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**BETWEEN EMPIRES
– BEYOND BORDERS
THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
AND THE EARLY REPUBLICAN
ERA THROUGH THE LENS
OF THE KÖPE FAMILY**

Edited by

GÁBOR FODOR



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THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE EARLY REPUBLICAN ERA
THROUGH THE LENS OF THE KÖPE FAMILY

 **Century Studies in Humanities**

Editor: Pál Fodor



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Budapest, 2020

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PREFACE

Anthony H. Childress

Grandson of Antoine

15 August 2004 / Updated 2 September 2020

My grandfather, Antoine Fortune Köpe, hand wrote his life experiences in a series of books called “Souvenirs de Jeunesse” which translates to “Memoirs of My Youth”. These memoirs, written in French, encapsulate his life from his youth during WWI (1914) until late in his life in America (1970’s). As can be seen within the original memoirs, he was not only a gifted author, but also had beautiful handwriting and was a talented artist not to mention a wonderful man, father and grandfather. His life and times in the European campaign, his life, and the history found within his memoirs are so rare of a historical and family document, that preservation of this information has been performed by the personal publication of these documents.

As a child, I would watch my grandfather work on his books back in the 1960’s. I had no idea at that time what he was doing with his colloquial pen and ink. But I was amazed at watching him draw. As a child, we would get together and watch the movies on his Pathé projector. At times the film would run onto the floor and the film would stop and we would all yell “Papa” and off he went to fix them. Again, I did not realize at the time what I was watching. I just remember the experience of being on the floor watching them on a drawn blanket against the wall for the screen.

My grandfather had created a series of documents. First there were three series of documents related to the compiled memoirs. There are the original “Tomes” or manuscripts that he hand wrote all of his memoirs in which he left with my mother. Then there were the original volumes which included pictures and drawings added to the hand written memoirs. Then, he duplicated his

work by typing his memoirs and adding duplicate or similar pictures or works of art to the reproduced set of books. Only the original "Tomes" were duplicated within the books titled "Souvenirs de Jeunesse". A compilation of all of his memoirs, "Tomes", and duplicate copies has been translated into English in a series of books titled "Memoirs of My Life".

It was in the 1970's when I first became fascinated with the memoirs. My father had taken my mother's copy of the books and with my grandfather, had them professionally bound and made into a series of books that rested on our shelves. My grandfather would go through the books with me and later after his death, my grandmother and mother continued to help me go through the memoirs.

Years later, I was going through my grandfather's items he left with us and found his Pathé projector and films. I was fortunate enough to be able to rebuild the projector into working order and for the first time in many years, we got to watch the films that we had all watched as children many years earlier.

These memoirs were copied from the original manuscripts and her copy of the books he made for her and was coordinated with original "Volumes" that he created from the manuscript which was left to my Uncle Charles (Károly) Köpe, the eldest son of Antoine, and oldest brother of my mother, Elizabeth. Upon Charles death in 2003, they were left in my possession. I had the "Volumes" professionally scanned to digitize and protect the documents. I then sent the originals to Charles's son, my cousin, Christian Köpe.

I hired professional experts in the art of history and languages and had the books translated into English as my French I spoke as a child has become quite useless today. In reading them, it dawned upon me that these were not just information about my family, but it held important historical information that should be shared.

It is my hope and desire, that my family and anyone who has interest in such things will enjoy these as much as I have had putting them together. I will leave you with my grandfather's wish found within his Prologue: "...I invite you to continue my work by adding memories and documents from the new generation, thus resulting in documentation that will become more and more interesting for our descendents."

INTRODUCTION

Lorans Tanatar Baruh – Nefin Dinç – Gábor Fodor – Erol Ülker

In December of 1990, a noble gentleman showed up unexpectedly at the doors of the Consulate General of Hungary in Istanbul and made enquiry about the possibilities of regaining his Hungarian citizenship. As the current Consul General was István Vásáry at that time, a well-known Turkologist, the enquiry which at first glance seemed to be ordinary paperwork, ended up as the inspiration for scientific research and later a conference presentation. In the meeting, the noble gentlemen introduced himself as Károly (Charles) Köpe. Two decades later Nefin Dinç, an eminent Turkish film director and associate professor, contacted the Hungarian Ambassador to Turkey, János Hóvári, also a Turkologist, to ask his help in a matter related to the Hungarians who once sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire in the middle of the 19th century. While living in the United States, Dinç accidently came across an extensive personal archive, containing hundreds of documents and ten thousands of written lines on the Late Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. The author and the “editor” of the archive was named as Antione Köpe.

The story of the Köpe family begins in the Tanzimat era, a period of Westernizing reforms in the Empire, when the path of András Köpe and Léocadie Tallibert intersected in Constantinople. Born and raised in a village near the city of Brassó, in Hungarian Transylvania (today Braşov in Romania), András Köpe fled to the Ottoman capital due to pressure from the Austrian Empire. Léocadie Tallibert, whose family was from Brittany, was in the city accompanying her two brothers; Louis, a watchmaker and jeweller, and Pierre, an architect. The couple married in 1842 and later took over the watch and

jewellery shop, which was once situated in the district of Karaköy. In 1882, their second child, Charles, married Rose-Marie Marcopoli, who was coming from a Levantine family of Genoese origin in Trabzon. They had six children with Charles: Charlotte, Ida, Taïb, Ferdinand, Antoine and Eugène.

Educated in French, the six siblings never became Ottoman subjects and remained citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, while at the same time became notable members of the Empire's Levantine community. Taïb went to Brassó shortly after the beginning of the war in 1914 and joined the military of the dual monarchy. Antoine followed in his brother's footsteps and enlisted two years later in Istanbul, serving as a soldier in Syria and Palestine where he witnessed key battles in 1917. When the war ended and both empires entered respective stages of dissolution, the majority of the Köpe family members stayed in Istanbul, and witnessed the Armistice of Mudros in 1918, the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, as well as the occupation of the city by the British, French, and Italian military officials in 1920. Antoine lived difficult times in the following years and later worked in small towns like Zonguldak, Sivas, and Kayseri while he and his family was witnessing the first decades of the newly founded Republic. Though he spent all of his life in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, even in the early 1940s he sent his children to study in Hungary and supported their efforts to learn Hungarian. As the outcome of the WWII, the xenophobia in Turkey significantly increased and Hungary was taken over by the communists, hence the family finally found no other way than to move and settle down in the United States, where the grandsons of the Köpes still live.

After the (re)discovery of this hidden archive by Dinç, different projects came into life in the previous years. First of all, Nefin *hanım* decided to make a documentary, which after years of development seems to be broadcasted in the near future under the title *Antoine, the Fortunate*. Secondly, the historical research for the documentary opened the way for an exhibition, titled as *Between Empires, Beyond Borders: The War and Armistice Years through the Eyes of the Köpe Family*, opened on the 15th of September, 2020 at the SALT Beyoğlu, and curated by Lorans Tanatar Baruh, Nefin Dinç and Erol Ülker. The exhibition delves into the memories of the Köpe family, who witnessed Ottoman Empire's modernization period as well as its withdrawal from the world stage. The visual narrative of the exhibition is based on detailed archival

records spanning the Second Constitutional Era, the WWI, and the Armistice Period that followed. It also explores how the diplomatic relations between the empires of the Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman were manifested in everyday life. Connected to the exhibition, the popular Turkish periodical on social history *Toplumsal Tarih*'s december volume will be a special edition of the Köpe story. Thirdly, through Antoine's memoirs, volumes of cartoons as well as visual and audio recordings, in addition to a selection from hundreds of photographs taken by his brother Taïb, this publication came into life under the title of *Between Empires, Beyond Borders: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Republican Era through the Lens of the Köpe Family*. The volume intends to shed lights on eight different topics by eight scholars from Turkey, France, Hungary, and the United States. Built on a family history as it moves from the 19th to the 20th century, and on the valuable family archive, this publication also draws attention to the different nationalities in the Ottoman Empire's capital, the mutability of identities, the mobility of lives, the city of Istanbul before and during the war, the Austro-Hungarian armed forces and visiting notables in the Empire; shortly to an extraordinary journey from Salonica to the Palestine front, from Turkey to the United States, as seen in photographs, caricatures and memoirs. As multicultural members of a multi-ethnic empire with Hungarian and French origins, the lives of the Köpe family and the documents they left behind testify to a moment in time when subjecthood and citizenship were not categorized within stable definitions of nationhood, but also to another era, when nationalism and racism was on the rise. The book also includes a preface and closing remarks by Antoine's daughter and grandchildren, Elizabeth and Anthony Childress, to whom we wish to express our gratitude for sharing this amazing collection with us and with the public. We also thank the Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest, for publishing this book in the series "21st-Century Studies in Humanities".

We, as the curators of the exhibition and the editor of this volume, do hope that this publication will help in better understanding this extraordinary period of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, while we also want this book to serve as an unofficial guide to the exhibition. However, we cannot emphasize enough, that beyond being a great source for historians, Antoine Köpe was above all a loving husband and a great father.

ANTOINE KÖPE'S WAYS OF SEEING: MEMOIRS OF A FOOT SOLDIER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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A SURPRISING ENCOUNTER

I came across Antoine Köpe's memoirs in 2006 in Texas. These memoirs were written by a very artistic and prolific man who lived in the Ottoman Empire and later in Turkey between 1897 and 1962. Antoine's paternal grandfather was a Hungarian refugee of the 1848 revolutions. His paternal grandmother was the sister of a well-established watchmaker from France who opened a jewelry and watch shop in Istanbul. Antoine's father Charles Köpe worked at the various branches of the Ottoman Bank in Anatolia and later at the Ottoman Railroads in Thessaloniki. Antoine's mother Rose-Marie Marcopoli was the daughter of a French-speaking Levantine businessman.

Antoine Köpe was born in Istanbul in 1897 and grew up speaking French, Greek, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) and some Italian in the imperial capital, Istanbul, and in Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece). Antoine took part in WWI after enlisting in the Austro-Hungarian army in 1916 in Istanbul. He was sent to Palestine in 1917 to fight against the British. He witnessed the catastrophic retreat of the Central Powers from Palestine. After spending three months at a military hospital in Damascus he came back to Istanbul in February 1918. Istanbul was under occupation by the Allied Forces. After returning to civilian clothes in December 1918, Antoine refused to be deported to his

paternal grandfather's homeland in Transylvania, which by that time became a part of Romania. Antoine had to hide from the Allied troops to not to be caught and deported. After spending months looking for a job in Istanbul, Antoine moved to the Black Sea Region in Turkey to work at the coalmines as a clerk. He married Emilie Gaziades, a Greek woman from Istanbul, and started a family in the new Turkish Republic. He later found work at the various branches of the Ottoman Bank in Anatolia. Towards the end of his life he immigrated to the US and passed away in Texas in 1974.

DOCUMENTING AN ERA

Antoine Köpe belonged to a generation which was the last to come of age under the 450-year rule of the Ottoman dynasty in the imperial city of Istanbul. The Ottoman Empire and the cosmopolitan culture of the capital came to an end as a result of the Great War. Antoine sensed that the life style he enjoyed in the Ottoman Empire was never to return. With his memoirs, Antoine tried to record the life he experienced during his youth. In this paper, I will present the importance and the exceptional value of Antoine Köpe's memoirs for documenting the life in the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey. I will also elaborate on how Antoine Köpe was capable of using the visual language of cinema and even editing techniques to tell his remarkable story.

Antoine's grandson, who now lives in Texas, preserved the memoirs and had them translated from French into English. As soon as I heard about the memoirs, without even seeing them, I thought that the material would constitute a solid base for a captivating documentary film. Firstly because it was written by someone who was present during most of the important events of the era. There are not many documentary films produced about the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, especially from the point of view of a foreigner who lived in the Empire. This makes the memoirs quite valuable.

When I actually saw the memoirs, I knew I was face to face with something even more remarkable. In his memoirs, Antoine used every means possible to record, chronicle and archive what he witnessed. Apart from writing ten large volumes about life in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey and his family history,



FIGURE 1
[1] 1916: THE ALLIES – FIELD MARSHAL MACKENSEN;
[2] 1919: THE OCCUPIER – GENERAL GOURAUD
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

Antoine also included copious amounts of precious materials in his memoirs. Perhaps most important of them all are the photographs taken by his brother Taib András Köpe. These photographs were never before published. They indicate that Taib Köpe had a significant access to the ruling elite of the Ottoman Empire and the important events of the time. These extraordinary photographs include the first aerial photographs of Istanbul taken in 1914, a series of photographs of the Goeben and Breslau in Istanbul, scenes of mobilization in the capital, several spectacular photographs of the city, the funeral of the crown prince Yusuf İzzeddin, photographs of demonstrations that took place at Sultan Ahmet Plaza for the occasion of the abolition of the capitulations, the arrival of Field marshal Mackensen in Istanbul in 1916 as well as General Gouraud arriving in Istanbul in 1919. Being a keen archivist and chronicler, Antoine placed these last two photos side by side in his memoirs, contrasting between the arrival of an ally and an occupant. There are many other examples of juxtaposing two related images belonging to different times in his memoirs to make his point; including Antoine's photograph with the pipe he receives as a present in 1916's Christmas in the army and himself with the same pipe in Samsun in 1930, or Christmas in 1917 in the Austro-Hungarian army and Christmas with his family in 1937 in Kayseri, and his parents playing backgammon in Konya in 1890 and himself and his wife Emilie playing the same backgammon in Athens in 1969.

Antoine also collected postcards of certain cities and locations and even drew arrows to point out important locations or events he encountered in these places. He also kept the official correspondence and memorabilia from WWI. The memoirs even include a badge from an English P.O.W. of the 3rd Gaza Battle.

A TALENTED ARTIST

Always fascinated by the new technologies Antoine also made hours of sound recordings of him and his family playing many different musical instruments and singing in different European languages. Later in his life, starting from 1927 he made many hours of home videos with his Pathé Baby camera. These images demonstrate that Antoine again wanted to document the important

people, events and locations in his life. In these films we see scenes from their family life in Kozlu and Kandilli in the 20s, scenes of Samsun in 1929, his daughter Elizabeth's wedding in İzmir in 1958, Köpe family strolling at the Central Park in NY City, and in Washington D.C. in the 60s, the Ottoman Bank building in Istanbul's Bankalar Caddesi, scenes from their voyage from NY city to Greece, Easter celebrations in Athens in 1971 and his visit to the Black Sea mines where he worked decades earlier.

Even though most of the home videos are in typical form showing the places they have visited, there are a couple of scenes which demonstrate that Antoine was an artistic and imaginative man.

In one of the scenes, using a simple editing method, Antoine created a short comedy with his family acting in it. First, we see Károly, his son, falling over from a rocking chair in front of their home and then we see Antoine applauding his son cheerfully. In the next shot Antoine's mother arrives and lifts Károly and his chair, next we see in a close up that Károly is crying, and then Antoine mocks Károly by imitating his crying. Later in an even closer shot we see Károly's upset face, and in the next shot Antoine mocks him again. Next, his wife Emilie seems like she is criticizing Antoine for mocking Károly, and in the last shot we see Antoine falling asleep because of Emilie's speech. Here, in this short comedy, Antoine uses shot/reverse shot technique which is a very common filming technique. In this technique, one character is shown looking at another character, and then the other character is shown looking back at the first character. Because of the way the characters are placed, the spectator understands that they are looking at each other. Antoine uses this technique masterfully. This little scene shows that he put some thought in how to successfully create a scene by using filming and editing techniques to tell his little story.

Additionally, the style of this little comedy scene, and others in his home videos, show that Antoine was inspired by the most popular actors' films of his time, most notably Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. There are a couple of more short comedy pieces where Antoine and other family members act for the camera. In these films, Antoine's performance is noteworthy. He seems to be imitating the mime actors of the silent film era. He is very good at using exaggerated facial expressions and body movements. Without using words, or



FIGURE 2
THESE SCREEN CAPTURES FROM ANTOINE'S FILM ILLUSTRATES THAT
HE IS GOOD AT CREATING COMEDY SCENES
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

intertitles in between the shots, the viewer is still able to understand what Antoine is trying to tell them, after all these years since he made his movies.

Using the same sense of humor, Antoine drew thousands of caricatures since his childhood. It is important to point out that Antoine started writing his memoirs in 1945, but he drew countless illustrations and caricatures starting from at least 1911. With these caricatures and drawings, he depicted the life in Thessaloniki and later in Istanbul, the Tripoli War, the Balkan Wars, a day by day account of the beginning of the Great War, his life in Anatolia, and an illustrated Greek-French Dictionary and many more. Since he had been drawing for decades, it shows that he gets better and better with every caricature he creates. In all of these caricatures accounting thousands of frames, his wittiness is ever present.

A COMPELLING CHARACTER

In cinema, it usually is useful to have an interesting character to capture the attention of the audience and convince them that it is worthwhile to follow the protagonist's story throughout the film. Antoine Köpe is certainly a compelling character. Apart from chronicling everything in a meticulous detail and narrating his story in creative ways, his look at the events is almost always humoristic and light hearted even though he lived in one of the most catastrophic times of the Empire. Additionally, Antoine is always fascinated with what he sees in Istanbul and in different regions of the country and he is able to convey to the reader this feeling of his captivation. It is clear that Antoine's is a subjective point-of-view. He never tries to conceal the fact that his account about what happened in the Ottoman Empire and later in Turkey is his personal opinion.

His honesty in declaring his views and his feelings about the people he met and the historical events that took place around him make his accounts even more interesting to read since they diverge from the official interpretations.

One other essential element that makes Antoine a captivating character to follow is that with the start of the Balkan Wars, the economic status of the family continuously deteriorates. Throughout the memoirs, Antoine and his family are always struggling to make ends meet. The reader would want to see what happens to them and would want to know if they survive at the end of the story.

Antoine's extraordinary adventures in the Empire's catastrophic end times are astonishing, and because he manages to tell his story in such a compelling manner with the materials in his memoirs, a related documentary film on his life will be of great interest. The extraordinary quality of the material in the memoirs and the cinematic quality of the way Antoine tells his story already makes Antoine's memoirs strong material for a compelling screenplay, a must for a strong film.

FROM AN EMPIRE TO A NATION-STATE

The material in the memoirs will also add to the historiography of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey since the information and the visual material in the memoirs are fresh and never before published. Additionally, telling the story of the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of modern Turkey through the eyes of an insider/outsider (since he was born in Istanbul and because he had French and Hungarian background) will make the movie distinctive as well.

The story will also relate something more than Ottomans and Turks. It will disclose how people thought and behaved in an “empire” vis-à-vis their country, national identity, and other loyalties. Through the story of a person and his family, the spectator, but also the historians, will see how social structures and communal relations are transferred as something, i.e., the Empire, fades away, and how different beliefs and loyalties appear and are structured by the appearance of a modern nation state.

READING THE MEMOIRS AS IF WATCHING A MOVIE

Antoine was born just two years after the Lumiere brothers first screened a movie in 1895 in Paris. In his memoirs, Antoine talks about how he frequented the cinemas first in Thessaloniki as a child, and later in Istanbul as a young person. He also speaks about going to the movies during his active military service in the city. Even though it has been more than forty years when he writes about the first film he ever saw, he can describe it in great detail probably since he was so fascinated by the movies:

“I saw my first film around 1902. I must have been five years old. At first, I was afraid to be in the dark room. Then, all of a sudden, I saw a man appear in front of me. He lifted his arm and a woman appeared at his side. He lifted his other arm and another woman appeared. Then he lifted both arms and the women disappeared. I thought I was watching real people and that a magician was making people appear and disappear at will.”

Right from the beginning of his memoirs, Antoine uses a strong visual language, practically giving the reader the feeling of watching a movie. Antoine starts his memoirs with a prologue and explains how he started writing his memoirs:

“The idea of writing down my memoirs came to me in 1945 during the funeral of one of my friends from World War I. During the funeral ceremony, I was besieged by a throng of memories, and saw the entire span of my military service as if I were a spectator watching a film.”

Then, Antoine tells his story to his “viewer” as if he was a filmmaker. Antoine’s cinematic language emerges as he discusses his comrade Otto Kuhvalek’s funeral in the memoir’s first chapter (named “About my friend Otto Kuhvalek – Memories from the War”). Antoine first creates a filmic atmosphere by describing the people, the location and the lighting in the chapel. When Antoine describes the Catholic cemetery in Feriköy in Istanbul, he practically creates an establishing shot by depicting what the reader would see when they first see the cemetery. He then brings the “viewer” closer to the scene by describing different elements in the scene:

“Several people gathered in front of the cemetery chapel. They spoke in low voices. ... I entered the chapel. Only two women were there. They were standing in front of the coffin crying in contemplation and silence. Two women and I. Of all of his friends outside, the three of us were the only ones to stand beside Otto Kuhvalek for the last time. I would soon learn that these two women were his mother-in-law and his niece. I don’t know how long they had been there. The pain I read in their faces was real and dignified. I was very moved.

It was cloudy and the chapel was sad. Six large candles framed the casket platform and threw weak flickers of light on the coffin made of ordinary wooden planks by some unskillful carpenter so common in Anatolia. The brown stain brushed hastily onto these pathetic planks was pitiful. An oak cross, probably nailed to the center of the casket lid in Istanbul, clashed with the rest of the coffin. As for wreaths, there were only two very modest ones: One from his wife and another from a Turkish merchant.

I had told him when we were in the service in Syria: ‘Kuhvalek, in exactly twenty-seven years to the day, Lessiak and I will attend your funeral.’ He laughed his great laugh and hit me in the stomach with the back of his hand saying, ‘My funeral in twenty-seven years? That’s a good joke. Twenty-seven years is so far away. We’ll have plenty of time to think about it.’ However, it wasn’t so far away. One could even say it was yesterday...”

And with these three dots at the end of the sentence, Antoine takes a moment and allows the previous scene to fade out. In cinematic terms, with a fade out, the screen goes black for a brief moment. In the next chapter, with the three additional dots at the very beginning of the first sentence, Antoine starts the new scene with a fade in, and a new image slowly appears on screen. In this new scene, Antoine creates a flashback and the viewer is taken to an earlier time in his story:

“I see myself again doubled over with pain that afternoon in December of 1917 entering the Austro-Hungarian military hospital in the country in Damascus. It had quickly been set up in a hotel, not far from the great plaza whose name I’ve forgotten. They told me it was already full, for the arriving troops from a difficult retreat brought back more sick soldiers than wounded or dead ones.”

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS OF THE LAST CENTURY

At the military hospital in Damascus, with his boundless talent for observation, Antoine drew numerous caricatures of his comrades and described them one by one in his memoirs. One of his comrades, Aaron, clearly provides a lasting impression on Antoine. The way Antoine describes Aaron also hints at the presence of anti-Semitism in the army long before WWII:

“First, there was this great Polish devil of a Jew named Aaron. His bed was stuck against a window that looked out into the main room. Aaron called himself a baker. Disproportionately tall, he had a cube-shaped head, a

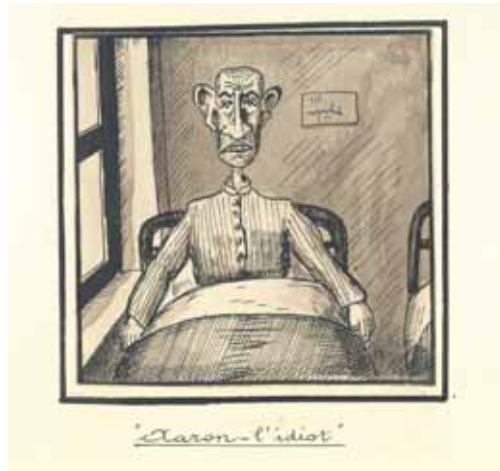


FIGURE 3
 "AARON – THE IDIOT"
 (ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH
 CHILDRESS)

narrow forehead, small and mischievous eyes, a bulky nose, and enormous fan-shaped ears. Our comrades bet him that he couldn't walk against the wind, but on the other hand, if he used the wind to his advantage, he would be able to use his ears as sails and move forward more quickly."

Another soldier Antoine met at the frontlines and later at the military hospital was an Armenian soldier who belonged to a battery composed of Hungarian artillerymen. The story of this Armenian soldier in Antoine's memoirs also allows the reader to read about this important part of WWI history through a first person account. With his keen observation skills, Antoine describes the Armenian soldier in great detail and while talking about him, Antoine regularly makes references to a movie character with which he was captivated as a child:

"He looked exactly like a burlesque Italian comedian named Cretinetti who had filled my childhood with joy. This soldier, who had a razor blade-shaped head, an enormous nose, and very brown hair parted down the middle and

plastered to his temples. His miniscule body was terribly skinny. Cretinetti and his double also had the same smile. I often saw this artilleryman during the retreat and the more I looked at him, the more he reminded me of the films I loved so much and in which Cretinetti was always beaten by his wife, by the crowds, or by the police.”

In his memoirs, Antoine explains how this young Armenian man joined the Austro-Hungarian army. According to a story Antoine had heard, when an Austro-Hungarian battery passed through a Syrian village, this young man leaps toward the Hungarian artillerymen and crossed himself to show that he is Christian and Armenian. He explained to the artillerymen that his parents had been killed in Eastern Anatolia and that he was looking for a safe place to survive. The captain of the battery feels pity for him and proposes that the young man stay with them. From then on, this young Armenian serves in the Austro-Hungarian army and he stays last to cover the withdrawal of the Turkish infantry during the retreat. Nevertheless he contracts tropical malaria during the retreat and dies at the military hospital. Antoine contemplates this young man’s faith with his usual frankness:

“...death had eyed him since his departure from his village. She gave him a small respite but finally took him with a simple attack of malaria fever. We must recognize that we can try to flee our destiny, but we will never succeed in escaping it. Cretinetti the anonymous Armenian was quickly forgotten. Do we not remember today that in Hungary there were children from this country who died as unknown heroes and who sleep their final sleep under the burning desert sands? ... But all of these dead men, like Cretinetti, are forgotten and no one will speak of them.”

Even though Antoine meets many other soldiers and drew countless caricatures of them, Antoine’s real comrades are three soldiers from Istanbul; Lessiak, Maurer, and Kuhvalek. While staying at the hospital, they share memoirs and their youthful adventures with each other. They speak French with one another, the language of the enemy, and bewilder the rest of the soldiers at the hospital. Sharing good memories from Istanbul with his friends makes Antoine pensive and he recalls those memories almost like he is watching a movie:

"These few memories quickly retold had transported my thoughts to Constantinople. The movie of my young life created from all the scenes of my existence unfolded in my mind, scene by scene, and the wheel of time had begun to move in reverse in my imagination."

THE BEGINNING OF A WAR

Here, Antoine uses another flashback and the reader is taken back again in time, this time to 1914. With a new chapter named "La Turquie en Guerre" (Turkey at War) Antoine first portrays the atmosphere in the city at the beginning of the War in the Ottoman Empire:

"We learned on October 28, 1914 that the lighthouses of the Bosphorus would remain extinguished during the entire duration of the war. This news gave us the premonition that more serious events would soon occur."

By describing how the Bosphorus was to remain dark during the War, Antoine uses foreshadowing, an effective cinematic tool, which supply hints to prepare the viewer for later events in the story. Here, by stating that the feeling in the capital was foreboding, Antoine prepares the reader for what is to come for the Ottoman Empire.

At the beginning of the War, Antoine depicts the mobilized Austro-Hungarian soldiers in the capital. While describing the soldiers with humor he also gives information about the state of the Austro-Hungarian army in the Ottoman Empire. In this part, Antoine explains that when they were first enlisted, the officer in charge gave him and his friends ridiculous uniforms in order to humiliate them because they were all from Constantinople, many of them belonging to well-known, affluent families:

"The elegant Cartizza, the most slender young man in the troop of recruits, was frankly ridiculous. The sleeves came almost to his elbows, his military cap barely fit on his head, and regarding his shoes, they were at least two sizes too long and too wide for the measurements of his feet. ... Then, ... he

[the officer] threw me a pair of enormous shoes, a uniform in which three of me could fit, and condescended to place on my head himself a miniscule military cap, even smaller than my comrade Cartizza's who had provoked our hilarity, so that I became as ridiculous as he."

One of the most striking part of his drawings are the caricature series on the Great War. In this series named "Detailed Diary of the War", Antoine illustrates and writes about the first five months of WWI day by day, covering dates August 1 to December 13, 1914. The comic book is thirty pages long, depicting the important events of the War in the first year. Antoine borrowed the information for his comic book from M. Berg's "Journal de la Guerre" (Diary of the War) which was published in Berlin as a monthly serial.

Antoine's detailed sketches in the comic book are similar to a storyboard which is used in filmmaking. A storyboard is a series of illustrations, like a cartoon strip, of events as seen through the camera, that mainly outline the various shots, movement of actors, indicate camera angles, and the size of the frame. By using the storyboard, the filmmaker is able to plan the main elements and their movements during filming. Similar to a storyboard, Antoine drew different camera angles, different shot sizes, the movement of certain items in the frame (the soldiers, ships, guns etc.) and even some dialogue in his comic book. Antoine, with his usual habit of chronicling everything, drew the events in such detail that it will allow the filmmakers to redraw some additional frames in between his caricatures and animate the comic book. Consequently, most of the first five months of the War will be told through animation in the documentary film. Antoine also wrote about the events in his comic book in his memoirs thoroughly. Since Antoine witnessed the events that took place in Istanbul himself, he is able to depict all these events with great immediacy, especially when his comments are coupled with his drawings:



FIGURE 4
 THE LAST CARICATURE ON THE RIGHT:
 “THE AMBASSADORS OF FRANCE AND BRITAIN LEAVE CONSTANTINOPLE”
 (ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

“Great overexcitement reigned in the capital. With the help of the German victories, the populace cried, “To war!” The Ambassador of Russia left Turkey that same day. Those from France and England followed him several days later.”

Another noteworthy series of photographs in Antoine’s memoirs are the pictures of the crew of the Emden arriving Istanbul. Antoine tells the Emden’s story at length in his memoirs in a chapter dedicated to this light cruiser belonging to Germany. Emden was sunk in the Indian Ocean and the surviving crew arrived Istanbul in Spring 1915. Like many other important events of WWI, Antoine was present when the Emden crew arrived Istanbul.

As Antoine comments, a prominent cinematographer of the time, Sigmund Weinberg, filmed the occasion. As a keen archivist, Antoine apparently wanted to keep these moving images of the event but they were lost. In any case, the photographs found in Antoine's memoirs showing the arrival of the Emden's crew, possibly never before published, are a great addition to WWI's historiography:

"I attended [the reception] along with my brother Ferdinand on the Coast of Serail where hundreds of people (men, women, and children wearing flowers) were lined up on both sides of the quay awaiting the heroes. At two o'clock, a Turkish torpedo boat coming from Haydar-Pacha drew alongside and the newly outfitted sailors of the Emden debarked.

Several welcome speeches were given after which the procession aligned. At the head of the procession came military musicians, then surrounded by fireman under arms (at this time, firemen were military men) marched the German crew lead by Lieutenant Mölke and the flag of the detachment. The crowd followed. My brother Ferdinand and I were among them. We passed by Sirkedji, traversed the bridge, and by way of Banks Street, we reached les Petits-Champs (Little Fields) (Tepebasi) and the current Istiklal Caddesi (Main Street of Péra).

At several places the cameraman Weinberg recorded shots of the parade and I had the surprise of seeing myself with my brother on the screen laughing and gesticulating. What a shame that I didn't think to buy this portion of the film later when this cameraman was still alive! With time, this would have become a souvenir of priceless value to me."

HIS ADVENTURES AT THE FRONT

In September 1917, Antoine was sent to Palestine. After embarking on the train at Haydar-Paşa train station, he traverses all of Anatolia by train with his comrades and arrives in Pozantı, which was the first stopping place of the railway line at the time. After camping at Çamalan, a military camp at the center of the Taurus Mountains with German and Austro-Hungarian automobile parking stations, Antoine and his column travel towards the Gaza

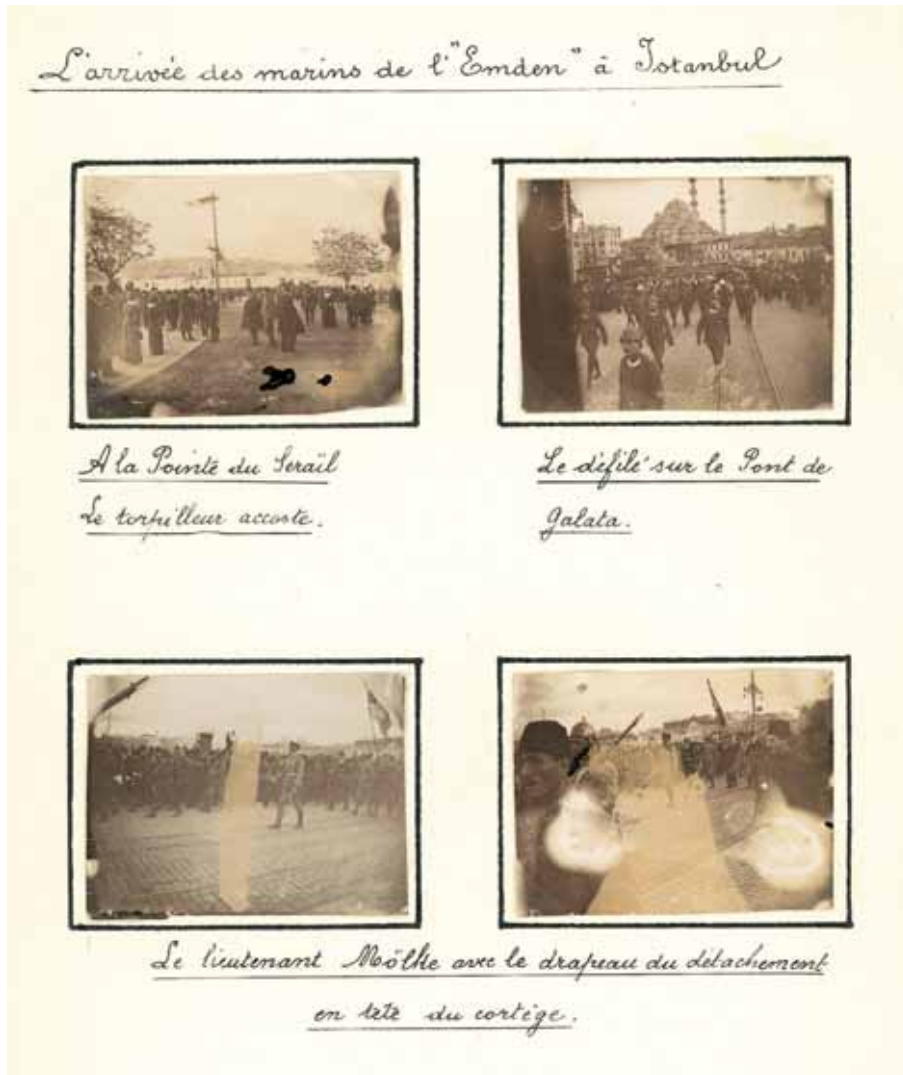


FIGURE 5

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SEAMEN OF THE "EMDEN" AT ISTANBUL

[1] "AT THE SERAIL TOP. THE DESTROYER LANDING";

[2] "THE PARADE AT THE GALATA BRIDGE"; [3-4] "LIEUTENANT MÖLKE WITH THE FLAG OF THE DETACHMENT HEADING THE RIFLING"

(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

front. He arrives there before the 3rd decisive battle in Gaza. Antoine's lengthy description of his travels on the Baghdad Railway, and his stories about the Gaza front, along with his caricatures and drawings, also add to the historiography of WWI:

"Before us, the horizon formed a line from one end to the other entirely illuminated by the explosions of the shells and the flashes of the gunfire. I had the impression that I was in Istanbul on the side of Asia and had the entryway of the Horn of Gold in front of me with the bridge of Galata lit by multiple electric lamps. Above this line, many luminous points lit up and were extinguished: it was the shrapnel exploding in the air. Such was my first view of the front. The spectacle was impressive. For a long time, I remained contemplating it and I thought that each one of these luminous points or other explosions that I saw perhaps caused the death of one or several soldiers."



FIGURE 6
"MY FIRST SIGHT OF THE FRONT UPON THE EVENING OF MY ARRIVAL AT DJOULIS"
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

Here, Antoine seems to create a dissolve in his drawings and in his description of the horizon in the morning. In cinematic terms, a dissolve is a screen image that slowly disappears while the next one gradually appears. The images of the night slowly vanish and now in the morning, we see war planes and an English blimp on the horizon, spying on the Central Powers' forces. Antoine indicates that the sounds of the night before continue in the morning. This continuing sound which is called sound bridge in cinema, connects the two scenes together thematically and make the transition from night into the morning smoother:

"The following morning, I wanted to see the horizon, which the night before had been so illuminated. The deafening noise continued just as intensely, but apart from the light fog caused by the smoke released from the shell explosions and by the sand projected into the air, I saw nothing in particular. Above this fog, several black points moved: it was the planes of the Germans or the English. An English 'sausage' serving as an observation post climbed slowly in the sky. Protected by the planes, it spied on the movement of the troops and the positions of our batteries, and reported them by telephone to the English artillerymen. It was eventually struck down by one of our long-range cannons, but the outcome of the battle was already decided."

Here, in his last sentence Antoine again provides foreshadowing for the reader the outcome of the battle. Events turn sour for the Central Powers in Palestine, and the battles at the Gaza front are becoming more and more vicious. Nevertheless, because of his ever-present luck, Antoine stays at the back of the front, thirty kilometers away from it, most of the time. He is sent to the front only a couple of times. He describes his adventures at the front with great excitement when he goes there for the first time. His mission is to send a telephone message to the Austro-Hungarian command post, which was on the front line:

"He [a Turkish officer in the calling station] lost an infinite amount of time trying to make contact with the Austrian central telephone station, which, I learned later, was well hidden beneath the earth. He finally reached it on the other end of the line, but I did not even have the time to say "Hello!"

before the connection was interrupted. Much later in Damascus, my comrade C. Barabich, today an attaché of the Head Office of the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul like myself, told me that he was on duty at the Austrian telephone station that morning, and at the precise moment that he heard my call, a large caliber shell launched by an enemy war vessel demolished his shelter and he was buried alive under the rubble. They had great difficulty rescuing him.”

Here, with the way he describes his ordeal while making the phone call, Antoine creates a cross-cut, also known as parallel editing, in filmmaking. A cross-cut occurs when the film editor cuts between two different scenes that are happening at the same time in different spaces. As in cross-cutting, by describing what was happening on the other side of the line at the same time while he was trying to make the phone call, Antoine tells two simultaneous stories at once, and the information given to the audience feels more immediate.

In the same part of his visit to the front, Antoine adds suspense to his adventure through the way he depicts the events happening afterwards. Now, things become tense because the sun is almost up and Antoine has to reach the truck where the driver is waiting for him, to leave the front at once. He describes the events taking place in quick successions and creates a scene similar to fast cutting in cinema:

“Before us, probably leaving the trenches, some Turkish infantrymen, deployed as a skirmish contingent, advanced impassively with their sacks on their backs and their rifles in hand in lines of one hundred to one-hundred-fifty men, each rank followed by an officer clutching a pistol. Were they going to attack or were they moving to other trenches? I had neither the time nor the curiosity to find out. I only know that I felt great pity for these men, who, on that morning, were marching toward death, whereas I – favored by destiny – was moving in the opposite direction to shelter in the ravine toward my truck, which would drive me rapidly out of the danger zone in several minutes.

