camels and dates in Fezzan.
- An increase in the number of gendarmerie in Benghazi.
- The installation of quarantine furnaces against cholera in Trablousgharb.
- The re-opening of the Benghazi saltpan, which had been closed by the Administration of the Ottoman Debt.

The parliamentary debates also contain a wide range of information on the social life and local way of living. For instance, measures against the destruction of the date palms by cutting their tops and branches to produce a liqueur named "lakbi" are among the issues discussed. For such producers, a heavy financial penalty is brought. In a speech, *Omar Mansur* explains the hardships of placing the desert nomads under military service, and gives important clues on their living conditions. Libyan parliamentarians, also, take the floor to express their views on more general issues related with the Empire. The press law, rights of the sultan, military problems, and the conflict between Ottoman Greeks and Bulgarians on the partition of Orthodox churches are some of the issues they spelled.

The most active of the Libyan parliamentarians was *Omar Mansur Pasha*, a graduate of Istanbul School of Political Science. *Youssuf*



*Shetvan*, an expert on law and a graduate from İstanbul followed *him* closely. *Mahmud Nadji*, *Sadek*, and *Mustafa* showed more interest in the local problems of Libya. *Ferhad's participation in the* discussions was even less than his colleagues did. *Djami*, an officer by profession, intervened mainly on military and international political subjects. *S. Barouni* was better known for his active involvement in preparation of motions rather than his speeches.

### **In search of solidarity with the Sanussiyya**

The French invasion of Algeria caused the Ottoman State to focus more on Maghreb. As for the administration in Egypt, it was acting, by now, completely independent of the Porte, and had started to show more interest in Eastern Sudan and the hinterland of Cyrenaica. In 1820 and 1821, some forces of Mehmed Ali Pasha penetrated Eastern Sudan. The events in the region were being closely watched by the international community. Against this setting, conflicts among local tribal leaders were going on, in a usual way.

The *Zuwaya* tribe of Barca took control of the *Kufra Oasis* in 1840. This event placed the issues of the Eastern Sudan and the Cyrenaican Hinterland on the top of the international agenda. Later on, the opening of the *Suez Canal* in 1869 served to bring the issue of the Cyrenaican Hinterland more to the forefront. Hence, the borders of Tripoli-Algeria/Tunisia lost their central place on the international scene.<sup>95</sup> All of a sudden, the caravan routes passing through the Cyrenaican Hinterland were of a tremendous value. Located in the south of Cyrenaican Hinterland, Kufra's role as a trade route grew in importance with the Anglo-French threats directed at Wadai-Bornou and the eastern African coast. A further factor in this line was The *Mahdi's* revolt (1881-1898) in Sudan. As pointed out by a source, the trans-Saharan trade grew by around 30 to 40 % between 1870 and 1885.

The Porte was deeply concerned with the partition plans on Africa. The rules of the occupation of the African Continent had been defined by

the Articles 34 and 35 of the General Act of the *Berlin International Conference* (1884-1885). The signatories had to notify the other powers about their new acts of possession or when assuming a protectorate. It was further stated that any such occupation in order to be valid had to be effective. For instance, states had to occupy a land militarily, hoist their flag, and notify the other signatory powers of their action. This spurred a race among the European powers for the occupation of African lands. Consequently, the meaning and content of the term hinterland came to the forefront. On the Ottoman side, Sultan Abdulhamid, within the context of the Berlin Conference, aimed to learn more on the inclinations of the people of the Libyan Sahara and the scope of its borders. Not contented by the reports of the mutasarrif of Benghazi, he sent his aide de camp, *Azmzadah Sadek al Moayyad*, to Giabub on a fact finding mission in 1302 (1886/7). This mission is the first direct contact that was established between Istanbul and the people of Sudan. Cooperation with the Order of Sanussiyya was the result of these contacts. And, it was to play, later on, a key role in Ottoman-Libyan relations.

In order to better comprehend the policy drawn by the Sultan, the concept of "*Islamic solidarity*" and "*the principles of the Sanussiyya*", the two main factors that shaped his plans, need to be defined. The term "Islamic solidarity" is preferred in this study to "*Pan Islamist*", since the latter was a design put forward by the colonial powers. Their motive in using "Pan Islamism" was that 90% of the world's Muslims living under their yoke had the potential to instigate a common resistance, which in reality never materialized.

Central Africa had always been a refuge for religious orders that could not have a chance to flourish in the cities. North Africa had also its pretenders to the caliphate. At the 16<sup>th</sup> century, *Askya Mohammad I* (1492-1528) in Sudan, *Saadian Al Mansour* (1578-1603) in Morocco all claimed the caliphate, in addition to the Ottomans. The first two were also saying that they were descendents of the Prophet's family, the Qureish, thus their caliphate were legitimate. On the other hand, they were not totally rejecting the pre-eminence of the Ottoman sultan/caliph. For instance, *Askya Muhammad* told his son; "*you are the vicar of the vicar of the*

*Charif – Abbaside – who is also the vicar of the big Ottoman Sultan.*”<sup>96</sup> In general, as long as the Ottoman administration did not interfere in their affairs, this subjection to the sultan was common to all these local rulers. On the other hand, there was no place for a political and military side in their understanding of the concept of “Islamic solidarity.”

In relation to the political regime they live under, orders and religious movements display two main ways of thinking; some oppose the political regimes and show activist tendencies; others pursue a pacifist line and accept to work under an authority. The latter are known with their emphasis on religious teaching.

One of the activist orders is *Wahhabism*. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, they invaded Hicaz and captured Mecca and Medina. Denounced by all Muslim states, they were pushed back to Central Arabia with use of force.

The Sanussiyya was not an activist order.<sup>97</sup> Its founder, *Muhammad Ibn Ali Al Sanussi* (1787-1859), was born in Algeria, lived in Fés and Mecca, and around 1839 he established his first *zawiya* in Hijaz. After a short stay in Egypt, he settled in Barca, where he founded a new *zawiya* in 1843. The order of Sanussiyya spread among the masses rapidly. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were around 200 *zawiyas* set up in Najd, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Tripoli, Fezzan, Koufra, Sudan, and Chad.<sup>4</sup> According to one observer:

*“Contrary to French claims insisting on the fanaticism of Sanussis whenever something went wrong in the Sahara (...) they were not active even in their own region. They did not have any military or political activity until 1912. They spread only religious learning and pious practices among the bedouin. As a precondition for this work, they also defused internal conflicts between the bedouin groups and urged them on towards the common goal of peaceful trade across the Sahara. They largely ignored the European presence as being irrelevant to their activity of promoting Islamic learning and piety. Their main difference with the Wahhabites lies in their conception of Islamic reforms. Muhammad Sanussi was not a ‘salafi’ in the mode of his contemporaries, such as Muhammad Abduh and Afghani; his way of thinking and of writing was much more in line with classical Islamic scholarship. He never refers to Europeans, modernity, reason or to the*

*other 'challenges' to Islam to which other authors of his time tried to respond.*"<sup>98</sup>

Nor was Muhammad Sanussi a "jihadist". His line was closer to some mujtahids of early Islam. This pacifist attitude must have attracted Abdulhamid, who, in contrast to all claims, by no means pursued a Pan Islamists policy and sought to encourage a jihad mentality.

At the peak of European expansion in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>, there were various sufi orders in the North African and Arab worlds, like the *Nakshibandiyya*, *Shadhiliyya*, *Qadiriyya*, *Tijaniyya*, *Tayyibiyya*, and *Arousiyya*. In Abdulhamid's line, there is a sound inclination towards pacifist orders like the *Nakshibandiyya* and the *Arousiyya*, etc. The *turbeh* of the second major spiritual guide of the Aroussiya *Sayyid Abdussalam al Asmari* was restored by the orders of the sultan. Some claim that the first contacts of Muhammad Sanussi with the Porte began in the 1850s, and Sultan Abdulmajid granted him a number of privileges and tax exemptions for his zawiyas.<sup>99</sup> Sultan Abdelaziz, later, was to confirm these rights.

It is not difficult to understand the Interest and concern shown towards the region by the Ottomans :

*"The two fundamental aims of the Ottoman government, which after 1858 kept law and order in Libya with relative ease, were to achieve prosperity and security in the region. Realization of both of these goals required the close attention of the state in matters concerning the Sahara. The reason for this interest was economic (...) There was a tremendous increase both in the volume and importance of the caravan traffic (...) Documents in the Turkish archives show that control of the provincial trade routes between Libya and Sudan was a primary concern and substantial effort was spent to control and secure these routes between Libya and Sudan."*<sup>100</sup>

Not only the Ottoman government, but the public as well, was concerned with the situation in the Ottoman lands in Africa. İstanbul newspapers frequently published news and reports on the events in the

region. The sultan must have encouraged the intellectuals to work on the topic.

*Omar Subhi*, a colonel of the General Staff who was known for his translation of books from European languages, prepared one such study entitled '*Trablusgarb ve Bingazi ile Sahrayi Kebir ve Sudan Merkezi*' (Tripoli and Benghazi with Sahra-i Kebir and Central Sudan). The Serasker (Commander in Chief), *Ali Said Pasha* submitted this study to the Sultan in May 1888 with a cover letter. Published in 1890 – certainly with the consent of the Sultan – it explained the importance of Trablousgharb and Benghazi from the point of trade, as well as the efficacy of Islam in Central Africa. The importance of controlling the caravan roads was also stressed.

The weekly newspaper, *Mizan*, gave start to a series of articles that implied a challenge to the sultan's policy on Ottoman Africa. On the first day of the series, there were two articles titled "Central Africa" and "Occupation of the Sahara". The editor of the paper was *Murad Bey*, a professor of history in the Mülkiye (the school of political science) in İstanbul. Here is a quotation taken from those articles:<sup>101</sup>

*"At a time when the European powers are invading Africa, the Ottoman government cannot remain indifferent. An army division can reach Lake Chad, which is on the east and southeast edge of our hinterland in 15 days. The Ottoman presence can also be manifested by the formation of an Islamic trading company (like the British Company of the Levant), which would first create its organization in the area and then transfer it to the State. If we are permitted to initiate such an enterprise, we can do the necessary preparatory work for the propagation of Islam. We will prepare a book of instructions, which we are sure, no one will object. If this area, which until now has been penetrated only by a small number of European travellers and some local businessmen, can be opened up to trade there will be large profits. Furthermore, if the population of 200 – 300.000 can be equipped with modern weapons, important activities can be materialized in the Sahara, Central Africa, and Sudan. This is neither a chimera nor a dream. There is no time to waste."*

On its issue of June 5, 1890, *Mizan* reported that its readers had shown wide interest to take part in such an enterprise and wanted to learn more about the procedures. Murad Bey wrote that, with the money to be collected, a madrasah whose graduates would work for the Islamisation of Africa could immediately take start in Chad. The paper's project foresaw an Islamic action -a jihad- in two levels; Islamic propaganda to be backed by military action. Activities would be carried out in Ottoman and foreign lands, with the support of other Islamic communities. In short, what was being addressed was Pan Islamism, a concept much dreaded by European colonialists.

Western circles have expressed and written a great deal on Sultan Abdulhamid's sponsorship of Pan Islamism. In fact, he was against such activities, and certainly, it was not his intention to tempt the European powers to take measures.<sup>102</sup> The official reaction shown to *Mizan* was its closure by the Censorship Office. It was the cautious attitude, typical of the Sultan's diplomacy, which brought this closure. The decision had been given on the ground that the paper was "a *disobedient publication in defiance of repetitive warnings*".

It is very striking that in the articles published by Murad Bey there are no references made to the activities of Central Africa's Islamic orders or the Mahdiyya in Sudan. His proposal was a new formulation in line with the Caliphate's orthodox views, with which he did not go against. However, even such moderate approach on the part of Murad Bey would not be enough to please Abdulhamid. *Mizan* went on with its publication after an interval of five weeks.

At first, the paper stayed away from African issues, but it did not take long for an article titled "*Problems of Africa – Bornou, Wadai, Trablousgharb, and Benghazi*" to come out. In the article Murad Bey put forward that; Lake Chad was not included in the French sphere of influence; *Bornou, Wadai, Darfour, Kordofan* districts were supplementary components (*ecza-i mütemmime* = the hinterland) of Ottoman domains Trablousgharb, Benghazi and Egypt. Hence, all Central African lands that lay in between the western frontiers of Trablousgharb and Congo were to

be considered as Ottoman lands. Consequently, France could expand its influence towards Chad only by permission of the Sublime Porte.

On its issue no.156, the paper published an article on Africa and a map showing just the caravan road of *Trablousgharb-Fezzan-Wadai*. At that moment, there was only limited information available on the hinterland of Benghazi. The article stated that while Lake Chad was not in the Anglo-French Agreement of August 5, 1890, both signatories were now considering how to secure the adjacent caravan roads. The writer declared: *“the regions up to Congo belong to us; there is no more to add.”*

Two weeks later (no.158, dated December 11, 1890) the writer returned to the same subject in an article titled “Watch Africa”. After criticizing European colonialism, it asserted that:

*“Unknown places, uninhabited deserts, regions claimed to be without an owner on African maps and in school geography books until a year ago are very well known now. It is asserted that they be inhabited, and the ‘civilized’ countries of Europe can immediately become owners by force. Between July 1 and August 20, that is in 50 days, England, Germany, France and Portugal partitioned [an allusion to the Anglo-German, Anglo-French and Anglo-Portugal Agreements of 1 July and 5 and 20 August 1890] those unowned lands of Africa, equal to twice the size of Europe. The Anglo- French agreement concerns places which are owned by no-one, and as the south border of Trablousgharb and Lake Chad are not included in it (...) Things are in conformity with our exigencies...The Ottoman administration acted as we proposed, for which we are thankful.”*

The writer is referring in the above text to the Sublime Porte’s Note of October 30, 1890. In fact, this Note, from the point of view of territorial claims, was in conformity with *Mizan’s* proposals. However, this was not enough to save *Mizan* from the rage of the Sultan. The newspaper was closed again.

In *Mizan’s* case, the reaction shown by Abdulhamid was very typical of him. He never liked his policy to be discussed publicly and preferred to make separate deals with European countries. He cautiously avoided all

moves that could cause joint reaction in Europe and refrained from taking any step that might unite them against the Ottoman State. Any Pan-Islamic action, which had to be carried out in solidarity with the world's Muslims, particularly with those in European colonies, was not in his options. In the opinion of the Sultan, a Pan-Islamist line would help to bring the colonialists –usually split by their private interests– together. To highlight his role as the Caliph, in line with his vision of a pacifist “Islamic solidarity”, he praised individuals publicly whom he saw as perfect exemplars of Muslim way of life. It was evident that he was giving a message to all, particularly to the Europeans, who sought ways to establish a rival caliphate. But, he would not encourage any Islamic joint action against the western threat.

It is simple to map out Abdulhamid's policy in the *Kufra Affair*. The Sublime Porte in its Note dated October 30, 1890 notified the French and the British<sup>103</sup> sides that *Bornou, Kanem, Tibesti, and Wadai* regions, in line with the Ottoman concept of hinterland, were Ottoman lands. Accordingly, all caravan roads, including *Benghazi-Kufra-Wadai* were under the control of the Ottomans. On the other hand, in practice, Abdulhamid displayed a different approach. His sending of armed forces to some oasis in Western Africa to halt the French advance to the interior from the West was not in the same line with the European concept of hinterland that called for a declaration after a military occupation. Then again, France, in spite of the concept of hinterland in the Anglo-French agreement, was denying the Ottoman State the same “rights” that it found fit for itself. As to the Eastern and South-Eastern Africa, the sultan's stand was changed from the west. It may be recalled that in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the regions mentioned were under the control of Rabah, and the Mahdi's followers whose influence grew by taking up arms against the Europeans. Here, the sultan refrained from taking such action that could get him on the way of the local Muslims.

Abdulhamid was always in favour of solving all problems through peaceful means by negotiations. In fact, this peaceful approach is observed in Algerian, Tunisian, and Egyptian cases. He preferred contacts with local people, along with orders and organizations and did not resort to



force. The flying of the Ottoman flag in the 1890s in Rabah was a self-act rather than instigation by İstanbul. This policy of the sultan was reflected in the Italian reports as follows:

*“Instead of making its presence felt in any way in the main oasis of the Tripolitanian hinterland, the Porte is only preoccupied with the defence of the wilayat towards the sea, which it believes is threatened by Italy, and it is fortified and armed.”*<sup>104</sup>

Abdulhamid may have pursued a pacifist policy, but this did not mean that he was not being well informed on the political events in Europe. He received regular reports from his close advisers along the lines of his instructions. A report dated June 10, 1894 prepared by a legal adviser on international relations drew his attention to the subject of Africa's partitioning. The report warned the sultan that particularly Britain sought to enlarge its share. Abdulhamid, who was deeply concerned with the threat posed by the British colonialist aims, held not much favourable feelings towards them.<sup>105</sup> The British activities were in areas of direct interest to the Porte, including the Persian Gulf, Aden and the Red Sea, Egypt and Sudan. In the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, rumours of British ambitions towards Barca were intense. British advances in the direction of Sollum and the desert, in line with the khedive's interest to construct a railway along the Mediterranean coast towards Barca, only helped to deepen the distrust of the Sultan.<sup>106</sup> He must have planned to learn more about the tendencies of the people and to find ways to protect the area against the Egyptian/British advance when he sent *Azmzadeh Sadek Al Moayyad* to Benghazi for a second time. The aide-de-camp of the sultan came to Benghazi on October 7, 1895. He departed on October 13, reached the Kufra oasis on November 6, and was back to Benghazi on December 2. The report of this mission was given to the sultan in January 1896. A year later, his first and second mission diaries (1886 and 1895) both were made public in the weekly *Servet-i Fünun*. These accounts took the form of a book in 1898 (1314 Rumi). The political recommendations made to the sultan in the reports are not found in the diaries.<sup>107</sup>

One of Al Moayyad's observations is on the side effects of the change in the salt transporting route. The new Kavar - Kasir road (near Za'fran on

the Sirte Bay) has replaced Kawar – Tripoli and shortened the travel time around two weeks. He expects this new route to contribute to regional development and help to keep the bedouin under control. The change in main caravan routes from Wadai is also noted. Caravans from Wadai, now have changed their course from *Fezzan-Tripoli* to *Kufra-Benghazi* or *Kufra-Egypt*. He marks that this is an evidence of the growing interest in the area around Kufra. Even the traders of Tripoli prefer this road and sail first to Benghazi, and then proceed on to Sudan.

In fact, various sources noted the flourishing trade in Kufra during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

*"It is recorded that between 1890 and 1900 weekly an average of 200 to 300 camels entered Gialo from Kufra. This trade through Kufra continued to flourish until 1912, when Italy, having forced Turkey to renounce all claims to Cyrenaica, began the occupation of that country and the suppression of its Arab inhabitants."*<sup>108</sup>

*Hachaichi* names Kufra, Ghadames al-Jadid. In his report, *Al Moayyad* gives a different picture of Oudjala and Gialo. Contrary to Kufra's progress, these two oases seem to be in decline:

*"The towns of Oudjala and Gialo are at the end of the Sandjak of Benghazi, and situated between the Sahra-i Kebir and the Libyan Desert, their soil is sandy and unfit for cultivation. They are like two islands in a sea of sand. They produce only dates. The real income of the population depended in the past on the trade they were doing by going back and forth between Sudan and Wadai. When the flour trade was permitted, and ivory and ostrich feathers were valuable, they were rich and paid without hesitation or delay the surcharges fixed by the imperial government on the dates. They never fell into arrears. In recent years, though, ivory and ostrich feathers being exported from many places in Africa, have suffered a sharp drop in value. Consequently, this trade came to bring loss rather than profit. With the trade in flour forbidden, which was their only income source, poverty reached such a level that the payment of taxes became impossible. The people were unable to find enough food for their basic subsistence. As they have no other skills and as their land is not suitable for agriculture, there is only one solution for them: to settle on the fertile*

*lands of Barca with the help of the government. They can be introduced to agriculture, and can return to the oasis when the dates are ripe for harvest."*

The comparison between Oudjala/Gialo (where Ottoman control ended) and Kufra shows that the trade routes had shifted decidedly towards the latter. Some two to three thousands camels were said to arrive in Gaol weekly, but the local traders were out of business and the profits went to Kara. Al Moayyad proposes a different policy for Kufra than the one applied in the sandjak of Benghazi. He points to the contrast between the sharp declines in general revenues and the 1865-66 tax freezes that are still in force in the sandjak. Tax collectors carry on their duty with the same zeal as before and force the people to pay regardless of their capacity. The result is a dual mischief; the pressures on the people intensify because of the unjust taxation system and the treasury cannot close the growing gap in the budget. Pointing to the serious clash that broke out between the people and the Ottoman soldiers collecting tax at Ahdjeza, he warns against repeating the same mistake in Kufra.

*Al Moayyad* also refers to a former project to incorporate Kufra into the Ottoman lands, and to make it a *qaimmakamlık* (a district administration) of Benghazi as Gialo or Derna. It is likely that among the instructions given to Al Moayyad before his departure there is seeking the possibility of hoisting the Ottoman flag in Kufra:

*"Until now, no official has been to Kufra, nor has the flag of any state been flown in the oasis. This time, I carried as leader of my group, with God's help, two sublime Ottoman banners, so the Sahara-i Kebir was honoured with their presence, and also Kufra happy with them for the first time".*

These tactful words were to please the sultan who would feel content if Kufra was declared as Ottoman land. But, in fact, they served more to screen the failure of Ottoman intentions. Al Moayyad concluded his report saying that time was not ripe to create a *qaimmakamlık* (District administration) in Kufra, to do so would only cause 'reactions.' All he

proposed was to keep the status quo in Kufra and work for the betterment of the administrative and economical situation in Barca.

An anonymous report, without date and signature, written probably during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, points to a similar policy:<sup>109</sup>

*“The British are planning to seize Barca by incorporating it into Egypt. Anglo-Italian cooperation aims at directing attention to French activities to disguise their own games. The remedy is the development of trade and economy in the littoral and arrangements of defence along the coast. As the hinterland belongs to the Ottoman state, it is necessary to develop trade with Bornou and reinforce the State’s influence.”*

The report adds that the state’s “rule and sovereignty” had to be applied with vigilance, since gaining the sympathy of the people of the hinterland was a must. European observers of the period point that the Porte pursued a more tolerant policy towards the people of hinterland because raising their living standards at a level desired could not be realized in short time.

In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all the concerned, Turks, Germans, and Italians had drawn better maps of the Kufra caravan road, showing that they had up-to-date information on the area. Following the agreement of 1904, having to concede rights to Italians in Libya, Abdulhamid realized the gravity of the situation. In early 1908, before the Young Turks seized power, he ordered the incorporation of Kufra into the Ottoman state. Nonetheless, the sultan acted very cautiously and authorized a prominent Benghazi notable with the task of effecting the incorporation.

The person was *Omar Mansur Kahia* (later a pasha and a parliamentary deputy for Benghazi). He insisted on carrying out the job in the form of a civil duty by only two soldiers and a secretary, rather than the recommended military unit. Conditions being ripe at last, Omar Mansur hoisted the Ottoman flag in Kufra, with no opposition from the local people. He was rewarded generously by the Sultan.<sup>110</sup> At last, the Sanussi order had given its consent to Ottoman protection.

### **The Last phase of African partition**

By the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in line with the growing pressure of colonialism policies, the Eastern Question turned to be the main concern of European powers, and of the Porte, as well. The Europeans were already staking out parts of the Empire as their own, which were to be shared as spoils at the time of its final collapse.

From the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, European explorers wandered all over Africa to estimate the wealth of each region. With the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the British government launched various missions to explore the lands between the Mediterranean littoral and the Guinea coast. The fourth of these missions, composed of two officers, a doctor and two civilians (one of them was a protégé of Warrington, the British consul) left Tripoli on February 1822. They crossed Fezzan, Central Sudan, Bornou, Lake Tchad, Sokoto, and returned in the winter of 1824-25.<sup>111</sup> New information on the region was attained.

The veiled struggle between the Ottoman Empire and France was out in the open in 1858, with the end of the Ghuma affair. Yet, by coincidence, France was engaged with the delimitation of the borders at the hinterland of Algeria, which it had pacified. In those years, domination restricted to the coastal territories did not mean much. The desire of the Bey of Tunisia to obtain greater autonomy from the Porte also contributed to Ottoman concerns. On the other hand, the British consul pointing at the Treaty of Paris (1856), advised the Bey to move towards the Ottoman sultan reiterating that he had successfully achieved a success in receiving a guarantee on its territorial integrity from the European powers.<sup>112</sup>

The first tactic set up by France, as the vassal of Algeria, was to create an 'Arab area' against Tripoli. By then, the French had successfully arranged an Arab force to fight the resisting Turks in Constantine. From 1861 until 1911, clashes short of a declared war went on without a break between France and the Ottoman state, and their supporters. France made particular use of the Meharistes Chaanba to eliminate the local resistance. The Ottomans, in return, had the support of volunteers from tribes against

the French colonisation. This was not a mere issue of Muslim solidarity against Christian France. The tribes were also opposed to attempts to put all commerce and trade in the hands of the French. As both sides struggled for influence, the Ottoman regime adopted a more tolerant approach in areas under its control. The Porte, in general, sufficed with a fixed tax and refrained from its collection if sources were inadequate. It also tried hard to ensure good governance in the region. An imperial order sent to Fezzan in 1861 stated that the 'key' to the African continent was calling for the establishment of an 'exemplary' system of administration and justice there.<sup>113</sup>

The request of the people of Ghat to be part of the Empire reached the Porte in 1849, and was renewed in 1854, 1858, and 1868. By the 1870s, Ghat had an Ottoman garrison of 90 soldiers (200 according to an English traveller). Even a regular postal communication system had been set up. France occupied Djanet, which is placed opposite to Ghat. On the other hand, as revealed by a document dated May 3, 1911, the people of Djanet kept on regarding themselves as citizens of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>114</sup> Fezzan continued to be a stronghold of the Ottomans. In some cases, it was placed under the management of a local leader who was granted the title of qaimmakam (district administrator) and given a salary. Up to the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman administration did not have to deal with serious problems arising from the south. On the Cyrenaican side, *Mehmed Ali* of Egypt fixed the border first at Ras Kanais in 1840. Later, it was extended to include Marsa Matrouh, but the Egyptians did not conceal their desire to incorporate Bomba and Tobruk - the only port with deep water until Bizerte- into their domains. In 1869, with Derna as its last administrative centre in the direction of Egypt, the Porte appointed administrators to Bomba and Tobruk. Hence, this was the completion of the "unity of Libya".

The fragile balance between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers changed after the defeat in the war with Russia in 1877-78, and the signing of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. Ottomans recovered some of their losses in the Balkans with European support, but at the cost of territorial and commercial concessions. Tunisia was allowed to fall under French

control. The British invasion and occupation of Egypt followed the invasion of Tunisia in 1881. Libya was placed to be the sole African territory of the Ottoman Empire. The colonialists' congress held between the European powers for the partition of the continent created a new problem for the Porte. Since there were no borderlines in Central Africa, the congress agreed –as pointed out previously in the relevant chapter- that a land would belong to a State, which could fly its flag there, first. This decision became the starting point of a fanatic race in the Sahara. Prior to 1911, Ottoman officers were spending efforts to be the first to reach some unknown spot, and the same was true of the British, the French, and the Italians. But, border issues did not remain to be the sole concern of the French. They were deeply worried by the presence of Algerian and Tunisian refugees in Tripoli, too.<sup>115</sup> The fear of a Pan Islamist uprising led by Sultan Abdulhamid through the Sanussiyya or from Mecca –in their imagination- led them to look for sultan's spies and agents in every place. It is possible to elaborate that this fear of Pan Islamism reached to a level of mania even amongst the British.

In a short time, the competition among the colonizing powers reached to such an extent that no African territory – including Libya – could be spared from this wave. Not only the Mediterranean states such as France and Italy, but also Britain and even distant United States<sup>116</sup> showed interest in a range of projects like the opening of naval bases on North African coasts. Some individuals prepared detailed plans on colonisation to show the way to their governments. In 1869, a person named A. Channebot presented his views to the French government in a book<sup>117</sup> with the title "*Empire Ottoman Esquisse d'un Projet de Colonisation de la Cyrénaïque*". Channebot, in his 43-page book, based his proposal on an immigration law issued previously by the Porte. The High Council of Tanzimat had decided to grant European immigrants settlement rights in some less populated areas by a decree dated March 9, 1857.<sup>118</sup> Evidently, this was not a carte blanche invitation. Immigrants had to become Ottoman citizens, accept its laws, give up their foreign citizenships, and renounce foreign protection. Channebot's book begins with a criticism of the French system of colonisation in Algeria. In his opinion, this system was no more than "*a large school of practice for the army's general staff, a magnificent exercise*

*ground for the soldiers, and a permanent reflection place for the bellicose constitution of the nation".* On the other hand, while being critical about Islamic laws and practices, he mentions Tanzimat with praising words. Arguing that France should take advantage of the Ottoman immigration law, he finds Cyrenaica as a natural area for the European settlement based on two points:

*"First, the disruptive force of conflicting nationalities – common in the Balkans – does not exist there as the Arabs are simple and ignorant people. Secondly, Cyrenaica is known in history for its extraordinary fertility, the abundance of its rain and the general prosperity of the country."*

The French Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs were not the only ones to receive Channebot's report. He sent the report to the Ottoman, British, Austrian, and German Embassies, as well. However, due the on going war between France and Germany, his views remained unanswered.<sup>119</sup> In 1880, Channebot put forward a new proposal<sup>120</sup>, the construction of three railway lines in Africa, with one linking Chad to Tripoli. He argued that this line would open up an African population of 20 million to the Mediterranean commerce. Channebot's third proposal, titled '*L'Empire Ottoman, l'Italie et la France*', describes the threat posed by Italy – Germany's ally – because of its interest in Libya. In a time of high tension between France and Germany, he claimed that the 'problem' of Tripolitania posed to be more provocative than the Balkan or Armenian questions. Channebot points to the location of Tripoli as he describes it to be the key of the Mediterranean, the central Sudan, and all the equatorial Africa. In support of his views, he cites the judgement of the German explorer *Hohlfs* who described Libya as '*El Dorado*'. The Italians were quick to pick up this slogan. The myth on Libya's wealth reached to such proportions that in 1908 a commission of the '*Jewish Territorial Organization*' of London visited Tripoli and Cyrenaica to verify whether it was a promising area for colonisation. In a report<sup>121</sup> published in January 1909, the commission expressed that '*the old wealth, a dense population, and exceptional fertility of Cyrenaica are exaggerations...*' Accordingly, the Jewish organization gave up the idea of a Libyan project. In contrast, the interest of the Italians in Libya was increasing.



The financial and political crisis of the 'Sick Man of Europe' reached a climax at the beginning of the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1875, the Sublime Porte announced that it would not be able to pay even the interests of its debts. In connection with the insurrections in the Balkans, more was to follow. War with Russia broke out soon (1877-78) to end in a crushing defeat for the Ottoman side. The Porte could hold on to most of its territories due to the rivalry and disagreements that went on among the European Powers on the share of the spoils. However, adherence to the status quo had a cost; implementation of reforms under the control of the European Powers. This was a direct threat, which aimed the partitioning of the Ottoman lands into sectors of influence, each under the control of a certain power. Eventually, a fragile but durable balance was established; no further incursions into Ottoman lands could be allowed without the consent of the Concert of Europe, since a break in their ranks could turn into an overall European war like the one in the Crimea between 1854 and 1856.

Italy was a late comer to the Concert of Europe. Only 15 years had passed since the conclusion of its union and it was still struggling to attain the status of a first rate power. The territorial problems with its neighbours (Austria in particular) were still waiting to be solved. In addition, unemployment caused by lack of resources, was forcing the Italians to look for their living abroad. These factors were pressuring Rome to expand towards the North African coasts, which were coveted by its European rivals. This led Italy to an impasse, because by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in order to be considered a 'great power' a country had to be a 'colonialist power'. Moreover, Italian politicians were well aware of the disintegration of the Ottoman State and could only be tempted by it. The Italian ambassador in Berlin in a report submitted to the king expressed the thinking in Europe with regard to the Ottoman Empire: *'Whatever you do, Turkey is in the process of crumbling and on the verge of a downfall'*.<sup>122</sup>

Italy, as a first choice, preferred Tunisia to expand. In this Ottoman province, there was a populous Italian colony. In fact, it was run as an autonomous vice-royalty. However, against any move in that direction

stood the aspirations of the French on Tunisia. The situation in the Adriatic was not much different either. In spite of the presence of a catholic community with strong ties to the Roman Church, the Adriatic shores were also closed to Italy because of the Austrian interests there. So, eyes, then, had to turn on to some other Ottoman lands. In 1877, the Italian Consul in Scutari, Albania, made a proposal to start a rebellion there. His plan was to open the way for a military intervention. It was a time of turmoil in the Balkans, and the Russian and Ottoman War was very close. But, in his reply, Foreign Minister Malegari was quite clear and cautious; "*We decided together with other powers to avoid any action or declaration which could be interpreted as to indicate hostile intentions towards Turkey.*" Furthermore, he kept the same line in yet another directive; "*At this moment, Italian interests imply the maintenance of the present territorial status quo.*"<sup>123</sup>

Moreover, Malagari made it known to the Austrian side that Italy's intentions in the Adriatic were peaceful. In this line, the Italian side turned down an Albanian Christian notable looking for support to set up an autonomous administration in Albania. This notable who occupied a prominent post in the Porte had advanced the Italian embassy and was told: "*Our policy is essentially peaceful and we are not interested in protectorates.*"<sup>124</sup> As a result, Albanian dissidents who were turned down by Rome had to look for support from other European governments. Austria, main rival of Italy, was among the most prominent one. In the pre 1911 period, the role of Italy was far behind Austria in the subversive activities that were seen in Albania.<sup>125</sup>

In 1878, the Italian Foreign Minister *Cairoli* expressed the anti-colonialist policy of 'clean hands' at the Congress of Berlin. This caused rage in the Italian public opinion. King Victor-Emmanuel II, himself, asserted that '*Italy must not only be respected; she must make herself feared.*' On the other hand, the Sultan under siege on all sides by the imperialist powers could only welcome Cairoli's statements. When the crisis on Tunisia escalated in April 1881, Italy remained to be the only signatory of the Berlin Treaty, which would confirm the Ottoman sovereignty there. The Porte attempted to get Italy engaged in the

convening of an international meeting to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. The Ottoman representative in Rome told the Italian government that the interests of Italy in Tunisia were more than the others. However, this was also a period of internal crisis in Italy. Cairoli accepted the Ottoman rights and supported the continuation of the status quo, but, at the same time, he had to say no to any unilateral policy. After his fall in late May, the new Foreign Minister (Mancini) reiterated the same argument: “*the principle of the unity of the Concert of Europe cannot be violated by Italy.*” A press war went on in the columns of the French and the Italian newspapers. But, Italy was to show no official reaction to the French occupation except a ‘self initiated’ protest by the ‘gérant’ of the Italian consulate in Tunisia.<sup>126</sup>

The news of the occupation of Tunisia by France and the declaration of protectorate left the Italian politicians and the public opinion in shock. Fierce discussions went on and occupied the agenda for months. It was not easy to accept the ‘loss’ of Tunisia. Rumours that Tripoli would be allocated to Italy did not suffice to calm down the Italians. Deputy Savini expressed his dissatisfaction in Parliament: ‘*We wanted Tunisia not Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as they propose...*’<sup>127</sup> Partition of the Ottoman lands contrary to the provisions of Concert of Europe against unilateral action placed Italian diplomacy in a dilemma. Rome was not strong enough to force a *fait accompli* through military action. On the other hand, public opinion and the opposition were forcing the government to take up a more active colonialist policy. Another blow came with the occupation of Egypt by Britain (1882) and prompted Italy’s reaction. This occupation gave Italy the opportunity to negotiate openly its share in the partition of Africa. France and Britain wanted to get Italy’s approval of their *faites accomplis* by offering Tripolitania. In their colonial competition neither wanted a common border with the other; preference was for a buffer state. In addition, they used rumours to distract the attention of the public opinion, and carefully avoided to bind with any commitment that may suggest an agreement.

At the end of 1882, the Sublime Porte was alerted by its ambassador in Paris on the opening of negotiations between France and

Italy. This forced it to reconsider all measures to protect its last province in Africa from land against France and from the sea against Italy. A detailed report was presented to the Sultan in 1884, and in the following year a defence plan was prepared by *Colmar Von der Goltz*, the senior German officer in the Ottoman service.<sup>128</sup> In view of the difficulty of sending food, ammunition and soldiers from the sea route in war conditions, the plan envisaged to establish ammunition depots along the coast; to restore old cannons and other weaponry; and to give military training to the local people (the regular Ottoman forces in Libya had never exceeded seven to eight thousand and at times had fallen as low as 3500). In a parallel measure, the Porte ratified and implemented at once the international conventions against the slave trade and arms trafficking. These were attempts to avert criticism and not to give ground to any foreign intervention based on the internal affairs of the province.

By 1888, the Sultan had been assured that Tripolitania was no longer an easy prey for invaders. Nevertheless, he insisted on the preparation of a joint report by the ministries of War and Naval Affairs with a view to render the province self-sufficient in case of sudden attack. Measures were also taken to prevent land purchase by foreigners in Tripoli.

The Ottomans also took notice of the Italian maritime activity off the Red Sea ports. Subsequently, a report was prepared on present and future protection measures for the Red Sea, the Arabian peninsula and the gulf of Basra. It was decided to separate Somali affairs from the Egyptian problem and to present it to the international forum as an act of aggression. The problem became even more complicated when Britain refused to evacuate Egypt and proposed a joint venture to administer the Red Sea coasts. It was in this period that the Mahdi of Sudan defeated British-Egyptian forces and refused to submit to the Ottoman Caliph. Therefore, the problem exceeded by far the limits of an Italian-Ottoman struggle. However, Italians concentrated on commercial activities in the Red Sea, and the Sublime Porte preferred to play the issue down by ordering the Ottoman press not to mention the Red Sea problem.<sup>129</sup> Such exchanges were a proof of Italian and Turkish dependence on other European powers in their political moves. Indeed, both sides closely observed the polarizations and groupings in the

continent. France was seeking partners to settle scores with Germany: this finally ended with the Paris-San Petersburg rapprochement. *Bismarck* responded by creating a German-Austrian Axis, and encouraged Italy to join in. Britain, with the threat of a Russian presence both in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean, favoured a policy of active neutrality. At the same time, it oscillated among the powers along the lines of its interests.

The policies observed by Italy and the Sublime Porte were in a 'pacifist' line between the early 1880's and the war of 1911. Two factors forced them to such a common line. First, they were dependent on the Concert of Europe in political decisions. Second, they were not in a position to carry out the required military operations. As a result, Italy remained as '*the defender of the status quo*', while the Ottomans observed a policy of '*pacifist resistance*.'

The failure of 'clean hands' policy helped its opponents to come to power in the person of *Crispi* in 1887. Still, he was very cautious and as foreign minister, sent the following instruction to the Italian ambassadors in the six main capitals of Europe (London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg and Istanbul): '*We have definitely decided to pursue the peace and conservation policy which characterizes the work of Italy in the Concert of Europe*'. Two weeks later, *Crispi* received a note from his ambassador in London transmitting a message by the British foreign secretary saying: "*Time is not yet ripe for the solution of the Eastern Question, but when it's ripe Italy will obtain Tripolitania.*" *Crispi* was very impressed, and asked his ambassador to send detailed information about the meeting, and inform the Foreign Office that he would support Britain in its Egyptian policy. In his memoirs, *Crispi* writes that with French designs over Tripoli in his mind, he tried to alarm Britain and Germany with the phantom of a French empire extending from Morocco to Egypt. "*This will help Italy capture Tripoli, with the support of Europe*" he thought. The British foreign secretary's reply was again a classical example of active neutrality: "*Not now, but at an appropriate moment Tripoli will be Italian.*"

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The Italian politicians, hoping that Tripoli would be colonised by them in the near future, began to act keener to defend the territorial 'status quo'. After the French and British 'faits accomplis' of 1881 and 1882, *Crispi* thought that he had found an opportunity in the internal political crisis in France. He began an active policy to preserve the status quo in the Mediterranean. His aim was to take under control the French advancement in Africa by way of international negotiations. An agreement was reached first with Britain in 1887, to which Austria and Spain later adhered. But, Italy's purpose in signing the Mediterranean Pact was to give itself the freedom it needed to concentrate on Libya. Both Rome and Istanbul were concerned over the implications of the Anglo-French agreement of August 5, 1890 for the delimitation of influence zones in Africa. In response, the Porte sent a Note to Paris and London, which claimed the Ottoman rights in the hinterland of Tripoli, comprising Chad and even the Congo (October 30, 1890). Neither France nor Britain took the Ottoman Note seriously. The grand vizier *Said Pasha*, told the Italian ambassador that his government was deeply concerned with foreign intervention in Tripoli's hinterland. *Said Pasha*, in a report, warned the sultan that the international agreements, which guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, were not to be relied on. Each signatory power was regarding the provisions as a medium to pursue its own interest.<sup>131</sup>

Actually, Italy was the sole state to find the Ottoman Note of October 30, 1890, serious. *Crispi* openly deplored the inactive attitude of the Porte, and claimed that it was favouring France. General *L. Dal Verme* recommended to the government to support the claims of the Ottoman Empire on the hinterland of Tripoli. His report was dated January 1891, and titled "*How to correct the situation created by the Anglo-French agreement on North Africa*". Lieutenant general *G. Sironi*, in a report to the chief of the general staff, focused on the French efforts to turn the Mediterranean to a 'French lake'. *Sironi* suggested close monitoring of the French activities in the Sahara to make sure that they do not expand their sphere of influence there.<sup>132</sup> The language used by *Crispi*, as if a future owner of Tripoli, forced *Said Pasha* to react by stating that the Porte will

not let anyone - France or other powers - to occupy its lands. ( February 4, 1891)

Years later, a foreign minister of Italy, would refer again to the issue of the inactiveness of the Ottoman Empire. This time, it was *Canevaro* speaking in the senate in response to the Anglo-French agreement of 1898: *"Instead of making its presence felt in some way in the main oases of the Tripolitanian hinterland, the Porte is interested only in the defence of the wilayet, which it thinks is threatened by Italy (...) the fact that we are open and loyal in our relations with Turkey, more so than any other government, [only] harms our policy."*

The policy of the sultan was not much different from *Crispi's* remarks. Relations with France were strained after the occupation of first Algeria, and then Tunisia, but the Sublime Porte kept a restrained tone towards Paris. It found a balance in Germany to counter the effects of the Italian policy. *Bismarck's* place with respect to the Italian politicians also played its role. The policy of rapprochement with Russia proved to be effective against the British policies. However, this move tempted Italy to seek British support with regard to Tripoli. In short, the sultan was giving priority to the development of relations with Europe on a bilateral basis. He carried the concern that international agreements could be used as a means to bring more concessions and capitulations.<sup>133</sup>

As long as there was no polarization with clear-cut lines among the European states, the Ottoman policy could find room to manoeuvre. It could successfully hold back the Italian colonialist aspirations, and get in the way of their searches for support.<sup>134</sup> *Crispi*, as he waited for a consensus on Libya to form among the Europeans, tried his chance in another part of Africa, Abyssinia. However, after its defeat at Adua (1897) Italy lost all its hopes to carry out a Libyan operation on its own. Rome was compelled to go back to play the policy of safeguarding the 'status quo'. Meanwhile, the grade of political and economic relations between Italy and the Sublime Porte could be expressed as being cordial. The very existence of the Ottoman State was connected with the continuance of the Treaty of Berlin. Italian insistence on the preservation of the status quo in

line with the Treaty was highly important for the Ottomans. In addition, the incapability of the Italian side to carry out a military *faite accompli* was displayed in Abyssinia. The defeat of Italy was a relief for the Ottoman side. The Italian image and pride was so damaged that a new adventure seemed almost impossible in the near future.

Both Italy and the Ottoman State were aware of each other's intentions. The Ottoman side remained restrained and the Italian businessmen and workers in Ottoman lands continued to work with no obstruction. There were restrictions on their freedom of movement in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. On the other hand, Italy did not miss any chance to remind other powers of its continuing interest in Libya. However, the leading colonial powers carefully avoided making any commitments in their replies and kept on to disappoint the Italians. This forced the Italian policy to draw continuous zigzags between antagonist groups. There were also sarcastic articles on the Italian press against the government, the allies and the other states. When Italy proposed to establish a garrison in Tripoli '*for the protection of Christians*', the reply of the British foreign secretary was a shocking; '*I am not used to make vivisection of States*', as if Britain itself had never been involved in imperialist conquest and territorial dissection. The foreign secretary based his refusal on a likely French reaction:

*"Even if France eventually accepts Italian rights over Tripoli, do you think she will not seek compensation? This compensation would be Gadames, which we will never agree to see in her [French] hands (...) All we can do is exchange letters – similar to those of the past – that will repeat the attachment to the status quo in the Mediterranean. Lord Salisbury is [remains] a sincere friend of Italy, although he does not agree with all her ambitions."*<sup>135</sup>

Following the *Fashoda Crisis* (1898), Britain and France entered into negotiations over their spheres of influence in Africa, and the Anglo-French *Entente Cordiale* was signed with the aim of settling long standing disputes in this direction in 1904. This agreement of collaboration and friendship was also representing an important change in the European equilibrium. A shift from rivalry and conflict to rapprochement and alliance



was taking place in between the two countries. The loose ties among the countries of the Central Alliance (Germany-Austria-Italy) were still there. On the other side, Britain's entry into the scene became reinforcement for the Franco-Russian alliance. The 'splendid isolation' of Britain was now over with the Entente Cordiale and the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907. Italy had joined the Central Alliance in 1882 in order to secure German support against a possible French threat in Africa. However, in the last years of the century, Italy lost all its hopes for having colonial territories, and no longer felt the need to oppose France. In the end, Italy and France reached an agreement on North Africa in December 1900. Both sides recognised their mutual interests, such as in Morocco France's and in Tripoli Italy's. It was a covert defection by Italy from the Central Alliance. Negotiations between France and Italy had started in 1898. The delay in reaching the agreement was due to Italy's insistence on a written assurance that France would give Italy a free hand in Tripolitania in return for the acknowledgement of France's 'rights' in Morocco. Delcassé, the French ambassador to Rome, who initiated the negotiations, was in favour of granting such an assurance, because -according to him- even if France imposed its direct sovereignty over Morocco or declared it a protectorate Italy would not be able to take action since it did not possess the required power.<sup>136</sup>

*'It is very unlikely that Italy will attempt to seize Tripoli, even if we take possession of Morocco; to do so, soldiers, money, a solid interior situation, and the goodwill of the powers, especially the Allies, would be necessary – all things which Italy lacks in such a large undertaking... But, even should it undertake such an enterprise, the action would urgently require our consent and goodwill, any Mediterranean expansion necessarily placing Italy in a somewhat tributary position to us.'*

Based on such an argument, France gave its written approval to Italian claims in the so-called 'secret pact' of 1902, which stated *inter alia*:

*"... each of the two powers might freely develop its sphere of influence in the above mentioned regions [i.e. Morocco for France and Tripoli and Cyrenaica for Italy] when it judges the time opportune, without either one's action being necessarily subordinate to that of the other".*

But, was it really a secret – and could it be considered as a pact? Moreover, did it really contain any new elements? France immediately informed the British Foreign Office, which in turn transmitted the text to the Germans. The secrecy lay solely in the fact that although signed on July 10, 1902, it carried the date of November 1, 1902. The purpose was to hold off the negative reactions by the allies of both governments.<sup>137</sup> In addition, there were no new elements in the text. The only aim of Italy was to ensure that Tripoli would not fall in the hands of others. Italy hoped that this agreement would be interpreted as a confirmation of its ‘right’ to invade Tripoli. Having received, at last, the approval of one great power was a success for Rome. But, the text and the commentaries were away from fulfilling Italian hopes. Germany did not find “the secret pact” in contradiction to the spirit of their alliance, as it aimed the preservation of the status quo in North Africa. Thus, any unilateral action by Italy would be on its own risk and cost. Austria and Britain shared the view of ‘preservation of the status quo’, adding that they would not interfere:

*‘if at any time, an alteration of the status quo should take place, it would be their object that, so far as is compatible with the obligation resulting from the public law of Europe, such alteration should be in conformity with Italian interests.’*<sup>138</sup>

The best appraisal came from the Italian ambassador to Paris (Tornielli) in a private letter sent to his colleague in London (Pansa):

*‘It is not a duet in which both parties find the same motives. They are two melodies in which each sings his own song ( ...) It has to be noted that, it would have the pretension of changing the effects of the solemn agreements with which France and the other powers have guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire! Now that the legend has been created, in the sense that France has let free the hand on Tripolitania, it will be appropriate that they keep well under lock and key the famous text in Rome, so that nobody destroys the legend.’*<sup>139</sup>

Once the public heard about this well kept ‘secret agreement’, the Italian government found itself in a tight situation. Some questions were raised. If permission was granted, why not immediately send the navy to Tripoli and invade it sooner than the Germans? When deputy *De Marinis*

reminded his colleagues in the parliament that Tripoli and Cyrenaica were once part of the Roman Empire, a storm of applaud burst. But, foreign minister Prinetti's swift reply came as a sound reminder; *"Our relations with the Ottoman Empire are very good. Agitations in the public opinion have no basis. And there is no reason to disturb the status quo in the Mediterranean."*<sup>140</sup>

The 'legend' made the Porte active no less than as it did the Italian public opinion. Ottoman ambassadors in Europe were instructed to find out the content of the agreement. They were also told to inform the respective governments that; *"Italy threatens the equilibrium in Eastern Europe (...) which concerns all the signatories of the Berlin treaty, which implies the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman State."* Direct contacts with Italian diplomats began to take place in İstanbul, as well as Rome.