We stepped over crates, shells, cans, and many other things scattered in the ravine and we finally arrived to the place of rendez-vous. The sun was high above the horizon. The driver was furious. He received us poorly: ‘One more minute and you wouldn’t have found me here,’ he shouted. ‘Where

were you strolling about? Don't you see that the planes have already spotted us?' He departed immediately in fourth gear seeking to clear a path across the crevices... Several meters from the place where our truck had awaited us, a large shell had just exploded. Thick smoke climbed from the ground and debris from the palm trees and cacti burst into the air. The driver had left just in time. One minute more and we, too, would have been among the palm trees reduced to pieces."

Here, it is also important to point out that a recurring theme in his memoirs is his ever-present luck. In cinema, a reoccurring theme like this is called a leitmotif. In his memoirs, like in the part above, Antoine explains that he was saved from difficult situations many times with the help of his luck, or with the presence of Providence watching over him.

Throughout his memoirs, Antoine did not only pay attention to the visual quality of his story. The sounds also take up an important part in his narrative. In powerful movies, usually the quality of the sound track is as strong as the images. Here, like in many other parts in his memoirs, he masterfully describes the sounds he hears during the British attack. He practically creates the sound design of this scene on paper, while describing the beginning of the British offensive with heavy bombing during the 3rd Gaza Battle:

"From behind our tree, we followed the trajectory of these projectiles with our hearing, and all turned around the trunk in two compact rows, practically laying on the earth to shelter ourselves from the explosions. At the moment of the explosion, it seemed that we heard thousands of birds escaping swiftly from all the branches of this tree. The displacement of air produced this phenomenon. Sometimes it happened that the trunk cracked beneath the striking of iron pieces or from the sand it absorbed on our behalf. It was quite irritating and we did not dare leave this frail shelter to seek a better one for fear of receiving a direct shell hit. They fell about everywhere without a determined target, it seemed."

Almost every successful story in cinema needs a real hero but also a real antagonist for the hero to confront. In Antoine's story on Palestine, the real antagonists seem to be the Arabs in Palestine. Antoine almost always talks about the Arabs he encounters in Palestine with a condescending tone. When



FIGURE 7
"ARABS FALLING ON THEIR KNEES..."
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

describing the troops running away from the British offensive in Palestine, he also talks about how the local people had to leave their homes to run away from the arriving British army. It is another important piece of history that Antoine wrote about and drew on paper. He describes one of the events he witnessed as if he was watching a burlesque comedy, although it was probably a tragic scene rather than a comedy:

"A little after leaving Jerusalem, we saw a group of three Arabs dressed in European fashion crossing the fields and following the road. They were strangely dressed. Then a very comic scene unfolded before our eyes. ... The lieutenant seemed to be worked up by the Arabs. Who knows what dirty tricks they had played on his soldiers to cause him to display such a great

furor toward our peaceful voyagers. He advanced toward them with a menacing air. The three Arabs were frightened and began to run across the fields. The officer pursued them and passed them, then turning brusquely, he brought his rifle to his shoulder and pretended to fire at them. Fear transformed into terror. The Arabs threw themselves to their knees, with both arms lifted to the sky. In one hand, they held their enormous umbrellas and in the other their small suitcases, which certainly contained their fortune. They chanted in chorus, dragging themselves before the lieutenant: 'Pardon, pardon, pardon!'

This burlesque scene lasted a good while, then the savage officer who could no longer remain serious lowered his rifle and turned toward us, shouting: 'Beware... If I catch you again, I will have you shot!' and he leapt into his automobile, which sped away."

THE CITY UNDER OCCUPATION

After elaborating on the retreat of the Central powers at great length, Antoine writes about life in occupied Istanbul. This part of the memoirs is perhaps the most original because it talks about the consequences of the occupation for the soldiers who served in the Austro-Hungarian and German army, a topic not touched upon very often in the Ottoman Empire's WWI historiography. Antoine describes how the soldiers were hunted down in the streets of Istanbul and were forced to go to the newly emerged countries in Europe, since now, because of their nationality, these soldiers were deemed to belong to these new countries. Antoine himself had to be very careful in the streets of Istanbul for now he was called a 'Kraut'¹ by the occupying armies and the people who supported them in Istanbul. Antoine was chased on Istanbul's streets several times and was barely able to escape from the Allied soldiers in the city.

Finally, Antoine concludes the part about his army life with a resolution. A resolution in filmmaking would explain the outcome of a certain story or how things turn out for the important characters in a film:

1 'Kraut' is a German word used as a derogatory term for a German soldier during WWI. Antoine belonged to the Austro-Hungarian army and so was wrongly called a Kraut.

“That is how human life ends, all of a sudden, when one least expects it. Each person never imagines that they will die, and even if it were to happen, it would be as late as possible in any case... It was in this way that during the funeral ceremony of my comrade I freed myself to relive that period of my life during the ‘Great War.’ When I came back to reality, mass had ended. I looked at myself: I no longer wore a uniform and was no longer twenty years old, but forty-seven. The future was no longer before me: it was already behind me.”

HIS PAST AS A PROSPECT FOR A FUTURE FILM

With these sentences, Antoine closes the section about his life in the army. His wish to chronicle, preserve, and communicate everything he lived through has been successful. Now, a hundred years later, his memories will provide an exhibition, books in English and Turkish, and several articles and presentations at international conferences. As mentioned above, the memoirs will also be used to produce a documentary film on the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of modern Turkey. His ideas, wishes, troubles, worries, and hopes will reach the large audience he seems to write for a century ago.

ANTOINE KÖPE'S TRAIL OF TEARS AND LAUGHTER: THE SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF HIS JOURNEY FROM CHILDHOOD IN SALONICA TO MOBILIZATION IN WWI SYRIA, AND BACK TO CONSTANTINOPLE

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For the general reader, Antoine Köpe's memoirs and cartoons are a humorous and often sardonic look at a soldier's life in WWI, written in the same spirit as the famous European memoirs *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *The Fateful Adventures of the Good Soldier Svejk*.¹ For the professional historian, however, Antoine's personal archive represents a rare eyewitness account from the Ottoman front of the war. In contrast to the bounty of memorabilia from the Western front, relatively few personal accounts by soldiers serving in the East have survived.

Antoine gives voice to those who experienced the war from within the non-Turkish, Levantine communities of the Ottoman Empire. Born in Constantinople, he grew up in Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece) and spoke

1 Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. A.W. Wheen. New York, 1985; Jaroslav Hašek, *The Fateful Adventures of the Good Soldier Svejk. Book One*, transl. Zdeněk Sadloň and Emmett M. Joyce. Chicago, 1997 is a newer translation. It is also available in an earlier translation by Cecil Parrott (New York, 1973/1974). The books, originally published in 1928 and 1921 respectively, undoubtedly influenced the style in which Köpe wrote his memoir after 1945.

rudimentary Turkish and Greek. He also struggled in German, the language spoken by his superiors in the Austro-Hungarian army. His mother tongue was French, the language of the enemy in WWI. Antoine's memoirs show how lost and lonely he was as he traveled across Anatolia and Syria to the Palestine front, and even in while driving a car across the Golden Horne to the Turkish side of Constantinople. He reminds us of how late Ottoman society was ethnically and religiously segmented, but at the same time, cosmopolitan. Antoine expresses a remarkable loyalty to – even fondness for – his Turkish Muslim neighbors. But his memoir also bears witness to the divisions among peoples of the Ottoman Empire as it crumbled under the weight of total war. As a very young man, he writes at times with naivete and ignorance about the events and people he encountered.

This essay follows Antoine Köpe from his childhood in Salonica to his eyewitness account of how the people of Constantinople welcomed WW I in August 1914, through his own enlistment and journey across the empire to the Gaza front in 1917, his hospitalization in Damascus, and finally to his return home to experience the Allied occupation of Constantinople. We will pause along Antoine's trail to regard how he depicted it in photographs, sketches, and cartoons, and to fill in the social landscape through which he moved. Viewed within a critical historical context, his family memoir offers a rare glimpse of how a Hungarian-French family negotiated its place in a critical era of rapid change in world balances of power, the boundaries between East and West, and the relations between Muslims and Christians.

SALONICA, 1908–1912

Antoine Köpe's childhood saw the best of times and the worst of times in the Ottoman Empire. His family had move to the port city of Salonica in 1897, when he was an infant, because his father Charles Köpe had obtained a prestigious job as an inspector of the Ottoman state railroad. His position brought him in contact with the emerging elite. For example, Charles knew Cemal Pasha before he became a leader of the ruling party, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).

In 1908, the year that Antoine turned 11 years old, the CUP sparked the constitutional revolution, a dawn of hope for equality and peaceful coexistence among the diverse peoples in the empire, both Muslim and non-Muslim, Turkish and non-Turkish. The city's population was nearly evenly divided: 30 percent were registered as Ottomans, mostly Muslim Turks living in the upper town; 40% as Jews, living in the lower town near the sea; 35% as Greeks. On July 24, the Greek archbishop, Turkish mufti, and Bulgarian committee president appeared on a balcony to embrace one another and announce the restoration of constitutional rule after three decades of Sultan Abdülhamid's tyranny. Postcards in Greek, Turkish and French celebrated the event. The revolution no doubt fortified the Köpes' feeling that they lived on the cusp of modern European civilization, as did many urban Ottomans – not just in the Balkans, but also in Constantinople and Western Anatolia. Salonica's Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Muslims alike wore European styles as they traveled from their suburban homes to department stores to buy Swiss watches, French perfume, and German cutlery.² Antoine Köpe recalls his first trip in an automobile on the streets of the prospering city, which grew to a population of 158,000 by 1913. Antoine assembled family photos like the one below (Fig. 1) on pages in his memoir labeled “the Belle Epoque.”

But political troubles darkened the horizon. Fears of war grew after the Austro-Hungarians annexed Bosnia and Bulgaria asserted independence in 1908. Brigands had long roamed the hilly areas of Macedonia, to the north. Now, they increasingly deployed their violence for political goals, claiming territory for the Greek, Bulgarian, or Macedonian nation. Within the city, Greeks, Turks, Jews, Bulgarians and the small community of Western European immigrants remained segmented. Social boundaries hardened with political suspicion and fear. After 1910 dreams of Ottoman tolerance gave way as the CUP yoked the state administration to a militarized, Turkish nationalist program.

The Köpes' lives turned upside down on 8 November 1912, when the Ottomans surrendered Salonica to the Greek army. After five centuries of rule, shocking defeats during the Balkan Wars virtually erased the Ottoman presence in Europe. The third of Salonica's population that was Greek turned

2 Mark Mazower, *Salonica: City of Ghosts*. New York, 2005, 209–235, 257–262.



FIGURE 1

FAMILY GROUP IN 1903: BACK ROW: "TAÏB, FERDINAND, IDA, CHARLOTTE"; FRONT ROW: "MOM, ME (ANTOINE), EUGÈNE, DAD." (ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

out in force to greet their conquering heroes, waving blue-and-white Greek flags.³ Having lost control of the railroad, Charles Köpe and his family fled along with the city's Ottoman ruling elite. As Hungarians, the Köpes had always considered their people as close friends of the Turks. With the coming of WWI in 1914, the family threw their lot in with them, turning their backs on the French heritage of Antoine's mother and grandmother. His father Charles, who had spent his childhood in France, would never again board the train at Salonica for his annual vacations in Vichy.

3 Mazower, *Salonica*, 275–285.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 1914–1916

Antoine returned to Constantinople, the city of his birth, in a state of turmoil. Tens of thousands of Muslim refugees from the Balkan Wars were flooding the capital. Among them was the family of the future Turkish president, Mustafa Kemal, which had also left Salonica. Most refugees were penniless peasants. Mosques, homes, and public gardens were turned into hospitals and shelters for them.⁴

Housing was scarce, but Charles presumably used his connections to secure lodging for the family in Pera, the European quarter of the city. Antoine entered another French school. French was the lingua franca of the neighborhood. And as in Salonica, there were many Greeks and Ladino-speaking Jews. The family's close ties to CUP leaders, who ruled the empire after their January 1913 coup, gave Antoine's older brother Taïb, a photographer, access to historic events that opened WWI.

Constantinople had modernized since the family left in 1897. The streets shined with 600 new streetlamps and hummed to the sound of electric trams installed only in the past five years, since the 1908 revolution. Twelve new telephone exchanges had opened in February 1914. More than 100 kilometers of telephone lines now permitted residents across the capital to chat, instantly. Below the streets lay a new sewage system. Antoine and Taïb thrilled at the introduction of every new technological advance. Taïb claimed to have taken the first aerial photo of Constantinople from an airplane.

Pera and Beyoğlu were the capital's showcase of cultural modernity, much to the shock and envy of the city's Muslim Turks, who lived across the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Many thought of Pera as Frangistan, or a foreign land. With the completion of a new bridge across the Golden Horn in 1912, they gained easier access to what was the marvelous and foreign world of Levantines, European diplomats, and the public social life of the quarter. The Grand Rue de Pera (today's İstiklal Caddesi) was lined with coffeeshouses, beer gardens, ice cream shops and cinemas not to be found elsewhere in the city. Here, too, were

4 *Ibid.*, 313–318. The date was October 26, 1912 according to the old calendar, November 8 according to the new style Greek calendar: Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922–1934*. New York, 2006, 237.

top schools like the Galatasaray. The sheer wealth of the district contrasted ever more sharply with the capital's Muslim neighborhoods, where refugees settled.⁵

The Balkan Wars had opened new political divisions in Constantinople society. Muslim elites condemned Europeans' indifference toward the war crimes that Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians committed against the Muslims they deported. Turkish-language newspapers screamed for revenge. Satirical cartoons linked diseases to foreign contagion and European corruption of women's morals. Cholera, which hit the city at the start of the First Balkan War in November 1912, was portrayed in satirical cartoons as a gaunt European lady. Fear that it would engulf the capital was one reason the Ottomans called for a truce.⁶ By the end of the fighting in the summer of 1913, more than 400,000 Muslims had been pushed out of the Balkans. During WWI, waves of Turkish and Russian refugees continued stream into Constantinople, lifting its population to more than one million.⁷

Misery ignited talk of retaliation. The government launched a drive to expel 100,000 residents they deemed Greek out of Thrace (west of the capital). After Greece seized three Ottoman islands, Greek leaders in Constantinople met with Minister of Interior Talat Pasha to discuss the safety of their community.⁸

As a teenager with rudimentary Turkish, Antoine was likely unaware of the seismic shift in politics in his new hometown. His memoir evokes sympathy for the Turks and Germans. He shared Turks' hope that the war might bring redemption for the Balkan defeat. But with every press report of atrocities against Muslims in the Balkan Wars, the liberal pluralism that had blossomed

5 Murat Gül, *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul: Transformation and Modernisation of a City*. London, 2009, 63–67; Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Modern Istanbul*. Cambridge, 2010, 313–327.

6 Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908–1911*. Albany, 2000, 275–287; Hikmet Özdemir, *The Ottoman Army 1914–1918: Disease and Death on the Battlefield*. Salt Lake City, 2008, 16–26.

7 Nur Bilge Criss, *Constantinople under Allied Occupation 1918–1923*. Leiden, 1999, 20; Justin McCarthy, *The Ottoman Peoples and the End of Empire*. London, 2002, 92.

8 Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War*. New York, 2008, 42–56.

after the 1908 revolution faded.⁹ What Antoine perceived as Ottoman solidarity was at times cynical sectarian politics. One motive for recruiting Christians into the Ottoman army was fear that they would cooperate with the Allies.¹⁰ The army recruited young men with explicit calls to the Muslim faithful. Pamphlets quoted the Qur'an and argued that military duty was the sixth pillar of Islam.¹¹ Non-Muslim Ottoman citizens were transferred into segregated units, often unarmed labor battalions. Köpe made little reference to Christian discontent in the mobilization.

Young Antoine experienced the so-called "Days of August" at the start of WWI with boyish enthusiasm for action, and with confidence in the mutual sympathy of Turks and Hungarians. He described the arrival of German allies on August 16, 1914 with the ironic humor typical of a teenager: "It was quite amusing to see blond, well-built Turkish sailors marching impeccably down the main street of Pera (İstiklal Caddesi), almost all of them decorated with the Iron Cross."¹² The sailors were Germans who had escaped the British Royal Navy aboard the cruisers Goeben and Breslau. They had sailed from the Adriatic to the Dardanelles and taken the neutral Turkish flag for cover. It was not yet publicly known that the Ottoman government had signed a secret treaty with the Germans. But the Constantinople public had already been fired up against the British by the confiscation of two Turkish battleships two weeks beforehand. Citizens had contributed to a fund drive by the Ottoman Navy League to pay for them.¹³

By contrast, Antoine's description of Turkish recruits captured how the Ottomans, still reeling from the Balkan defeat, had not yet re-armed for another war. "The army stores did not possess the necessary stocks for such a mass levying of forces, so they distributed to the mobilized soldiers all that

9 Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities*. Salt Lake City, 2014; Eyal Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and their Aftermath*. Oxford, 2016; Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War*. Leiden, 2012, 58.

10 Ellinor Morack, "The Ottoman Greeks and the Great War: 1912–1922," Helmet Bley and Anorthe Kremers (eds.), *The World During the First World War*. Essen, 2014, 219–222.

11 Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 71–84.

12 Antoine Köpe, *Memoirs of Our Youth* (from here on Köpe, *Memoirs*), Book 2, "The Goeben". References to Antoine's memoirs are to the unpublished English translation of the text.

13 Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 48–49.



FIGURE 2
MASS DEMONSTRATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE ABOLITION OF THE CAPITULATIONS,
SULTAN AHMET SQUARE
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

existed in the depots; in other words, all types of uniforms including those dating from 20 to 30 years ago: blue, black khaki, jackets and pants too long or too short. Dressed this way, these mobilized soldiers gave the impression of insane men escaped from an asylum, in disguise, rather than the future heroes of the battlefields.” Like all belligerents who mobilized in August 1914, the Ottomans expected the war would be a short one. CUP leaders even hoped that the war would be over before they had to fire a shot.¹⁴

Even before it was publicly known that the Ottoman regime had signed a secret treaty of alliance with the Central Powers, Antoine’s family expressed loyalty to the Turks with whom his father Charles Köpe had worked. Antoine

14 Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*, 1–41; Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 39–70.

described one of the largest nationalist demonstrations staged in Constantinople at the war's start. Held in Sultanahmet Square on September 10, 1914, it celebrated the abolition of European capitulation treaties. Speakers promised that the war would bring new prosperity to an empire freed of burdensome trade restrictions imposed by the British and the French.¹⁵ Antoine's brother Taïb was so well connected that he was able to take rare photographs of the Sultanahmet demonstration (Fig. 2). Their apparent support for breaking treaties with European powers was unusual for a family living in Pera, where many had made their fortunes through privileges accorded through the treaties.

On October 29, 1914, the Ottomans entered the shooting war with a battle against Russia on the Black Sea. "Great overexcitement reigned in the capital," Antoine recalled. "The populace cried 'To war!'" The first Allied bombardment of the Dardanelles straits, south of Constantinople, came a few days later. On November 14, the government publicly declared holy war on the Entente. It organized a huge demonstration that day at the Fatih mosque in the old city. The crowd marched to the Sublime Porte and then to pay respects at the German and Austro-Hungarian embassies. The public alliance of Crescent and Cross echoed Antoine's private desire to fight alongside Ottoman soldiers. First, however, he had to break ties with his Francophone upbringing, and he had to reach the critical age of 16.¹⁶

One morning that winter, a police captain arrived at Antoine's French high school, St. Michael's. He ordered students to take their books and return home. Around the city, the government seized French schools and deported their faculty. The French had run the most extensive foreign school network in the capital, with more than 10,000 students. They had even managed the premier high school, Galatasaray. British schools, fewer in number, were also closed down. Because the United States had not entered the war, American universities – Robert College for men and Constantinople College for women, remained open.

While parents worried, students were overjoyed to be free from lessons. "Reading newspapers interested us more than Algebra or literature", Antoine

15 Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 60–62.

16 Beşikçi, *Ottoman Mobilization*, 63–66.



FIGURE 3
"ONE OF MY CARICATURES PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL LA DEFENSE IN ISTANBUL IN 1915-1916. THIS ONE OF THE ENGLISH-FRENCH CONCERNED DEFEAT AT THE DARDANELLES (MARCH 1915)."
THE CAPTION READS: "HAVING REACHED THE SUMMIT, THEY ENDEAVORED TO DESCEND."
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

recalled. In March 1915, he published a cartoon celebrating a Turkish victory over the French and British at Gallipoli, ironically in a local French-language paper (Fig. 3). Since the start of the war Antoine had chronicled major events in homemade cartoon books.

Foreign schools closed across the empire. Especially hard hit was Syria, where Antoine would be deployed in 1917. French and British missionary schools taught thousands of Syrian children, not just Christians. The governor, Cemal Pasha, enlisted local elites and women's groups, to open substitute,

“national” schools. Instruction aimed to Turkify and Islamize populations that the CUP had been influenced by British and French culture. However, German and Austrian education was encouraged a prerequisite to technical education. The Austrian Orient Mission in Syria launched a program to recruit the most advanced boys to attend Austrian schools.¹⁷

War conditions prompted change in ethnic, religious, gender, and class relations in the capital – and beyond. Where locally run schools remained in session, lessons became politicized. Greek schools in Constantinople quietly supported the nationalism of the Greek government. Meanwhile, the city’s Turkish schools began hiring women to replace young men sent to the front. To meet the new need, the government opened a new women’s teaching college.¹⁸ Halide Edib, a prominent Turkish writer, took a job as an inspector of government Islamic schools. When she visited them in poor neighborhoods, children mocked her fashionable clothing. Edib became acutely aware of the class tensions.¹⁹

Armenian schools in the capital, meanwhile, suffered not only teacher shortages but also closures after the April 1915 arrest of more than 100 Armenian intellectuals. The arrests were the first stage in the mass deportation and murder of the empire’s Armenian population. Armenians generally lived in neighborhoods outside of Pera. It is nonetheless striking that Antoine made no mention of their annihilation in his memoir, even when he traveled, as a soldier, through the Anatolian provinces that had been emptied of their centuries-old Armenian presence.

17 M. Talha Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria: Cemal Pasha’s Governorate during World War I, 1914–1917*. New York, 2014, 11, 24, 93–98, 180–191.

18 Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 1999, 25–26, 32–33.

19 Halide Edib, *House with Wisteria: Memoirs of Halide Edib*. Charlottesville, 2003, 285–301.

ENLISTMENT IN THE ORIENTKORPS AT CONSTANTINOPLE, OCTOBER 1916

On October 10, 1916, Antoine was finally permitted enlist in the Austro-Hungarian army. His memoir reveals his intense desire to strengthen his Hungarian identity and his imperial ties –perhaps to compensate for his prior affiliation with the culture of the French enemy.

It was not easy. At the induction ceremony, the young recruits turned toward a crucifix and pledged allegiance to Emperor Franz Joseph. Antoine mouthed the pledge, but he could not fully understand its meaning in German. His discomfort intensified six weeks later, when the 86-year-old emperor died. All Austro-Hungarian soldiers in Constantinople gathered at the Taksim military field to pledge allegiance to the new emperor, Charles. Soldiers were grouped to make their pledges in their native language: German, Hungarian, Czech, Croat, Romanian and Italian. “When my turn came, I was very embarrassed. I was in reality Hungarian, but I did not understand a word of it,” Antoine wrote. Since he knew some Italian, he was placed with thirty soldiers from Trieste. “We were at war against Italy and here were Austrian soldiers declaring themselves Italian.”²⁰

Antoine joked about being a misfit, but the mishaps were poignant. One day, an officer asked that he take him to the Grand Bazaar in old Stamboul, but he didn’t know how to get there – he’d lived in the city only three years, and mostly on the European side. “It is inadmissible that a man from Constantinople does not know his native city!” the officer scolded. Assigned the job of translator, he resorted to trickery to hide his bad German and the limits of his Turkish. At the same time, his humble Hungarian roots clashed with the infamous arrogance of his Austrian officers. He wrote with contempt about one officer who claimed undeserved medals and profited on the black market. In contrast, he wrote with sympathy about half-starved Ottoman soldiers who were too exhausted to dig a new road. Antoine presents himself as a bumbling everyman, disoriented in a world upended by nationalism and war.

20 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, “The Death of François-Joseph”.

Nonetheless, Antoine thrilled at the simple joys of army life – he received better food than civilians, and even learned to drive a truck. “Drivers belonged, like the aviators today, to a privileged category of the army,” he recalled. “On the collar of my tunic was sewn the insignia of the drivers, a winged steering wheel.” He had barely ever even ridden in an automobile, since his first ride in 1910, offered by an Armenian friend of his father, Mr. Minassian, in Salonica.²¹ The memoir makes no mention of the mass deportation and murder of Armenians, nor of the smaller scale deportations of Greeks earlier in the war.

TO SYRIA, SEPTEMBER 1917

In September 1917, Antoine’s unit was mobilized to the Gaza Front in Palestine, where Ottoman, Austrian and German armies battled against British forces.²² After loading barges of equipment on a train, they headed east across Anatolia. The train traveled slowly because it was fueled by wood. The Ottomans had runs short of coal, and to run military trains it chopped down thousands of trees. Syrians today still speak of forests that disappeared. Days later the soldiers caught sight of the snowy peaks of the Taurus mountains. Labor battalions were digging tunnels through the mountains, to connect Anatolia rail lines to those in Syria and Mesopotamia. For now, the Orientkorps had to offload the train near Pozanti, north of Adana. They then crossed into Syria, an arid and brown land compared to lush Anatolia.

While Antoine’s Turkish was not yet fluent, his memoir reveals the landscape through the eyes of Turks who Orientalized the Arab provinces as a wild backwater. Antoine wrote that he was heading to the “Tropics”, to a warmer but less modern world. Jackals howled at night. By day, they met a caravan of camels driven by Kurdish nomads, whom he regarded as exotic Orientals. The Kurds prepared a frugal dinner consisting only of thin pancakes of “azine” bread.

21 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, “Misadventures”.

22 He was a driver in Turkish Column No. 1, attached to the mountain howitzer battery No. 2/6 of the Austro-Hungarian Expeditionary Force: Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, “The Hospital”. The remainder of this section is drawn from several chapters of Book 3.

Antoine theorized that the bread was an ancient dish, akin to the Israelites' matzoh.

The meagerness of the Kurds' meal was not, however, likely due to any primitive culture; rather, it reflected desperate food shortages. Syria had suffered multiple epidemics, deportations, and famine. By 1917, the region's agriculture had collapsed. Armenian farmers of Cilicia had been deported and likely killed; newly settled Balkan refugees did not know how to farm the land. Most able-bodied Arab Muslim men had been recruited into the army, leaving women and the elderly to scrape a living. The army had also requisitioned livestock and tools. Residents lined up at missionary stations for daily rations. Malaria spread mercilessly. In Lebanon, the famine was even more acute, caused by poor harvests and the Allied blockade. Tens of thousands had already died because of it.²³

At Aleppo, they took showers, cleaned their trucks, and headed to the famous Baron Hotel, where Turkish and Viennese music played. Antoine makes no mention of the devastation in the city outside, where Armenian refugees squatted and died in the streets.²⁴ At Damascus, he and his unit camped at the Hijaz Railway Station, the terminus of a line that extended south to the holy city of Medina. Local men wore long "Arab" tunics with European-style jackets, Antoine marveled. The city's covered markets were beautiful, and Turkish pastries were on sale: baklava, ekmek kadayif, pistachio cakes. Otherwise, Antoine complained, the city seemed lifeless and empty. While Antoine drew cartoons of fellow soldiers and his camps, he drew almost no cartoons of the people in Damascus or elsewhere in Syria and the Holy Land. His memoirs instead include postcards he bought on site (Fig. 4), which emphasizes the emptiness of city streets and Antoine's own distance from the Arab citizens of the empire.

Had Antoine had more time to explore Damascus, he would have discovered a population devastated by hunger and disease. In 1916, the city's Austrian consul had exposed corruption on the black market for food, prompting the

23 Chris Gratien and Graham Auman Pitts, 'Towards an Environmental History of the First World War', in Bley and Kremers (eds.), *The World During the First World War*, 239–352.

24 Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 114–119; Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts: The Middle East in the Great War*. Cambridge, 2014, 99–102, 141–143, *passim*.



FIGURE 4

"DAMASCUS IN 1917: MARKET STREET"

(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

military governor (Charles Köpe's former friend, Cemal Pasha) to fire the mayor. Syrians confronted the coming winter with fear of mass starvation. Antoine was also apparently unaware that the city was just then suffering the ravages of cholera. In the autumn, the government would install a new sewage system to reduce the spread of disease.²⁵

Antoine was also unaware of the political reasons for Damascus' empty streets. In May 1916, Cemal Pasha had hanged the sons of Syria's most prominent families in that same central square on suspicions of planning a national revolt against Ottoman rule. He ruled the city with an iron rod.

25 Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 243–249; Salim Tamari, *Year of the Locust: A Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past*. Berkeley, 2011, 111–114.

Though shocked by the executions, most Syrians remained loyal to the Empire – and especially to the Caliph. They had continued to fight alongside Turks in the Ottoman army. But the state's inability to assure their families' daily bread was eroding that support. Many feared that the Turks wanted to exterminate the Arabs in Syria – just as the Armenians had been in Anatolia. Syrians had witnessed the exodus of emaciated refugees into their provinces.²⁶

In fact, Cemal's executions had sparked the Arab Revolt, launched in June 1916 at Mecca. Arabs fought against the CUP's betrayal of their rights guaranteed in the constitutional revolution and particularly against Cemal's cruel regime, which had done little to prevent the deaths of more than 100,000 from famine so far. Two months before Antoine's unit passed through Damascus, the Arab army had taken the critical port of Aqaba to the south. From Aqaba, they aimed to link with the British army in southern Syria, or Palestine. In desperation, German officers had taken control of the Fourth Army from Cemal and mobilized Antoine's Austro-Hungarian unit to help prevent Britain's advance from Egypt.²⁷ Antoine did not yet know it, but he was heading into what would become known as the third and final battle of Gaza.

Antoine's description of Palestine reflects both the Turco-German hostility toward Arabs and his own Catholic romanticism about the Holy Land. Short of rations after leaving Damascus, his unit stopped in a village. "We were hungry, and we totally lacked bread," Antoine wrote.²⁸ When they asked to buy bread from Arab villagers, however, the local imam refused their paper money. (Cemal Pasha had recently sparked a controversy by imposing an inflated official value to the bills.) A police officer intervened and forced the imam to sell the bread. But the Arabs got their revenge in the end, Antoine explained: the bread was inedible. This was not likely an act of malice, however. By 1917, most Syrians confronted similarly inedible bread.

26 Najwa al-Qattan, 'Historicising Hunger: The Famine in Wartime Lebanon and Syria', in T. G. Fraser (ed.), *The First World War and its Aftermath: The Shaping of the Middle East*. London, 2015, 124–125; L. Schatkowski Schilcher, 'The Famine of 1915–1918 in Greater Syria', in John P. Spagnolo (ed.), *Problems of the Modern Middle East in Historical Perspective*. Reading, 1992, 229–258.

27 Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 258–263; Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*. New York, 2015, 342–348.

28 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 3, "Damascus".

Antoine described Arabs as backward, brutal heathens without principles. "The Arabs hated us because we were Christians and also the allies of the Turks, whom they hated. Unfortunately, many of our soldiers were victims of this hate," he wrote. His views likely derived from Austrian and Turkish officers who condemned Arab disloyalty to the Empire.²⁹

But on October 22, he thrilled at the sight of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. "I perceived Jerusalem below and far away on the horizon like a marvelous painting, with its old walls, its houses constructed of white stones, its churches, and its numerous steeples, which shined under the dazzling noon sun," he wrote.³⁰ He wanted to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a pilgrimage destination marking the burial site of Jesus Christ. The Holy City had been under Muslim rule for nearly 1300 years, except for the brief reign of European Crusaders in the 12th century. Paradoxically, Antoine and his fellow Austro-Hungarians now fought to keep Jerusalem under Muslim rule.

Jerusalem had been on edge for months. As British warplanes soared in the sky, bread prices also soared. Typhus was rampant, even among the elite diplomatic corps. Before the war, Muslims, Christians and Jews in the city had coexisted peacefully. But now the sinews of solidarity strained. The city's Jewish population, once the majority, had dwindled to 26,000 out of a total population of 70,000 people. Thousands of Jews had left after Cemal Pasha demanded that they adopt Ottoman citizenship. Christian patriarchs worried about guarding the precious church relics from theft – not just by enemy invaders, but also by petty thieves seeking funds to buy food.³¹ Fearing Christians' foreign ties, the Ottoman regime spied on them and expelled some from the city. Muslim residents were shocked and humiliated to see Christians and Jews vengefully assigned to garbage battalions tasked with cleaning streets. But they also felt envy that foreign food aid from the United States (which had not

29 Nogales, Rafael de, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*. London, 1926, 298, 301. Nogales' memoir describes the battle of Gaza from within the Ottoman ranks. On p. 301 he portrays the "low-caste Arab recruit" as a "traitor, liar, and deserter by nature. The only way to subjugate and rule him is to pump him full of lead or lay on the lash".

30 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 3, "Jerusalem".

31 Eduardo Manzano Moreno and Roberto Mazza (eds.), *Jerusalem in World War I. The Palestine Diary of a European Diplomat - Conde de Ballobar*. London, 2010, 127–167.

declared war on the Ottomans) had been directed disproportionately to non-Muslims.³²

Remarkably, Antoine found his father's letter waiting for him at the post office. The postal clerk was an Orthodox Jew, wearing a long coat and curls at his temples. At the bank, he was surprised to find a Greek man who had once worked for his father in Edirne. More than 1,900 kilometers from Constantinople, Antoine still moved within the far-flung social web of the waning Ottoman empire.

THE GAZA FRONT, NOVEMBER 1917

The Orientkorps did not tarry long in the holy city. Within days Antoine's unit rushed southwest across the desert to the Gaza front. The city had been evacuated and the Great Mosque converted into a munitions storehouse. The garrison was a maze of blackened walls that had withstood British bombardment six months before, during the first two battles of Gaza.³³ Antoine joined Austro-Hungarian artillerymen in the oasis village of Djoulis. His unit transported munitions every night to the trenches at the front. They carried back the wounded on their return. On the horizon, shells exploded in the sky like fireworks. After the first few nights, Antoine learned to sleep despite the deafening noise. But he remained on the lookout for Arab snipers and spies, locating munitions caches. Within days the British had crashed through the first line of trenches.

"From Jerusalem, the German Marshal von Falkenhayn ordered resistance at any cost in order to prevent the enemy from setting foot in the Holy land," Antoine recalled.³⁴ But they were short of artillery guns and shells because Allied battleships had bombarded the railway. On November 7, the Orientkorps began its retreat under a rain of shells launched from 30 kilometers away.³⁵

32 Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem between Ottoman and British Rule*. Syracuse, 2011, 3, 22–52; Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 106–107.

33 Nogales, *Four Years*, 299, 328.

34 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "Moonlight in the Desert".

35 Rogan, *Fall of Ottomans*, 347–348.

Antoine rushed to the telegraph hut to signal Jerusalem of their return. He found the operator there with his young daughter. "How dare you expose an innocent child to this?" Köpe asked the man. "This girl is my child," he responded. "I am from Constantinople and my wife died a month ago. I have no one to whom I can entrust her."³⁶ He was deeply impressed by the fortitude of Turkish soldiers.

Their truck took on new loads of crates and soldiers at Jerusalem, and sped toward Nablus, the new staging ground. For lack of provisions, Antoine and his comrades sold all their equipment for food. By the first week of December, they were forced to withdraw farther, back to Damascus.

DAMASCUS, DECEMBER 1917

Antoine arrived in Damascus under a cold rain, literally in rags. He had not eaten for days and he found no room in the barracks. After a night spent on a damp terrace, he headed to the Austro-Hungarian military hospital, afflicted with dysentery. He would remain for three months. Bathed and shaven, he was assigned a bed, the first he had seen in months. "I still have not forgotten the sensation of well-being I felt as I slid between the sheets."³⁷ A few days later, Jerusalem fell to the British.

Then a political earthquake rattled Damascus. Cemal Pasha publicized evidence of Britain's betrayal of the Arab Revolt. In the secret Sykes-Picot treaty of 1916, Britain had vowed to occupy southern Syria (today Palestine and Jordan) and agreed that France should occupy northern Syria (today Lebanon and Syria). The treaty violated Britain's promise to Sharif Hussein of Mecca that the Arabs would inherit those lands as an independent state in return for their revolt against the Ottomans. Also in November, Britain publicly announced plans to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine, also in violation of its promise to the Arabs. In light of these revelations, some Arab leaders in Damascus embraced anew loyalty to the Ottomans –especially when

36 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "The Retreat from Gaza".

37 The hospital was set up temporarily in a hotel near the central, Marjeh Square: Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "Christmas at War".

the hated Cemal Pasha was replaced as governor by the much-respected Mersinli Cemal Pasha.³⁸ All of this occurred even as citizens of Damascus continued to suffer from famine. Starving children lay at the door of the city's venerable Umayyad Mosque to die.

Antoine would have learned little of these events from his bed in the secluded Austro-Hungarian hospital. Austro-Hungarian soldiers enjoyed a remarkable level of well-being compared to Ottoman soldiers and civilians. Antoine admitted in his memoir that he even became fat from the food at the hospital. His bank account swelled with profits he earned by selling military-issue cigarettes to Arabs for twice their value. (Tobacco was scarce in Syria.)³⁹ The only hint of civilians' suffering came with Antoine's discovery that most patients in the hospital suffered not from battle injuries, but rather from venereal disease. Desperate Syrian women survived the war by turning to prostitution. The medical consultations also revealed contempt for these women. "Aren't you ashamed?" a nurse asked a patient with syphilis. "How could you sleep with these dirty Arab women full of diseases?"⁴⁰

Inside the hospital's comforting walls, Antoine discovered a microcosm of the Austro-Hungarian empire. His three-month residency there was the closest he would ever come to actually living in the homeland of which he was a citizen. The head doctor was a Polish major; his assistant was a Czech. In the next bed lay a large German fellow suffering from fever. Like him, another patient, named Niedl, also came from Vienna. When he shared his German poems about the Holy Land, Antoine politely pretended to understand. There was also a Czech artilleryman who talked in his sleep and a "great Polish devil of a Jew named Aaron". He refused to join in anti-Semitic pranks played on Aaron, but nonetheless believed that most Jews shirked their military duty. Similar anti-Semitic rumors circulated back in the Austro-Hungarian empire and Germany, where officials scapegoated Jews for their losses during the "Turnip Winter", when food rations were reduced to that one, miserable vegetable.

38 Salim Tamari, *The Great War and the Remaking of Palestine*. Berkeley, 2017, 18–27; Rogan, *Fall of the Ottomans*, 355–359.

39 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "The Return".

40 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "Harmless Adventures of My Youth".

Just before Christmas, Antoine met three friendly French speakers from Constantinople. Together they celebrated what Antoine called “the last Christmas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.” Each patient received gifts from the Turkish government: a package of “sultanine” raisins labeled as a personal gift from Enver Pasha to the valiant Austro-Hungarian soldiers” and a pack of candles. The Austrian Red Cross and other charities sent a Tyrolean pipe, cigarettes, a brush and comb, notebooks, pencils, and pocketknives. Staff and patients ate cake together and then sang Christmas carols in all the languages of central Europe. The next morning, the chaplain offered Christmas mass in Hungarian. Antoine looked at the young, peasant soldiers around him: Austrians, Hungarians, Czechs, Croats, Poles, and Italians. “All the people who form the veritable ‘United States of Central Europe’ that we would like to reconstitute today, in vain,” he wrote. “These men of different races in the same uniform were living in perfect harmony and willing to die together if necessary.”⁴¹ Antoine composed his memoir after WWII, when Eastern Europe was divided by Cold War rivals. He was pained at the erasure of their common Habsburg past.