The Italian foreign minister explained their official stand in a note to the Italian ambassador in İstanbul:

*"In present conditions, we have no intention of undertaking any action towards Tripolitania, and all rumours concerning preparations for such a move are baseless. Regarding the future, of course, I cannot engage the future of my country; nevertheless, the royal government will always consider with high anxiety every eventuality, which will force her to abandon the persistent politics of respect for the Turkish sovereignty. In any case, it seems to me that whatever happens, Italian and Turkish interests in Tripolitania could find a way to reciprocal understanding and even complementarities."*<sup>141</sup> The minister went on: *"I pronounced this last sentence with the aim of opening a dialogue for the exchange of ideas on the subject, if the Turkish government does not feel an absolute repugnance for it."*

The sultan received a more explicit proposal informally through the embassy's dragoman:

*"Vital Italian interests require that Tripoli cannot be left to fall under the domination of other powers; because of its geographical situation, Tripoli cannot be defended efficiently by Turkey; economically it*

*represents for the state an incurable problem, as Turkey does not have sufficient sources to appraise its natural resources. By mutual agreement, it is possible to preserve its territorial integrity, and to secure its economic development, as well.*"<sup>142</sup>

The Italian politicians might have been serious in thinking that an agreement on Tripoli with the sultan could be made. In the archives of the Italian foreign ministry, there are three drafts found on 'a *project for an Italo-Turkish Convention.*' One draft examines to give equal rights to the Italian consul and the Ottoman governor, and to set up an Italian naval base for keeping law and order. Another one considers administering the province in the name of the sultan.<sup>143</sup>

The first move by *Abdulhamid II* to counter the threat was to search for an ally. The chances of defending Libya by Ottoman forces, without the support of a European power, seemed to be very low. He thought to enter into an alliance on regional defence with France. The grand vizier, Said Pasha, opposed the idea. The pasha pointed out that such an alliance would constitute a violation of the international treaties that guaranteed the existence of the Ottoman state. Both Italy and France were parties to these treaties, and signing an agreement with one against the other for the protection of any Ottoman land would be the same as accepting the abrogation of these treaties. Yet, Said Pasha also knew quite well that the future of Tripoli and the possibility of keeping it Ottoman lay in the hands of the balance of power. In this line, negotiations were started with the French embassy, but they produced no result.<sup>144</sup>

The council of ministers went on to reinforce the local defences in Tripoli. They revised their measures on the field. Decisions were taken on sending reinforcements, restoring and upgrading weaponry, and giving military training to the local people. Rules on the acquisition of land were tightened to control any economic infiltration by Italy,<sup>145</sup> From this point on, the Italian press intensified its campaign against the Sublime Porte and began to report all developments in the province. This '*peaceful economic infiltration*' by Italy, as put by G. Bevione, one of the most ardent supporters of the Libyan expedition of 1911, aimed to integrate the

province 'quietly and gradually', and to conquer it 'without firing a shot'<sup>146</sup> Indeed, when asked if Italy was preparing for a landing at Tripoli, *Tittoni*, the minister of foreign affairs, replied in the senate:

*"All concerned governments have accepted the priority of Italian rights among any other nation in Tripoli (...) In my opinion, Italy must not invade it as long as circumstances do not force it to do so (...) The integrity of the Ottoman state must be preserved (...) For strategic reasons, Italy cannot tolerate the installation of any other European sovereignty in Tripoli (...) Italy declares that it will occupy this province in case of the disintegration of the Ottoman state, but we are in favour of the preservation of the status quo until that time. As it is necessary to be ready for such an eventuality, Italy cannot tolerate the interdiction of civilization there. Consequently, Italy has to persevere with peaceful infiltration, and must use its perfect relations with the Sultan to establish economic superiority in a land which it considers its own."* (May 1905)

When it came to the matters of economic infiltration, the sultan was in the same frame of mind; "mistrust for all". In case of Italy, this mistrust would turn into anxiety. The ambassador of Italy in Istanbul, *Imperiali*, explains:

*'The Sultan is in principle against [granting] any kind of concession to foreigners for mineral exploitation (...) For Tripoli and Cyrenaica he nourishes the same suspicion and the same mistrust vis-à-vis France and England. They turn to an inveterate hostility when it comes from Italy....'*<sup>147</sup>

More to the point, in 1906, he counselled that economic infiltration could lead the relations into an open clash.<sup>148</sup> This warning found no repercussions in Rome. The Italian diplomacy acted in line with the requests of the financial circles and the nationalist press. It pushed the Porte to the limit to receive permission to set up Italian institutions in Tripoli and Cyrenaica. While making continuous requests to start shipping and postal services, to open schools and banks, they kept referring to Italy's respect for the integrity of Ottoman lands. But, when they thought it would help, they did not refrain to threaten the Sublime Porte by use of naval force, as in the case of the postal services. One thing was clear; they were not willing to take the issue to a multilateral platform. Italy

preferred to solve the disputes at bilateral level. This Italian tactic could be the reason why the Sultan had some form of reserves towards the Italian policy. In turn, quite often, he attempted to use Italy as a media to introduce the Porte's views before the Concert of Europe. The mission of *Selim Melhame Pasha* in 1907, a Catholic in the private service of the sultan, draws a good example in this line. He was sent on a mission to Rome to seek for Italy's mediation on the subject of Macedonian reforms between İstanbul and the European powers. The sultan, in his first message, thanked to the king of Italy for the steady policy pursued by the Italian government to preserve the territorial integrity of the Ottoman state. The Italian foreign minister replied that this policy would never change, and the sultan should give up any thought about Italy having "criminal" aims over Tripoli.<sup>149</sup>

Yet, messages among the grand vizier, the minister of foreign affairs, and the governor of Tripoli illustrate that the Ottoman side was fully aware of all Italian plans. One example is the correspondence on the opening of the first branches of the *Banco di Roma* in Ottoman lands – in Tripoli and Benghazi, in preference to İstanbul. On September 21, 1905, the grand vizier advised both the foreign ministry and the governor to find a way that can block the branche openings '*without causing problems and staying within rules*'. Certainly, he was acting with the approval of the sultan. But, it did not take very long (April 22, 1907), for the permission to open the branches to reach the governor. The main aim of this concession was to win the support of Italy in custom tariff negotiations with European powers. In the same way, the Italian maritime company's service to the Tripolitanian ports was 'tolerated'. It must be added that Ottoman officials knew about the relationship between Banco di Roma and foreign minister *Tittoni's* brother.<sup>150</sup>

By 1908, it was possible to name the relations between Italy and the Ottoman Empire as too intricate. A remark by a contemporary historian shows the level of complexity the relation had reached :

*'During the period immediately prior to the Young Turk revolution of July, 1908, Italy's ambassador to the Porte, the Marquis Imperiali, opposed the reform schemes proposed by other European Powers, and foreign minister*

*Tittoni was irritated by the 'constant annoyance and harassing of the sultan by the ambassadors.'*

Italy was not feeling comfortable with the reforms. As a secondary power, it was following a conservative line. A reversal of the status quo would be untimely, and premature. It was still not ready to take advantage of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, '*on anything like equal bases with the other Creditor-Powers*'.<sup>151</sup>

## V. WAR WITH ITALY

### From regionalism to anti-colonialism

The Tanzimat had a significant impact on the intellectuals in Tripoli. The efforts of the *New Ottomans* (called Young Ottomans by Europeans) who instituted the constitutional regime and Libyan contacts with Egyptian modernists change needed generations, but steps towards a new way of thinking were taken. An important contribution came particularly from the young Libyans who had completed their education at the *Aşiret Mektebi* (*The Tribal School*) established in İstanbul by Sultan Abdulhamid. The sons of tribal chiefs from all over the Empire were admitted in the school and were given modern education. The graduates, after returning home, served as a neutralizing element against regionalist and conservative tendencies. The Libyan historian *Abdalkarim Aboushwerab* points out to the presence of ten doctors from Libyan origin that graduated from Ottoman School of Medicine and returned to Tripoli to work in their homeland. Furthermore, the New Ottoman's awareness and insistence on integrating the people into the process of change had an impact, which is not possible to disregard. As a result, the autonomist tendency associated with regionalism was replaced with a search for a unified stand based on modern thinking.

The noted affair of *Serajeddin* is the most typical example of this new approach.<sup>152</sup> After having lived in Hijaz, Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt, he settled in Tripoli and worked in the wilayet's newspaper '*Trablousgharb*'.

Very much disturbed by the recent occupation of Tunisia and Egypt and aware of the immediate danger for Libya, he tried to involve notables of Tripoli in safeguarding the future of the region. He established a charitable association under the auspices of governor *Ahmed Rasim Pasha*. Among its most prominent members were *Ahmad Hussain an Naib* (Mayor of Tripoli), *Sheikh Hamza al Madani* (whose father was a favourite of Sultan Abdulhamid). However, it concentrated on mainly the young elites of the city and even some young officers were also enrolled as members. The association's programme of 20 articles stipulated initiation of reforms, particularly in the field of education, as a measure against the European threat. It recommended the establishment of medical, military and engineering schools at Tripoli, advised its members to read Istanbul newspapers regularly in order to follow world events in detail. At its meetings political issues were discussed. The association did not show any sign of opposition to the Ottoman regime, but the admission of young officers must have annoyed the Porte. Considered a secret revolutionary association, its offices were closed by the police and the leaders jailed (March 31, 1883). In his defence, Serajeddin made references to the ignorance of the people, economic stagnation, waste of water resources and French occupation threats. In prison, Serajeddin met *Muhammad Bourbiah* who led the opposition of Tripolitanian notables against the governor. *Abd al Jalil as Sayd* joined them, as well. With the aim of opposing the governor and inciting the people to revolt, Serajeddin claimed to be *Al Mahdi al Montazar* (The expected Mahdi) and sent messages to notables in all towns and villages, asking their support. Some of the recipients informed the governor about the messages. Serajeddin was condemned to death and sent to Istanbul.

The arrival of the exiled *Young Turks* in Tripoli on September 1897 constitutes a turning point in the history of Libya. There were doctors, officers, students of military, medical and engineering schools in Istanbul and also some civilians among them.<sup>5</sup> Abdulhamid's regime feeling highly threatened by their activities sentenced them to forced stay in Fezzan, called '*sunny Siberia*' by a French observer, *M.N. Slousch*. However on their way to Fezzan, the governor of Tripoli intervened and changed their place of exile to Tripoli. The first group of exiles was composed of 78



people. The number increased later. For the first few years, a very strict control was applied to prevent the exiles from escaping to Europe or neighbouring countries. Later, after taking an oath not to leave the country, they were permitted to stay in the city. The Ottoman government assigned administrative, educational or medicinal tasks to almost all of them. A number did break their word and leave for other countries, but most preferred to settle down in the city, married and merged into the society. One of them wrote in his memoirs, as cited by Kandemir: <sup>153</sup>

*“Trablousgharb became a city of the exiled. Since, the exiles were convinced that they would be staying there for a very long period; some brought their families from Anatolia to share their daily lives. There were even quarters where exiles lived. (...) On the two main roads of Tripoli, the Mizran and Rikardo houses were mostly occupied by exiles. They participated actively in the cultural life of the city. For example, they collected money and opened a library at the centre of the town. They also installed a school ‘Mekteb-i İrfan’ (School of Culture) for educating youngsters. All the teachers were exiles. They provided all the necessary tools and materials that did not exist in other schools. Some of the exiles settled in Homs, Benghazi and Derna and worked as state employees.”*

The political activities of these resident Young Turks did not cease. Under the leadership of Doctor *Mehmed Reshid (Shahingiray)* they instituted in Tripoli the seventh secret branch office of the ‘*Union and Progress*’. In short time, they won the sympathy of the local people by their considerate approach towards the society and the activities they carried out for the public good. In addition as exiled dissidents, they had the chance of being close to the people than the administrators were. Soon, an atmosphere of solidarity with the Young Turks among the people began to prevail. As a result the participation of the local people to the anti-colonialist campaign and the war with Italy was attained with more readiness. *Sami*, present governor of Fezzan who also served formerly an exile sentence there, sent a letter to his friend Temo dated May 30, 1910 reflecting this change in the feelings of the people towards solidarity with the Young Turks: <sup>154</sup>

*“I do believe in the sincerity of the government, but we don’t know the needs of our country. It is not a shame... Because, we do not know our*

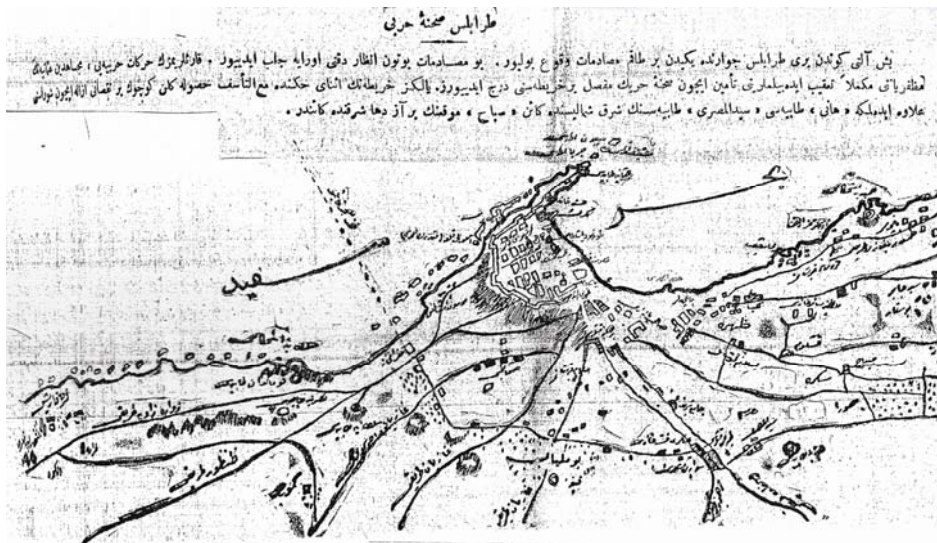
country. We still want to administer Fezzan as the Gallipoli (In Anatolia). While there are hundreds of employees of the central government, here in Fezzan, that has four districts, each as big as a governorate, we have only 15 employees. The district governors are included in this number. Furthermore, when something happens in Ghat it takes 20 days for my office to be notified. From here, I inform Tripoli and from there the matter is transmitted to İstanbul. Then a telegram comes: 'Inquire very quickly, or sent an official there!' Where is the employee? It is already written to the local administration. Three days later another telegram, asking how is the investigation progressing? Fifteen more days is needed for my letter to reach Ghat... So, my friend, we do not know our country. Our neighbours, the French, are working with full energy, because they are convinced that, 'Turks have woken up... Before they start changing things , we must oppose them with a fait accompli...' Thank heaven, by shouting and yelling, I found three district governors as I wanted. We are also working very hard to teach them their job from scratch. Lately, I inspected the villages for fifteen days. One thing only made me happy: the gendarmes, the administrators and their employees cannot oppress the people anymore. Wherever I asked, the reply was the same: thank God, we understood that we are also human beings, we pay nothing else but our taxes, and we don't fill anymore the stomachs of the employees and their animals".



28.Patriotic demonstrations at Tripoli in front of the governor's office(1911)



29.Ottoman cannons at the Hamra Palace.Their range were not enough to reach the Italian navy



30. Ottoman and mujahid forces surrounding Tripoli, according a plan published by the İstanbul newspaper Tanin (12. November.1911)



مصر طريقيلا دار حرب به مهني عنيت برقاذا، مجاهدين

31. Volunteers, mainly Turkish officers disguised as local people, joined the war front by crossing the desert, particularly from Egypt.



بنغازي مظهریات

بر قاج وقتدن بری بنغازی ایتالیانلرک حال و موقعی بک زیاده مشکلات کسب ایتشد. صوک کونلرده وازد اولان معلوماته نظر ا دشمن عساکرینک بنغازی ایلری دوشرو حرکت حربیه کیشهرک شهر جوارنی اله کیرمک ایچون اوغراشمنقه اولدینی آکلاشیلوردی. اولکی کونکی السخه مزده مندرج معلومات رسمیه اینه ، استغانی آژانسک احواله بر فوق المادهک اولدینی ادعا ایتسنه رعماً ، ایتالیا کشف قوللرینک مهم مغلوبلره اوغراهلرخی کوسر مکده ایدی .

32. Victory at Benghazi (From Tanin Newspaper of 16. December. 1911)



بنغازی مبعوثی منصور پاشانک افادات وطن پرورانه سی دیکلامک اوزره اجتهاع ابدن اولاد عرب  
Tribu arabe ecoutant un discours de Mansour Pacha, député de Benghazi.

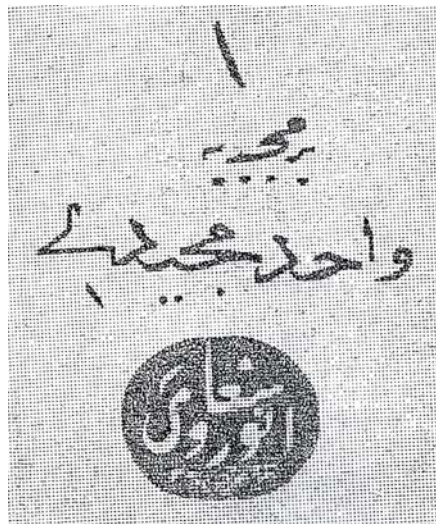


بنغازی مبعوثی منصور پاشانک مجاهدین اسلامیه به خطابی  
[ ایلوستراسیون خابرخصوصی فوطوغرافینندن ]

33. Omar Mansour Pasha deputy of Bengazi, addressing to the Libyan mujahids at the warfront



34. Enver Bey and Mustafa Kemal posing with the weapons seized from the Italians. Behind them captain Rechad Bey hold an Italian machine gun



35. Paper money worth one 'medjidie' bearing the seal of Enver Bey commander of the Bengazi-Derna front, which circulated in the Ottoman controlled areas during the war.



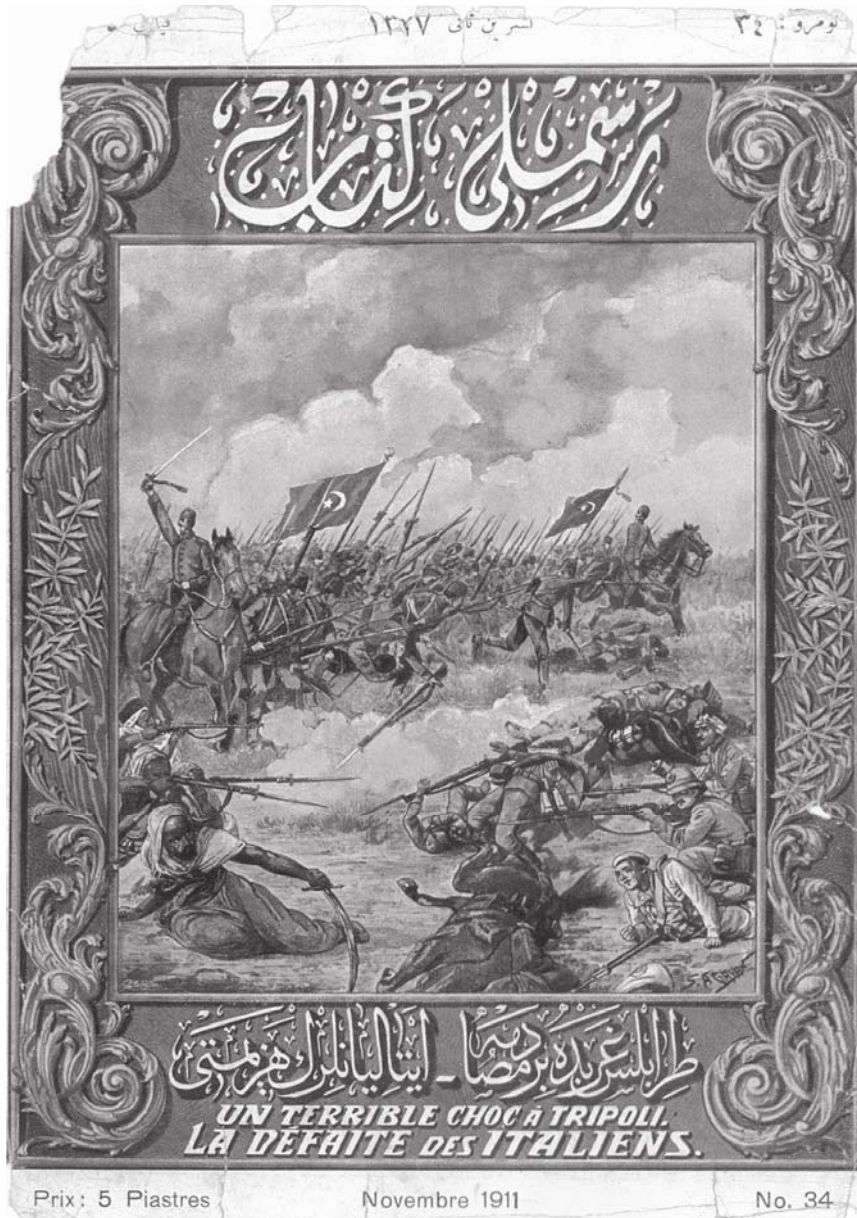


طرابلس غرب صحنه حريبتدن بر لوحه غرا : انور بك باشنده اولديني حالده مجاهدين اردوستك رسم كيدي

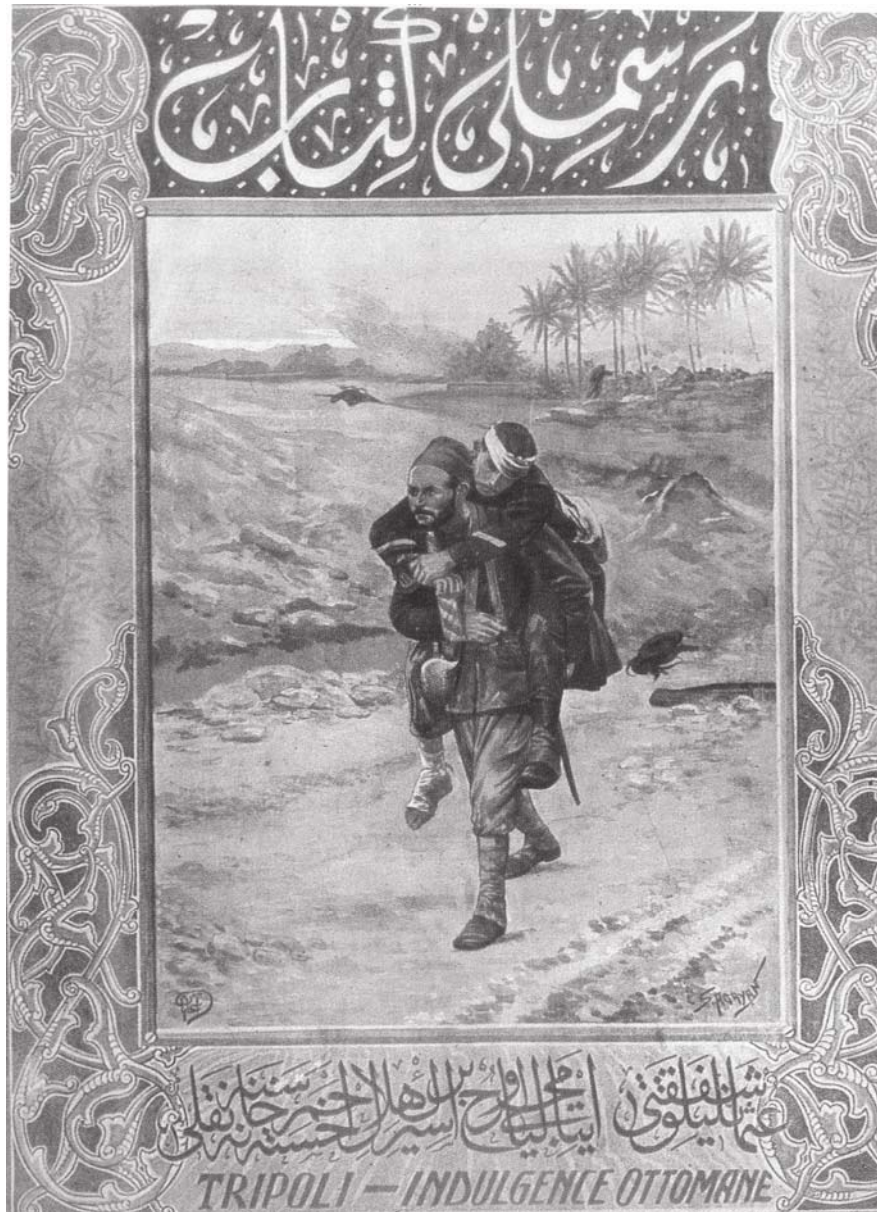
36.Parade of the Libyan mujahids before Enver Bey at Derna



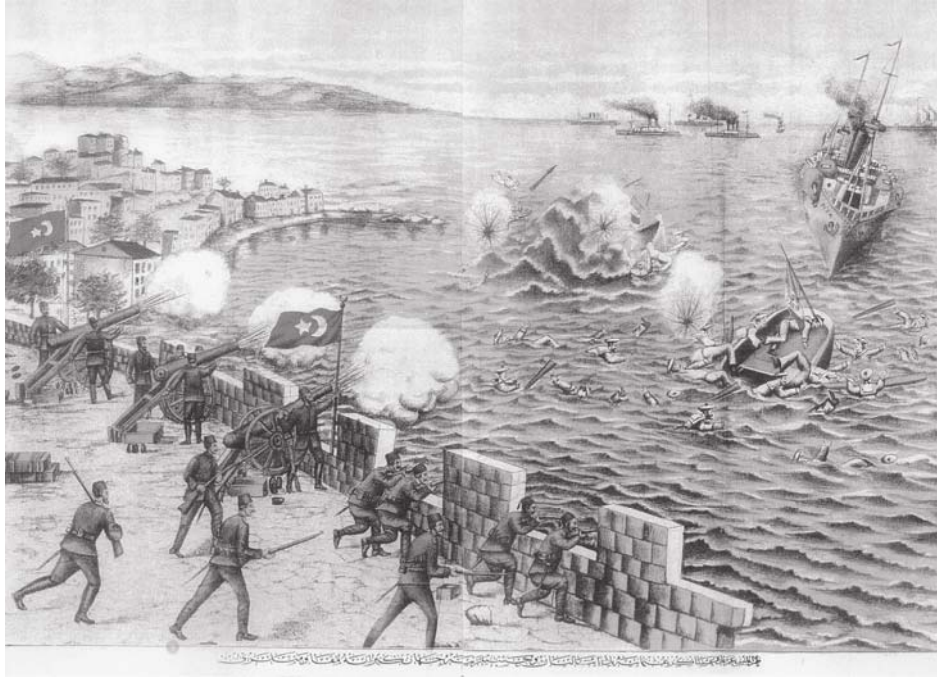
37.Victory at Libde (12.June.1912) under the command of Enver Bey, presented to the Turkish readers by the review 'Resimli Kitab'



38. Italian defeat at Tripoli, November 1911



39. Ottoman indulgence during the Libyan war: Turkish soldier carrying a wounded enemy to the hospital painting of S. Ağayan at the front



40. Popular painting depicting the defence of Tripoli

## Appel à l'opinion publique européenne

Notre grande révolution turque de juillet 1908 avait été faite dans le but de régénérer l'empire ottoman et de donner un peu de bien-être à un peuple opprimé par un régime on ne peut plus tyrannique. Mais, à peine au pouvoir, notre gouvernement constitutionnel reçut deux rudes coups, qui annulèrent le traité de Berlin. On se consola de ces malheurs en pensant qu'on avait pu éviter ainsi l'effusion du sang et que, désormais, on pourrait travailler sans obstacle à la régénération de la société orientale.

Voilà trois années que nous tâchons, de toutes nos forces, avec une ardeur que rien ne peut rebuter, à relever la condition des peuples de notre empire et c'est juste à ce moment que l'un des pays qui se prétend notre aîné dans la voie du progrès fonce sur nous, tel un bandit des temps féodaux, et cherche à nous voler une de nos plus importantes provinces. Où sont ces beaux principes, dont se glorifie le XX<sup>me</sup> siècle ? Où est cette ère de paix, de concorde et de fraternité entre les nations, qui devait régner désormais sur cette Europe, où toutes les intelligences, toutes les volontés, toutes les énergies ne devaient tendre qu'à rapprocher les hommes et à les faire travailler tranquillement, pour le plus grand bien de l'humanité ?

Donc, tout cela n'était qu'un leurre, qu'un mensonge destiné à bernier les naïfs.

La Turquie sauvage apprend ainsi de l'Italie civilisée qu'en ce monde la seule règle de conduite, c'est l'intérêt ; le seul droit, celui du plus fort ; le seul idéal, la spoliation des faibles.

Ainsi, une nation qui ne demande qu'à vivre et à prospérer en paix, à jouir, comme les autres, des bienfaits que la nature accorde à tous, sera brutalement arrêtée dans sa marche vers un avenir meilleur par des gens dont aucun scrupule ne peut réprimer l'insatiable ambition. Un million d'hommes, attachés de tout

leur cœur à leur patrie, ne seront considérés que comme un simple troupeau qui s'achète au prix de quelques boulets.

Une poignée de braves, isolés sur la terre africaine, sans autre ressource que leur courage, sans autre aide que leur patriotisme, entourés d'un cercle de fer et de feu en avant, et d'un immense désert en arrière, luttant désespérément contre toutes les forces d'une grande puissance, n'éveilleront-ils aucun intérêt ? aucune voix ne s'élèvera-t-elle pour crier halte à ces horreurs des temps modernes, qui, au mépris de toute justice, attaquent un peuple pacifique ?

L'Italie s'est trompée d'heure, si elle a cru que le moment de nous ensevelir était venu.

La Turquie n'est pas morte et ne veut nullement mourir. Elle prouvera à l'univers sa vitalité et son énergie en luttant de toutes ses forces contre son ennemi. On pourra brûler quelques-uns de nos ports, couler plusieurs de nos navires ; mais on ne pourra jamais nous faire courber le front ; ce front, que nous redresserons toujours fier et indompté au-dessus de toutes les ruines fumantes qu'accumulera, à n'en point douter, cette guerre inique, qui sera d'autant plus implacable qu'elle sera faite contre toute une nation indignée de tant de bassesses et de trahisons. Et, lorsque le monde contempera les villes embrasées, les monceaux de décombres et les milliers de morts, il comprendra qu'un peuple calme et pacifique en temps de paix, peut devenir terrible lorsqu'on le pousse à bout et qu'on attente à sa vie. Il reconnaîtra que ce coup redoutable porté à la civilisation vient d'une nation qui, précisément, prétend agir en son nom, et ne pourra plus accuser les Turcs d'être les seuls barbares de l'Europe.

Les étudiants turcs à Lausanne  
(Suisse).

Prière d'insérer.



41. Call to the European public opinion by the Turkish students at Lausanne; invitation to a conference concerning the war at Tripoli, in Germany, 11 March 1912.

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله على نعمة الاسلام والصلاة والسلام على خير الانام أما بعد فنجيبكم ببيعة أهل الاسلام ونسئل الله لنا ولكم الهداية وحسن الختام ونرفع اليكم بهذا ما يأتي. تعلمون أن الدولة العثمانية صاحبة الخلافة العظمى وطمية الحرمين الشريفين قد بعثت عليها حكومة ايطاليا الظالمة وناوتها العدوان والحرب في ولاية طرابلس افرقيا المتاخمة لمصر. وحيث أن الامة الاسلامية أمة واحدة بدليل قوله تعالى « ان هذه أمتكم أمة واحدة » وحيث أن المسلمين اخوة يجب عليهم معانته بعضهم بعضا بدليل قوله تعالى « إنما المؤمنون اخوة » وقوله عليه الصلاة والسلام « المؤمن المؤمن كالبنين الموصون يشد بعضه بعضا »

وحيث أن الله جل وعلا قد أمرنا في كتابه الكريم أن نرد كيد المعتدين علينا بدليل قوله تعالى « من اعتدى عليكم فاعتدوا عليه بمثل ما اعتدى عليكم » فيجب حتما على كل مسلم ومسلمة يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر وملائكته وكتبه ورسله أن يدفع هذا العدا الذي نزل بأخوتنا في الدين بيدل نفسه وماله بدليل قوله تعالى « وجاهدوا في سبيل الله بأموالكم وانفسكم » وأي سبيل لله أقوم وأفضل من الجهادة لدفع عدا حكومة ايطاليا الباغية الطاغية على اخواننا المسلمين

لهذا ندعوكم أولا أن أعينوا دولة خلافتكم في حربها بيدل المال والنفوس كل على قدر طاقته واستطاعته لان في ذلك إغاثة لأخوانكم الجاهدين بطرابلس وأن تقطعوا كل معاملة تجارية ومعاشية مع الطليان النازلين والمقيمين ببلادكم أي تقاطعوا مع مقاطعة تامة

هذه دعوتنا اليكم كتبناها بدم قلوبنا نرجو منكم اذا عنتها ونشرها بين اخواننا المسلمين بطرقكم كما انا نرجو توزيع النسخ للرسولة مع هذه على بعض الاخوان لقراءتها بالمساجد لونها بالبرق التي تستحسنونها. ونحيطكم علما أن هذه الدعوة قد بعثت أيضا الى أطراف العالم الاسلامي. وانا ننصرع الى اللول عز وعلما أن يلهمكم الصواب وأن يشيبكم على أداء هذا الفرض الذي ثوابا عظيما

اخوانكم في الدين  
المسلمون المقيمون  
بالمانيا

43. Captain Suleiman Askeri disguised as a ulema for reaching Libya by crossing the desert



سليمانه عسكري بك كين اتانبا هر نيزه بو كسره  
اليد صردوه طرابلس غربه كجتمشري  
الكره بو كين سركي



43. Aziz Ali el Masri who replaced Enver as commander of the Benghazi front, but had a quarrel with A. Sharif Sanussi.



44. Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) with Libyan mujahid dress at an invitation in honour of A. Sharif Sanussi in 1920 He was one of the first Young Turk Officers, who by their own decision joined the already existing Ottoman forces in Libya and worked for the reorganisation of the local mujahids.





45. Mustafa Kemal at the Derna front 1911.



46. The first Italian airman Ricardo Moizo captured together with his plane by the local people and delivered to the Turkish forces at Azizia. As he was not carrying arms but only photographic apparatus he was generously treated by his captors.

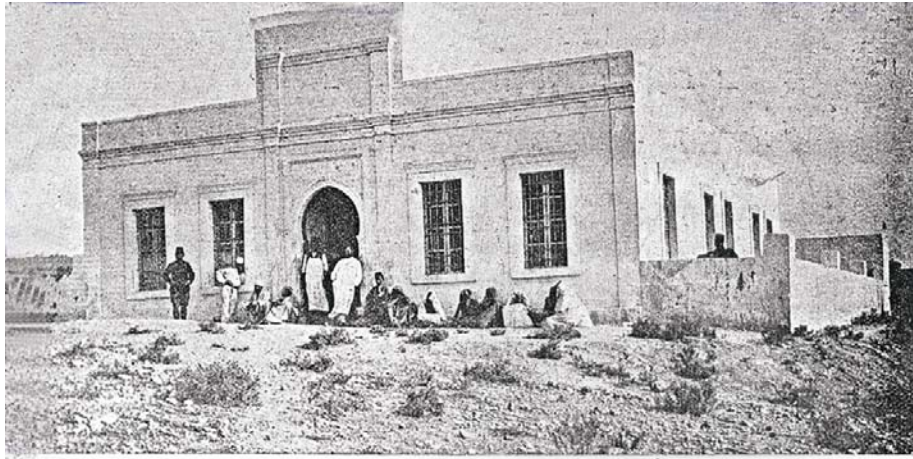


طبرق : أطفال مدرسة المجاهدين يتدربون  
على إطلاق النار



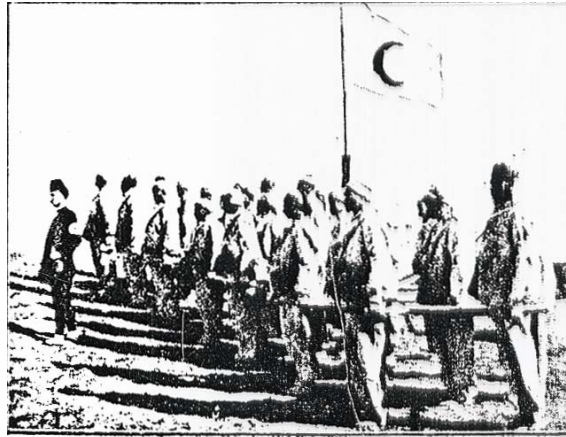
مكتبة ميني ميني طرابلس عسكري تعليمي اجرا ايتري  
Les petits écoliers tripolitains faisant l'exercice militaire.

47. Children of the madrasa of mujahidin e drilling with rifles and training as regular soldier during the 1911-12 war.



طرابلسده غريابنده هلال احمر — خسته خانه افراغ اولنان برمكتب بناسی  
Une école arabe transformée en Hôpital par le Croissant Rouge à Gariane.

48. School at Garian taransformed to hospital by the Red Crescent



AL CAMPO TURCO. - La « Mezzaluna Ro-sa » ad Aziziah

49. The Ottoman Red Crescent team at Aziziye

Although the atmosphere of solidarity that prevailed was not an absolute one, it was enough to raise the anti-Italian feelings in both Libyans and Young Turks. The public was in extremely tense feelings because of the latest rumours and developments. The Italians were complaining that all Tripoli was hostile to them. This remark was not baseless, but valid only for Libya. In other parts of the Empire where Italians lived and went on with their business activities since centuries, there were no anti-Italian feelings. The Tripolitarians, not only the ruling class elites, but the people as well, knew that as an Italian aspiration Libya carried a priority and the threat was close to them. In other parts of the Empire where Italians resided and went on with their business since centuries, such as İstanbul, Salonica, İzmir and Beirut, there were no such feelings against Italians. According to one Italian observer:

*"There was a reaction against us among the people who previously regarded us with favour. Pestalozza, the Consul-General in Tripoli, said that a notable whom he had talked mentioned that the people were imbued with hatred against us.*

*-But why?*

*-It is because Governor Redjep Pasha succeeded in winning the hearts of the people and ingrained hatred in their minds for the Europeans generally and the Italians particularly. Yet, only five or six years ago they were ready to cooperate even with the devil in order to get rid of the Turks:"* <sup>155</sup>

However, it may not be realistic to assume that this general reaction shown had its roots in the propaganda of a few years by a single governor. The Italian knowledge on the changes that had taken place after the revolution of 1908 fell short. In fact, they had misinterpreted the impact of the revolution on the Libyan society as being negative. For instance, *M.N. Slousch*, a French author, who visited the area first in 1906 and studied the events in the 1908 revolution, pointed out to discord between the Young Turks and the people of Libya. He referred to the frequently quoted European view that, *"the local population, whose mentality was shaped by religious feelings, only feel hatred against the Young Turks who think and act like Europeans"*. This theme had been so widely circulating since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that even the propagandists themselves -whose

main aim was to sever Turco-Arab ties— fell victims to the image they had ‘created’. In fact, even in Abdulhamid’s period, some regions had reacted against the reforms implemented on zoning and parcellation of lands, compulsory military service, and taxation.<sup>156</sup> These are reactions common to all societies which are subject to major change. On the other hand, the comments by European observers on these reactions are grossly overstated. Indeed, there was opposition to the Young Turks by some self-seekers and reactionary personalities like *Hassuna Pasha Qaramanli*, the mayor of Tripoli, who later fully cooperated with the Italians. But, these should not keep one from seeing the important role played by the exiles in the formation of a positive public opinion. In July 1908, the declaration of the Constitution left the officials and agents of the old regime and favoured sections of the society, in gross discomfort. They criticized the Young Turks for their reformist policies as had been done by the colonialists. On the other hand, across the Empire, majority of the people showed their joy in public demonstrations, an event seen not very much in eastern societies. There were attacks on the officials and informers of the old regime. Some were even forced out of their offices. In some cases, these events triggered counter attack by the conservatives. The dislike of religious obscurantism that was such a strong feature of the western-inflicted modernism of the Young Turks fed these reactions. These feelings were not restricted with Libya.

The distant reactionary events in Tripoli and Benghazi were apprehended as a revolt in Salonica, where the headquarters of the *Committee of Union and Progress* was based. When *Redjep Pasha*, governor and commander of Tripoli, became the minister of war in the first cabinet of the constitutional period, time had come for the exiles to rejoice. The pasha, who, himself, in a way, was expelled from İstanbul for his moderate feelings towards the young Turks, had approached them with a degree of tolerance. These exiles returned to İstanbul with the Pasha in the same ship. Thinking that these former exiles once in İstanbul could cause them harm, the officials of the previous regime, notables and sheikhs of Tripoli formed an interest group. It was at this point that the young kolaghası (a rank between captain and major) *Mustafa Kemal* was sent by the ‘Union and Progress’ Headquarters on a fact finding mission on

the opposition in Libya.<sup>157</sup> Between September and mid November 1908, he paid visits to Tripoli and Benghazi. He met with all the interest groups, and secured loyalty to the new regime without resorting to force. Italian, French, and British diplomatic reports describe the events in Libya as a rift between the Young Turks and the Arabs. The reply to this claim comes from a young Libyan who completed his studies in İstanbul. In his open letter sent to the *Tanin* newspaper (August 26, 1908), he states in a specific tone : “*The nationalistic loyalty, religious devotion and the patriotic zeal of Tripolitarians is unquestionable.*” The owner of these lines, *Mukhtar Kaabar*, will later on represent Libya in the Ottoman Parliament. Various reports by the Tripolitanian press also refute foreign comments on a break between Young Turks and Arabs.

Soon after the 1908 revolution, there was a boom in the number of publications in Libya. Several dailies began to appear where one or two intermittent newspapers were seen before. *Ali Mustafa El Misarati* comments on the importance of the Libyan press of the period:<sup>158</sup>

*“The few years, which followed the declaration of civic freedoms after the 1908 revolution brought great richness to the Libyan press history in terms of literary activities, volume of printing and exchange of information. Seven or eight newspapers were published weekly: this means a journal a day. These influenced the people with extraordinarily attractive ideas (...) Common themes of all editorials were independence, freedom and patriotism. These themes were elaborated around the central ideas pertaining to the preservation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and loyalty to the office of the Caliphate.”*

For instance, ‘*Terakki*’ (Progress) used to demand autonomy for Libya within the Ottoman administration; emphasized the need for reform in the Islamic world; the importance of Arabic and the role of language within the ideology of nationalism.

‘*Asrı Jadid*’ (New Century), carried the slogan, “with the people for the people” as its subtitle, published regular articles boosting national resistance against the Italian bank and warning the public of the danger of foreign economic imperialism. It advocated the necessity of defending parliamentary monarchy, which had brought the constitution with all its present civic liberties; in fact, it was a noble cause like defending religion.

'*El Kashshaf*', defended the rights of the country within the framework of the constitutional principles, asserted that the idea of Islamic union as the political torch of the East and the driving force behind national enlightenment.

'*Al Mirsad*' attempted to protect the rights of the Arab nation and Muslims, while drawing attention to the imperialistic English, French and Italian aims. It was particularly keen in exposing Italy's aims concerning Libya and North Africa. Because of its continuous campaign directed against them, the Italians accused the newspaper with contempt for the Italian army, and demanded apologies from the Sublime Porte just before the 1911 war. In addition, the Italian colony in Tripoli asked the consulate to protest the current offences. Finally, the Ottoman Foreign Minister Rifat Pasha, replied to the Italian Ambassador that he was dissatisfied with the attitude of the journal offending the Italian army, but he added that the laws did not allow him to stop the publication of the journal.

'*Rekib*', a rather humoristic journal, was bitterly criticizing Banco di Roma in "poetic and sarcastic" style.

Since *El Misarati* dealt mainly with newspapers in Arabic, a glance at the Turkish and Italian press in Libya may prove to be useful. There were Italian newspapers that circulated freely in Libya and some publications in Tripoli were subsidized by the Government in Rome. '*Eco di Tripoli*' and '*La Stella d'Oriente*' are the two publications that were engaged in polemics with the Libyan press. They had writers with local experience who were subsidized through Banco di Roma and in close touch with the Italian officials in Libya. Their most important opponent was an Argentinean of Italian descent, *Carlos Guzman*, a leftist, whom they called as Italophobe, anticlerical and socialist was their most important adversary. After his arrival in Tripoli in 1910, he began to publish the newspaper '*Il Progresso*'.<sup>159</sup> His criticism of Italian policy became so intense that at the request of the Italian government he was expelled from Tripoli in August, 1910. When he attempted to return in early 1911, Italian consulate's personnel tried to "arrest" him. This created severe problems with the Ottoman officials, but in the end Guzman was again expelled.

The Turkish newspaper '*Tamim-i Hürriyet*' (=Diffusion of Freedom) was a firm defender of freedoms as its name brings to mind. In its first

editorial, it was emphasized that: *“Ottomans must really enjoy this blessing provided by the freedom mujahids of Union and Progress. The unity under the Ottoman identity is our aim and we remain opposed to any foreign intervention.”* Although it had a pro-Unionist and Turkish stand, the paper did not refrain from criticising the administration. For instance, like all the Arab newspapers of the period, it criticized the use of only Turkish in courts where both the plaintiff and the defendant were Arabs.

As the result of the Young Turk revolution a public aware of its rights, determined to protect them, and showing complete hostile action towards European imperialism took shape. While the intellectuals and the people gathered in a “sacred” nationalist front, the role played by the collaborators with the backing of Italian funds weakened. The French observers, apparently with more experience than the Italians had on the handling of the problems of North Africa and Sahara, did not fail to release their cautions. These warnings are suggestive of the remarks made by the Italian counsellor *Pestalozza*. The following are from two issues of ‘*Revue du Monde Musulman*’ published in 1909, the scientific press organ of the French Colonial Administration:

*“There is no Pan-Islamist propaganda against the Italians. There seems to be only a Pan-Tripolitanian or simply a Pan-Ottoman course.”<sup>160</sup>*

*“ Although the natives do not like the Turks, all of them adore the Sultan and stand up against any form of Italian infiltration.”<sup>161</sup>*

Italy was in a race with the French over North Africa, it was in no mood to pay heed to advice on Libya, especially when it came from the French side. In fact, differences between Italy and France would end up in open quarrels. In the thinking of the Italians the Ottoman power was of no importance, and the problems in Libya could be solved if France kept silent.

### **The campaign of Young Turk refugees**

Abdulhamid’s policy was to act in caution and to keep neutral. As a result, it showed no interest in one of the two blocs, which formed with



England-France-Russia on one side and Germany-Italy-Austria on the other. Viziers and diplomats would avoid open criticism of European powers; Ottoman newspapers would not be permitted to engage in polemics, as well. On the other hand, the Young Turks who took refuge in Europe or Egypt were able to express their opinions freely. Also, they could follow the views of European governments, especially the ones on the Ottoman Empire direct from the Paris or London press. Their own publications in exile was reflective of the anti-colonial policies of their own. These articles are important to comprehend the thoughts of the Young Turks who would later come to power in 1908.

In 1889, *Ahmed Riza* (1859-1930), the leader of the Young Turks who settled in Paris began to publish there the anti-Hamidian review '*Mechveret*' in both Turkish and French. He laid emphasis on bringing back the constitutional regime. As a man of principles, he strongly defended his views and never made any concessions. When the Second Constitutional Period was proclaimed in July 1908, he went back to İstanbul. He cooperated with the representatives of Arab, Armenian, Albanian, Greek and other communities living under the Ottoman rule, which won him further repute. In an article titled "*En Tripolitaine*", dated May 15, 1899, he raised his voice against the partition of North Africa among the Europeans:

*"The Anglo-French accord in the Fachoda affair and the partition to interest zones is an implicit violation of the rights of Turkey. The territories conceded to France belong to Tripolitania."*

The target of his criticism was the Sultan who, in his opinion, had remained passive in the face of such a violation of Ottoman rights. In an article, he sees the visit paid by the King of Italy to the Tsar of Russia as a possible invitation to annex Albania and Tripoli by the latter. "*The Sultan, since 25 years, based his policy on concessions and the King, taking his policy granted, plans to detach Tripolitania without meeting any resistance.*"<sup>162</sup>

Later on, Ahmed Riza reminds:

*"Following the agreement concluded in 1901 between Italy and France, the Government of Rome acquiesced in the designs of the French*

*government on Morocco. Such good conduct requires reciprocal concession... That can only be the liberty of action for Italy at Tripoli.*"<sup>163</sup>

He often asserts that clashes among the powers over Morocco must be seen as a step towards detaching Libya from the Ottoman Empire. In 1904, when France, Britain and Spain conclude an agreement for the peaceful partition of North Africa, he renews his deep concerns:

*"We must not forget that the word 'peace' in its current use means a kind of tranquillity which entitles Europe and Europe only, to a bona fide settlement of the matters. Any encroachment by the white races of Christian Europe on races belonging to another religion is never considered as a provocation of war. The word war is not even used when it comes to crushing natives of far away countries when they legitimately seek to defend their homes and independence against barbarian invaders, the real plunderers who come from Europe. If I criticize here the shameful alliances of the European states, it is because I feel a duty towards the fate of the Tripolitarians".*<sup>164</sup>

He points at *'the megalomania of small rulers of the Orient who cooperate with the colonizers simply to have the title of Sultan of the Sahara or Vice-King of Sudan'*, and expresses his concerns that such collaborators may be found in Libya, as well :

*"As for Tripoli, it will not be difficult to find there also some chiefs ready to sacrifice the real interest of our country to their shameful lust for power. Italy will never cease to make use of such individuals, by way of finance or promise, to start trouble and incite anti-patriotic tendencies. It will end, eventually, with the enforcement of Italy's supremacy over Tripoli. France and England can no longer refuse Italy's right of supervision over the tranquillity of that country and the preponderance of its influence there. We are asking to ourselves, at this moment, what the Ottoman Government must do if Tripoli is seized by Italy. As it cannot declare war on three powers at the same time, its duty will be to bring the case to the Tribunal of La Haye and to protest against the violation of independence and the integrity of its territories. I will not be surprised if some disappointed d'Estournelles does not forbid her access to the tribunal. I will be even more surprised if the Tribunal, composed mainly of neutral and interested parties, pronounces against Turkey. But, what importance would this have! This recourse to arbitration would serve at least to demonstrate the*

*partiality, if not the absurdity, of an institution that claims to be the masterpiece of the European diplomacy. Making fun of the principle of arbitration is not my aim. Surely, nothing is more precious and more desirable than an agreement between nations. But, it is necessary to base an agreement on genuine respect for the rights and dignity of all peoples which constitute the human collectivism."*

Seven years later, the Libyan problem arose as foreseen by Ahmed Riza. France and Germany agreed on the Moroccan problem, and all international institutions remained powerless before the Italian fait accompli. In his article dated June 1, 1905, titled "*L'Italie a l'affût*" (Italy is on the search of an opportunity) he gives a detailed picture of the Italian policy;

*"In the countries with a parliamentary regime, a government which does not feel secure, may revert from time to time to patriotism as a tool to consolidate its position even in the misleading style of a peddler. Because of the aggressive attitude of Austria the Italian people are nervous these days, so the government is trying to find a pretext to divert their attention. By coincidence, unfounded news have appeared in the press to the effect that the Porte had given a concession to a French company for the construction and exploitation of a port in Tripoli. These reports immediately alarmed the Italians, who claim to have a certain right over this country, and gave the cabinet in Rome an excellent opportunity to make a chauvinist declaration assuring the people that Tripolitanian cake would never be abandoned to a rival power. 'I invited our ambassador' said Mr. Tittoni, 'to draw the attention of the Sultan to the grave consequences which can arise for Turkey if it grants concessions and privileges in Tripoli that are detrimental to Italy's interests. Such a concession will oblige the Italian government to take energetic measures'.*

*The Italian Minister has probably forgotten that Tripoli is part of the Ottoman Empire and that the rulers of the country, the Turks, are free to accord concessions to any company without having the need to solicit the permission of Italy. Mr. Tittoni added that 'Italian government must not think that it can immediately occupy Tripoli, . It is evident that our future situation in Tripoli must give us the right to have, from now on, a preference on the economical field'. This is a bizarre right that he*

*concedes to himself. Is it because Italy made some sacrifices by opening some educational and religious establishments in Tripoli? But then, these establishments were not set up, as claimed, in a purely humanitarian purpose. The adverb 'now' twice repeated in the declaration of the Minister, indicates clearly his intention of appropriating our lands whenever a favourable occasion will surface, which the Italian Government will use when the time is opportune.*

*It must be recalled that, at Niddy, in the Red Sea, a serious dispute arose some years ago between the two countries, when Italy wanted to install there a civilized piracy on large scale. It sought from the Ottoman Government the immediate suppression of small commercial ships of the natives, which they called pirates, because they were obstructing the activities. Turkey demanded time to inquire the case. This request being not convenient with the plan prepared by Italy, its naval commander received an order to bombard the place. Turkey was obliged to pay an indemnity of 15.000 francs for the Italian sailor killed by a native who was only trying to defend his possessions. The day when Italy will try to satisfy some ambitious projects, nothing will become easier than to create in Tripoli a quarrel of the same kind.*

*While waiting for the opportune time, Mr. Tittoni made it clear to the Sultan that, the aims of the Italian policy were peaceful. Highway bandits who demand your money or your life also have equally peaceful intentions, if you consent to be robbed without protesting. They will shake your hand in a friendly manner, and will even thank you for not wasting their cartridges. In any case, the Ottoman Government is now aware of the 'peaceful' views of Italy. And it is her turn to take the necessary measures that she thinks fit to protect the country from such unforeseen attacks.*

*The deployment of some infantry battalions in some cities, as decided recently, remains only a semi-measure, if communication by naval forces with the headquarters is not assured. We have many times indicated the practical measures to be followed. Instead of blindly facilitating Italian commerce and its influence every time an Italian admiral will make some salamaleks (greetings) to the Sultan, it is necessary to treat Italy as it deserves, according to its behaviour towards us. It is necessary to create*

*obstacles to the expansion of Italy's influence in Tripoli and initiatives in this land. In short, when faced with similar circumstances, what is expected from every 'civilized' and 'very hospitable' country like us should be carried out.*

*Why do we have to permit Italy in Tripoli to whatever France - which agrees so well with Italy when it comes to the property of others - does not permit any other state in Algeria?*

*It is revolting to see that human rights, morality and justice are nothing but empty words when applied to Turkish, Arabic, Persian and Chinese countries; in those countries, in other words, which have not yet been brought under domination of Christian powers. The really honest men of the West must be indignant with and scandalized by the encroachments of a powerful state on the rights of a weak state. This is savagery. It is worst than savagery, because savages at least do not conceal their actions behind the façade of a hypocritical diplomacy.*

*'The degradation of our political customs is surely at this moment, one of the biggest dangers which menace the Republic' Ribot said at the (French) Parliament. If we generalize this sincere cry and say, 'the degradation of the public customs in Europe is surely one of the biggest menaces to humanity in our time' it will be more just".*

In his article dated May 1906 titled, "*For civilizing the Muslims*" Ahmed Riza evaluates the problem from a different view . He studies the agreement of Algeciras (April 7, 1906) signed by the European powers, especially its clauses, which leave Morocco in the French zone of influence in return for Egypt to Britain ;

*"The moment it was authorized to do at Morocco whatever Britain could do in Egypt, France, which all through twenty years protested British occupation of Egypt, approved it with a stroke of the pen. Formerly, it considered this act as a violation of justice and human rights. Italy and Spain being jealous of this private arrangement claimed their part of the coveted booty. England very satisfied from its lion's share which was paid in cash, allowed the three Latin powers to conclude between them a*

*special agreement. France promised to give Italy assistance in the fulfilment of its aims on Tripoli, while allowing Spain a large sphere of influence in the Mediterranean, which is considered as a Latin Sea".*

The article goes on with considerations concerning the Muslim and Arab worlds which *'from Tangier till Cairo have a passionate concern for their independence'*. The propaganda wars between the powers are elaborated in depth on the basis of oriental interests, and it is claimed that the Moroccan case carries importance because it may be taken as a model by the other colonizers:

*"Among all the participants Italy was the most interested in the affair. Tripolitania being in the game, it had even gone for sacrificing the Entente to obtain her future African Empire. It became the longest speaking side in the Moroccan problem because it was connected to the Tripolitanian case and because it could give birth to the analogous complications. Whatever happens in one is a warning of what we might expect from the other. Italy pretends to have in Tripoli a 'particular situation' ensuing from the expansion of her commerce. It wanted to encourage it with a more active policy. However, the 'civilizing action', which it was invited to exercise there -nobody knows by whom- can only be materialized if its preponderance and supremacy in this country is recognized. To reach this aim without expensive and bloody wars, it relies on the French support - with the condition of compensation- as well as the 'patriotic' zeal of agents in Tripoli. This is why the Turkish province became since some years, a centre of intrigues. Italian element, cleverly prepared, takes an unbearable attitude. The Turkish General Governor and the police are, it seems, at the end of their strength and patience. Italy awaits a favourable occasion - probably a blow of fan (As it happened in Algeria) - for sending there its fleet. The involvement of its honour and the prestige of its flag will evoke screams of alarm.*

*Germany probably will not fail to intervene there also. Then a new international conference will be convened. In another general act beginning, 'In the Name of God, the Almighty', Italy will recognize the sovereignty and independence of the Sultan; but this will not prevent it from violating this sovereignty in the name of the same God the Almighty,*

*through regulations organizing, first of all, the supervision and the repression of arms smuggling, an activity which until today only Italy has practiced . However, 'the international supervision will not have any right on the French borders...'. The organization of the police will also be entrusted to 'two powers exclusively Latin' of whom one will be naturally Italy. A third foreign element will not be included. This will constitute, it seems, an obstacle to the re-establishment of the order".*

Without opposing the value of western civilization, he criticizes its utilization as an instrument of political and economical domination and subsequently underlines the double standards in usurping the title of 'Muslim Power', while at the same time, taking measures that are detrimental to Muslims interests:

*"In any case, Italy cannot invoke this pretext, neither can it raise the problem of security on the borders. According to which principle can Italy appropriate a land to which it has no rights? 'We have concluded with France' says the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs 'a particular agreement concerning African question which is related to the Mediterranean'. Secret agreements can have no admissible legal value. If the Italian subjects residing in Tripoli are not satisfied with the Turkish administration, there is nothing else they can do but to leave the country".*

The article on the 'Turk' newspaper (September 22, 1904) which reflects views of the Young Turks who took refuge in Egypt, is much similar to Ahmed Riza's, with some minor changes:

*"If by accident our readers visit Italy these days, they will notice that the shelves of libraries in Milan, Genova, and Rome are full of big dimensionel maps of Tripoli and its neighbourhood. Is it all! There are also some companies, which issue shares and collect money to buy lands and exploit them. Newspapers are full of news concerning that part of Africa. It seems that they have appropriated these lands already. The Italian Government, meanwhile, acts in all its operations as if it is the future owner, the next heir of this country. What other meaning can sending soldiers and fleet to Benghazi and Tripoli, opening post offices by force in those cities, turning*

*an insignificant event in Derna into a big political problem have? The affair was discussed publicly many times in the Italian Parliament. Many of the deputies were even in favour of immediate expeditions.*

*The Italian state, having reached the status of big power a little late, was not able to get a share in the partition of Africa, where France, England and Germany acquired large colonies. The Italians marched on Ethiopia, but were defeated and obliged to withdraw. Then what could Italy do, who desired to rule over the Mediterranean and wanted to have colonies on its coast like England and France, in order not to be eliminated from the balance of powers? It concentrated on Tripoli and Benghazi. These were the regions, above all, closest to Italy. Making them colonies was much easier. Second, there are convenient places that can be used as ports. Third, it is claimed that, 'the one who dominates Tripoli will also dominate Sudan; Tunisia is not worth one tenth of Tripoli; as Tunisia is lost to France, we must retain this region'. Fourth, it is a land depending on the crescent and to conquer a land that depends on the crescent is an easy target in our century. Is it not the Europeans who maintain the idea that Muslim countries must come under the Christian domination in the long run? Because of the above, the Italian people and the Italian Government are ready to appropriate them at the first opportunity".*

After pointing out to the common understanding reached among different Italian political circles on the transformation of the Mediterranean into 'Mare Nostrum', the article continues:

*"The degree of importance Italians attach to this conquest can be understood by adding material motives to those spiritual. In general, Italy is not very rich and the south of the country, in particular, is rather poor and in need. For this reason, many Italians feel obliged to immigrate to foreign countries, including Algeria, Tunisia, Tripoli and Egypt on the Mediterranean littoral. Considering this necessity, it is easily understood why Italy needs colonies. Where can it find them? Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt are all occupied and Morocco is not interesting to Italy. There is no place else, but Trablousgharb. In such a conjuncture, and especially after the occupation of Tunisia by France, Italian government is pursuing this project relentlessly. Among the companies that sent deputies and experts*



to Trablousgharb a major one belongs to Duc de Genoa. In 1898, Italian exports to Tripoli were less than those of Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire. The total value was only 768.000 Franks. Since then, however, the quantity of Italian goods has increased. First of all, this has been helped by the development of maritime trade. Actually, the Italian companies that organize the regular commercial navigation receive considerable subvention from their government. The Rubatino company serving Tripoli and Benghazi, completes the round trip in 15 days. Thanks to these activities, the Italian Government has been able to increase its commerce as well as the number of its immigrants.

It is not known under which secret reasons England supported Italy in this affair. Maybe it is to help Italy, its former ally, in the Mediterranean's equilibrium. Whatever the reason is, the British Company in charge of transportation on the Tripolitanian littoral withdrew in favour of the Italians. Furthermore, the London Government always supported, although secretly, the Italian Government in the difficulties which have arisen during the course of this affair. France has always been Italy's adversary. It remains opposed to Italy's North African adventures. Furthermore, its infiltration into Sudan has compelled it to reject the sovereignty of all other powers in the region. It is not known how France and Italy have reached an agreement between themselves lately on the subject but Mr. Delcassé, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that his government is not against the invasion of this region by Italy. We have reached a stage where the Italian government is searching for a pretext to integrate Trablousgharb and Benghazi. Through the simple conspiracy of a consul, this pretext came about very recently at Derna. However, we believe that, the chaos in Europe, and particularly the situation in Macedonia has forced the Italian government to act prudently, because of Italy's rivalry with Austria over Albania. In any case, it is clear that we are the target of the attack. Italy wants to take Trablousgharb from us., Austria has aims on Albania, France on Syria, and Russia targets our complete existence. The third phase of the Eastern Question -now underway - means the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, but the way of partition has still to be resolved. All of Europe agrees on the necessity of the first, but disagreement persists on the second. And it persists in such a way that if rivalries among states

*become deeper and if we can strengthen ourselves we can be able to join the Concert of Europe and save ourselves from annihilation. But, how should we act now in the face of the Tripolitanian problem? What must we do to confront the next Italian attack? The answer we find is in the article of a French writer:*

*'Whatever they do, it is clear that we cannot forget that Trablousgharb is not a land without proprietor. Furthermore, it does not belong to one of the humble rulers of Africa, but is a dependence of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, it is not in the statute of Tunisia prior to 1881, or of Morocco. At Trablousgharb, at Benghazi, at Fezzan, in short, in all these regions the authority of the Ottoman Empire is firmly established. It is based on a solid administration and is secured by a powerful army reinforced recently. Although it is not known exactly, the number of soldiers is estimated at 15.000. They include a regiment of cavalry and a regiment of artillery. Very recently, a German Colonel at the service of the Ottoman Empire arrived there and reorganized them. Besides, the Sultan, worried by Italian intentions, ordered to conscription from these provinces. Although this caused some disorders in 1901, these military improvements, and reorganization of the troops were put into force. The success is such that a force of 1200 regulars and 3000 Hamidiyye cavalry, as well as 8000 regular infantrymen and 12.000 Hamidiyye soldiers will face the enemy. The aggressor cannot end the conquest only by occupying Trablousgharb and Benghazi. It must move forward in the desert and must reach Fezzan and even further. It could not reach its goal even by using all its force in a war without end. An army of 50.000 soldiers and 100 million francs will scarcely be enough to reach such an objective. It is with such considerations in mind that Italy hesitates to embark upon the occupation of this country'.*

*Consequently, keeping in mind this remark, and recalling the principle of 'people in need should learn to be self-reliant' it is evident that we must protect this part of our country against the aggressor with our own forces and arms. We have to reinforce our regiments and give them morale. Furthermore, we must set up an administration reflecting justice and good conduct in such a way that both the administration and the people can form*

*a united body against the enemy, thus securing people's participation in our forces and our future. If this can be realized, let the Italians come. They will find a resistance more solid than that put up by the King of Ethiopia. And, they will be obliged to retreat in disorder. It is only by armaments and force with which we can protect our country from the covetous acts of the Europeans."*

### **Governments and parliaments**

The declaration of the constitution in 1908 and the rise of the Young Turks to power did not cause changes in foreign policy of both sides. Italy made public declarations of friendship to the new regime, although it had had the best relations with Abdulhamid. Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an act that dealt a severe blow to the dogma of status quo, had a bigger affect on European policy.. Nevertheless, Italy did not go for a sudden change in the status quo. Addition of Russia also to the list of powers which accepted the validity of Italian interests in Tripolitania, was enough for it. As soon as the constitutional era began, Rome tried to find out if the Young Turks would agree to a more flexible policy than Sultan Abdulhamid. Ambassador *Imperiali* even inquired the possibility of concluding a secret agreement with Istanbul to secure an economic monopoly over Libya. His conclusion was negative: "*In spite of excellent words, nothing has changed; the old method is repeated: refusal in Tripoli, reconciliation in Istanbul, or vice versa.*" He added that the new cadres have a much firmer stand:

*"In the time of the Sultan, we could prevent the distribution of economical concessions in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, sometimes through recommendations and sometimes with threats. This was because the structure of that regime was not leading to very dangerous ends. At present, the same method can put the earnest structure of our relations in a tangle."*<sup>165</sup>

In April 1909, Mr. *Bresciani*, the representative of Banco di Roma, in a dispatch to his Government, reported that the governor of Tripoli had told

him; “*There is a formidable file against you in Istanbul.*”<sup>166</sup> In Italy, majority of the people believed that a colonial foreign policy would boost up the nation’s “masculine” line. This view dominated the political arena. Its supporters pressed hard for the adoption of an aggressive policy by the whole nation. The ‘Italianness’ of Libya was so strongly embedded in minds that those who were against could not even make themselves heard.<sup>167</sup> Libya had been declared as Italy’s “*Terra Promessa*” (*Promised Land*). Almost every day, the Italian press published something about the rights of Italians in Libya and concluded that “*time has come, the fruit is ripe*”. At the same time, as the Italian writer *G. Volpe* admitted, the government could not complain about Turkish rule in Libya: commerce had developed, and there was no obstacle created for the Italian cultural institutions. The problem, in *Volpe*’s view, arose from Italian land purchases and capital investments and the attempts of Italians -prevented by the Turkish administration- to establish settlements that could later be used as legitimate bases for further action. The Italians, occupying the second place in Libyan trade, were still complaining that the economic infiltration had been brought to a dead end due to Turkish obstructions.<sup>168</sup>

Taking measures against the Italian penetration attempts in Libya, added new burdens on the already strained Imperial budget. As the tax income of the region was not sufficient to meet the local expenses, particularly military expenses and investments had to be financed from İstanbul. In short, Libya was not really sending any revenues to the Ottoman Treasury, but rather depending on it. The paucity of financial means had always rendered governors and commanders inactive and helpless, paving the way to the opening of Banco di Roma branch office in Tripoli. The bank, engaged in market ventures and stock trade was guided by the Italian foreign policy in its loan distribution. Purchase of land in large scale was also promoted. Even the salaries of gendarmes were paid through the special credit obtained from Banco di Roma when these troops rebelled against the government for payment of their overdue salaries.<sup>169</sup> As a consequence of the growing influence of the Italian Bank, governor *Redjep Pasha* set up a branch of the *Ziraat Bankası* (Agricultural Bank) in order to curb the policy of the Italians aimed at purchasing land. The local people deposited a considerable amount of money in the Ziraat Bank.<sup>170</sup>

The most serious problem created by Banco di Roma began with the opening of a credit account for 100.000 francs, in the name of the municipality of Tripoli in 1910. The municipality used 20.000 francs out of this credit. However, the Ottoman Governor halted this transaction with the aim of preventing Italian economic infiltration. In response, the Italian Embassy submitted a memorandum to the Sublime Porte and called this action, "*disrespect for an institution which has shown great interest in the problems of the local administration*". By 1911, according to an official declaration, the volume of Banco di Roma's overall transactions in Libya had reached 244 million francs.<sup>171</sup>

All eminent Libyan personalities and intellectuals were in full comprehension of Italy's intentions, and except a very few, had distanced themselves from Italian advances. The overwhelming majority's solid attitude did not change even though governments came and went. The governors of Tripoli were highly sensitive against the Italian economic infiltration. After the 1908 revolution, during the Young Turk administration, the Porte's Libyan policy was much less conciliatory contrary to the expectations of the Italians. Having gone through the bitter losses of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Crete and Bulgaria, and the turbulent years during the establishment of the second parliamentary monarchy, Ottoman Society entered into 1911 deeply longing for peace. However, internal unrest went on with uprisings taking place in Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, Macedonia and Albania where the people, encouraged by the support of the European states, were expressing their demands for autonomy in an increasingly uncompromising way.

With the exceptions of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, Italo-Ottoman relations in all Ottoman lands were generally in harmony. However, on the Italian side, Libya was declared as the '*Eldorado of the Roman Empire*' and the press did not lose a single occasion to attack and criticize Ottoman administrators in Tripoli. The intensifying Libyan campaign of the Italian press, soon became the driving force behind the 'war party'.<sup>172</sup>

The nomination to grand vizirat of *Hakkı Pasha*, the Ottoman ambassador

to Rome, created a new hope in the Italian circles. The semi-official 'Giornale d'Italia' wrote: "*Hakkı Bey has a sound nationalism which is convenient for us, because we don't have any desire of conquest and we aim, on the contrary, to uphold the integrity of the Ottoman Empire (...) The development of commerce is sufficient for us (...) We have no difference of views with him, it is sufficient if he can materialize what he had in mind as an ambassador*".<sup>173</sup>

It was surprising to see that all of a sudden the issue of Italian territorial disinterest became a common topic in the newspapers of the period. In 'Tribuna', Francesco Coppola in his article entitled, "*Ancient and Modern Imperialism*" proudly expressed that Italy was not among the modern imperialists of the world. Roberto La Valle repeated this theme in the 'Giornale d'Italia': "*We have no treachery to forget, no secret cupidity to hide and no colossal interests to follow*"<sup>174</sup> This campaign seemed to be directed towards Hakkı Pasha, as if affirming the assurances of non-aggressiveness given to him during his stay at Rome. As an ambassador, he had asked very directly whether Italy wanted war over Tripoli, and if all the "uproar" in the press had nothing but a "platonic" meaning. He always received the same reply: "We have no hostile aims".

One and a half year before the war, Italy preferred to ease the tension, and repeated its proposal for a secret agreement with the Sublime Porte. Additionally, foreign minister Gucciardini made the following statement in the parliament, regarding preservation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire in response to a criticism:<sup>175</sup>

*"The Ottoman provinces of North Africa have for us, for Italy, first rank value in the Mediterranean equilibrium. For that reason, it has always been an inflexible principle of the Italian foreign policy that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire must be respected and secured also in Africa. It seems honourable Colonna thinks that possibly our law could be abused. I can ensure him, the integrity of the Ottoman provinces of the North Africa have never been as secure and respected as today: the guarantee of general agreements, the guarantee of special agreements, and furthermore, the guarantee of the new regime of the Ottoman Empire, will not permit any violation of her provinces in Africa".*

All this was of little avail. The Italian expectations of Hakkı Pasha did not materialize. *Primo Levi*, one of the most experienced Italian diplomats, who served as consul in Salonica, transmitted to his ministry that hopes to establish more intimate relations with the Young Turks were fading away.

*"I must not conceal my impression that we must not count too much on the goodwill and sympathy of Hakkı Pasha. His stay in Rome, the courtesy accorded, evidence of our entity, do not change the fact that he remained, if not hostile, at least indifferent toward us. I think that with him, like the majority of the Young Turks, the chapter of our courtesy has come to an end."*

Ambassador Mayor, added the following comment to Levi's remark: *"I cannot but subscribe to those rightful words"*.<sup>176</sup> Later, Mayor reported that *Talat Bey* (The minister of interior) is the most hostile person to Italy's position on Tripoli.<sup>177</sup> By the end of the year, he no longer had any doubts: *"There is no difference between Young and Old Turks; we are not realistic about Hakkı Pasha. He sent messages to the Sublime Porte when he was an ambassador in Rome, to prevent concessions to Italians in Tripolitania; we can expect nothing from him as long as he is grand vizier"*.<sup>178</sup>

Most researchers share the view that governors appointed to Tripoli and Cyrenaica during Abdulhamid's reign, as well as during the Unionist regime, were all against Italian infiltration.<sup>179</sup> As ambassador Imperiali has pointed out, with the rise of the new regime the Ottoman intransigence deepened and the fury of the Italian nationalistic circles and the press reached to a climax. The new Government of *Luzzati* was being attacked for lethargy. Yet it was not still willing to do anything more. The Government did not want to change its traditional attitude, because *"Economic infiltration is a part of the program of all the governments which have acceded to power in Italy over a long period of time"* foreign minister *San Giuliano* wrote to *Luzzati*.<sup>180</sup> On the other hand, he directed his ambassador to İstanbul to inform the Ottoman government that *"under such conditions a turcophile policy cannot be defended in the parliament"*. In addition, *San Giuliano* underlined the Italian support to Turkey in international questions like Crete. He also reiterated in the parliament (December 1910) the government's policy:

*“The Turks still have not been able to understand something which in substance is very clear. Italy does not want to occupy Tripolitania and desires that it remains Ottoman. However, this region, with all its resources, located between Egypt and Tunisia (where impressive progress is being made) cannot remain eternally inactive. It is our interest that the economic development of Tripolitania is achieved not through the influence of other foreign powers, but solely by Ottoman or Italian activities”.*<sup>181</sup>

When direct negotiations failed and both sides were seeking reconciliation Germany – the ally of one and collaborator of the other – accepted to act as a mediator. However, German initiative failed because both sides refused to step back from their well-entrenched positions. *Rifat Pasha*, the Ottoman foreign minister, complained of Italian intransigent position on attaining an economic monopoly in Tripoli, *“We are not against Italian business as long as it observes the same rules as the other states. However, they want to be the only one. We cannot accept that”.*<sup>182</sup>

The German ambassador’s views that the Italian press was increasing the tension between the two countries in dispute by its aggressive reporting and comments, was also shared by the Italian government. According to San Giuliano, it was the only reason for the escalation of the crisis. Part of the press even attacked German policy as well as the positions of the Italian and Ottoman governments. Subsidized by the Italian government, some journalists had chosen Germany as a target reporting on possible German aspirations over Libya.<sup>183</sup>

The Libyan issue was also discussed at length in the Ottoman parliament.<sup>184</sup> Deputies were of the view that the imperialist encirclement of Libya was almost at its final stage. According to one deputy, from Benghazi, *“The island of Crete is the key to Ottoman Africa”*; another argued *“Kufra valley is the key to Ottoman Africa”* and both underlined *“loss of Crete and Kufra will lead to total dismemberment of Ottoman Africa”*. Libyan deputies were cognizant of the fact that Libya was not an isolated case, but integral part of the preservation or disintegration of the Ottoman domains. *Nadji, Sadık, Ferhad, Mustafa, Barouni* tabled the first motion in the Ottoman Parliament concerning the Tunisian and Algerian borders on June 5, 1909. They argued that France’s domination of caravan



routes and water sources was aimed to hamper commerce, the only source of income of the region. *Djami Bey*, in his speech of April 19, 1911, accused the French who were supported by some rural tribes, of terrorizing Ottoman subjects. *Omar Mansour*, supported this view and accused both France and England of continuously trying to incite local people against Ottoman rule.

During these debates, France and Britain are only referred to in the context of territorial problems. Italy however, was discussed in the context of economic and social infiltration. *Nadji* carried the issue of opening new schools in Libya that could compete with Italian institutions, to the parliament on June 19, 1909. In a joint motion he and *Sadik* pointed out to the presence of 12 Italian schools which also served the Jewish community of 20.000. The motion was also critical of the government's policy regarding Italian economic infiltration. In a separate motion, *Nadji* recalled that during epidemics, Italian health services, could intervene much faster than the Ottomans thus the Jews were forced to get closer to the Italians.

In the parliament, neither the government nor the deputies discussed the outrageous Italian press campaigns regarding annexation of Libya. They preferred to deal with the subject within the context of general foreign policy and in a cautious tone. However, the same discussions in the Italian parliament were ultimately aggressive, excluding Italian ministers who were referring to 'respect of the territorial integrity of the empire'. The Ottoman politicians seemed to realise that discussing Italian press comments would only serve to heighten tension. The grand vizier, *I. Hakkı Pasha* placed the problem in the context of international alliances. He said that the Porte maintained the same friendly relations with both blocs; 'Germany—Austria—Italy' and 'Britain—France—Russia' adding "*the most important thing is the continuation of our territorial integrity or the status quo. We want peace. We take military measures and we reinforce our army and navy, accordingly. Any claim seeking imperialist aims in our behaviour is based on bad intentions*". Even *Djami*, a critic of the government's policy, supported the Grand Vizier: "*We don't want war*".

Some deputies - like *Ferid* from Anatolian district of Kütahya - did not believe in the sincerity of the Italian Foreign Ministry's "respect for

territorial integrity". In his opinion, "*they are talking about integrity, while partitioning the Empire*". The grand vizier reminded that the economic concessions were in conformity with those conceded to other powers in different parts of the Empire. He argued that these concessions were contributing to economic development and drew the parliament's attention to the presence of 100.000 Italians residing in French-occupied Tunisia and 300.000 Germans in Paris. *Ferid* riposted by saying, "*I did not make this remark because we are losing the area right away, but because we must be cautious*". So, even the opposition was not totally against the government's policy of moderation. Indeed, in a vote of confidence on December 10, 1910, this policy was approved by 123 votes against 63. Libyan deputies, *Omar Mansour, Barouni, Mustafa, Nadji* and *Sadik* voted in favour and *Youssuf Shetvan* and *Ferhad* against.

During the discussions on January 1911, *Sadik* and *Nadji*, stated that their intention was not to unseat the government but to draw its attention to the Italian cultural activities in Libya. They quoted a recent statement made by the Italian minister of foreign affairs: "*We don't want Tripoli to remain in ruins between Tunisia and Egypt*". During foreign policy debates on April 1911, *Omar Mansour* stated that Italian references to "territorial integrity" could be a deception, as Muslims in Crete are being massacred and forced to migrate. If Libyan deputies were not opposing principles of the government's foreign policy but only criticising its implementations, it was because they were aware of international complications.

In June 1911, with tension escalating in the Italian public opinion, a deputy in the Italian Parliament claimed: "*Tripoli is more Italian than Turk*". In reply, the minister of foreign affairs, *San Giuliano* repeated his view: "*Our policy is based, in conformity with the policies of other powers, on the preservation of the integrity and status quo of the Ottoman Empire. On this rostrum, a year ago, honourable Gucciardini said that the permanent law of the Italian foreign policy was the preservation and sanctity of the Ottoman integrity in Africa; the motives behind the statements of my predecessor have not been changed*".<sup>185</sup> On the other hand, there were also some groups, including the socialists and some intellectuals like the orientalist *Leone Caetani*, who opposed the campaign against the Ottoman Empire. In

a speech he made in parliament on June 7, 1911, Caetani accused Italy and supported Turkey's position: "*Turkish obstructions are simply the outcome of the tremendous clamour that has been raised by the Italian press in Tripoli against Turkey.*" He criticized the foreign ministry for being highly influenced by the press and by speeches delivered on specific 'Tripoli days'.

The Italian foreign minister had previously stated that he was in favour of keeping Tripoli a Turkish province, but he had a condition: "*Italy -as a privileged partner- should be allowed to cooperate with Ottoman capital and labour in the administration of the province*". Rifat Pasha, the Ottoman foreign minister, responded to this assertion by stating that granting special privileges only to Italy could not be considered and that the Italians had to carry on their business on equal-terms with other parties.<sup>186</sup> In fact, he was touching to the core of the conflict. Moreover, the Italian press also opened a campaign against the governor, *Rifat Pasha*, because he had "*a negative attitude toward Italian interests*". The campaign demanding his dismissal and expulsion from Libya went on throughout the year.

The Ottoman Government knew that restraint in Italy's policy was temporary and related with German-French competition over Morocco and the English stance in the Mediterranean. Italy, during the Moroccan negotiations claimed that Moroccan issue should be handled together with the Libyan question, because they were closely linked to the Mediterranean balance of power. On June 4, 1911, the Ottoman embassy in Rome sent a report to Istanbul on repeated Italian claims over Tripoli, advising the government to increase the number of its troops. Furthermore, the foreign ministry presented a note to the grand vizier on June 6, informing him that, "*the matter of Morocco is soon to be settled between France and Germany, and Italy is getting ready to claim Tripoli*".<sup>187</sup> However, it was clear that the general policy of the Sublime Porte remained unchanged and it refrained from any move that could augment tension. This is why the Ottoman press refrained from discussing the Libyan issue, and why, to calm down the Italian side, the Porte accepted to withdraw the governor .

Two weeks before the declaration of war (September 1911), when the Ottoman diplomatic representative in Rome asked if his government shared the hostile views of the Italian press, *San Giuliano* replied: *"These are published by the opposition papers. The Government does not share their views. My official statements are proofs of my political belief in our mutual friendship. If we make an official statement to negate them, they will be more provoked"*.

By the summer of 1911, the Italian campaign for Tripoli reached its climax. Both Giolitti and San Giuliano pursued a two sided policy. While they were making statements in the official line of "no occupation, only economic interests", the government was clearly preparing for a military attack. Even their diplomats in Europe, İstanbul and Tripoli were kept in the dark about the plans that were being laid, and were simply instructed to concentrate on spreading news about the '*explosion of fanaticism against Italians*' in Tripoli. Later, *Giolitti* confessed in his memoirs that he was behind the press campaign.<sup>188</sup> *San Giuliano* gave only some hints about a military action to his diplomats. While seeing off the new Italian consul *Galli* to Tripoli, he whispered that he would be the last<sup>189</sup> without giving an explanation. To the chargé d'affaires in İstanbul he wrote, *"You are wrong in thinking that Italy does not intend to profit from the present tension to resolve the Libyan question"*. It is believed that both ministers were haunted with the fear of a defeat. This explains why the decision to intervene was only taken after mid September. Furthermore, the continuous Ottoman proposals in line with international practice against exclusive concessions rendered the decision difficult.

Ottoman government and press were very careful in avoiding provocations. They did not refer to the probability of war and kept their restraint. Ministers were worried that any response to the clamour of the Italian press could lead to further undesirable complications. The Sublime Porte replied indirectly to the prolonged Italian press campaign through the pen of a Unionist porte-parole only 3 weeks before the declaration of the War:<sup>190</sup>

*"We do not always cite or translate the publications and claims of Italian newspapers concerning Tripoli. Not only special, but also official relations*

*between the two countries would be endangered if the Turkish public opinion constantly kept informed about them. It is an undeniable fact that Italy has fixed its eyes on Turkey with greed and ambition and she does not even try to hide it. We cannot deprive Tripoli of affection and protection like an orphan child. It is necessary to pay close attention to the danger, which Tripoli is under. It is a patriotic obligation to consider that this danger does not lie ahead but is immediate, and we must be prepared to meet it.*

*In the defence of Tripoli, the point that we should concentrate on is its special geographical position. We would not regret it if no sea existed between Tripoli and us and if it were a territory attached to other provinces (of the State). However, the necessity of a naval force in the defence of Tripoli is an important issue that seriously occupies us. Of course, it will be a mistake to wait inactively until the construction of a new Ottoman naval power. Therefore, the general principle that will form the basis of the defence of Tripoli has to be its preparation to defend itself. We believe that it is a hard task to sustain a military force in Tripoli to stand against all probable developments. Thus, Tripoli's defence solutions require a military power continuously based in Tripoli and serving effectively in times of war, but not costly to the Government in times of peace. Construction of necessary fortifications, of course, will be carried out in selected strategic places. Those who know the patriotism, virtues and ability of the people of Tripoli assure us that formation of a militia ready to defend the country against foreign aggression is both possible and very easy. In any case, we believe that both the Ministry of War and the Cabinet will act against a probable danger with due caution".*

There is more than sufficient evidence to prove that this editorial was the summary of the government's policy rather than the views of a journalist. Avoiding any direct confrontation with the Italian government, the Italian press had been targeted. In other words, it was a message given to the Italian side through the press while keeping the dispute within the framework of bilateral relations.

Against the impossibility of sending units, armaments and provisions to Libya from the sea, Egypt was the only supply route left. The Ottoman

*Salname's* (Year-books) of the period still considered Egypt an Ottoman province. Although, Egypt had to make military contributions and grant rights of passage to Ottoman troops according to the 1882 agreement, Britain would never give its consent to such demands. London was aware of the existence of pro-Turkish and Pan Islamist feelings in Egypt that could threaten its rule. The Sublime Porte was also aware that it could not secure the implementation of this article. Since sending military units and supplies over the land route would not be possible, the only hope rested upon the patriotism of the local people and Ottoman forces in Libya. Knowing and admitting that it could not declare war, the Sublime Porte officially kept repeating that, "*Italy had no intentions on Tripoli*"<sup>191</sup> until war was actually declared by the latter. The statements of the high officials underlined the principles of international law and requesting the intervention of civilized Europe to resolve the crisis. However, this was not enough to avert criticism emanating from Tripoli directed at the government's stance. In a letter published in *Tanin* on September 12, 1911, the Libyan deputy *Sadik Bey* accused the new administration of neglecting Tripoli like the previous one. He asserted that the Government had to accomplish two duties at once, in return for the loyalty of the faithful and courageous people of Tripoli. First, it had to arrange the rapid shipment of food and ammunition for an army of 50-60.000 ready to fight at short notice. Second, it had to establish a regular militia force of 25-30.000 men, a task which *Sadik Bey* believed, rather naively, could be realized with relatively little money.

Encouraged by the Porte's declaration of its own passivity, the Italian propaganda machinery found the opportunity to exploit the situation and began to spread rumours that all sheikhs were now cooperating with the Italians. This propaganda led the Italian circles to believe that the war of Libya would be over in a maximum of 8-10 days. As these developments were taking place, *I.Hakki Pasha* was expressing to *De Martino*, Italian chargé d' affaires, his concern over the grave situation arising out of the 'agitation of public opinion by the press in Italy over Tripolitania'. He told him that Italy's legitimate economic requests were acceptable, but illegitimate and inadmissible political claims could not be considered. The same message was transmitted at the same time to *San Giuliano* by the

Ottoman Chargé d'affaires in Rome (September 26, 1911).<sup>192</sup> The next day - 48 hours before the declaration of War (September 27)- the Turkish newspaper *İkdam* published a statement of *I.Hakki Pasha*, in which he tried to calm down the Ottoman public opinion by declaring that, '*There is neither tension nor disagreement in our official relations with the Italian government on the Tripolitanian issue*'. When the war broke out on September 29, 1911, both sides were still insisting on their 30-year-old political line and were pretending to ignore each other's arguments and conditions.

#### **An Italian tactic: annexation by payment**

The cession agreements signed between the Ottoman Empire and the new owner of its provinces comprised particular clauses that organized the financial aspects. Cyprus was left to the British Crown, but still, as the owner of the island, Ottoman Empire received a yearly payment in return for its right to collect taxes. The same applied for Egypt but not Tunisia. In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Bulgaria there had been infrastructural investments made by borrowings from European financial circles (such as railways) The instalments of their debts naturally had to be paid by the new owner. The idea of a financial solution for Libya existed in Italian circles long before the declaration of war. Cyprus or Bosnia-Herzegovina affairs must have inspired them. However, the Italians conceived almost a commercial initiative, consisting of a proposal to buy the province as if it was for sale. Their procedure being unusual, the Italian politicians preferred to use an indirect method: they proposed to pay a rent for the region, which, in the long run, would end by incorporation through a *fait accompli*, as Austria had done in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Italian economic infiltration reached its goal when Banco di Roma received the concession to open branches and conclude financial transactions in Libya. In early days of 1911, there was a sudden surge of news commentaries in the Italian nationalist press -subsidized by the business circles- regarding a safer means to acquire Libya through a final overall payment under a contract. This also seemed to be a less

expensive alternative than war whose outcome could never be foreseen, particularly in the light of the Ethiopian failure . Furthermore, the participation of European powers in a possible financial arrangement being of capital importance to the Italians, they preferred to transmit their proposal indirectly, through their ally Germany. In reply to the German ambassador's suggestion, grand vizier *Hakki Pasha* declared without hesitation that *"every minister will refuse with indignation to accept a financial formula, to exchange land for money"*.<sup>193</sup> He agreed to start negotiations to accord concessions to Italian projects, but refused categorically to grant an economic monopoly.

The first Turkish public reaction particularly on the Italian proposal to purchase Libya appeared only two weeks before the declaration of war, in the columns of the newspaper *Sabah* (September 12, 1911). An editorial entitled, *"Against erroneous considerations"* constituted a riposte to the Italian newspapers, *"Idea Nazionale"* and *"Adriatica"*:

*"Some Italian newspapers regard the Trablousgharb affair as a financial problem. They claim that an agreement may be reached with the payment of an indemnity or by the assurance of yearly instalments by the Italian government. It can be deduced that the resolution of Bulgarian and Bosnia-Herzegovinian problems has created erroneous considerations in Italy. None of the particular conditions of these two countries applies to Trablousgharb. This region is a wilayat, directly subject to the Ottoman administration. An attack on it will constitute an attack on the national honour of all Ottomans"*.

The Porte paid no attention to polemics, until the Italians declared war on September 29, 1911. The tone of Italian government statements changed suddenly and talk of a compromise was replaced by intransigence in the days before the declaration of war: *'If inevitable, war to the end'*. Consequently, the efforts of her ally Germany, to save the peace by financial solutions failed completely. The Kaiser declared the failure officially on October 2. As England and France had already refused the Sultan's call to intervene, the affair seemed to have reached a dead end. Of course, in the Porte's application to England and France no reference is made to a financial solution.



On October 3, the *Giornale d'Italia* published an interview with a high placed Italian diplomat - without disclosing his name - in which it was stated that the payment of an indemnity was no longer possible for his country. Neither was it possible to accept Turkish sovereignty over Tripoli. "This might have been possible before the declaration of war" the diplomat was reported to have said. "But, now that Italy has taken up arms it is no longer possible and only one solution can be envisaged simply and openly, the annexation"<sup>194</sup> In the same days the financial proposal was taken up by the international press. French newspaper *Le Figaro* claimed in its issue of October 1, that Italy was 'ready for all kinds of concessions including those material...' Thus, *Le Figaro* was confirming that Italy was still favouring the financial solution contrary to its claims. The *Westminster Gazette* of the same day contained an article in the same sense while *The Times* repeats it in its editorial of October 3, 1911:

"Our correspondent in Paris informs he has reasons to believe Italy will be prepared to consider terms of peace described as 'very generous'. It seems they prescribe from one side, 'the complete and unconditional' surrender of Tripoli, and from the other, the payment of 2,5 millions of Sterling to Turkey or the same amount which Austria-Hungary paid for the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina..."

The commentator elaborates, "In present state of the popular sentiments in Turkey, we are afraid it is not possible to expect such a solution". In its issue of October 4, the *Berliner Tageblatt* published a comment from Paris on the same subject: "In the diplomatic circles, it is accepted without hesitation that Italy will not refuse an accord on the bases of the following conditions: in return of a Protectorate over Tripoli, recognition of the Sultan's suzerainty and payment to the Porte of a certain sum".