Antoine struck another note of melancholy in the story of a funeral held after Christmas. A young Armenian refugee, whose face reminded him of the silent film comedian “Cretinetti” (French actor Andre Deed), had been adopted by the Hungarian artillery corps. He had accompanied them to Gaza and back, only to contract malaria and then die in Damascus. In mourning for their beloved friend, 200 artillerymen marched behind the coffin, with a military band, to the Catholic cemetery. “Cretinetti, the anonymous Armenian, was quickly forgotten,” Antoine later wrote. After WWI, he mused, “Divided Hungary, reduced to its most simple expression with only nine million inhabitants, has completely forgotten that there was a time when its soldiers marched to music on the streets of Jerusalem and Damascus, at a time when its army counted for something.”⁴²

These passages in Antoine’s memoir foretold his own alienation after the war. In March 1918, orders came to return to Constantinople. He traveled home by

41 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, “Christmas at War”.

42 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, “Cretinetti”.

train, passing through the newly dug mountain tunnels. Snow blanketed the pine forests of Anatolia, a welcome change from months in the desert.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 1918 AND AFTER

Antoine lost all his fat within three months of his return to Constantinople. In the spring of 1918 food rations were still short. Communications had broken, too. Friends and relatives asked Antoine about the status of their brothers and sons still in the field. But all hope was not yet lost. A crowd gathered on May 19, 1918 to greet the Emperor Charles and Empress Zita, on an official visit to Istanbul. Two days later, Austro-Hungarian troops gathered for an official ceremony at the Taksim military esplanade. Before Antoine could receive his medal from Charles, the Emperor was whisked away by his attendants.

“It is in this way that I received the Iron Cross for Military Merit, almost from the hands of the King of Hungary. It is the most humble of decorations, but for me it has great value, given the circumstances under which it was awarded to me – in Constantinople, my native city, capital of the Ottoman Empire, a few months before the collapse of the Habsburg dynasty and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.”⁴³

From army headquarters, Antoine tracked the retreat of his former army comrades: they arrived in Damascus on October 10, then Aleppo on October 31, the day the Ottoman Empire formally capitulated. The Armistice of Mudros required that all German and Austrian troops be expelled. No sooner did Antoine’s comrades arrive in the capital than they were shipped home by way of the Black Sea. Some 10,000 troops would depart by the end of the year.

“My comrades, who several days before were good faithful Austrian soldiers, suddenly declared themselves Czech, Yugoslav, Romanian, Polish or Italian. It was only the true Austrians and Hungarians who remained faithful to the army,” he wrote.⁴⁴ Antoine watched them depart from Galata aboard improvised barges, heading toward the Black Sea in pounding rain. At headquarters,

43 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, “My First Decoration”.

44 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, “The Debacle”; Rogan, *Fall of the Ottomans*, 395.

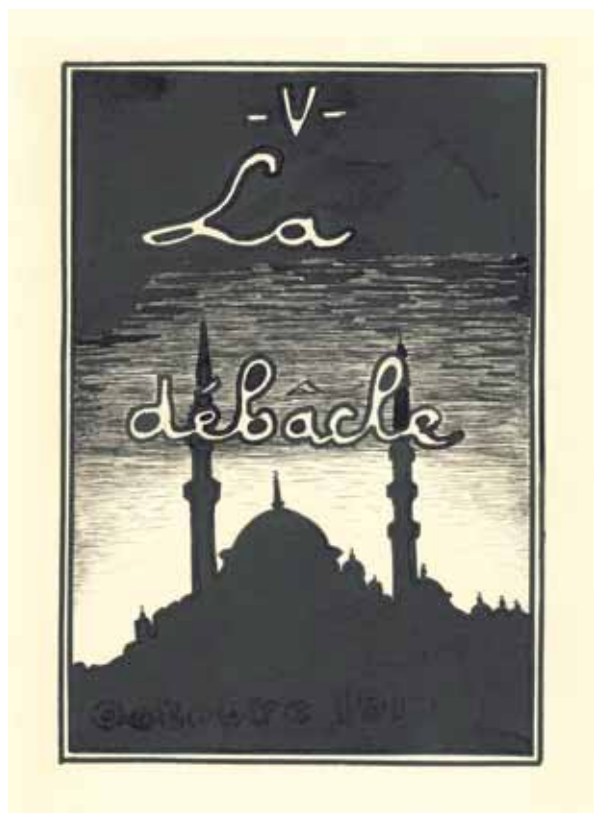


FIGURE 5
DEBACLE
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE,
COURTESY OF ELIZABETH
CHILDRESS)

he helped to burn their archives. On November 3, they learned that the Austro-Hungarian Empire too had surrendered. Antoine labeled this section of his memoir “The Debacle.”

On November 13, 1918, the Köpe family watched from their apartment building as enemy troops occupied Constantinople. As warplanes swarmed overhead, 42 Allied ships lined up on the Bosphorus in front of the Dolmabahçe Palace. Neighbors on nearby roofs shouted cheerful greetings. Thousands of Greek flags unfurled. Photos of Greek Prime Minister Venizelos appeared in shop windows. Pera became a virtual island of Greece. Even children taunted Muslims and Austro-Hungarian soldiers on the streets. They threw stones and snatched fezzes off their heads. In a reversal of the optimistic pre-war era,

when the new Galata Bridge had united the city's peoples, Turks now did not dare to appear in Pera.

Clashing loyalties upset life within the Köpe family's home, as well. Antoine's sister Charlotte had married an Italian man, killed during the war presumably in a battle with Austria. She collected a pension from Italy, an enemy power. Now, one of the French occupying forces knocked on the door. He introduced himself as Major Armand Pagnier, the fiancé of another of Antoine's sisters, Ida. "Despite the fact that we were both in uniform, we embraced one another," Antoine wrote. "But deep inside, I felt very embarrassed, and even humiliated, to be in the presence of an officer of the victorious army."⁴⁵

More confusion came when the Hungarian consulate informed the Köpes that they were now Romanian subjects. Antoine's grandfather had come to Constantinople in the 1840s from town in Transylvania that was now occupied by the Romanian army. Faced with deportation to a foreign country they did not know, the Köpes defiantly chose to remain in the only home they knew. Antoine, as a veteran of the Austro-Hungarian army, faced immediate deportation under the terms of the Mudros armistice. "At an age when one need pleasure more than worry, I had to traverse the saddest period of my life," he wrote. "I saw German, Austrian and Hungarian subjects chased like wild beasts. They were arrested in their homes or on the street." French offices and shops posted signs above their doors, "Entry forbidden to Krauts."⁴⁶ Antoine was considered a 'Kraut' German because he had fought with the Ottomans.

The armistice also prohibited Antoine from working in Ottoman territory. The helpful Major Pagnier got him a job at a French hospital, but his co-workers called him out. He remained unemployed for nine months. His home was safe only because his brother-in-law was Italian. He could walk in the street safely only when local Turkish police turned a blind eye, out of respect for a fellow veteran.

The occupation of Constantinople deepened social fractures in the city's population of one million, which was almost equally divided between Muslims and non-Muslims. Allied troops openly socialized with non-Muslims in Pera

45 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, "The Debacle (2)".

46 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, "Somber Days".

and kept a hostile distance from Muslim Turks. Most Muslims, like Antoine, could not find jobs – scarce jobs with the Allied administration went to Christians. Bitter competition for survival increased with the arrival of 100,000 refugees, largely Russians fleeing civil war in their country. Rents soared, and city residents were forced to rely on foreign charities to avoid starvation. City services were so overstretched that firefighters were forced to let many houses burn down.⁴⁷ Segregation among the remaining groups worsened. Armenians who had once lived in the old city of Stamboul began relocating to European and Greek-dominated districts across the Golden Horn.⁴⁸

By early 1919, secret resistance cells had formed among the city's Turkish Muslim nationalists. In May, they staged huge demonstrations across the Golden Horn, at the Blue Mosque, when the Allies authorized the Greek army to land at Izmir (Smyrna) in May 1919. The seeds of the future independence war were planted. In January 1920 the newly elected parliament would adopt a national pact that would define the country explicitly as the homeland of Muslim Turks. The pact was the death sentence of pluralistic Ottoman society and the birth certificate of a new Turkish nation-state.

Meanwhile, in August 1919, Antoine lucked into a job as an accountant with the Ottoman Public Debt administration. As the institution that repaid old loans owed to Allied victors, it was one of the few employers in Constantinople that continued to pay its workers regularly. Then, two months later, Charles Köpe passed away. With him died the family's links to the old, pre-war Ottoman world. Antoine had to find better work to support his mother and family. In the summer of 1920, as war between Greece and Turkish nationalists loomed, he left Istanbul to take a job in the coal mining industry on the Black Sea. In 1921 he once again defied the currents of history to marry his longtime fiancée, Emilie Gaziades, who came from a Greek family of Constantinople. In yet another irony in the twists and turns of Antoine's life, they settled in a town vacated by deported Greeks.

Antoine could not have then known that, by resisting deportation to Transylvania, he was making an extraordinary choice. Within a year, in 1922,

47 Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 1–35; Clarence Richard Johnson (ed.), *Constantinople Today*. New York, 1922, 203–210, 212.

48 Johnson, *Constantinople Today*, 14–19; Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 20.

Turkish nationalists won their war of independence. Greek flags that had flown in Pera since 1918 came down.⁴⁹ The nationalist victory completed the ethnic cleansing of Anatolia and the erasure of Ottoman pluralism. Under the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, a million Greeks, most descended from families who had lived in Anatolia for centuries, were expelled. They were exchanged for a half-million Muslims who had similarly lived in Greece for generations.⁵⁰ By then, too, nearly all Russian refugees had departed Constantinople.⁵¹ The Turkish Republic, now seated in Ankara, neglected the old Ottoman capital, which was officially renamed Istanbul.⁵² The era of building a homogeneous Turkish nation had begun. As Hungarian-Greek Christians, Antoine's family became ever more marginalized in the Turkish Republic.

Nostalgia for the lost Ottoman world ultimately inspired Antoine's memoir. He decided to write it in 1945, after attending the funeral of Otto Kuhvalek, an army buddy whom he had met in the Damascus hospital. During WWII, Otto had been thrown into a German internment camp, where he died. Antoine had long depended on the Turks' respect for former comrades-in-arms. That respect no longer held. In the late 1930s, Antoine had visited relatives in Hungary and sent his eldest son Károly to study there. But thoughts of emigrating to Hungary were suspended when WWII broke out. Beneath the beautiful calligraphy of his handwritten memoir, Antoine was finally saying goodbye to the only homeland he had ever really known. However, by the time he finished writing the memoir in 1954, it was clear that the postwar Communist regime in Hungary would not welcome them.

Like many family memoirs, Antoine wrote in order to pass on to his children a feeling of solidarity with their ancestors, in absence of a country to which they belonged as citizens. The intimate nature of his intended audience likely accounts for his decision to emphasize humorous incidents and moments of brotherhood among army mates, and to exclude what he may have witnessed of the war's grimmer horrors. But even as Hungary fell behind the Iron Curtain,

49 Johnson, *Constantinople Today*, 31.

50 Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement*, 88–92.

51 Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 29–32.

52 Gül, *Emergence of Modern Istanbul*, 72–91; Erik J. Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*. London, 2010, 213–233.

Turkey joined the NATO alliance. Just as it had done in the 19th century, in settling in Constantinople, the Kope family once again adjusted to the shifting geopolitics of world power. In the 1950s, two of Antoine's children would move to the United States. In 1962, their parents would reluctantly follow them.

HUNGARIANS IN CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY: SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND CAREERS

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Writing the history of the Hungarian colony in 19th-century Constantinople is hindered not only by the lack of written resources but also by the issues of identification of the Hungarians themselves. Such issues were especially poignant in the first half of the century, when, while the Kingdom of Hungary was legally independent, international politics considered it an integral part of the Habsburg Empire. This resulted in Hungarians being seen only as Habsburg subjects particularly because many of them spoke fluent German or were of German ethnicity. Hungarians as a national group living in the Ottoman-Turkish capital appear in our resources only in the middle of the century. From this time on until the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, their history is markedly different from that of the other peoples/nationalities of the Austrian Empire. This is mainly because following the defeat of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849, significant numbers of Hungarian subjects fled to the Ottoman Empire avoiding retribution and oppression, where they tried to survive. After the Compromise, however, because of the changes in the demographic-economic-social situation and sometimes in a search for adventure, a massive migration started both from Hungary and the other provinces of the Monarchy. This wave

targeted primarily the West, but emigrants also appeared in the modernising Ottoman Empire. From that point onwards, it becomes difficult again to distinguish the Hungarian and the Austro-Hungarian colonies, so there exist relatively little data regarding their number, composition and activities. The first part of the current study outlines the history of the Hungarian migrant colony in Constantinople related to the war of independence, and the second part introduces the most successful and best-known civil career types.

HUNGARIANS IN CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1848

Until the spring of 1848 we hardly know anything about the Hungarians of Constantinople. However, the Hungarian Revolution in March mobilized the Hungarians there.¹ Hearing the news from the home country, more than fifty of them gathered together in their haunt, in the coffeehouse in “little Campo” located in the European district of the Ottoman capital. They decided to establish a “Hungarian equality club” to defend the interests of the more than 200 compatriots living there. At the same time, on 9 April 1848, a petition was signed by fifty people and sent to the palatine applying either for the establishment of the Hungarian nation’s own diplomatic representation in Constantinople, or for the formation of “a separate department for the Hungarians” beside the already existing Austrian consulate. Although the Austrian objection and hesitation, as well as the outbreak of the war swept away the issue of the consulate, this event can be considered the beginning of the conscious organisation and distancing of the Hungarian colony from the other nations of the Habsburg Empire living in the Ottoman capital.²

1 On the 1848–1849 Hungarian revolution and war of independence, see Gábor Bona (ed.), *The Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence, 1848–1849. A Military History*. Highland Lakes, New Jersey, 1999; István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849*. London, 2001; Domokos Kosáry, *Hungary and International Politics in 1848–1849*. New York, 2003; Róbert Hermann, *Lajos Kossuth ve 1848–49 yıllarında Macar Özgürlük Savaşı*. Budapest, 2003.

2 On the attempts of establishing independent Hungarian consulates in the East in 1848, see György Csorba, ‘Hungarian Diplomatic Envoys in Constantinople during the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849’, in Pál Fodor, Nándor E. Kovács, and Benedek

Some of those who signed the petition also indicated their professions. Among them we can find an Ottoman military surgeon, a civil servant working in a “Turkish imperial office”, an engineer, an artist, a merchant, a piano-maker, a journalist and even a baron.³ The son of the abovementioned baron, Balázs Orbán also reports in his memoirs that a certain Hungarian was brewing beer in the nook of an abandoned brewery, and that many well-off Hungarian craftsmen/artisans and some merchants were living in the Turkish capital at that time. Other resources mention other artisans from that time: a watchmaker, an imperial shoemaker, carpenters and an imperial coachman. The craftsmen had a curious habit of not using their real surnames but naming themselves after their hometowns. That is why we can find artisans with names like Pesti (of Pest), Aradi (of Arad), Temesváry (of Temesvár) and Győry (of Győr).⁴ Another emigrant memoir tells about – among those who arrived before the revolution – Anton Commandinger, Nikitits, András Köpe and the smith, Samu Barabás, saying that “they also had prosperous businesses and were in good financial situation”.⁵ We know about a letter by an ex-military officer baron, who returned to Hungary from a long sojourn/stay in Constantinople to offer his services to the Hungarian national army.⁶ To support the war of independence, in 1849 a Hungarian “Stambul” legion was set up including 150 military refugees who arrived from Italy and 250 locals. Their strength, therefore, was not insignificant.⁷

After the Hungarian war of independence was repressed with Russian assistance, practically the only way to escape from retaliation was towards the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The first refugees entered Ottoman territory

Péri (eds.), *Şerefe. Studies in Honour of Prof. Géza Dávid on His Seventieth Birthday*. Budapest, 2019, 541–544.

3 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary), Budapest (hereinafter: MNL OL) Archive of Prime Ministry, 1848–1849. General Papers H 2 1848:544; *Pesti Hírlap*, 2 June 1848.

4 Sándor Veress, *A magyar emigratio a Keleten. Vol. I*. Budapest, 1879, 239.

5 Károly Velits, ‘Jegyzetek az 1849-ik évi eseményekből, 1848–49. *Történelmi Lapok* 4:20–21 (1895) 171.

6 MNL OL H 2 1848:7089. 30 December 1848.

7 Balázs Orbán, *Törökországról s különösen a nőkről*. Selected by Ágota Steinert. Budapest, 1999, 108–110.

on 20 July 1849, and from August they began to arrive in large numbers, including many civilian and military leaders. The 5,000–5,500 refugees were gathered in Vidin, from where 3,156 people returned to Hungary at the end of October with the promise of a favourable Austrian judgment. At the beginning of November 1,690 refugees were registered, and 400–600 people died in the sick camp.⁸

As a possible solution for the diplomatic crisis caused by the refugee issue, the Ottomans secretly suggested the conversion of the refugees to Islam, since according to the effective peace treaties, the Sublime Porte could not be forced to extradite a Muslim to another state. A group of emigrants accepted the offer. Some did so because they thought that this might incite the outbreak of the war against the great powers leading to the possible recurrence of the war of independence; some because of their fear of extradition; and others for concerns of sustenance because those converted received higher daily allowance, clothes and better accommodation. The exact – and definitive – number of the converted is unknown, but according to some sources, it could exceed 250 people.

At the turn of October and November the Hungarian and Polish refugees were transported to Şumla from Vidin because of the vicinity of the Russian border and the approaching winter. Then after serious negotiations it was agreed upon that the prominent Hungarian leaders would be relocated to Kütahya in Asia Minor. Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian War of Independence, and his 56 comrades set out to Kütahya on 15 February 1850,

8 About the question of refugees: György Csorba, 'Az 1848–49-es törökországi magyar emigráció története', *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 112:2 (1999) 352–398; also see shortly: György Csorba, 'Hungarian Emigrants of 1848–49 in the Ottoman Empire', in Hasan Celâl Güzel, C. Cem Oğuz, and Osman Karatay (eds.), *The Turks. Vol. 4: Ottomans*. Ankara, 2002, 224–232; István Hajnal, *A Kossuth-emigráció Törökországban. Vol. I*. Budapest, 1927; Nejat Göyünç, '1849 Macar Mültecileri ve Bunların Kütahya ve Halep'te Yerleştirilmeleri ile İlgili Talimatlar', in *Türk-Macar Kültür Münasebetleri Işığında II. Rákóczi Ferenc ve Macar Mültecileri*. İstanbul, 1976, 173–179; Bayram Nazır, *Macar ve Polonyalı Mülteciler: Osmanlı'ya Sığınanlar*. İstanbul, 2006; Kemal H. Karpat, 'Kossuth in Turkey: The Impact of Hungarian Refugees in the Ottoman Empire, 1849–1851', in Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, İlber Ortaylı, and Emiri van Donzel (eds.), *CIÉPO Osmanlı Öncesi ve Osmanlı Araştırmaları Uluslararası Komitesi VII. Sempozyumu Bildirileri, Peç: 7–11 Eylül 1986*. Ankara, 1994, 107–121; Abdullah Saydam, 'Osmanlıların Siyasi İlticalara Bakışı Ya Da 1849 Macar-Leh Mültecileri Meselesi', *Bellekten* 61:231 (1997) 339–385.

where later more and more Hungarians joined them. Finally, on the invitation of the United States, Kossuth and his retinue left the city on 1 September 1851 and left for Western Europe.

Hundreds of refugees still remained in Şumla, but after the Ottoman aid ceased, they slowly scattered. 130 people travelled to the United States, and many joined Turkish military service or dispersed in the Ottoman Empire.

GENERAL PROFILE OF THE HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

What was a typical 1848 Hungarian refugee in Turkey like? Is it possible to draw the general portrait of such an emigrant at all?⁹

In fact, we will never know exactly how many people and who remained in Turkey after Kossuth and his retinue left in September 1851. Moreover, their number was continuously changing. From time to time new refugees arrived and settled down, although in Constantinople there were more “pushing” than “pulling” factors for the Hungarian emigrants. In the 1850–60s Western Europe and the United States offered more opportunities for sustenance, land acquisition, growth, and even for military careers during the time of the Italian unification and the American civil war. Also, the same or very similar cultural-religious background and familiar social structure and milieu seemed to be appealing. Usually the members of the Hungarian nobility and bourgeoisie and the former students already spoke German, many had even started to learn French, Italian or English earlier.

Even the infrastructural conditions were against the Ottoman Empire. It is not an insignificant factor that the leaders of the political emigration were primarily active in the West and they expected the Western great powers to solve the Hungarian question. Furthermore, gradually more and more refugees returned home taking advantage of the amnesty and escaping from the difficulties of sustenance. This tendency was further accelerated/strengthened

9 The basis of the analysis is the biographical data of Csorba, ‘Az 1848–49-es törökországi’, 360–394.

by the political *détente*. Not surprisingly, by the sixties and seventies the 1848 emigration in Turkey/Constantinople perceptibly melted away.

Altogether the estimated number of the emigrants known by name is less than 300 who were living and working in the Ottoman Empire for shorter or longer time after Kossuth had left. Our typical emigrant in 1849 is 27 years old, religion is not significant, but primarily Christian, mainly of bourgeois or noble origin and single. An analysis of the data for occupations before the war of independence shows that many soldiers can be found among the documented persons. They would have been punished at least with forced conscription by the Austrians in case they had stayed at home. Analysing the commissions received during the war of independence, a typical emigrant was a lieutenant or a captain, although the number of non-commissioned officers was also high. The number of common soldiers known by name is low. The reason for this is that the majority of the refugees persuaded to return home in October 1849 was ordinary soldiers/rankers who were only threatened by minor punishment. On the other hand, they never became significant or interesting enough to be mentioned in emigrant sources. Considering other professions, it is surprising that doctors (18) and pharmacist (4) are over-represented.

Those who were in military service in the Austrian army before the war of independence, almost without exception served in the Ottoman army for some time, too. The refugees could keep their ranks and even their conversion was only in name. Many chose this option instead of the dreary conditions of the refugee camp. Many officers – Richard Guyon (Hürşid Pasha), György Kmety (Ismail Pasha), Maximilian Stein (Ferhat Pasha), Joseph Kollmann (Feyzi Pasha), Gusztáv Frits (İskender Bey), Adolf Farkas (Osman Pasha) – made significant careers in the empire, especially during the Crimean war. It is worth noting that most of the doctors and chemists in exile were also employed in the Ottoman army. It is also apparent that professional soldiers could always climb the ladder further in the Ottoman hierarchy, if they met the expectations and the Ottomans found them to be experienced officers. It is important to mention that the majority of the refugees participated in the Crimean war in some way: many as soldiers risking their lives, while others trading as canteen-keepers.

The only common point among the known persons that converted to Islam was their profession. They entered the Ottoman army or practised as doctors

(generally also in the army) almost without exception. We hardly know of any civilians converting.

In civilian life, the refugees tried to make do in various professions. There were waiters, innkeepers, gamblers, chemists, coachmen, bakers, interpreters, engineers, farmers and photographers. Many made successful careers.

Several refugees settled down taking mainly European or Levantine (rarely Muslim) women to wife. There are some famous Hungarian and Turkish figures among their descendants like the poetess Nigâr Hanım, the Turkish historian Suna Kili and the Hungarian historian Endre Veress.

Some women followed the refugees usually as wives, but there was one who even fought in the war of independence. Júlia Bányai (1824–1883), disguised as a man and using a male pseudonym, joined the Hungarian army and got injured many times. She reached the rank of lieutenant. Having married an emigrant captain in Turkey, she settled with her husband in Cairo where they ran an inn.

In their desperation and hopelessness, several refugees took to alcohol or hashish. Count Lajos Splényi was the best-known drug victim. In the years of the freedom fight, he operated as the representative of Hungary at the court of the Sardinian king. The count was also Richard Guyon's brother-in-law, who kept trying to save his relative but in vain. Count Splényi died of his addiction in 1860.

Following the Austro-Hungarian Settlement, the repatriates typically entered either the army of the Dual Monarchy or that of Hungary, while in civilian life they were employed as civil servants or lawyers.

Finally, according to the available data, more than fifty refugees died within the Ottoman Empire after 1850, but their actual number is supposed to be much higher. Seven of them died in battle sacrificing their lives for their new homeland which offered shelter for them.

THE LIFE OF THE HUNGARIAN REFUGEES IN CONSTANTINOPLE

Most of the Hungarians naturally gravitated towards Constantinople because the Levantine population and the multi-lingual and colourful atmosphere of the city provided better odds for survival. As a global transport hub, the city offered the opportunity of leaving for any part of the world in an instant either to fight for the freedom of Hungary, to make a new start elsewhere or to disappear – if the need arose. Here they could react to the daily news faster than in a remote Anatolian village. With anticipation they waited for the moment when they could return home or hear the news about the outbreak of a new Hungarian freedom fight. Last but not least, Constantinople was the place where they could turn to foreign consulates for help since the emigration did not receive any protection on behalf of the Austrian *internuntiatúra*, which nominally covered every citizen of the Austrian Empire. Moreover, many refugees were apprehended by force in both Constantinople and in other Turkish cities.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, many emigrants – even after the thaw – refused to turn to the consulate out of pride until the Compromise. Therefore, they could only hope to get the necessary protection and passports from the consulates of Britain, France, Piedmont and the United States.

Somehow initially most of the Hungarians found accommodation in the district called *Macarca* (uncertain etymology) north of Pera but because of their low number a distinct Hungarian district was not formed. They never belonged to any millets and were not religiously homogeneous. The protestants were the most organized; they established a religious community under the name of *Keleti Magyar Protestáns Colonia* (Oriental Hungarian Protestant Colony) in December 1854, which succeeded in receiving protection from the United States as well as American passports. By 1864 there were only few members left who they went to the Dutch house of worship and met for social gatherings in the German Teutonia society.¹¹

10 Veress, *A magyar emigratio*, I. 190–191. The best known affair is Márton Kosztás case; see Andor Klay, *Daring Diplomacy: The Case of the First American Ultimatum*. Minneapolis, 1957.

11 Veress, *A magyar emigratio*, I. 190; Csorba, 'Hungarian Emigrants', 228.

The earlier settled Hungarian colony helped the emigrants in finding a job. Many cavalry officers were employed in the riding-hall opened by the Belgian-born hussar Chief Captain Karl Schwarzenberg, who himself was a refugee as well. Many became sailors and servants. Artillerist Károly Rényi established a house-painter company with six comrades and decorated the Dolmabahçe Palace. Another refugee trained in architecture set up a company with twelve of his comrades skilled in masonry. They undertook the building of the palace of a wealthy Armenian on the bank of the Bosphorus, employing 24 emigrants as helpmates. Sester, the Sultan's Austrian-born head gardener employed six refugees in the Beşiktaş Garden. Hungarian coachmen were also much required. The former director of the arms factory in Debrecen, a certain Matheidesz, opened a gunsmith shop and later established a small arms factory. Many pursued their former professions, but some officers were not ashamed to even learn the cobbler's trade. Some started their own businesses with the money they brought from home or collected from here and there, and a few became successful businessmen. However, most of the enterprises ended in failure, and the hardening of life made many emigrants return home or go west.

The hope of the emigrants to restart the war of independence revived during the Crimean War. They had been waiting for a conflict like that since the beginning of their emigration, but the politics of the great powers smashed their dreams. The conflict never spread to the Austrian Empire. Despite this, many Hungarian soldiers fought in the wars against the Russians, where they excelled themselves mainly in the fighting around Kars. Those emigrants who could not or did not want to participate in the conflict with arms were employed as interpreters to the high-ranking officers of the Anglo-French army due to their multilingual background.

Many recognised and benefited from the supply difficulties in the Crimean War, and they sold foodstuff and other equipment in the military camps. They earned a considerable amount of money, but they were incapable of keeping it. Usually they wasted their profit on revelries or simply gamed it away. Consequently, they became poor again after the war. The astute few bought land or started businesses. In this way they could retain assets that might easily have been lost during the post-war economic recession. Farms, however, soon

went bankrupt due to the locals' distrust of foreigners and the low standard of agriculture of the time.

The 1859 Italian incidents further narrowed the circle of emigrants in Constantinople, as many hurried to the Italian battleground to fight against the Austrians. After the Compromise, the majority of the emigrants returned home. Those who remained either were tied to the Ottoman Empire or had become too marginalised to go home (e.g. they had become dervishes). In 1867 "the existential basis of the emigration came to an end, after eighteen years of struggle and hardships they can go home old, broken, neglecting their material interests ... to die!" – wrote Sándor Veress, the most important chronicler of the emigration.¹² However, by then, the social structure of the (Austro-) Hungarian colony of Constantinople has already changed completely. Following the defeated 1848 revolutions and then the Crimean War, massive immigration started from the Habsburg Empire resulting in settled generations who already considered Turkey their home. Scores of people arrived from Austria-Hungary to enter employment or to try their luck in the Ottoman capital. While – disregarding the refugees of 1848–1849 – the Austrian colony in Constantinople counted approximately 700 members in 1856, their estimated number in 1869 was about 20 thousand including all nations of the Monarchy.¹³ Lajos Thallóczy, notable historian and later one of the most significant figures of the Balkan policy of the Monarchy, was more cautious, estimating the population of the Austro-Hungarian colony in Constantinople to be at 5–6,000 in 1880. The community was made up mostly of merchants, craftsmen and "the so called protégés from foreign nations", referring to those who received consulate protection in accordance with the Capitulations.¹⁴

After the dissolution of the 1848 emigration, there are only scattered data about the Hungarian community of the period in Constantinople. Therefore, it is much harder to get a general idea about their number, motivation, strategy

12 Veress, *A magyar emigratio*, II. 435.

13 Elmar Samsinger, „Nur im Geschäft begegnen einander die Landeskinder". Von Bankiers und Mädchenhändlern – Who Was Who in der Österreicher-Kolonie Konstantinopel, in Elmar Samsinger (Hrsg.), *Österreich in Istanbul II. K. (u.) K. Präsenz im Osmanischen Reich*. Wien, 2017, 19, 30.

14 Lajos Thallóczy, *Utazás a Levantéban*. Budapest, 1882, 35.

and activity. Nevertheless, it is possible to sketch the careers of certain outstanding figures. One of the common characteristics of the successful and renowned early Hungarian entrepreneurs is the date of their arrival. Below – only briefly because of the limitations of this paper – we introduce those persons who arrived in the Ottoman capital as 1848 emigrants or at least in the late 1840s, and who made successful careers as entrepreneurs, similarly to András Köpe. Thus, we ignore the people of the other successful career type, those who excelled themselves within the Ottoman army.

HUNGARIAN CIVIL CAREERS

Among the studied persons, assuredly Anton Commendinger (1823–1900, Constantinople) from Szekszárd (Tolna county, Hungary) arrived the earliest. He settled down in the Turkish capital before 1848, where he had a piano repository and became a purveyor by appointment of the Sultan. In 1847, during the stay of Franz Liszt in Constantinople, the composer was accommodated in his house in Beyoğlu. Commendinger's family regularly went on holiday in Hungary in the 1870–80s. The Hungarian monarch, Franz Joseph I, decorated him with the Golden Merit Cross with the Crown in 1884.¹⁵

József Nikitits's participation in the Hungarian Revolution is also questionable. According to a source of the Hungarian Ministry of Defence from 1849, Nikitits was the rifle-maker of the First Jäger (Rifleman) regiment, and then he became a national rifle-maker at the beginning of 1849. On the other hand, a reliable emigrant source states that he settled down in Constantinople before the revolution where he was running a rifle store and depository with great success. Naturally it is possible that after hearing about the freedom fight, he returned home and took action. Though renowned, he was not a very active figure of the emigration. The business was inherited by his son, Carl, who had been a reserve in the 8th Hungarian Hussar Regiment. In 1891 the store was located at 2 Rue de Bahçekapı and 9 Rue de Yorgancılar.

15 György Csorba, 'İstanbul'da Macarların Tarihine Dair Bir Kaynak: "Macar Nüfus Kütüğü"', *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 24:2 (2013) 107–108; *Fővárosi Lapok*, 21 September 1881; *Magyarország tisztí cím- és névtára*. Vol. 16. Budapest, 1897, 59.

We can keep track of the history of the family until 1916. It is highly probable that they returned to Hungary during or after WWI. I have the privilege to know the Nikitits descendants personally, but unfortunately they do not have any resources concerning the family's Turkish stay, except for the family tradition.¹⁶

Károly Tóthfalusy (? – Constantinople) of Transylvanian origin, fled to the Ottoman Empire as a non-commissioned officer. He opened a restaurant in Constantinople and later became the owner of the “Hotel de Pest” under 455 Grand rue de Pera. The hotel also appears in Karl May's work, *From Baghdad to Stambul*. Several emigrants got employment in the hotel. In the late 1870s, on the death of Tóthfalussy, his wife Jozefa Tóthfalussy († 1897) and his children took on the business. The hotel was still operating at the turn of the century and served as a meeting place for the local Hungarians and a popular accommodation for Hungarians visiting the city. In 1891, the family also owned the Hotel Imperial at 45 Rue de Asmalı Mescid. The daughter of a hotel owner might be a proper match even for a doctor in the Turkish capital. At least, Mária Tóthfalussy, who was born on 23 May 1854, got married to Otto Bruckner, a doctor of Moldavian origin. They had six children. Their son Arthur born on 1 March 1878 became one of the few Hungarians in Constantinople who converted to Islam.¹⁷

Károly Velits (1823, Torda – 1901, Torda) also of Transylvanian origin completed a pharmaceutical course and a technical college in Vienna. From 1845, he worked as a chemist at his father's side in Torda, Transylvania. He fought as a captain during the war of independence and later he had to go into hiding and managed to flee to Constantinople only in 1851 across Belgrade, Albania and Salonika. Following a three-month long service in the Turkish army, he started to work for a Swiss pharmacist called Lodermann and soon became his partner. They were dealing with the export of oriental

16 MNL OL Ministry of Defence, H 75 1849:2162 undated, [2 February, 1849]; Velits, 'Jegyzetek', 171. The source is incorrectly named Nikolics. – *Annuaire oriental (ancien Indicateur oriental) du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*. 10me année, 1891. Constantinople, 1891, 388; Csorba, 'İstanbullu Macarların', 111–112.

17 Csorba, 'İstanbullu Macarların', 112; Sándor Szalczer, *Magyar emigránsok Törökországban 1849–1861*. Pécs, 1893, 390–393; *Annuaire oriental*, 449.

medicines and oil products. When Lodermann left the business, Velits took over the complete leadership. He opened a pharmacy in Yüksek Kaldırım Street in Galata under the name “Velits & Compagnie”. The company mainly focused on wholesale of pharmaceuticals. He moved back to Hungary in the summer of 1862 and consigned the business to his cousin, János Czakó, who was also living in the Ottoman capital. Velits’s family connections shaped peculiarly: he married the sister of the above mentioned Baron Balázs Orbán in Constantinople.¹⁸

János Czakó (1821, Dées – 1887, Constantinople), the brother of Zsigmond Czakó the tragic playwright of the Hungarian Reform Era, moved to Constantinople in the late 1830s. Although there are many controversial data concerning his participation in the Hungarian war of independence, it is certain that following its defeat, he was in Constantinople working as a pharmacist and tradesman. He became Velits’s business partner and in 1862 he took over the entire enterprise. The prosperous business made it possible for him to purchase several houses, though later he went bankrupt for reasons unknown. At one time he was the president of the Hungarian Society in Constantinople.¹⁹

Dániel Szilágyi (1831, Hajdúhadház - 1885, Constantinople) was without doubt the most colourful personality among the Hungarian emigrants in Constantinople. The Calvinist divinity student fought in the Hungarian war of independence first as a private later as an under-officer and after its failure he fled to Turkey. Languages became his passion during the exile. Besides Turkish, he also learnt Arabic and Persian, and he had a good command of English, French and German too. In the Crimean War he was an interpreter with the British army and then worked as a canteen-keeper. From the money earned there he bought a bookshop. As a bookseller he collected a lot of oriental rarities, and he was the first to turn his attention to the Corvinas (old codices taken to Istanbul during the Ottoman occupation of Hungary in the 16th century) lying hidden in Turkey.

18 Gábor Bona, *Századosok az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban. Vol. II.* Budapest, 2009, 518; Velits, 'Jegyzetek'; Csorba, 'Az 1848–49-es törökországi', 392–393.

19 MNL OL K 653 Vol. 41:15. No. 7; 423. Csorba, 'Istanbulu', 107; *Budapesti Hírlap*, 1 November 1887.



FIGURE 1
DÁNIEL SZILÁGYI
(NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF HUNGARY
OL P 1590 -13 - No. 17.)

Szilágyi was in close contact with the outstanding Hungarian scholars of the century, including Ármin (Arminius) Vámbéry. He was of great assistance to Hungarian orientalists and scholars visiting Constantinople, not only through his language knowledge, his familiarity with the city and his social network which included influential statesmen and intellectuals, for he also tracked down books and manuscripts for them.

From the aspect of Ottoman history, Szilágyi's connections with the Ottoman-Turkish reformist groups – poets, translators, linguists and ministers – may be the most significant factor. They often visited his shop to purchase foreign books and papers. He knew well some of the leading intellectuals of the age, Cevdet Pasha, İbrahim Şinasi, Ahmed Vefik and Namık Kemal among others. The banned and therefore foreign-published papers and writings of the *Yeni Osmanlı* society found their way to the Ottoman capital through the Austrian postal service and his shop. Probably that is why he was frequently harassed by the police and they even tried to confiscate his

manuscripts. Also, the mysterious burglary into his shop after his death might be explained by the police wanting to either track down or destroy possibly incriminating documents.

Szilágyi had many irons in the fire: he acted as a solicitor in cases where Christians were involved, he interpreted and taught languages. He married a German woman in the Turkish capital, started a family which he later sent to Hungary, though he himself stayed in Constantinople till his death. After his death the most valuable part of his bequests was bought by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, founding the “*Collectio Szilagiana*”, which, with its 438 manuscripts, is still one of the most valuable sections of the Oriental Collection of the Academy.²⁰

Without doubt, the Jewish Adolf Orosdi (until 1848 Schnabel) (1818, Uherský Brod – 1878, Paris) and his family became the richest. During the war of independence, in December 1848, he worked as a cartographer in the rank of lieutenant in the General Staff of the Ministry of Defence. From this we can assume that he had done some kind of technical or artistic studies. However, from April 1849 on, he served as aid-de-camp in the Upper Hungarian regiment. After he had fled to the Ottoman Empire, he became Kossuth’s secretary in Vidin and rose to the rank of major. During that time, they compiled a Turkish grammar book together. Orosdi converted, took the name Ali, and was paid by the army for a while. He opened a shop in Galata probably in 1855, although there is no information on the origin of the capital used for that, and later he partnered with Fülöp Back. Their joint trading company, which later achieved proper fame was registered under the name of Orosdi in Constantinople on 15 April 1878, then as Orosdi-Back in Paris on 1 February 1888. Around the turn of the century, they established department stores in several cities of Europe, Asia and North Africa, mostly in capital cities, ports and transport/railway hubs

20 György Csorba and Balázs Sudár, ‘İstanbul’da Macar Bir Sahaf: Dániel Szilágyi’, in Rifat N. Bali (ed.), *Türkiye’de Kitap Koleksiyonerleri ve Sahafılar II*. İstanbul, 2020, 140–166. the Corvinas, see Ildikó Arbanász and György Csorba, ‘Magyar kutatók az isztambuli levél- és könyvtárakban a második világháború előtt’, in Mihály Dobrovits (ed.), *A kísérlet folytatódik. II. Nemzetközi Vámbéry Konferencia*. Dunaszerdahely, 2005, 7–46.

to ascertain that their primarily western goods would be in demand due to the dense population and the great number of foreigners. Their Constantinople department store called Ömer Efendi Han was located at Bahçekapı.

It seems that the Hungarian roots or memories of the father affected so deeply his son's, Fülöp personality (1863, Constantinople – 1930, Tiszabő, Hungary) that he started to gravitate towards their homeland. Despite his grounded existence in Turkey, Fülöp succeeded in integrating into the Hungarian high society, taking a big step upwards on the social ladder at the same time. This way his case became the success story for all those emigrants and their descendants who were considering moving back to the old country. After his studies in France, Fülöp returned to Turkey and joined several enterprises. However, some time before 1886, he bought an estate and nobility in Hungary. In 1893, in Budapest he married Margit Herzog whose father was an influential wholesaler with interests mainly in Southern Europe, thus the family further strengthened its positions. Orosdi, similarly to his father-in-law and his relatives, was president or board member at several companies, but the Back name appears around the enterprises as well. Orosdi's wife converted to Christianity in Constantinople in 1895. At first the family commuted between Constantinople and Budapest, but finally they settled down in the latter. Orosdi and his children received a baronial title from Franz Joseph I in 1905, becoming legitimate members of the Hungarian aristocracy. In 1910, Orosdi was elected to be a member of the Hungarian parliament and in the following year he got life-long membership in the Upper House. His son, Raoul served in the army of the Monarchy and died of a war injury in 1916. With Orosdi's death in 1930, the spear side of the family died out. A year later his widow – as a rare example – was elected as a member of parliament.²¹

21 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Ministerium des Äußern Informationsbüro BM-Akten 1863:1892; Gábor Bona, *Hadnagyok és főhadnagyok az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban. Vol. II.* Budapest, 1998, 609; Szalczer, *Magyar emigránsok*, 36, 390; János József Gudenus, *A magyarországi főnemesség XX. századi genealógiája. Vol. II: K–O.* Budapest, 1993, 425–427; Uri M. Kupferschmidt, *European Department Stores and Middle Eastern Consumers: The Orosdi–Back Saga.* Istanbul, 2007; Gábor Alföldy, 'A pilisszántói Orosdy-kastély és parkjai', *Ars Hungarica* 27:2 (1999) 389–417; Elmar Samsinger, '„Jahrelange Abwesenheit hat den Einzelnen fast entfremdet.“ Legal und illegal am Bosphorus 1840–1918', in Samsinger (Hrsg.), *Österreich in Istanbul*, 403; *Vasárnapi Újság*, 24 December 1905, 141.



FIGURE 2
SÁNDOR VERESS
(HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH
COLLECTION OF THE HUNGARIAN
NATIONAL MUSEUM)

There were many who, though they had the opportunity, did not return to Hungary after leaving Constantinople, but settled down in other countries. One of the most notable among them is Sándor Veress (1828, Sarkad – 1884, Bucharest), the chronicler of the history of the emigration. He was a law student when joined the army in 1848 and reached the rank of lieutenant. He fled to Ottoman territory and visited the emigration camps. First, he learnt to be a tailor in Varna, then he lived in the Turkish capital for an extended period. During the Crimean War he made significant capital by trading, but in the post-war recession his enterprises, including a furniture store in Constantinople, failed. Soon he travelled to London to study engineering, then he took part in the formation of the Hungarian legion in Italy where he was commissioned to the rank of captain. In the same year, after the first dissolution



FIGURE 3
THE GREAT-GRANDFATHER JÁNOS KÖPÖ AND THE GREAT-GRANDMOTHER KATALIN BARTHOS.
INTERESTINGLY, THE CAPTIONS OF THE PICTURES ARE IN OLD SZEKLER (SZÉKELY) SCRIPT
(ANTOINE KÖPÖ ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

of the legion, he left for Bucharest where he settled down and worked as a surveyor engineer and became an expert in great demand. He was decorated with the Order of the Crown of Romania and was knighted for his contribution to maintaining cordial relations between Hungary and Romania. He wrote several informative articles. His memoir is one of the most important and reliable sources on the history of the Hungarian emigration in Turkey.

Finally, some words about András Köpe, a man of Csángó Hungarian origin who gave the idea of this study.

According to the family tradition, András Köpe [Keöpe] (Barcaújfalu, 1816 – Konstantinápoly, 1879) participated in the war of independence of 1848. What we can safely say though is that he was among those who signed the petition applying for the establishment of a Hungarian consulate in Constantinople in April 1848. He started working in the shop of a French jeweller called Louis Tallibert in the Karaköy district of the capital city, whose sister he married. For the sake of the marriage, Köpe, whose father was a Lutheran pastor, converted to Catholicism. After Tallibert's return to France, he took over the business and became famous as a jeweller and watchmaker, also acting as Sultan Abdülmecid's (1839–1861) imperial purveyor. In 1869, he was decorated by Franz Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary. Köpe's descendants lived and worked not only in the Ottoman Empire and later in the young Republic of Turkey, but also scattered across the globe.²²

It is apparent that although the aforementioned Hungarians found different ways to settle down and make a career (or at least a decent living), there are some well-definable common economic and social characteristics. What would be the common features of the figures sketched here and those omitted from the current paper?

The above introduced persons were all known and honoured members of the Hungarian (Austro-Hungarian after 1867) community in Constantinople. They either arrived before the 1848 war of independence or after it as political refugees. It is worth emphasizing that even in the case of those who are documented to have been living in Constantinople before 1848, there is always

22 István Vásáry, 'A Köpe-család. Egy isztambuli magyar–francia família története', in Mihály Dobrovits (ed.), *A Kelet ritka nyugalma. VII. Nemzetközi Vámbéry Konferencia. Duna-szerdahely, 2010, 195–203*; Iván Bächer, 'Keöpek', *Népszabadság*, 17 July 1993, 27.



FIGURE 4
THE GRANDFATHER ANDRÁS KÖPE AND THE GRANDMOTHER LÉOCADIE TALLIBART
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

a reference or a story in connection with their participation in the Hungarian freedom fight, which they were never quick to deny. The freedom fighter past was a strong identity component within the Hungarian colony.

None of the above-mentioned persons converted to Islam even though they lived for decades or even until their death in the Ottoman capital. As for their families, their wives were Christians or Jews, so their children were brought up in a basically Christian but at the same time cosmopolitan culture and atmosphere. Those who could afford it, had their children educated abroad or in Hungary to uphold the continuity of the family trade/business.

The successful entrepreneurs operated primarily in sectors with high value added and therefore high profits – such as pharmacy and rifle making (including the trade thereof). They acquired the capital and knowledge required by the business applying diverse strategies. With the exception of Commander, none of them seem to have received support from home or from the family; all

were the architects of their own future. One of the most typical scenarios was to get a job at a company using previous education or craft, and either become the partner of the owner or acquire the enterprise by purchasing it with fresh capital or through family ties. A few astute refugees did not deplete their wealth earned by the years of prosperity during the Crimean War but started businesses. Success came through assiduity and hard work rather than luck.

Almost without exception they were well-known in Hungary too. Their names appear in several newspaper articles of the era and many of them are mentioned as most helpful hosts or tourist guides in the Hungarian guidebooks. After the Compromise, they maintained especially intensive contact with the old country and many of them even visited home. They were active members of various Hungarian cultural, scientific and social organisations, offering financial support for the construction of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences palace, built through public subscription. Many of them received high state honours.

To sum up, the story of most Hungarians (i.e. the refugees) who arrived at Constantinople in the middle of the 19th century, was not a successful one. One of the reasons for this is that they considered their stay to be temporary. Being political refugees, they were looking forward to returning home. Difficulties with making ends meet, the amnesty and then the Compromise led many of them to decide in favour of repatriating. The emigrants described in this article chose the other way even if they were well aware of the Hungarian political situation. They established livelihoods and could be surprisingly successful in their various walks of life. They integrated well into the life of the multi-ethnic and multicultural metropolis, and their legacy lives on in the history of both the city and the empire.

THE ROLE OF AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARTILLERY ON THE OTTOMAN FRONTS IN WWI

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Taking into account the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary during WWI, it is commonly known that a corps of the Ottoman Army consisting of around 115,000 soldiers fought in Galicia to assist the Austro-Hungarian army in their campaign against Russia. In spite of the initial reluctance of the other Ottoman decision takers, Enver Pasha, the minister of war, asserted that this would be a good chance to prove the loyalty of the Turks to their allies.¹ Falih Rıfki [Atay], a leading journalist who served as the secretary of the Ottoman 4th Army in Palestine during WWI criticized this decision. He believed that instead of sending troops to Galicia, they could have been deployed in Palestine and the fall of Jerusalem could have possibly been prevented with 20,000 additional soldiers.²

In comparison to the collaboration in Galicia, it is relatively less known that around 7,000-12,000 troops from the Austro-Hungarian army fought on the

1 Malkoç draws a general framework of how Ottoman troops fought in Galicia perceived their Austro-Hungarian allies; see Eminalp Malkoç, *Galiçya Cephesi'ndeki Türk Askerinin Müttefik Algısı*. İstanbul, 2017. For a financial analysis of this decision, see Bilge Karbi, 'Birinci Dünya Savaşında Osmanlı Devleti ve Avusturya-Macaristan Askerî Yardımlarına Bir Örnek: Osmanlı Birliklerinin Galiçya Cephesi'ne Gönderilmesi Kararı Etrafındaki Tartışmalar', *Çanak-kale Araştırmaları Türk Yılığ* 14:20 (2016) 193–206.

2 Falih Rıfki Atay, *Ateş ve Güneş*. İstanbul, 2012, 107.

Turkish fronts, mainly in Gallipoli and Sinai-Palestine until the very end of the war when the Armistice of Mudros was signed on 30 October 1918. The major share of these forces undoubtedly belongs to the artillery, which supported the Ottoman Army and impeded the decisive British victory. The Austro-Hungarian artillery arrived in Turkey for the first time on the Gallipoli front in late November 1915 with the aim of expelling enemy forces. With the passage of time, various batteries were given different tasks including the defence of the Gulf of İzmir (Smyrna), training the Ottoman artillery, taking part in the first expeditionary force on the Sinai front, and the defence of Palestine. This article mainly aims to focus on the role and activities of the Austro-Hungarian artillery on the Ottoman fronts.

DETERMINANTS OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY TO SEND TROOPS TO TURKEY

To begin with, it is necessary to keep in mind that the political and economic interests of Austria-Hungary are major factors behind sending troops to the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, Austria-Hungary was seeking the support of Germany on Isonzo and Galicia fronts in order to compensate for its relatively weak military power. Indeed, there was already a rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Germany dating back to the breakout of the war. Austria-Hungary, which lost its prestige in the international arena due to internal crises caused by the lack of colonies and nationalist awakenings among its subjects, pursued a policy to reacquire its position and prestige as a major power at the end of the war. In contrast, Germany never respected Austria-Hungary owing to its weak army. These circumstances triggered an ongoing rivalry between the Central Powers, which was so intense that Conrad von Hötzendorf, the chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army even defined their collaborators as their “secret enemy.”³

3 Oliver Stein, ‘Propagandisten des k.u.k. Vielvölkerreiches: Österreichisch-ungarische Soldaten in Osmanischen Reich während des Ersten Weltkrieges’, *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 78 (2019) 418. For the origins of the rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Germany, see Günther

Furthermore, as the German influence on the Ottoman Empire continually increased over the course of the war, Austria-Hungary intensified its efforts to establish itself in the Ottoman market, which Britain and France had already left due to the suspension of capitulations by the Ottoman government.⁴ Thus, as a clash of interests between Austria-Hungary and Germany deepened, they began to see each other as rivals rather than allies. When the Ottoman Ministry of War decided to strengthen its artillery capacity with mountain guns for the Suez Canal campaign, Lieutenant General Pomiankowski, the military representative of Austria-Hungary in Istanbul (Constantinople) sought ways to present this delivery as a propaganda tool that would show how independent and influential the Austro-Hungarian army was.⁵

These propaganda tools directly targeted Ottoman officers as well. Austrian officers serving on the Ottoman front observed that Ottoman and German officers tended to not like each other and used this lack of sympathy to influence the Ottoman side. Staff Captain Latscher,⁶ an artillery officer of Austro-Hungarian army reported unfair treatment of the German officers towards the Turkish soldiers under their command in spite of the warnings by the army commander, Staff Colonel Kress von Kressenstein.⁷ In fact, Austrians, who were more at ease, seemed to be a better companion for Turkish soldiers rather than the Germans with their direct and proud character.⁸ Contrarily, even though Turkish and Austro-Hungarian soldiers got along well with each other, German officers criticized their Austrian counterparts for flattering the

Kronenbitter, 'Falsch verbunden? Die Militärallianz zwischen Österreich-Ungarn und Deutschland 1906–1914', *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift* 38 (2000) 36–38.

4 For further analysis, see Ernst Werner, 'Ökonomische und militärische Aspekte der Türkei-Politik Österreich-Ungarns 1915 bis 1918', in *Jahrbuch für Geschichte* 10. Berlin, 1974, 373–401.

5 Stein, 'Propagandisten des k.u.k. Vielvölkerreiches', 418–422.

6 *Friedrich Johann Latscher-Lauendorf* (Vienna, 30 August 1884, † Klagenfurt / Kärnten, 26 November 1964).

7 Alexander Will, 'Grenzerfahrungen beim Waffenbrüder. Offiziere der Mittelmächte im Orient 1914–1918', in Sabine Pentz (Hrsg.), *Europas Grenzen*. St. Ingbert, 2006; Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv, Ministerium des Äusseren, Türkei, XII, Kostantinopel 1848–1918, Berichte 1916, Res, No. 143, 29. September 1916.

8 Hans Guhr, *Anadolu'dan Filistin'e Türklerle Omuz Omuza*. İstanbul, 2007, 112–114, 119.



FIGURE 1
AN AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN SOLDIER RIDING A DONKEY WARMLY WELCOMED BY LOCAL PEOPLE IN
MARDIN, EASTERN ANATOLIA, 1917
(İCLAL-TUNCA ÖRSES ARCHIVE)

Ottomans to gain prestige.⁹ General Hans von Seeckt, a German officer in the Ottoman Army, considered this behaviour among the factors that facilitated the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰ He observed that this intimate contact prompted improper behaviour such as theft, black marketing, hoarding, drunkenness, and a lack of discipline that were repeatedly reported to the general headquarters in Vienna.¹¹

9 Stein, 'Propagandisten des k.u.k. Vielvölkerreiches', 434–435.

10 Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Türkiye'de Bulunan Alman Generallerinin Raporları*. Ankara, 1966, 49.

11 Stein, 'Propagandisten des k.u.k. Vielvölkerreiches', 436–437.

Other forms of propaganda made by the Austro-Hungarian armed forces aimed at improving Ottoman public opinion. Against the famine caused by the locust plague of 1916–17 in Palestine, the Austro-Hungarian field kitchen regularly baked and served bread to the people of Jerusalem. Military doctors treated not only soldiers, but also civilians against illnesses such as typhoid, typhus, cholera, malaria and diarrhoea in field hospitals located in Jerusalem and Nazareth. Open-air movie theatres and concerts organised by military band and Hungarian gypsy orchestra attracted crowds and reassured the public.¹² Around 500 Austro-Hungarian soldiers voluntarily took part in extinguishing a huge fire in the downtown of Istanbul in 1918, for which they were greatly appreciated.¹³

Remarks made by the Commander of the Unit of Repair Parts and Ordnance Depot of the Austro-Hungarian army in Istanbul, Chief Pharmacist Herrlinger, on the visit of Emperor Charles I (Charles IV as Hungarian King) and Empress Zita to the Ottoman capital in 1918 also confirms the propaganda efforts of the Empire. In comparison to Kaiser Wilhelm II's visit to the capital city in 1917 in his daily military uniform, the Emperor arrived to the station in a luxurious Hungarian hussar uniform that emphasized the Turkic origin of both nations and made a good impression on the Ottoman public, which was keen on luxury.¹⁴

Another factor that oriented the Austro-Hungarian policy towards its ally the Ottoman Empire relates to the former's security concerns. Scenarios including either a possible alliance between major powers in favour of Russia, the traditional rival of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, or their possible act against the empire's territorial integrity or Russia's direct rule in the region, influenced Austria-Hungary sending military assistance to the Ottoman fronts in WW1.

12 Gil Stern Stern Zohar, 'Been There: A Forgotten Line', *Jerusalem Post*, 27 August 2010, <https://www.jpost.com/local-israel/in-jerusalem/been-there-a-forgotten-time> (Access Date: 27 August 2020).

13 Emil Vidéky, *Törökországi kalandok a világháborúban*. Budapest, 1933, 18–19.

14 'Vortrag des Militärapothekeers i. d. Re Mr. Richard Herrlinger ehem. Kommandant des k.u.k. Materialersatzdepot in Constantinople', *Pharmaceutische Post*, 7 December 1935, 5. For an article on vivid cultural relations between Turkish and Hungarian nations during the WWI, see 'Türkisch-ungarische Beziehungen', *Pester Lloyd*, 6 February 1916, 11–12.

In the aftermath of the war, though, the empire, which was exhausted and ultimately dissolved, forgot about appreciation and positive feelings it once had towards its Ottoman allies. News from March 1919 could be a good example of this change in attitude. According to news released in the Austrian press, the Austrian government brought around 100 secondary school students from the Ottoman Empire during the war. Following the fall of both empires, the new government stopped supporting this programme and it was decided to send the students home. However, the armistice clauses and transportation restrictions did not allow them to go home, therefore the students were temporarily settled in a refugee dormitory until they were allowed to return home. However, they had a row with a group of local teens on Engerth Street of Brigettenau on 6 March. Turkish students took shelter in their dormitory from a crowd gathered outside, but one among them pulled out a knife, increasing tension again. Finally, all Turkish students in Vienna were immediately sent home on the following day, because of a fight in which three were wounded.¹⁵

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARTILLERY ON THE GALLIPOLI FRONT

As the artillery batteries arrived in Gallipoli for the first time, the Ottoman 5th Army in the region was facing severe conditions. There was neither land nor naval direct connection between the Ottomans and their allies, making it impossible to send the army additional supplies. To conceal this situation, the Ottoman artillery was obliged to use noise bombs instead of real cannonballs.¹⁶

Under such a circumstance, the Germans decided to invade and eliminate Serbia and open the Balkan connection among the Central Powers in order to prevent the fall of Dardanelles. To accomplish this, Germany made a military alliance with Bulgaria on 6 September 1915 and invaded Serbia with an army

15 'Die türkische Knabenkolonie in Wien,' *Wiener Bilder*, 16 March 1919, 9–10.

16 'Org Vedat Garan'dan Hatıralar,' *Yakın Tarihimiz: Birinci Meşrutiyetten Zamanımıza Kadar* 4:46 (1962) 214.

consisting of German and Austro-Hungarian troops.¹⁷ The Germans were finally able to supply the 5th Army in November 1915. Until that moment, well-trained Ottoman artillery could not have gotten better results with bad ammunition despite their success in targeted shooting against the enemy forces. The Ottoman Army was deprived of howitzers and mortars, which were regarded as the best weapons against British troops located on the hillsides of Gallipoli. The field guns of the Ottoman Army were only effective against assaulting allied troops or naval vessels. The Austro-Hungarian mortars and howitzers produced in the Škoda factory in Plzen were the best and unrivalled artillery of the period.¹⁸

Nevertheless, the Austro-Hungarian army did not have an adequate amount of artillery to supply the Ottomans. In April 1914, the Ottoman Ministry of War ordered 12 batteries of 10 cm gun (48 pcs.) for the first time. Even though this order was prepared, only one battery was delivered to the Ottoman Empire in June 1914 due to the political situation in Europe.¹⁹ The rest of the batteries, including 1915 M 15 7.5 cm mountain-cannon batteries (14 pcs); 7 cm mountain-cannon, mod. 1899 1915 15 cm heavy howitzer batteries (20 pcs.) and 80 mountain guns, were successfully delivered to Turkey in 1916. At the end of October 1915 the general headquarters in Vienna informed Pomiankowski that a 30.5 cm mortar battery and a 15 cm howitzer battery were going to be sent to the Gallipoli front.²⁰ Two Austro-Hungarian officers came to Turkey to inspect the Gallipoli front for this purpose. In the light of this inspection, it was decided that a 24 cm motor mortar battery was going to be delivered, instead of the original ordered weapons due to the lack of

17 Tuncay Yilmazer (ed.), *Harb Akademisi 1934–1935 Tedrisatından Çanakkale Savaşı'ndan Alınan Dersler. Muallim Kurmay Albay Fahri Belen*. İstanbul, 2009, 144, 149.

18 *Deutsches Nordmährerblatt*, 7 December 1915, 4; *Neues Wiener Journal*, 6 December 1915, 2; Liman von Sanders, *Türkiye'de Beş Sene*. İstanbul, 2006, 124.

19 The rest were deployed to the other sections of the Austro-Hungarian army under the name of "Turkish Field Howitzer Batteries" (Türkei-Feldhaubitzbatterien); see Peter Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg - Österreich-Ungarn im Vorderen Orient 1915–1918*. Graz, 1992, 43–44.

20 Wolfdieter Bihl, 'Die Beziehungen zwischen Österreich-Ungarn und dem Osmanischen Reich im Ersten Weltkrieg', in *IX. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildirileri. 2. Cilt*. Ankara, 1988, 1193.

infrastructure and bad roads.²¹ Thus, the first Austro-Hungarian battery under the command of Captain Kamillo Barber with 183 soldiers arrived in Uzunköprü, Edirne (Adrianople), on 15 November 1915. In mid-November the 24 cm motor mortar battery (k.u.k. 24 cm. Motormörser-Batterie No. 9) arrived at the Gallipoli front. This was deployed on the left-hand side of the Anafarta group (Suvla Bay). Later Captain Alexander Kodar Edler von Thurnwerth took command of the troops in Gallipoli.

The mortar battery began bombarding on the allied troops located at Kanlı Sirt (Lone Pine) on 29 November and caused serious casualties.²² Thanks to the effective artillery fire, the allied army consisting of 134,000 soldiers, 14,000 animals and 400 pieces of artillery withdrew from Gallipoli in mid-January 1916.²³ The motor mortar battery was placed under the command of the 4th Army in Palestine and divided into two units. Two guns of the first unit were sent to Haifa. The second unit supplied by 10.4 cm artilleries were given the name 10 cm Canon Battery No. 20 (k.u.k 10-cm-Kanonenbatterie Nr. 20) joined 2nd and 3rd Battle of Gaza and fought in all of the battles in the Valley of Jordan.²⁴ The rest were first sent back to İstanbul, and then deployed to the coastal line of the Gulf of İzmir in June 1916.²⁵

21 The fighting capacity of the ordered artillery was better than the recommended weapons. Thus, this decision disappointed the Ottoman officials and public opinion. To overwhelm this, a wooden model of the ordered weapon in the same size was built in Škoda factory and given to the Ottoman government. This wooden model called "The Cannon of Memorial of Heroism (Hatıra-ı Celadet Topu)" was proudly promoted at Beyazıt Square where the Ministry of War was located. In this respect, a charity was started in honour of the Ottoman Army. This wooden model is still exhibited at Turkish War Museum in İstanbul.

22 'Zur Aufgabe von Gallipoli, Der Sieg bei Ari Burnu und Anafarta', *Der Tiroler*, 24 December 1915, 1.

23 Georg Bittner, 'Die Flucht der Engländer von Gallipoli', *Neues Wiener Journal*, 12 January 1916, 8; Josef Pomiankowski, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Çöküşü*. İstanbul, 1990, 126; August Julius Urbański v. Ostrymiecz, 'Ein Auszug aus dem amtlichen englischen Werk über den Weltkrieg', *Danzers Armee-Zeitung*, 14 October 1932, 4.

24 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 43.

25 'Unter dem siegreichen Halbmond. Automobilistenbrief aus Kleinasien', *Fremden-Blatt*, 8 April 1917, 32–34; İsmail Tosun Saral, 'Avusturya-Macaristan Ordusu 9 Numaralı 24 cm'lik Motorlu Havan Bataryasının Türkiye'deki Faaliyetleri Hakkında Rapor', *Düşünce ve Tarih* 2:6 (2015) 32–37.

The 15 cm Howitzer Battery No. 36 (k.u.k 15 cm- Haubitzebatterie Nr. 36) arrived at the Gallipoli front on 23 December 1915 under the command of Captain Karl Manouschek and they were deployed and was deployed to Soğanlıdere, opposite to Seddülbahir (Cape Helles).²⁶ On the eve of Christmas on 24 December, the battery began bombarding on the enemy forces. On the commemoration of their success, a memorial stone was erected at the point of their deployment in Soğanlıdere.²⁷ Following the withdrawal of the allied forces, the battery was given a task of training of the Turkish artillery soldiers and officers in Istanbul.²⁸ This corresponds to the period when Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War, paid an official visit to inspect the battery on 7 February 1916.²⁹ Afterwards, they were sent to İzmir province and took part in the recapture of the island Uzunada (Kösten, Chustan) at the entry of the Gulf of İzmir.³⁰ This battery was given the duty of the defence of western coast of Turkey until the very end of the war.³¹

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN INSTRUCTION DETACHMENTS IN SERVICE OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY

Austro-Hungarian Instruction Detachments trained the artillery class of the Ottoman Army in 1916 and 1917. These detachments, consisting of 1 officer and 6 non-commissioned officers (NCOs) each, were commanded by 1st Lieutenant Oskar Gomolka, Lieutenant Hermann Pokorny, 1st Lieutenant Karl Jan-deseck, 1st Lieutenant Hermann von Steinhardt, and 1st Lieutenant Marschauer

26 'Die Österreichisch-ungarische Artillerie auf Gallipoli', *Neues Wiener Tagblatt (Tages-Ausgabe)*, 26 January 1916, 3.

27 *Österreichische Illustrierte Zeitung*, 7 May 1916, 749. The original inscription on the memorial is as follows: "Erinnerung an die Dardanellen-Kämpfe 1915/1916 öst.-ung. schw. H.-B. No. 36"; see 'Die letzten Tage der Entente aus Gallipoli. Szenen aus dem neuesten Kriegsfilm', (*Neuigkeits*) *Welt Blatt*, 14 March 1916, 1, 8. The exact location of this memorial is still unknown.

28 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 48.

29 Paul Schweder, *Çanakkale Cephesi'nde Türklerin Genel Karargâhında*. İstanbul, 2012, 57–60.

30 von Sanders, *Türkiye'de Beş Sene*, 146–147; 'Die Smyrna Batterie', *Grazer Mittags-Zeitung*, 19 January 1917, 2; Emin Çöl, *Çanakkale-Sina Savaşları*. Ankara, 1977, 73.

31 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 142.



FIGURE 2
ENVER PASHA, THE OTTOMAN MINISTER OF WAR, IS INSPECTING
AN AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN HOWITZER BATTERY IN ISTANBUL
(*WIENER BILDER*, 12 MARCH 1916)

whose head commander was Captain Fritz Iselstöger from the Mountain Artillery Division³² No. 14 of the Austro-Hungarian Army. On one hand, the Ottoman decision takers were fully aware of the fact that the artillery class of the Turkish army lacked heavy artillery as well as the modern methods. Thus, it needed improvement in order to minimize missed shots.³³ On the other hand, Austrian decision takers saw this necessity as a good opportunity to influence

32 In Austro-Hungarian military terminology, an artillery division refers to an artillery group including 2 batteries or more. It should not be confused with the term 'division' referring to ground forces in common military terminology.

33 'Artilleristische Ausbildung in der Türkei', *Neues 8 Uhr Blatt*, 5 April 1917, 2.

their Turkish companions for further economic concessions as stated above. Nonetheless, some objected to this idea by asserting that it would not be affective to train Ottoman soldiers, since they were short-sighted, lacked discipline, and were less capable so that they would possibly reduce the capacity of the Austro-Hungarian batteries during the war.³⁴

Even though the headquarters of the instruction detachments were initially deployed in Istanbul, it was soon decided that these detachments were to be directly sent to the army headquarters located in different parts of Ottoman lands under the command of 2nd Army in Diyarbakir, 3rd Army in Erzincan, 4th Army in Damascus, 5th Army in İzmir and Dardanelles, and 6th Army in Iraq. These detachments not only trained the Turkish artillerymen, but also fought in the battles and were part of the lines of defence.³⁵ The trained Turkish artillery class were successful not only in the ongoing war, but also in the Turkish War of Independence.

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARTILLERY ON THE SINAI AND GAZA FRONTS

The Austro-Hungarian troops took part in the Suez campaign and defence of Gaza between 1916 and 1918 respectively. Activities of a special detachment, which sabotaged strategic facilities of the enemy forces, should first be mentioned. A reserve officer Georg Gondos, an engineer, and Dr. Paul Michael Simon voluntarily raided military locations around the Suez Canal such as springs, oil beds, and aerodromes with the help of 50 Turkish civil fighters and 10 Turkish soldiers in the first months of 1915. These acts of sabotage significantly paved the way for the Suez campaign of the Ottoman Army.³⁶

34 Stein, 'Propagandisten des k.u.k. Vielvölkerreiches', 437.

35 Friedrich Iselstöger, 'Kommando der k.u.k. Instruktions-Detachments für Gebrigsartillerie in der Türkei', in Hugo Kerchnawe, Rudolf Niederleuthner (Hrsg.), *Ehrenbuch Unserer Artillerie. Band 2*. Wien, 1935, 512–517.

36 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 174; E. General Yahya Okçu and E. Albay Hilmi Üstünsoy (eds.), *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi. Cilt IV, Kısım I: Sina Filistin Cephesi Harbin Başlangıcından İkinci Gazze Muharebeleri Sonuna Kadar*. Ankara, 1979, 232; Ali Fuad Erden, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Suriye Hatıraları*. İstanbul, 2006, 73, 77–78.

Among the artillery classes, particular emphasis should be made on a division called “von Marno”, which was composed of 2 batteries with 6 cannons each. On 21 July 1915, Ahmed Cemal Pasha, the commander of the 4th Army in Palestine, sent a report on the number of the required troops and amount of weapons as well as supplies planned to be used in the Suez Canal campaign to the Ministry of War in Istanbul. This report explains the vital importance of Austro-Hungarian artillery on Sinai and Gaza fronts for the campaign. The British and Anzac troops defending the Suez Canal were located at the western bank of the canal and the Ottoman forces were naturally expected to attack from the rugged terrain of eastern bank where barriers with 3-5 m in length and 15-30 m in width were located. Mountain howitzers became essential for the Ottoman Army, which was only equipped with German artillery that lacked cannons appropriate for fights in a mountainous terrain. Thus, Cemal Pasha requested two battalions from the headquarters, which would include two mountain howitzer batteries each that would easily attack the enemy lines on the right and left wings of the army.³⁷

For the second Suez Canal Campaign³⁸ a special force called *Birinci Kuvve-i Seferiye* (First Expeditionary Force) under the command of Cemal Pasha’s 4th Army was formed. The command of this force was given to Staff Col. Kress von Kressenstein, chief of staff of the 4th Army, on 26 December 1915. Its command headquarters was formed on 2 January 1916 in Halilürrahman (Hebron) – Birüssebi (Beersheba) – Hafırülavce (Hafir el-Auja) line in the status of army corps. The corps were composed of the 3rd Turkish Infantry Division and the German unit “Pasha 1”, the first allied military unit arrived at the Sinai front at the end of 1915. Afterwards, two Austro-Hungarian mountain howitzer batteries, each consisting of six 10.5 cm cannons, joined the corps.³⁹ Hence, in Ali Fuat Erden’s own words, “The First Expeditionary

37 *Ibid.*, 148–150.

38 The first campaign was unsuccessful. It took place in 1915 during the Gallipoli campaign to weaken the British forces.

39 Cemal Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi’nde Türk Harbi: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Siyasî ve Askerî Hazırlıkları ve Harbe Girişi*. Ankara, 1991, 339. Pomiankowski gives the calibre of these guns as 10 cm: Pomianowski, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Çöküşü*, 227.

Force became an appealing alliance of Turkish, German, Austrian, Hungarian, Polish origins, and Muslims including Qadiris and Mevlevis.”⁴⁰

In late 1915 and early 1916, a huge defence line on East Mediterranean covering Adana, Beirut, Haifa, and Gulf of İskenderun (Alexandretta) was formed of various guns including field guns and coastal artilleries and was reinforced by an Austro-Hungarian mortar battery in April 1916. An expedition was made for the most appropriate location to deploy this battery in the coastal defence line covering the area between Mersin and Jafa under the inspection of an Austro-Hungarian army officer.⁴¹ In the meantime, a special division entitled “Mountain Howitzer Division von Marno (k.u.k. Gebirgshaubitzen-division von Marno)” was established on 1 January 1916. This division consisted of the first battery of 4th Mountain Artillery Division from Budapest, under the command of Captain Rudolf Schaffer and the second battery of the 6th Mountain Artillery Division from Kassa of both 7.5 cm guns. The division was specially formed to join the Suez Canal campaign and the decision to this effect was reluctantly approved and signed by Emperor Franz Joseph. He said: “Well, I don’t think that we would see them again.” Artillery Captain Adolf Wilhelm Marno von Eichenhorst, a vivacious officer with a monocle who was known for his luxury was given the command of this battalion.⁴² The total strength of the division was 22 officers and 813 soldiers, who were mostly of Hungarian origin.⁴³ It participated in all of the battles on Sinai and Gaza fronts and fought together with the Ottoman army from early summer of 1916 until the very end of the war in late October 1918.⁴⁴ The battalion arrived in Istanbul in two parts in 13 and 16 March 1916. Enver Pasha visited the division

40 Erden, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Suriye Hatıraları*, 177.

41 *Ibid.*, 112.

42 *Wiener Genealogisches Taschenbuch*. Vol. VI. Wien, 1934, 129.

43 Jan Christoph Reichmann, “*Täpferer Askers*” und “*Feige Araber*”. *Der osmanische Verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914–1918*. PhD-Dissertation, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, 2009, 189.

44 Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Allerhöchster Oberbefehl Chef des Generalstabs (hereinafter ÖStA/KA AhOB GSt), Militärattachés Konstantinopel, Akten 66 Artilleriekommando in der Türkei 1916–1918, unpaginated [fols. 17–21], KA/Mil.-Bev.Konstantinopel, Res, No. 811, Artilleriesituation für Oktober 1917, Abschnitt der Geb.Haub. Abt. I.d.T from Artillery Captain Arenstorff to General Pomiankowski dated 12 October 1917.



FIGURE 3
VON MARNO DIVISION (BATTERIES No. 1/4 AND 2/6) DEPARTING FROM ISTANBUL
TO THE SINAI FRONT: [1] LIEUTENANT GENERAL POMIANKOWSKI; [2] ENVER PASHA; [4] TALAT PASHA
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

on 17 March and a parade was held for Sultan Mehmed V Reşad on the same date. The Sultan honoured the division by saying General Pomiankowski: “I see, your soldiers are fully aware of the fact that they belong to a victorious army” and received the badge of the battalion made of silver.⁴⁵ The division departed for the front following some social and cultural events organised in Ottoman capital.

The von Marno Division left Istanbul in two groups by train from Haydarpaşa Station on 28 and 29 March respectively and reached Çamalan (Tchamalan)-Pozanti, the northern skirts of the Taurus Mountains, in three

45 ‘Der Islam im Weltkriege. Enthüllung der Eisernen Haubitze in Constantinople. Oesterreichisch-Ungarische Artillerie in der Türkei’, *Der Tiroler*, 16 May 1916, 4–5.

days where the railway ended. This is due to the fact that the entire division was obliged to pass the narrow Gülek Pass (Cilician Gates) on foot. Animals such as water buffalos, oxen, horses, and mules, which would pull the cannons were previously supplied. The ammunition and weights of the division, on the other hand, were planned to be delivered by the German trucks. For this reason, an army transport corps was established at Cilician Gates as well. The narrow road of the pass was optimised for the passage of motor vehicles beforehand. This was the first time the Austro-Hungarian troops passed the Taurus Mountains, which, therefore, has special importance.

Arriving at the Cilician Gates, the equipment was loaded on a train and troops departed to Mamure (Anamur) station. Afterwards, once again the Nur Mountains (Amanus) were passed on foot except the ammunition and weights, which were sent through narrow gauge railway. The division brought its field kitchens as well. Finally, the division arrived in Damascus where they were welcomed by Cemal Pasha himself and Friedrich Kraus, the Austro-Hungarian consul in Damascus.

It can be asserted that entrance of von Marno Division to Jerusalem on 9 April 1916 had greater repercussions than their welcoming in Damascus. Marno and his staff attached more importance to their march into the city. The entire division attended the parade with fully decorated dress uniforms. Such a charming parade aimed to make a good impression on the local people, which were considered as providing advantage for them in the rivalry against their German allies. A cheerful and excited crowd gathered in the station to greet 400 Austro-Hungarian soldiers with flowers. 14 officers, a military physician, and a chaplain also attended the parade. The military band and a gypsy orchestra entertained the crowd with pleasant tunes and military marches. The parade ended at Damascus Gate where the Austro-Hungarian St. Paul Hospice was, the headquarters of the division. In the evening, the military band continued its performance at the Austro-Hungarian consulate. The consul organised some entertainment for the army officers and notables of the city.⁴⁶

46 Gerda Sdun-Falscheer, *Jahre des Lebens - Die Geschichte Einer Familie im Palästina um die Jahrhundertswende bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Stuttgart, 1989, 517.

In the first days of April 1916, first the airplane detachment No. 300 of the German army, then the Mountain Howitzer Division of Austro-Hungarian army arrived in Birüssebi, in northern Negev following a 14-day tiring journey in 12 April 1916 and deployed in the desert. The division's staff was so large that around 1,000 soldiers were employed just for 8 guns. The cannons were all of Hungarian origin, they needed an interpreter for their communication with Turkish officers. The division was prepared against hard desert conditions so that they immediately began preparations for adaptation.⁴⁷

The division joined the Suez campaign as a part of the first expeditionary forces under the command of von Kress from El-Arish to the Canal. The cannons were moved through the desert under very difficult conditions.⁴⁸ They finally arrived to Birülabd (Bir el Abed)–Birübayur line on 23 July and were under the command of Lt. Col. Refet Bey [Bele] of the First Division of the 4th Army on 29 July. On 30 July, the division received orders to assault the canal.⁴⁹ On 4 August, Ottoman planes attacked the British positions with the support of heavy fire from the German and Austro-Hungarian artilleries.⁵⁰ However, the British troops counterattacked.⁵¹ Thus, the first battle began at Romani resulting in the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces in the direction of Katya (Katia).⁵² The next battle took place at Katya where British troops attacked the Ottoman Army and in response the Austro-Hungarian artillery countervailed on 7 August. A huge part of the First Expeditionary Forces withdrew to the Birülabd–Birübayur line on the following day.⁵³ Thanks to the courage of Battery No. 1/4 under the command of Captain Schaffer, the withdrawal was successful.⁵⁴

47 'Unsere Artillerie am Suezkanal. Oesterreichisch-ungarische Kanoniere im Orient', (*Österreichische Volks-Zeitung*, 2 March 1917, 7.