It was widely known that French media was being used by Italy for its propaganda purposes. It was a clever tactic, as French was widely spoken across the Near East, and Ottoman intelligentsia could only follow French newspapers. Furthermore, according to the agreements between *Reuters* and *Agence France Presse*, only the latter was allowed to operate in Ottoman lands. Consequently, any news leaked to the French sources was immediately distributed around the world. For instance , when the British

ambassador in İstanbul asked The Porte to inquire into the news about the massacre of Italians working in the construction of the Hijaz Railway, the allegations were categorically rejected as totally baseless and claimed to be fabricated by the Italian ambassador *Tittoni* in Paris.<sup>195</sup> Even the Turkish newspapers could not avoid being entrapped in this propaganda campaign, although they never mentioned the financial issue. For example, the *Ottoman Agency*, which was using AFP as the main source, in its news qualified “unofficial” and labelled “subject to reserve” claimed that there was a possibility that Italy could receive a ‘mandate’ for the occupation of Tripoli and the two countries were working on a deal.

Aware of this misleading campaign the *Berliner Tageblatt* added the same day that those rumours were “... a kind of public poll by the Italians as the news did not deserve confidence, or a political game ‘à l’oriental’ by the new Grand Vizier Said Pasha to gain time”. On the same issue the newspaper gives place to contradictory news in its different reports. One claims that “there is an optimism that an accord of sovereignty/payment is possible”. Yet another one, referring to the commentators of the French newspaper *Le Matin*, called as the ‘soldiers for the Italians’ - states that “an accord would be possible if arms had not already been used”.

It is worth mentioning that while many comments on a financial formula emanated from Italian sources, it was just the opposite in the Turkish side. The determination not to abandon Libya was repeated continuously, proving that the ‘financial solution’ was an invention of the Italian propaganda mechanism. We can transmit some more examples of the campaign. The French newspaper *Echo de Paris* (4<sup>th</sup> October) advanced the hypothesis that *Baron Marshall*, German ambassador at İstanbul had put the proposal of ‘sovereignty/payment’ into circulation. In this way, Italy was trying to involve its main ally and other European powers in its campaign. Gradually, the financial formula became the only acceptable solution for those who were afraid that the early partition of the Ottoman heritage would lead to a general European conflict. An editorial of the *London Daily Chronicle* (October 5, 1911) also supported this view, and proposed a peaceful solution based on the payment of 2 or 3 millions of sterling by Italy and the acceptance of Ottoman sovereignty over Libya. Newspapers in occidental languages published in the Near East -mainly the

mouthpiece of the colonialists - also participated in the campaign and propagated similar ideas. *The Egyptian Gazette* (October 4, 1911) wrote that "Turkey is weak and without money (...) Italy may solve the problem by some payments". The newspaper even claimed on its issue October 6, 1911 that, "they are fighting for money and it is fortunate that religion has nothing to do with the problem". As the porte-parole of the British colonialism, it was logical for this publication to set aside Muslim religious solidarity and mention only financial concerns. Soon, the events proved the contrary.

The Italian's simulated indifference to a financial solution was refuted by the reports of diplomats. For example, British ambassador in Rome reported to the Foreign Office on October 12, 1911, that the reality was absolutely different: "*The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs supported the idea (...) that if the war is not prolonged and if Turkey abstains from acts which can rouse the popular sentiments, Italy is ready to grant large moral and material compensations*".<sup>196</sup> The ambassador, referring to his contacts with the Italian politicians, reported their readiness to make some financial and even territorial concessions, similar to the exchange with Eritrea. Moreover, there are similar approaches made by Italian ambassadors in various capitals. The ambassador in St. Petersburg informed the Russian government that Italy was ready to make material and moral concessions if Turkey accepted to relinquish sovereignty. Towards the achievement of these goals his government would accept the good offices of Russia. The same declaration was also reiterated in Paris at Quai d'Orsay by the Italian ambassador.<sup>197</sup>

In this tense atmosphere, on October 3, a 38 year old businessman named *Alberto Theodoli*; –unofficial representative of the Italian government and its financial circles- who had been living in İstanbul for the last seven years received a visitor, a prominent Ottoman deputy, *E. Carasso*. Coming from a noble and influential family, Theodoli had well established contacts with the Papal State, and Banco di Roma as well. In 1905, he was appointed to the post of Italian representative in the Organization of *Ottoman Public Debt (Düyunu Umumiye)*. In his memoirs, he relates his nomination to this important post at a considerably young age, to the

influence of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "...which wanted me, with my qualification as an engineer, to travel, study and report conditions that could serve Italian interests, particularly in Albania and Libya (...) where, thanks to the organization of Public Debt, Italy had a jurisdiction and a direct influence (...) First Tittoni and then Guicciardini gave me precise instructions and stressed that I should not attract the attention of the Turks and the foreign powers".<sup>198</sup>

He adds that he had been intimate with Sultan Abdulhamid and his team, but had had very little contact with the Young Turks. He also wrote that he was in continuous correspondence with *Montasser*, a notable from Tripoli, who supported the occupation of Libya by Italy and narrowly escaped arrest by the Ottoman authorities.<sup>199</sup>

According to Theodoli's memoirs, on October 3, Ottoman deputy Carasso, referring to the minister of interior, asks Theodoli to depart to Rome with the aim of preventing the war. To confirm the credibility of the proposal they go together to the Sublime Porte and meet the grand vizier and the ministry of war who repeat there what Carasso has conveyed. The full text of this interesting part of the memoirs is reproduced below:

*"On September 29, 1911, the declaration of war was remitted to the Grand Vizier I. Hakki Pasha. After the departure of our diplomats I stayed at Therapia (On the Bosphorus) together with Garbasso, the secretary of the legation, who had been placed under the order of German Ambassador Baron Marshall de Biberstein entrusted with the protection of Italians. Garbasso's position was difficult and delicate: It is enough to say that although he enjoyed diplomatic immunity, he was not permitted to appear in public, not even to take an aperitif at the Cercle d'Orient. In the mean time, with the first military action of our navy, thousands of our citizens who remained in Turkey were placed in a very precarious moral and material situation. I was able to learn all that was happening thanks to a German friend who enjoyed the special confidence of the ambassador, the correspondent of the Frankfurter Zeitung, Mr. Weitz. His competence and honesty were very much appreciated by all.*

*I was seeing Garbasso twice a day, and also in my office at the Public Debt I had contacts with some high placed Turkish personalities. On October 3, honourable Carasso, an Israelite from Salonica and deputy for*

*Istanbul, came to Therapia in a car. He was accompanied by engineer Denari, the constructor of the Italian church in Pera. In the name of the Young Turk Committee, the Minister of Interior had charged Carasso to ask me to depart immediately for Rome, with the aim of preventing the war between Italy and Turkey. I talked with Garbasso who was very embarrassed because of his position vis-a-vis ambassador Marshall, as well as me, because I begged him not to communicate anything to Rome for the time being. I agreed to accompany the honourable Carasso to the Sublime Porte to confirm the credibility of the proposal and the possibility of such a mission. The grand vizier and the minister of war repeated everything that Carasso had said. In short, the ideas of these gentlemen were;*

- 1. to take urgent steps to avoid blood shedding,*
- 2. to boycott with all means Italian products and enterprises, in view of the impossibility of preventing the military occupation and annexation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica,*
- 3. to organize the Arab armed resistance,*
- 4. to propose, granting a mandate to the King of Italy for the occupation and administration of Libya, in return for his recognition of the Sultan's sovereignty,*
- 5. to propose a payment of 10 million Turkish pounds by Italy as an indemnity to be deposited with the Public Debt and the Tobacco Regie,*
- 6. a treaty of friendship between Italy and Turkey.*

*Against all my objections, they replied by citing examples of Egypt and Tunisia where analogous solutions were adopted. I declared to them that I was only able to contact Rome through the German ambassador. "It is precisely because we don't want to go through Berlin that we appealed to you. 'Tout bon courtier exige une médiation et la Turquie en paie déjà trop!'<sup>200</sup> they said. They insisted on my immediate departure to Rome. I tried, as much as possible, to avoid this important service, because I felt that at Rome the proposed agreement would be considered quite delayed and the conditions unacceptable. The two ministers replied to my all observations by remarking that if I accepted their proposal, it would be a great service towards Italy, as well as Turkey, my family should not worry on residing in Therapia, and the German ambassador and all others, must not know the aim of my trip. In spite of the war between Italy and Turkey,*

they would deliver to me, a code that would permit me to communicate by telegram with honourable Carasso. Furthermore, the same night, in order to save time and for secrecy they would stop a transit Rumanian ship in the Bosphorous to take me to Costanza the next morning.

I could not resist; and with the pretext of having to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Banco di Roma at Paris, I left Therapia, entrusting my family to the friendly protection of the British Embassy. In this way, I reached Vienna. Our ambassador Duc Avarna, learning the goal of my trip begged me to continue without delay to Rome, where he thought my mission would be useful. He told me that each hour was precious for occupying Tripoli without resistance, because difficulties were met from all parts of the international camp.

After a three day trip, I arrived in Rome and immediately met the Comm. De Martino who communicated to me the outcome of his last three meetings with the Sublime Porte. While commending my conduct, he explained how, at the Consulta and the Palace of Braschi, the spirits were high, and the mood enthusiastic for our navy's positioning and offers made to the Turks<sup>201</sup> with the hope of preventing war. He believed that, it will not convince the ministry of San Guiliano to re-consider the situation and even will have less impact on the mentality of the Comm. Luigi Mercatelli who conducted from the Ministry of Interior, the colonial policy of Giolitti, and rose in short time to a front position in the Libyan expedition. Then we went together with De Martino to the Consulta, where we were immediately received by Marquis of San Guiliano. Having learned of my mission, he said that the matter rested with the authority of the prime minister, but in his opinion, I had arrived too late. We went to the Palace Braschi in his official car. The minister and Mercatelli were admitted to the office of Giolitti, where they held a long conference while we waited with De Martino in the office of Principal Private Secretary Peano. I was waiting impatiently to transmit the gravity of the situation in Turkey, thinking that each minute of delay could make Italian blood shed in Africa. The waiting was long and seemed to me inopportune. When it was lunchtime, Peano dismissed me in a cool and indifferent manner by inviting me to come the next day to learn about Prime Minister's decision. The next morning, I went to Mercatelli's office at the Palace Braschi. His colonial experiences, such as his misadventures in Somalia, were well known to me. The context of my

conversation with him could not reassure, nor convince anybody who were cognizant of the situation. Mercatelli told me that the prime minister was opposed to take into consideration the proposals that I transmitted on the ground of the following three arguments:

1. Italy could not allow Libya to remain under Sultan's sovereignty,
2. it was necessary to proclaim without delay the annexation of Libya,
3. there was no doubt that with the powerful war ships and the 20.000 soldiers of Caneva, it would be easy and quick to overcome the few Turkish battalions armed with outdated cannons.

I must confess that I was surprised particularly with this last affirmation (...) <sup>202</sup>At Rome, I had found a disorder (...) I observed a deplorable lack of cohesion and cooperation among different sectors (...) Returning to my conversation with Comm. Mercatelli, I must say that I did oppose his views transmitted above, by specifying to him that the ministry of interior was not able to measure exactly the character and the difficulty of the attempt in which it was engaged. Mercatelli defended himself, relentlessly, by accusing me of pessimism and being a bird of ill omen (...) The next morning, I ran to the Consulta to remind that the purpose of my mission must be kept rigorously secret particularly vis-à-vis Germany, which was already in action for proposing its own mediation (...) I tried to have indications and instructions concerning the stand to be taken towards Turkey. And, above all, I asked if my stay in Italy would be convenient or if they thought that I would still be useful in İstanbul. In the office of the under-secretary, a telegram was drafted which I personally coded with the formula delivered to me at the Sublime Porte and which Baron Bordanaro dispatched to Deputy Carasso, explaining the Italian refusal, and adding reasons which surely were open to criticism. Concerning my possible return to İstanbul, they refrained from answering my demand. But, the same night, minister San Guiliano, upon an enquiry about my presence at Rome, in the presence of his secretary general Comm. Bollati and the Austrian ambassador Mr. Merley, preferring not to put it on paper, verbally recommended that there was nothing to keep me from returning to my post in the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (...) On the day of my arrival in İstanbul, a kavas of the German Embassy informed me that Baron Marshall desired to see me immediately. I ran to Ayazpasha, where I was received without any welcome, directly with the following words:

*'Je ne savais pas que vous aussi faisiez partie de cette bande de brigands Siciliens qui s'est emparé de la Consulta' (I did not know that you were also among those Sicilian bandits who have seized Consulta)*

*I did not hide my indignation at my country's foreign minister being referred in such a manner (...) From the few words of the German Ambassador - the grand protector of the Turks - I understood immediately that Merley, the Austrian Ambassador at Rome had informed Vienna and Berlin about my trip to Rome. I replied that I was not a 'brigand', but someone who wanted to prevent blood shedding. But, my protests served no purpose, because Baron Marshall announced harshly that my presence in Turkey had become "undesirable" and declared to me that I had to leave immediately. I rose up in protest against his warning and stated that it was contrary to my position in the Public Debt, as Italian citizens who remained in Turkey were under his own protection. But, his furious state dissuaded me from insisting further (...) At the end, not willing to take the risk of extradition from Turkey, 'manu militari', I begged a Romanian diplomat to accompany me to a Romanian ship which was going to Egypt."*

In the memoirs of Theodoli, the main role is played by the Ottoman deputy *Emmanoel Carasso*, who comes from a noted Jewish family occupied in trade. He was born in Salonica on 1862. The family exchanged their Spanish citizenship with Italian and later they became Ottoman citizens. *Emmanoel* studied law in the Ottoman Institute, worked as a lawyer, and even gave lessons in criminology at the School of Law at Salonica. He occupied a prominent place in Salonica's social life, becoming the Grand Master of the freemason lodge "*Macedonia Risorta*", which was under Italian 'obedience'.

In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Salonica had a rich economic, social and intellectual life. This was due to the construction of the railway, which linked Salonica with Western Europe and Istanbul. Its port was serving all the Balkans as a commercial centre. Furthermore, with its number of officers and officials, the deployment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army's *Headquarters* in Salonica brought further dynamism to the city. New cultural and commercial institutions were rising and enriching the city.



With growing European interest in the region, the number of Abdulhamid's agents increased, too. The Young Turks opposing Abdulhamid's regime were also very active in Salonica, and the city soon became the centre of their organization. To avoid Sultan's agents, they used the secret structure of the lodges which had immunity under the protection of capitulations. At that time, in Salonica, there were lodges with Italian (*Macedonia Risorta, Labor et Lux*), French (*Veritas, L'Avenir de L'Orient*), Spanish (*Perseverencia*) and even Romanian (*Pleasa Salonicului*) obediences.

Under the leadership of Carasso, the Macedonia Risorta formed a private meeting place for the Young Turks who established their party *Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki)* in 1906. Carasso did not get involved in their activities nor participated in their meetings, but he did play an important role by restraining the curiosity of other freemasons and by remaining loyal to the Unionists when he was interrogated by Abdulhamid's agents. He even protected *Talat*, their leader, entrusting him with a job in his bureau after his eviction from the post office. Moreover, he is also known to have opposed the Zionist activities in Ottoman lands.<sup>203</sup>

After the declaration of the Second Constitution, Carasso was elected to the parliament as deputy for İstanbul. For a short while, he was a member of the Union and Progress' Central Committee, but gradually retired from the administrative group of the party. His involvement in party affairs was so negligible that, upon his arrest after the end of the First World War, even the most furious opponents of the Union and Progress defended him, absolving him of any responsibility regarding the party's activities.<sup>204</sup> Following an intense campaign lead by *Chief Rabbi Nahum* and the Jewish community, he was taken out from the list of those culpable and set free by the anti-unionist government. To avoid future accusations, he claimed Italian citizenship. Initially the Sublime Porte turned down this request in view of his service as deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, but later gave approval, because the *Sèvres Treaty* - soon to be concluded - would recognize such a right.<sup>205</sup> Encyclopédie Judaique describes Carasso's end in the following words: "*When Kemal Atatürk came to power in 1923, Carasso was discredited and his fortune confiscated. He lived his last years in poverty and died in 1934 at Trieste.*"<sup>206</sup>

In the *Giolitti's Memoirs* there are no references made to the 'Carasso/Theodoli' initiative. The statements and memoirs of the Young Turks also do not mention the initiative. In the archives of the Italian foreign ministry, there is a report by Garbasso carrying the title "*The presumed mission of Alberto Theodoli*". However the file has only two newspaper comments on the issue. One is an *Ottoman Agency* bulletin transmitting a news from the French newspaper *Le Matin*. It reports that the Italian foreign ministry had turned down semi-official initiatives aimed at safeguarding the peace. The other also cites the Ottoman Agency bulletin and informs that the Porte has refuted the initiative. Our insistent searches in related archives and our contacts with historians involved in the period failed to shed more light on the Theodoli affair.

Theodoli's memoirs are not without contradictions and they do create confusion in reader's mind. Without going into the reliability of the memoirs, we will point out their inconsistencies. These flaws may be explained by the fact that the memoirs were written 39 years after the events occurred:

1. - On October 3, the Young Turk leaders were not in İstanbul. They were in Salonica to attend the annual congress of the party, which had began on September 29. Only *Halil Bey*, minister of interior in the previous Unionist government was in İstanbul. Moreover, at this point it had been no less than a couple of years since Carasso himself had had no place in the administration of the party.
2. - Theodoli mentions that the initiative was in the name of the Young Turks. This seems not likely in view of the fact that I.Hakkı Pasha resigned on the night of September 29 and the new grand vizier appointed by the Sultan, *Said Pasha* – very from Union and Progress - had no contact with the Unionists. The new government was formed on October 4 and Rahmi Bey who was sent to make the first contact had left Salonica on October 5. These facts lead us to the opinion that Young Turks could not be part of this affair.
- 3.- It is not easy to comprehend why Theodoli claims that the grand vizier and the minister of war acted in the name of Unionists. Two possibilities may be there: (a) as he was not very familiar with Young Turks' circle,

Theodoli found Carasso's comments reliable, and (b) after long years, he confused the way the events took shape.

4. – Why would Halil Bey, the Minister of Interior, the only high level member of the Union and Progress in İstanbul, act in the absence of his companions who were at the Party congress in Salonica? Could Halil Bey take part in an initiative without consulting his companions?

Though it is claimed that Halil Bey is the person who told Carasso to go and ask Theodoli to accept the affair, there is no mention of his name later on. This stands rather odd. His non participation in the talks held with the grand vizier and the ministry of war also looks strange. Could the ascription of such initiative to Halil Bey be an invention by Carasso.

5. - In the memoirs, both the grand vizier and the minister of war receive Carasso and Theodoli personally in their offices. But all the newspapers of the period point out that the new grand vizier held all his meetings, including the ones to form the cabinet, at the Sultan's palace. Hence he was rarely seen at the Sublime Porte. Even the deputies who sought to meet either of the viziers were not able to find the opportunity to do so. Theodoli might have thought that he was seeing the viziers, while they were actually the undersecretaries. This argument is backed up by his expression of non-acquaintance with the statesmen of Second Constitutional Period. Another endorsing point is the practice of undersecretaries to take action in the name of the viziers. Also, Theodoli might have faced with a setup and have met with some pretenders.

6. - The new government's list of ministers was completed only on October 4. All along the process and the two weeks to the vote of confidence, there was uncertainty in the domestic and European circles on Said Pasha's power, due to a possible non-vote. Under such vague circumstances, it does not seem very likely that the ministers mentioned could get involved in a give and take issue requiring high requirements.

7. - Said Pasha was a statesman of high calibre. This was his eighth nomination as grand vizier. It is difficult to expect a person of his competence to engage in talks without consulting the Unionists. If this was the case, he would possibly act only in his own name. Additionally, when Theodoli first objects to the offer, the ministers cite Tunisia and Egypt as samples to try to persuade him. Finding them referring to such unfortunate experiences is also something not to be expected.

Furthermore, in the Tunisian affair, there was no issue of payment.

8. At a time when the intellectuals were in strong nationalist mood and talks, the Ottoman ministers would not be using a phrase like “organizing Arab resistance”. They would have preferred, without doubt, to talk about an “Ottoman resistance”.

9. What is the role of the antagonism of the German ambassador in Theodoli’s unexpected deportation from the empire? Is it full, as his relevant remarks seem to indicate? They may rather be overstatements, because he was at Rome, and engaged in contacts, with his name was put on an ‘undesirables’ list. There were also Italian journalists who were deported on October 10. It does not seem likely that Ottoman authorities expecting important services from him would put his name on the list.

10. - Theodoli’s swift response to an “important task” offered to him directly by the ministers, in person, brings up some questions. He tries to avoid, “as much as possible”, this important service thinking that it will be found in Rome “quite delayed” and the conditions “unacceptable”. A person sent to Istanbul with the aim of serving his country’s interests, would rather choose to say he would immediately inform his superiors. But, he almost attempted to turn down a peace initiative, which he should simply transmit to Rome. This may bring to mind that he has doubts on the reliability of his interlocutors. Moreover, he prefers to make critical remarks, even stating his doubts on Rome’s possible compliance. On the other hand, once in Rome, he seems quite persistent in returning with a positive answer.

11. – Remarks like “...serving the Italian interests...” which Said Pasha is suggested to have pronounced as he tries to persuade Theodoli to transmit the proposal to the other side, are not in line with the style of the very experienced Ottoman grand vizier.

12. - Why did the Ottoman government opt for an indirect and the services of a person holding no title when it could try a person of high authority and esteem? Is there a sound explanation to be found for this choice?. As they did later on, they could have attempted to start negotiations through Ottoman and Italian embassies in a neutral country.

13. - It was widely known that the German Government had very close relations with the Young Turks. Throughout the initiative, both Italians and

their Turkish counterparts seem to try not to leak any information to the German side. Whoever was the initiator of the Theodoli project he was aware that any leak to the Germans would bring intervention of the Young Turks and cause it to end.

14. - Furthermore, as of 3<sup>rd</sup> October; the war was limited only with the bombardment of Tripoli, and troop landing had not commenced yet. At such an early stage, the proposed conditions of the Ottoman side may be regarded as hasty behaviour on their part against their own interests. This was not the first time that the Sublime Porte was threatened by naval forces. During the Abdulhamid's reign it had occurred, perhaps a dozen times, and without ending ever in armed clash. The search for a solution through negotiations may be part of a common process. But starting with a payment formula, prior to any negotiation, indicates an extremely submissive behaviour on the part of the Ottomans. This is all the more so, bearing in mind that such an offer had not even been advanced officially by the Italian side. Finally both sides had just refused the German initiative and had insisted on their initial stands.

In view of the above, and without trying to probe the authenticity of Theodoli's story, since there is no document found to contradict it, we may think about a scenario. It is possible that the Italian officials made a genuine attempt to find out if a peaceful solution could be reached or not. The war had not been declared, the press campaign for Libya was going on, and there was the insistence on the 'territorial integrity' of the Ottoman Empire. They may have wanted to avoid any adverse reaction by the Young Turks, and made recourse to an unofficial intermediary.

The Carasso affair was not the first time the "annexation by payment" proposal had been brought forward. Earlier it was Volpi, an Italian official, who had made the offer to *Hüseyin Cahit*. He was a unionist, journalist and deputy with close ties with the leadership of the Party. Like Theodoli, he was also working in the Public Dept Administration, as the representative of the Ottoman creditors. In short, he was well known by foreign circles. In his memoirs, Hüseyin Cahit notes "Volpi, cited the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and proposed for a peaceful solution; ceding Libya to the Italians in exchange of a certain price".<sup>207</sup> Cahit says that he rejected the proposal right away without a second thought. In return, Volpi

described him as “a person of intransigent attitude”. It may be presumed that Cahit was subject to an attempt to start an initiative, which later on would be taken over by Carasso.

Carasso was a better choice, because of his closer relations with Italians, as well as Young Turks. As noted earlier, on September 5, Tanin, the official mouthpiece of the Unionists, within the context of the on going press polemic, had written about some Italian initiatives which aimed to get rights from Turkey. When rumours intensified, the Italian *Stephani Agency* refuted these news on September 16, only two weeks before the outbreak of war. It may be presumed that they were cautious not to annoy the Sublime Porte, as the Young Turks were categorically against concessions. When the Unionist government resigned, there was another opportunity to renew the proposal with the same tactic, and again through Carasso.

*What was the concern of the Young Turks when their prestige was at stake in such games?* In the first days of the war, they had turned their full attention on Salonica the venue of their annual congress, rather than the Sublime Porte. Though it was no longer in the government, everyone was keen to learn what the Party’s response would be. The British consul in Salonica informed the embassy in Istanbul that the Committee of Union and Progress had closed the offices of prominent Jewish bankers, and Italian citizens on October 4 and 4. The order to close the offices was given with no instructions from Istanbul. In the following day, those who felt threatened left the city. On October 5, it was decided to send a representative to Istanbul - *Rahmi Bey* – to make contact with the new government.<sup>208</sup> This action show that Unionists were acting on their own initiative and not under the influence of others. A declaration published by the Committee in the first days of the war is a reflection of their independent mind and their resolution to fight in Libya. On the other hand, news from Istanbul to the Italian newspaper *Il Secolo* in those days, shows the presence of disagreement between the group in Salonica and those who remained in Istanbul:

*“The supporters of the war who are at this moment playing ‘va banque’ have no more followers in the political circles. An eminent member of the*

*Young Turk Committee authorized the correspondent of Secolo to disseminate news that Turkey wants to give Tripoli peacefully to the Italians and that Italy must make an alliance with Turkey for maintaining the status quo in the Balkans.*"<sup>209</sup>

Since the dissemination of the above news and the presence of *Theodoli* in Rome coincide, this "unnamed eminent member" could as well be *Carasso*. Indeed, in the same days a report by a British diplomat reveals the break of relations between *Carasso* and the Committee. In the British Foreign Ministry Archives, in file no. FO-371/1254, there is a letter with the heading of "*Eastern Question Association*", no.41473-21, and dated October 19. The first sentence starts: "*Our correspondent of Salonica informs us the 16<sup>th</sup> of October*". The last paragraph of the letter is specifically related with our subject: "*Concerning the defections from the Committee, it is significant that Carasso Effendi broke off his ties. It may be deduced that rats abandon the sinking ship first*".

This proves that *Carasso* was totally against the policy of the Young Turks to fight to the end. Therefore, it can be assumed that *Carasso* approached the newly appointed grand vizier, pretending that he was carrying out a mandate given by the Young Turks. This is why, although the Unionists were not in the government and in İstanbul, they were regarded by all the interested parties as the initiators of the project. Rumours became so intense that *Tanin* newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Union and Progress, founded by Hüseyin Cahit felt the necessity to refute them in an article on October 11. It may be speculated that the article was instigated by Hüseyin Cahit:

*"National honour does not give way to a financial solution (...) We cannot deal with a power, which after committing such an iniquitous act, spreads calumny against the Turks and tries to discredit them"*.

A little later, *Babanzade Ismail Hakkı*, a renowned polemicist of the Young Turks, deplored in an article, "*the unfortunate precedent created by the Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has encouraged the Italians to come up with such proposals*". Subsequently, he added, "*If Italy clings to such a formula; it means that despite its bragging, it is in a very critical situation*".

By the mid of October, the Italian tactic was fully disclosed in the 15 October issue of *Le Figaro* :

*“At the moment, in presenting its ultimatum Italy is showing its aversion to all the that would be necessary to compensate the Turks for the loss of their province. It offered to pay voluntarily a high indemnity and even thought of accepting Turkish suzerainty over Tripoli. Actually, it wants to hear nothing on this subject, and aims simply to annex the region (...) The Turkish Government was rather conciliatory at the beginning. Unfortunately, it has become more and more submerged by the public opinion and the coercions of the Young Turk Party”.*

On October 19, 1911, the discussions held at the Ottoman Parliament during the vote of confidence for the new Government, did help to put an end to the financial proposal rumours. Carasso was among the speakers. He referred to national honour and the necessity of a government having the confidence of the Parliament, and on the Libyan question asserted that only negotiations could solve the problem. He did not mention the financial problem and insisted on peaceful solutions instead of military resistance. In his speech, the grand vizier *Said Pasha* stood firm:

*“In the affair of Tripoli, which has occupied us for some days, the reasoning of certain states, I am obliged to say now, is based on the agreement concluded some years ago for Bosnia-Herzegovina. In particular, a financial indemnity is being put forward on this basis. In my view, the country cannot be sold for money”.*

*Enver Bey (Pasha)*, left Istanbul on September 3, and reached Libya at the end of October. The rumour *“the caliph sold Libya to the Italians”* was so widespread then that he had to address the issue in his first declaration to the Libyan people. Enver’s choice of the *‘son-in-law of the Sultan’*, – for he was engaged to a young girl from the Ottoman family – would help him in defying this fabricated propaganda:<sup>210</sup>

*“Dear countrymen,*

*The Italians attacked suddenly, violating human and state’s rights. Our fleet, one of the most neglected institutions of the Abdulhamid’s reign, in spite of efforts made over three or five years, could not prevent the surrender of our coasts to the enemy. It was incapable of coping with the*



*Italian forces which had been perfected over forty years. They tried to mislead you by lies consisting of calumnies such as 'Your Caliph sold you to the Italians'. But be sure, oh you! The obedient and loving sons of the sultanate, the caliph has made a solemn promise to sacrifice all his sons to save you. God forbid, you are not sold and will never be sold. Your name is engraved in the heart of the padishah and of the nation. The mighty caliph has sent me here for to save you from the grip of the enemy. Come on. Come to join your truthful brothers whom the padishah has sent to help you. I will deliver arms and ammunitions to those who want to participate in the war."*

The Italian media campaign had reached to such a high that it had become possible to relate any event with the payment propaganda. When a Jewish freemason from Salonica payed a visit to Rome on February 1912, the same claims were made again :<sup>211</sup>

*"An anti-freemason newspaper wrote that the good services of the Master of the Italian Grand Orient were used to help the banker Joseph Salem secure private meeting with the foreign minister San Guiliano and the president of the parliament. He came not as a member of the Macedonia Risorta lodge, but as the intermediary and special representative of the Young Turks. 'Il Giornale' wrote that everyone who knows Salonica is aware of the role played by advocate Salem, who is among the leading freemasons who prepared the revolution in Turkey. It is claimed that his particular aim is to achieve the annulment of the decree of annexation so that an agreement can be signed with Turkey declaring an Italian protectorate under the sovereignty of the Sultan (...) But, the Palazzo Guistiniani, the centre of the Italian freemasonry has officially denied this claim".*

Citing Rome as its source, the Vienna newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* (22 February 1912) wrote on the arrival of Salem to Rome "Rumours were concentrating on a particular peace mission, but he denied his connection with any such mission, and declared that he was concerned only with the private problems of some bankers who had difficulties in Salonica".

The search for secret aims behind the activities of freemasonry was very

common at this juncture. Their relation with freemasonry may be one reason for the erroneous ascription of the Young Turks to the payment formula. Having succeeded in restoring the constitutional regime through activities carried out under the cover of the lodges, the Unionists decided to establish their own Grand Orient. Their aim was to be more independent of the European Obediences. The move they made may be regarded as a nationalist one. However, they wanted to stand in good terms with all the freemason organizations. Indeed, when the war broke out, Union and Progress tried the two anti-war channels: *Socialist International* and *freemasonry* to influence the European public opinion. The former defended the Turkish cause, organized mass meetings, and issued declarations but to no avail. The latter, the freemasonry connection was more veiled, but speculations on their outcome were open and dense. The British ambassador, in a dispatch dated October 17, 1911, pointed out that the initiative was the work of the "most moderate members of the Union and Progress through lodges of freemasons and Jewish bankers".<sup>212</sup> Also the same was reiterated by the French military attaché.<sup>213</sup>

The Young Turks' contribution - if there was one - could have been their attempt to influence the Italian freemasonry, which opposed to the expedition to Libya. Carasso's name in the affair makes sense because of his freemason, as well as Italian connections. What's more, he was accompanied by *Denari*, a prominent Italian, the grand master of the lodge *Bizansio Risorta*. Later on, when both sides were negotiating peace, Denari served as mediator. What we do not know is to what extent Carasso acted in accordance with Young Turk's instructions - if there were any- and on his own. It is to be recalled that *Halil Bey* who is claimed to have initiated the Theodoli affair, seems to disappear from the scene and is not present in the meetings with the grand vizier and the minister of war. On the other hand, Carasso the main actor in the alleged payment project, happens to be the main Italian informant on the policies of the Young Turks before and during the war, as shown by Italian documents.<sup>214</sup>

Italian side used every occasion to repeat the payment formula, and when peace talks started after the intervention of European powers, it was

placed in their proposals, with implicit references to the agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina: *"Italy will pay all the debts of the Ottoman government related to Libya and will buy also the official real estates belonging to the State"*.

Disclosing this proposal, the spokesman for the Unionists *Hussein Djahid* responded in the *Tanin* of March 21, 1912, very directly: *"They want to be the owner of our land by paying us five to ten paras"*: ('Para' is the smallest Ottoman coin). He rejected all their proposals. In an article published on August 22, 1912, again in *Tanin* by reproducing a remark made by an Italian delegate to the peace talks: *"You were able to reconcile your honour and dignity with the situation when you ceded Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austria"*. In a speech made in parliament on 15 July 1912 the grand vizier, Said Pasha, confirmed that the payment formula had been put forward by the Italian government and reiterated his refusal:

*"We received proposals. They said that the rights of caliphate could continue that Italy will pay an indemnity. (...we replied) that caliphate's rights could not be discussed. The Bosnia-Herzegovina system is not acceptable (...) What we actually want is complete and real acceptance of the Ottoman Sultanate's rights, because the land cannot be sold with money"*.

It was the Union and Progress Party, which suffered the most from the 'payment game'. Some 25 years later, an observer of the events disclosed how the opposition invented a strange "conspiracy theory" to accuse the Young Turks:<sup>215</sup>

*"The opposition had set aside all the factual and legal criticism and was dispersing conflict and venom among the masses by a disgusting propaganda. These ominous rumours, which changed in content every day, finally took the following form:*

*At the instigation of German Emperor, the Young Turks decided to sell Trablousgharb to Italy. For this reason, they assigned Hakkı Bey as ambassador to Rome. He settled there and started the deal with the Italians. However, he was not able to finalize it alone. Because of his official capacity, there were places where he could not enter and people whom he could not contact. Consequently, people with good contacts and easy access were sent to assist him. There was the need to assign*

someone 'a trader who knows such tricks and has the trust of both sides.' Accordingly Carasso Effendi, the Deputy, and Maitre Salem, leader of the freemasons were sent secretly to Italy. Together with the ambassador Hakkı Bey, they arranged the affair in a way to satisfy both Italians and Unionists. Afterwards, they returned to İstanbul and explained that the programme prepared at Rome must be put into practice at İstanbul. According to this programme the grand vizier Hilmi Pasha was overthrown and replaced by Hakkı Bey. Immediately after acceding to the grand vizierate, he began to put the programme into effect. First, the Sublime Porte building (the grand vizierate) was set on fire to destroy some documents and then the secret operation began. Pasha, a commander known for his capacity of take the most intelligent measures, was dismissed from his post in Trablousgharb. Instructions were sent for all munitions to be sent to İstanbul, depriving both the people and the soldiers of their defence capability. Many soldiers were sent to Yemen. In addition, the commander of the fortress major Vahit Bey was recalled to İstanbul, weakening possible resistance to the Italian fleet. After Trablousgharb had been deprived of its defence capacity with such measures, the Italians were invited: 'Please come... everything is ready, declare immediately war and conquer Trablousgharb and Benghazi'. The Italian government sent a note simply as a matter of procedure, and then declared war. Of course all those rumours and claims relied on not a single truth and were absolutely unfounded."

The financial strain the Ottoman State had been going through was a fact known by all. Hence, on the part of Italy, before a step in the direction of a military solution, to seek firmly payment formula may be seen as a rational move. But to propose money for land was not a common international practice except the United States - Russia agreement on Alaska in 1867., and Italy instead of making a direct proposal preferred a strategy that would induce the Ottoman side to take the first step. If this strategy had proved successful, the goal would have been achieved without firing a shot and with very limited outlay. Military risk and costly invasion would have been avoided. It must also be kept in mind that, payment arrangements on debt shares of Libya are not to be confused with a 'payment formula'. In simple terms it is not fair to expect from any state to

pay for shares of a land where its sovereignty ceases. It is also a fact that, there were Ottoman politicians, especially those against the Unionists, who could favour the payment solution. But the final word rested with the Young Turks who categorically opposed any such approach.

### **Discussions in the Ottoman parliament**

The parliament was in recess at the time of the attack on Libya.<sup>216</sup> It was summoned to an urgent meeting. It met on October 14, 1911 and went on with its work until January 18, 1912, the date it was dissolved to hold new elections. The new parliament convened on April 18, was dissolved on August 1, 1912.

The attack of the Italian forces was the main issue on the parliament's agenda. *Said Pasha's* newly formed cabinet - on October 4, 1911 - dealt with the items of interpellation on foreign policy and Libyan issue. The new grand vizier was in favour of a closed session. He was not disregarding the possibility of a peaceful solution. In line with the views of the preceding governments, he found a connection between the crisis and Europe's security. Thus, the crisis could be solved by the intervention of European powers. The opposition did not share the government's concerns to debate the issue in closed sessions and assumed that, by a vote of confidence the Union and Progress could be discredited. However, the government won the vote of confidence by 125 votes against 60.

*Sadık* and *Nadji*, the Libyan deputies who cast votes against the government, led the debate with an interpellation on October 23, in which they blamed Abdulhamid's reign as much as the Unionist period for deficiencies in the defence system:

*"Because of the attack from the enemies of justice and humanity, the fatherland is losing a quarter of its lands, the Ottoman nation; two millions of his sons, the sultanate; its sovereignty in Africa, and the caliphate; its contact with 90 million Muslims existing in the African continent. (...) We already knew, with bloody tears in our hearts, that the*

*government's and your actual power would never be enough to protect the poor and needy Trablousgharb and Benghazi, distant and separated from the capital of the Sultanate, and requiring a very big naval force. Their salvation depends on Ottomanism being as strong as theirs, and Ottoman naval forces being at least as much as majestic as theirs. Because of the past regime's treacherous negligence concerning Ottoman naval power, it is known and accepted by everybody that such a force could not be prepared and completed in a couple of years (...) But some political measures were possible, as well as consistent and open foreign policy and military measures appropriate to its location".*

After this statement they asked the government to state the reasons behind certain actions taken, which had negative affects on the military preparations. Their aim was to shed light on the delinquencies:

- The number of the military contingent was as low as 5.000 when it should have been 40.000.
- Actions with regard to the military service training of the local people were suspended.
- The government failed to renew stocks of rifles and to deploy new artillery.
- The officers who were acquainted with the region and had some knowledge of local language were replaced.
- The government failed to support the people in their four-year struggle against drought,
- The new administrators were chosen among those who did not have knowledge of the local language.
- Posts of the governor and some commanders were vacant due to delays in their appointments.
- When the news of the invasion reached him , Hakkı Pasha remained quite calm and indifferent. .
- The troops were left with no orders on defence, which in turn, facilitated the invasion.

As a result, the interrogation of Hakkı Pasha was sought. The accusations of delinquencies were based on a possible breach of Article 31 of the Constitution. *Esad Pasha*, a member of the opposition, remarked that the

number of the Ottoman force in Libya could not exceed 20.000, which meant that there was an overstatement. But even this number was much higher than the official figure of the contingent set to be around 8-10.000. In fact, the number of force at the time of invasion was much lower. Some soldiers, because of their experience in hot climate conditions, had been sent to Yemen as reinforcements to suppress the rebellion. Moreover, the inadequate and outdated guns and cannons were the results of the former defence policy pursued in the period of Abdulhamid's reign. Also the Ottoman state, feeling the heavy strain of the loss of its revenues in the Balkans, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, was trying hard and forcing its limits to allocate more resources for the defence of Libya. Some accusations which stemmed from the situation on the field cannot be seen as sole elements that gave way to the Italian attack. Behind the decision to invade Libya stood Italy's own internal political conflicts and balance of interests among European imperialist policies. Remarks by *Karolidi Efendi*, a deputy of Greek origin, openly reflect the prevailing state of affairs: *"The party responsible for this is Europe. Italy exploits the stand of Europe. We should speak against Europe"*.

The parliamentary investigation concerning the former grand vizier could not be completed, because before the interrogations of the ministers of interior and of defence by the parliamentary commission were over, the parliament was dissolved. When the new parliament convened, *I.Hakkı Pasha*, personally tabled a motion on May 28, 1912, for the reopening of the uncompleted investigation about himself. However, due to the dissolution of the second assembly and the outbreak of the Balkan war, this investigation would not even take a start.

Other than the attempt to question Hakkı Pasha, there were two main conflicting views expressed in the parliamentary debate over Libya, one for and the other against the struggle. The opposition was mainly against the war and attempted to come to power by the ouster of an independent grand vizier, who in their opinion was supporting the Union and Progress. In the opposition there were separatist movements, as well as different political views. There were Albanian nationalists backed by Italy, and deputies from Syria and Iraq who supported Arab independence

movements. Later, the opposition changed its tactics and instead of targeting the new government attempted to oust the minister of defence. The proposal submitted for this purpose was signed by “*the Albanian Deputies*”. This title which was seen as an apparent mark of their separatist tendency. In swift reaction, it was pointed out that they were only Ottoman Deputies in the parliament and it would be enough if they just mention the names of their constituencies. They were not representing Turks, Arabs, Greeks or Albanians they were all Ottoman deputies. However the Albanian deputies were determined to oppose the efforts of the government to put down the rebellion in Albania. Moreover, they claimed that they would not be against any possible action on the part of Italy in the Balkan region. The minister of defence, in his speech dated November 20, 1911, warned them openly that such a way of thinking could cause the collapse of the state:

*“What the country needs is tranquillity. My Christian citizens, I am addressing you! We all have common interests. If we lose the country and the country invaded by foreigners, be sure that you will lose also your committee and nationality. My Muslim brothers, I am addressing you! One from the west and the other from the east, two Islamic Governments are already collapsing at the same time (the reference is to Morocco and Persia). Today, the only independent Islamic state is the Ottoman Empire. I am afraid that, because of the dispute we are carrying on, we might cause the collapse of the only Islamic Government (that is left)”.*

In his opening speech at the parliament, the Sultan repeated parallel warnings. At the same time a group of independent deputies issued an appeal for “unity in the country” They called on all deputies to postpone their in fights, but they were not able to convince the opposition. The Muslim Albanian deputies also insisted on the continuation of the discussions on the Albanian issue. Their main aim was to prove that the Christian *Malisors*’ rebellion provoked by Italian intrigues was justified and the fault lay with the government, which therefore had to be unseated. In fact, the statements by Albanian deputies were the same as saying that the Europeans should keep law and order in the Balkans. This, by analogy, would confer the same rights in Libya upon Italy.

The following speech by the Albanian deputy *Basri* shows that deputies



were now putting their regional interests before the integrity of the Ottoman Empire: *"The attack on Trablousgharb i like the amputation of a limb. But, do not forget that Albania, which is now very vulnerable, is the heart of the Ottoman Empire"*.

In addition, remarks by *Abdulhamid Zahrawi*, Deputy of Hama (Syria), a well-known leader of Arab nationalism, went even further and expressed doubts on the future of the state:

"*The actual situation proves the inability of the state. This state could send neither an army, nor food (to Libya). When the state is in such a position, the governed nations and communities lose their hopes. Everyone should understand this. No one should abstain from declaring it. Trablousgharb is invaded today, but who can prevent us from being concerned about Syria, Hijaz, and Iraq? How is this lazy nation, this nation which is moving in the direction of collapse and fails even to send two and half soldiers..."*

In contrast, despite the prevailing atmosphere of anxiety, there were deputies who stood firm demanding no concessions to be given and to fight to the end. The most noteworthy and at the same time surprising is the speech by the Syrian Deputy *Khalid Berazi*, who was accused of separatism:

*"Europe claims that the Arabs are separatists. (...) The loyalty of Arabs since the establishment of the Ottoman Empire is as clear as the sun. (...) There are rumours of peace. However, if peace is reached without the parliament's approval and the enemies are granted land, I want to say on behalf of all Arabs, that we will destroy this decision with our blood and it cannot be implemented without the destruction of all Arabs. It can only be done by walking over our dead bodies. It is certain that the entire Ottoman nation would join such a campaign. Trablousgharb was conquered in the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of Hegira by Amr Ibnul As. It has been governed by Muslims for 1300 years. Consequently, it is very important for us. It must not be left to the enemy hands and won't happen with the help of Allah and our Prophet."*

Muslim communities from all corners of the world showed their also reaction to the invasion of Ottoman lands by sending solidarity and

support messages to the parliament. But as will be explained in the chapter 'Enver and the Sanussiyya: Pan Islamist dynamism', their reactions did not take the form of an active participation in the Ottoman war effort. A rebellion started by *Idrisi of Arabia* to capture Hijaz with Italian support showed that Libya's invasion did not pave the way to Islamic solidarity.

The tactic of the opposition in the parliament was based on a possible immediate defeat in Libya. However, the incapacity of the Italian forces to penetrate the hinterland changed the feelings in favour of the Unionists. In this context, the telegram sent by *Suleiman Baruni* from the theatre of war, which was read in the parliament on November 1, 1911, created a very positive atmosphere:

*"Yesterday, we reached, with our volunteers, the coast from Djebel (Gharbi). After fierce fighting, we expelled the enemy from the fortress. Today we are heading towards Trablousgharb. With the permission of God, we will enter there".*

One of the leading criticisms of the separatist tendencies was made by *Youssuf Shetvan*, deputy of Benghazi, on November 9. Although known as a firm anti-Unionist, he first praised the organized resistance: *"I am coming from the war zone. The military situation is extraordinarily favourable. The enemy's morale is completely impaired."* He, then, touched upon the need to unite:

*"I have a special request from you now. We are, now, very much in need of unity and harmony. We should leave our small differences and discuss them later. We must find the road to salvation for our country. We are in a great danger. This is no time for getting occupied with other things. We must do what is necessary to overcome the enemy. I must stress this particularly, as these disagreements have very adverse effects on Muslim fighters in Ottoman Africa (...) I am well-known as an opposition deputy for a long time. My comment on the issue must never be judged as serving a specific purpose. My only aim is to create unity and contribute to the salvation of our country."*

Some Christian deputies also took part in the debate and called for an end to the quarrel between the opposition and government. For example, *Zohrab Efendi* (İstanbul) warned, *"We have the enemy standing before us,*

*but the discord and disagreement among us is getting bigger all the time. We, Ottomans, must be united*". However, these calls remained unanswered.

In another speech dated May 4, 1912, *Youssuf Shetvan* praised the Young Turk officers fighting in Libya, by citing their names:

*"I hereby propose the parliament to express its thanks to the 'Union and Progress Organisation', and especially its most prominent members Enver, Fethi, Halil and Aziz, who are guiding the Islamic fighters in the defence of our national honour and esteem and prove the greatness of our country to friends and foes alike, hence they have provided the opportunity of expressing blessings to His Majesty the Caliph. Thanks also to our Egyptian friends who have extended extraordinary assistance and expressed the noblest feelings since the beginning of the war."*

In his wired message from the front, *Suleiman Baruni* expressed his emotion: *"We have proven Ottoman determination and firmness, we shall live or we shall die"*. On account of these declarations and statements of support the parliament issued a letter of appreciation to *Enver Bey*, who replied in a very modest tone by stating they were doing nothing but their duty. In spite of these exchanges, the opposition did not give up its resolve to unseat the government. It found a new opportunity when a secret anti-Unionist organisation was discovered in the army. The minister of war, *Mahmud Shevket Pasha*, proposed a law that banned officers from getting involved in politics. After the law was passed in the parliament, the minister of war resigned to facilitate the implementation of the new law.