48 Şerif Güralp, *Bir Askerin Günlüğünden Çanakkale Cephesi'nden Filistin'e*. İstanbul, 2003, 94.

49 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi*, 371, 374.

50 Güralp, *Bir Askerin Günlüğünden*, 102.

51 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi*, 367.

52 Güralp, *Bir Askerin Günlüğünden*, 100, 104, 105.

53 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi*, 388.

54 Major Dr. Adelhart v. Fedrigoni, 'Die Kärntnier Gebirgshaubitz-Batterie 1/4 bei Ghaza', *Salzburger Volksblatt*, 3 July 1937, 12.

On 9 August, the British 4/6 Horse Brigade attacked the Ottoman front in the south direction of Birülabd, which resulted in the withdrawal of First Expeditionary Forces to El-Arish on 14 August. The withdrawal resulted in serious casualties due to tiredness, fatigue, lack of drinking water, and unhygienic conditions. 4 deaths, 11 cases of cholera, 60 dysentery and enteritis were reported and 1 soldier died of typhoid. Physical and psychological problems also challenged the division.⁵⁵ This withdrawal ended the Suez Canal campaign following a few impotent British assaults in September.⁵⁶

In the aftermath of this campaign, the Division, composed of two batteries with 6 cannons each, was reorganized and redeployed at Birülabd–Jerusalem line.⁵⁷ The von Marno Division was recalled to Beytüllahim (Bethlehem) on 7 October. The Battery No. 1/4 was quartered in the Carmelian Monastery, while the Battery No. 2/6 was quartered in the Silezian Monastery. The first supply and aid for the artillery was acquired on 19 October. On 18 November, 83 soldiers of the division were decorated by von Kress with Turkish War Medal. Meanwhile, von Marno, Captain Truszkowski, and 1st Lieutenant Scharff, aide of von Marno, were decorated the German Iron Cross 2nd Class. A parade was organised for the visit of Cemal Pasha's and high-ranking military officers from Istanbul on 20 November. The news that Emperor Franz Joseph died reached to the Division on 23 November. Therefore, a special religious service was held on 24 November. In this respect, the Division had the chance to pay visits to the holy Christian places and prayed for the soul of the late Emperor as well as pledged allegiance to the new Emperor, Charles. Meanwhile, British preparations for further attacks continued at Christmas. Even though both batteries took necessary measures against their possible attacks, the British forces occupied El-Arish after a forcible strike supported by naval vessels. They also conducted an air raid on Magdebe (Magdhaba) and captured the garrison on 23 December. Henceforth, the priority of Gaza front turned into the defence of Palestine and Syria.⁵⁸

55 'Unsere Artillerie am Suezkanal', 7.

56 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi*, 392.

57 *Ibid.*, 399.

58 *Ibid.*, 426–436.

Enemy attacks did not keep Austro-Hungarian forces from celebrating a peaceful Christmas in 1916. A religious service was held in Bethlehem with the participation of the Archbishop of Jerusalem. His magnificent entry into the city drew much attention.⁵⁹ This drew severe criticism from the Turkish officers about their Austro-Hungarian counterparts for their indifference under circumstances as their homeland was under attack. They were better supplied than their Turkish colleagues were. Over and above, the Ottoman officers frustrated by their constant requests.⁶⁰

The year 1917 started with a British attack on Tellelrefah (Tall Rafah) in January. The von Marno Division successfully withdrew to Gaza–Tel Sheria line in February and March protected by various Ottoman cavalry divisions.⁶¹ On 5 March, as von Marno was appointed to the Italian front for another duty in 6 March 1917, the command of the battalion was given to Captain Wladislaw Ritter von Truszkowski and the battalion was renamed into “Mountain Howitzer Division in Turkey (Gebirgshaubitzaabteilung in der Türkei)” afterwards. From this moment on, the division was challenged by various difficulties prompted by a series of battles for Gaza. The first one occurred on 26–27 March,⁶² the second on 17–19 April,⁶³ and the third battle on 30 October–2 November 1917. The first battle ended with severe casualties, most notably Truszkowski, the Division commander. In Cemal Pasha’s own words, he was found dead with his gun in his hand near the cannon he was defending and therefore deserved the most reputable appreciation.⁶⁴ Apart from the commander Truszkowski, the two batteries of the division lost 2 officers more and 4 soldiers. 7 cannoneers were wounded. The data on the soldiers who were either lost or held captive were as follows: 2 officers,

59 ‘Weihnachten unserer Artillerie in Bethlehems’, *Neue Freie Presse*, 14 December 1917, 12.

60 Von Kress, *Son Haçlı Seferi. Kuma Gömülen İmparatorluk*. İstanbul, 2007, 238–239.

61 *Ibid.*, 225.

62 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi’nde Türk Harbi*, 513–531.

63 “Artilleriesituation für Oktober 1917” from Artillery Captain Arenstorff to General Pomiankowski, 12 October 1917. ÖStA/KA AhOB GSt, KA/Mil.-Bev. Konstantinopel, Res., No. 811.

64 Ahmet Cemal Paşa, *Hatıralar*. İstanbul, 2006, 205.

32 cannoneers and an interpreter of Turkish origin.⁶⁵ In spite of the serious casualties, the Ottoman Army resisted well and repulsed the British attack, causing them 2,000 casualties.⁶⁶ Captain Rudolf Schaffer, one of the heroes of the first battle, took over the command following Truszkowski's death.⁶⁷ He was so dedicated that even though he wounded three times throughout the war, he never gave up his command. In his memoirs, Major Adelhart von Fedrigoni, an Austro-Hungarian army officer, narrated that once Refet Pasha, commander of the 22nd Army Corps of the Ottoman Army kissed him on his forehead in a military ceremony, which is a common and sincere way of paying respect in Turkish culture, and acknowledged him by giving the seat next to him at dinner. He was called "Bey of Gaza (Herr von Ghaza)" among his fellow soldiers.⁶⁸

The second battle was so vehement that the British forces used heavy artillery and gas shells in their assault. It was also supported by a French war vessel *Requin*. The Battery No. 1/4 which was located beyond Ali Muntar Hill resisted against the attacking forces.⁶⁹ The significance of this battle was the success of artilleries against British tanks, in other words *his majesty's land ships* (HMLS). Among seven British *Mark I* tanks three of them were totally destroyed by Ottoman artillery. Moreover, the Austro-Hungarian artillery destroyed HMLS *War Baby*, HMLS *Nutty* and HMLS *Sir Archibald*.⁷⁰ Falih Rıfkı (Atay) described the intensity of the fights and destruction of tanks from the eyes of a vigilant Turkish soldier:

"Have you ever seen a 'dead tank' before? How touching corpses of the things designed to kill are... One of them has overturned right in front of our trenches. This became an obstacle with its huge, decumbent and discharged

65 "Artilleriesituation für Oktober 1917" from Artillery Captain Arenstorff to General Pomiankowski, 12 October 1917. ÖStA/KA AhOB GSt, KA/Mil.-Bev. Konstantinopel, Res, No. 811.

66 *Salzburger Chronik*, 6 April 1917, 6.

67 Iselstöger, 'Kommando der k.u.k. Instruktions-Detachments', 516.

68 Fedrigoni, 'Die Kärntnier Gebirgshaubitzen-Batterie 1/4 bei Ghaza', 12.

69 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi*, 631.

70 E Col. HBMGC War Diary: 19 April 1917, Reference Map Gaza 1/40,000 52nd Division, 155 Brigade, Order No. 42; The Second Battle of Gaza, Palestine, 19 April 1917, 3 October 2009. http://alh-research.tripod.com/Light_Horse/index.blog?topic_id=1113723 (Access Date: 30 January 2020).

bulk between the trenches. The detachments with silent guards with felts on their feet, having seen the front side of the tank at nights, are trying to neutralize a possible sudden attack that could avail itself of this obstacle. One of our patrolling guards turned and saw a British soldier behind him in one night. He thought himself of these two situations: Had he had shot him with a rifle, then all bullets from Turkish and British trenches both would have rained on this suspicious noise. Had he had stabbed him with a bayonet, either dead or alive, he would have vainly been deprived of the reward of five gold coins. Then something strange occurred to him: He removed his socks, which he did not remember when he wore last time and hid them in his left hand. Then having bewildered him with a fist on the nape of his neck, he tucked this cloth in his mouth. After sobering up, the prisoner said: 'First, he punched me and I staggered, then he stuffed an unknown poison into my mouth so I fainted.'"⁷¹

Géza Maróti (1875–1941) painted pictures of the destroyed British tanks in the Battles of Gaza. He was sent to the Gaza front to draw war paintings for the Military Museum. He personally met Cemal Pasha and visited the most dangerous parts of the front for several weeks. Maróti who painted paintings on the snapshots from the fronts, drew Cemal Pasha's own portrait and gave it to him. There is no exist information about these paintings today. The Hungarian painter, who was able to return home under difficult circumstances after the war, brought letters of two Austrian soldiers who died in the battle and delivered them to their families in Vienna.⁷²

Finally, the last battle led to the fall of Gaza because of a decisive victory against the Ottoman Army due to the lack of coordination between Turkish and Austro-Hungarian artilleries.⁷³ The Battery No. 2/6 bravely fought in this battle. Artillery Sergeant Major Yusuf Efendi, among the Turkish soldiers of the battery, was the artillery marksman and assistant commandant. He bore witness to the tragic scenes of the reckless fights. He narrated how they survived from the heavy British fire thanks to the calm leadership and ability of 1st Lieutenant Robert Hofmann, the commander of the Battery No. 2/6. Lt. Hofmann and medical

71 Atay, *Ateş ve Güneş*, 158.

72 For the details from Maróti's memoirs, see *Lapus Angularis IV. Források a Magyar Építészeti Múzeum gyűjteményéből. Maróti Géza emlékiratai*. Budapest, 2002, 92–162.

73 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 108–110.



FIGURE 4
ARTILLERY SERGEANT MAJOR AHMED
EFENDI, PORTRAIT BY 1ST LIEUTENANT
ROBERT HOFMANN
(ROBERT HOFMANN, 'MEINE ERLEBNISSE
IM HEILIGEN LANDE', IN KERCHNAWE UND
NIEDERLEUTHNER (HRSG.),
EHRENBUCH UNSERER ARTILLERIE, II. 521.)

officer candidate Strasser heroically rushed towards the enemy line to rescue the signallers of their battery under enemy fire. Officer candidate Mateyka, who did not obey the commands of Lt. Hofmann was also shot dead. Yusuf was ordered to inform the Turkish headquarters about the fight. On the way to the headquarters, a group of Turkish soldiers captured him, mistaking for an enemy and he was severely beaten: "Under such a turmoil and racket, it is not easy to explain them that they did not catch a 'British' but an 'Austrian.'" The truth came out when he was taken before the unit commander in the trench.⁷⁴

Artillery Sergeant Major Ahmet Efendi was another Turkish staff of the battery. His appearance is known due to a surviving charcoal drawing.⁷⁵ This portrait is from a drawing book, which was coincidentally delivered to its owner in 1937. In the previous year, on his visit to Berlin Krishne Urs, who joined the war as an infantry officer of British Indian Army, delivered it to

74 Feuerwerker D. Jussuf, 'Mit 10.4 Zentimeter Kanonen in der Schwarmlinie, Erlebnis an der türkischen Front', *Neues Wiener Journal*, 5 August 1937, 11.

75 Robert Hofmann, 'Meine Erlebnisse im heiligen Lande', in Kerchnawe und Niederleuthner (Hrsg.), *Ehrenbuch Unserer Artillerie*, II. 521.

German military authorities. He found this book near a dead German officer, so he thought that the book belonged to him. The German authorities later revealed that the owner of the book was not any German, but an Austrian, and subsequently returned this book to Austria. Indeed, the drawing book belonged to 1st Lieutenant Hofmann himself, praised by Yusuf Efendi for his heroic act as mentioned above. This included his drawings from the Gaza front. He left his book in a truck in which the weights of the battery were loaded and when the truck was damaged during the battles in Anabta, the book was lost. Hofmann was able to survive after a long march from Palestine to the Valley of Jordan, then over Hauran to Daraa, Syria. After the war, he became a leading painter in Vienna and drew for a caricature magazine called *Die Muskete*.⁷⁶

Artillery Sergeant Major Nissim Behmoiras was also shot at this battle on 25 July 1917 and died in Bethany Field Hospital at the age of 22. He was the son of a Jewish family, who migrated from Edirne to Brünn (Brno). As he spoke fluent Turkish, he was appointed to the Battery No. 20 at Gaza front as an interpreter. Major Sergeant Yusuf Efendi narrated how he died:

“It was not pleasant to curl up on sand trenches under intense heat, listen to the noise of the cannonballs flying over the heads for hours and waiting for the next cannonball. Under such a circumstance, a shell fragment in the size of a thumb fell down very close to the feet of Boichmores [Behmorias], our interpreter, who was a courteous man. He got so scared. He took it over the floor with a pale face and said: ‘I will take this piece with me all my life as a memoir.’ He could not have taken this shell fragment for a long time. He died a hero on the same day.”⁷⁷

The victory won in the third Gaza battle opened the road to Jerusalem to the British forces.⁷⁸ They began to siege the city on 7 December and the Ottoman officials abandoned the city on the 9th.⁷⁹ There are discrepancies in the accounts of the Turks and their Christian allies about the Fall of Jerusalem.

76 *Das Interessante Blatt*, 1 July 1937, 10, 16.

77 Jussuf, ‘Mit 10.4 Zentimeter Kanonen in der Schwarmlinie’, 11.

78 ‘Kriegsschauplatz Orient, Der Fall von Gaza’, *Auszug aus der Tagespresse*, 17 November 1917, 18.

79 Robert-Tarek Fischer, *Österreich im Nahen Osten: die Grossmachtspolitik der Habsburgermonarchie im Arabischen Orient 1633–1918*. Wien, 2006, 260.

Mehmet Akif Ersoy, the famous poet of Turkish National Anthem *İstiklâl Marşı* recounted that when Jerusalem fell down to British forces he was in Vienna. Looking outside the window, he saw a cheerful crowd making celebrations on the street. He initially assumed that this should probably be news of a victory. However, this was not the victory of the Austro-Hungarian army, but rather that of Christendom. Somebody from the crowd told him: "The British entered into Jerusalem under the command of Allenby. The holy city got rid of the crescent and retrieved the cross!"⁸⁰ W. H. T. Squires, an American physician who later visited Jerusalem, wrote a story about a Catholic nurse who took care of the wounded Turkish soldiers but gave her duty up and thankfully prayed to God in tears because the Turks had withdrawn from the city.⁸¹

In 1917, a new division of artillery consisting of two long ranged cannons under Lt. Hans Sedlmayer's command was sent to the Gaza front.⁸² These cannons arrived in Istanbul and joined the forces of Captain Kodar's 24 cm Motor Mörser Battery No. 9 in Istanbul. This new battery was named The Austro-Hungarian 10 cm Cannon Battery No. 20 and was sent to Syria on 10 and 11 May 1917 through the way at Taurus Mountains: Pozanti-Çamalan-Cilician Gates, Anamur and Rayak.⁸³ As soon as they arrived in their destination, the battery immediately saw action and attacked an English aerodrome on 20 July.⁸⁴ From 12 October on, Captain Hugo Friedrich took over the command of the battery. Therefore, in early October 1917, the artillery support provided by Austro-Hungarian batteries to Ottoman Army was as follows: 7 cm M 99 mountain cannons (5 pcs.); 7 cm M15 mountain cannons (29 pcs); 10.5 cm M16 mountain mortars (10 pcs); 15 cm M 14 field howitzer (1 pc.) with 2,400 Hungarian cannoneers and 170 Austrian officers.⁸⁵ General

80 Mithat Cemal Kuntay, *Mehmet Akif – Avrupanın Gerçek Yüzü*. İstanbul, 1939, 150.

81 Michael J. Mortlock, *The Egyptian Expeditionary Force in World War I: A History of the British-led Campaigns in Egypt, Palestine and Syria*. Jefferson, 2010, 154.

82 Hans (Johann) Sedlmayr was born in Hornstein-Ödenburg (Szarvök-Sopron) on 8 January 1896. In the aftermath of the war, he studied art history at the Technical University of Vienna as he became interested in Byzantine and Turkish-Islamic architecture during his military service and became a leading professor.

83 The transfer in which Antoine Köpe was also involved and referred to in his memoirs.

84 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 102.

85 Wolfdieter Bihl, *Die Kaukasuspolitik der Mittelmächte. Vol. I*. Wien, 1992, 132.



La batterie motorisée de 240 m/m devant Tchamalan

FIGURE 5
24 CM MOTOR MORTAR BATTERY AT ÇAMALAN (TCHAMALAN)
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

Pomiankowski assigned 6 trucks from “Austro-Hungarian Auto Unit in Turkey No. 1” to recover the damaged batteries owing to the casualties. 1st Lieutenant Heinrich Loewy was among the officers who served in this unit; he became ill and was sent to Austro-Hungarian Hospital in Istanbul in early September 1917 where he died. He was a good pianist and was awarded by the Austrian Ministry of Education.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the mountain howitzer division was reorganized and supported by 10 cm M 14 field howitzer in Damascus and renamed into “The Austro-Hungarian Field Howitzer Division in Turkey

86 (Österreichische) Volks-Zeitung, 25 September 1917, 5.

(K.u.K Feldhaubitzaabteilung in der Türkei).⁸⁷ Battery No. 1/4 joined this recently established division and Battery No. 2/6 left the front in March 1918.

Ottoman forces were able to maintain the Turkish fronts for another six months after the fall of Jerusalem.⁸⁸ British troops attacked West Bank and Jordan and were turned away on 30–31 March 1918. A month later, they conducted an air raid and a forcible resistance of Austro-Hungarian batteries once again turned the British forces away on 3 May.⁸⁹ Two weeks later, Emperor Charles I paid a three-day visit to Istanbul.⁹⁰

DEFEAT – END OF THE WAR AND RETURN OF THE ARTILLERY TO HOMETLAND

British troops started the decisive attack on 18–19 September 1918. Between 19 September and 26 October British forces held as prisoner nearly 3,700 soldiers of the Central Powers. The casualties of Austro-Hungarian artillery was 540 deaths and 12 cannons were destroyed.⁹¹ In late October, the Ottoman Empire surrendered and Armistice of Mudros was signed. In accordance with the relevant clause, the Ottoman Army was totally dissolved on 31 October 1918 and the Austro-Hungarian batteries were recalled to Istanbul. The entire Austro-Hungarian troops were obliged to leave the Turkish territories within three months. They first gathered at certain meeting points on Asian side of the Ottoman capital and afterwards they were taken to their homelands in groups by ships called *Stella* and *Reşit Paşa* between January and May 1919.⁹² Those who either did not or were not able to leave the country after the deadline would be treated as prisoners of war. While the soldiers of Italian, Czech and Slovak descents within the Austro-Hungarian army were given privileges

87 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 144.

88 Von Kress, *Son Haçlı Seferi*, 367.

89 'Die englische Niederlage in Palästina. Mitwirkung österreichischer Artillerie', (*Linzer Tages-Post*, 14 May 1918, 2; Pomiankowski, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Çöküşü*, 393.

90 *Vorarlberger Wacht*, 3 December 1918, 3.

91 Jung, *Der k.u.k. Wüstenkrieg*, 167.

92 *Grazer Tagsblatt*, 22 January 1919, 10; *Arbeiter Zeitung*, 9 May 1919, 5.

under the auspices of the Entente powers, such as early and safe evacuation, the Germans and Hungarians were guarded without any unfair treatment.

Regarding the situation of the prisoners of war, it can be said that the number of Austro-Hungarian soldiers who were held captive by British forces on all fronts was 8,952 at the end of 1919. 1,200 of them, who were held captive at Syria and Gaza fronts, were kept in Egypt.⁹³ They were gathered at the camp in Tel-Rifat; and their transfer battalion was the camp at El-Kantara on the Suez Canal. The officers of Hungarian origin were sent to Seydibashir camp where Germans were also kept, the rest were transferred to camps such as Ras el-Tin, Tura, Maadi, Kasr el-Nil, and Tel el-Kebir. Non-officers were kept under guard at *The Red Barracks* and *Heliopolis* previously functioned as hospitals in Cairo.⁹⁴

Apart from the Austro-Hungarian officers whose number was either 21 or 23,⁹⁵ Turkish, German, Bulgarian, and Austrian officers were also kept under guard at Seydibashir camp. On the other hand, at Tel el-Kebir camp there were 125 Austro-Hungarian soldiers where 30,000 Turkish and 1,000 German prisoners of war were gathered.⁹⁶ They were released and returned home in December 1919. This was the last group of soldiers to leave Turkish lands.

Nevertheless, some were not able to return home as their final resting places are still in Turkey. Some died in German hospital in Üsküdar (Scutari) and were buried in the hospital garden. Their remains were later transferred to the garden of the summer residence of the German ambassador in Tarabya (Therapia), Istanbul.⁹⁷

93 Jenő Udvary, 'Angol szuronyok között', in Jenő Pilch (ed.), *Hadifogoly magyarok története. Vol. I.* Budapest, 1930, 330.

94 *Ibid.*, 359.

95 2 medical corps, 12 chief surgeon and lieutenant, 6 2nd lieutenant and 1 3rd lieutenant; see Udvary, 'Angol szuronyok között', 359.

96 *Ibid.*, 361.

97 [http://www.denkmalprojekt.org/2015/istanbul-tarabya\(deutsche-kriegsgraeberstaette_tr.html](http://www.denkmalprojekt.org/2015/istanbul-tarabya(deutsche-kriegsgraeberstaette_tr.html)) (Access Date: 23 April 2020).

- Infantryman Danzosch, K.u.k. Honvéd R. 29, Hungarian
(1886 – 21 February 1919)
- Infantryman Erben Vincent, Haub. B.2, Hungarian
(1887 – Scutari Military Hospital, 19 January 1919)
- Josef Kanalas, Hungarian
(1888 – Scutari Military Hospital, 18 December 1918)
- Private Antal K.u.k. Honvéd R. 29, Hungarian
(1892 – Scutari Military Hospital, 24 February 1919)
- Private Marek Josef, Czech
(? – Scutari Military Hospital, 17 December 1918)
- Artilleryman Johann Naggi, Haub. B.33, Hungarian
(1888 – Scutari Military Hospital, 20 December 1918)
- Artilleryman Paul Paul, Geb. K.36, Austrian
(11 October 1897 – Scutari Military Hospital, 4 December 1918)

Some soldiers who died fighting for the Ottomans were buried in the Catholic cemetery in Feriköy, Istanbul. Plaques were unveiled to commemorate them in 2000 and 2007, respectively:

- Artillery 2nd Lieutenant Baron Arthur von Groedel
(19 November 1887 – 5 July 1917)⁹⁸
- Erasmus De Seegner
(† 23 November 1916)
- Medical Aid Man Josef Kolsky
(† 27 February 1918)
- Medical Aid Man Gottlieb Honek
(† 7 February 1918)
- Vormeister Ignatz Fuchsbichler
(† 2 February 1916)
- Matthäus Mayerkolm
(† 7 August 1917)
- Albert Facuch
(† 7 September 1918)

98 It is written “[h]e died in Gallipoli while saving the motherland” on his epitaph.



FIGURE 6
AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN SOLDIERS IN FERİKÖY CEMETERY, İSTANBUL (2016)
(GÁBOR FODOR'S PHOTOGRAPH)

On 13 June 1930, the Hungarian colony in Istanbul erected a column, which has not survived, under the auspices of László Tahy, the Hungarian minister for the remembrance of the fallen Austro-Hungarian soldiers in the war. On this occasion, a ceremony and a religious service was held which was attended by Tahy and his wife. The column made of white marble had the following inscription: "I believe in one God, one land and resurrection of Hungary! Amen."⁹⁹

Finally, Roman Kasseling, another officer of the Battery No. 20 sent a telegraph from Czechoslovakia addressed to Kemal Atatürk himself in 1933. He celebrated the Turkish president and expressing his warm feelings for him and his entire nation on the 10th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic in Turkey. After the war, he became the head mechanic of the Czechoslovak Railway.¹⁰⁰

99 8 *Órai Ujság*, 13 June 1930, 7.

100 Mehmet Önder, 'Atatürk'e Mektuplar', *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 4:10 (1987) 113–114; Çankaya Köşkü Atatürk Arşivi, D: 86-F: 1241.

To sum up, the general list of the artillery units and other supportive organs as part of the Austro-Hungarian Army in the Ottoman Empire during the World War I are given as follows:

K.u.k. 24cm Motor-Mörser-Batterie Nr. 9 (1915–1918)

K.u.k. 15cm Haubitzbatterie Nr. 36 (1915–1918)

K.u.k. Gebirgshaubitzddivision von Marno – renamed into Gebirgshaubitzaufteilung in der Türkei in 1917 (1916–1918)

Ersatz (Replacement) Divisions for Artilleries (1916–1917)

K.u.k. 10 cm Kanonenbatterie Nr. 20 (1918)

K.u.k. Gebirgskanonenabteilung in der Türkei (1918)

Kommando der k.u.k. Instruction Detachments for Mountain Artillery (1916–1918)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Oberleutnant Gomolka (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Leutnant Pokorny (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Oberleutnant Jandesek (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Oberleutnant von Steinhardt (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Oberleutnant Edler (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsdetachement Oberleutnant Maschauer (1916–1917)

K.u.k. Instruktionsabteilung für Gebirgsartillerie (1918)

K.u.k. Instruktionsabteilung für Scheinwerfer (1918)

K.u.k. Instruktionsabteilung für Minenwerfer (1918)

K.u.k. Instruktionsabteilung für Infanteriegeschützed (1918)

BEFORE THE BRIDGE: SKETCHES OF A BLURRED LEVANTINE MILIEU (OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 19TH CENTURY)

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The Latin Catholic cemetery of Feriköy, where the Köpe family is buried, is a calm square plot enclosed in a noisy neighbourhood of Istanbul. The Köpes' grave stands near other tombstones engraved with Italian, German and French sounding names. Under the large and even concrete slab lie Antoine Köpe's Hungarian grandfather, his French grandmother, his parents, both raised in Constantinople - the mother came from Trabzon and was of far Italian descent - and two of his siblings, also born in the Ottoman capital. External heterogeneity, internal diversity: this could be a first approximation of the Levantine society. If one adds to this Antoine's Greek wife, his Italian brother-in-law, another French one, and brothers and sisters born here and there in Anatolia, one starts to get a quite good outline of the persons of European origin who settled long ago in the Ottoman empire, enjoying legal privileges, criticized by everyone and understood by nobody.¹

1 The Levantines concentrated in Istanbul but they also lived in other parts of the Ottoman empire. Smyrna especially had an important Levantine population.

“A LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING”:² THE TROUBLESOME DEFINITION OF LEVANTINITY

The name of the others

*Levantine*s: arguably the Köpes would not have named themselves that way. Nor would have their neighbours at Yeni Çarşı street and consorts in Istanbul, Salonica and elsewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, at that time, the term “Levantine” was coined and used by professional travellers, consuls, diplomats, writers and orientalists, and all kinds of European external observers with a definite opinion on the “Orient”.³ The Ottomans would have used the word “Frenk” (freshwater Franks).⁴ As written by the son of a Smyrniot Levantine:

“You never claimed to be a Levantine. This identity term was only rarely formulated among the people of Smyrna. Yet, this is the denomination that is found in most texts ... So were they designated by the others, but everyone preferred to claim for his nation of origin, even distant, or quite simply for Smyrne.”⁵

And this is even the optimistic version (a 2013 version, when multiculturalism still got good press and the “Orient” was still inspiring). Conversely, during the 19th century, the term was almost systematically connoted in a negative way: stateless, morally suspicious, cunning and deceitful, Levantines were considered

2 “Un malentendu à la fois linguistique et culturel”; see Robert Ilbert, ‘Levantin’, in *Dictionnaire de la Méditerranée*. Arles, 2016, 788.

3 The scholars who interested in this milieu at the time would rather talk about “Latin community” and “Latinity”; see M.A. Belin, *Histoire de la latinité de Constantinople*. Constantinople, 1894; César Saïh, *Notice historique sur la Communauté Latine Ottomane*. Constantinople, 1908.

4 On the issue of terminology, see Oliver-Jens Schmitt, *Les Levantins. Cadres de vie et identités d’un groupe ethno-confessionnel de l’empire ottoman au “long” 19^e siècle*. Istanbul, 2007, 55–64; Edhem Eldem, “Levanten’ Kelimesi Üzerine”, in Arus Yumul and Fahri Dikkaya (eds.), *Avrupalı Mı Levanten Mi?* Istanbul, 2006, 11–22.

5 Louis François Martini, *Le crépuscule des Levantins de Smyrne*. Paris, 2013, 10. My translation. In the following pages the secondary literature is translated in English, whereas the primary sources (Antoine’s Memoirs as well as contemporary texts) are given in their original version (except when an official English translation exists), echoing the practice of multilingualism of the Levantine milieu.

self-serving, ignorant and unreliable.⁶ Too Oriental to be European, not different enough to be exotic, they represented the anti-model of the nation, in a period of increasing nationalism and national identifications.

This may be one of the reasons why, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, almost nobody, except for their descendants, was interested in them until Oliver-Jens Schmitt, whose masterful book provided the first and extensive study on this social group in 2007.⁷ Except for their descendants: the few existing accounts were written during the 20th century by their sons and grandsons.⁸ These amateur writings driven by nostalgia often adopted a hagiographic tone. The lack of interest may also have been due to the difficulty to define the notion of Levantine and thus to capture the Levantine reality itself. You cannot define them by their origin, nor by their nation, language, legal status or by religion. The term is at the same time functional and embarrassing, functional because inclusive but embarrassing because particularly ill-defined.⁹

Outlines

First, “Levantine” was not an Ottoman legal category. Contrary to Greek Orthodox (*Rum*), Armenian (*Ermeni*), Jew (*Yahudi*), it did not correspond to any *millet*; even if the validity of the notion of *millet* has been intensely discussed by historians, it was still a basic organizational unit with centralized institutions and official representation. This induces a source effect, since scholars cannot rely on the archives of a central administration. Instead, the

6 For a general review of these clichés and the evolution toward an exclusively negative representation, see Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 64–91.

7 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*. About the reasons of this lack of interest, see p. 13–15; see also Yumul and Dikkaya (eds.), *Avrupalı Mı Levanten Mi?*

8 For instance: Livio Missir Di Lusignano, *Familles latines de l'Empire ottoman*. Istanbul, 2004; Livio Missir Di Lusignano, *Appunti familiari: Smirne. Mio padre. Ernesto Buonaiuti, introduzione a un epistolario. Familles latines de l'Empire ottoman*. Luxembourg, 2004; Giovanni Scognamillo, *Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları*. Istanbul, 1990 (expanded edition 2002); Willy Sperco, *Les anciennes familles italiennes de Turquie*. Istanbul, 1959; and the novel: Angèle Loreley, *Les derniers Levantins* (unpublished manuscript).

9 Marie-Carmen Smyrnelis, ‘Levantins’, in *Dictionnaire de l'Empire ottoman*. Paris, 2015, 717.

legal status of the Levantines were the most diverse: they could have a European passport, be “protected” by one European consulate; they could be Ottoman subjects as well.

In any case, these statuses did not correspond necessarily to the origin of a person. The European origin is commonly given as an unifying parameter. But these more or less fresh “Europeans” mixed with natives – Armenians or Greeks –, local Eastern Christians, also named Levantines, on the one hand, and, on the other, could not be defined by their national origins either: the group originated from Genoese and Venetian merchants who settled down in the city during the Middle Ages; followed then by French and Italian traders and craftsmen, later Dutch, Brits and German; later then migrants from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, who acclimatized in the Ottoman capital. The milieu was composed of these successive strata,¹⁰ forming “a supranational group – in the fullest sense of the word”.¹¹

But when did one turn into a Levantine? After how many generations? Did it start with the second generation, as soon as one was born in the Empire? And was the birth in the Empire a sufficient parameter? What about those who grew up in a fully European way? And what about Europeans who settled definitively in Istanbul, took a local wife, home and work, and stayed so long that they forgot the place they came from as Antoine Köpe’s ancestors did? In other words, what differentiates a European settled in the Empire from a Levantine?

The question is all the more relevant in that the 19th century was characterized by the significant arrival – in thousands – of Europeans immigrants, who escaped political repression (as Antoine’s grandfather did), economic hardship (especially in the last third of the century) or more simply wanted to try a new life in a land that seemed to offer more opportunities. Very often these political, economic and existential motivations mixed. These waves of immigration upset the Levantine society and redefined the centuries-old European presence in the capital.

10 People of Italian origin were an important element of the Levantine milieu, which often produces confusion between the Italian community of Istanbul and the Italo-Levantines. On Italo-Levantines: Alessandro Pannuti, *Les Italiens d’Istanbul au XX^e siècle: entre préservation identitaire et effacement*. Istanbul, 2008 (2004).

11 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 15.

The national affiliation, whatever its nature, did not correspond to a single idiom so that the language could not be taken as a criterion. Multilinguism was the rule. The fact that a Hungarian like Antoine Köpe had French and Greek as mother tongues - if this notion might have a sense in this context - and was not able to speak Hungarian was not odd at all. This multilinguism, fascinating when compared to our nowadays common monolingualism, is a *passage obligé* of the discourse on Levantines in the literature as well as in the self-description of the descendants who still display it proudly.

As said, the cemetery where the Köpes are buried in Istanbul is Latin Catholic. Religion - Roman Catholicism - is often considered as the main definitional standard.¹² However, if Catholicism summed up the group, it did not totalize it and the limits of the group were not as clear as the cemetery walls. One just walks for a few meters beyond the *Latin Katolik Kabristan* to find the Protestant cemetery, where Brits and Dutch lie. A bit further, one comes across the Jewish cemetery. All of them were considered as part of Levantine people.

Therefore defining a Levantine community is quite difficult, but this will not be the aim of this paper. Instead, the paper will present a few sketches, as attempts to depict this milieu.¹³ In this respect Antoine Köpe's narrative represents an inestimable source, that provides us with a look from within.¹⁴ Of course this is a retrospective account, written when multiculturalism in the Eastern Mediterranean had already been shredded by foisting nation states (Köpe starts to write in 1945) - and maybe longing for Levantine memoirs of the time is a mirage. The Levantine record might be anachronistic by definition. Nonetheless Köpe's first books are an unprecedented observatory of this part of the Ottoman society, of its identifications and sociabilities, habits and trajectories for the period immediately preceding and including WW1. From

12 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 15.

13 "Milieu", instead of "community" or even "group": I choose the term because it renders better the heterogeneous dimension and the blurred contours of this socio-cultural entity. On this concept, see Giovanni Scognamiglio "Être levantin à Istanbul", reproduced in Pannuti, *Les Italiens d'Istanbul*, 29-34.

14 Antoine Köpe, *Memoirs of Our Youth* (from here on Köpe, *Memoirs*). The article relies on the French original version of the unpublished manuscript.

that point of view they differ from the numerous account of Europeans who stayed in the late Ottoman empire for a more or less long period and they enable us to observe this particular society that was a challenge for the thought of the origin, a provocation toward any idea of racial or national purity.¹⁵

MULTI-LAYERED IDENTIFICATIONS AND SENSE OF BELONGING

Family

Family was the first site of identification and sociability.¹⁶ The assertion would certainly apply also elsewhere at the time, but there was a Levantine peculiarity: the Levantine milieu took shape and conglomerated beyond national and linguistic discrepancies precisely through family ties. An institution was pivotal in this sense: marriage. Until 1800, a strong endogamy characterized the group, later mixed marriages exploded, mixing people of different nationalities as well as natives and newcomers.¹⁷

European immigrants tended to marry local women, barely resisting to “*les grassouillettes Levantines avec leurs pervers roulis des hanches*”.¹⁸ And this is precisely what they were blamed for by travellers and European officials: taking a wife and staying. From the official’s point of view, this contributed to the local dissolution of the nation. The fear was old: in the 16th century the Venetian

15 The study of the Levantine society is at the center of the activities of the Levantine Heritage Foundation that spearheads a wide network of scholars and descendants, carries out an important work of collection and diffusion of sources, studies and references about Levantines and organize regularly conferences and workshops. Their website is: <http://www.levantineheritage.com/>

16 This is probably why the Levantine authors dedicated a large part of their research to the “old Levantines families”. However, their perspective was mainly genealogical, not sociological – a sociological approach developed in the more recent researches instead. The titles of their books are telling: Missir Di Lusignano, *Familles latines de l’Empire ottoman*; Sperco, *Les anciennes familles italiennes de Turquie*, etc.

17 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 249–254.

18 Bertrand Bareilles, *Constantinople, ses cités franques et levantines (Péra, Galata, Banlieue)*. Paris, 1919, 48.

Senate already worried about the fact that its dragomans entered into “*matrimoni mal convenienti alle circostanze loro*”,¹⁹ i.e. with Greek women. These unions turned a temporary emigration into a life plan. As a matter of fact Antoine’s father, Charles, did not depart from the rule, wedding the Italo-Levantine Ida, met in the jewellery shop where he worked— she was the sister of the boss – nor did Antoine with his Greek wife Émilie Gaziades. Professional relationships were also familial networks.

Giuseppe Zaccagnini, a notable of the Italian colony - the principal of the Technical-Commercial School and president of the local committee of the Dante Alighieri association - described the typical composition of these families in these words:

“N’è infrequente è il caso di trovare una famiglia press’a poco così composta: nonno italiano e nonna armena, padre italiano e madre greca, zio ottomano e zia russa, un figlio austriaco e uno francese. Lascio immaginare ai lettori i vocabolario che s’adopra nelle conversazioni domestiche, e le bandiere che s’in-alberano nelle commemorazioni patriottiche.”²⁰

This account is not so distant from Köpe’s family. In that sense the Köpes are an outstanding example of this inherent ethno-national diversity.

Observing the sense of belonging to the family is hard work, especially for documentary reasons. Oliver-Jens Schmitt insisted on that point. Cold parish registers enable us to know who married who but do not give access to data of a more subjective nature. In Köpe’s journal instead we see the son running at home during the conflict in order to bring the bread he just received to his relatives²¹ or share his father’s tears when he is sent to the front.²² Episodes of that kind give an insight of the importance of family values.

19 Francesca Lucchetta, ‘L’ultimo progetto di una scuola orientalistica a Venezia nel Settecento’, *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 3 (1985) 41.

20 Giuseppe Zaccagnini, *La vita a Costantinopoli*. Turin, 1909 (1907), 99.

21 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2, “Les mésaventures...” (“Misadventures”).

22 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 3, “Le départ” (“Departure”): “*J’arrivai ainsi aux premières marches des escaliers de la rue Yeni-Tcharchi. C’était la limite extrême d’où l’on pouvait encore apercevoir notre maison. Je me retournai une dernière fois et je vis alors que mon père sanglotait. Il m’envoya un dernier baiser de la main. Ma mère n’était plus là. Je compris qu’elle devait pleurer en cachette. L’image de*



FIGURE 1
[1] "TROPIC' UNIFORM"; [2] "MY BROTHER FERDINAND ONE YEAR BEFORE HIS DEATH (DEC. 1915) (HE IS WEARING THE UNIFORM OF MY BROTHER, TAÏB)"; [3] "MY BROTHER-IN-LAW ERNESTO LEMMI AS A "BERSAGLIERE"; [4] "MY SISTER IDA AND HER FIANCÉ COMMANDER ARMAND PAGNIER IN SALONICA (1917)" (ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

This diversity was smashed to pieces by the First World War, which compelled members of a same family to join enemy forces – to fight one against the other. Antoine joined the Austro-Hungarian army (Fig. 1/1), his brother Ferdinand died for it (Fig. 1/2), their brother-in-law Ernesto Lemmi was a *bersagliere* in the Italian army (Fig. 1/3), allied with France – for whom the fiancé of their other sister Ida (Fig. 1/4) fought – and Britain and opposed to the Central Powers.²³ War interfered with couples as well.