Although his cabinet had won the vote of confidence with an overwhelming majority (194 votes in favour, 4 against), the grand vizier *Said Pasha*, also chose to resign, unwilling to continue without *Mahmud Shevket Pasha*, his most trusted minister. On July 15, 1912, a day before his resignation, in a speech to the parliament, *Said Pasha* summed up the political situation as follows:

*"War cannot be eternal. It is obligatory to transform it to peace. Do not think from these words that I want peace immediately. Because, when I disclosed such an idea in the previous parliament, saying that we are*

*partisans of peace and not of war, there had been some publications opposing it. What I say does not mean that. Peace is the honour of every war. I mean it in that sense (...) We received proposals. They say that the rights of caliphate will remain; that Italy will pay an indemnity (...) Caliphate's rights cannot be discussed. The Bosnia-Herzegovina system is not acceptable (...) What we actually want is complete and real acceptance of the Ottoman Sultanate's rights, because a land cannot be sold for money (...) It is claimed that in the Albanian affair Ottoman Empire is condemned to death. They send telegrams. On the contrary, there is a will to survive in the Ottoman state. Its constitution is strong. It will be possible to agree on a peace treaty by combining our constitutional rights and interests with the Italian demands."*

The foreign minister Asım Bey added:

*"Our insistence on continuing the war is not because we take pleasure in shedding blood, but because we want to live and because the conditions proposed by our enemy, who has not been victorious over us, are not acceptable. Whenever the peace conditions are acceptable, we will not be reluctant in working on them. The foreign relations of the Ottoman state are much better than they were ten months ago. And will be even better. As long as the Ottomans keep in mind, for the sake of confronting the enemy, the necessity of setting aside personal ambitions, (there will be no danger of them) destroying this great, this holy Ottomanism with their own hands."*

The determination to continue the war was full and firm. However, the financial problem was here. The scarcity of sources, as well as lack of foreign aid (either in the form of Muslims donations or European loans) imposed the necessity of charging a new tax. The official responsible for the new tax formula, *Hafiz Mehmed Efendi*, explained its inevitability in a most straightforward way in the parliament :

*"In order to continue the war, a man with two coats should sell one, should eat nothing but bread and cheese; we can only continue this war by sacrificing as much as we can."*

Said Pasha was replaced by *Ghazi Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha* who formed an entirely anti-Unionist government. With his nomination to the grand vizierat the policy of the state was confined to a person who believed to the futility

of the military opposition in Libya. Earlier, in an interview published in the Times of October 10, 1911, he had reminded that it was impossible to send reinforcement to Libya and to defend the Vilayet. Shortly after, on August 1, 1912, the parliament was dissolved to pave the way to new elections. However, because of the Balkan War elections were postponed and were not to be held until 1914.

### **Italy's Unsuccessful Expedition**

The Franco-German agreement on Morocco played an important role on Italy's sudden decision to invade Libya and to go to war. Even the very self-confident Italian government was forced to think that some others could turn their eyes on Libya, the last uncolonized region in North Africa. On September 23, 1911, Rome sent a 'warning' Note to the Sublime Porte, in complete contradiction to the letter and spirit of its previous "preservation of status quo" Notes:<sup>217</sup>

*"Ottoman officers and members of Union and Progress Association are inciting fanatical and ignorant people against Italy and Italians. This has come to my government's knowledge through a confidential channel, and these incidents may endanger seriously the security of the Italians living in Tripoli and Benghazi areas. Some Italian families having sensed the danger will leave those areas tomorrow. Under such conditions, our government considers the arrival of an Ottoman ship carrying soldiers and ammunition for war and provisions to Tripoli and Benghazi, a factor for the upsurge of fanatical emotions. As the Ottoman Government will not be able to calm down these agitation, Italian government considers it a danger to its own subjects."*

The Porte, in its reply, rejected the presence of any threat to the security of Italians, the existence of any fanatical movements and gave the assurance that the government was able to maintain law and order. On September 28, Italy presented a second Note:

*"Since long years Italian government, in its correspondence with the*

*Sublime Porte, has stressed the need for the same progress in Libya that is to be found in other parts of North Africa. It has also drawn attention to the need to put an end to the great disorder and abandonment in which Tripoli and Benghazi regions are. This is a requirement of civilization, and because of their close proximity to the Italian coast, these regions represent a first grade vital interest of Italy. However, in spite of Italian government's genuine support and its patience and moderation, not only its views and practices have been declined, but its activities in the area subjected to continuous and insistent opposition. The Ottoman government, which has expressed such incessant hostility to all the initiatives in the Trablousgharb and Benghazi areas, has lately proposed the conclusion of an agreement with the Royal Government, indicating that it is ready to grant all economical privileges, in conformity with the valid agreements, and that can be acceptable by the honour and interests of the Sublime Porte. But, our Royal government is not inclined to enter into such discussions, their futility being confirmed by experience and they do not form a guaranty, but on the contrary become cause of continuous disaccord and disorder. Italian consuls and officials at Trablousgharb and Benghazi indicate that the situation is very dangerous because of the very open incitements against Italian citizens by officers and State employees. The threat is not only to the Italians, but also to all the foreign subjects, who because of their anxiety have also began to board ships to leave Tripoli for good. While the Sublime Porte has already been warned by the Royal government that sending military ships would provoke serious problems, their arrival will do nothing else but escalate the crisis and will force the Italian government to take necessary measures to deal with the complications that may arise. Consequently, the Royal government bearing in mind the need to protect its own honour and interests, has decided to occupy Trablousgharb and Benghazi with military forces. It is the only solution for Italy. Accordingly, the Royal government expects the present Government to transmit all the necessary orders to local administrators not to impede but to facilitate the application of the measures that will be imposed. Whatever the outcome, the two governments must conclude an agreement concerning the arrangements for these regions. The Italian embassy at İstanbul has been instructed to ask the Sublime Porte to give a categorical answer to this document within 24 hours from its delivery. If not*

*the Royal government will be obliged to immediately begin the implementation of the necessary measures for the invasion."*

In its reply dated September 29, the Ottoman government rejected the accusations; Italian economical activities in Libya were not being hindered; no person was being threatened; the ship that had been sent to Tripoli was not carrying military forces; the ship's arrival, contrary to claims put forward by the Italian government, would have a calming effect on the public mood. It was added that, if Italy made no attempt to invade Libya, full support would be given to efforts to find a solution to the crisis; all terms would be accepted provided that respect was shown to the full integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and during the process of deliberations, there would be no attempt to make changes, particularly in the military field. It was evident that no concession İstanbul might give, would be enough to stop the Italian government from going to war. Indeed, on September 29, 1911, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires remitted the Note declaring war.

The Ottoman officials and notables in Tripoli had notified the Porte on the need to strengthen the region's defences. In a telegram to the grand vizier, they confirmed their determination to resist any attack; they also asked the government to send a year's supply of arms and provisions. Starting from September 25, three Italian warships began patrolling the Libyan coast to cut supply lines. The Ottoman ship *Derna* was the first and the last that successfully broke the blockade. It arrived in Tripoli on September 26, carrying 100 officers and soldiers, 25.000 rifles, 6.812 chests of ammunition, 500 sacks of clothes, 951 sacks of flour, 500 sacks of hard biscuit etc. A second ship *Sham* (Damascus) had also weighed anchor for Libya with more officers, soldiers and provisions, but when the war declaration reached İstanbul, it was ordered to return.<sup>218</sup>

The Ottoman cannons had a range of 2.000 meters and Italian naval guns had range from 9.000 to 10.000. ruled out resistance by the Tripolitanian fortress.<sup>219</sup> The ministry of war ordered its forces not to show resistance and to retreat towards the hinterland. The first Italian bombardment caused a big panic in the city. When the fortress was hit 11

people died, 20 were wounded. Panic among the people grew even more when looting began. The pro-Italian elements of the population also took part in the looting. The only authority, the deputy governor, had no power to take decisions without instructions from İstanbul, and was helpless. Under the leadership of *Mayor Hassuna Pasha Qaramanli*, the city's notables met and decided that resistance would be useless: "*As there are no soldiers in the city and it might endanger the lives and belongings of the people, consequently, it is better to surrender*".

The deputy governor refused their proposal, and the mayor and the notables convened once more in a mosque. This time they sent their decision to the Italian admiral and confirmed it by hoisting a white flag at the top of the governor's office. Italian forces landed under their guarantee and the admiral was proclaimed governor. He immediately issued an order inviting people to hand over their arms. After 368 years, Turkish rule in Tripoli had come to an end.

The initiative to surrender cannot totally be regarded as an act of treason, as the motive was to save the city and its citizens from bombardment. On the other hand more light should be shed on the role played by mayor *Hassuna Pasha Qaramanli* - the main instigator in the decision of surrender. As explained earlier, he had arranged, in the name of the municipality, a loan of 100.000 francs from Banco di Roma, the main tool of Italian economic infiltration. Moreover, the mayor was also receiving a personal allocation from the bank. When the municipality withdrew 20.000 francs, governor *Ibrahim Pasha*, learned about the loan. He immediately ordered its cancellation and replaced it with a credit from the Ottoman Bank. This incident created a serious tension between the governor and the mayor. Italy directed fierce attacks against the governor, and indicated that friendly relations could not be restored as long as he remained in his post. Finally, yielding to pressure, the Porte assigned Ibrahim Pasha to another post. Qaramanli, who lost his reputation with the Porte, and his dream of becoming autonomous ruler of the region, was drawn closer to the Italians. He was not the only one to make such a choice. *Montasser, Mustafa bin Kaddara (Deputy), Ahmad ben Mansour, Hadj Ali ben Ara', Abdallah Belouse, Suleiman ben Hadj Youssuf, Sheikh Sadiq al-Arnavaud, Mukhtar abou Ghomtze, Al Amin Dergham* can be



placed in the same category.

The war of Libya was mainly fought in the littoral coastal regions. Their naval superiority gave the Italians the upper hand not only on the Libyan, but also on the Anatolian, Syrian and Red Sea coasts as well. All that required was to shell the ports and occupy some of them. However, in the interior regions they faced continuous defeat. The following list of ports and coastal cities show the extent of Italian naval bombardment :

Bombarded cities in Libya :

1911: October: 3 Trablousgharb, Tobrouk; 4-5 Trablousgharb; 9 Derna ; 10 Misurata ; 14 Benghazi; 16 Derna; 17 Homs, Derna; 21 Homs; 24 Sirte; 29 Adjilet, Kirova; 30-31 Zwara.

November : 1 Zwara; 5 Tadjura; 8 Bomba; 23 Zawiya; 29-30 Sirte.

December : 1 Zawiya; 5 Sayyid Said; 18 Tadjura; 31 Sayyid Said

1912: January : 10 Zwara; 16 Zanzur; 22 Zwara

March : 29 Tolmaissa

April : 9 Zwara; 11 Zwara, Sayyid Said; Kirova; 28 Bomba, Zlitan; 29 Zlitan

May : 8 Zlitan; 11 Sirte

June : 2 Soussa; 8 Zansur; 10 Soussa; 16 Misurata; 29 Soussa, Benghazi

July : 11 Misurata; 13 Bomba; 27-28 Sayyid Said

August : 5 Zawiya, Zwara; 28 Port Sulaiman

October : 7 Bomba; 10 Soussa

Bombarded cities in Anatolian, Syrian and Red Sea coasts : Dardanelles, Tceshme, Alatchati, Kushadasi, Marmaris, Kelemish, Karadere, Rhodes, Kalamaki, Andifli, Beirut, Akaba, Shingin, Konfide, Midi, Luhya, Djebane, Hudeide, Hawza, Muha, Babulmandab, Sheikh Said.

Occupation dates of coastal cities: Tobruk (3.10.11); Aynzara (5.12.11); Bomba (7.10.12); Derna

(17.10.11) Benghazi (18.10.11); Misrata (8.7.12); Qasr Ahmad (16.6.12); Zlitan (8.5.12); Homs (21.10.11); Trablousgharb (5.10.11); Tadjura (18.12.11); Zanzur (8.6.12); Zawiya (18.8.12); Menshie (18.8.12); Zwara (5.8.12); Sayyid Ali (14.7.12); Sayyid Bilal. (20.9.1912); Sayyid Said

(28.6.12); Bukemash (15.4.12); Krova (11.4.12). It must be added that between 20 April and 3 May 1912 Italian forces occupied the Twelve Islands (Dodecanese) in the Aegean Sea, including Rhodes.

A comparison of the forces of the two hostile armies gives a better picture of war. The Italian general staff estimated that an army of 23.000 regular soldiers would be sufficient to occupy the entire country. However, Italian government was more cautious and decided on 40.000 to begin with; within a few months this number would be increased to over 100.000.

The Ottoman documents, state the official number of the garrison in Libya as 7.518 (4.568 in Tripoli and 2.950 in Benghazi). However, the actual number was nearly 1/3 less than the assigned list due to units sent to Yemen. As of May 1911, there were 4.080 soldiers in Libya, of which 2.880 were deployed in Tripoli and 1200 in Benghazi. With the addition of 600 gendarmes, the total number was 4.680. It is obvious that, if the envisaged number 7.518 soldiers were on duty at the time of the invasion, this also would not be sufficient to change the course of events. They could not be expected to hold on to their positions considering the Italian artillery range and the strong Italian landing forces with 35.000 soldiers.

The *mujahids*, the local people, formed the actual power of the strong Libyan defence. The Ottoman defence plan was based on the recruitment of local irregular soldiers estimated around 20-25.000. Without their participation, a successful resistance would not have been possible. Lack of military training of these irregulars was a source of criticism. It may be recalled that highly self-reliant tribes were reluctant to undergo formal military training. (The chapter on "The impact of Tanzimat"). However, after the Italian attack, not only the people of the interior and the nomads, but also the city dwellers, on their own free will, worked for the resistance. The enthusiasm of the Mujahids reached higher level with the immediate arrival of the voluntary Young Turk officers at the war scene. The propaganda leaflets the Italian planes dropped, containing anti-Turk accusations, aimed to weaken the solidarity which existed between the

Turkish officers and the Mujahids. The Libyan deputies Baruni and Ferhad replied these leaflets. The self-assured tone in their reply shows the high degree of interaction between the officers and the local population:

*"You claim that the Turks drove us to the forefront while they remain behind. We are in complete solidarity with them. We are the sons of the same fatherland. However, as they are our precious teachers, we have to protect them. It is thanks to the war methods which they teach us that with a force composed of only 500 persons, we were able to defeat your regiment."* <sup>220</sup>

The Derna front may be cited as an example of the interaction between Mujahids and the Ottoman Army. A force of 8 Ottoman officers and 282 soldiers supported by 7.742 Bedouin militia had been deployed in the defence of the front. The strength of the invasion force they faced was between 15.000 to 16.000 men. It was reinforced and reached to 25.000 in a short while. The names of the tribal sheikhs who fought at the Derna front, the number of bedouin militia under their command and their fighting zones are as follows:<sup>221</sup>

*Sheikh Sayyid Abdallah, Ain Budjazi 501; Sheikh Sayyid Murtaza, Ain Mansour 127, Ain Abdalkarim 200; Sheikh Sayyid Mahmoud bou Farisi, Ain Muzayyan 200, Ain Rifat 77; Sheikh Saydialami, Ain Tambe 918, Ain Harif 567, Ain Hussain 764; Sheikh Sayyid Derdef, Ain Sayyarike 431, Ain Nejajait 353, Ain Galabate Mohammede 256, Ain Galabete Mevase 220; Sheikh Abdallah abu Saif, Ain Mansur 376, Ain Shellavi 269, Ain Teraki 228, Egyptian Mehmed Bey 80; Sheikh Mohammed Ghazali, Ain Alemikayt 436, Awlad Ali 41; Sheikh Abdalbaki, Ain Abes 227, Ain Ibraimalgazatch 77, Ain Abathulgazatch 36, Ain Almesafir 52, Ain bu Hayyaw 255, Ain Almezi 36, Ain Husngazatch 106, Tribe Rahime 25, Ain Ghabes 57, Ain Almezareshe 11, and Ain Alhaliyya 17.*

With their support and cooperation, battles were fought, at Bir Tobias, Homs, Tobruk, Nadina, twice at Benghazi, twice at Ain Zara, twice at Zanzur, twice at Mizrata, and six times at Derna. Comprehensive information regarding the role played by Süanoussiya in the War of Libya is found in the forthcoming chapter "Enver and Sanoussiya: Pan Islamist dynamism".

In the occupied towns and lands, some notables showed a submissive behaviour towards the occupation force. Also in line with calls made by the occupation commander, there were people who delivered their arms in return for cash payment. But , the majority did not choose to deliver their weapons and there were intellectuals who expressed their discontent with the invasion. These people remained in contact with the Ottoman forces at Gharian. Furthermore, the Italians in search for mujahids in disguise caused many street clashes especially when they made attempts to unveil women. On November 1, 1911, at Menshie 105 civil Libyans were killed of whom 32 were children. In the searches for pro-Turks , around 4.000 Arabs of whom 400 were women were massacred. These deaths were strongly condemned by the European press, as well as the leftist Italian publications.

Mosques and *Red Crescent* hospitals were hit in the Italian attacks. The bombing of the mosque at *Hawza* left nine persons dead and many wounded. The attacks on hospitals by breach of international rules caused outcries in many parts of the world. Italians argued that targets hit in air attacks were actually arsenals or Mujahidin posts and not hospitals. However, they could not verify their claims which were only based on aviator observations.

The War of Libya, in terms of air warfare, is the first where planes were used for combat purposes. Thus, the Ottoman army became the first force to shoot and bring down military aircraft. All along the war, between the first flight on October 22, 1911 and the last on March 1912, 153 sorties were made by airplanes and 194 sorties by balloons. In addition to reconnaissance flights and air raids to bombard positions, planes were used in dropping propaganda leaflets, as well. At first sorties had caused panic among the people, but fears subsided when planes were shot down and pilots captured.

Access to modern medical services was an important gain for the local people, particularly the nomads. The *Ottoman Red Crescent* sent three medical teams to Libya to set field hospitals near Tripoli, Homs and Benghazi. The first had had 6 doctors, one pharmacist and 15 nurses, the

second 29, and the third 6 medical staff. Records show that they treated 3.000 patients. Records of local visits were not kept unless related to an epidemic. Furthermore, 400 boys in Tripoli and 300 in Tobruk were circumcised.<sup>222</sup>

### **The Peace of Ouchy**

There were two main reasons under the Ottoman government's policy of peace towards the aggressor. One was the logistical difficulties to send fighters and supplies to Libya and the other the bankrupt Ottoman treasury. The government was not able to pay the salaries of state employees on a regular basis. In spite of all geographical and financial odds that were there the officials were fully determined to defend their lands. This may be trailed in a letter by senior army captain Mehmed *Hamdi*, an Ottoman officer born in Tripoli:<sup>223</sup>

*"I am on duty in the Balkans (...) The impossibility of crossing the sea prevents us from fighting across there. We are not rich (...) But we swear by Almighty God, as well as by our military honour, to help with all ways and means the orphans and widows of the warriors. As the first sign of this oath, we send you, for the moment, only three liras (...) But, we must not accept annexation".*

The minister of finance urgently sought ways to finance the war by way of loans. But the French and British financial circles remained totally aloof to these overtures.<sup>224</sup> In principle all members of the government and officials of the ministry of war were willing to continue the fight against the invader. They were against the abandonment of land with no resistance. When Italy insisted on solving the problem by force, the only possible way to save peace was to seek the intervention of the European powers. It was thought that these powers would have to act to avoid a possible general European clash. In this context, the government preferred not to declare war against Italy. This was an unusual move on the part of the Ottoman government whose territorial integrity was being violated by an invader. Actually, the Porte was trying to strengthen its hand to win the

support of European colonialists for a peaceful settlement. In accordance with this line no declaration of jihad was made, so that the colonialists would not sense any threat from peace initiatives.

Under a covert operation, officers "on leave" were allowed to take part in the battle, and on their own. They would be supplied with provisions when possible and their activities to be kept 'personal' until the Sublime Porte declared war. These unofficial activities would not be made subject matter in a peace effort. This policy enabled the Porte to keep a 'ready peace' position towards European powers, and to fight with all available means against the aggressor in Libya. This practice came to an end when Italy, announced the annexation of Trablousgharb and Benghazi to the crown on November 5, 1911. It was put forth by the Sublime Porte that dialogue could not be possible as long as Italy did not revoke its one sided declaration. Since Italy had no intention to renounce this declaration doors kept open to dialogue had to be closed. As a result, the armed clashes intensified.

It was clear that Ottoman military resistance would not be enough to push out the aggressor from Libya, and foreign help was needed. The state of affairs was not more different in the Italian side. The military stalemate between the two sides led the wave of speculations that the fight would continue on for the next hundred years. Soon, Italy was face to face with severe financial problems that turned out to be as pressing as the Sublime Porte's. Putting an end to the war by European intervention had become imperative for Italy, as well. Italy devised a plan that would raise the concerns of other European powers while forcing the Ottoman Empire to surrender. For this purpose it carried its theatre of operations to other territories of the empire by way of its navy. Italian navy began its attacks on ports in the Red Sea. When Europe did not respond it proceeded further by bombarding *Beirut* (February 24, 1912), a port that was of prime importance to France. A real panic ensued in the French political circles.<sup>225</sup> The allied Powers (France-Britain-Russia) saw the bombardment as an act of provocation by Central Powers with Germany on the lead. Finally, Italy had achieved its aim to get the European powers involved in the problem.

On April 16, 1912, concerned that there might be an escalation, Britain and

particularly Russia approached the Porte to learn its conditions for peace. However, Italy used the peace initiative as an opportunity to force the Porte to accept its self-declared sovereignty over Libya. Two days later Italian navy, in a timely planned move, attacked *the Dardanelles*. The aim was to enter the Marmara Sea and to bombard İstanbul. In response to the Italian attack, the strait was mined and closed to maritime traffic. European business circles were quick to show their reaction. The British claimed that 150 ships carrying one million tons of cargo passing through the straits had come to a halt and the loss was 9.000 liras a day. Under pressure from Britain and Russia, the mines were swept. In return, Italy, as its part, refrained from forcing the straits. But, before long in the month of July, Italy began to bombard the *Dardanelles* again. Giolitti, the Italian Prime Minister, refers to the issue of Dardanelles in his memoirs. He explains that, on April 24, an Italian warning was sent to the European powers. In his warning 'the intransigent Ottoman side' was charged with using the annexation decision as an excuse and a 'peace talks trick'. To increase the pressure on the Ottoman Empire, Italy occupied the *Twelve Islands* in the Aegean Sea including *Rhodes*. This move constituted a dangerous direct threat to the heartland of the Ottoman Empire, Anatolia. The occupation of the islands started by the end of April and ended in early May, 1912. The few hundred soldiers of the Ottoman garrison in Rhodes defended the island. The strength of the invading force was 10.000 men. The Island fell when the last of the Ottoman soldier surrendered on May 17, 1912.

In his February 2, 1912, report to the Porte, the Ottoman High Commissioner in Egypt *Raouf Pasha*, points to rumours on Benghazi that it shall be left to Britain. This report has been a factor which pressed the Ottomans to reconsider peace conditions. In fact when war had started, the Porte had accepted with no opposition the annexation of *Sellum* by Egypt, which was an important strategic base. Raouf Pasha warns particularly about the possible chain reaction that Benghazi's hand over to Egypt may create: "*This may reinforce the efforts of Britain to create an Arab caliphate in the Arab countries, Iraq, Syria, Hijaz, and Yemen*". Egyptian Khedivial regime was already in favour of such tendencies. Its representatives (prominent amongst them *Mardini Arif Bey*) sent to

Benghazi region to support the Ottoman war effort, instead disseminated an anti-Unionist propaganda. In a while, these deviating policies shown by the representatives of the Khedive had their influence on an Ottoman officer in Libya, *Aziz Ali Misri*. He was to show an inclination towards an Egyptian nationalist current. Information on his activities is given in the forthcoming chapter "Cooperation during the First World War".

Italy did not stop with the invasion of Twelve Islands, and continued its attacks on the Ottoman ports. On the other side, tensions over the Balkans and Yemen were approaching to their climax. As indicated in the relevant chapter concerning the discussions held in the Ottoman Parliament, both provinces were actually in a state of internal war. Libya was no longer the main concern of the Sublime Porte. Italy was in the background of events in both Yemen and the Balkans. *Idrisi*, the Imam of Yemen, was trying to invade Hijaz with arms provided by the Italians. According to the minutes of the Ottoman cabinet, reports received from Arabia were warning of dangerous complications that may arise if peace was not made immediately. In the Balkans, the situation was even more complicated. In addition to Balkan states, all the European powers were involved in the events. The revolt by the Albanian Christian Malissores with the backing of Muslim Albanians was a source of concern for Austria, whose ambassador *Pallavicini* warned the grand vizier (May 14, 1912) on the risks that might be involved if peace was not made. The French ambassador also shared his views.

*Talat Bey*, the minister of interior and leader of the Unionists remarked: "*If we give up in the Trablousgharb affair, this will have a very bad effect on the Arabs, as well as on all Muslim communities. It will also incite the ambitions of other states towards other regions of our Empire. Consequently, we cannot change our policy*".

All the Ministers agreed with him, but could find no way out. Moreover warnings by the minister of finance remained unanswered: "*We have in our treasury money to last only for five or ten days*." Indeed, both the government and the parliament acted with extreme caution in economic and financial affairs. Measures against Italian interests were brought before the parliament. However, some sector's reliance on Italian goods and services



limited the scope of measures to be taken. Increasing customs duty on Italian products by 100% met with opposition, because Italian sulphur was indispensable for the protection of grapes in the Aegean region, while the textile industry would be ruined without Italian threads in Aleppo. Italians working in railway constructions were dismissed first, but later had to be summoned back. The closure of the Italian post offices was not accepted, because it could hinder the total communication system. 50.000 Italians were residing in Ottoman lands when the war broke out and only 2000 could be deported. The only effective measure taken against the Italian side was to stop them from using the benefits of Capitulations.

In sharp contrast with the government and the parliament, the Union and Progress Party kept its firm nationalist and aggressive line. The party wanted to attract and motivate the masses. Immediately after the declaration of war, the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (Association for National Defense) was established in Salonica on October 5, 1911. The Association aimed to recruit volunteers as part of its activities. It tried to achieve the support of the non-Muslim communities through their religious representatives, as well. The local organizations of the Party were entrusted with collecting donations. A special propaganda campaign was arranged to invite the people to join in the "economic war". Even the slogan "*Union for Enmity*" was proposed as a means of ending all contacts with Italians. By the second half of 1912, the Party's enthusiastic campaign had lost its dynamism, mainly due to the severe financial difficulties and the new international dimension of the war.

In an attempt to find a solution to the deadlock, various partitioning formulas fabricated in Europe began to be voiced by the public. Division of Libya between Italians (Tripoli) and Ottomans (Benghazi) or allotment of Benghazi to Britain was some of them. But the most threatening development came from Rhodes Island. The Ottoman Greeks were giving support to the Italian invasion of the Islands. Their demonstrations at Rhodes Island in favour of the Italians could spread to the other Aegean islands, particularly Midilli (Mitilini). In reality, these were not simply pro-Italian but pro-independence demonstrations. Greece was following the events very closely. The other Balkan states, alarmed with the rumours of

an Italian landing on a site in Thrace to force the Sublime Porte to accept Italy's terms, left aside their centuries old enmities and began to search possible ways of co-operation.

The *Megali Idea* (the revival of the Byzantine Empire) was climbing at its peak. After the declaration of the Second Ottoman Constitution in 1908, Greece, without taking into account its defeat in 1897 at Dömeke, immediately attempted to annex the island of Crete, but stepped back due to the intervention of European powers. Since then, it focused on strengthening its army and had formed a fleet nearly equal in size to the Ottoman navy. Bulgaria, which did not conceal its desire to an access in the Aegean Sea, also was set to strengthen its military force. The continuous pressure of opportunities that seemed at hand prompted the Greek and Bulgarians. Their aspirations on the Albanian and Macedonian provinces of the Ottoman state, were in high rise due to the competition of Serbs and Montenegrins. Russia, acting under the main concern of ending the Austrian superiority in the area, played a leading role in bringing these archenemies together against the Porte. The accord signed between Serbia and Bulgaria on March 13, 1912, had a secret article on their possible cooperation in case Ottoman provinces were partitioned. It was supplemented with two more military agreements signed on May 12 and July 1. Agreements between Bulgaria and Greece (May 29) and also between Montenegro and Bulgaria (August, 1912) completed the collaboration net.

The Sublime Porte, although cognizant of these secret activities, still adhered to its policy of peace and non-provocation. A statement by the foreign minister declared that "*No threat of war exists in the Balkans*". Of course, it was getting clearer each day that as long as the peace talks with Italy were left to drift, more complications would arise in the European provinces of the Empire. In addition, towards the second half of 1912, the conditions turned to worse in the ministry of finance, and as a result in Libya. The resistance was better organized in the Benghazi area than at Tripolitanian region due too the ease in the provision of supplies. While *Enver Bey* the commander of the Benghazi front reported that his troops were ready to fight for two more years, Tripoli was sending distress signs

to İstanbul. A message sent on July 17<sup>th</sup> by *Neshet Bey*, the commander of Tripoli front, informed the government of the urgent requests of the local sheikhs for ammunition, arms and provisions. In case of delay, they were planning to start direct negotiations with Italy. The commander also reminded that the number of the dependent population had reached 100.000 with the families and relatives of the Mujahids. The government did not know how to reply these requests. The minister of finance had disclosed at the cabinet meeting that there was a need for 3,5 million liras to pay the salaries of the state officials. Furthermore, it would be possible to finance the war if 135.000 liras could be allotted each month.

Even the most dedicated Unionists were convinced that peace had become an imperatif. As a result on July 17, 1912, secret bilateral talks started in Switzerland. The Ottoman side still hoped to pursue the discussions on an equal basis. The talks entered into a deadlock when *Said Halim Pasha*, the Ottoman representative insisted on the Sultan's sovereignty and the annulment of the annexation declaration. The Italians tried to convince him to change his position, but without success. The new Ottoman government replaced him with two new delegates and talks restarted on August 13. The grand vizier *Ghazi Ahmed Moukhtar Pasha* while reiterating the well-known anti-concession stand in the public, was instructing the delegates to follow a more flexible line.

As peace negotiations continued, Balkan governments decided to put their secret action plan into practice. On September 30, they all declared general mobilization. Two days later the Sublime Porte did the same. Montenegro was the first to declare war (October 8, 1912) and other Balkan states followed suit. Peace with Italy had become indispensable. Italy did not miss the opportunity and issued an ultimatum to the Sublime Porte that if an agreement was not reached by October 15 it would withdraw from the peace talks. There was no other alternative but to accept Italian conditions. The secret preliminary agreement signed with Italy on October 15, covered the main elements of the projected peace. It was composed of nine clauses. In three days, the Ottoman Empire would announce the Sultanic Firman to the Libyan people; afterwards, within a maximum of 3 days, an Italian declaration and the peace treaty would follow. Accordingly, ***the Sultan's firman*** was communicated to the Libyan

people.<sup>226</sup>

*“To the inhabitants of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica:*

*My Government, finding it on the one hand impossible to render you the effective help that you need to defend your country, and caring on the other for your present and future happiness; desirous of avoiding the continuation of a war disastrous for you and your families and dangerous for our Empire; in order to cause to be reborn peace and prosperity and availing myself of my sovereign rights I concede to you full and complete autonomy. Your country will be ruled by new laws and special regulations, in whose drafting you will participate so that they correspond to your needs and customs.*

*I name for you as my Representative, my faithful servant Shamseddin Bey with the title of Naib us-Sultan [nā'ib al-Sultān] whom I charge with the protection of Ottoman interests in your country. The mandate, which I confer upon him, has duration of five years; at the end of this period, I reserve to myself the right of renewing the mandate or of appointing his successor.*

*Our intention being that the sacred disposition of the Chéri [shari'a] remain constantly in force, we reserve to ourselves towards this end the right to nominate a Cadi [qādi] who in his turn will name the Naibs [more properly, nuwwab from among the local Ulema ['ulamā'] conformably to the dictates of the Chéri. The emolument of this Cadi will be paid by us; those of the Naib us-Sultan and of the other functionaries will be levied upon local revenues”.*

**The Italian Royal Decree followed the Sultan's decree :**

*“In view of the Law of 25 February 1912 No. 83 with which Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were placed under the full and entire Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Italy;*

*In the intention of soliciting the pacification of the said Provinces;*

*Having heard the Council of Ministers;*

*We Have Decreed and We Decree:*

*Article 1 - Full and entire amnesty is granted to the inhabitants of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, who have participated in the hostilities and*

were compromised by the occasion of these, except common crimes. In consequence no individual, whatever his class or condition, can be prosecuted or molested in his person or in his possessions or in the exercise of his rights, because of political or military acts committed by him or for opinions expressed during the hostilities. Individuals detained or deported for such a motive will immediately be liberated.

Article 2 - The inhabitants of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica will continue to enjoy as in the past the most complete liberty in the practice of the Muslim faith. The name of H. I. M. the Sultan, as Caliph, will continue to be pronounced in the public prayers of the Muslims, and his Representation is recognized in the person nominated by him. His emoluments will be levied upon local revenues.

Article 3 - The aforesaid Representative is recognized as safeguarding the interests of the Ottoman State and of Ottoman subjects, who remain in the two Provinces after the Law of 25 February 1912 No. 83.

Article 4 - In another of Our Decrees will be nominated a commission of which a part will be made up of indigenous notables, to propose for the two Provinces civil and administrative ordinances inspired by liberal criteria and a respect for local usage and custom”.

**The Peace Treaty of Ouchy** signed on October 16, 1912, is composed of ten articles, of which only four deals directly with Libya:

“Article 1 - The two Governments engage themselves, immediately after the signature of the present Treaty, to take the necessary dispositions for the immediate and simultaneous cessation of hostilities. Special Commissioners will be sent to the scene to assure the execution of the above dispositions.

Article 2 - The two Governments engage themselves, immediately after the signature of the present Treaty, to give the order for the recall of their officers, of their troops, and of their civil functionaries, the Ottoman Government respectively from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the Italian Government from the islands that it has occupied in the Aegean Sea. The effective evacuation of the above islands by Italian officers, troops, and civil functionaries will take place immediately after Tripolitania and Cyrenaica will have been evacuated by the Ottoman Officers, troops, and civil functionaries.

*Article 3 - Prisoners of war and hostages will be exchanged in the shortest time possible.*

*Article 4 - The two Governments engage themselves to grant full and entire amnesty, the Royal Government to the inhabitants of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and the Imperial Government to the inhabitants of the islands of the Aegean Sea subject to Ottoman sovereignty, who took part in hostilities or who might have compromised themselves on the occasion of such hostilities, excepting crimes of common-law. In consequence, no individual of whatever class or condition he is may be prosecuted or harassed in his person or possessions or in the exercise of his rights by virtue of his military or political actions or even of the opinions that he may have expressed during the hostilities. Persons detained or transported for this reason will be immediately set at liberty”.*

Articles 5 to 10 concern exclusively the measures to be taken for the reestablishment of the situation existing before the hostilities. Relevant part of Article 5 is as follows:

*“All the Treaties, conventions and engagements of every sort, kind, and nature, concluded or in vigour between the two High Contracting Parties prior to the declaration of war, will immediately re-enter into force and the two Governments will be placed towards each other, as will their respective subjects, in the identical situation in which they found themselves before the hostilities”.*

One of the economic articles is about payment by the Ottoman government to the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in return for investment credits effectuated in Libya:

*“Article 10 - The Italian Government engages itself to pay annually into the vaults of the Ottoman Public Debt for the account of the Imperial Government a sum corresponding to the average of the sums which, in each of the three years prior to that of the declaration of war, were set aside for the service of the Public Debt from the revenues of the two Provinces [Tripolitania and Cyrenaica]. The amount of the above annuity will be determined by mutual agreement by two commissioners, one named by the Royal Government, the other by the Imperial Government. In case of disagreement, the decision will be referred to an arbitral tribunal composed of the above Commissioners and of a third arbiter named by agreement between the two Parties. If agreement is not reached on this subject, each*

*Party will designate a different Power and the choice of the third arbiter will be made by agreement between the two Powers thus designated. The Royal Government as well as the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt, through the intervention of the Imperial Government, will have the ability to ask for the payment of the corresponding capitalized sum at the rate of four percent. In what refers to the preceding stipulation, the Royal Government declares that it recognizes from henceforth that the annuity cannot be less than two million Italian Lire and that it is disposed to pay over to the Administration of the Public Debt the corresponding capitalized sum, as soon as the request is made".*

The Ouchy Treaty's acceptance of the Ottoman Caliph as the religious leader of Libyans does not conceal the fact that, Libya was being completely placed under the Italian rule. Ouchy Treaty pleased the Italian politicians because it was bringing them to a level equal with other European States. Two agreements were signed between Italy and France concerning their respective sovereign rights; Libya versus Morocco (October 30, 1912) and Libya versus Tunisia (May 29, 1914). In addition, a similar agreement was signed with Spain, Libya versus Morocco (May 4, 1913).<sup>227</sup>

#### **Enver and Ahmad Sharif : Pan Islamist Dynamism**

When Italian forces were invading Libya, almost all Muslim states had already been placed under the domination of imperialism and the remaining few were under its immediate threat. The unexpected resistance put up against the invading forces caused deep excitement in the Muslim societies worldwide. As elaborated before, the success of the resistance was due to the close and effective collaboration carried out between Young Turks and Libyan Mujahids. It can also be associated, on a personal basis, with their respective leaders, *Major Enver Bey* (later Pasha and Minister of War) and *Ahmad Sharif as Sanussi* (Sheikh of the Sanussiyya Sect).

The Ottoman Army and its officers in Libya were with no operational orders from the ministry of war when war was declared by Italy. This was because the Porte had hoped a peaceful solution could be reached until the last

moment, and as a result, it refrained from taking any action that the Italian side might interpret as hostile. Thus, the Ottoman officers in Libya had differing views on the options available to them. Finally, they received orders to take their forces out of the range of the superior Italian cannons and wait for new orders at a safe distance. All the Young Turk officers were members of the Union and Progress, and with their guerrilla warfare background from the Balkan Mountains, they bore a character of revolutionary dynamism. Given permission to act on their own, by the ministry of war, they were successful in reflecting their dynamism to the local people who soon would win their self-esteem. In addition to *Enver*, we can only name here some who, at a later stage, would also play very important roles in the history of the Middle East and Turkey: *Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk)*, *Fethi (Okyar)*, *Nuri (Killigil)*, *Suleiman (Askeri)*, *Eshref (Kuşçubaşı)*, *Yakup Cemil*, *Aziz Ali Mısri*.<sup>228</sup>

The close family ties of major Enver with the Ottoman dynasty impressed the local people deeply. The former hero of the constitutional regime had not a high rank, but as the son-in-law of the Sultan/Caliph, he quickly won the trust and respect of the mujahids. Enver in his first declaration to the people of Libya in the early November 1911, aware of this privileged position, used the title "*Major, son-in-law of his Highness the Sultan and the Commander of the Benghazi Army*". Relevant parts of Enver's declaration refuting claims regarding '*Libya's sale to Italians*' have been quoted in previous chapters. After categorically denying the claims, Enver ends his words by calling the people to unite and fight against the enemy in the name of the Sultan/Caliph:

*"The magnanimous Caliph has sent me here, to save you from the grip of the enemy. Come on. Come, join your truthful brothers. Embrace your brothers whom the Padishah has sent to your help. I will deliver arms and ammunitions to those who want to participate in the war. Those who want to be engaged with commerce will have more opportunities here for trade. I am expecting your arrival in 15 days. Let the city be ruined in the hands of the enemy. After the given period, I will consider those who remain there, as having accepted the Italian laws and rules and I will act against them accordingly. I embrace you all".*



As a policy the Ottoman State had refrained from an official declaration of war and hoped for a peaceful solution with Italy. In actual fact, it was Enver's declaration which started the war unofficially, in the name of the Sultan/Caliph. In his memoirs, Enver highlights the interest shown to him by the people because of his connection with the Sultan/Caliph:

*"I am surprised at my own authority. Nevertheless, I am the Son-in-Law of Sultan and an Ambassador of the Caliph. My relations with the imperial family helped me. Arabs do not recognize the 'standard-bearer of freedom' and Major Enver Bey means nothing to them. What they are respecting in me is, above all, my quality as son-in law of the Padishah and to represent him here".*

He praises the determination of local mujahids to become a shahid and fight the enemy without any hesitation and fear of death. It is a fact that the determination of the local population was a must for the success of the Young Turks' initiative. Indeed, Enver's relationship, in addition to his personal qualities, played an important role in the participation of the Sanussi Sect in the war, giving it an added morale and dynamism. At first *Sheikh Ahmad as Sanussi* was reticent to express his support. His initial hesitancy encouraged the Italians. They attempted to present him, in subsidized Egyptian newspapers, as a supporter of Italian policy. They even commissioned Arab intermediaries to convince him to join their ranks, but without success. After evaluating the situation carefully and inspired by the earnest and dedicated character of the Young Turk officers, the Sheikh decided to join Enver. In his letter to Enver sent from the Kufra oasis, he expressed his concerns over their common struggle for Muslims and his desire to join him.

By the mid of January 1912, Ahmad Sharif had issued the *declaration of Jihad* inviting all Muslims to participate in the holy war against the Italians. The declaration concentrates on the recommendations of the Holy Qoran and the Sayings of the Prophet, and invites all Muslims 'to protect the power of the caliphate shining with glory' against the 'poisonous daggers of the Cross'. It condemns all those who refrain from participating in the jihad as apostates. Later, some other Muslim religious leaders followed his

steps and also issued similar declarations. The participation of Sanussiyya was highly important for the cause as it had zawiyas in all Arab countries, including Yemen. Even *Idrisi*, fighting against the Caliph's forces in Yemen, felt the need to defend his position. He was receiving arms and supplies from Italians and to avoid condemnation as an apostate he spread rumours that the arms were not coming from the Italians but the Sanussiyya. When this news reached Benghazi, Ahmad Sharif issued a new declaration to the Yemeni people, refuting Idrisi's claims, inviting them to join the jihad and again calling for "*the only formula which is the union of all Muslims under the roof of the Ottoman Empire, the powerful Islamic state.*"

Islamic solidarity around the legend of Enver reached to such an extent that French journalist *Georges Rémond* remarked: "*Enver is no more Bey, they call him Pasha and even for the Bedouins he is a Melik (King) and they consider him as equal to Sanussi. There is even a legend which claims that Sidi al Mahdi - The founder of the Sanussiyya - who was in the sky has been reincarnated in the person of Enver, to guide them to glory.*"<sup>229</sup>

Enver was successful not only in creating solidarity between Muslim communities, but also laid the foundation stones of a secret organization aimed to mobilize the resources of the Muslim world. This was the *Teshkilati Makhsusa* (Special Organization). Its first activities were mainly to provide and smuggle arms for fighters in Libya. Facilitating the clandestine movements of the officers and messengers to and from Libya was also another important activity carried out. At a later stage, during the World War, *Teshkilati Makhsusa* will play a revolutionary role vis-à-vis the colonized Muslim communities.

In addition to the Young Turk officers fighting in Libya, Muslims living in many countries made significant contributions to the war effort. A list of persons to be awarded with medals for rendering great service in the war was prepared by the Ottoman ministry of war<sup>230</sup> gives an idea about the dimensions of the activity. Obviously, all were not agents but active sympathizers:

Libyans: *Abdallah ben Youssuf* from Misrata is presented as the most

important organizer and guide, bringing the supplies from the coast to the mujahids. *Salim Ben Youssuf* and *Mustafa Ben Youssuf* two brothers, also from Misrata, probably Abdallah's relatives are also on the list. From Tripoli, there is *Djuma Effendi* a police, and *Hadji Eboubakr Younis*.

Egyptians: The most active supporter is *Abdelaziz Shawish*, who contributed by writing articles with the aim of activating the Arab masses; collecting donations for the '*Jane-i Harbiye Cemiyeti*' (Association for Helping the Warriors), and involving the political party under his vice-presidency in the war effort. He had fought against the British occupation of his country and was a defender of Pan Islam. He sought political asylum from the Ottoman Empire as a political refugee. *Muhammad Pasha Yeghen*, a member of the Khedivial family helped with high-level contacts. There are also *Ramadan Effendi Alkul* (?), *Abdallatif Ben Youssuf*, and *Muhammad Bey*.

From Tunisia: French officials from Tunisia are on the list: *Leal*, the police director of Tunis; *Marshi Marzak* (?) commissar of Police; *Bohra* (?) Commandant of the border; *De Joze*, Lieutenant; *Chailletot*. Also Tunisians: *Omar Yasroul*, employee at the Bank Commercial; *Hadji Rahume* (?); *Ali ben Djebbare*; *Sayyid Muhammad al Mukaddim*; *Tabib Rais*; *Ali Sadek* from Gabés; *Ismael Bey ben Djabbare*; *Sheikh Mehmed Schamih*.

From Beirut: *Abdulkader Gallai*, the most important transport intermediary who provided ships free of charge. Also from Beirut *Saadeddin Gallai*, *Hadji Khalil Abdulmeal*, *Ubayd Merankirane* (?), *Ahmad Effendi Abdulali*, *Mahmud Sharkawi*, *Effendi Zaidan* served in the transportation of supplies. Even two Greeks are involved. One is an Ottoman citizen, captain *Pandeli*, first captain of one of A. Gallai's ships. The second is captain *Mihail Nikolao*, a Greek citizen who resisted even the tortures of Italian officials and did not confess his role.

There are also Turks: *Suleiman Bey*, the Second Secretary of the Ottoman Extraordinary Commissariate at Egypt; *Khalil Bey*, the Director of Turkish Telegraph Communication in Egypt; *Ismail Hakkı Bey* Consul General at Marseilles.

Three more persons whose origins are not known are on the list: *Mustafa Effendi Khulwani*, *Hadji Reshid Effendi Ramadani*, *Ali Effendi Mahjoub*.

The solidarity shown by the Libyans was sufficient to confine the Italians to the coast but was not strong enough to expel them. On the other hand, it was enough to create great excitement within the Muslim world, not witnessed since long. About 270 millions Muslims (90% of the total) had lost their independence and had become the colonial subjects of Europe. Only 10%, mostly in the Ottoman lands, were still living in an independent Muslim state. Actually, it was a limited independence, but even that was admired and envied by other Muslims.<sup>231</sup> The year 1911 witnessed, in addition to the Italian attack on Libya, three more imperialist assaults on the last self-ruled Muslim countries ending or threatening their partial independence. Morocco was placed under French colonial rule. Iran was reminded, under the threat of military force that the Anglo-Russian partition agreement was still in force. Afghanistan feared the same and was on guard against British intrusions on its freedom.

Muslim communities all around the world were shocked to hear the news of the Italian invasion in Libya, but as news of victories by Muslims began to reach them they rallied enthusiastically to the resistance. It was a time when the Islamic World felt depressed and insecure. The successes in Libya against the supposedly invincible Europe came as an unexpected relief, Muslim expressions of joy focused on the victory of Islam over Europe and Christianity. The display of emotions also helped to weaken the anti-Ottoman propaganda aimed to destroy the unity of the state. Divide and rule tactics, targeting Turks and Arabs in particular, were now becoming less effective.

The enthusiasm of the masses was so extensive that Muslims public figures began to make calls for a general uprising. An Ottoman deputy, *Hassan Schaybi*, who had recently returned from Hijaz, declared at the Ottoman Parliament that Muslims were in a high state of emotion and added, "*It is time to declare Jihad; masses are waiting an order and a sign from the Caliph*". The declarations of the Muslim communities all over the world were expressing their morale support. The demonstrations held in lands from Tunisia to India, triggered the hope that this support could be channeled into an active participation in the war. In a number of newspaper articles the support of Muslims for the Libyan struggle and even

the readiness of the masses to act had been shown:

*A Syrian camel owner named Fayed, who lived in Egypt, was willing said to provide camels (30.000), mules (500), horses (300) to the front with no charge.*<sup>232</sup>

*A notable of Egypt, Ahmed Bey, informed the Sublime Porte that he could muster 30.000 thousand men to defend Tripoli.*<sup>233</sup>

*50.000 volunteers from Central Asia and 15.000 from Egypt were reported to be on the march to join the mujahids in Libya.*<sup>234</sup>

*The rebel Imam Yahya in Yemen in a message to the Ottoman commander told that he and 50.000 volunteers were ready to take part in the 'Jihad fi sabil-Allah'.*<sup>235</sup>

Even the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula as well, expressed that they were ready to send 100.000 warriors to the front. However, they all had a condition, their expenses should be met. The near bankruptcy of the Ottoman Empire was no secret to anyone and donations stood at a very limited level. The question that did arise was whether the time was ripe for a general Muslim uprising against the occupying European powers. It seemed as if people were looking for a leader or a power, which would take on all the military and financial responsibilities and declare the Pan Islamist revolution. On the other side, the understanding of the Ottoman politicians was just the contrary. They were well aware of the impossibility of such a movement. The Libyan Deputy *Ferhad az-Zaoui*, an active organizer of the resistance, told openly to a French journalist: "*Holy War! Please do not write about it, you may render us suspect in France. We are not religious fanatics, but shabbily dressed and barefooted patriots like your soldiers of the Revolution*".<sup>236</sup>

The Ottoman foreign minister *Asım Bey* was of the same opinion: "*I will say quite plainly that the idea of Pan Islamism is an illusion. It cannot be materialized. (...) It would be the greatest danger not only to Europe but the whole world including the Turks*".<sup>237</sup> The famous Arab review *Al Manar*<sup>238</sup>, Turkish newspaper *Sabah*<sup>239</sup>, and the Indian *Panjabee* of Lahore<sup>240</sup> shared these views. But, if this was the case, then what did all those messages of solidarity sent to the Ottoman parliament and widely

covered by the press mean? These messages were from countries like Colombo, Austria, USA, Britain, France, Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, Russia, and of course from every city of the Ottoman Empire as well. Muslim societies under threat or suppression were only identifying themselves with the theatre of action which was going on with all its vehemence. This was a simulating attitude common to the repressed societies in their search of a catalyst that would trigger off a dynamic reaction against oppression.

In other words, the Libyan case helping the Muslim world to quench its inferiority feelings to a positive development. The successes of their brothers in Libya were a source of pride for Muslim communities who had to live under the pressure of the scientific, cultural, political, military advance of the West. At times, even the western press acknowledged the gains of the resistance. For a short period the Libyan resistance turned to be a symbol of the victory of Islam over its Western oppressors. The effect of the Libyan success on the Muslim communities was deep and wide. The colonialist powers had to channel the energy of the masses to non-military fields such as donations for relief aid (wounded, orphans, Red Crescent, etc.). However, the enthusiasm of the Muslim masses was to subside soon. Support for the resistance movement, began to lose its momentum. eventually lost its momentum.

The widely held view of most colonial powers was that all Muslim solidarity movements were a threat to their security. However on the subject of nationalistic tendencies there would be variations in their policy in connection with the status quo of the land involved. That is if the subject place were a colony, they would suppress, or if it were an independent state they would support nationalistic tendencies. Thus some countries like France, Russia and Austria-Hungary, which were supporters of these tendencies in the Ottoman State, would try to suppress any local nationalistic resistance that might be inspired by the Libyan case. Accordingly they gave more weight on the promotion of assimilation policies. Britain ruler of the largest Muslim community in the world and control on the largest number of ethnic groups, was in favour of nationalistic trends in its colonies. This was fitting best to its "divide and rule" policy.

Germany, a late comer to the imperialist club, was interested in the destruction of other colonialist powers in order to take over their heritages. In line with this thinking Germany considered that the Islamic solidarity movement could be used as a tool to open the way to new opportunities. German policies as regards the Muslim world, which were put to test during the First World War, had been formulated by building on the Libyan experience: the reactivation of Turkish-Arabic solidarity; the promotion of the Turkish caliphate against the British-backed Arab caliphate; the worldwide reactions of Muslims during the Libyan War. These moves by the German policy-making, proved to be effective tools that formed a threat to the strategy of the colonialist empires.<sup>241</sup>

An outcome of the Libyan War has been upsurge of the Muslim solidarity with the Ottoman Empire as head of religion. Participants and observers conceived this 'solidarity' in a variety of ways. The reaction of Muslim communities on the Libyan experience showed difference in line with the structure of their socio-economy. In *Syria* and *Lebanon*, in an atmosphere of panic caused by Italian navy bombardment, Christian and Muslim nationalist Arabs come to cooperate. While feuds that continued for centuries between groups and tribes left the masses divided, the upper echelons of society were able to act together towards unity.

There was a similar cooperation seen between the Muslims and Christians in *Albania*. The difference was that both Muslims and Christian's from higher and lower classes exploited the Libyan War to re-emphasize their autonomist claims by supporting the Christian *Malissore* revolt. Furthermore, the Muslim-Albanians had a special place in the service of the Ottoman Empire. In all the Muslim communities of the Empire they were the leading non-Turkish bureaucratic group. However this advantage would not stop them from pursuing nationalistic aims

In *Egypt*, where masses had been very active, the colonialists and the Khedivial regime directed with skill the public sentiment to more nationalist and local problems; even Islamists could not distance themselves from the influences of this manipulation.

In *Tunisia*, solidarity with and support for the Libyan Muslims caused the first nationalist sentiments to rise. Because of the Italian attack the

Tunisians were able to express their discontent with the colonialists. In this case the nationalist reaction shown by the people seemed to be stronger than the elite were. In a smaller dimension the same was true for *Algeria* as well.

In *Iran* a small group declared jihad but in general, a part of the upper layer exploited the Libyan example to reactivate the people in the line with their own local interests. In *Afghanistan*, the elite created dynamism, but it was to remain again within the level of local exploitation as well.

In *India*, cooperation between the elite and the masses was at a high level. However, the focus was more on the future of the Ottoman state and the caliphate, and less on the war. The Libyan case helped to create an opening for the revival of internal discussions (with Hindus). In addition the subject of loyalty to the colonialist rule was a matter of debate. .

It is also interesting to note that even in Libya, the idea of an independent republic was born first during 1912, in the mind of *Ferhad Al-Zaoui*.<sup>242</sup>

Indeed the Libyan War instigated a Muslim reaction that was witnessed worldwide. It was seen in the form of an Islamic solidarity reaction, where the role played masses was larger. However this solidarity, did not pave the way to a Pan Islamist movement. In a year, it gradually took the form of a catalyst for local and in some cases nationalist currents. As the outcome of this deviation, the Muslim masses were drawn back to their initial meditative stand. Neither the Balkan War, nor the jihad call made during the First World War would bring the issue of Islamic solidarity to the forefront again. Nationalist currents (as in Egypt, Turkey, India, Syria etc.) took its place and they prevailed.

While the war dragged on for months without any progress and the enthusiasm of the Muslim masses gradually subsided, the Muslim World faced a more complicated situation, the outbreak of the *Balkan War*. From this moment on each Muslim community went back to deal with its own internal problems. The Libyan issue remained as a local problem, concerning only the Libyans and the Young Turks.

## FROM OUCHY TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

### Cooperation During the First World War



The Balkan war had been going on for two weeks, when the Bulgarian troops who won the Lüleburgaz Battle (October 28 -November 2, 1912) were almost 50 km. away from İstanbul. It was possible to hear the roar of cannons the capital. Hundred thousands of Muslim Balkan migrants flooded İstanbul, where they waited to be transported to Anatolia. Between November 15 and 30, Bulgarian forces launched a very strong, but unsuccessful attack against the Turkish defence line at Çatalca. The Ottoman State lost all its territories in the Balkans, except İstanbul and a few besieged cities (such as Edirne). These territories meant 167.000 sq. km. of land and a population of 6.5 million inhabitants.

These great losses had to be born in such a short time that the success of pinning down the Italians on the coastline in Libya was totally forgotten. His notes on the commemoration of the first anniversary of the Libyan War show that, *Enver Bey* thought "*there was no possible way other than an honourable defeat*" when he first came to Libya. However, the unexpected accomplishments of the Libyan warriors proved him wrong. This gave him additional fervour to carry on the struggle. He relates the following episode in his memoirs as an example of how consciously the Libyan warriors were fighting for their cause:

*"There is a family here. Only the father survived. His eleven sons and son-in-law died in the war. When I presented my condolences to him he said, 'I am happy and proud that they died fighting for their country.'"*


Encouraged with the military successes, he sent a telegram dated May 23, 1912, declaring, "*All Turks in Libya are resolute to resist to the end*", a comment received with great applause by the Ottoman parliament. There was no change in the determination of both the Turkish soldiers and the Libyan mujahids, but the Ottoman government was so hard-pressed by the situation in the Balkans that it could not seriously focus on the Libyan problem. The Turkish officers in Libya were left in a very difficult position. The main apprehension worry of the Sublime Porte was how the Libyan mujahids would react to the peace treaty.

In his October 27, 1912, telegram to the ministry of war, Enver mentioned the complications that may rise from the withdrawal of all forces and arms. The Arabs were certainly bound to be upset:

*“Consequently, the return of the units and officers in a regular and collective way is not possible. The officers who are not useful and who do not want to remain will be sent in steps with different means of transport. If this creates some conflict with the provisions of the Treaty, which might damage the interests of the state, it might be necessary to declare explicitly my rebellion to the government and my refusal to comply with its orders. If this is not satisfactory, we can dress some of the Arab mujahids in military uniform and send them to the Rumelian warfront (...) For the moment, I will not send out any of the war materials. Guards can replace the regular force, and soldiers who can use cannons and machine guns can continue with training. (...) The forty young men sent to the military school can be prepared in three years time to replace the officers. I am retaining the telegraph employees and installing telephone in all centres. This will provide direct communication without need to employees. I have also sent sixty persons to study medicine, veterinary, pharmacy and production of gunpowder, repair of arms, etc...(…) There is also a monthly need to ten thousand liras as indemnity to the families of the wounded. (...) I have decided to remain here, because Ahmad Sharif Sanussi, as well as sheikhs of the zawiyyas are insisting (...) Not to endanger our possible operations in the Aegean Sea, for the moment, I am halting the operations temporarily. Consequently, please slow down all applications with regard to here”.*

حرب عيوى مرتجة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدانا لهذا  
وَمَا كنا لنجده لولا أن هدانا الله



### « ذكرى »

هَذَا هو الشمر الذي شهد الحروب الهائلة  
وعليه امطرت القنا بل كالفواعق نازلات  
خاض المعامع لا يهاب على الجباد الصافات  
حسباً يتطير المواطن من بني الايطاليات  
آليت ان يبتقى الى ان يسير الجند القات  
لترى النزاة على ضفا في التبل تفتك بالبنات  
وزى طرابلس العزيزة في ليلال باهرات  
تخسار في برد الهنا بالانتصار على الطفلات  
وتسود اعلام الحيا في البلاد الضائعات  
وزى الهلال متوجاً جزر المحيط الحاديات  
اذ ذلك يخلق بين افواج الاعاظم والنزات  
ما بين تهليل وتكبير وتقديم الصلات  
فيكون عنوان الفتح وحمدى العصور اللذات  
او هكذا يبتقى اذا لم يتنصر حتى المناسات  
يا من وعدت للمسلمين النصر امن بالحياة

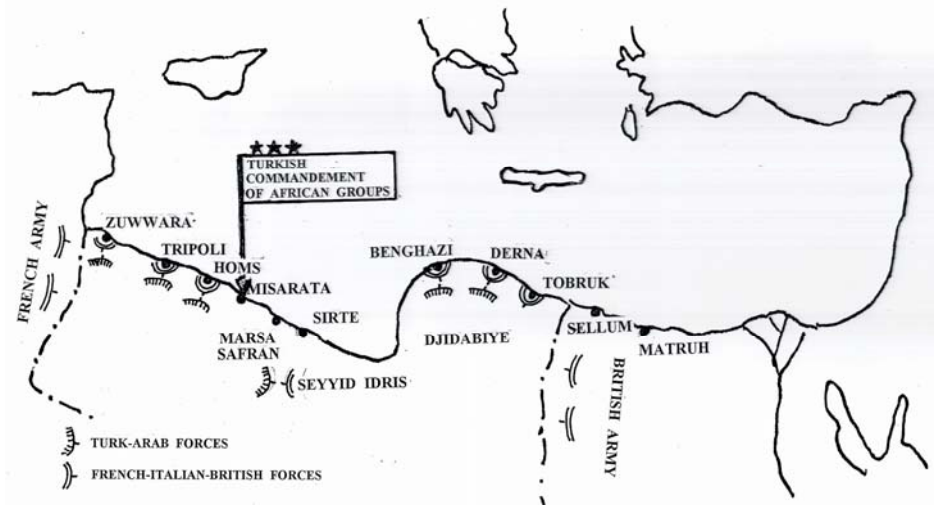
١ ربيع الاول ١٣٣٣ حرره بمركز السلام من الحدود المصرية [ سليمان البارونى ]

❦

50. Suleiman Barouni, deputy of Djebel Gharbi, is named governor and commandant of Trablousgharb and of the depending provinces at the beginning of the First World War, by the Sublime Porte. In a propaganda leaflet in Turkish and Arabic distributed all over the area, he explains with a poem, the reason of heaving long hairs: He promised not to cut them till a complete victory and Tripoli's liberation, with the joint action of the Ottoman and Muslim forces. Dated 17 January 1915



51.Prince Osman Fuad, Commander in chief of Ottoman forces at Tripoli and Benghazi in 1918



52. Position of the conflicting forces at Libya at the signing of the Moudros Armistice the 30<sup>th</sup> October 1918, ending the First World War, (According Turkish Military History Department of the General Staff Genel Kurmay Harp Dairesi, Türk İstiklal Harbi, vol.1, no.2/A)



53. The Zaman newspaper of Istanbul informs it's readers the 20 August 1918 that "Tripolitania is saved completely from the enemy"

In brief, Enver was explaining to Istanbul his long-term policy of not to give up the struggle and to continue the fight for Libya. On October 30, 1912, *Ahmad Sharif* in a message to Enver expressed his devotion to the Caliph. Ahmad Sharif's private secretary in the Sanussi delegation stated that Sanussiyya would act in accordance with the policy to be drawn by Enver. He further added: "*under all conditions, Ahmad Sharif is determined to continue the fight*". In his telegram of November 3, Enver gave information on Ahmad Sharif's refusal of the presents sent by the king of Italy. He also stressed that the conditions deemed it very essential to keep the words given to Ahmed Sharif for his part in the war. The message also reflects Enver's resolve not to send the arms and cannons back. He remarks that only a very small number of officers and soldiers opted to return. He had stopped military operations, it was clear that positions held prior to the signing of the treaty were being kept and that peace was not working. *Neshet Bey*, the commander of the Tripoli front, known with his complete compliance with the instructions of the Sublime Porte, in this case, handed all workshops for armaments and provisions to the Mujahids. The sheikhs of the Sanussiyya in a telegraph to the Ottoman ministry of foreign affairs expressed their determination to keep on the war. The message signed by 42 sheikhs repeated their will "*to consecrate their lives to save the country for the honour of the caliphate and sultanate.*" The Sheikhs reminded the ministry that they needed the officers to continue their jihad and they would be left "*without commanders and rules*" if the order to the return of the officers was not cancelled.

It was the mid of November 1912, when the news on the very critical military situation in the environs of Istanbul reached Enver. He realized that he had to leave. Facing with the threat of losing its capital, the state's existence was at stake. The Empire could vanish totally from the world scene. Enver, gave his orders on the delivery of armaments to the Mujahids, and left Benghazi. He was in Istanbul by the end of December. At this point Italy was keeping up with its complaints on non-compliance with the terms of the Treaty, while supplying arms incessantly to Idrisi of Yemen.

Enver's decision to keep on the fight, in breach of the terms of the Treaty, gave rise to problems for both the Sublime Porte and the Mujahids. First,

as a riposte, Italy refused to withdraw its forces from the Twelve Aegean Islands. On January 5, 1913 a notice to the officers and soldiers in Libya was sent by *Nazim Pasha*, the minister of war. He warned them that if they did not stop hostilities they would be as rebels. But the resolve the men proved to be firm, and the circular remained ineffective. The sole exception would be the commanding officer *Aziz Ali Misri*. The choice of this officer of Tcherkassian origin was against Enver's orders. Misri had to leave Libya due to his rivalry for leadership with *Ahmad Sharif*. With some of his forces, he crossed to Egypt and handed over arms and ammunitions to the British, which otherwise would have been given to the Sanussiya. The first reaction came from *Ahmad Sharif* who accused Aziz Ali Misri by treason in the Egyptian press. In İstanbul, *Abdalaziz Shawish* the Egyptian nationalist who cooperated with Young Turks attacked him with strong words. When Aziz Ali returned to İstanbul, a case against him was opened and an investigation carried out. It came to light that he was the founder of an Arab nationalist secret association in the Ottoman army, which had been recruiting officers of Arab origin. He was court-martialled and sentenced to death during the first days of 1914. His sister's husband *Zulfikar Pasha*, an Egyptian, the commander of Cairo, approached the British to ask their intervention to save his life. Finally, the sultan abrogated the sentence and he was extradited to Egypt. In general the drive behind Aziz Ali's actions has been explained by "the prejudice of Arab urban dwellers against the unreliable beduins." Libyan historian *Omran Muhammad Burwais* remarked that Aziz Ali Misri had an excessive sentimental reaction, when a success of the combined Turk/Mujahid forces he commanded, was celebrated by the local people as a victory of Ahmad Sharif.<sup>243</sup>

Officers of Libyan origin served in full devotion in World War I in the Ottoman Army, particularly in the Dardanelles campaign. They were not in a tendency to form separate organisations or to join in them. Later on, they also played a part in the Turkish Nationalist Armies at the War of Independence.

There was an all out launched by the Arab nationalists in Egypt to support *Aziz Ali* and to charge the Young Turks. The campaign was so

effective that Ahmad Sharif, due to his hostility to Aziz Ali, was a 'persona non grata' in the public. The appalling contradiction in the affair lies in Aziz Ali's declaration to the Egyptian journalists: "...If one day the Ottoman Empire needs my sword it will always be at its disposition."<sup>244</sup> His words may reveal two realities. First, he had entered into a personal power struggle with Ahmad Sharif. Second, he was opposed to the policy of the Young Turks, which sought continuation of the resistance in Libya. But, both his policies proved to be in detriment of the Libyan Mujahids, mainly because of the role they played in the alienation of the Arab nationalists from the Libyan cause.

It was a moment of life and death for the Empire, and the Ottoman administrators were not able to focus on Libya, as strong as they would. The evacuation of the Italian forces from the Twelve Islands could no longer be realized due to the Greek invasion threat. Accordingly, Istanbul wanted to put an end to its conflict with Italy, at the earliest. Rome was also eager to normalize the relations. Germany, concerned that its ally in the *Central Alliance* may change sides and join the Franco-British group, was in favour of a swift agreement, as well. It was in this context that during the Balkan War, the Italian government proposed the Sublime Porte to join the Central Alliance. For this purpose, like before, it had recourse to the mediation of *E. Carasso*; however, *Mahmud Shevket Pasha*, then the grand vizier, decided to turn it down. In his diary, Pasha tells that he did not take the proposal because in his opinion, the aim of the initiative was to put an end to the Sanussi resistance in Libya.

Even the defeats in Libya and the Balkans could not change the resolve of the Young Turks to keep on the fight against Italy. In a tactical move, they tried to absolve themselves from the responsibility of the resistance shown by the Mujahid's. On February 21, 1913, in the newspaper *Tanin*, the porte parole of the Union and Progress, Arab people were shown as the source of resistance. This was a time when the Union and Progress was in power, again. According to Tanin's report, the revival of the war was a self-decision taken by the Arab people, and it was a choice of their own. The events of the 1911-12 campaign had unified the Arabs. In actual fact, the Ottoman side was engaged in some covert operations to give



support to the Mujahids. One of the routes used to send aid to Libya was the monthly allowance of the Sultan-Caliph's Naib, estimated to be sixty thousand Ottoman liras. As shown by the Ottoman archives, some parts of this transfer were handed to the Mujahids to be given to the families of the fallen and imprisoned. Also, Mahmoud Shevket Pasha, the grand vizier of the new Unionist Government, in his diary dated April 28, 1913, points out that, in the name of the sultan/caliph, thousands of gold coins were sent to Ahmad Shariff, because he carried on the fighting.

Enver Pasha, after his appointment as minister of war, at the end of 1913, had the chance to work again for the Libyan cause. The concern he had for Libya, and his affiliation with Germany were two issues in interaction with each other. During the Libyan War, a number of German officers were deployed at the headquarters of Enver under Muslim names. Their task was to make assessments on the potential of the "Muslim solidarity" concept, i.e. on the state of affairs between Turks and Arabs. Earlier, *Kaiser Wilhelm* had made a declaration of friendship with Muslims, and had proclaimed a role as the protector of Islam at the tomb of *Salahaddin-i Ayyubi* in Damascus in 1898. In line with this message, Germany had started a policy of close cooperation with all Muslim societies of the world. In this effect Germany would have to go against the Anglo-French campaign to split and sow seed of antagonism between them. German agents were also active in the Muslim colonies of the Entente Powers. In 1908, Enver was sent to Berlin to serve as military attaché. There he met the German orientalist and had close relations with them. His relations with *Ernst Jaekch* was so close that Enver, in his letters sent from Libya, could disclose his projects on the future of the Muslim world. He even pronounced that with the Mujahids of Libya, it was possible to create an Islamic empire. It is noteworthy that in 1911, under the guidance of another German orientalist agent *Muhammad Brugsch Bey*, a declaration of support to the Mujahids and invitation to jihad was issued in the name of the "Muslims living in Germany".<sup>245</sup> At this point the Ottoman Empire was still pursuing a policy of caution and avoiding to declare jihad.

Germany, to implement its expansion plans was in need of the full support

of the Ottoman Empire to win the struggle with the colonialist Entente Powers (Britain-France-Russia) pointed to a Pan Islamist response as the most efficient and convenient method. A reconciliation between Turkey and Italy was seen as an issue of high priority by the German side to carry out their plans. Germany secured Sublime Porte's cooperation through Enver's efforts and by providing considerable loans to the completely bankrupt Ottoman government. However, Italy was already showing signs of withdrawal from the Central Alliance of which it was one of the founders. When the First World War began on August 3, 1914, Italy immediately declared neutrality. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire had been drawn into the war through a conspiracy of German warships, which bombarded Russian ports in the Black Sea on October 29, under Ottoman flags. Immediately afterwards, jihad was declared against Russia, Britain and France. Italy, still considered as a friendly country, *Ahmad Sharif* was asked to attack Britain in Egypt. The British Armies would be caught between the Ottoman army attacking on the Suez Canal and Ahmad Sharif's forces. However, reports by Ottoman ambassadors in Europe suggested that Italy was thinking of joining the Entente Powers. Even Germans and Austrians asked the Sublime Porte to try to dissuade Italy, but all efforts remained fruitless and Italy declared war on the Central Alliance on May 24, 1915. One of its pretexts was the non-compliance of the Ottoman state with the provisions of the Ouchy Treaty. The Italian claim was not baseless, as the Sanussi resistance still went on under secret contacts between the 'Sanussi' and the Enver's "*Teshkilatı Mahsusa*." Italy had now an excuse for not evacuating the Twelve Islands. *Ahmad Sharif* knew that no help could come from the nearest Arab country, Egypt, because of Britain's concern not to deter Italy. He was able to keep his lines of communication with the Ottoman Empire open, in spite of difficulties. An exemplar of this cooperation is a letter by *Sultan Mehmed Rechad* dated May 6, 1915, addressed to Ahmad Sharif, which the Italians seized in June 1915.<sup>246</sup> It does not contain strategic information, but only the compliments of the Sultan/Caliph to his representative in Libya on his contribution to the jihad.

With Italy's entry into the war on the side of England and France enlarged

the scope of the Turkish operations in Libya expanded. Ahmed Sharif was leading the struggle with the title of '*Amir-al-Muminin*' (commander of the faithful) for Africa.<sup>247</sup> In official Ottoman documents his title was as follows: *His Excellency Sheikh Ahmad Sanussi, Vice Royalty of Tripoli and Benghazi*.<sup>248</sup> "The Libyan *Suleiman Baruni*, still member of the Ottoman Senate was sent to the Misurata region in a German submarine. He took over the governorship and military command in accordance with the Sultan's decree. The commandership of Misurata region, the only harbour to bring in aid to the Mujahids via submarines and small sailboats was of high importance. Later, *Nuri Bey*, the young brother of Enver Pasha was also sent to the Tripoli region to coordinate the war effort. In 1918, a member of the Ottoman Imperial family, Prince *Osman Fuad*, was sent to Libya as supreme commander. In spite of the Italian naval blockade, large amounts of arms, ammunition, food supplies medicine and cash were sent to Libya all through the war.

Muslims in India, Caucasus, Turkestan, Egypt and North Africa were expected to revolt in compliance with the jihad declaration. Germans who counselled the Ottoman Government believed that the Entente's resistance could be easily crushed by jihad from within. However, the dynamism created in Libya was not emulated in the rest of the Muslim world. Total number of world Muslims was presumed to be around 300 million and Muslims living outside the Ottoman territories 270 million, of which only 5% gave active support to the jihad. Egypt, India and all countries in North Africa, except Libya, remained in apathy, which was caused either by disinterest or by British or French promises of independence after the war. Muslim soldiers recruited from these countries fought against the armies of the Caliph and his allies.

It was only Ahmad Sharif, who followed the call of jihad. His contacts with Sudan incited some support activities there also. Tribes in Yemen, Nejd and Hijaz regions were completely split up, some siding with the Ottoman government and others with the British. For example Sharif *Hussain* raised the banner of rebellion against the Ottoman State in Hijaz. Against all odds, Ahmad Sharif and his warriors never gave up fighting on the side of the Sublime Porte. But, the influence of some groups advocating peace

with the Italians gradually increased in Libya:

*“When Seyyid Idris reached an agreement with the Italians and the British, part of the Ottoman forces stationed in Benghazi succeeded in withdrawing to Tripoli. Those who could not withdraw were captured and imprisoned by Sayyid Idris. Simply because Idris was dominant in Benghazi and had formed a front against the Ottoman forces in Tripoli, the British (on the Egyptian-Benghazi border) and Italians (in Tobruk, Derna-Benghazi harbors and some minor harbours), remained in safety behind his forces until the end of the war.”<sup>249</sup>*

On the other hand, except the harbours of Tripoli, Homs and Zwara, Libyan warriors and Ottoman forces were in complete control of the greater Tripoli region, Fezzan, Agades, all the territories west of Lake Tchad and Al Fasher region extending down to the Sudanese border. They continued fighting against the British and French forces dispersed in various areas until the signing of the *armistice in Mondros (Mudros)* on October 30, 1918. Meanwhile, as a result of differences of opinion that surfaced among Sanussi sheikhs, Ahmad Sharif lost his influence considerably. He withdrew to Djarabub and left the command to his cousin *Idris Sanussi*. It was in this juncture that the factions in favour of ending the war with Italy came to power in Libya. Ahmad Sharif stood for complete independence and refused all kinds of offers made by the Italians including wealth and kingdom.

In all its declarations until the end of the First World War, The Ottoman government persistently used the expression of “African Front” despite the increasing effectiveness of forces in collaboration with colonial powers. In each official war report all warriors were praised as “our brave troops” and their achievements against the Italians emphasized. Ahmad Sharif was invited to İstanbul in July 1918, just before the end of the World War, to express his loyalty to the new Sultan-Caliph. The honour of girding the imperial sword on the Sultan was bestowed on him in the traditional throne accession ceremony held at the tomb of *Ayyub-al Ensari*.<sup>250</sup> This honourable duty traditionally was the privilege of either the Nakib-ul Eshraf (head of the descendents of the Prophet’s family) or the Sheikh of the Mawlawi Sect of Konya. Departing from the tradition by giving the honour

to Ahmad Sharif. The main aim of this political decision was to show the world that a breach did not exist between Turks and Arabs. This was an answer to Sharif Hussain who was accusing the Young Turks with irreligiousness. There could not be a better personality than Ahmad Sharif to show the public the baselessness of the claims. Apparently, it was also an honourable exit strategy, and a refuge for Ahmad Sharif, who had been. Two months later, British/Arab forces launched a joint attack and defeated Ottoman armies who had to pull back from Palestine and Syria. Finally, by the end of October, the Empire was forced to surrender unconditionally to the Entente Powers.

Ottoman-Libyan relations were one of the main topics discussed at the Mondros armistice negotiations. According to the memoirs of *Ali Fuat Türkgeldi*<sup>251</sup>, secretary of the Ottoman Delegation, the principal demands of the British Admiral regarding Libya were:

*Article 17 – The surrender of Ottoman officers now in Tripoli and Benghazi to the nearest Italian garrison.*

*Article 18 – The submission of all occupied harbours in Tripoli and Benghazi, including Misurata to the nearest Allied garrison.*

Türkgeldi further points out that the Ottoman delegation refused Article 17. The participants continued to discuss Article 18. The admiral agreed to review Article 17, while insisting on the acceptance of Article 18. Subsequently, the Ottoman delegation issued orders for the withdrawal of forces stationed in Libya. During the third meeting, on October 28, *Rechad Hikmet Bey*, stated that Article 17 pertaining to the surrender of Ottoman officers to Italian garrisons was unacceptable. He told the Italian ambassador in a discussion: “Although we have given orders, through your side, to the Ottoman officers stationed in Tripoli, they have not obeyed up until now. Allow us to send troops there in order to bring them back.” However, the Ambassador turned down this proposal.

*Rauf Bey*, the other Ottoman delegate, remarked: “The officers in Tripoli will not carry out the order if they are told to surrender. The Sublime Porte cannot guarantee that such an order will be carried out. The only thing to do is to sever relations with them.” Consequently, Article 17 took the following shape: “Ottoman officers in Tripoli and Benghazi will surrender

*to the nearest Italian troops. The Ottoman Government pledges to terminate all communication and aid if they do not obey to its order of surrender."*

The return of Prince *Osman Fuad* to Turkey posed particularly serious problems. The refusal to surrender and hand over arms was not a phenomenon exclusive to Libya. On the Caucasus front and most important in Medina, the heart of Hijaz, Turkish officers and soldiers refused to give up. In the Libyan case, they thought that the struggle was not totally part of the World War, but an independent phenomenon which had started long before and had to be solved in line with its particularities by the cooperation of the local people. The inefficiency of the Sublime Porte to convince its own armies to surrender prompted the British government to threaten by bombarding the Dardanelles if all non-complying forces did not lay down their arms. At a time when the capital of the Empire was under occupation, in an attempt to find a solution, the Porte even had had to send special messengers to Libya.

In the end, it was months after the armistice when the Turkish soldiers in Libya surrendered. Their forced surrender was reported in an extremely gloomy tone by the Turkish press. An emotive article reflects this atmosphere::

*"The Sublime Porte had to carry out the painful duty of communicating the evacuation order of Trablousgharb in accordance with the special article of the armistice. Poor fatherland of the Muslims! If you are falling under the boots of an alien nation, which has no connection with you, whatsoever, it is because Wilson's theories about the freedom of peoples are putting chains on you! Today we have nothing left to bequeath you except the sorrow of our hearths and the tears of your eyes. Yet, do not give up, do not surrender to sorrow! Let the chains embracing you strengthen your nerves! Let the cruelty that has covered your horizon intensify your will-power and your faith."*<sup>252</sup>

The profound sorrow the fall of Libya created in the Ottoman public opinion was even more deeper, among the officers stationed there. *Prince Osman Fuad* handed over his commission to his assistant *Ishak Pasha*, most probably with the thought of influencing the Sultan. Pasha together

with the Turkish and Arab fighters continued the war as if he was acting on his own. These officers later played an important role in the foundation of the *Republic of Tripoli*.

The memorandum submitted to the Sultan by the court chamberlain *Lutfi Simavi Bey* in March 1919, confirms the solidarity between Turkish and Arabic warriors:<sup>253</sup>

*“The people who had formed some kind of republican administration in Tripoli and who are still successfully resisting the Italians had agreed to deliver Prince Osman Fuad and the officers in his entourage to the Italians, in line with the terms of the armistice. They were ready to send them all to Istanbul safe and sound, if a Turkish or Allied ship was sent for this purpose, since they had no trust in the Italians. These are the last words of the representatives of the people. I hereby submit them to you.”*

The departure of the last officers marked the end of a seven-year-old joint struggle period against the invader. Libya and Turkey were torn apart. They could only communicate now through the Italians, on condition to the state of affairs in Anatolia and Libya. However, the Italians did not feel comfortable enough until they read Article 121 of the *Sèvres peace treaty*'s partitioning of Turkey stipulated in article 121 *“the Ottoman State totally relinquishes all of its rights and privileges in Tripoli and Benghazi.”*

### **Between The Two World Wars**

The national targets and borders set by “*Misak-ı Milli*” or “the National Pact” formed the foundations of the Turkish Republic's foreign policy. A resolution in line with ‘*Misak-ı Milli*’ was already adopted by the last Ottoman parliament in Istanbul on January 28, 1920. They were based on the decisions formerly reached by National Congresses which first convened in Erzurum (July/August, 1919) and later in Sivas (September, 1919). According to the first article of the resolution, Turkey was acknowledging people's self-determination rights – particularly Arabs - who remained in territories outside the control of the Ottoman armies, as of the day of the armistice (October 30, 1918).

Although the right of self-determination was meant for all nations, European colonial powers, which imposed Sèvres, refrained from recognizing the same right to the Turks. After nearly two years from the armistice, Turkey had to face at Sèvres the bitter fact of partition . Plans that had previously been on paper only, would now be put into practice all over Anatolia by foreign armies. The *Kemalists* (heir of the Young Turks) had two alternatives facing them; to give up their right of self-determination like the 'Sultan/Sublime Porte' ; or to fight for the Turkish Republic's independence, which they had founded against the will of "winners of the biggest victory in history". As a consequence, they gave utmost importance to non-interference with the internal affairs of peoples remaining outside the borders drawn by the 'Misak-ı Milli'. The first reaction of the Turkish people against the invading forces was to start small guerrilla bands that operated in rural areas, which would later form the core of the *War of Independence*. There was no leader or a clear target as yet. People were simply uprising with their arms to resist captivity. The sultan and the Sublime Porte were representing Turkey on the surface, but in reality, High Commissioners of the Entente Governments in İstanbul (British, French and Italian) were the only sovereign power in the country.

The existing or emerging conflicts of interest among the victors were continuously obliging them to make relevant adjustments in their power policies. In this context, concerned with the vision of an empowered Italy preparing to occupy the whole Aegean region, England supported the Greek invasion of İzmir. In return, to oppose this British policy, Italy, suddenly became a supporter of the Turks. In an author's words:

*"They supported the Nationalist Forces fighting against the Greek army. The Italian invasion – restricted with a small part of South Anatolia – now acquired such status that it was as if they were friends of Turkey and had come to alert the Turkish people against Greek-English Imperialism. Thus, nationalist forces were not fighting against the Italians; on the contrary, they were supported by them (...) They were inculcating animosity among the people against the Greeks and the British, they were treating the peasants well, and even over-paying them when they bought*



*something. They were opening up public dispensaries and treating people free of charge. They were also helping emigrants coming from the Greek zone of invasion.*"<sup>254</sup>

The Turkish people were bewildered by attacks coming from all directions; Armenians in the east, the French-Armenian and British forces in the south, the Italians on the Mediterranean coastline, and the Greeks in the Aegean region. Allied navies lay anchored in the Bosphorus across the Sultan's palace and in the Black Sea ports. However, Italian policy, placing a distance between itself and the other invaders, decided on a new role; the supporter of the Turks, at a critical time when the Turks when they were not properly organized for their National Struggle.<sup>255</sup> Italians backed the initiatives by the people of İzmir to establish an association named "*Rejection of Annexation*". They even placed a battleship at the disposal of the association. Italian High Commissioner, *Count Sforza*, was not only in touch with the grand vizier *Damat Ferid* and *Mustafa Kemal Pasha*, but also supported the former Young Turk leaders (Enver and Talat Pashas) who had fled to Germany. Italians arranged the escape of Enver Pasha's wife and child from İstanbul to Berlin. They allowed Rome to become one of the most important propaganda centres of the Turkish National resistance.

The Turkish press was full of stories about the Italian army's good conduct in contrast to atrocities committed by the Greek army. There were also overstated news which circulated that the generous Italians would grant a constitution and autonomy to the Libyan people. The Italian attitude was welcomed by the Turkish people at this critical hour when European press was clamouring with the news of the expulsion of the Turks "*who were not able to govern themselves let alone other peoples*" from Anatolia back to Central Asia. Some Anatolian towns in order to avoid Greek occupation sent delegates to the Italian mission and asked to be included in their zone of occupation. *Count Sforza*, in his memoirs, reveals that his mission was not restricted to securing economic zones of influence in Turkey, but also aimed to reach an agreement on Libya with Ahmad Sharif who had settled in Bursa.<sup>256</sup>



54. Ahmad Sharif Sanussi and Mustafa Kemal (with his wife) at Tarsus, at the beginning of 1923.

*“I believed that only a wide-ranging autonomy could provide peace and prosperity in our two Mediterranean colonies. I did not hesitate to accept the ideas, which friends of Ahmad Sanussi conveyed to me (...) I succeeded in making him accept a project encompassing a wide ranging autonomy provided that Italian sovereignty was endorsed.”*

In all the notes of Sforza, there is the thought of whether Mustafa Kemal, a former Mujahid of Libya, could initiate a new uprising in Libya through Ahmad Sharif. These were the years of relative peace in Libya and *Omar Mukhtar* had not yet started his last outstanding struggle as a leader. Ahmad Sharif refused to take part in the “Islamic Revolution” movement that Enver Pasha wanted to lead from Berlin. Sharif also refrained from launching an initiative in Libya from distant Turkey. On the other hand, he also opposed Sultan *Vahidettin’s* submissive attitude. Another prominent Libyan warrior, *Suleiman Baruni*, supported his views. Both of them did not hesitate to inform the Sultan of their opposing stand. Baruni returned to Libya following the enactment of treaties concerning his country, while Ahmad Sharif – doubting that the Sultan might turn him over to the Italians – joined *Mustafa Kemal* in Ankara. Count Sforza had enough reason to suspect the nature of this relationship. He asked the Kemalists about the nature of politics they intended to devise towards the Arabs. The answer he received was in line with the two principles of ‘Misak-ı Milli’ as quoted earlier. The nationalist government in Ankara was supporting the right of self-determination for every nation. Moreover, any search for Turkish sovereignty over Arab lands was out of question. Above all, Turkey had its own existence problem and had to fight for it.

Obviously, in the fight for national liberation Mustafa Kemal’s line was different from Ahmad Sharif’s in terms of religious approach. However, he was courageous enough to declare, *“the true jihad is being carried out by the cadres in Ankara.”* Moreover, his entire personal prestige was at risk when he decided to counter the campaigns of the British and sultan-caliph to divide the people in Anatolia to undermine the national struggle. He went from one Anatolian town to another, inviting the people to join the ranks of Mustafa Kemal. He was even arrested for a short time in Konya, by an anti-nationalist group claiming to act on behalf of the sultan-caliph.

It is evident that the contributions of the great warrior of Libya were of a high value for the Turkish War of independence. Today, his sword presented by him as a gift to Mustafa Kemal is on display in the Museum of National War of Independence at the Mausoleum of Atatürk.

In 1921, after the Italians started cooperating with the French against the joint Greek-British interest front, their policy showed more inclination towards Turkey. Subsequently, in June 1921, the Italians handed over the Anatolian territories under their occupation to Ankara. It was impossible for the Turks not to appreciate such an action at a time when they were fighting against Greek armies advancing on Ankara. Italians continued their pro-Turkish stand after the Turkish armies defeated the Greek forces and reached Dardanelles. Together with the French, Italians refused the British call to launch a fresh war on Turkey (September – October 1922).

Italy took part in *the Lausanne Peace* negotiations, but its stand was more of a conciliatory one. However, like all other European states it did not intend to give up the economic privileges of the capitulations, as well as other prior concessions gained. For the most part it preferred not to play a front role at the Lausanne negotiations held between November 21, 1922 and July 24, 1923. It distanced itself from the British and French diplomatic effort, and focused on safeguarding its own interests. The Italians were eager to find a permanent solution to the Libyan dispute and the sovereignty over the Twelve Islands. To meet their demands in this line, the following articles have been placed in the Lausanne Treaty:<sup>257</sup>

*Article 15 - Turkey relinquishes all of its rights and privileges over Rhodes and the Twelve Islands in favour of Italy.*

*Article 16 - Turkey declares that it has (...) relinquished all of her rights and privileges on lands or pertaining to these lands that remain outside the boundaries set down in this agreement. The future destinies of these lands and islands have been or will be determined by the concerned parties.*

*Article 22 - With the condition that it does not refute general principles of article 27, Turkey declares that it recognizes the decisive termination of all rights and privileges which it has enjoyed in Libya, irrespective of their nature, in accordance with the Lausanne Agreement of October 18, 1912, and attached documents.*

*Article 27 - No political, legislative or administrative power or authority will*

*be exercised by the Turkish government or Turkish officials for any reason at all over subjects of countries who remain outside Turkey, and who are under the sovereignty or protectorate of other states which have signed this agreement as well as being subjects of countries that have seceded from Turkey. It has been hereby decided that spiritual authorities of Muslim clerical officials will not be harmed.*

*Article 29 – (...) the same rules that are applicable to Italians will be applied to Libyan citizens in Turkey. The provisions of this article can in no circumstances affect the citizenship of people of Tunisian, Libyan and Moroccan origin who have settled in Turkey. Correspondingly, Turkish citizens will benefit from the same rights as they do in France and Italy and in countries, the people of which benefit from the provisions of the first and second articles.*

In these articles, Italy, unsatisfied with the existing isolation, attempts to cut off Turkey's all ties with Libya. The War of Libya that began in 1911 and gave the impression to end with the Ouchy Treaty of 1912, in fact, continued for 12 years until the conclusion Lausanne Peace Treaty in 1923.

A relative peace and calm period prevailed in the Turkish Republic between the Lausanne Peace Treaty (1923) and the beginning of the Second World War (1939). Some revolts instigated by the colonialists were easily suppressed. At a period of escalating tension in world politics, Turkey had to be continuously on guard in its foreign affairs. It had common borders with five competing powers of the period: Russia, Britain (through Iraq), France (through Syria), Italy (through Aegean Islands), and Germany (through its ally Bulgaria). Atatürk's words; "*peace in the country, peace in the world*", in all their sincerity, would not be sufficient guarantee against the colonialist ambitions of these powers. Tension with Britain over the Iraqi border, with France over the Sandjak (Hatay), the efforts to end the demilitarization of the straits and to create peace groupings in the west (Balkan Pact) and in the east (Saadabad Pact) took much attention of the government. With the advent of fascist regime, Italy was seen to give up the friendly approach it displayed between the years 1919 – 1922. *Mussolini* launched a belligerent colonialist policy in 1923. Taking

advantage of Turkey's conflict with Britain over Mossul, Italy reasserted its appetite for Anatolia. There were rumours that Italy was preparing to send troops to Anatolia if Turkey ventured to annex Mossul by force. In fact, Mussolini delivered speeches during his visit to Tripoli in 1926 that clearly exposed his expansionist inclinations.<sup>258</sup> His occupation of Corfu in 1923, Fiume in 1925, the annexation of Djarabub from Egypt, and his troop sending to Shanghai were a clear measure of the imperialist dimensions of Mussolini's foreign policy. In 1927, he openly started mentioning "*The Great War of Europe which will enable Italy to win her rights within ten years.*"

Reference to Turkey's Mediterranean coastal regions under such a context caused great concern in Turkey. The following argument, frequently expressed by the Italian press, accurately sums up the rationale for expansion:

*"Italy has an excess population and its land is increasingly insufficient to feed its people; industrial raw materials (coal, iron, cotton, etc.) are either lacking or almost nil; by contrast, Turkey has raw materials, vast lands and is under populated; thus it is imperative or even a right for Italy to turn Turkey into a kind of colony (protectorate, at least an ally) and allot settlement zones on Turkish territory for Italy's excess population."*<sup>259</sup>

The Turkish side met these claims with a wide scale counter press campaign. Mussolini's method of preparing ground by a campaign of words was answered back in the same style. The Turkish President's (Kemal Atatürk) warning, "*if you do come your main problem will be to find a burial place for yourself*" won enough repute to be reproduced in the cover of *Time* magazine.<sup>260</sup> Mussolini's decision to turn his ambitions towards Ethiopia instead of Anatolia may have been the result of the determination showed by Turkey to resist any attack. Although Turkey was in no position to take any action in Libya, Italians found reasons to feel restless. In one case, a letter written by the Libyan freedom fighter of the 1920's, *Omar Mukhtar* to Mustafa Kemal to seek assistance – since there was no Arab society interested with the fate of the Libyans who were jammed in concentration camps – was seized. In another case, the revelation of presence of an old Turkish officer among the mujahids who formerly had fought together with Enver was enough to disquiet Italians.<sup>261</sup>

### Independent Libya and Turkey

After the Second World War, the role of bilateral initiatives played less in the formation of the framework of the Turkish-Libyan relations. The entirely new international political environment which dominated the whole world as a network was the driving force behind all the decisions.

Turkey continued its domestic and foreign policies in a relatively stable line. In internal politics, single party system was changed with a multi-party system based on free elections. Despite all the difficulties of the experience, the system survived and drove Turkey closer to Europe. There was a transformation from a purely state controlled economy to liberalism. This further helped the goal of integration with the EU. In the process, generations of Turkish migrant-workers in Europe also played a role as catalyst. Soviet threats on the straits and Eastern Anatolia also forced Turkey to seek its security in NATO. In brief, Turkey headed towards the West, in all areas of development.

Post War Libya may be studied in two phases, royalist and revolutionary (before and after 1969), which are divergent in structure. In the Second World War, a Libyan military unit -organized and financed by the British in Egypt- fought the Italian-German forces, in the name of *Idris es- Sanussi*, who lived in Egypt since the 1920's. This involvement entailed on Britain and its allies the right to find solutions to the ex-Italian colonies. The main trend was the division of Libya into three regions, each one controlled by a Western Power; Tripoli by the USA, Benghazi by Britain and Fezzan by France. Enfeebled by thirty years of colonialist and fascist rule, and with lack of financial sources, the Libyan people found it difficult to be organized to meet the new developments.