Religion

Religion constituted another strong category of identification. It was also a sociability. The church and the graveyard, the masses, marriages and funerals were places and times of sociability. Several episodes testify Antoine Köpe's deep attachment to Catholicism. Of course in the Memoirs we come across drunkard priests and swindle monks, but his way of approaching Palestine when he was sent to the Eastern front with a line of trucks in 1917, for instance, was completely mediated by religion: he reads cities and landscapes through a filter which is exclusively biblical. The passages dedicated to this episode in the Memoirs contain several postcards and pictures with biblical imagery. His comrades-in-arms, as their predecessors "*fiers d'avoir été désignés par le sort pour défendre la Terre Sainte*",²⁴ reacted in the same way. The military mission turned thus into a kind of unexpected pilgrimage, "*bonheur*" and "*rêve*"²⁵ of any Christian – and war, as an opportunity. We tend to forget it nowadays, but this

mon vieux père qui avait su si habilement maîtriser sa tristesse pendant les derniers jours précédant mon départ et qui maintenant pleurait comme un enfant au coin de cette terrasse me fit une impression tellement pénible que je n'ai pu l'oublier."

23 The anniversary of the Great War has produced an important bibliography about the Ottoman Empire in the War and the Oriental front: Erik-Jan Zürcher, 'Recent Trends in the Historiography of the Ottoman Empire in World War I', *Ventesimo secolo* 41 (2017) 9–17; Julie Andurain (d') and Cloé Drieu, 'Par-delà le théâtre européen de 14–18. L'autre Grande Guerre dans le monde musulman', *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* [Online], 141 | juin 2017, online since 25 October 2017, connection on 29 July 2020. URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/remmm/9498>.

24 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 3, "Jérusalem".

25 *Ibid.*

association was common among European travellers, even among scholars (archaeologists, orientalists), who went in search of a Christian past in these territories. They were an inescapable stage of any travel, and any travel writing, and the disillusion could only be proportionate to the expectations:

“Jérusalem me fait l’effet d’un charnier fortifié – là pourrissent silencieusement les vieilles religions – on marche sur des merdes et l’on ne voit que des ruines – c’est énorme de tristesse.”²⁶

The strong religiosity of the Levantines has been frequently pointed out by European visitors, who often disparaged it as mere bigotry. More generally, Catholicism has been considered as a common denominator and consequently as an identity characteristics by scholars. Oliver-Jens Schmitt describes the Levantines as a “group ... not defined by nationality, yet by religion, Roman Rite Catholicism”, “a prototype of ethnically mixed community united by religious ties”.²⁷ Others, like Rinaldo Marmara, spokesman of the Episcopal conference of Turkey and head of the association Caritas Turkey, who heavily worked on the “Latin Catholic Community” in Istanbul also adopted this confessional definition.²⁸ Certainly the fact that most of these works rely largely on confessional archives prompts to consider the confessional parameter as determining.

However, Catholicism was not the unique confession of Levantine people, and Antoine Köpe’s case, although prevailing, did not represent them all. The limits of the group were blurred and the Catholic majority mingled with Protestant and Orthodox, as well as with Armenians, not always Catholics. This was even more flagrant with Jews, be they included or not among Levantines in contemporary narratives and even if typically Catholic antisemitism was widespread among the Levantines, as shown by the Memoirs.²⁹

26 Gustave Flaubert, *Voyage en Orient*. Paris, 2006, 244.

27 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 15. My translation.

28 Rinaldo Marmara, *Précis historique de la Communauté Latine de Constantinople et de son Église*. Istanbul, 2003; Rinaldo Marmara, *La communauté levantine de Constantinople. De l’Empire byzantin à la République turque*. Istanbul, 2012.

29 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 1, “L’hôpital” (“The Hospital”), 16, 20–21, for instance.

The Jews of Italian origin for instance, who mainly came from Livorno, were an important part of the Italian community.³⁰ Their social role was important – as exemplified the Allatini, a wealthy family of bankers in Salonica – and they were a notable vector of Europeanisation and spread of the French language. This confessional multiplicity was not only present inside the families: it also manifested itself in practices of worship, especially through the sharing of sacred places, widespread at the time in the Mediterranean.³¹ Saint-Antoine, Antoine Köpe’s church, was one of the numerous examples of this phenomenon. Even if this practice should not be taken for what it was not – a genuine syncretism – it is telling about the familiarity and the neighbouring that percolated through the milieu.

HOMELAND

Another channel of identification emerges throughout the diary: the attachment to the Empire – the Habsburg one – and more precisely to the figure of the Emperor, who held it together. The attachment to his “homeland” took this shape for the Hungaro-Italo-French Istanbul-born Antoine Köpe – an attachment that was strong among Levantines, often highlighted by European observers and mocked as a degenerated version of patriotism. For Antoine Köpe, it consisted of a mix of feelings, characterized by the pride of being part of a multi-ethnic and yet united empire, these “*États-Unis de l’Europe Centrale*”, where “*tant de races différentes, aujourd’hui ennemies, [vivaient] en si bonne harmonie*”.³² This may have echoed with his local Ottoman experience.

Necessarily we cannot know what comes under the retrospective narrative and the genuine feeling in these notebooks where Antoine Köpe outlines a

30 Anthony Molho, ‘Ebrei e marrani fra Italia e Levante ottomano’, in Corrado Vivanti (ed.), *Gli ebrei in Italia. Dall’emancipazione a oggi*, vol. 2 (Storia d’Italia. Annali, 11.) Turin, 1997, 1009–1043.

31 Dionigi Albera and Maria Couroucli (eds.), *Religions traversées: lieux saints partagés entre chrétiens, musulmans et juifs en Méditerranée*. Aix-en-Provence, 2009.

32 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2, “La mort de François Joseph” (“The Death of François Joseph”).

vanished world, the *Welt von Gestern* Stephan Zweig described so well,³³ and that opened precisely with the split of this world. This patriotism, handed down through the family, was directed towards the country of origin of the ancestors, a more imaginary than actual homeland, where most of them had never been, a little bit as in diasporic situations. The ties and sense of belonging were thus multi-layered, infra and supranational, paradoxical in appearance only.

LANGUAGES: THE USES AND THE NORM

Unknown languages

Antoine Köpe did not speak Hungarian, nor German, nor Turkish – nor the language of his forefathers, nor the one of his homeland, nor the one of his country. This lack of knowledge earned him some cold sweat and exhilarating episodes, just as when charged by an Austrian captain with translating driving classes from German to Turkish – he had been appointed as “instructor-translator” (*traducteur-interprète*) – he gave completely fanciful directions to some 30 Ottoman and perplexed soldiers, relying on the scraps of Turkish he had learned some time previously with a friend in a bar, between two beers:

“Fallait-il dire « appuie sur la pédale » je traduisais : « pousse le fer », ou bien on me disait : « Dites-lui de tirer le levier moins brusquement », je lançais en turc très crânement :

« Tire le fil de fer et fais attention ! »

Aucune des deux parties en présence ne comprenait rien à mon horrible langage mais cela n'avait aucune importance parce que j'avais l'air d'accomplir très sérieusement mon rôle d'instructeur.”³⁴

The Austrian captain was actually ill-advised to opt for a man like Antoine Köpe, believing that since he was from Turkey he would necessarily speak Turkish. The knowledge of Turkish was far from being shared in the Empire. Turkish was

33 Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers*. Frankfurt, 1942.

34 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2, “Instructeur interprète” (“Instructor Interpreter”). A caricature with Ottoman soldiers who are circling illustrates this anecdote too.

the language of the State, but it was only one of the many idioms of the Ottoman empire and its command and uses varied according to ethno-confessional, social, geographical, urban/rural, gendered contexts, even within a same city. Spoken and written languages should be distinguished as well.³⁵ In Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece) for instance, where Antoine spent the first 13 years of his life, the foremost languages were Greek and Judeo-Spanish (later caught up by French). This accounts for Antoine's ability to mumble some Ladino when necessary.

However, like him, Levantines were known for speaking little Turkish and cases such as Angelo Scanziani's, Istanbul-born son of a Lombard exile and secretary of the Sultan Abdülhamid II, were probably fairly rare. The Europeans who worked for the State, the army or the Palace were more likely to speak Turkish for professional reasons. Still the knowledge of language is more a question of gradient: its usage varies according to the milieu and the contexts. Antoine Köpe would learn German – the language of the Austrian army and communication tool for the Central Powers – during the war. As seen, until the WWI, there was no coincidence between language and nation, even if this coincidence became more and more imperious.

Levantine Languages

An episode illustrates the discrepancy between language, origin and patriotism: the oath taking, in Istanbul, to the new Emperor after François-Joseph's death in November 1916. In Taksim,

“Les soldats furent groupés par catégorie de race afin qu'ils prêtent serment dans leur langue maternelle. Il y avait donc des groupes d'Allemands, de Hongrois, de Tchèques, de Croates, de Roumains et d'Italiens sous le commandement de leur officier. Ces divers groupements avaient été effectués par des triages dans les rangs. Un officier questionnant chaque soldat sur sa langue parlée, lui avait ensuite désigné son groupe. Lorsque mon tour était venu je fus très embarrassé. J'étais en réalité hongrois mais je n'y comprenais pas un mot. Je parlais bien un peu l'allemand, mais comme je connaissais

35 Nicolas Vatin (ed.), *Oral et écrit dans le monde turco-ottoman* in *Revue d'études du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 75–76 (1995).

l'italien et que je tenais à savoir ce que j'aurais juré, je m'étais déclaré Italien et c'est pourquoi je fus classé parmi une trentaine de Triestins. ... Nous, « les Italiens », n'étant qu'une trentaine parmi les mille et quelques soldats de la garnison, avons été placés à la queue de la colonne. Notre lieutenant pour nous stimuler, se tourna vers nous, un peu avant d'arriver devant le Feldmarschal, et nous cria en italien :

- « Et surtout, marchez bien, montrez que vous êtes des Italiens et pas des « gniocchi » [sic], per la Madona [sic] ! »

- Par « gniocchi », les Triestins désignaient les Autrichiens.”³⁶

This imbroglio was possible because we are here at the crossing of two imperial contexts, as such multilingual and multicultural. Here again there was no strict overlapping between the idioms used in the Empires and the ethno-confessional origin – and “race” in Antoine’s (and contemporary) words. While Italian was one of the Habsburg Empire languages, for geopolitical reasons – Austria bordered Italy and ruled Italian-speaking populations – Antoine’s fluency was not due only to his Italian remote roots, but to the fact that Italian was commonly spoken in Galata and Pera and among Levantines.

Instead his proper language was French. Aren’t his memoirs written in that language? Nothing surprising here: French was, with Greek, the main language spoken among Levantines and Europeans. It was also the dominant written language: other authors used it in their texts, such as the Italo-Levantines Willy Sperco or Angèle Loreley.³⁷ French gained such a position during the 19th century, when it progressively prevailed over Italian, that had played the role of vehicle since the Middle Ages, when Italian States controlled trade in the Mediterranean and Genoese and Venetian merchants settled in the Levant city ports. French did not impose itself only among people of European origin. It was commanded also by the Ottoman elites, Muslim and not, who studied it at school (the teaching in Superior Schools was to a large extent delivered in French) and for some of them, directly in France. Here again, it appears necessary to relocate the Levantines in their Ottoman context.

36 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2, “La mort de François Joseph” (“The Death of François Joseph”).

37 Pannuti, *Les Italiens d'Istanbul*, 229–309 and 311–390.

French was the language of “*distinction*”, even if its knowledge and use also varied according to the socio-economic background.

Paris’ prestige was not the only reason for this success. Its outreach was the result of a wilful policy of the French State and elites, mainly a schooling policy, relying on confessional schools run by congregations (which is not the smallest paradox for such a secularizing Republic). French imperialism was foremost a linguistic imperialism.³⁸ Levantines and European newcomers were good clients of these institutions – Antoine attended the colleges of the Frères des Écoles chrétiennes in Salonica and Saint-Michel in Istanbul. As elsewhere, French was the language of culture and diplomacy, associated with the ideas of Europe and progress. A part of the Ottoman – and Istanbul – press was French-speaking or at least bilingual. Thus it became fully one of the languages of the Ottoman empire. What Antoine calls a “miracle”³⁹ every time he manages to get out of trouble in situations requiring Turkish and German proficiency thanks to French, is actually no more and no less than the privilege of a *lingua franca*.

Greek was a more popular language, the language of the servants and intimacy, the one soldiers had learnt in the arms of their local girlfriend. It was spoken throughout the city, by Rums as well as Levantines, and widespread in Galata.⁴⁰

Be it for Greek, French or Italian, Levantines were regularly blamed – and mocked – by European observers for not speaking these languages properly. A quick walk in Galata’s streets let the visitor hear for instance “*un italiano già bastardo, screziato d’altre quattro o cinque lingue alla loro volta imbastardite*”, “*un italiano bizzarro, pieno di parole contraffatte e incomprensibili, molto somigliante a quella così detta lingua franca, la quale ... consiste in un certo numero di vocaboli e di modi italiani, spagnuoli, francesi, greci, che si buttano fuori l’un dopo l’altro rapidissimamente, finché se ne imbrocca uno che sia capito dalla persona che ascolta*”.⁴¹ For sure, if compared to the languages spoken in European countries,

38 Jacques Thobie, *Les intérêts culturels français dans l’Empire ottoman finissant. L’enseignement laïque et en partenariat*. Louvain, 2009.

39 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 3, “Nouvelle mission de l’instructeur” (“New Instructor’s Mission”).

40 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2 “Petite vengeance” (“Little Revenge”).

41 Edmondo De Amicis, *Costantinopoli*. Turin, 2015, 78–79.

the Levantine's ways of speaking were probably faulty and inaccurate. However these considerations have a context: they have to do with the nationalization of languages and the standardization that it imposed throughout Europe during the 19th century.⁴²

The question then may not be whether Levantines spoke well or not and it requires to stray from assessments in terms of standards and norms, from which one would measure the greater or lower extent of linguistic knowledge, to be addressed in terms of usages. People spoke certain languages in certain contexts (at home, at the market, at work, in the street), they used languages to write and other to speak, some languages were language of the heart and others of the mind, the main issue being to understand one each other. This does not mean reducing the part of ideologies, on the contrary, but shifting the gaze and adopting more precise observation tools.

THE USE OF THE CITY

Galata and Pera

The Levantines clustered in some neighbourhoods. Two in particular: Galata and Pera, located on the European side and described in these terms by the Italian travel writer Edmondo de Amicis:

“Galata is situated on the hill which forms the promontory between the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, the former site of ancient Byzantium's great cemetery. It is now the 'city' of Constantinople. Its streets, almost all of them narrow and tortuous, are lined with restaurants, confectioners', barbers', and butchers' shops, Greek and Armenian cafés, business-houses, merchants' offices, workshops, counting-houses-dirty, ill-lighted, damp, and narrow, like the streets in the lower parts of London. A hurrying, pushing throng of foot-passengers comes and goes all day long, now and then crowding to right and left to make room in the middle of the street for the passage of porters,

42 Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIII^e-XX^e siècle*. Paris, 1999, 67–81.

carriages, donkeys, or omnibuses. Almost all the business conducted in Constantinople flows through this quarter. ... Were it not for the ever-present turban or fez, one would hardly know he was in the East at all. On every side is heard French, Italian, and Genoese. ... Of this ancient glory, however, nothing now remains except a few old houses supported on great pilasters and heavy arches, and the ancient edifice which was once the residence of the Podesta."⁴³

Pera instead

"lies more than three hundred feet above the level of the sea, is bright and cheerful, and overlooks both the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. It is the 'West End' of the European colony, the quarter where are to be found the comforts and elegancies of life. The street which we now followed is lined on both sides with English and French hotels, cafés of the better sort, brilliantly lighted shops, theatres, foreign consulates, clubs, and the residences of the various ambassadors, among which towers the great stone palace of the Russian embassy, commanding Galata, Pera, and the village of Fundukli on the shore of the Bosphorus, for all the world like a fortress. The crowds which swarm and throng these streets are altogether unlike those of Galata. Hardly any but stiff hats are to be seen, unless we except the masses of flowers and feathers which adorn the heads of the ladies: here are Greek, Italian, and French dandies, merchant princes, officials of the various legations, foreign navy officers, ambassadors' equipages, and doubtful-looking physiognomies of every nationality."⁴⁴

43 Edmondo De Amicis, *Constantinople*. Philadelphia, 1896, 88–89 (English translation). Original version: "*Galata è posta sopra una collina che forma promontorio tra il Corno d'Oro ed il Bosforo, dov'era il grande cimitero dei Bizantini antichi. È la city di Costantinopoli. Son quasi tutte vie strette e tortuose, fiancheggiate da taverne, da botteghe di pasticciere, di barbieri e di macellai, da caffè greci ed armeni, da uffici di negozianti, da officine, da baracche; tutto fosco, umido, fangoso, viscoso, come nei bassi quartieri di Londra. Una folla fitta e affaccendata va e viene per le vie, aprendosi continuamente per dar passo ai faccini, alle carrozze, agli asini, agli omnibus. Quasi tutto il commercio di Costantinopoli passa per questo borgo. ... Se non si vedessero per le strade dei turbanti e dei fez, non parrebbe d'essere in Oriente. Da tutte le parti si sente parlar francese, italiano e genovese. ... La Galata antica è quasi interamente sparita.*" (De Amicis, *Costantinopoli*, 70–71). Thanks to Nefin Dinç for helping to find the English version of the text.

44 *Ibid.*, 93–94. Original version: "*Pera è alta cento metri sopra il mare, è ariosa ed allegra, e guarda il Corno d'Oro ed il Bosforo. È la Westend della colonia europea; la città dell'eleganza e dei*

The Köpes' house was located in Yeni Çarşı, at the limit between these two neighbourhoods. Antoine writes several times that he almost never crossed the bridge before the war. Hence his worries when his superior commanded him to go to the historical centre (today Fatih):

“Nous traversâmes le pont de Galata et je vis avec inquiétude que l'auto s'engouffrait dans les rues de Stamboul que je ne connaissais pas étant donné que depuis mon arrivée à Constantinople (octobre 1913), je n'étais allé de ce côté du pont que deux ou trois fois seulement. Je me demandais avec angoisse où [nous] allions.”⁴⁵

This was not idleness or lack of curiosity: the Galata bridge was not a bridge that somebody who lived in Galata would necessarily cross regularly. Life happened at the neighbourhood's scale.

The concentration in these specific areas, considered as Europeanised, characterized Levantinity.⁴⁶ Being Levantine was synonymous of living in Pera or Galata – the contrary was not necessarily true. Actually research on Levantines blossomed from the 1980s onwards when scholars and amateurs started to be interested in the two districts that had become fashionable.⁴⁷

piaceri. La strada che percorriamo è fiancheggiata da alberghi inglesi e francesi, da caffè signorili, da botteghe luccicanti, da teatri, da Consolati, da club, da palazzi d'ambasciatori; tra i quali giganteggia il palazzo di pietra dell'ambasciata russa, che domina come una fortezza Pera Galata e il sobborgo di Funduclù, posto sulla riva del Bosforo. Qui brulica una folla affatto diversa da quella di Galata. Sono quasi tutti cappelli a stajo e cappelletti piumati o infiorati di signore. Sono zerbini greci, italiani, francesi, negozianti d'alto bordo, impiegati delle legazioni, ufficiali di navi straniere, carrozze d'ambasciatori, e figurine equivoche d'ogni nazione.” De Amicis, Costantinopoli, 74–75.

45 Köpe, *Mémoires*, Book 2, “Les mésaventures...” (“Misadventures”), in particular 212; see also Book 2, “Une visite au Grand Bazar” (“A Visit to the Grand Bazaar”).

46 The Levantines represented 3,5% of the total population (10% in Smyrna). Cf. Oliver-Jens Schmitt, ‘Sur la voie d'une bourgeoisie d'affaires? L'élite sociale levantine à Galata-Péra et à Smyrne au XIX^e siècle,’ in Suraiyya Faroqhi and Gilles Veinstein (eds.), *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire*. Louvain, 2008, 186–187.

47 For an overview of this literature, see Ethem Eldem, ‘Ottoman Galata and Pera between Myth and Reality,’ in Ulrike Tischler (ed.), *From “milieu de mémoire” to “lieu de mémoire”. The Cultural Memory of Istanbul in the 20th Century*. Munich, 2006, 19–36. See for instance: Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera*. Istanbul, 1998.

In that respect, space is a criterion to define Levantinity as relevant, if not more, as geographical origin or confession.⁴⁸ This does not mean that there were no Levantines elsewhere in town. During the second half of the 19th century, Levantines invested other districts further inland, especially Pangaltı,⁴⁹ that developed under urbanistic pressure. The Latin Catholic cemetery mentioned at the beginning of this paper, originally in the “Grands champs des morts” in Taksim, was relocated there in 1863.

There was no such a thing as a Country Levantine: Town Levantine was the one and only species. Theirs was a fundamentally urban culture.

This gathering transcended sociological differences: not that people from different social classes lived together and shared a common lifestyle, but they lived in the same districts, and the spatial segregation did not happen at the neighbourhood scale. It was a product of history as well as geography. Since the Middle Ages Galata had been the harbour district, where foreigners went ashore and settled down to do business. The same observation would be true for other cities – Smyrna, Beirut, Alexandria – and neighbourhoods of other cities. This observation enables us to refine our depiction: an urban culture undoubtedly, but more precisely a port culture, where amalgam could occur.

These neighbourhoods have been the crucible of an original cultural synthesis. The languages mentioned before are an aspect of it. Architecture would be another good exemplification of this synthesis between European references and local features. Paolo Girardelli demonstrated how the so-called “Italian style” was genuinely Ottoman.⁵⁰ Hence the importance of urban historiography – in the broadest sense, history of architecture included – as much as the history of the various ethno-confessional communities to understand this milieu.

48 For an innovative approach in spatial terms, see Gabriel Doyle’s current doctoral research on ‘Les missionnaires et la fabrique urbaine: changements urbains, réseaux de bienfaisance et souverainetés à Istanbul (1860–1914)’ (working title).

49 Rinaldo Marmara, *Pancaldi: quartier Levantin du XIX^e siècle*. Istanbul, 2004.

50 Paolo Girardelli, ‘Sheltering Diversity. Levantine Architecture in Late Ottoman Istanbul’, in Maurice Cerasi et al. (eds.), *Multicultural Spaces and Urban Fabrics in the South and Eastern Mediterranean*. Istanbul, 2007.

The Levantines were not the only ethno-confessional group living in Pera and Galata. They were not even the majority. The Mevlevi tekke was not far away from the Köpe's house, Galata was bordered by a wide Muslim cemetery, the Dominican church at the base of the district had long before been transformed into a mosque. People of the most diverse ethno-confessional origins came across daily and coexisted. But coexistence was not necessarily synonymous with cultural contamination – with cosmopolitanism. Edhem Eldem, who pleaded for a prudent use of this “very loaded term, more often than not assumed to be a logical and direct consequence of the coexistence of a mixed population within a limited urban space”, phrased the question in these terms: “True, there is no denying that Pera and Galata displayed a high level of ethnic, religious and national variety, a fact often emphasized by foreign travellers...; yet was this sufficient proof of the existence of a cosmopolitan culture, especially if one agrees to define it as more than just the sum total of differences?”⁵¹ He responded in the negative: “My feeling, on the contrary, is that although this mixed population mingled and blended daily in the urban space of the Ottoman capital, it also showed a remarkable capacity and propensity to establish solid communal barriers that made cultural interaction extremely limited and, at best, pragmatic and superficial.”⁵²

Crossing the bridge

This does not mean that people were trapped in Galata and never moved from there. The Köpes often went on excursion around Istanbul, along the Bosphorus: in Antoine's pictures album, the family pose smiling in Thérapia (Tarabya), in Bebek, Rumeli Kavak (Rumeli Kavağı) and Anadolu Hisarı or breathing some fresh air in Polonezköy,⁵³ the colony established by Polish émigrés in the midst of the forest in the middle of the 19th century and turned into a tourist attraction – the kind of bourgeois leisure shared by middle and

51 Eldem, 'Ottoman Galata and Pera', 28.

52 *Ibid.*

53 Köpe, *Photo album*. For Tarabya: Book 6, 1909; Book 7, 2986, 2987, 2990; Bebek: Book 6, 2891, 2892; Book 7, 2977, 2990; Rumeli Kavak: Book 3, 1961; Book 6, 2857; Book 7, 2977, 2981; Anadolu Hisari: Book 6 2675; Book 7, 2983, 2991, 3000.

upper classes in Istanbul.⁵⁴ They visited Istanbul's surroundings even when they lived in Salonica: some pictures of these journeys date back to 1909.

Antoine's father was an employee of the Ottoman Bank; his mother came from a merchant family; his grandparents were smallholders. In many respects, the Köpes shared habits and practices with the Istanbul Ottoman bourgeoisie.⁵⁵ The toys for children, quite a rare thing at the time, would be one of them. Moreover the Köpes gladly displayed their Ottoman acquaintances. Several pictures show them together; Antoine Köpe is proud of including photographs with "friends of his father".⁵⁶ The very practice of photography comes under a bourgeois *habitus* in progress, made of leisure, objects, representations that corroborate an economic capital.⁵⁷

This point is critical: in many respects, the social position was as determining, if not more, as religious or ethno-confessional belonging. Schmitt already pointed this out when he studied the sociology of the Levantines: in the 19th century class solidarities mattered as much if not more than origin-based solidarities.⁵⁸ We can go further and consider Levantines as fully part of the Ottoman bourgeoisie, pleading for the idea of an "integrated Ottoman bourgeoisie".⁵⁹

54 Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, 'Un bourgeois d'Istanbul au début du xx^e siècle,' *Turcica* 17 (1985) 137–138. The family went to Europe as well, as confirmed by the pictures of holidays in Brittany, another proof of the economic comfort of the family.

55 On the Levantine bourgeoisie: Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 245–285; Idem, 'Sur la voie d'une bourgeoisie d'affaires?', 215–230. The Ottoman bourgeoisie has been extensively studied. See for instance: Edhem Eldem, '(A Quest for) the bourgeoisie of Istanbul', in Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi (eds.), *Urban Governance under the Ottomans: Between Cosmopolitanism and Conflict*. London, New York, 2014, 159–186.

56 Köpe, *Photo album*, Book 4, 2234 for instance.

57 Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem (eds.), *Camera Ottomana: Photography and Modernity in the Ottoman Empire, 1840–1914*. Istanbul, 2015; Ece Zerman, 'Représenter la famille, la modernité et la nation. Pratiques et usages des photographies de famille de la fin de l'Empire ottoman au début de la Turquie républicaine', in Gilles de Rapper (ed.), *La photographie de famille en Méditerranée, de l'intime au politique*, in *Science and Video, des écritures multimédia en sciences humaines*, 6 (2017).

58 Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 252; Idem, 'Sur la voie d'une bourgeoisie d'affaires?', 215–230.

59 Eldem, '(A Quest for) the Ottoman Bourgeoisie.'



FIGURE 2
"DE BOUSSINEAU PHOTOGRAPHED WITH MY FATHER AND THE EMPLOYEES OF THE OTTOMAN
IMPERIAL BANK IN KONIA, 1889"
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

In the same way, the Köpes moved throughout the Empire for job-related reasons. As recorded, Antoine spent his childhood in Salonica, where his father was hired as tax inspector for the Ottoman Railroad Company. This was only a step in Charles' broad peregrinations throughout the Empire. The family moved from Istanbul, where Charles had been hired as an employee of the Ottoman Bank (1873–89) to Konya when he was promoted director of the local agency (1889–92), then to Edirne (1892–95). After a French interlude, Charles took his family to Salonica (1897–1913) before coming back to the capital. As a result, Antoine's siblings were born in these different places (Charlotte and Taïb in Istanbul, Ida in Konya, Ferdinand in Edirne).

This trajectory was typical of an emerging class of civil servants and employees of international companies such as the Ottoman Bank. The development of a banking system linked with capitalism in the Empire as well as the ramification of the imperial bureaucracy gave birth to a network of agencies all over the territory, which resulted in a system of continuous transfers of staff. They were vectors of sociological and cultural uniformization.

From this professional life remain Charles Köpe's visit cards and numerous pictures with his colleagues (Fig. 2). If one plays the game of similarities and differences, a detail is striking: they all wear the fez, typical Ottoman hat of the time. As Bernard Lory told me when I was discussing all these questions during a seminar, the headgear is a cultural marker and wearing a fez signified an Ottoman identification.

Again, the Great War changed everything. It was the war that led Antoine Köpe to cross the bridge, then move to the "other side", for delivery, for caretaking, for flirting too. This drew a new subjective urban topography, with wider dimensions, before he and his sons would cross the borders of the city to go abroad, to Europe and to the United States, when no room was left for them in the Empire. This is the new-dimensioned Istanbul that Antoine would remember with nostalgia in Palestine; this is why he would get on with soldiers from the capital during the war. The city, the neighbourhood, are not only a scale: they are vectors of identification and sense of belonging.

CITY, MOBILITY AND IDENTITY IN KÖPE FAMILY ARCHIVE

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The 19th century Ottoman Empire's capital city witnessed an era in which mobility rose; transport, infrastructure and service industry were advanced, and numerous new businesses and institutions were established. The story of the Köpe family began in the first half of the 19th century, when a young revolutionary wearied by the Austrian yoke András (1815–1879) fled his homeland in Transylvania, Brassó (Braşov, Romania) to take refuge in Istanbul. András' path crossed with horologist Louis Tallibert, who came to Istanbul in order to rectify the sorrows of the past, to pursue adventure, and to earn a living. According to the stories told within the family, Louis' brother Pierre was also in Istanbul to work under the direction of the Ballian brothers in the interior design of the Dolmabahçe Palace. Louis' sister Léocadie (1816–1874) on the other hand, was sent to look after her siblings, and to take care of their house. András met Léocadie during his time when he worked at the watch and jewellery shop L. Tallibert in Galata at the Karaköy Plaza, which he later took over from Louis Tallibert once he went back to his country.¹ In 1842, András and Léocadie got married in Galata, at Church of SS Peter and Paul,² and they

1 Raphaël Cervati, *Indicateur Constantinopolitain, Guide Commercial 1868–89. Première année.* Istanbul, 1869, 157. SALT Research, Yearbooks, AAO00800157.

2 SALT Research, Church of SS Peter and Paul, Galata, SPP00200052, "Liber II. Matrimoniorum, Baptizatorum, Defunctorum, [1823–1846]".

had five children.³ András who came from a Protestant family, not only converted to Catholicism in order to get married, but also did not object their children's upbringing with the French culture, due to Léocadié's ongoing close-knit relationship with France. French, having been embraced as the language of culture taught at schools, and having gained prominence in relations with Europe; proved advantageous for children growing up in this environment. As a matter of fact, the recruitment of Charles (1855–1919) – an Austro-Hungary citizen – at the Imperial Ottoman Bank, was the result of his French descent he took from his mother, despite his education and his previous employment⁴ in Vienna. In this way, Charles Köpe, became part of the new rising social class, formed by civil servants working at banks, insurance companies, new department stores and bureaucracy.

This essay focuses on the relationship between the members of the Köpe family from four generations - in fact five generations when the age difference between two brothers, Taïb (1884–1954) and Antoine (1897–1974) is considered - and the city of Istanbul during the era of empires in which mobility increased and identities were transformed. It attempts to comprehend the complex relationship of a multicultural family with transnational identities in a period of transition from empire to nation state. On the other hand, based on the memories narrating everyday life experiences, which are rarely encountered in official archival resources, and photographs of the family; it also aims to map the movement of a middle class family living in Istanbul. This study, which scrutinises the accounts of the environment Charles grew up in, the scenes Taïb had encountered through the lens of his camera, and the memories of Antoine's first arrival in Istanbul from Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece) during his teens, not only comprised the trips they had taken in the centre of Istanbul but also their journeys at the periphery of the city, conducted by the most contemporary transport vehicles of the 19th century. It aims to understand the way the city was perceived by the white-collar officers and their families based in Beyoğlu; to rethink the city's boundaries, and to determine which locations were excluded from their daily trajectories.

3 Antoine Köpe, *Memoirs of Our Youth* (from here on Köpe, *Memoirs*), Book 4, "Family Tree".

4 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "When a student in Vienna", 1872. MINCOLOR2808.

CHARLES KÖPE AND HIS FAMILY IN BETWEEN TWO CULTURES

András and Léocadie's youngest child Charles⁵ grew up under the influence of the close ties⁶ with his Breton mother's family in Tréguier.⁷ His mum's comment about the soil, at the French Embassy garden in Istanbul having been his own land, made a mark in his memory, and guided his life.⁸ Despite working in Vienna for a while, when he returned back to Istanbul, Charles started a job at the Imperial Ottoman Bank at the age of 18, with French Deputy Director General Deveaux's⁹ reference.

After a probation period as the Director General, following his appointments at the Bursa, Afyonkarahisar and Konya branches, he was appointed as the Director of the Edirne Branch. In 1882, when in charge in Istanbul - Galata, he married Rose-Marie Marcopoli (1857–1934), daughter of a Levantine family from Trabzon, who originated from a Genoese family, at the Santa Maria Draperis Church in Beyoğlu.¹⁰ Charles, who did not dismiss his journeys to France after he got married, always remembered to bring presents for his children.¹¹ In fact, in 1889, when he went to the opening ceremony of the Eiffel

5 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, Charles' birth was recorded as 15 January 1855, in the notes titled "Family Memoirs". MINCOLOR2637. Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "Charles Köpe's baptismal records", 1855. Issued by St. Anthony of Padua Church, on the 15 March 1879. MINCOLOR251. SALT Research, The Ottoman Bank Archive, Charles Köpe employee file, PP03413.

6 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "A family photograph taken in Tréguier", approx. 1859. The photograph which Charles in Breton clothes had taken with Léocadie, their daughters and his relatives in Tréguier. MINCOLOR2806.

7 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "Tallibert family house, in which my grandmother was born, in Tréguier. The marked place is my father's [Charles] room", dateless. MINCOLOR219

8 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, "My Father".

9 Emile Deveaux worked as a Deputy Director General between 1871–1889 at the Imperial Ottoman Bank. After he left the bank, he continued his life at Ağa Hamamı Street, in Pera, until he passed away. Lorans Tanatar Baruh, *The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis of Nineteenth-century Istanbul: Property, Investments and Elites from Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station*. PhD-Dissertation, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, 2009, 194.

10 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "Taïb and Rose-Marie Marcopoli's marriage certificate", 27 November 1882. The document was issued in 1939. MINCOLOR253.

11 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "Charlotte with her doll", Konya, 1890. MINCOLOR228. "The tricycle that my father Taïb brought me", Konya, 1890. MINCOLOR229.

Tower with his wife, at Paris World's Fair, he returned to his home in Konya with a piano, which was popular amongst the bourgeoisie families of that era.¹²

Charles, who maintained a close relationship¹³ with senior local councillors in Edirne, and was previously awarded with two Orders of the Medjidie¹⁴ and an Order of Saint Stanislaus¹⁵ due to his accomplishments in collecting Russian indemnity in Konya, was made redundant¹⁶ from his job at the bank in February 1895, due to the loss made by his Deputy Manager.

As late as two years later, in the beginning of 1897, Charles found a job as superintendent at the Salonica-Istanbul junction of the Ottoman Railway Company. Appointed to Salonica shortly after this, Charles lived there with his family for sixteen years.¹⁷ Their sons; Antoine, Eugène and Ferdinand brothers,

12 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 3, "Konya".

13 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Distribution of awards at school, in Edirne", 1859. Taïb was present at this ceremony, to which the governor also attended. MINCOLOR2733.

14 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, p. 854, Mentioned "Osmaniye Nişanı Beratı" [Certificate for Order of Osmanieh]. Though, the certificate dated 6 Shawwal 1311 [12 April 1894] was given for the third rank of the Order of the Medjidie; *ibid.*, 855. "Mecidiye Nişanı" [Order of the Medjidie], 7 Dhu'l-Qādah 1309 [3 June 1892] was given for the 4th rank of Medjidie. I would like to thank Edhem Eldem who interpreted the certificates. MINCOLOR2644.

15 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "The text written by La Fuente, the Deputy Director General of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, for Charles the Director of the Edirne Branch, regarding the awarding of the Order of Saint Stanislaus by the Russian Embassy", 5 June 1893. MINCOLOR2647.

16 SALT Research, The Ottoman Bank Archive, Charles Köpe Employee File, PP03401300003A001. – Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, addition to 919. MINCOLOR2734, 2740–2750. Between 25 October 1894 and 26 November 1895, correspondence with La Fuente, who was the Deputy Director General of the Ottoman Bank. In the bank's testimonial, although the reason for Charles' redundancy was stated as "health problems preventing Charles from fulfilling his work commitments", details which were not documented in the bank's official records, in fact appear in the letters Charles sent to the bank, which he also possessed copies of. These correspondences are a good example of the inadequacy of the official bank records in writing biographies, and the fact that they could be completed only through the disclosure of personal documents; and without chasing the other side of the medal, we would not be able to learn about the entire story.

17 "Engaged at the beginning of the year 1897 in the secretariat of the Direction in Constantinople, I was, a year later, transferred to Salonica, where I lived with my wife and my 6 children..." Charles Köpe, *Des Événements Macédoniens de 1904 à 1912*, "Original copies of my father's letters from 1899 to 1913, letter sent to the president of the Company from Salonica on 12 August 1913".

received French education like their father, at the Priests College in Salonica.¹⁸ To such extent that, when Antoine became a soldier at the Austro-Hungarian Army, he could not speak any language other than Italian, which was one of the languages recognised by the dual-monarchy.

BETWEEN SALONICA AND ISTANBUL

In his mission in Salonica, Charles was inspecting the neighbourhoods traveling to Bitola, and to the other stations on the same railway line. Acquiring his tickets free of charge owing to his job, Charles did not neglect his trips to France.¹⁹ Meanwhile, Charles' eldest son Taïb was in Istanbul, started working at the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and was employed at the Pera Branch²⁰ between 1909 and 1913. Despite the increasing attacks committed by the Bulgarian Komitadjis against the railway line, family members' journeys between Salonica and Istanbul continued for both work and leisure.²¹ The memoirs of Antoine's journeys in first class with his father, describes the conditions of train journeys

18 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, the education certificate issued by Maison du Saint-Esprit in Pangalti, which was run by priests, 18 September 1916. In this certificate, it is specified that Antoine received education at the Priests School in Salonica between 1907 and 1911, and was registered to Saint Michel French High School in Beyoğlu, in 1914. MINCOLOR1776.

19 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Final journey to Vichy", June 1912. MINCOLOR2663. Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "The transit document of Rose-Marie, who went to Vienna to greet Charles returning back from France", 1902. MINCOLOR3680-81.

20 *Annuaire Oriental du commerce de l'industrie de l'administration et de la magistrature*. Constantinople, 1909 and 1913, accordingly 674 and 551. AAO00600674 and AAO00200551. It is understood from the 1915 dated client card that Taïb worked at the Galata Branch at that date. SALT Research, The Ottoman Bank Archive, Taïb Köpe Stocks and Bond Card, OFTK0160.

21 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Charles, on the Thessaloniki–Istanbul train, which he took for one of his inspection trips in Thessaloniki; my mother's sister, aunty Marie at the door," dateless. MINCOLOR2845. – Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Single use first class travel pass in Taïb's name prepared for Alexandroupoli–Thessaloniki Line", 13 October 1910. MINCOLOR3691. Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Free travel pass, which Charles obtained free of charge but couldn't make use of, due to the Balkan War", 1913. MINCOLOR3694.

at that period in detail, and presents a vibrant narrative regarding the history of rail transport between two cities.

The train journey took 26 hours which started just before dawn in Salonica. In first class, the six-person compartment with red velvet seats was often empty and rarely shared with governors, diplomats or a wealthy businessman. Until 1906–1907, these carriages which did not have corridors and whose doors directly opened onto the platform, had no toilet nor heating. For ticket control, the conductor had to utilise the handle outdoors to cross from one carriage to the other, whilst the train was moving. They had to hold on to the copper bars with one hand, while opening the door with the other. The conductors who had to hold on to metals burning hot in summer and freezing cold in winter, worked under significantly dangerous circumstances. The interior of the carriages were unbearably hot in summers, and freezing cold in winters. In order to avoid shivering in winter, they used to place hot water barrels on the floor space. These 15 cm wide and 7–8 cm high hot water barrels, used to keep feet warm for about an hour. People had to wait for the train to stop in order to go to the toilet.

Until midday, the train used to arrive in Drama, passing through the wheat and tobacco fields, the Doiran Lake and the iron bridge of Demirhisar near Serres, which the Bulgarian Komitadjis had blasted numerous times. This was the station where the Port of Kavala passengers disembarked. The scenery was more impressive in the second part of the journey. The train used to travel through Rhodope Mountains, Karasu Gorge, the fast flowing river and numerous tunnels. Every single time they passed from that spot, Charles pointed at the hill between two tunnels to Antoine, where the graves of the two French engineers were and honored the memory of these victims of duty, who died of malaria during the construction of the railway. They used to arrive at Alexandroupoli at early sunset. The train used to give a longer break here, and the carriage which continued to Istanbul, would be coupled with another train. During the tea break at the station, they placed oil lamps for lighting at nights; but even in the first class, despite the presence of two lamps, the light was still not enough for reading.

In the morning, from Lake Büyükçekmece onwards, one would sense the smell of the sea. Passing the fishermen after Küçükçekmece, Yeşilköy from Istanbul's suburbs, Yedikule Fortress, and the tin shacks of Roma people in Kumkapı, the train would arrive at the Sirkeci Station around eight o'clock.

ISTANBUL IN ANTOINE'S YOUTH MEMORIES

Once the train arrived in Istanbul, following the inspection of their luggages by the attendants, the Köpe family took a coach to go to their aunt's house, in Pera. Once they handed their payment at the beginning of the bridge to continue onto Karaköy, the coach started to jolt at each juncture of the wooden planks of the bridge as it crossed the Golden Horn. Antoine recounts seeing people going to sea hammams set up in the middle of the bridge during summer months with their gowns in their hands. He also depicts vivid scenes of people from all nationalities in various outfits from Greek islands to Yemen. Although these narratives²² are documented years later, Antoine describes his impressions of his first trips to Istanbul, very similar to the perception of a European traveller visiting the city for the first time.²³

Until the new iron Galata bridge's construction was completed²⁴ on January 25, 1914, the tram line was interrupted at the bridge, and Pera was accessed through Karaköy line. Antoine in his coach usually followed the Karaköy–Şişhane–Galatasaray trajectory of the tram line opened first in 1871. According to him, the horsecars of the capital city looked like sardine cans, when compared to the widely used comfortable electric tram in Salonica.²⁵ Antoine recounted his impressions as follows: "These trams pulled by three or four horses which traveled to Tepebaşı through Voivode Street and arrived at Pera, could not accommodate more than 30 passengers." The horseman who controlled the tram whipped the poor horses and provoked them with his voice. An employee from the tram company would run in front of the horsecar, blow a horn with all his strength to warn careless pedestrians, and to prevent unfortunate

22 When Antoine attended the funeral of his friend from the army, he took the decision to write his memoirs. Began in 1945 – the same year with his friend's funeral –, Antoine ended this recounting in 1954 with his brother Taib's death. However, making a fair copy this ten-volume corpus took until 1959. Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "Preface".

23 "Try to imagine the most extravagant contrasts of costume, every variety of type and social class, and your wildest dreams will fall short of the reality; in the course of ten minutes and in the space of a few feet you will have seen a mixture of race and dress you never conceived of before." Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople*. Philadelphia, 1896, 46.

24 *Servet-i Fünûn*, 16 kanuni sani 1329 [24 January 1914] 1182, 268.

25 Meropi Anastassiadou, *Tanzimat Çağında Bir Osmanlı Şehri Selanik*. İstanbul, 2010, 134.



FIGURE 1
THE STREETS OF OLD ISTANBUL, 1910
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

accidents. When going up the hill, if the tram got stuck, it was the ticket collector's duty to give up his job for that moment, get off the tram at once and place a wooden block under the wheel to stop the tram from losing traction."

Beyond its role as a personal testimony, this scene, which left a mark in Antoine's memory, recounts details regarding the use of the tram which had a prominent role in Istanbul's expansion and transport, with a colourful narrative. It gives clues regarding how the tram cruised through the public, who are not used to trams in a crowded, jammed city centre; and also the situations the tram came across within Istanbul's topography. This testimony, at the same time, gives an idea about the possible reasons for accidents, which newspaper articles and caricatures depicted to be many.



FIGURE 2
ANTOINE, CHARLES, EUGÈNE AT THE TRAINING FIELD OF THE TAKSIM MILITARY BARRACKS IN
ISTANBUL, 1908
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

For a young person who grew up in Salonica, the life in the capital, whose population was ten times larger,²⁶ looked considerably different; perhaps even more fun. During these journeys, which sometimes other family members also joined,²⁷ the relatives in Pera were visited first, then the grave at Feriköy Catholic Cemetery; after this, their father would take Eugène and Antoine into Bazaar Allemand or Bon Marché, to show them the toys there. Despite not being able to afford to buy these toys, seeing them and imagining them as Christmas presents made them happy.²⁸ One of those days Charles went out with his two younger sons. A photo from that date in 1908, at the Taksim

26 *Ibid.*

27 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "During Bosphorus tour", 1910. MINCOLOR1338.

28 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Karoly is Starting School (2)".

military training field, gives clues about the integration of Istanbul's less visualised military zone, into the daily life of a city dweller (Fig. 2).

The floating of the Ottoman hot air balloon in front of a crowded audience, from which Ta'ib Köpe took Istanbul's first aerial view photographs²⁹ on June 4, 1909, exemplifies the diversity of the public use of this space. 150,000 metre-squared Taksim Military Barracks and its training field were continued to be utilized for military reasons and parades during the war years, despite the proposed construction projects,³⁰ following its transfer into *Emlâk Şirket-i Osmaniyesi* (Ottoman Real Estate Company) established in 1914. The photographs of the drivers column of Austro-Hungarian army, the medal ceremony of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers, or the parade of French and Italian soldiers during the Armistice period, created a visual memory for the use of this extensive land of earth from Surp Agop Hospital until Taksim Maksim.

The places, where the family spent time and had fun can be observed through the photograph Antoine had taken with his father in 1912 at Bomonti Beer Garden³¹ (Fig. 3.1), or a rare undated snapshot of Taksim garden (Fig 3.2).

The shooting of the fitting of the rails in front of the Sixth District Municipality in Şişhane due to the transition into electric tram from horsecar, can be considered as another representation of the family's everyday encounters with the city. On the other hand, looking at the photos Antoine chose and included within his memoirs, it becomes apparent that Köpe Family's life in Istanbul was not only limited to the Galata-Pera-Taksim-Feriköy neighbourhoods on the north of Golden Horn, which progressively expanded at that period, acquired a vibrant social life³² and a modern urban texture.

29 'L'illustration'dan Seçmeler: 3 Temmuz 1909 İstanbul'un İlk Hava Fotoğrafları', *Toplumsal Tarih* 286 (2017) 8–9.

30 Lorans Tanatar Baruh, 'İstanbul Emlâk Şirket-i Osmaniyesi'nin Yatırımları: Karaköy Borsa Han, Taksim Kışlası ve Talimhane', *Toplumsal Tarih* 232 (2013) 32.

31 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Antoine in Bomonti Garden with his father", 1912. MIN-COLOR3740.

32 In *La Revue du Levant* magazine, which the Istanbul French Chamber of Commerce published between 1895–1929, Ernest Giraud's monthly column titled "La rue", describes the complex world of the Galata-Pera neighbourhood in a vibrant manner.



FIGURE 3

[1]ANTOINE WITH HIS FATHER CHARLES AT THE BOMONTI BEER GARDEN IN ISTANBUL, 1912

[2]TAKSIM GARDEN FREQUENTED BY THE YOUNGSTERS OF BEYOĞLU IN ISTANBUL, 1906

(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)



FIGURE 4

[1] ANTOINE ON THE BOSPHORUS WITH HIS FAMILY, ISTANBUL, 1910

[2] ANTOINE WITH HIS FATHER CHARLES AT RUMELI KAVAK ON ONE OF THEIR TRIPS TO CONSTANTINOPLE, 4 AUGUST 1912

(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)



FIGURE 5
TARABYA SEASHORE IN ISTANBUL, 1904
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

The photograph taken in one of the Şirket-i Hayriye ferries³³ which took off from Karaköy (Fig. 4.1); those with Ida and Eugène along Göksu Creek³⁴ or the snapshots taken separately with Taïb³⁵ and Antoine³⁶ in Rumeli Kavağı (Fig. 4.2) reveal the Köpe family's excursions to the shores of the Bosphorus.

People wandering and veiled women sitting in groups on the shores of Tarabya in 1904 (Fig. 5), or the public walking in front of the Dolmabahçe Clock Tower, when compared with the people taking a walk on the quays of Salonica must have offered a divergent sight for the young Antoine, as he found these places he visited worthy of photographing, and described this community as "picturesque".

33 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "During Bosphorus tour", 1910. MINCOLOR1338.

34 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Charles, Eugène and Ida are at Göksu River", 1903. MINCOLOR2675.

35 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Charles and Taïb are at Rumeli Kavağı in one of their excursions", 4 August 1912. MINCOLOR2857.

36 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Books 3 and 10, "Antoine in Rumeli Kavak during one of his journeys with his father", 4 August 1912. MINCOLOR1961 and MINCOLOR3739.



FIGURE 6
EUGÈNE, CHARLES AND ANTOINE AT THE KADIKÖY PIER, ISTANBUL, 1909
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

One of the destinations of the Köpe Family was Kadıköy, which developed as an attractive settlement in the early 1900s. Kadıköy and the infrastructure works which they witnessed, were reflected in the photographs of the family who visited the town and its neighbourhood via Haydarpasha ferry which took off from the Bridge (Fig. 6). The construction of the Kadıköy Pier³⁷ which was undertaken by Pierre Augier in 1909, and the Fenerbahçe cape which bears an epic beauty, were among the places photographed during these excursions.

Although there are no accounts written regarding the photograph of Sultanahmet Plaza, or those of the streets within Istanbul's Walled City (Suriçi)³⁸ (Fig. 1), shot in 1910, and the undated photograph of a hookah seller's shop³⁹ in Grand Bazaar; demonstrate that he not only visited the Eminönü, Sirkeci side

37 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "The expansion of Kadikoy Pier", dateless.

38 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Hookah seller in Kapalıçarşı", dateless. MINCOLOR3758.

39 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Books 9 and 10, "Ta'ib at Florya Beach", 1903. MINCOLOR513, MINCOLOR3768. Also, for a photograph taken in 1906: MINCOLOR3736.

of the bridge, but also the neighborhoods of the old Istanbul which was popular with tourists. Thereafter, when he was in the army in 1916, following his commander's order to take him to the Grand Bazaar, the panic⁴⁰ he experienced regarding his ability to find their way there, was not thought to be related to his upbringing in a restrained environment. It is assumed that this was rather about growing up in Salonica, only to have moved to Istanbul a few years ago, and to have visited Grand Bazaar only once, possibly with his father. He experienced a similar incident when he had to bring sand from Florya Beach, for the wheels of the trucks in his troop. Using a vehicle from his troop, Antoine got lost on his way to this beach, a place where he previously went with his brother Taïb numerous times with a commuter train. Antoine, who went to Edirnekapı from Galata, thought he would find the way to Florya as he drove through the coast along the Yedikule Fortress. However when the coast road ended in Bakırköy, he returned back to Topkapı, and followed the road to Yeşilköy Aviation Park, and eventually arrived⁴¹ at Florya Beach hours later.

PHOTOJOURNALIST TAÏB KÖPE

Alongside his career as a clerk at the Imperial Ottoman Bank, Antoine's brother Taïb worked as a photojournalist,⁴² taking Istanbul's aerial photographs, from the aeroplane piloted by Fethi Bey,⁴³ on January 8, 1914⁴⁴ (Fig. 7).

40 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, "A visit to the Grand Bazaar".

41 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, "A Journey to Florya".

42 We have very limited information about the life of Taïb Köpe, who does not have an employee file in the Imperial Ottoman Bank's archive, and who is barely mentioned in the memoirs. His photojournalism can be followed from the photographs published at the *L'Illustration* magazine. However his photographs featured in Italian publications as well, so it is fair to say that he had a broader relationship with the publishing world. For *L'Illustration*, see <https://www.lillustration.com/>

43 Born in 1887, the aviator Fethi Bey took his aviation courses at the training school of Bristol Aeroplane Company in 1911. During the Istanbul–Alexandria expedition, he did not survive the crash of the Blériot XI monoplane he piloted and died in Damascus on 3 March 1914: Altay Atlı, 'Development of Turkish Aviation', *Turkey in the First World War*, 2003–2020. <http://www.turkeyswar.com/aviation/development-of-turkish-aviation/>

44 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, newspaper clipping, "Aviation", *La Turquie*, 11 January 1914.



FIGURE 7
AVIATOR FETHI BEY WITH THE BLÉRIOT MONOPLANE IN İSTANBUL, 1914. PHOTOGRAPH: TAİB KÖPE
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

It is understood that Taïb walked every part of the city as someone who observed the naval exercise offshore of Heybeliada (17 September 1914), demonstrations in Sultanahmet, on the occasion of the abolition of the capitulations (11 September 1914), the parade of Austro-Hungarian army in Seraskerat (7 February 1916), the opening ceremony of Dârülmualimin Teacher Training School, as the Çapa Hospital for the wounded, under the administration of Hungarian Red Cross Committee (10 April 1916), the funeral of Yusuf İzzeddin who was buried into Mahmud II Mausoleum graveyard (3 February 1916), the visit of Austro-Hungarian Emperor Charles and Empress Zita who were greeted with an official ceremony at Sirkeci Train Station (19–21 May 1918), and Franchet d’Espèrey’s presence in Istanbul during the Armistice period (8 February 1920) from a close distance.

In his military duty at the Austro-Hungarian Army’s drivers column in Istanbul, Antoine enjoyed the driving training given to Ottoman soldiers, in the setting at the Liberty Hill in Şişli and on the roads of Büyükdere, Maslak. In his

words “it couldn’t be better”. However, he had to leave Istanbul for the Palestine Front and took the train from Haydarpaşa in September 1917.⁴⁵ Six months after his return, following the Armistice of Mudros signed on 30 October 1918, civilian life would not be easy for Antoine, once he was discharged from his position at the Austro-Hungarian army in Istanbul, on 6 December. Despite his Austro-Hungarian nationality, Antoine did not leave the city owing to his connections through his French brother-in-law and his father, and began working at The Ottoman Public Debt Administration, following a few short term employment. Travelling between his family home in Galatasaray–Yeniçarşı and his place of work in Cağaloğlu, Antoine’s journeys between both sides of the Golden Horn would become his daily routine.

Visible from the terrace of the family house in Yeniçarşı, Üsküdar on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, did not occupy a significant place in the life of the Köpe family. Represented only through an Orientalist postcard about graveyards in the memoirs, Üsküdar, which symbolises traditional life, was not more than a transitory location connecting Haydarpaşa. Similarly, when compared to Pera, more conservative and less privileged Fener, Balat, Hasköy and Eyüp districts, which are located on the shores of Golden Horn, were not mentioned in the memoirs. Thus, it could be argued that these itineraries excluded from daily life of the Köpes clearly demonstrate the divergence between the socio-economic status of the family, and the communities living in these areas.

MOBILITY, CITY AND IDENTITY

Köpes’ mobility was high, the boundaries of the Istanbul they lived in were considerably wide, and their perception of the city was as diverse. Increasing their means of mobility as they used the latest transport of their time; such as tram, ferry, train, automobile, hot air balloon, and even aeroplane, the family members achieved to travel easily to different parts of the city and its surroundings. The snapshots in the memoirs reveal that they have enjoyed very

45 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 3, “Separation”.

much these journeys. The photographs taken in Polonezköy,⁴⁶ a place they visited as a family on the recommendation of the doctors for Antoine's brother Ferdinand's illness in July–August 1914 (Fig 8.1); in Kağıthane, Cendere⁴⁷ where Antoine had a picnic with friends, before being sent off to Palestine Front in September 1917 (Fig. 8.2); and at Bebek Park,⁴⁸ where Antoine said farewell to his lover, before he went to Anatolia for work in 1920; visualize the locations the family spent their time at, as well as the city's relationship to leisure and entertainment culture, in the beginning of the 20th century. Through their credits and accounts, these photographs provide a review on that era's means of transport, as well as a reflection on daily life practices in different districts of Istanbul.

Although making broad statements over one single family is not achievable, The Imperial Ottoman Bank's employee files⁴⁹ demonstrate that a significant number of people, standing between empires, nations and cultures and wishing to maintain their life standards had to travel to different cities. Nevertheless, it is not possible to trace their mobility⁵⁰ in their daily life or how they experienced city life, due to the lack of or loss of memoirs of these individuals or families; who are the voices of the silent actors of our history. On the other hand, it is not always possible to get access to detailed information regarding how they portray contrasting identities beyond borders and at times significantly elusive

46 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, Ferdinand's different photographs: "In Polonezköy with Taïb (August 1914), my father, my mother and my brother Ferdinand in Polonezköy (14 July 1914), Ferdinand with his friends in Polonezköy (July 1914)". MINCOLOR3852-55.

47 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, "At excursion in Cendere. Emilie, Vlahopoulos and I", May 1917. MINCOLOR1893.

48 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "As soon as I received my allowance for my journey, Emilie and I bought a bottle of beer at Bebek Music Hall", 7 July 1920. MINCOLOR2892.

49 Edhem Eldem, 'Reshuffling Nationality and Ethnicity. The Ottoman Bank Staff from Empire to Republic', in Ton de Graaf, Joost Jonker, and Jaap-Jan Mobron (eds.), *European Banking Overseas, 19th–20th Century*. Amsterdam, 2002, 179–211; Idem, 'Les dossiers des employés de la Banque impériale ottoman', *Biographies et récits de vie*. Tunis, 2005, 45–62.

50 Murat Güvenç presented his research on urban mobility before and after the transition to electric tram, titled 'Galata ve Pera'nın Toplumsal Coğrafyasındaki Değişme: 1910–1922 Doğu Yıllıkları Üzerinde Çözümlemeler' on the 12 November 2003, to the Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre.



FIGURE 8

[1] TAİB AND FERDINAND IN POLONEZKÖY IN ISTANBUL, AUGUST 1914
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

[2] AN EXCURSION IN CENDERE IN ISTANBUL, MAY 1917

in nature, but also regarding how they experienced the transition⁵¹ between identities.

With regard to the Köpe family, one can read between the lines of Antoine's memoirs, how the belonging and identity of a family which a young Nationalist Hungarian man founded in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, transformed and evolved in a period for over a century, where everything cascaded, collided, then reconstructed rapidly. Moulded with French and Levantine culture in the Ottoman Empire, the family members who were Austro-Hungarian nationals and served in the army during the WWI, witnessed the collapse of both empires when the war ended. However it was not a viable option to expect them to make an application to Romanian Consulate as Transylvania, the place of birth of their ancestors, was within the boundaries of this country. Although the family found the way to maintain their Hungarian citizenship at that date, following WWII, when the communist regime came to power, Antoine Köpe, who was a member of the Hungarian Charitable Association in Istanbul bringing together white Hungarians, as well as his family would lose their Hungarian citizenship.⁵² They would continue their life in Turkey without a nationality, until they migrated to the USA in 1962.

Such different voices and resources⁵³ are necessary to understand the complex and multi-layered process of transition from empire, where multiple

51 For the permeability of ethnic identities in Izmir, see Marie-Smyrnelis Carmelis, *Une société hors de soi: identités et relations sociales à Smyrne aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*. Paris, Louvain, 2006.

52 According to the research of the Hungarian Cultural Centre's director Gábor Fodor, under the effect of the 1948 dated, LX numbered legislation, for those who lost their citizenship according to the Treaty of Trianon dated 1 January 1948, as long as their settlement is in Hungary from 1 January 1948 onwards, their Hungarian citizenship was valid. It is assumed that Antoine Köpe lost his citizenship due to his antecedents' birth place having been within Romanian borders and his preference to live in Turkey. Correspondence with Gábor Fodor on the 23 July 2020.

53 Cem Behar and Alan Duben's *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880–1940* was published in 1991. Based on the data obtained from the register office for births, it was a research regarding understanding the structure of families who lived in Istanbul in the 19th century, and only a few photographs were referenced from family archives. However this pioneer project led the way for new studies to be instigated using family archives. "Archiving, Remembering, Aestheticising 'Old' İstanbul: The Case of the Fabiato Mansion" which Çiçek

belonging is possible, to the nation-state based on national identity. Also these sources enabled a refined interpretation of the great transformation of the social structure in the early 20th century. On the other hand, when personal testimonies in different family archives overlap with each other, they give important clues about the various aspects of “ordinary lives”. Briefly, research based on reading and interpreting documents, accounts and photographs from these archives and exploring experiences through everyday encounters, will pave the way for an alternative historiography, which would uncover nuances in the flow of life.

İlengiz presented in 2013 at Sabancı University, was formed on Fabiato Family Archive. “Dismantling the Archive: Representation, Identity, Memory in an Ottoman Family” exhibition, which opened in 2014 at SALT Galata, depicted how the family expressed and represented itself, referencing Ece Zerman’s masters thesis on Said Bey’s family, “Studying an Ottoman ‘Bourgeois’ Family: Said Bey’s Family Archive (1900–1930)” and the family archive. Ece Zerman’s 2018 dated PhD-Dissertation (*Nouvelles pratiques de représentation de soi de la fin de l’Empire ottoman à la république de Turquie: écrits du for privé, photographies, intérieurs*. Université Paris Science de Lettres, Paris, 2018) focused on the years between 1890s and 1930s, is a study which scrutinised how the families preserved their memory and expressed themselves through memoirs, yearbooks, letters, photographs, and objects.

REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC HISTORY IN THE KÖPE ARCHIVES

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A part of Antoine Köpe's family history originated from the political context of Central Europe in the mid-19th century.¹ His grandfather András was a Hungarian from a Transylvanian village close to Brassó (Braşov, Romania). András was opposed to the Habsburg dynasty. This appears to be the reason why he fled to the Ottoman capital Istanbul before the 1848–1849 Revolutions,² which swept through much of the Austrian Empire, including the Empire's Magyar populated areas.³ In Istanbul András met his future wife Léocadie Tallibar, who was from Brittany. She made it to Istanbul to live with her brothers Louis and Pierre, who had already been settled there. Born in 1855, Charles was the second son of András and Léocadie. In 1882, Charles was married with Rose-Marie Marcopoli from a Levantine family of Genoese origin in Trabzon. Antoine was born in 1897 as one of their six children.

1 Antoine gives detailed information about his family background in Book 6 of his memoirs, in the first chapter entitled "My Father". There he says he conveys what his father told him about his parents, namely Antoine's grandparents. In this essay all my references to Antoine's memoirs are to the unpublished English translation of the text.

2 For a concise review of the 1848–49 Revolutions, see Stephen J. Lee, *Aspects of European History 1789–1980*. London, 2007, 36–43.

3 For more information on the 1848–49 Revolutions in the Habsburg Empire, see Robert A. Kaan, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy (1848–1918)*. Vol. 2. New York, 1964, 3–39.

Antoine's family came into existence in an inter-imperial context and this in-between status continued to characterize the life stories of the family members. As far as Antoine recounts, his grandparents András and Léocadie visited Hungary several times after their marriage. His father Charles went to Brittany at the age of 5 to stay with his mother's family, receiving French upbringing and education. Later he lived in the Austrian capital Wien for two years to learn German. Charles himself and his children never received Ottoman nationality while living in the Ottoman Empire. They remained citizens of the Dual Monarchy. After the Great War began, Antoine's older brother Taïb was recruited to the Austro-Hungarian army in Brassó, the birthplace of András, who had migrated to Istanbul long time ago. Antoine, too, was conscripted in October 1916 in the Istanbul Consulate of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.⁴

Not only did the Köpes move across the empires, but they were also quite mobile within the Ottoman domains. Charles worked in different Ottoman cities, including Konya and Edirne, before settling down in Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece), later to move back to Istanbul. In 1917–1918, Antoine served in Palestine and Syria after being enlisted in the military of the Dual Monarchy. In July 1920, after the Great War ended and the Allied powers embarked on the occupation of the Ottoman territory, he moved to the Black Sea town Kozlu near Zonguldak to work at the coal mines of Candilli. In his memoirs Antoine relates vivid details about these localities and provides hundreds of photographs about them. Some of the photographs he used in his memoirs had been shot by his older brother Taïb Köpe, who was a news photographer in Istanbul.

There is no doubt that the written narratives, photographs and caricatures produced and collected by Antoine Köpe form one of the rich private archives

4 Antoine had been declared unfit for military service in August 1915. In August 1916, he went through a medical examination in the Consulate and was listed among those declared good for military service. After taking the oath of allegiance to the Emperor Franz Joseph, they were considered mobilized soldiers. Antoine was supposed to present himself to an infantry regiment in Brassó. But when he presented himself to the Consulate on October 9, 1916, for his travel to Brassó, he was asked to stay in Istanbul to serve in the Austro-Hungarian *Orientkorps*. Antoine Köpe, *Memoirs of Our Youth* (from here on Köpe, *Memoirs*), Book 2, "My Military Life".

shedding light on the social and cultural history of the 19th and 20th-century Ottoman Empire. Compiled in many volumes by Antoine,⁵ these sources provide great insights into a wide range of subjects from the urban history of Istanbul to the question of citizenship and nationality in late Ottoman context. They furnish important details about the local histories of various cities visited by the members of the Köpe family as well. What I aim to discuss in the rest of this essay is how the Köpe archives may contribute to our understanding of the late Ottoman political and diplomatic history.

FAMILY AND HISTORY

Antoine's memoirs include numerous details on his childhood, his personal experiences in different periods of his life, his feelings and attitudes about various topics and events. Although he himself is clearly and naturally more central to this narrative, Antoine devotes considerable attention to the life stories of his parents, his siblings, and his grandparents as well. In the Prologue of his work he implies that he started writing after having appreciated the value of family memoirs.⁶ Antoine attempted to trace his family lineage in the original documents and family photos since 1768. One can tell from this effort and from the way he writes that he took personal pride in this lineage and was quite content with making sense of his life as part of it.

A good example to that attitude is the way he recounts an encounter between the Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph and his grandfather András. Franz Joseph visited the Ottoman capital in 1869, two years after the Empire was divided into two portions with the incorporation of Hungary as the Empire's equal partner along with Austria.⁷ According to Antoine, the Sultan

5 In the Prologue of his work Antoine says that his memoirs include 12 hand-written tomes. There are also the thirteenth volume containing his drawings from childhood and adolescence, the fourteenth volume containing Charles' reports from 1898 to 1913, an album of photos from his bank offices, and two other albums that include the original documentations and family photos since 1768.

6 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, "Prologue".

7 Jane Brubank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, 2010, 348–350.

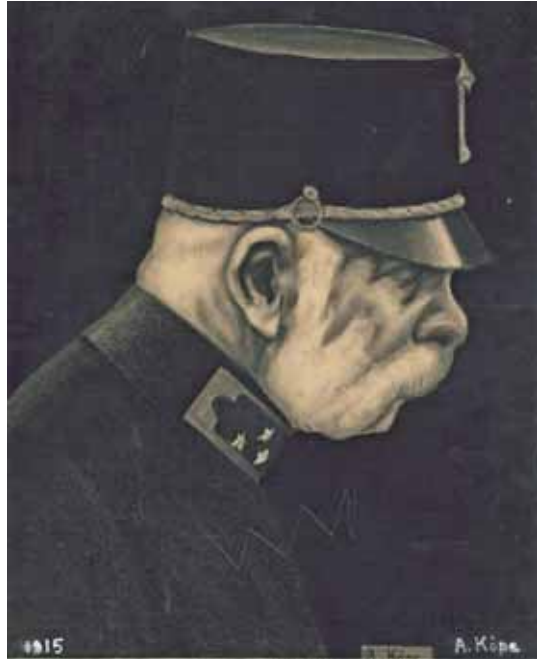


FIGURE 1
FRANZ JOSEPH I
– DRAWING BY A. KÖPE BASED ON
A PHOTOGRAPH, 1915
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE,
COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

Abdülaziz had conferred to András the title of “Palace watchmaker and jeweler” before Franz Joseph’s visit.⁸ András was introduced to the Emperor in a reception at the Austro-Hungarian Embassy. Antoine highlights that the Habsburg Emperor honored András with the Cross of the Order of François-Joseph and invited him back to his country. Despite this royal invitation András refused to return and to live under the Habsburgs.

In this anecdote Antoine places a personal experience of his grandfather in a wider context of relations between the Habsburg and Ottoman dynasties. In fact, this is a general perspective that characterizes much of Antoine’s narrative. A bird eye’s look at the content of his tomes makes it clear that his intention was not just to convey his personal experiences or to simply write a family history. In Prologue, Antoine implies that he meant to write something more comprehensive:

8 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, “My Father”.

“The idea of writing down my memoirs came to me in 1945 during the funeral of one of my friends from World War I (1914–1918). During the funeral ceremony, I was besieged by a throng of memories, and saw the entire span of my military service as if I were a spectator watching a film. I told myself then that I had to tell my children about my life and about the events in which I was involved.”⁹

Antoine is interested in intersections between more general processes and the life stories of Köpes, especially that of himself. Therefore he refers in his memoirs to many important social developments and political events in which himself and his family members were involved in some ways. Apart from personal anecdotes, Antoine makes use of a large number of photographs and caricatures. This interesting combination of memoirs and visuals in his narrative brings fresh insights into the history of the late Ottoman period to which Antoine pays particular attention.

SALONICA

Antoine was born in Istanbul, but he lived his childhood in Salonica, where his father Charles had been employed by the Ottoman Railway Company since 1897. Located in Ottoman Macedonia, Salonica was one of the Empire’s most important port cities, where the ethno-religious composition of the population was quite heterogonous.¹⁰ The city and its surrounding witnessed the activities of various nationalist organizations and guerilla movements. Some of the photographs collected by Antoine carry the traces of this tense atmosphere. They reflect the images of attacks and sabotages organized by Bulgarian Comitadjis, like the attack on the Ottoman Imperial Bank’s Salonica branch, which was blasted to the ground on April 29, 1903. Antoine attached

9 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, “Prologue”.

10 On the city of Thessalonica under Ottoman rule, see Meropi Anastassiadou, *Salonique 1830–1912. Une Ville Ottomane a l’âge des Réformes*. Leiden, 1997; Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts. Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950*. London, 2004.

to his memoirs a number of photographs showing the Comitadjis captured or being executed by Ottoman forces.¹¹

Salonica was also the city in which the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was organized and firmly rooted.¹² Many of the leading cadres of the Young Turk movement, such as Talat, Cemal, Mehmet Cavit, and Midhat Şükrü [Bleda], took part there in the formation of this organization in cooperation with the other center of the movement located in Paris. The CUP recruited into its ranks a large number of junior officers involved in counter-insurgency against nationalist bands. These officers, many of who were affiliated with the Third Army in Monastir, formed the driving force of the revolutionary movement that culminated in the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution on July 23, 1908, which started the Second Constitutional Period in the Ottoman Empire.¹³

The CUP and its activities find little place in Antoine's childhood memoirs from Salonica. He mentions a Turkish staff officer named Cemal Bey, who would become one of the CUP's major leaders in the next years.¹⁴ He notes that Cemal was their neighbor, very connected to his father and among the pioneers of the Revolution of 1908.¹⁵ Antoine refers to the Constitutional Revolution with personal anecdotes, like the one relating how his schoolmates got to launch a strike in the course of popular mobilization in the city.¹⁶

11 For example, Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, 1903, MINCOLOR3749; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, 1904, MINCOLOR3750; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 9, 1903, MINCOLOR503.

12 For the Young Turk movement and the CUP's organization, see M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902–1908*. Oxford, 2001. For the influence of Salonica's social structure on the CUP's formation, see İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin, 'İttihat ve Terakki Hareketinin Oluşumunda Selanik'in Toplumsal Yapısının Belirleyiciliği,' in *Cumhuriyet'in Harcı. Cilt: 1. Köktenci Modernitenin Oluşumu*. İstanbul, 2003, 1–65.

13 Feroz Ahmad, *İttihat ve Terakki, 1908–1914*. İstanbul, 1995; Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*. Leiden, 1997.

14 Hasan Kayalı, 'Cemal Paşa, Ahmed,' in Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson (eds.), *1914–1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. Berlin, 12 May 2015.

15 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "My Father (1)".

16 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 10, "Excerpt from 'Old Memories of My Childhood from Thessaloniki'".



FIGURE 2
 TALAT PASHA, SULTAN MEHMET REŞAT AND THE KING OF SERBIA, PETER I
 (ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

However, the Unionist leaders begin to show up increasingly more in the parts of Antoine's narrative that concern the Second Constitutional Period.

One of the visuals about the CUP in his memoirs dates from April 1910. It is a photograph shot by Antoine's brother Taïb, when the Serbian King Peter I visited Istanbul.¹⁷ At that time, Taïb was employed at the Ottoman Imperial Bank in Istanbul while publishing photographs in press. This one photograph (Fig. 2) shows the CUP leader Talat, the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet Reşat, and the Serbian King Peter I within the same frame. Antoine marks only Mehmet Reşat and Peter I, putting a short note below the picture as he usually does.

17 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, 1910, MINCOLOR3921.

But Taib's photograph focuses on Talat, who stands in the picture as the first figure ahead of Mehmet Reşat. Talat's posture looks as though he were the only one aware of Taib shooting a picture, although he does not look directly at the camera at the moment.

We cannot totally make sure whether or not Taib deliberately wanted to zoom on Talat. Nevertheless, this photograph can be seen as a symbol of the changing balance of power in the Ottoman Empire. After the Revolution, the CUP did not immediately attempt to monopolize political authority, exerting, instead, *de facto* control over the prevailing governments.¹⁸ However, this policy began changing and the Unionists increased their weight in the Ottoman cabinets following the suppression of a counter-revolution in April 1909 (known as 31 March Incident – *31 Mart Vakası* in Ottoman-Turkish historiography).¹⁹ Thereafter, Talat stepped in the new cabinet as Minister of the Interior. Cavit Bey, another Unionist, became Minister of Finance. The number of Unionist ministers increased in the Hakkı Pasha cabinet formed in January 1910. With Abdülhamid II dethroned, Mehmet Reşat had been declared new Sultan right after the counter-revolution. He got along pretty well with the Unionists during his reign.²⁰

In Taib's photograph above, Talat's image is that of a solemn statesman welcoming a foreign diplomatic mission. This image contradicts that of a leader of a revolutionary committee, such as the CUP, and, thus, represents a certain degree of institutionalization in the Unionists' relations with the state and political authority. This tendency accelerated in the next years and the CUP ended up gradually seizing full control of power by the time the Great War broke out. The Köpes witnessed the rise of the CUP's one-party regime after moving back to Istanbul in 1913.

18 Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*. Ankara, 2001, 127.

19 Aykut Kansu, *Politics in Post-Revolutionary Turkey, 1908–1913*. Leiden, 2000, 77–125.

20 Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, 198–200.

UNION AND PROGRESS IN POWER

When they lived in Salonica, the Köpes never completely cut off their ties with the Ottoman capital. Taïb was in Istanbul while working in the Ottoman Bank's branch in Pera between 1909 and 1913. The other family members visited the city from time to time, taking the advantage of the railroad connecting Istanbul and Salonica.²¹ Yet it seems that the Köpes wanted to settle back in Istanbul permanently. This decision must have been made around the time when the Ottoman Empire lost Salonica in the Balkan War. In August 1913, Charles submitted a petition to the company administration asking a permission for his appointment to a new duty in the Istanbul headquarters.²² This request was accepted and the Köpe family resettled in Istanbul by October 1913. However, many things had previously changed there before they returned.

After briefly falling from power in July 1912, the CUP staged a coup d'état on 23 January 1913.²³ The photograph (Fig. 3.), available in Book 5 of Antoine's memoirs, shows a scene from this incident.²⁴ It looks like this photo was shot by Taïb while the coup was underway.²⁵ It shows a considerably large crowd surrounding the Sublime Porte. Antoine's note below the photo describes the event as a "popular demonstration." This description is consistent with a news piece published the day after the coup in *Le Moniteur Oriental*.²⁶ It speaks of how some one thousand demonstrators with banners in hand occupied the street in front of the Sublime Porte. They were reportedly shouting slogans like

21 Lorans Tanatar Baruh analyzes the subject of city, mobility and identity in the Köpe archives in her article in this volume ('City, Mobility and Identity in Köpe Family Archive'). In this article, Baruh discusses how Köpes travelled on the railway between Salonica and Istanbul as a case of inter-city mobility in the late Ottoman Empire.

22 Charles Köpe, *Des Événement Macédoniens de 1904 à 1912. Copie originales des lettres de mon Père de 1899 à 1913*, 12 August 1913, 203–205.

23 Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, 324–340.

24 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR2384.

25 Lorans Tanatar Baruh has confirmed that this photo was shot in the course of the Raid on the Sublime Port (Bab-ı Ali Baskını) in her research for the exhibition "Between Empires, Beyond Borders" at SALT in September 15 – December 27.

26 'La Chute de Kiamil pacha', *Le Moniteur Oriental*, 24 January 1913, 1.



FIGURE 3
DEMONSTRATION AT THE SUBLIME PORTE
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

“long live the war; long live the Union and Progress; we do not give up Adrinople; down with the traders.” The coup took place when the Kamil Pasha government was in the process of negotiating the terms of a peace treaty to end the war. The slogans of the crowd led by the Unionists were referring to the claim that the Kamil Pasha government had already given up Edirne – the second Ottoman capital after Bursa – to save the peace.

The CUP rapidly consolidated its political power after the coup. The process of establishing a Unionist one-party regime gained momentum when the Grand Vizier and Minister of War Mahmut Şevket Pasha was assassinated in June 1913. The Unionist leadership used this assassination as an excuse to

purge the CUP's opponents, sending many of them to exile. However, the images we run across in the Köpe archives do not point out to a static and inert society being totally dominated by an authoritarian state. On the contrary, these sources show that there was a considerable social mobilization in Istanbul. Demonstrations were organized to support the government's war efforts, thousands gathered to send off soldiers to the front, artisan and labor associations marched in favor of the abolition of capitulations.²⁷ Such scenes from the streets of the Ottoman capital provide important clues about the social underpinnings of the Unionist one-party regime that ruled the Ottoman Empire during the Great War.