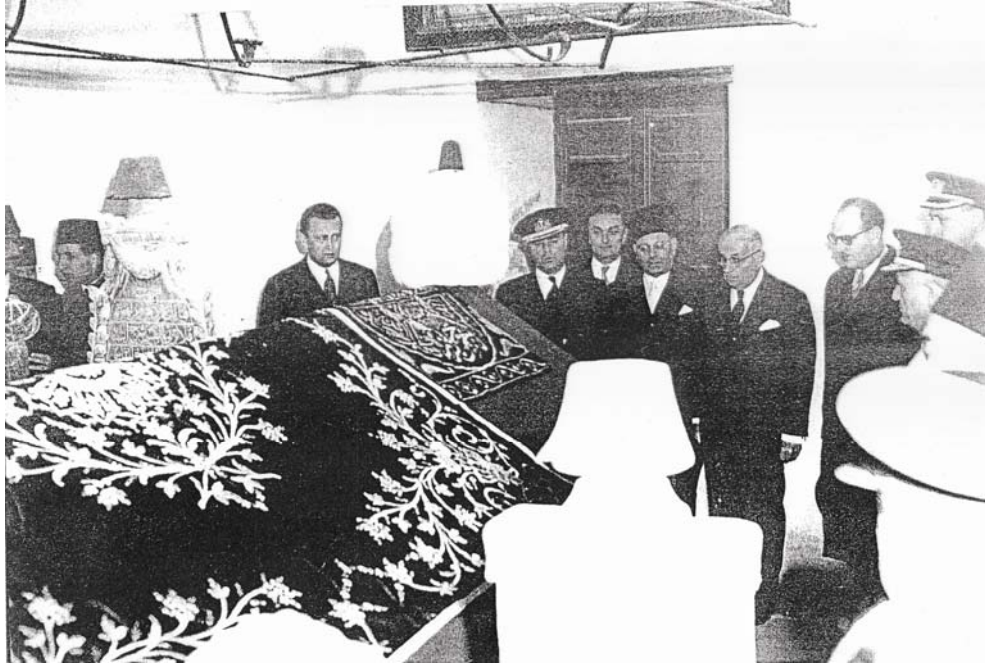
In the post-war period, the first formal encounter between Turkey and Libya took place at the U.N. General Assembly meetings in 1949. *Adnan Kural*, the Turkish representative had the floor in the First Commission, which convened on October 3, 1949, to decide on the future of Italian colonies. He pointed out that there was hypocrisy to claim to bring freedom

to the people and while continuing the military occupation in these lands as a protectorate. He reminded that Turkey was concerned with the future of Libya as a Mediterranean country and disapproved with Britain's stand which found Libya in poor shape for self-government. He expressed that the people of Libya had formerly carried out active duties in the local administration and held top positions at the time of the Ottoman regime. He gave the example of the newly formed Barca Government, which proved its administrative capabilities with the support of some Turkish experts of Libyan origin; *Sadullah Koloğlu*, a governor in Turkey who became prime minister in Libya; *Ümran Yetişal*, a general in the Turkish Army, who organized the Libyan military forces, and *Abdussalam Busayri* from the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs, who served as foreign minister were among these prominent experts. Kural warned the General Assembly that deciding on Libya's future without holding a referendum did not rest with it. He emphasized that Turkey was in favour of the unity and independence of Libya.<sup>262</sup>

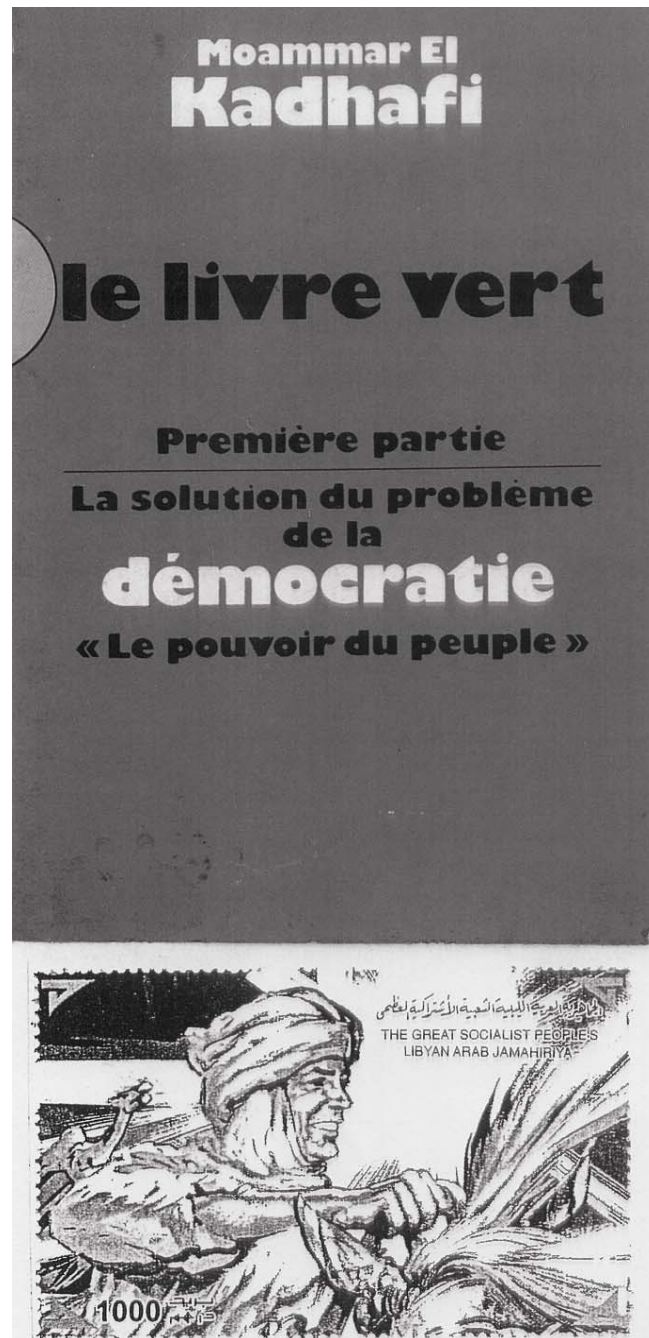


55. Delivery of the Turkish cannons to the Libyan government at Tripoli in December 1954, at the presence of Libyan Prime Minister Ben Halim and Turkish ambassador Karasapan.





56. Visit of the Turkish President Celal Bayar to the tomb of Dragut (1958)



57. Muammer al Qadhafi's "Green Book" and his portrait on a stamp.



58. The cover of the book published in 1981 in commemoration of centenary of Atatürk's birth and 50<sup>th</sup> of Omar Mukhtar's shahada.

At this stage, Arab nationalism was not yet well organized and Libya was too weak to make her voice heard. Thus, the Turkish intervention at the UN pleased the Libyan public opinion deeply. Emotions were high towards Turkey, and some set up a party named '*Hizbul Ittihadî Trablous-u Turki*' (Union Party of Turkish Trablous), albeit utopian. It aimed to stop the founding of a new colonialist administration by cooperating with Turkey.<sup>263</sup> *Idris es-Sanussi* explained to a Turkish journalist in Egypt that the aim of party was to form a federalist union with Turkey. A common foreign policy would be followed and there would be cooperation in financial and military matters. But, both countries would be autonomous in their internal administration. It is obvious that his statement was a political tactic to stop the imposition of a new colonialism, or even Arab unionism. Actually, Libyans wanted full independence and Turkey did not want to deviate from her policy of non-expansionism. The statement, not in line with the '*Misak-ı Milli*', was well received in Turkey but only in its capacity as a reply to allegations of Ottoman imperialism in the Arab world.

By the end of 1949, it was decided in the U.N. that Libya would be given the status of an '*independent state, endowed with national sovereignty*'. It

would be composed of Tripoli, Benghazi and Fezzan, and the decision was to be carried out by January 1, 1952. Finally, the vision shared by both Libya and Turkey was turning into a reality.

The declaration of Libya's independence was a source of joy for the Turkish people. They expressed their solidarity and passion in public demonstrations and in the press. President *Bayar* and Prime Minister *Menderes* sent their congratulations. During debates held at the Turkish parliament enthusiasm prevailed and friendly feelings were expressed.<sup>264</sup> One of the articles which reflect best the atmosphere of excitement found in the press is *Kadircan Kafli's*:

*"It gives us great pleasure and joy to see our brave and devoted brothers in religion, with whom we have lived together for four centuries and have shed blood side by side, free and independent; we hope wholeheartedly that the new Muslim State lives successfully for ever."*<sup>265</sup>

The Turkish Youth Organization sent a message to its Libyan counterpart:

*"While presenting the most candid affection and greetings of the youth of İstanbul University to the youth of brotherly Libya who has won her independence, we wish happy days of peace and serenity."*<sup>266</sup>

Most of the articles published in the Turkish press between the years 1948 and 1952 had the Libyan issue as their main theme. They laid emphasis on the unconditional Libyan independence and the historical ties between the two nations. However, the most important problem facing the new independent state was financial, and forced it to accept conditions set down by the new world powers. An editorialist of the '*Cumhuriyet*' newspaper cautioned:

*"Libya is the first state created by the United Nations. Her birth, bestowed by the United Nations is not my only sincere concern. I also hope that she is nurtured and reared into maturity (by the same organization). If this country is placed into the arms of England and left to remain under the command and influence of the British Ambassador in the first days of her birth, not much will be accomplished. These two weeks have left doubtful impressions on me, concerning the future [(of Libya)]."*<sup>267</sup>

At the same time, *Bashir Sadawi*, leader of the opposition '*Mutamar al*

*Watani'* Party and a freedom fighter claiming to be a comrade-in-arms of *Enver* and *Halil Pashas*, expressed his dissatisfaction with the situation: "Today the Government survives on the money it receives from the British. We want genuine independence."

In its early days, Libya was one of the least developed countries in the world. In addition to Britain, Libyan economy was also subsidized by the USA and France. As expressed in the reports of the first Turkish Ambassador to Libya, Karasapan, in the year 1955, the Libyan budget was funded 50% by Britain, 30% the USA and 4% France. Turkey, also under the strain of serious financial difficulties itself, was only able to send military aid and experts. Between 1954 and 1958, 21 high school, 8 higher education, 26 Islamic sciences and 8 military (4 naval and 4 air force) scholarships were granted to the Libyan students. Later, the graduates occupied important posts as ministers and even became prime minister in the Libyan government.

The budget deficit was one of the main reasons behind the faint reaction shown by the Libyans to the Anglo-Libyan Agreement (1953), and the Wheelus Base Agreement with the USA (1954). These agreements were signed soon after Libya joined the *Arab League* as its eighth member in early 1953.<sup>268</sup> Only a few knew that under the Libyan soil lay large oil fields, unknown even to the Italians. Pursuant to the signing of the above agreements, the discovery of oil resources was made public and by 1960 its commercial exploitation began. The flow of petro-dollars rapidly turned one of the least developed countries in the world into one of the richest.<sup>269</sup> Coincidentally, the Palestine problem had dominated the affairs in the Arab world. Moreover, ideological differences had turned the Arab world into a political mosaic. In his book, '*The Road to Ramadan*' the Egyptian journalist *Muhammad Haikal*, summarized the situation briefly: '*Arabs agree to differ*'. As said by *Prof. Fahir Armaoğlu*, it would be difficult for Turkey to follow a global and stable policy that could please all the Arabs in the Middle East:

*"Two currents prevailed among the Arabs: conservatism and socialism (...) However, the fracturing was not so simple. It is a heterogeneous structure. Classification under the headings of*

*conservatism and socialism is not enough. Each group has its own contradictions, clashes and different policies towards both each other and the world outside. Structures of such political complexity have neither stability nor continuity, making it impossible for Turkey to fix a steady policy. On the other hand, such structures can also easily change according to regional and global shifts. In such a complex and unstable situation, it was difficult for Turkey to follow a global and stable policy that would satisfy all the Arabs. The only common line could be the expression of goodwill and sympathy. This is why the Turkish policy was based on two principles: 1) avoidance of being caught up in inter-Arab quarrels and 2) designing bilateral relations in line with particular needs of countries and their policy vis-à-vis Turkey, by excluding all global policies.*"<sup>270</sup>

Political relations between the two countries, which were drawn in line with the above frame took a new shape with the advent of Libyan radicalism. The *Al Fateh Revolution* of September 1, 1969, brought a group of young officers to power. Their leader was *Muammar al Qadhafi* and they were all admirers of *Nasser's* Pan Arabism and anti-imperialism. Along the lines of their nationalist program, they nationalised foreign companies and banks and attained the closure of British and American bases. Within the context of Colonel Qadhafi's "*theory of people's power*", under the aegis of the *Jamahiriyya*, the people's army was set up and private property annulled.  
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He did not limit himself to proposing formulae to the Arab world. With the aim of finding a solution to the global economic problems, he proposed a '*Third International Theory*' as an alternative to capitalism and socialism. Qadhafi sought political unions with Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, and Tchad, but all failed. He was a serious source of concern for the western world, international organizations and the Arab States when he gave his support to radical organizations. Libya also entered into a dispute with USA over the 6th fleet, and threatened Israel with nuclear war.<sup>272</sup> Libyan policy was permeated by radicalism based on a mixture of concepts of Islam and socialism. This saturation was so dense that the UN had to place a diplomatic, military and aerial embargo for its failure to hand over the two individuals accused of a sabotage to a PAN AM airliner. The embargo remained in force until 1999. Finally, the problem was settled in 2003 when

Tripoli agreed to pay compensation.

The first important rapprochement between Libya and Turkey came in 1974 with the Turkish intervention in Cyprus. The intervention was carried out by Turkey, one of the co-founder and guarantor states of the Cyprus Republic, in reaction to Nikos Sampson's coup d'état supported by the Greek junta. There was a serious concern over a possible massacre of the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Peace Operation received the backing up of Libya. The pressure of a USA embargo on military materials was greatly reduced with the help of Libya, which procured and supplied them. These materials, mostly airplane spare parts, were sent out from Libya to Turkey by covert operations. As a sign of the Libyan government's close support, there was a wide circulating rumour that claimed it was Qadhafi himself who personally loaded the spare parts to the planes. Bilateral relations won a new impetus in early 1975 when Prime Minister *A. Jallud* paid a visit to Turkey, the first high-level one after the revolution. Emphasis was given to economical cooperation and agreements were signed on joint projects:<sup>273</sup>

- Maritime Transportation Company, which was founded in 1979 with headquarters in İstanbul
- Agricultural and Animal Feeding Project, with a capital of 20 million dollars, headquarters in Turkey.
- Ship Construction and Repair Project, with a capital of 40 million dollars, headquarters in Libya.
- Turkish-Arab Bank, established in 1978 in İstanbul, which provided credits to the Turkish Central Bank, Turkish Airlines, Agricultural Bank, etc...

In addition, the Turkish construction companies were invited to take part in the reconstruction of Libya. Until 1978, there were only two: *Türkeş Akkaya* in charge of the Tripoli harbour and *Enka* engaged in the construction of the cement factory at Tarhuna. The number quickly rose to 60 in 1981, the year Turkey, after Germany, was Libya's second largest supplier of commercial goods. The following statistics are an indication of this new trend:

<u>Years</u>	<u>Turkish exports</u>	<u>Turkish imports</u>
	(million US Dollars)	(million US Dollars)
1977	13.5	276.3
1978	48.5	212.6
1979	43.2	208.4
1980	60.3	778.3
1981	441.5	789.4
1982	234.5	889.6

The highest amount of total contracts signed by the Turkish contractors was in Libya with 11.6 billion US\$. The contracts won in Saudi Arabia followed next with half of this amount. In the number of Turkish guest workers Libya took the third place after Germany and France. In Libya, there were 49.376 Turkish workers. This was equal to 5.3% of the Turkish workers in the world. This was 70% in Germany and 6.1% in France. Saudi Arabia was fourth with 3%. In 1984, the Libyan Minister of Agriculture declared that there were 120.000 Turkish guest workers in almost 150 Turkish companies in Libya. With this number Libya climbed to the second place among the countries employing Turkish workers. Direct daily flights were inaugurated for ease of communication and Turkey became one of the places of predilection for the Libyan tourists.

As a result of the change in the international political atmosphere against Libya, the Libyan economy was placed under serious strain. The crisis that followed hit the Turkish contractors deeply. Libya was suddenly short in dollars because of an embargo or other reasons connected. On the other hand, in some cases, Turkish companies were also at fault, because of new regulations introduced in the financial system at home or simply because they failed in carrying out their obligations. Notwithstanding the fluctuations, in the early months of 1993, the total value of Turkish contracts in Libya reached to a record value of 14.5 billion US\$, the highest scored by them in a foreign country. For a comparison, Turkish projects in Saudi Arabia totalled 3.7 billion US\$, and in Iraq 3.5 billion US\$.<sup>274</sup> Libya's share was 53% in all the total foreign contracts. Between 1985 and 1990, payment difficulties were solved by the goodwill of both



sides, mainly when the Turkish Government's extension of its counter-guarantee to the bank guarantees , played a primary role in this time.<sup>275</sup>

Gradually, the number of workers dropped to 25.000 and later to 10-12.000. Presently, dependent on the number of contracts, this number varies between 2.000 and 10.000. The sudden upsurge in economic ties between Libya and Turkey caught the attention of all states with fundamental interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. With its Arab-Israel conflict and the world's richest oil reserves, the Middle East was regarded as the most likely place for a possible Third World War where American and Soviet fleets were in a constant state of alert. His radical alignments placed Qadhafi in the centre of attention of the political circles. His speeches were analyzed word by word and quite often transmitted to the world media with unfavourable comments. The Turkish public opinion was caught surprised by his well known forthright and often indiscreet declarations some of which were distorted by the media. Nevertheless, taking into consideration his attacks on his "Arab brothers", his criticisms towards Turkey may be considered less aggressive. For instance, he stated that fanatics had forced *Atatürk* towards secularism, and warned Libyan men of religion against fanaticism and advised them not to push him in such a direction (1978).

In 1981, when the USA threatened Libya with an air strike, his response was to retaliate against the American bases in the Middle East, and warned the people in the host countries (Italy, Greece, and Turkey) to bear the consequences. His declaration found place in the world media as a direct threat of bombardment for the people of these countries. Qadhafi felt the need to correct this misinterpretation and summoned the Turkish Ambassador to whom he explained that his words were distorted.

The Libyan leader also made some critical remarks about Atatürk's secularism (1970).<sup>276</sup> Moreover, he claimed that the Unionists had delivered Libya to the Italians in 1912. He described their "act" as "*an unforgivable mistake*".<sup>277</sup> (Background information on this subject is on chapter titled "An Italian tactic: Annexation by payment"). But, at the same time, he did not spare Arabs from his criticism. In 1984, he pointed out that "*It was betrayal by the Arabs, which created Atatürk*". On the other hand,

none of these criticisms could change the high regard Libyan politicians and diplomats, as well as its public opinion, placed on the Turco - Libyan brotherhood. This affection is best summarized in the following words of a Libyan Minister:

*"There is no power in the world that can undo the strong ties between the Turkish and Libyan people. Turks have fought side by side with Libyans against imperialists and colonialists, and during the Turkish War of Liberation, Libyan fighters fought with their Turkish brothers against the invaders."*<sup>278</sup>

The friendly relations based on the historical roots of solidarity went through some hard tests and proved that they were durable. Some extreme cases were: hosting of ASALA members; extending support to the leader of the terrorist organization PKK (Prime Minister *Demirel* documented the facts on the subject to *Jallud* in January 1992); Qadhafi's criticisms of Turkish policy in the Gulf Crisis of 1990-91. Crisis caused by these actions and remarks found their solutions through diplomatic reconciliatory means. In this context, in an interview on August 17, 1991, Bushayry, the foreign minister of Libya explained what Qadhafi was trying to mean when he criticised the Turkish foreign policy over the Gulf War. :

*"We criticize Turkey because we love Turks very much. We have a special liking and respect for the Turkish people who defended Islam for six centuries. When some countries make mistakes, we do not interfere, but we criticize our Turkish brothers, with the right of having had a long common history. It is not because of hatred of the Turks, but because of our love (...) it is normal to have differences in views, but that does not mean that our relations are bad."*<sup>279</sup>

Gradually, the Jamahiriya softened its radical stand and gave signs that it aimed to distance itself from states with terrorist connections. A sign of change is found in a Libyan declaration made on the UN decision no. 731 dated January 22, 1992, concerning the destruction of the American and French passenger planes. Finally, it accepted to pay compensation in September 2003 and added that: *"Jamahiriye confirms its continuous and firm view that all kinds of terror, including state terror, has to be condemned (...) and blame the terrorist acts which cost human lives in*

*Libyan, Korean, Iranian, Indian, American and French planes...*” It is noteworthy that the Libyan government was also making a request from the Ankara government to support its proposal on a related inquiry in the UN.

The trade figures of the last 20 years (1983-2002) may help to shed more light on the state of bilateral affairs. By examining the below trade figures, it is possible to comment that there is a relatively steady course in economic relations, despite some yearly fluctuations. The UN sanctions imposed on Libya in 1992 and suspended in 1999 are among the main reasons behind these fluctuations.<sup>280</sup> The total trade volume in the first half (1983-1992) is 6 and in the second (1993-2002) 6.063 billion US\$. The trade surplus in favour of Libya, due to the sale of petroleum products, has climbed to 3.356,5 million US\$ dollars in the second decade from 2.380,4 million dollars:

(1983-1992)

(Million	US			Dollars)
Years	Turkish exports	Turkish imports	balance	volume
1983	184,2	793.3	-609.0	977.6
1984	142.0	660.8	-518.8	802.9
1985	58.8	620.8	-561.9	679.6
1986	135.7	292.2	-156.4	428.0
1987	140.6	305.7	-165.0	446.3
1988	218.1	78.8	+139.2	297.0
1989	226.8	286.2	- 59.3	513.1
1990	220.5	487.0	-266.5	707.6
1991	237.4	281.4	- 43.9	518.9
1992	246.5	445.4	-198.8	692.0
	1.810.6	4.251.6	-2.357.4	6.145.6

(1993-2002)

1993	240.3	131.0	109.2	371.3
1994	179.4	319.5	-140.1	499.0
1995	238.3	385.2	-146.9	623.5
1996	243.8	476.3	-232.6	720.2
1997	186.7	533.1	-346.3	719.8
1998	95.5	342.8	-247.6	438.0
1999	139.6	502.0	-362.4	641.6
2000	95.5	786.1	-690.6	881.7
2001	67.4	847.8	-780.3	915.3
2002	165.1	667.0	-588.9	919.1
	1.886.7	5.077.8	-3.644.7	6,729.5
2003	254.7	1.072.5	-817.8	1.327.2
2004	337.2	1.514.1	-1.176.9	1.851.3

The basic Libyan exports to Turkey are crude petroleum and liquid petroleum gas, forming 95-98 % of the total exports. The remaining 2-5 % is composed of mineral oils, methyl alcohol, azotes, fertilizers, insect killers, wool and woollen materials, sheep, cow, goat hides; animal entrails, peanuts, etc...

Turkish exports to Libya have a wider spectrum: All kinds of food, fruits, meat, milk, butter, cheese, olive oil, etc.; as well as office furniture, electrical appliances; agricultural machinery, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, construction material, hand tools, iron and steel materials, home and industrial glass, tyres and rubber products, cloth and ready-made dresses, textile fibres, etc...

To sum up, Libya, after the elimination of the Socialist Block went through policy adjustments to have a rightful share in the new world order. On the other hand, Turkish foreign policy preserved its former stand. As proved by past events, historical ties and sentimentalism have served as catalysts in the friendly relations and as factors of stability in times of crisis.

The future of the Arab world has always been Qadhafi's main concern. On the whole, his criticisms towards Turkey may find their meanings if evaluated within this perspective. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it was quite a challenge not only for Turkey but also for Libya to find policies that could take in the interests of all Arab states. Qadhafi's change of course from Pan Arab and Pan Islamist policies to Pan Africanism in the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, may be an effort to keep away from the international conflicts centred in the Mediterranean and the Middle East basin.

### CONCLUSION

In the search for peace and stability in the Mediterranean region, the 500-year-old Turkish-Libyan relations have a key role to play. The Ottoman Turks entered into the scene after centuries of phenomenal pace in Islamisation and reaction to it in the form of Crusades. This was a time when the Islamic world was already in a gradual decline. The Ottomans not only saved the Near East from domination by the Christian powers, but also helped pave the road to extend Islam in Europe. The sine qua non of the protection of the holy sites of Islam was the establishment of control over the Mediterranean. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, Turks began to settle in North Africa, and co-existed in relative peace with the local people. As Maghribi historians have pointed out, "The Turkish Presence" in Maghreb was not the end result of a colonialist way of thinking. In fact, the Tripolitanians were drawn in by the non-colonialist approach of the Ottomans when they appealed to the Sultan for his protection. Their initial appeal was made in the second decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and full protection was granted in 1551. The second Western Odjak was established in Tripoli to serve this purpose. Later on, all the North African communities were placed under the protection of the Sultan by the establishment of the third Odjak in Tunisia.

The odjaks, administered by their own staff, carried out their duties in line with the general strategies and principles of the Empire without getting in the way of native customs and traditions. They had a degree of autonomy in a decentralized system run from İstanbul. Because of the distance factor, there were communication and transportation difficulties. These problems were solved in a system of decentralisation. At first, the 'beghlerbeys' appointed from İstanbul ruled the Odjaks, and later on the 'deys' chosen by and within the Odjak. Libya's poor agricultural conditions due to the climate made it reliant on the transportation of goods from Central Africa to Europe and Ottoman lands. Thus, the naval force, which was set up to fight against the Italian, Spanish and French pirates, and corsairs, soon became an important element of the economy of the region.

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the forces of the industrial revolution and free trade drove the European powers to a rush for the colonisation of Africa and Asia. Within this frame, they also turned their eyes on the Ottoman lands, Libya included. The Sublime Porte which had lost Algeria after a long struggle to France, was now facing the separatist movements in Tunisia and Egypt. It chose to put an end to the autonomous administration in Libya, and its direct rule from İstanbul, by appointment of governors began. In parallel with this decision reforms in Libya were given start. All modern practices and institutions falling within the framework of 'Tanzimat' reforms were also brought to Libya: The Libyan people took part in the administration process through municipal and parliamentary elections. New plants with latest production techniques and methods were set up. In the field of education, modern facilities were provided. Printing press was there, and newspapers began to circulate.

It was in 1911 when Italy, after a long planning and preparation stage, found it timely to launch an attack on Libya, the last Ottoman territory in Africa. Rome's attempts to annex Libya by a deal of payment had failed and been subject to categorical rejection each time. The Young Turk officers, together with the Turkish troops in Libya and the local Mujahids contained the Italian assault on the shores. It took much more than the deep financial crisis and the unturned support of the Islamic world to change Ottoman Empire's resolve to continue with the fighting. It was the

unforeseen Balkan War that changed all the setting. All of a sudden, the enemy had put Istanbul under the immediate threat of invasion; the Sublime Porte had no other choice but to accept all conditions put forward by Italy to make a peace. On the other hand peace did not stop the Ottoman side to give its support to the guerrilla war of the Mujahidin through covered operations. During the World War, these guerrilla clashes took the form of a full-scale war between Italy and the Ottoman Empire in Libya, once again. In 1918, the Ottoman State accepted defeat in the World War, but the Italian concerns on Ottoman threat in Libya did not cease. A special clause attached to the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty finally put an end to these concerns.

Subsequent to World War II, Libya's independence was on the agenda of the United Nations. Turkey took active participation in these discussions, and gave its full support to Libya. For the restructuring of the new Libyan State, administrative staff, experts were sent and arms were supplied by Turkey. Scholarships were granted to young people. Soon, Libya was one of the oil producing countries of the world. Turkish and Libyan friendly relations went on as before and grew further under Muammar Qadhafi's rule. It was particularly the Soviet threat that forced Turkey to seek membership in NATO. Turkey, engaged in a reform process since the time of Tanzimat, continued its path towards the West and became a member of the European Council. In the same period, Libya joined in the Arab Union, and sympathized with the Socialist Block. It was a surprise for outsiders to observe no change in the friendly ties and economic relations between the two countries that were placed on opposite ends. Today, both nations, which share a culture of cooperation, and a friendship between peoples rather than political engagements, are in a key position to contribute to durable peace in the region. Their heritage is also waiting to be shared by those who are willing to strive for in line with this end.

**DOCUMENTS**



**ITALIAN DECLARATION OF WAR**(From Italian Foreign  
Ministry Archives)

1

**Ultimatum presentato dal Reggente la R. Ambasciata d'Italia in Costantinopoli  
alla Sublime Porta.**

Pendant une longue série d'années le Gouvernement italien n'a jamais cessé de faire constater à la Sublime Porte la nécessité absolue que l'état de désordre et d'abandon dans lequel la Tripolitaine et la Cyrénaïque sont laissées par la Turquie prennent fin et que ces régions soient admises à bénéficier des mêmes progrès réalisés par d'autres parties de l'Afrique septentrionale. Cette transformation qui s'impose par les exigences générales de la civilisation constitue pour ce qui concerne l'Italie un intérêt vital de tout premier ordre en raison de la faible distance qui sépare ces contrées des côtes italiennes. Malgré l'attitude tenue par le Gouvernement italien qui a toujours accordé loyalement son appui au Gouvernement impérial dans différentes questions politiques de ces derniers temps, malgré la modération et la patience dont le Gouvernement italien a fait preuve jusqu'ici, non seulement ses vues au sujet de la Tripolitaine ont été méconnues par le Gouvernement impérial, mais, ce qui plus est, toute entreprise de la part des italiens dans les régions susmentionnées s'est constamment heurtée à l'opposition systématique la plus opiniâtre et la plus injustifiée. Le Gouvernement impérial, qui avait ainsi témoigné jusqu'à présent son hostilité constante envers toute activité légitime italienne en Tripolitaine et Cyrenaique, a tout récemment, par une démarche de la dernière heure, proposé au Gouvernement royal de venir à une entente se déclarant disposé à accorder toute concession économique compatible avec les traités en vigueur ainsi qu'avec la dignité et les intérêts supérieurs de la Turquie. Mais le Gouvernement royal ne se croit plus en mesure à l'heure qu'il est d'entamer de semblables négociations dont l'expérience du passé a démontré l'inutilité et qui, loin de constituer une garantie pour l'avenir, ne sauraient que déterminer une cause permanente de froissements et de conflits. Les informations que le Gouvernement royal reçoit de ses Agents consulaires en Tripolitaine et en Cyrénaïque y représentent la situation comme extrêmement dangereuse à cause de l'agitation qui y règne contre les sujets italiens et qui est provoquée de la façon la plus évidente par des officiers et d'autres organes de l'autorité. Cette agitation constitue un danger imminent non seulement pour

les sujets italiens mais aussi pour les étrangers de toute nationalité qui justement émus et inquiets pour leur sécurité, ont commencé à s'embarquer en quittant sans délai la Tripolitaine. L'arrivée à Tripoli des transports militaires ottomans de l'envoi desquels le Gouvernement royal n'avait pas manqué de faire remarquer préalablement au Gouvernement ottoman les sérieuses conséquences, ne pourra qu'aggraver la situation et impose au Gouvernement royal l'obligation stricte et absolue de parer aux périls qui en résultent.

Le Gouvernement italien se voyant donc désormais forcé de songer à la tutelle de sa dignité et de ses intérêts, a décidé de procéder à l'occupation militaire de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque. Cette solution est la seule à laquelle l'Italie puisse s'arrêter. Le Gouvernement royal s'attend à ce que le Gouvernement impérial veuille donner des ordres en conséquence à fin qu'elle ne rencontre de la part des représentants actuels ottomans aucune opposition et que les mesures qui en seront la conséquence nécessaire puissent s'effectuer sans difficulté. Des accords ultérieurs seraient nécessaires entre les deux Gouvernements pour régler la situation définitive qui en résulterait.

L'Ambassade royal à Constantinople à l'ordre de demander une réponse péremptoire à ce sujet de la part du Gouvernement ottoman dans un délai de vingt-quatre heures de la présentation à la Sublime Porte du présent document. A défaut de quoi le Gouvernement italien se verra dans la nécessité de procéder à la réalisation immédiate des mesures destinées à assurer l'occupation.

Therapia, ce 28 septembre 1911.

## 2

**Risposta della Sublime Porta all' « Ultimatum » presentato dal Reggente la Regia Ambasciata in Costantinopoli.**

L'Ambassade Royale connaît les multiples difficultés des circonstances qui n'ont point permis à la Tripolitaine et à la Cyrénaïque de bénéficier, dans la mesure souhaitée, des bienfaits du progrès. Un examen impartial des choses suffit, en effet, à établir que le Gouvernement Constitutionnel ottoman ne saurait être à partir du fait d'une situation qui est l'oeuvre de l'ancien régime.

Cela posé, la Sublime Porte, en récapitulant le cours des trois dernières années, cherche vainement les circonstances dans lesquelles elle se serait montrée hostile aux entreprises italiennes intéressant la Tripolitaine et la Cyrenaïque. Bien au contraire il lui a toujours

paru normal et rationnel que l'Italie coopérât par ses capitaux et son activité industrielle au relèvement économique de cette partie de l'Empire. Le Gouvernement Imperial a conscience d'avoir témoigné des dispositions accueillantes chaque fois qu'il s'est trouvé en présence de propositions conçues dans cet ordre d'idées. Il a, de même, examiné et généralement résolu, dans l'esprit le plus amical, toute réclamation, toute affaire poursuivie par l'Ambassade Royale. Est-il nécessaire d'ajouter qu'il obéissait en cela, à sa volonté, si souvent manifestée, de cultiver et de maintenir des rapports de confiance et d'amitié avec le Gouvernement Italien? Enfin, ce sentiment seul l'inspirait encore, lorsqu'il proposait, en tout dernier lieu, à l'Ambassade Royale, un arrangement basé sur des concessions économiques susceptibles de fournir à l'activité italienne un vaste champ dans les provinces susdites. En assignant pour seule limite de ces concessions la dignité et les intérêts supérieurs de l'Empire, ainsi que les traités en vigueur, le Gouvernement ottoman donnait la mesure de ses sentiments de conciliation, sans cependant perdre de vue les traités et conventions qui l'engagent vis-à-vis des autres puissances et dont la valeur internationale ne saurait déchoir par la volonté d'une partie.

En ce qui concerne l'ordre et la sécurité tant dans la Tripolitaine que dans la Cyrenaïque, le Gouvernement ottoman, bien placé pour apprécier la situation, ne peut que constater, ainsi qu'il a déjà eu l'honneur de le faire, l'absence totale de toute raison pouvant justifier des appréhensions relativement au sort des sujets italiens et des autres étrangers y établis. Non seulement il n'y a pas en ce moment d'agitation dans ces contrées, encore moins de propagande excitatrice, mais les officiers et autres organes de l'autorité ottomane, ont pour mission d'assurer la sauvegarde de l'ordre, mission qu'ils accomplissent en toute conscience.

Quant à l'arrivée à Tripoli de transports militaires ottomans, dont l'Ambassade Royale prend texte pour en inférer des conséquences graves, la Sublime Porte croit faire remarquer qu'il ne s'agit en réalité que d'un seul transport dont l'expédition est antérieure de plusieurs jours à la note du 23 septembre, indépendamment du fait que cette expédition, qui ne comportait, du reste, pas de troupes, n'a pu avoir sur les esprits qu'une influence rassurante.

Réduite à ces termes essentiels le désaccord actuel réside donc dans l'absence de garanties propres à rassurer le Gouvernement italien quant à l'expansion économique de ses intérêts en Tripolitaine et Cyrénaïque.

En ne procédant pas à un acte aussi grave qu'une occupation militaire, le Gouvernement Royal rencontrera la ferme volonté qu'a

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la Sublime Porte d'aplanir ce désaccord. Aussi, le Gouvernement impérial demande-t-il à ce que le Gouvernement Royal veuille lui faire connaître la nature de ces garanties, auxquelles il souscrira volontier, tout autant qu'elles s'effectueront par son intégrité territoriale. Il prend à cet effet l'engagement de ne point modifier en quoi que ce soit, durant les pourparlers, la situation présente de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrenaique, nommément sous le rapport militaire; et il aime à espérer que le Gouvernement Royal se rendant aux dispositions sincères de la Sublime Porte acquiescera à cette proposition.

Constantinople, 29 septembre 1911.

3

**Dichiarazione di guerra presentata dal Reggente la R. Ambasciata  
in Costantinopoli alla Sublime Porta li 29 settembre 1911.**

En exécution des ordres du Gouvernement de S. M. le Roi, son Auguste Souverain, le soussigné, Chargé d'Affaires d'Italie, a l'honneur de signifier à Votre Altesse ce qui suit :

Le délai que le Gouvernement Royal avait accordé dernièrement au Gouvernement Impérial, en vue de la réalisation des mesures devenues nécessaires, vient de s'écouler sans qu'une réponse satisfaisante lui soit parvenue. Le défaut de cette réponse ne fait que confirmer la mauvaise volonté ou l'impuissance dont le Gouvernement et les autorités impériales ont donné déjà des preuves si nombreuses, en ce qui concerne particulièrement la protection des droits et des intérêts italiens dans la Tripolitaine et la Cyrénaïque. Le Gouvernement Royal se voit, par conséquent, obligé de pourvoir directement à la sauvegarde de ces droits et intérêts, ainsi que de la dignité et de l'honneur de l'Etat, par tous les moyens dont il dispose. Les événements qui vont suivre ne sauraient être envisagés autrement que comme la conséquence nécessaire, quoique pénible, de la conduite suivie depuis longtemps par les autorités de l'Empire, vis-à-vis de l'Italie.

Les relations d'amitié et de paix étant de la sorte interrompues entre les deux Pays, l'Italie se considère dès ce moment en état de guerre avec la Turquie. Le soussigné, d'ordre de son Gouvernement a par conséquent l'honneur de faire connaître à Votre Altesse que les passeports seront mis aujourd'hui même à la disposition du Chargé d'Affaires de l'Empire ottoman à Rome et il prie Votre Altesse de vouloir bien lui faire expédier sans délai ses propres passeports.

Le Gouvernement Royal a chargé le soussigné de déclarer, en même temps à Votre Altesse, que les sujets ottomans pourront continuer à résider dans le territoire du Royaume, sans qu'aucune atteinte soit à craindre, concernant leur sécurité personnelle, leurs propriétés et leurs affaires.

DIREZIONE		Si pubblica in Roma tutti i giorni non festivi		AMMINISTRAZIONE	
Via Larga nel Palazzo Baloni				Via Larga nel Palazzo Baloni	
 <b>Gazzetta Ufficiale</b> DEL REGNO D'ITALIA					
Anno 1912		ROMA — Domenica, 25 febbraio		Numero 47 (straordinario)	
<b>ABBONAMENTI</b> Roma, presso l'Amministrazione: anno L. 22; semestre L. 12; trimestre L. 6 " a domicilio e nel Regno: " " 24; " " 12; " " 6 " per gli Stati dell'Unione postale: " " 20; " " 10; " " 5 Per gli altri Stati si aggiungono le tasse postali Il abbonamenti si prendono presso l'Amministrazione e gli Uffici postali; decorrono dal 1° d'ogni mese. n° numero separato in Roma cent. 10 — nel Regno cent. 15 — arretrato in Roma cent. 20 — nel Regno cent. 30 — all'Estero cent. 35 Se il giornale si compone d'oltre 16 pagine, il prezzo aumenta proporzionalmente					
<b>SOMMARIO</b> Parte ufficiale. Leggi e decreti: Legge n. 83 che converte in legge il Regio decreto 5 novembre 1911, n. 1247, col quale la Tripolitania e la Cirenaica sono poste sotto la sovranità piena ed intera del Regno d'Italia — Ministero di grazia e giustizia e dei culti: Disposizioni nel personale dipendente.					
<b>PARTE UFFICIALE</b> <b>LEGGI E DECRETI</b>					
Il numero 83 della raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno contiene la seguente legge:					
<b>VITTORIO EMANUELE III</b> <b>per grazia di Dio e per volontà della Nazione</b> <b>RE D'ITALIA</b>					
Senato e la Camera dei deputati hanno approvato; noi abbiamo sanzionato e promulghiamo quanto segue:					
<b>Articolo unico.</b>					
Il R. decreto 5 novembre 1911, n. 1247, col quale la Tripolitania e la Cirenaica furono poste sotto la sovranità piena ed intera del Regno d'Italia, è convertito in legge.					
Ordiniamo che la presente, munita del sigillo dello Stato, sia inserita nella raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia, mandando a chiunque spetti osservarla e di farla osservare come legge dello Stato.					
Data a Roma, addì 25 febbraio 1912.					
<b>VITTORIO EMANUELE.</b>					
<b>GIOLITTI - DI SAN GIULIANO - FINOCCHIARO-APRILE - FACTA - TEDESCO - SPINGARDI - LEONARDI-CATTOLICA - CREDARO - SACCHI - NITTI - CALISSANO.</b>					
to, Il guardasigilli: FINOCCHIARO-APRILE.					
(R. decreto 5 novembre 1911, n. 1247).					
<b>VITTORIO EMANUELE III</b> <b>per grazia di Dio e per volontà della Nazione</b> <b>Re d'Italia</b>					
Sulla proposta del presidente del Consiglio dei ministri e del ministro degli affari esteri;					
Sentito il Consiglio dei ministri;					
Visto l'art. 5 dello Statuto fondamentale del Regno;					
Abbiamo decretato e decretiamo:					
La Tripolitania e la Cirenaica sono poste sotto la sovranità piena ed intera del Regno d'Italia.					
Una legge determinerà le norme definitive per l'amministrazione di quelle regioni. Finché tale legge non sarà promulgata si provvederà con decreti reali.					
Il presente decreto sarà presentato al Parlamento per essere convertito in legge.					
Ordiniamo che il presente decreto, munito del sigillo dello Stato, sia inserito nella raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia, mandando a chiunque spetti di osservarlo e di farlo osservare.					
Dato a Roma, addì 5 novembre 1911.					
<b>VITTORIO EMANUELE.</b>					
<b>GIOLITTI — DI SAN GIULIANO — FINOCCHIARO-APRILE — FACTA — TEDESCO — SPINGARDI — LEONARDI-CATTOLICA — CREDARO — SACCHI — NITTI — CALISSANO.</b>					
Visto, d'ordine di Sua Maestà:					
Il presidente del Consiglio dei ministri <b>GIOLITTI,</b>					

THE PEACE OF OUCHY (LAUSANNE)

لوزان معاهدة نامہ لری صورتیدر :

Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans et Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, animés par un égal désir de faire cesser l'état de guerre existant entre les deux Pays et en vue de la difficulté d'y parvenir, provenant de l'impossibilité pour l'Italie de déroger à la loi du 25 Février 1912, qui a proclamé sa souveraineté sur la Tripolltaine et sur la Cyrénaïque et pour l'Empire Ottoman de formellement reconnaître cette souveraineté,

ont nommé Leurs Plénipotentiaires :

## SA MAJESTÉ L'EMPEREUR DES OTTOMANS

Son Excellence Mehmed Naby Bey, Grand Cordon de l'Ordre Impérial de l'Osmanié, Envoyé Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipotentiaire de Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans,

Son Excellence Roumbeyoglou Fahreddin Bey, Grand Officier de l'Ordre Impérial du Médjidié, Commandeur de l'Ordre Impérial de l'Osmanié, Envoyé Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipotentiaire de Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans;

## SA MAJESTÉ LE ROI D'ITALIE

Monsieur Pietro Bertolini, Grand-Croix de l'Ordre de la Couronne d'Italie, Grand Officier de l'Ordre des S. S. Maurice et Lazare, Député au Parlement,

Monsieur Guido Fusinato, Grand-Croix de l'Ordre de la Couronne d'Italie, Grand Officier de l'Ordre des S. S. Maurice et Lazare, Député au Parlement, Conseiller d'Etat,

Monsieur Giuseppe Volpi, Commandeur des Ordres des S. S. Maurice et Lazare et de la Couronne d'Italie;

Lesquels après avoir échangé leurs pleins pouvoirs respectifs, trouvés en bonne et due forme, sont convenus du *modus procedendi* secret suivant :

Le Gouvernement Impérial s'engage à ce que dans un délai de trois jours au plus tard un Firman Impérial soit émané adressé aux populations de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque conforme au texte ci-joint. (annexe N° 1.

II.

Le représentant du Sultan et les chefs religieux devront être préalablement agréés par le Gouvernement Royal.

Les appointements du susdit représentant et des Naïbs seront fixés d'accord par les deux Gouvernements et payés sur les recettes locales; ceux du Cadi seront au contraire payés par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Le nombre des susdits chefs religieux ne pourra pas dépasser le nombre de ceux existant au moment de la déclaration de la guerre.

III.

Le Gouvernement Royal s'engage à ce que dans un délai de trois jours au plus tard à dater de la promulgation du Firman Impérial mentionné à l'article I, un Decret Royal soit émané conforme au texte ci-joint. (N° II).

IV.

Le Gouvernement Impérial s'engage à ce que dans un délai de trois jours au plus tard à dater de la promulgation du Firman Impérial mentionné à l'article I, un Iradé Impérial soit émané conforme au texte ci-joint. (annexe N° III).

V.

Immédiatement après la promulgation des trois actes unilatéraux susdits les Plénipotentiaires des deux Hautes Parties contractantes signeront un Traité public conforme au texte ci-joint. (annexe N° IV).



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VI.

Il reste naturellement entendu et consacré par le présent Accord que le Gouvernement Impérial s'engage à ne pas envoyer et à ne pas permettre l'envoi de Turquie en Tripolitaine et Cyrénaïque d'armes, de munitions, de soldats et d'officiers.

VII.

Les dépenses supportées respectivement par les deux Gouvernements pour l'entretien des prisonniers de guerre et des otages seront considérées comme compensées.

VIII.

Les deux Hautes Parties contractantes s'engagent à maintenir secret le présent Accord.

Toutefois les deux Gouvernements se réservent la faculté de rendre public cet Accord au moment de la présentation du Traité public (annexe No IV) aux Parlements respectifs.

Le présent Accord entrera en vigueur le jour même de sa signature.

IX.

Il est bien entendu que les Annexes mentionnés dans le présent Accord en forment partie intégrante.

En foi ds quoi les Plénipotentiaires ont signé le présent Accord et y ont apposé leurs cachets.

Fait à Lausanne, en deux exemplaires, le 15 Octobre 1912.

MEHMMED NABY

ROUMBEOGLOU FAHREDDIN

PIETRO BERLOLINI

GUIDO FUSINATO

GIUSEPPE VOLPI.

**Annexe No I**

Aux habitants de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque.

Mon Gouvernement, se trouvant d'une part dans l'impossibilité de vous donner les secours efficaces qui vous sont nécessaires pour défendre votre pays, soucieux d'autre part de votre bonheur présent et avenir; voulant éviter la continuation d'une guerre désastreuse pour vous et vos familles et dangereuse pour Notre Empire; afin de faire renaître dans votre pays la paix et la prospérité; Me prévalant de Mes droits souverains Je vous concède une pleine et entière autonomie. Votre pays sera régi par des nouvelles lois et des règlements spéciaux, à la préparation desquels vous apporterez la contribution de vos conseils afin qu'ils correspondent à vos besoins et à vos coutumes.

Je nomme auprès de vous comme Mon représentant Mon fidèle serviteur Chemseddin Bey avec le titre de Naïb-ul-Sultan que Je charge de la protection des intérêts ottomans dans votre pays. Le mandat que Je lui confère, a une durée de cinq ans; passé ce délai, Je me réserve de renouveler son mandat ou bien de pourvoir à sa succession.

Notre intention étant que les dispositions de la loi sacrée du Chéri restent constamment en vigueur, Nous Nous réservons dans ce but la nomination du Cadi, qui à son tour nommera les Naïbs parmi les ulémas locaux, conformément aux prescriptions du Chéri. Les émoluments de ce cadi seront payés par Nous et ceux du Naïb-ul-Sultan aussi bien que ceux des autres fonctionnaires du Chéri seront prélevés sur les recettes locales.

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**Annexe No II**

Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie.

Vu la loi du 25 Février 1912 No 83, par laquelle la Tripolitaine et la Cyrénaïque ont été soumises à la souveraineté pleine et entière du Royaume d'Italie;

Dans le but de hâter la pacification des susdits Provinces:

Sur la proposition du Conseil des Ministres;

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Nous avons décrété et décrétons:

*Art. 1.* — Pleine et entière amnistie est accordée aux habitants de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque, qui aient pris part aux hostilités ou qui se seraient compromis en leur occasion, sauf les crimes de droit commun. En conséquence aucun individu de quelque classe ou condition qu'il, ne pourra être poursuivi ou troublé dans sa personne ou ses biens ou dans l'exercice de ses droits en raison de ses actes politiques ou militaire ou bien des opinions qu'il aurait exprimées pendant les hostilités. Les personnes détenues et déportées de ce fait seront immédiatement remises en liberté.

*Art. 2.* — Les habitants de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque continueront à jouir comme par le passé de la plus grande liberté dans la pratique du culte musulman. Le nom de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, comme Kalife, continuera à être prononcé dans les prières publiques des Musulmans, et Son représentant est reconnu en la personne nommée par Elle; ses appointements seront prélevés sur les recettes locales.

Les droits des fondations pieuses (Vakoufs) seront respectés comme par le passé et aucune entrave ne sera apportée aux relations des Musulmans avec le chef religieux appelé Cadi, qui sera nommé par le Chəik-ul-Islamat et avec les Naïbs nommés par lui-même et dont les appointements seront prélevés sur les recettes locales.

*Art. 3.* — Le susdit représentant est aussi reconnu à l'effet de la protection des intérêts de l'Empire Ottoman et des sujets ottomans, tels qu'ils subsistent dans les deux Provinces après la loi du 25 Février 1912 N<sup>o</sup> 83.

*Art. 4.* — Une Commission, nommée par Décret Royal et dont feront part aussi des notables indigènes, devra proposer les règlements civils et administratifs pour les deux Provinces, en s'inspirant des principes de la liberté et du respect des usages et des coutumes locaux.

**Annexe No 3.**

Il sera procédé à des réformes administratives et judiciaires afin d'assurer aux habitants des Iles de la Mer Egée sujettes à la souveraineté ottomane, la distribution égale de la justice, la sécurité et le bien être sans distinction de culte et de religion.

Les fonctionnaires et les juges seront nommés parmi les personnes notoires connaissant la langue locale et ayant la capacité voulue.

Pleine et entière amnistie est accordée aux susdits habitants qui aient pris part aux hostilités ou qui se seraient compromis en leur occasion, sauf les crimes de droit commun. En conséquence, aucun individu de quelque classe ou condition qu'il soit, ne pourra être poursuivi ou troublé dans sa personne ou ses biens ou dans l'exercice de ses droits en raison de ses actes politiques ou militaires ou bien des opinions qu'il aurait exprimées pendant les hostilités. Les personnes détenues et déportées de ce fait seront immédiatement remises en liberté.

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**Annexe No 4.**

Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans et Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, animés par un égal désir de faire cesser l'état de guerre existant entre les deux pays, ont nommé Leurs Plénipotentiaires:

(Voir le préambule du présent accord) lesquels, après avoir échangé leurs pleins pouvoirs respectifs et les avoir trouvés en bonne et due forme, sont convenus des articles suivants:

*Art. 1.* — Les deux Gouvernements s'engagent à donner immédiatement après la signature du présent Traité, les dispositions nécessaires pour la cessation immédiate et simultanée contemporaine des hostilités. Des commissaires spéciaux seront envoyés sur les lieux pour assurer l'exécution des susdites dispositions.

*Art. 2.* — Les deux Gouvernements s'engagent à donner immédiatement après la signature du présent Traité l'ordre de

rappel de leurs officiers, de leurs troupes, ainsi que de leurs fonctionnaires civils, respectivement le Gouvernement Ottoman de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque et le Gouvernement Italien des Iles qu'il a occupées dans la Mer Egée.

L'effective évacuation des Iles susdites par les officiers, les troupes et les fonctionnaires civils italiens aura lieu immédiatement après que la Tripolitaine et la Cyrénaïque auront été évacuées par les officiers, les troupes et les fonctionnaires civils ottomans.

*Art. 3.* — Les prisonniers de guerre et les otages seront échangés dans le plus bref délai possible.

*Art. 4.* — Les deux Gouvernements s'engage et à accorder pleine et entière amnistie, le Gouvernement Impérial aux habitants des îles de la Mer Egée, sujettes à la souveraineté ottomane, le Gouvernement Royal aux habitants de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque, qui aient pris part aux hostilités ou qui se seraient compromis en leur occasion, sauf les crimes de droit commun. En conséquence aucun individu de quelque classe ou condition qu'il soit, ne pourra être poursuivi ou troublé dans sa personne ou ses biens ou dans l'exercice de ses droits en raison de ses actes politiques ou militaires ou bien des opinions qu'il aurait exprimées pendant les hostilités. Les personnes détenues et déportées de ce fait seront immédiatement remises en liberté.

*Art. 5.* — Tous les traités, conventions et engagements de tout genre, espèce et nature, conclus ou en vigueur entre les deux Hautes Parties contractantes antérieurement à la déclaration de la guerre, seront remis immédiatement en vigueur et les deux Gouvernements seront placés l'un vis-à-vis de l'autre, ainsi que les sujets respectifs, dans la situation identique dans laquelle ils se trouvaient avant les hostilités.

*Art. 6.* — L'Italie s'engage à conclure avec la Turquie, en même temps qu'elle renouvellera ses traités de commerce avec

les autres Puissances, un traité de commerce sur la base du droit public européen' c'est-à-dire qu'elle consent à laisser à la Turquie toute son indépendance économique et le droit d'agir en matière commerciale et douanière à l'instar de toutes les Puissances européennes et sans être liée par les capitulations et d'autres actes à ce jour. Il est bien entendu que le dit traité de commerce ne sera mis en vigueur qu'en tant que seront mis en vigueur les traités de commerce conclus par la Sublime Porte avec les autres Puissances sur la même base.

En outre, l'Italie consent à l'élévation de 11 % à 15 % des droits de douane *ad valorem* en Turquie, ainsi qu'à l'établissement de nouveaux monopoles ou au prélèvement de surtaxes de consommation sur les cinq articles suivants: pétrole, papier à cigarettes, allumettes, alcool, cartes à jouer. Tout cela à la condition qu'un même traitement soit appliqué simultanément et sans distinction aux importations des autres pays.

En tant qu'il s'agit de l'importation d'article faisant l'objet d'un monopole, l'administration de ces monopoles est tenue de se fournir d'articles de provenance italienne suivant le pourcentage établi sur la base de l'importation annuelle de ces mêmes articles, pourvu que le prix à offrir pour la livraison des articles de monopole se conforment à la situation du marché au moment de l'achat tout en prenant en considération les qualités des marchandises à fournir et la moyenne des prix, qui ont été notés dans les trois années précédentes à celle de la déclaration de la guerre pour les dites qualités.

Il est en outre entendu que, si la Turquie, au lieu d'établir des nouveaux monopoles sur les cinq articles susmentionnés, se décidait à les frapper de surtaxes de consommation, ces surtaxes seraient imposées dans la même mesure aux produits similaires de la Turquie et de toute autre Nation.

*Art. 7.* — Le Gouvernement Italien s'engage à supprimer les bureaux de poste italiens fonctionnant dans l'Empire Ottoman

en même temps que les autres États ayant les bureaux de poste en Turquie supprimeront les leurs.

*Art. 8.* — La Sublime Porte, se proposant d'ouvrir, en conférence européenne ou autrement avec les Grandes Puissances intéressées, des négociations en vue de faire cesser le régime capitulaire en Turquie, en le remplaçant par le régime du droit international, l'Italie en reconnaissant le bien fondé de ces intentions de la Sublime Porte, déclare dès maintenant vouloir lui prêter à cet effet son plein et sincère appui.

*Art. 9.* — Le Gouvernement Ottoman, voulant témoigner de sa satisfaction pour les bons et loyaux services qui lui ont été rendus par les sujets italiens employés dans ses administrations et qu'il s'était vu forcé de congédier lors des hostilités, se déclare prêt à les rétablir dans la situation qu'ils avaient quittée.

Un traitement de disponibilité leur sera payé pour les mois passés hors d'emploi et cette interruption de service ne portera aucun préjudice à ceux parmi ces employés, qui auraient droit à une pension de retraite.

En outre, le Gouvernement Ottoman s'engage à user de ses bons offices auprès des institutions avec lesquelles il est en rapport (Dette Publique, Sociétés de Chemin de fer, Banques etc.) pour qu'il en soit agi de même envers les sujets Italiens qui étaient à leur service et qui se trouvent dans des conditions analogues.

*Art. 10.* — Le Gouvernement Italien s'engage à verser annuellement à la caisse de la Dette Publique Ottomane pour compte du Gouvernement Impérial, une somme correspondante à la moyenne des sommes, qui dans chacune des trois années précédentes à celle de la déclaration de la guerre, ont été affectées au service de la Dette Publique sur les recettes des deux Provinces. Le montant de la susdite annuité sera déterminé d'accord par deux Commissaires, nommés l'un par le Gouvernement Im-

périal l'autre par le Gouvernement Royal. En cas de désaccord, la décision sera remise à un collège arbitral composé par les susdits Commissaire et par un surarbitre nommé d'accord entre les deux Parties. Si l'accord ne s'établit pas à ce sujet, chaque Partie désignera une Puissance différente et le choix du surarbitre sera fait de concert par les Puissances ainsi désignées.

Le Gouvernement Royal ainsi que l'Administration de la Dette Publique Ottomane, par l'entremise du Gouvernement Impérial, auront la faculté de demander la substitution de l'annuité susdite par le paiement de la somme correspondante capitalisée au taux de 4 o/o.

Pour ce qui réfère au précédent alinéa, le Gouvernement Royal déclare reconnaître dès à présent que l'annuité ne peut être inférieure à la somme de Lire italienne deux millions et qu'il est disposé à verser à l'Administration de la Dette Publique la somme capitalisée correspondante, aussitôt, que demande en sera faite.

Art. 11. — Le Présent Traité entrera en vigueur le jour même de sa signature.

En foi de quoi les Plénipotentiaires ont signé le présent Traité et y ont apposé leurs cachets.

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Les soussignés Délégués plénipotentiaires déclarent que les quatre annexes ci-dessus forment partie intégrante du présent Accord préliminaire secret en conformité de l'article IX du même accord.—

Lausanne, le 15 Octobre 1912

MEHMED NABY

ROUMBEOGLOU FAHREDDINE

PIERRE BERTOLINI

GUIDO FUSINATO

GIUSEPPE VOLPI



درد : ۲۰ طرفین عرب و بنغازی اہالیستک تابعیتی مسئلہ سنہ .  
 متعلق ضبطنامہ صورتیدر .

COPIE.

Procès Verbal de la Séance du 15 Octobre 1912.

Après une discussion dans laquelle on a examiné les dernières objections soulevées par les Délégués Ottomans d'après les instructions de leur Gouvernement, les Délégués italiens ont répété la déclaration qu'ils étaient chargés de faire par leur Gouvernement, c'est-à-dire qu'ils insistent d'une manière absolue sur l'acceptation intégrale du texte de l'accord préliminaire qui a été communiqué avec la déclaration du 2 Octobre sauf les modifications déjà convenues.

Ce nonobstant les Délégués Ottomans ont réitéré leur insistances spécialement sur les points suivants :

I. — La suppression de l'introduction du Firman dans le texte communiqué dans une des séances précédentes par les Délégués Ottomans.

Les Délégués Italiens ont nettement refusés cette suppression puisqu'ils considèrent ce texte comme définitivement acquis ayant été officiellement présenté comme le texte approuvé par le Gouvernement Impérial. Toutefois les Délégués Italiens consentent à en retrancher deux phrases qui n'ont aucune référence aux habitants de la Tripolitaine et de la Cyrénaïque.

II. — La suppression dans le texte du Décret Royal de la citation de la loi italienne du 25 Février 1912.

Les Délégués Italiens s'y refusent de la manière la plus catégorique, tout en faisant observer aux Délégués Ottomans que tout l'accord est basé sur ce que, comme son préambule énonce, la Turquie ne peut pas reconnaître la Souveraineté Italienne sur la Tripolitaine et la Cyrénaïque, et d'autre part, l'Italie ne peut déroger d'aucune manière à la loi par laquelle elle a proclamé sa

souveraineté sur ces deux provinces. Et c'est pour ce la que le Décret Royal comme le Firman sont des actes unilatéraux formellement ignorés respectivement par les deux Gouvernements; et c'est pour ce la que les Délégués Italiens n'ont soulevé de leur part aucune objection à ce que le Firman contienne la déclaration qui est émanée de Sa majesté Impériale dans l'exercice de sa souveraineté.

III. — Inclusion dans l'accord préliminaire de l'engagement de la part du Gouvernement Italien de ne pas exercer sa protection diplomatique vis-à-vis du Gouvernement Impérial à l'égard des originaires des deux Provinces qui se rendraient sur le territoire de l'Empire Ottoman.

Les Délégués Italiens, d'après les instructions formelles de leur Gouvernement, se trouvent dans la nécessité de ne pas pouvoir adhérer à cette demande, parce que ça impliquerait une formelle méconnaissance de la Souveraineté Italienne. Cependant les Délégués italiens se proposent dans leur prochaine entrevue, avec Monsieur le Président du Conseil, de lui soumettre l'opportunité que des instructions soient données aux Agents diplomatiques et consulaires royaux en Turquie dans le but d'éviter toute difficulté à ce sujet entre les deux Gouvernements et que les instructions soient portées à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial.

IV. — L'élévation à deux millions et demie du minimum de l'annuité à verser à la caisse de la Dette Publique Ottomane.

Les Délégués Italiens ont opposée au chiffre présenté à cet égard par les Délégués ottomans, ce dont le Gouvernement Royal est en possession d'après les informations qui lui sont parvenues

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notamment par l'entremise de l'Administration de la Dette Publique Ottomane et repoussent la susdite élévation; car l'admission d'un minimum de deux millions à été faite avec le plus large critérium.

V. — Les Délégués Ottomans renouvellent la demande que dans l'article 2 du Traité public on déclare que les officiers turcs, qui voudraient rester en Tripolitaine devront être considérés comme démissionnaires.

Les Délégués Italiens répètent qu'une telle disposition permettraient de considérer le rappel des officiers et des troupes ottomanes comme n'étant pas sérieusement stipulé. D'autre part, le Gouvernement Royal appréciera avec toute équité la bonne volonté que le Gouvernement Impérial mettra dans l'exécution sincère de ses engagements à ce sujet.

VI. — Inclusion dans le Traité public d'un article concernant le respect du culte musulman et la reconnaissance des chefs religieux.

Les Délégués italiens font observer au contraire que tout cela sera formellement arrêté dans le Décret Royal qui représente un engagement solennel de l'Italie vis-à-vis non seulement des indigènes arabes mais du monde entier et que d'autre part le plus grand respect des croyances religieuses correspond aux intérêts mêmes de l'Italie et forme partie de ses traditions.

Lausanne, le 15 Octobre 1912

Suivent les signatures

Les Délégués Ottomans demandent que dans le premier alinéa de l'article 6 du Traité public à la phrase; " en même temps qu'elle renouvellera ses traités de commerce " on substitue la phrase de l'article 6 du Protocole concernant la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine dans un délai de deux ans à compter de la date de la ratification du présent Protocole . "

Les Délégués Italiens déclarent ne pas pouvoir accepter cette modification car tous les traités de commerce actuellement en vigueur entre l'Italie et les autres Puissances seront échués en 1917 et que par conséquent le Gouvernement italien a depuis longtemps décidé de ne pas procéder à la conclusion d'aucun traité de commerce avant que le Parlement ait arrêté le tarif général sur la base duquel on devra procéder au renouvellement des traités de commerce avec toutes les Puissances; partant le traité de commerce avec la Turquie dans les conditions prévues à l'article 6 pourra éventuellement être conclu en même temps que seront conclus les autres traités de commerce et c'est dans ce but qu'on a omis de fixer une date quelconque. —

suivent les signatures.



اهالی محلیہ نیک امور شرعیہ لہ نہ متعلق ضبطنامہ ضورتیدر ۳ ذیل:

Procès Verbal de la séance du 18 Octobre 1912.

Les Plénipotentiaires ottomans portent à la connaissance des Plénipotentiaires italiens d'avoir reçu, ce matin, de la part de leur Gouvernement, des instructions précises d'insister pour l'inclusion dans le Traité public d'une disposition concernant la reconnaissance de la juridiction du Chéri à l'égard du statut personnel des indigènes et pour la suppression de l'Art. 9, en substituant un échange de lettres entre les Plénipotentiaires.

Les plénipotentiaires italiens répondent en voie préjudicielle qu'ils regrettent de ne pas pouvoir admettre aucune discussion sur les stipulations du Traité public qui forme partie de l'accord préliminaire déjà signé et devenu partant irrévocable.

Ils faut en outre observer que les deux demandes avaient été déjà présentées par les Plénipotentiaires ottomans et n'avaient pas été accueillies par les Plénipotentiaires italiens. Ils répètent du reste pour ce qui a trait à la première demande que le respect de la loi Sacrée du Chéri se trouve admis par le Décret Royal qui reconnaît le Cadi et ses Naïbs et qui dispose que les règlements civils et administratifs à édicter dans les deux Provinces devront s'inspirer des usages et des coutumes locaux.

Pour ce qui se réfère à la seconde demande, les Plénipotentiaires italiens répètent que le Gouvernement Ottoman par la disposition de l'Art. 9 déclare spontanément de vouloir réintégrer dans leurs emplois les fonctionnaires de nationalité italienne qu'il avait dû congédier non à cause de fautes personnelles mais à cause de la guerre, c'est-à-dire, d'un fait absolument indépendant de la conduite de ces fonctionnaires, de la sorte que leur situation sera tout à fait la même qu'avant la déclaration de la guerre, laissant au Gt. Ottoman, après leur réintégration d'user envers eux de la même autorité qu'avant la guerre.

Suivent les signatures.

## NOTES

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- <sup>5)</sup> Ibid. p.136
- <sup>6)</sup> Piri Reis, *Kitabı Bahriye*, (ed.Yavuz Senemoğlu) , İstanbul, 1001 Temel Eser no.19, vol.II, p.195
- <sup>7)</sup> Braudel, op.cit., vol.I, p.755
- <sup>8)</sup> Rossi,Ettore – Orhunlu, Cengiz, , article "Trablus", *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, İstanbul, 1939
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- <sup>15)</sup> Saunders, op.cit., p.115
- <sup>16)</sup> Braudel, op.cit., vol.II, p.860
- <sup>17)</sup> Ibid., vol.II, p.862
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- <sup>20)</sup> Stripling, G.W.F., "The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs", *The Muslim World on the Eve of Europe's Expansion*, Illinois Studies in the Social Science, p.50
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- <sup>23)</sup> Lewis, Bernard, *The Middle East and the West*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968, p.27
- <sup>24)</sup> Hicham Djait, *L'Europe et l'Islam*, Paris, col.Esprit/Seuil, 1974, p.24
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<sup>29)</sup> Piri Reis, *Kitabi Bahriye* (ed. Senemoğlu), op.cit., vol.II, p.193  
<sup>30)</sup> Ibid., p.195  
<sup>31)</sup> Braudel, op.cit., vol.II., p.27  
<sup>32)</sup> Monlaü, Jean, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1964, pp.107-108  
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<sup>34)</sup> Herder editrice, Roma 2004, pp.139-140
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<sup>38)</sup> Braudel, op.cit., vol.I, p.362  
<sup>39)</sup> Aziz Samih, op.cit., p.235  
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<sup>42)</sup> Monlaü, op.cit., p.100  
<sup>43)</sup> The word *kul* is translated by some orientalists as 'slave' which is absolutely wrong. They are completely free persons.  
<sup>44)</sup> Report of Nazif Pasha dated 13.June.1881, from Aziz Samih, op.cit.  
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- <sup>78</sup>) De Bourboulon to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, letter of 5.January.1841, Archives of French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Correspondance Commerciale de Tripoli de Barbarie*, tome 39
- <sup>79</sup>) Ibid., letter of 19.6.1841
- <sup>80</sup>) Ibid., letter dated 20.9.1841; on the same subject: N.Serrès, *La Politique en Afrique du Nord sous la Monarchie de Juillet*, 1925, p.266; *Cor. Commerciale de Tripoli*, tome 39, letter of 2.12.1841; ibid., letter of 24.4.1842; Boho, Salvatore, *Documentazione sulla Libia nell'Archivio del Ministero degli Esteri a Bruxelles (1850 Africa,- 1950)*, Anno 38/3, sept 1983, p.419



- <sup>81)</sup> Articles are from the Cdr. Commerciale Tripoli, tome 39, in folios 53-74
- <sup>82)</sup> Ibid., 15.3.1843, no.195
- <sup>83)</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>84)</sup> Ibid., 5.12.1841, no.163
- <sup>85)</sup> Ibid., 30.7.1842, no.179
- <sup>86)</sup> Ibid., 16.7.1843, no.6
- <sup>87)</sup> FO/524-4, letter of 8.2.1843; also FO/524-7 and 195/376
- <sup>88)</sup> Martel, A., *Les Confins Saharo-Tripolitaine de la Tunisie 1811-1911*, Paris, PUF 1965, vol.I, p.101
- <sup>89)</sup> Muhammad Ahmad al Tuwayr, "Thawra al Sheikh Ghuma fi Ayalat Trablous al Gharb 1835-1858", Majister 1981, Djamia al Fateh, later published in book form as *Mukawama al Sheikh Ghuma*, Markaz al Jihad, Tripoli 1988, vol II., p.396
- <sup>90)</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>91)</sup> Al Madani, "Abdal al Muqawama al Jazairiya: Hamdan Othman Khodja, Ahmar Bey Kosantine, Al Amir Abdal Qadir wa Dawlat al Othmaniya", *Majalla Tarikh al Jazair*, 1977, pp.31-134
- <sup>92)</sup> Sources for this chapter: Mohamad-Hadi Hashmi, *Les Effets des Reformes Ottomanes et le Role des Elites en Libye*, doctorat thesis presented to University Sorbonne Paris IV, 1987; Tuati el-Kilani, "Il. Abdülhamid Döneminde Trablusgarb Vilayeti ve Mehmed Kamil Paşa Layihası", *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildirileri*, vol.IV. 1994, pp.1569-1577; Cicero, Paolo, *L'Amministrazione del Municipale de Tripoli*, Tripoli 1916; Muhammad Amhamed al Tawir, "Wathika Tarikhiyya an istiratajiyya al taalim bi edjai al Dawla al Othmaniyya 1872", *Majalla al Wathaik wal Mahtutat*, 1990, pp.305-308; Anderson, Lisa, "Ara'i Gharbiyya fi islakh Othman: Libya fi awakhir al tasi ashar", *Majalla al Buhuth al Tarikhiyya*, June 1985, pp. 111-123; Abd al Karim abou Shwareb, "Mushahadati hawl al tib al shaabi fi Fezzan, Terjumata wa takdim al mushahadat tabib Turki", *Majalla al Buhuth al Tarikhiyya*, July 1979, pp.37-50; Abdulhakim Hikmet, *Al Tib al Shaabi fi Libya*, (trans. Abd al Karim abou Shwareb), Trablous, Markaz Jihad, 1989; Toledano, Ehud R., *Osmanlı Köle Ticareti 1840-1890*, (Trans. By Hakan Erdem), Tarih Vakfı Yurt yay., İstanbul, 1994)
- <sup>93)</sup> *Al Afkar*, year 4, no. 27, January 1960
- <sup>94)</sup> This chapter is the summary of Orhan Koloğlu's *Osmanlı Meclislerinde Libya ve Libyalılar* (Libya and Libyans in the Ottoman Parliaments), İstanbul, Boyut yay., 2003
- <sup>95)</sup> Concerning the subject of hinterland see *Documents Diplomatiques Afrique – Arrangements, Actes et Conventions Concernant le Nord, l'Ouest et le Centre de l'Afrique 1891-1898*, Paris, 1898, p.93
- <sup>96)</sup> Zakari Dramani-Issifou, *L'Afrique Noire dans les Relations Internationales au XVe Siècle*, Paris, E.Khartala, 1982, pp.116-118
- <sup>97)</sup> For more information on the origin of Sanussiyya see *Islam Ansiklopedisi* (articles on 'Senusi' and 'Tarikat'); Şehbenderzade Ahmed Hilmi, *Asrı Hamidide Alemi İslam ve Senusiler*, İstanbul 1325; André Salifou, "Kaoussan ou la Revolte Senoussiste", *Etudes Nigériennes*, no.33 (1973); Enrico de Leone, *Riformatori Musulmani del XIX Secolo nell'Africa e nell'Asia Mediterranea*, Milano, 1973; O.Depont – X.Coppolani, *Les Confréries Religieuses Musulmanes*, Alger 1897; Carlo Arrivabene, *Rapporto...*, Italian Foreign Ministry Archives, Serie Pol. P. Libia; Robert Mantran, *La Libye des Origines*

à 1912 ; Evans Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cirenaica* , Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964 ; Salahaddin al Suri, « Al Aouda al Qabiliyya fi Sharki Libia fi Uhd al Othmani al thani », *Majalla al Buhuth al Tarikhiyya*, January 1984, pp.19-28 ; Kadir Özköse, *Muhammed Senusi*, İstanbul, İnsan yay., 2000

<sup>98)</sup> Vikor, Knut S., "The Maliki School: Muhammad b. Ali al-Sanussi's views on the Madhab", *Journal of Libyan Studies*, vol.I, no.1, Summer 2000, pp.5-17

<sup>99)</sup> Moreau, Odile, "Quelques aperçus sur l'évolution des relations entre la Sanussiyya et l'Empire Ottoman", *L'Europe et la Méditerranée, Actes du colloque Septembre 1997*, Paris, ed. L'Harmattan, pp.291-302

<sup>100)</sup> Çaycı, Abdurrahman, *Büyük Sahra'da Türk-Fransız Rekabeti 1885-1911*, Erzurum, Atatürk Üniversitesi yay., 1970, pp.15-16

<sup>101)</sup> No. 144 of 24.4.1890 and 149 of 1.5.1890

<sup>102)</sup> The approach of Sultan Abdulhamid II to the Panislam is elaborated in detail in Orhan Koloğlu, *Abdülhamid Gerçeği* , İstanbul, Gür yay., 1987; Orhan Koloğlu, "Dünya Siyaseti ve İslam Birliği", *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 83, November 1990, pp.12-17

<sup>103)</sup> Çaycı, Abdurrahman, op.cit., pp.194-195

<sup>104)</sup> Many articles in the Italian press and reports of diplomats in the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses this view. On Ottoman defence provisions see E.Akarlı's communication on "Ottoman efforts to make Libya self-sufficient against an Italian attack 1882-1908" to the *Conference on Libyan Resistance and Turkish Officers*, at the Jihad Center, Tripoli, on 21-23 November 1981

<sup>105)</sup> Koloğlu, Orhan, *Abdülhamit gerçeği*, op.cit., and *Avrupa'nın Kıskaçında Abdülhamit*, İstanbul, İletişim yay., 1998

<sup>106)</sup> Deringil, Selim, "The Ottoman Response to the Egyptian Crisis of 1881-1882", presented to the conference; E.Akarlı, article cited; BBA, YıldızEvrakı ks.1 no. No.156/35, zarf no.156, cited by Mehmet Hocaoğlu, *Abdulhamit Han'ın Muhtıraları*, İstanbul 1989, pp.210-218

<sup>107)</sup> Sadık al Moayyad, *Afrika Sahrayı Kebirinde Seyahat*, İstanbul 1314; Al Moayyad's reports to the sultan : YEE, Kısım 14/Evrak no. 451/zarf 126/9; serialized in *Serveti Fünun*, from no.354 (23.12.1897) to no.384

<sup>108)</sup> Bell, K.D., *Handbook on Cyrenaica*, (no date), pp.5-6

<sup>109)</sup> Hocaoğlu, Mehmet, op.cit., pp.210-218

<sup>110)</sup> Karasapan, op.cit., p. 176

<sup>111)</sup> Bruce-Lockhart, Jamie, "İmpressions of Fezzan in 1822: The Borno Mission Diaries of Lieutenant Hugh Clapperton", *Journal of Libyan Studies*, no.1, summer 2000, pp.61-78

<sup>112)</sup> Martel, André, op.cit., p.51

<sup>113)</sup> Çaycı, Abdurrahman, op.cit., pp.57-58

<sup>114)</sup> Kavas, Ahmet, "Büyük Sahra'da Gat Kazasının Kurulması ve Osmanlı Tevarik Münasebetleri", *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no.3, 1999, pp.171-196

<sup>115)</sup> Mohamed el-Wafi, *Charles Féraud et la Libye*, Tripoli, Dar al-Farjani, 1977, thi research transmit the efforts of this consul between 1876-1884

<sup>116)</sup> Field Jr., James A., *America and the Mediterranean World 1772-1782*, Princeton University Press, 1969, pp.338-341

<sup>117)</sup> Published by: "libraire-editeur Charles Douniol"

<sup>118</sup>) Shaw, Stanford-Ezel Kural, op.cit., vol II, p.115; Karpas, Kemal, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, p.62

<sup>119</sup>) Quai d'Orsay, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Turquie*, tome 118, no.12, fol. 160-161

<sup>120</sup>) Channebot, A., *Politique Méditerranéenne*, Paris, 1880, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p.vi

<sup>121</sup>) Gregory, J.W., *Report on the Work of the Commission sent out by the Jewish Territorial Organization*, London, 1909

<sup>122</sup>) *DDI = I Documenti diplomatici Italiani, Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, 2. Serie, vol7, doc.109, dated 18.May.1876

<sup>123</sup>) *DDI*, 2. serie, vol.8, doc.84, 95, 186 (all of 1877)

<sup>124</sup>) *DDI*, 2. Serie, vol.10, doc. 371 and 483 (both of 1878)

<sup>125</sup>) This judgement has been reached after our research in the Austrian Staat and Hof Archiv, not yet published.

<sup>126</sup>) Çaycı, Abdurrahman, *La Question Tunisienne et la Politique Ottomane 1881-1913*, Erzurum, Atatürk Üniversitesi yay., 1963, the book deals in detail with the Italian policy on Tunisia

<sup>127</sup>) Collegio di Scienza Politiche e Coloniali, *La Libia negli Atti del Parlamento e ne i Provvedimento del Governo*, Parte Prima 1881-1891, Miland 1912. Most of the statements in the parliament transmitted in this text are taken from this source.(AP)

<sup>128</sup>) Harp Tarihi yay., Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanlı Devri, *Osmanlı-İtalyan Harbi 1911-1912*, Ankara, 1981; Akarlı, Engin, paper presented note 104

<sup>129</sup>) Başbakanlık Arşivi, *Yıldız Evrakı, Y.A.-Res.*, 2719, 27/25, 27/29, 28/2, 28/5, 29/34; Mazzucco, Ridolfo, *Storia della Conquista dell'Africa*, Milano-Varese, Istituter per gli Studi Pol. Inter., 1938; In the Yıldız documents there are many memoranda concerning Italian colonialist policy, e.g. Yıldız evr. Ks.1 no.156/35, zarf no.156, Ks.8 no.2625 zarf no.77, etc.

<sup>130</sup>) *DDI*, 2.serie vol.21, doc: 13, 63, 64, 71 (Year 1887)

<sup>131</sup>) Çaycı, *Büyük Saharada...*, pp. 84-87 and 194-195; Rossi, Ettore, "Per la Storia della Penetrazione Turca nell'Interno della Libia" *Oriente Moderno*, anno 9, no.4 (Aprile 1929), pp.153-167; *DDI*, serie pol.P. Libia, pac.2 pos1, report by L.di Collabiano to the ministry, from Istanbul the 11.4.1894

<sup>132</sup>) *DDI*, serie Pol.P.Libia, pac.1. pos.1 and pac 2., pos1

<sup>133</sup>) Deringil, Selim, "The concept of Legality in the foreign policy of Abdulhamid II", Conference at IRCICA, Istanbul 1992

<sup>134</sup>) For the formation of alliances in Europe see: Hurewitz, J.C., *Diplomacy in the Middle East*, Princeton University Press, 1956, 2 vols.; Albertini, Luigi, *The Origin of the War of 1914*, (trns.) 3 vols., Oxford University Press, 1952-1957; Bosworth, "Italy the least of the great powers" in *Italian Foreign Policy Before the First World War*, Cambridge University Press, 1979

<sup>135</sup>) *DDI*, 3 serie, vol.6, doc.226, letter to the ministry from the ambassador to London, 11.April.1899.

<sup>136</sup>) For the details and text of the agreement see J.C.Hurewitz's *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics (European Expansion)*, London, Yale University Press, 1975, vol.1, pp.477-482

<sup>137</sup>) *DDI*, 3. Serie, vol.VI contains many documents on the subject

<sup>138</sup>) *DDI*, 3. Serie, vol. 6 for Germany: doc.18; for Britain: doc.133, 223, 234; for Austria: doc.617

<sup>139</sup>) *DDI*, 3. Serie, vol.6, doc. 113, dated 1.February.1902; the real content of the agreement was not unknown to the Sublime Porte; in his letters of 22 and 24 January 1902, the Ottoman ambassador to Berlin informed Istanbul that "it

is an agreement which has no immediate effect and is aimed for the future”  
(Hariciye Arşivi, 518)

<sup>140)</sup> 29.January 1902

<sup>141)</sup> *DDI*, 3. Serie, vol. 6, letters of 26 and 29 January 1902

<sup>142)</sup> *DDI*, *ibid.*, doc. 105 of 30.January 1902

<sup>143)</sup> *DDI*, *ibid.*, doc. 243

<sup>144)</sup> See footnote 129

<sup>145)</sup> Başbakanlık Arşivi, BEO no.152.306 and 155.742 (years 1900 and 1903, BEO no. 242.268 (1908)

<sup>146)</sup> Bevione, G., *Come Siamo Andati a Tripoli, Torino 1912, p.122*

<sup>147)</sup> Grange, Daniel J., “Diplomatie, Finance et Nationalisme: Les Entreprises Minières du Banco di Roma en Tripolitaine 1908-1911”, *Extrait des Melanges de l’Ecole Française de Rome*, tome 90-1978/1, p.241. Imperiali’s letter to the ministry is dated 21.11.1905. Not only the sultan but all the Ottoman high officials had the same thought when the port of Tripoli was considered . Ottoman bureaucrats proposed that the construction must be awarded to others than Italians, French and British. (Başbakanlık Arşivi, BEO – A.MTZ. TG.S. – October 1906); French foreign ministry archive , N. Serie 96, letters of French ambassador at Rome dated 27, 28, 30 April 1905

<sup>148)</sup> Daniel, *op. Cit.*, 246

<sup>149)</sup> *DDI*, *pol p. Turchia* 124, report of talks with Melhame between 20 October and 12.November 1907

<sup>150)</sup> Mert, Özcan, “Osmanlı Belgelerine göre Banco di Roma’nın Trablusgarp’daki Faaliyetleri”, *Belleten*, vol.II, no.200, August 1987, pp.829-847

<sup>151)</sup> Chilos, Timothy W., *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy War over Libya 1911-1912*, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1990, pp.8-9

<sup>152)</sup> Mohamed-Hadi Hashmi, *op. Cit.*

<sup>153)</sup> Kandemir, Feridun, *Jöntürklerin Zindan Hatıralar*, İstanbul, Muhit yay. 1975, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Bilgi, Nejdet, “Dr.Mehmed Reşid Bey’in Taşkışla Hatıraları Hakkında”, *Tarih ve Toplum*, April 1992, pp.52-56

<sup>154)</sup> İbrahim Temo, *İttihad ve Terakki*, Romanya-Mecidiye, 1939, p. 234-5

<sup>155)</sup> Volpe, Gioacchino, *L’Impresa di Tripoli 1911-1912*, Roma, ed. Leonardo, 1946, p.18, Pestalozza’s letter to the foreign minister dated 3 March 1901

<sup>156)</sup> On that subject *Revue du Monde Musulman* contains some articles of M.N.Slousch: 1/2 (1906), 6/9 (1908). It was discussed also in other issues: 6/10 (1908, 7/3-4 (1909), 8/5(1909)

<sup>157)</sup> Koloğlu, Orhan, “Mustafa Kemal’in 1908 Ekim-Kasım’ında Trablusgarp ve Bingazi Gezisi”, *Türk Kültürü*, no.343, November 1991, pp.674-686

<sup>158)</sup> Ali Mustafa el Misarati, *Sahafete Libya fi nısf kurun*, Beirut, 1966, p.20

<sup>159)</sup> Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (de France), N.S.98, Tripoli-Cyrenaïque, contains detailed reports of the consul at Tripoli concerning Guzman Affair.

<sup>160)</sup> Musaféri, “La Tripolitaine il y a Cent Ans et Aujourd’hui”, *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 7/3 (1909), p.314

<sup>161)</sup> *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 8/5 (1909), p.314

<sup>162)</sup> 15.7.1902

<sup>163</sup>) 1.10.1902

<sup>164</sup>) 1.5.1904

<sup>165</sup>) Grange, Daniel J., op. Cit. Pp.245 and 248

<sup>166</sup>) Volpe, G., op. Cit., p.89

<sup>167</sup>) Koloğlu, Orhan, "1911 Libya Savaşını Başlatan Basın Savaşı", paper presented to the Seminar on "The War of 1911 in the Press" organized by the Libyan Markazi Jihad in 1979

<sup>168</sup>) Volpe, op.cit., pp.15-19

<sup>169</sup>) *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 7/4 (1909), p.445

<sup>170</sup>) *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 6/9 (1908) p.186

<sup>171</sup>) Koloğlu, Orhan, *Trablusgarp Savaşı –1911-1912 – ve Türk Subayları*, Ankara, Basın Yayın Gl.Müdürlüğü, 1979, p.60

<sup>172</sup>) Koloğlu, Orhan, communication "1911 Libya Savaşını Başlatan Basın Savaşı"

<sup>173</sup>) Editorial of 30 December 1909

<sup>174</sup>) 14. January 1910

<sup>175</sup>) AP, p.4933, 14 February 1910; Childs, op.cit., p.25

<sup>176</sup>) *DDI*, Serie Pol.P. Turchia 128, letter of ambassador Mayor dated 4. June.1910

<sup>177</sup>) *Ibid.*, letter of Mayor dated 29.June 1910

<sup>178</sup>) *Ibid.*, letter of Mayor dated 3 December 1910

<sup>179</sup>) Page, T.N., *Italy and the World War*, London 1921, pp.117-119; Bayur, Y.H., *Türk İnkılap Tarihi*, vol. II/I, Ankara 1943, p.79, both cited in Özcan Mert's cited article p.845

<sup>180</sup>) Childs, op. Ciit., p.25

<sup>181</sup>) Lepsius-Bartholdy-Thimme, *Die Grosse Politik der Europaeischen Kabinette 1871-1914* ( 30. Band) *Der Italianische-TürkischeKrieg 1911-1912*, Berlin 1926, doc. 10806; Bayur, op.c., pp.71-72

<sup>182</sup>) *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup>) *Ibid.*, doc. 10810, report of Jagow, German ambassador, 3.February 1911

<sup>184</sup>) For the discussion in the Ottoman parliaments : Orhan Koloğlu, *Osmanlı Meclislerinde Libya ve Libyalılar*, İstanbul, Boyut yay, 2003

<sup>185</sup>) AP, op.cit. p.324

<sup>186</sup>) Koloğlu, Orhan, *Trablusgarp Savaşı...*, op.cit., p.2

<sup>187</sup>) *Ibid.* p.3

<sup>188</sup>) Giolitti, *Memorie della mia Vita*, Milano 1922, vol.2, p.328

<sup>189</sup>) Galli, Carlo, *Diarii e Lettere*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1951

<sup>190</sup>) Hüseyin Cahid's article entitled "Trablusgarp ve İtalya = Trablousgharb and Italy", *Tanin*, 5 September 1911

<sup>191</sup>) Koloğlu, Orhan, "1911 Libya Savaşını Hazırlayan..." op.cit., statement by the Under Secretary of the Grand Vizier to the Tripoli deputies on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September; statement of the new Tripoli governor Bekir Sami to *Stamboul*

newspaper, 11 September; statement of Salih from the foreign ministry to *İkdam* newspaper on the 15<sup>th</sup> September ; statement of the Grand Vizier Hakkı Pasha to *İkdam* on 27 September

<sup>192</sup>) Childs, op.cit., pp.64-65

<sup>193</sup>) Lepsius etc., op.cit., , doc 10833, report of German ambassador Marshall to his ministry, dated 26. September 1911

<sup>194</sup>) *Berliner Tageblatt*, 3. October 1911

<sup>195</sup>) FO. 371-1254/40792, Lowther to Grey, Istanbul, 16.10.1911

<sup>196</sup>) FO. 371-1254 Telegram 103 of 12.10.1911 and of 15.10.1911

<sup>197</sup>) FO. 371-1254/40517, no.109, Rodd to Grey

<sup>198</sup>) Theodoli, Alberto, *A Cavalli di Due Secoli*, Roma, Navicella, 1950

<sup>199</sup>) *Ibid.*, p.75

<sup>200</sup>) In French in the text, which means "Every good agent demand a mediation and Turkey already pays too much."

<sup>201</sup>) In French in the text: "Aux Turcs". It proves that previously they made the same offer which was rejected by the I.Hakkı Pasha government

<sup>202</sup>) We excluded the parts which are dealing directly with the problem

<sup>203</sup>) On the subject of Freemason connection: Koloğlu, Orhan, *İttihatçılar ve Masonlar, İstanbul*, Gür yayınları, 1991. Italian ambassador Mayor reported the 19.6.1910 that none of the Ottoman Jewish leaders were Zionist: *DDI*, Serie pol.P. Turchia 128

<sup>204</sup>) *Journal d'Orient*, 5 April and 6 May 1919

<sup>205</sup>) *Başbakanlık Arşivi*, Meclisi Vükela Müzakeratına ait Zabıtname, 6. February 1337 (1921) reported from Tunaya, Tarık Zafer, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, vol.III, İstanbul, Hürriyet Vakfı yay., 1989 pp.623-625

<sup>206</sup>) There must be a mistake in this judgement as Atatürk's regime had not any concern wwith him. But it is claimed that he made an illegal big fortune during the First World War

<sup>207</sup>) Yalçın, Hüseyin Cahit, *Siyasal Anılar*, (ed. Rauf Mutluay), İstanbul, İş Bankası yay., 1976, p.170

<sup>208</sup>) FO. 371/1254-40532, Letter of the consul at Salonica to Lowther dated 6.10.1911, annexed to the letter of Lowther to Grey dated 11.10.1911

<sup>209</sup>) *Berliner Tageblatt*, 6.10.1911

<sup>210</sup>) Newspaper *Hak*, 28.April.1912, page 4

<sup>211</sup>) About Salem Affair: Koloğlu, Orhan, *Osmanlı-İtalyan Libya Savaşında İttihatçılar Masonlar ve Sosyalist Enternasyonal*, Ankara, Ümit yay., 1999, s.131-132

<sup>212</sup>) FO. 371/41379, Rodd to Grey, 17.10.1911

<sup>213</sup>) *Archives Historiques de l'Etat Major de l'Armée*, Paris 7N 1636

<sup>214</sup>) For more on Carasso's activities: Childs, op.cit., pp.175, 193; Layikteş, Celal, *Türkiye'de Masonluk Tarihi*, İstanbul, 1999, vol.I, pp.120-121

<sup>215</sup>) Ziya Şakir, "İttihat ve Terakki", *Son Posta*, 18.5.1934

<sup>216</sup>) This chapter is a summary of Koloğlu, Orhan, *Osmanlı Meclislerinde Libya ve Libyalılar*

<sup>217</sup>) Notes are from Aziz Samih, op.cit., pp. 252-256

<sup>218</sup>) *Salih Bozok'un Hatıraları* , Milliyet 13.11.1979

<sup>219</sup>) Main sources for this chapter: Kurtcephe, İsrail, *Türk-İtalyan İlişkileri 1911-1916*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995; T.C. Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Harp Tarihi Encümeni, *Harp Mıntıkaları Şehir ve Kasabaların İşgal ve*

*Bombardıman Tarihleri*, Ankara 1937; Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı, *1911-1912 Osmanlı-İtalya Harbi ve Kolağası Mustafa Kemal*, Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı yay., Ankara 1985; Koloğlu, Orhan, *Trablusgarp Savaşı 1911-1912 ve Türk Subayları*, Ankara, 1979; Şıvgion, Hale, *Trablusgarp Savaşı ve 1911-1912 Türk-İtalyan İlişkileri*, Ankara, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1989

<sup>220</sup>) *Tanin*, 14.1.1912

<sup>221</sup>) The names are according Turkish orthography

<sup>222</sup>) Concerning the war from the air: Koloğlu, Orhan, "Dünyada İlk Hava Savaşı", *Tarih ve Toplum*, no.50, February 1988, pp.13-25; for the Red Crescent's contribution: Akgün, S. And Uluğtekin M., "Hilali Ahmer ve Trablusgarp Savaşı", *OTAM* (Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi *Dergisi*, no.3, January 1991, pp.17-84

<sup>223</sup>) Akgün S. And Uluğtekin M., article cit.

<sup>224</sup>) Main source for the peace talks: Kurtcephe İsrail, *Türk-İtalyan İlişkileri...*, op.cit., particularly concerning the meetings of Ottoman government.

<sup>225</sup>) The French subsidized newspaper *Le Réveil* of Beirut started an anti-Italian campaign which influenced very much Arab communities

<sup>226</sup>) English texts of the decrees and the treaty are from Timothy Child's book

<sup>227</sup>) Miège, J.L., *L'Impérialisme Colonial Italien de 1870 à nos Jours*, Paris, SEDES, 1968

<sup>228</sup>) For the role of Enver in Libya: *Enver Paschaum Tripolis*, München, Hugo Bruckmann Verlag, 1918; Koloğlu, Orhan, "Enver Paşa Efsanesine Alman Katkısı", *Tarih ve Toplum*, June 1990 (pp.14-22) and July 1990 (pp. 49-56); *Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Paşa*, ed. Şükrü Haniöğlü, İstanbul, Der yay.,1989; Koloğlu, Orhan, *Trablusgarp Savaşı ve Türk Subayları*, op.cit.

<sup>229</sup>) Mattei, Jean-Louis, "Enver ve Mustafa Kemal Libya'da", *Toplumsal Tarih*, no.43 July 1997, pp. 27-31

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