The photographs provided by Antoine show that the CUP leaders' public visibility greatly increased in parallel with the formation of the authoritarian one-party regime. There are many pictures among them of the Unionist leaders, above all Enver, Talat and Cemal, attending official ceremonies with or without the Sultan, participating in public events, or hosting important visitors from Germany and Austria-Hungary during the Great War. The German Emperor Wilhelm II was among the most important visitors of Istanbul who arrived in 1917.²⁸ In his memoirs Antoine devotes considerable attention to the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Karl and the Queen-Empress Zita who visited Istanbul in May 1918.

THE EMPEROR AND THE QUEEN IN ISTANBUL

Karl ascended the throne as Austro-Hungarian Emperor and Hungarian King (as Charles IV) when the former Emperor Franz Joseph passed in November 1916. Antoine has a chapter on this development recounting how in Istanbul the Austro-Hungarian soldiers and officers of all ranks pledged allegiance to the new Emperor in a ceremony that took place in the military

27 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, MINCOLOR1455; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, MINCOLOR1738; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, MINCOLOR1745; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, MINCOLOR58; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, MINCOLOR1743.

28 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, MINCOLOR1789.

esplanade of Taksim (Talimhane quarter).²⁹ As usual he relates this event with a personal anecdote. The soldiers grouped by the category of nationality (Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Croats, Romanians, and Italians) pledged their allegiance in their own native language. Antoine declared himself Italian because he could speak this language but couldn't understand Hungarian, and his German was not fluent. But Italy was at war with Austria-Hungary. Antoine finds this noteworthy and inserts the following comment:

“We were at war against Italy and here were Austrian soldiers declaring themselves Italian and acting as such as they properly served the Austro-Hungarian Empire, I must say. I subsequently had the opportunity to confirm many times the same case among the other races (nationalities) of the Empire and save some rare exceptions, all of the servicemen loyally accomplished their duties. During my entire military service, I did not witness one single instance of a discussion or quarrel provoked by ethnic questions. The soldiers fraternized among themselves. In order to make themselves understood, they employed the German language – in general, bad German in the army – but each one tried willingly and they understood each other.

It will be difficult to make posterity admit that so many different races (nationalities), today enemies, could live in such good harmony. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was what we now wish to reconstitute: “The Unites States of Central Europe.” However, war was made against Austria and the only barrier that existed between Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism was torn down. Since then, the unease has done nothing but grow throughout Europe.”³⁰

This comment manifests Antoine's appreciation of the “multi-ethnic” character of the Austria-Hungary, which he served as a soldier of the *Orientkorps* in the Great War. As noted above, Antoine was conscripted in October 1916. Later he was appointed as aide-de-camp of a Czech Lieutenant, and, in August 1917, these two were dispatched to the Gaza Front in Palestine.³¹

29 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, “The Death of François Joseph”.

30 *Ibid.*

31 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 3, “The Holy Land. New Instructor's Mission”.



FIGURE 4
EMPEROR KARL, SULTAN MEHMET REŞAT AND EMPRESS ZITA AT THE TRAIN STATION IN SIRKECI
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

Elsewhere Antoine notes that he was serving in the Ottoman Fourth Army under Cemal Pasha's command. Around the time when they arrived in Jerusalem, the Ottoman Army was defeated. Antoine got sick in the course of the retreat and he ended up in an Austro-Hungarian hospital in Damascus, where he stayed between December 1917 and February 1918, and then made it back to Istanbul.³²

The Emperor Karl and the Queen-Empress Zita visited Istanbul in May 1918,³³ shortly after Antoine returned from the front. Antoine narrates their arrival in some detail, highlighting that they were received in great honors.³⁴

32 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "The Return".

33 About the coverage of this visit in the Ottoman press, see Mücahit Özçelik, 'Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatoru'nun 1918 İstanbul Ziyaretinin Türk Basınına Yansımaları', *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 27 (2012) 51–63.

34 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "My First Decoration".

The photographs in Antoine's memoirs confirm this observation showing Karl and Zita in official ceremonies in the company of Ottoman statesmen.³⁵ It was the Sultan Mehmet Reşat, the Crown Prince Vahdettin and the Unionist Minister of War Enver Pasha who welcomed them at the Train Station in Sirkeci.³⁶

According to Antoine, the Emperor donned the uniform of the Hungarian parade to look pleasant to the Turkish population sympathetic with Hungarians. The procession till the Yıldız Palace, where the royal couple would stay, was saluted by a big crowd.

Antoine was decorated for his conduct at the front in the course of the Emperor Karl and the Queen Zita's visit. A parade at the end of which Antoine and a group of other soldiers would be decorated took place in Talimhane on May 21, 1918. However, he missed the chance of getting decorated by the Emperor who left the field for some reason. Antoine received the Iron Cross for Military Merit from the Emperor's camp aide, who was a field marshal. What he says about this is interesting:

"It is the most humble of decorations, but for me it has great value given the circumstances under which it was awarded to me – in Constantinople, my native city, Capital of the Ottoman Empire, a few months before the collapse of the Habsburg Dynasty and the Austro-Hungarian Empire."³⁷

COLLAPSE OF THE EMPIRES

Indeed both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, with which Antoine identified in different ways, collapsed in a few months after he received the Iron Cross. Antoine relates how in September Bulgaria surrendered, and,

35 See, for example, a photo of the visit of the Emperor and the Queen to the Saint Mary Draperis Church in Pera (Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, 1918, MINCOLOR2355) and a photo of their ceremonial cortege passing the Galata Bridge in the company of Sultan Mehmet Reşat and the Minister of War Enver (Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, 1918, MINCOLOR2352).

36 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, 1918, MINCOLOR2355.

37 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "My First Decoration".

on October 17 (it must have been October 16), 1918, the Habsburg Emperor announced the transformation of the Double Monarchy into a federal state, which accelerated the collapse of the Empire.³⁸ Later, at the end of October, an Ottoman mission signed the Armistice of Mudros with the Allies, which, according to Antoine, started the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Corps in Turkey.

“My comrades, who several days before were good, faithful Austrian soldiers, suddenly declared themselves Czech, Yugoslavian, Romanian, Polish, or Italian. It was only the true Austrians and Hungarians who remained faithful to the army and who lowered their heads under the weight of harsh reality, accepting the defeat and its sad consequences with dignity.”³⁹

Antoine witnessed how the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire started first among the military corps in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which was also in the process of disintegration. Four years ago, he had seen the arrival of the German cruisers Goeben and Breslau, which had officially joined the Ottoman fleet and then bombarded the Russian ports at the Black Sea coasts, driving the Ottomans into the Great War.⁴⁰ Now it was an Allied fleet that entered the Bosphorus on November 13, 1918, beginning the *de facto* occupation of the city of Istanbul.⁴¹ Taïb, who had taken the photographs of Goeben,⁴² also photographed the Allied cruisers at the end of the Great War.⁴³

In Antoine’s memoirs there are many other interesting pictures about the Armistice Period, some of which belonged to Taïb. They show the parades and movements of Italian, French and British troops,⁴⁴ the tanks of Allied forces,⁴⁵

38 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, “The Debacle (1)”.

39 *Ibid.*

40 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, “The Goeben”.

41 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, “The Debacle (2)”.

42 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 2, 1914, MINCOLOR1733; Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 1, 1914, MINCOLOR1451.

43 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR2413.

44 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, 1918, MINCOLOR2409.

45 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR3932.

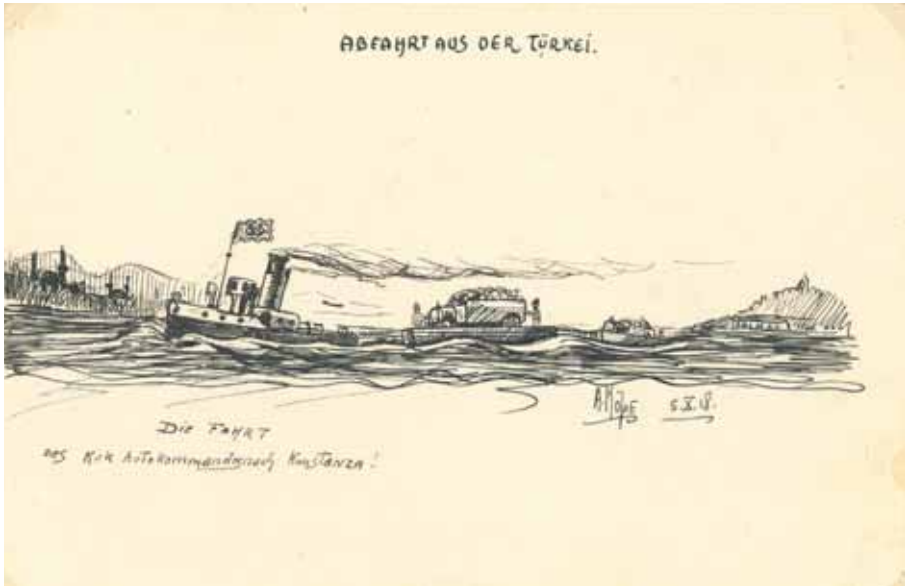


FIGURE 5
DRAWING OF A BOAT OFF TO ROMANIA, 1918
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

the Inter-allied police patrolling the streets of Pera,⁴⁶ which were decorated by Greek flags.⁴⁷ The drawings by Antoine attest to great transformations taking place in Istanbul under occupation. Among them is an image of a barge carrying a truck.⁴⁸ According to Antoine, the Allies demanded the Turks turn over all German and Austro-Hungarian soldiers, but the Ottomans refused to deliver their comrades in arms. In the end, the Allies accepted their return to their countries through Romania that was still under German occupation. It seems that the image in question (Fig. 5.) represents the departure of the German and Austro-Hungarian contingents to Romania through the Black Sea. Such voyages, emphasized Antoine, took place under very insecure conditions.⁴⁹

46 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR2479.

47 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR2416.

48 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, MINCOLOR2399.

49 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 4, "The Debacle (1)".

Antoine's drawings represents the Istanbul of the Armistice Period in a somber way. They evidently reflect his depressed mood. After demobilization, he could not find a stable job for a long time.⁵⁰ In August 1919, Antoine was finally employed at the Ottoman Public Debt Administration with a modest salary. Soon afterwards he lost his father Charles Köpe, who passed away on October 4, 1919.⁵¹ By the end of the year, he attempted to publish a humorous almanac that consisted of his caricatures, but it did not sell. Antoine came out of this enterprise in debt. Meanwhile, the Turkish resistance movement was developing in Anatolia. With no hope of improvement in his life, Antoine, along with his brother-in-law Ernest, accepted a job at the coal mines in Kozlu, Zonguldak, where Greek and foreign employees had abandoned their posts due to the schemes of the militia associated with the resistance movement. On June 14, 1920, Antoine and Ernest departed from Istanbul for Kozlu.⁵² The city they left behind had been officially occupied by the Allied powers on March 16, 1920.

50 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 5, "Somber Days".

51 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "My Father (5)".

52 Köpe, *Memoirs*, Book 6, "Epilogue to Dark Days".

A HUNGARIAN HOSPITAL IN ISTANBUL – THE STORY BEHIND TAİB KÖPE’S PHOTOGRAPHS

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At midday on 10 April 1916, a colourful crowd gathered in front of the teacher training building of Istanbul University, or the Darülfünûn as it was called then, in the Çapa quarter of Constantinople, a suburb that lay beyond the fire-ravaged areas of the city. On the frontage of the building, beside the red-crescent flag, the Hungarian national tricolour fluttered in the warm spring wind. The European personages and high-ranking Turkish guests included Enver Pasha, minister of war of the Ottoman Empire, Suleyman Numan Pasha, the head of the health service, Ismail Hakkı Bey, secretary of state for war, Besim Ömer Pasha, executive president of the Turkish Red Crescent Society, Canbolat Bey, mayor of Istanbul, Marquis Johann von Pallavicini, ambassador of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, staff of the embassy, Count Ödön Széchenyi Pasha, head of the Istanbul fire brigade, Admiral Wilhelm Souchon of Germany, commander of the Goeben, staff of the German and Bulgarian embassies, Hungarian, Austrian and German officers, and members of the local Hungarian colony. They were there to open the Hungarian hospital in Istanbul, which – following an initial proposal by Count László Semsey, parliamentary deputy and local head of the Hungarian Red Cross – had been built within four months. Its basic purpose was to care for wounded soldiers of the fraternal Turkish nation. At the opening, Semsey declared that “the hospital is a sign of the traditional friendship of several centuries between the Hungarian



FIGURE I
MEDICAL ORDERLIES OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARMY WAITING FOR
THE INAUGURATION OF THE HUNGARIAN HOSPITAL
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

and Turkish nations, friendship which in the present exceptional times must be given lasting expression." In conclusion, he said, "We hope that in this building we will return many valiant Turkish fighters to the magnificent Ottoman army."¹ After these warm words, Enver Pasha thanked the Hungarians for their sacrifice, and the company took a tour of the hospital wards before attending a champagne reception, where they were entertained by a Gypsy orchestra assembled from members of Austro-Hungarian units stationed in the Ottoman capital.

1 *Az Est*, 12 April 1916, 6.

This surprising and previously hardly-researched venture was one of the Hungarian initiatives during the WWI aimed at strengthening relations between these two allies. Here I will attempt to present the background to the opening of the hospital, the organizational details and difficulties it involved and the persons involved, and I will briefly cover the relations between the Hungarian Red Cross and the Turkish Red Crescent, and their joint projects.

THE FORMATION OF THE RED CROSS SOCIETY OF THE LANDS OF THE HOLY CROWN OF HUNGARY AND THE OTTOMAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The Ottoman Empire acceded to the Geneva Convention in 1865, the year after it was signed, and Austria acceded in 1866. Because of political differences within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, however, and a demand from the Hungarian side for a separate initiative, it was not until 16 May 1881 that the Hungarian Red Cross Society, properly known as the Red Cross Society of the Lands of the Holy Crown of Hungary, was formed.² The new organization mounted its first operation in the Serbian-Bulgarian War of 1885, and during the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, it first provided assistance to its Ottoman sister organization. At home, it took an active role in training nurses, providing relief during natural disasters, and supporting the establishment of hospitals. The Ottoman Red Crescent Society, officially formed on 11 April 1877, was not so fortunate. As soon as it was founded, it had to face the ordeals of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, and from then until the WWI, it was called upon to perform beyond its resources in many bloody incidents.³ The despotism of the

2 János Hantos, *A Magyar Vöröskereszt 100 éve. Emberiség háborúban és békében* [100 Years of the Hungarian Red Cross. Humanity in War and Peace]. Budapest, 1981, 74. The year of foundation is sometimes given as 1879, when the Hungarian National Women's Society for Assistance was formed; it was merged into the Red Cross in 1881.

3 Mesut Çapa, *Kızılay (Hilâl-i Ahmer) Cemiyeti (1914–1925)*. Ankara, 2010, 12. The suspension of the constitution by Sultan Abdulhamid II in 1878 put the society into a moribund state until the Greco-Turkish war of 1897.

sultan hindered the organization's development, and after the constitutional revolution of 1908, under the leadership of doctors close to the government of the Young Turks, the Red Crescent was reorganized.⁴

After the Greco-Turkish war, the next great challenge for both the Turkish and Hungarian societies was the disruption caused by the Balkan wars. In 1912 and 1913, the Hungarian Red Cross Society sent a mission to Sofia, setting up a field hospital and bandaging station, and two missions to care for Serbian wounded in Belgrade.⁵ Interestingly, several hundred Turkish soldiers who had come into the custody of Hungarian authorities after fleeing to Bosnia were treated in Kaposvár, Lőcse (Levoča, Slovakia), Miskolc, and Ungvár (Uzhhorod, Ukraine).⁶ At the beginning of the war, the Turkish society set up field hospitals in Skopje and Salonica (Thessaloniki, Greece) as well as in Istanbul, and also in Edirne during the Bulgarian occupation of that city. A succession of defeats, however, caused it to concentrate its remaining capacity in the capital. The great number of wounded obliged the authorities to convert universities and other educational establishments into temporary hospitals, and this led to the requisitioning of some buildings of the Darülfünûn.⁷ As the war progressed, many field hospitals were set up elsewhere, particularly around the Dardanelles, and aid was received from the Egyptian, Indian, British, German and Romanian sister organizations. Nonetheless, the tens of thousands of wounded and hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees from the Balkans stretched the organization beyond its capabilities.

4 An interesting aspect of the active involvement of the Committee of Union and Progress members during the WWI is the alleged recruitment of the Red Crescent Board for covert activity. See Mehmet Taylan Esin, *Hilal'in Karanlık Yüzü: Osmanlı Kızılayı, Teşkilat-i Mahsusa ve Emval-i Metruke (1914–1921)*. İstanbul, 2017.

5 Dr Miklós Brüll, *A Magyar Vöröskereszt tevékenysége az első és második világháború időszakában* [The Activity of the Hungarian Red Cross in the First and Second World Wars]. Budapest, 1984, 20–29.

6 Gábor Kiss, *Orvosok, katonák, katonaeorvosok... Mozaikok az osztrák-magyar katonaegészségügy történetéből, 1868–1918* [Doctors, Soldiers, Military Doctors... Mosaics from the History of Austro-Hungarian Military Medical Services]. Budapest, 2018, 83.

7 Mesut Çapa, 'Balkan Savaşında Kızılay (Hilal-i Ahmer) Cemiyeti', in *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)* 1 (1989) 94. Some wealthy individuals also allowed their houses to be used as hospitals or gave substantial donations for hospitals to be established.

For both countries, however, the real trial was the WWI. The details of the two organizations' work during the war is beyond our present scope, but the Red Cross Society, under the patronage of Archduke Franz Salvator and presidency of Count Endre Csekonics, royal commissioner, contributed to medical care with field units, health institutions in the home countries, health resorts, and convalescent homes. The field units consisted of two field hospitals, five field stores, eight subsidiary stores, eleven casualty transport and ten mountain casualty transport columns, three hospital trains and six relief trains. In the home countries, they had nine reserve and 1049 auxiliary hospitals and resort and convalescent beds for nearly 30,000 men.⁸ Although I have found no overall figures for the Ottoman Red Crescent Society under honorary president Prince Jusuf İzzettin and executive president Besim Ömer Pasha, the organization carried out its operations in caring for the wounded in five war regions: the Caucasian front, Kayseri (half way between the Eastern fronts and Istanbul), the Egyptian and Palestinian fronts, the front in the region of what is now Iraq, Saudi-Arabia and Yemen, and the crucial Dardenelles area and Istanbul.⁹ The heroic Turkish resistance in the Straits of Gallipoli, Bulgaria's accession to the Central Powers, and the opening up of the Balkan route after the surrender of Serbia prompted Count László Semsey, parliamentary deputy and commander of a motorized unit of the Red Cross Society, to propose setting up a Hungarian hospital in Istanbul. His proposal was clearly motivated, apart from the general Turkish-friendly mood among the Hungarian public,

8 Brüll, *A Magyar Vöröskereszt*, 53–64. According to Kapronczay, by 1917 there were two field hospitals, three field and eight auxiliary stores, one hospital with a special surgical unit, two mobile surgical units, twenty one aid posts, two recuperation stations, 185 casualty transport wagons, three hospital trains and six relief trains, and within Hungary, seven reserve hospitals and 590 ancillary hospitals. See Károly Kapronczay, 'A Magyar Vöröskereszt megalakulása és tevékenysége az I. világháborúban [The formation of the Hungarian Red Cross and its activity in WWI]', in *Háború és orvoslás. Az I. világháború katonaegészségügye, annak néhány előzménye és utóélete* [War and Medicine. Military Medicine in the WWI, Some Precedents and After-Effects]. Compiled by Károly Kapronczay. Budapest, 2015, 199.

9 Seçil Karal Akgün and Murat Ulutekin, *Hilal-i Ahmer'den Kızılaya*. Ankara, 2002, 214–226. In Istanbul, capacity gradually increased up to 1915, when about 10,000 beds were available to treat the wounded, and examination stations, recuperation centres and tea and soup stations were set up throughout the country.



FIGURE 2
CHIEF MEDICAL COMMANDER SULEIMAN NUMAN PASHA ARRIVES TO THE OPENING CEREMONY
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

by the chance of taking Hungary a step ahead of the Austrian half of the monarchy in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HOSPITAL

Hungarian–Ottoman relations were already developing rapidly in the economic, political and cultural fields when the WWI broke out. The wartime alliance added a military dimension that led to several joint projects. The

10 The Monarchy already had a military hospital in Taşkışla Barracks in Istanbul, but the Hungarian project was intended to be the largest military hospital in the city founded by a foreign organization.

Austro-Hungarian artillery units that set off for the Dardanelles in late autumn 1915 were mainly led by Austrian officers, but brought a considerable number of Hungarian soldiers to the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ This was one factor behind the proposal for the Istanbul hospital, another being a decision by the executive committee of the Red Cross Society on 29 October 1915 to set up a 500-bed hospital in Sofia. By 2 November, a detachment consisting of one deputy director, one chief consultant, two consultants, five junior doctors, twenty voluntary and professional nurses, one pharmacist and twenty-five medical orderlies set off for the Bulgarian capital.¹² That hospital operated right up to October 1918.

To ensure the success of the venture in Turkey, Count Semsey set up a support committee and started to seek out patrons. The chairman of the committee was Géza Josipovich, chief patron of the Red Cross Society; his co-chairwomen were Countess Khuen-Héderváry (wife of the former prime minister Károly Khuen-Héderváry) and the wife of the well-known banker Leó Lánchy; the executive officers were Countess László Semsey and Baron Lipót Bornemissza.¹³ Other members were Ahmet Hikmet [Müftüoğlu] Bey, Ottoman chief consul, Count Egon Fürstenberg, German ambassador to Budapest, and Semsey himself. The committee was accommodated in the society's building in Dísz Square. At the same time, the committee requested the Red Cross Society to provide international protection for the hospital by allowing it to be established under the insignia of the Red Cross.¹⁴ The society accepted the request, but stated that it was unable to contribute from its own budget. Eventually, however, it provided 25,000 crowns for hospital equipment. Semsey's efforts and the moral support of prime minister Count István Tisza and the president of the society, Endre Csekonics, resulted in donations amounting to 200,000 crowns within a short time. Among the donors were the main banks (Kereskedelmi Bank, Hitelbank, Magyar Bank, Osztrák-Magyar

11 The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy detachment fighting on the Turkish fronts numbered between 7,000 and 12,000. For the details, see Tosun Saral-Emre Saral, *Çanakkale ve Sina-Filistin Cepheleğinde Avusturya-Macaristan Ordusu Topçu Bataryaları*. Ankara, 2015.

12 Brüll, *A Magyar Vöröskereszt*, 77.

13 *Az Újság*, 11 February 1916, 10.

14 Brüll, *A Magyar Vöröskereszt*, 78.

Bank, Földhitelezet and Első Magyar Biztosító), prominent businesspeople and nobles including Manfréd Weisz, the Eszterházy, the Zichys, the Darányis and the Sztárais, and companies such as the Nagysurányi Sugar Works, the Salvatorbandage company, and the Construction and Engineering Association.¹⁵

The Turkish government, having been informed of the project by Chief Consul Ahmet Hikmet Bey in October, promised to provide a suitable building for the hospital. Hikmet also mentioned in this report that the decision was made after the visit of Professor Hikmet [Gizer] Bey, leader of the Red Crescent office in Vienna, who asked the Hungarians to treat the serious cases with using their experiences in the so-called Mechanotherapy.¹⁶ Ahmet Hikmet also personally advised to allocate some room for the Hungarians at the Şişli Etfal Hospital.¹⁷

This led, in January 1916, to Baron Lipót Bornemissza, chief Red Cross commissioner and head of Department F, responsible for transport and care of wounded, and Hugó Hirsch, technical manager of the society, travelling to Istanbul to discuss the details of the location. Upon his return to the Hungarian capital at the end of the month, Bornemissza gave an interview to *Pesti Hírlap* giving the details. Suleyman Numan Pasha, chief medical commander, received the Hungarian delegation in the war ministry building, where Bornemissza explained that the hospital was being offered not so much to an allied state as to a brother nation. Although Enver Pasha was not able to receive them in person, he delivered a message via Suleyman Numan Pasha the next day that he greatly welcomed the Hungarian mission and that they were prepared to provide any suitable building, but he specifically asked them to treat the difficult, serious cases.¹⁸ In the following days, escorted by Suleyman Bey's

15 *Budapesti Hírlap*, 16 January 1916, 7. In addition, Tivadar Woffner gave 5,000 crowns, Ignác Deutsch and son 2,000, Baron Adolf and Jenő Kohner 10,000, Ignác Grünwald and son 2,000, Baron Vilmos Guttmann 1,000, and Dr Tivadar Delmár 500.

16 Mechanotherapy is used as term for exercise prescription to promote healing and rehabilitation by stimulating tissue repair and remodelling.

17 *Türk Kızılay Arşivi* (TKA), Box No. 94, Document: 111, 26 October 1915. I would like to thank Yücel Namal for his generous help in acquiring the archival materials.

18 *Pesti Hírlap*, 30 January 1916, 7. On Suleiman Numan, see Efdal As, 'Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Sıhhiye Dairesi Reisi ve Ordu Sıhhiye Müfettiş-i Umumisi Süleyman Numan Paşa

adjutant Adnan Bey, they visited the potential locations, and finally chose a home for the elderly owned by the French nuns *Petites Soeurs de Pauvres* in the Feriköy/Bomonti district. This had been requisitioned in September 1915, and had already been functioning as a hospital under the direction of Derviş Bey and his German wife.¹⁹ Under Hirsch's management, the building was put into suitable condition in a few weeks, at a cost of 20,000 crowns. Before the Hungarian detachment arrived, more than 300 wounded soldiers had been treated there by the Red Crescent.²⁰

The preparations in Hungary, including the selection of staff to travel to Istanbul, continued in the meantime. According to a later summary report by the society, the hospital staff were led by a Red Cross commissioner and consisted of one chief consultant, two consultants, two junior doctors, one military pharmacist, thirty medical orderlies and eighteen official and volunteer Red Cross nurses.²¹ Press reports of the time also tell us who took part in the mission: at the recommendation of consultant Dr Pál Kuzmik, Professor (Colonel) Géza Lobmayer was appointed medical director of the hospital,²² and he was joined by the consultants Adám Bochkor and Pál Kisfaludy, the

(1868–1925)'nın Hayatı ve Askerî Faaliyetleri', *International Journal of Eurasia Social Sciences* 6:21 (2015) 105–120.

19 The French nuns established their home for the elderly in Istanbul in 1892. It was returned to them after the war, and they still run it today. For further details, see *Lés Petites Soeurs de Pauvres Istanbul (Bomonti). 125 and de Charité. 1892–2017. Textes choisis et présentes par Rinaldo Marmara*. Istanbul, 2018.

20 *Az Est*, 18 March 1916, 2. According to some sources, 30,000 crowns was spent on converting the building.

21 *A Magyar Szent Korona Országainak Vörös-Kereszt Egyletének 1914–1919. évi jelentése* [Annual Report of the Red Cross Society of the Lands of the Holy Crown of Hungary 1914–1918]. Budapest, n.d., 20.

22 Lobmayer, celebrated as the founder of Hungarian lung surgery, was an experienced surgeon, as is clear from an essay he wrote during the war, *A lövészároktól a kórházig. Egészségügyi szolgálat a háborúban* [From the Trenches to the Hospital. Health Service in the War]. See *Az első világháború orvosi magyar emlékeiből. Naplók, kézíratos visszaemlékezések, szakcikkek* [Hungarian Medical Memoirs of the WWI. Diaries, Manuscript Memoirs and Journal Articles]. Compiled and annotated by Károly Kapronczay and Katalin Kapronczay. Budapest, 2016, 49–56.



FIGURE 3
AMBASSADOR JOHANN VON PALLAVICINI ARRIVES TO THE OPENING CEREMONY
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)

junior doctors István Klinger, Fülöp Torday and Béla Radó,²³ and the pharmacist Sándor Szántó. The minister of war assigned thirty medical orderlies to the hospital, and the Red Cross designated eighteen nurses, led by

23 There were thus three junior doctors in the mission and not two, as stated in the report. There is some inconsistency in press reports concerning the number of those travelling and the form of the names. The first reports mentioned a total of four doctors, fifteen nurses and twenty-two medical orderlies, newspaper reports of the opening put the figures and four doctors, sixteen nurses and thirty-three orderlies. The most reliable newspaper in this respect seems to be *Az Est*, because its correspondent, Albert Barabás, was a member of the board of the Hungarian Association of Istanbul and could thus provide first-hand information. The names Kisfaludy and Torday are given in some places as ending in the letter *i*; Bochkor sometimes appears as Bocskor and in one place as Bocskó.

Countess Semsey and her daughter Ili.²⁴ The mission was escorted to Istanbul on behalf of the Red Cross by the great sport patron Alfréd Brüll and one of the main sponsors of the hospital, Tivadar Dános.

THE JOURNEY AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES

The detachment departed at 8:05 pm on Thursday, 24 February 1916 from Nyugati Station, where a large crowd saw them off. Among them were Count Endre Csekonic, president of the Red Cross Society, Géza Josipovich, privy counsellor and chief patron, Prince Miklós Esterházy, Ahmet Hikmet Bey, the Turkish chief consul, his wife, and Cevad Osman, embassy secretary. In his farewell address, Csekonic said, "To our Turkish brothers, we wish to show that we are with them heart and soul and wish to treat and heal their glorious fighters with the greatest care."²⁵ As the train pulled out of the station, the nurses waved Hungarian and Turkish flags, and the medical orderlies sang to the cheering crowd. Departing at about the same time was a barge carrying 1,400 crates of bandages and medical instruments, one X-ray machine, two autoclaves, one car and 325 beds. The plan was for the mission to travel in special rail carriages to Orsova, where they would wait for the arrival of the barge and continue the journey together by ship up to Ruse. There, they would transfer to another train and go through Bulgaria to Istanbul. Wartime troubles interfered with this plan, however.

They were delayed in Orsova for eight days before the barge arrived. Further problems awaited them in Ruse: the Monarchy's embassy in Istanbul had contacted the Turkish government on 28 February 1916 to request the assistance of the Turkish office in Sofia in the matter of obtaining railway wagons,²⁶ but as the Turkish ambassador to Sofia subsequently reported, the number of wagons requested proved impossible to find under the wartime

24 *Pesti Napló*, 25 February 1916, 4. Thus, the eighteen-strong nursing staff consisted of sixteen nurses, Countess Semsey and her daughter.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi* (hereinafter: BOA), HR.SYS. 2176/7/1/1 (28 February 1916).

conditions.²⁷ According to a telegram report by the Turkish consul in Ruse, instead of the forty wagons requested, four were provided on the first day and a further three on the next. This was enough only for the staff and a part of the cargo.²⁸ After spending three days on goods wagons, Countess Semsey and her daughter, Alfréd Brüll, doctors Lobmayer, Radó, Bochkor, Torday, Kisfaludy and Klinger, Szántó the pharmacist and eighteen nurses finally arrived in Istanbul on 10 March 1916, two weeks after their departure. They were welcomed at Sirkeci Station by Count István Csekonics, counsellor of the embassy.²⁹ The rest of the mission, although we have no detailed information, probably arrived some days later.

The difficulties had not ended, however. The day the advance party arrived, a fire broke out in the attic of the converted home for the elderly. Everything down to the first floor was burnt, and it was only with great difficulty that the wounded soldiers were rescued.³⁰ The tragic event did not dent the enthusiasm of the Hungarian mission, however, and the next day, following preliminary enquiries by Hirsch, Countess Semsey visited Enver Pasha to request a new building for the hospital. Enver immediately appointed three officers to take care of the matter. They eventually found the university's teacher training building in the Çapa district to be suitable premises and made arrangements with the local authority. The handover of the building is recorded in the diary of a Turkish university student, Hasene Ilgaz. The change of function obliged Ilgaz to move to Derviş Pasha's konak (residence), which stood opposite the building.³¹ Countess Semsey, as we know from an interview she gave to the

27 BOA, HR.SYS. 2176/7/3/1 (6 March 1916).

28 BOA, HR.SFR.04. 649/50/1/1 (9 March 1916); HR.SFR.04. 649/77/1/1 (26 February 1916). According the telegram of the Turkish consulate in Ruse, the Hungarian group arrived there in the 6th of March, 1916. HR.SYS. 2176/8/1/1 (6 March 1916). The press reports mention twenty-three wagons of equipment, the Ottoman archive documents, forty wagons.

29 *Az Est*, 18 March 1916, 2.

30 *Ibid.*

31 "I do not remember exactly how long had passed since the start of school, but we were still in the konak of Derviş Pasha. The newly-built teacher training building opposite, was awaiting us in all its splendour, but because of the war it was temporarily operating as a hospital. Every day, we stared out of the window at the sun glancing off the polished white marble of the ornamental gate, and constantly asked each other when we were going to be able to move over there."

newspaper *Magyarország* upon her return, used her personal contacts to find German soldiers and tradesmen to help Hirsch and his staff bring the building into suitable condition within ten days. The costs were supposed to be met by the Hungarians, but Turkish archive documents show that the university's preliminary estimate of 500 lira, adjusted to 31,567 kurus (approximately 31 lira) after the ministry's inspection, had still not been paid in May.³²

THE FUND-RAISING CONCERT

Before discussing the opening of the hospital, we should mention the concert held in Istanbul to raise funds for it. The Ottoman Red Crescent Society was already engaged in fund-raising activities in allied countries, and to provide effective assistance for this work it had – in November 1914 – sent a representative to Vienna. This was Professor Hikmet [Gizer] Bey of the medical university of Istanbul, who was a member of the society's central committee. He was able to set up a Red Crescent office in the Ottoman embassy in Vienna, largely because the ambassador, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, was a previous president of the organization. From this office, Hikmet Bey organized charity events in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, handled the donations and sought out the items that were needed, and had them sent home.³³ After some brief preparations, in the first half of December 1914, Hikmet Bey, Roth Bey and Vilhelm Singer, a journalist and member of the Viennese executive committee, visited Budapest, during which they met the prime minister, Count István Tisza. As chairman of the National War Aid Committee, Tisza declared his support for the Turkish initiative.³⁴ On 16 December, a concert to celebrate

Hasene Ilgaz, *1915'den 1921'e Kadar Yatılı Bir Kız Okulunun Hikayesi*. İstanbul, 1991, 9. I would like to thank Nicole van Os for drawing my attention to this source.

32 *Magyarország*, 23 May 1916, 5; BOA, MF.MKT. 1215/2/1/1 (16 Cemaziyelevvel 1334 [21 March 1916]).

33 The donations were held in German, Austrian and Hungarian banks, and then sent to Turkey.

34 Ahmet Altıntaş, 'Birinci Dünya Şavaşında Hilal-i Ahmer'in Macaristan'daki Faaliyetleri', *Tarih Peşinde. Uluslararası Tarih Ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 16 (2016) 3–4. Cf. *Pesti Napló*, 16 December 1914, 9.

the Turkish visit was given in the Budapest Music Academy by Géza Hegyei, a Hungarian piano virtuoso resident in Istanbul, and on 27 December, a meeting chaired by Tisza in the delegation hall of Parliament established the National Committee for Support of the Red Crescent. The committee's joint presidents were Countess Károlyi and the former prime minister, Count Károly Khuen-Héderváry,³⁵ and at its first meeting, held before the end of the year, the committee decided on a series of charity events. In January, artists from the Hungarian State Opera House and the National Theatre put on a joint production in aid of the cause. Then followed concerts outside Budapest, and in November, the Turkish violinist Haïg Gudenian gave a concert in aid of the Bulgarian Red Crescent and the Hungarian Red Crescent Committee.³⁶ In summer 1915, the committee donated 3,000 doses of cholera and typhus

35 *Az Újság*, 28 December 1914, 5. The presence of high-ranking persons on the committee was an expression of the Hungarian leaders' commitment to the cause. One interesting member was Archbishop Primate János Csernoch of Esztergom, who made a donation to the Committee on behalf of the congregation. See *Prímási Levéltár, Esztergom. Cat. 54/1915*. Letter from Károly Khuen-Héderváry to János Csernoch, 19 January 1915, No. 78/1915.

36 Hikmet Bey constantly sent reports to the organisation's Istanbul headquarters on the programme of the Hungarian (and other foreign) sister organisations and on the amounts raised, and these are accessible in the Red Crescent archives. Several Turkish-language articles have been written using the reports on the Hungarian activities and give the facts from the documents, but without examining the relevant Hungarian sources. An overall report on the Red Crescent's activities abroad is Murat Uluğtekin and M. Gül Uluğtekin (eds.), *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyete Hilâl-i Ahmer İcraat Raporları, 1914–1928*. Ankara 2013, 37–38, 61–63; For the Turkish-language articles, see Ahmet Altıntaş, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında*; Mehmet Okur, 'I. Dünya Savaşında Avusturya ve Macaristan'da Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti İçin Toplanan Yardımlar', in Aynur Yavuz Akengin and Selcan Koçaslan (eds.), *100. Yılında Birinci Dünya Savaşı Uluslararası Sempozyumu. 3–5 Kasım 2014*. Ankara, 2015, 503–514; Yücel Namal, 'According to the Turkish Archive Resources: Helps of Hungarians to the Ottoman Red Crescent Association During the First World War', *Közép-Európai Közlemények* 7:1 (2014) 24–126–135. The articles hardly, if at all, mention the Hungarian hospital. Altıntaş does not mention it, Okur devotes one sentence about a Hungarian hospital and volunteer Hungarian doctors, and Namal mentions Hungarians working in the Şişli Etfal Hospital. In her book titled as *14. Yüzyıldan Cumhuriyet'e Hastalıklar, Hastaneler, Kurumlar* Nuran Yıldırım mentions shortly the nurses of the hospital.

serum to the Turkish sister organization, in a consignment escorted by Gyula Germanus.³⁷

This sets the background to the arrival in Istanbul, at the end of March 1916, of Anna Medek, soloist of the Budapest Opera House and Jenő Hubay, the world-famous violinist. (They also travelled to Sofia a few weeks later.) The invitations had been made by Besim Ömer Pasha, executive president of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, although the invitees, as may be gleaned from Hubay's private correspondence, had been suggested by Hegyei, who also joined the two invited musicians to give concerts in aid of the Ottoman Red Crescent.³⁸ There were two concerts on the same day – at midday for Turkish women, and in the evening for men and European women. The latter was attended by Prince Mehmed Burhaneddin, Enver Pasha, Minister of the Interior Talat Pasha, Grand Vizier Sait Halim Pasha, Count Ödön Széchenyi Pasha, General August von Mackensen (who was actually staying in the city), and many other notables.³⁹ Count Semsey and his family were also in attendance, and the Countess asked the musicians to put on a similar pair of concerts a few days later, with a different repertoire, the proceeds of which were to go specifically to the Hungarian hospital. The audience at that event, held in Tepebaşı Theatre, also included several Turkish notables, and its proceeds, together with the donations collected at home, secured the operation of the hospital for at least six months. The artists received no fee but were awarded the Silver Medal of Merit of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society.⁴⁰

37 For the details, see Gyula Germanus, *A félhold fakó fényében* [In the Pale Light of the Crescent Moon]. Budapest, 1963, 100–122.

38 Géza Hegyei to Jenő Hubay, 12 February 1916. OSZK Kézirattár, Hubay bequest, unpublished, private communication by music historian László Gombos.

39 *Budapesti Hírlap*, 4 April 1916, 10.

40 BOA, İ.DUİT. 72/126/1/1–2 (21 Şaban 1334 [22 June 1916]); 72/126/2/1 (6 Haziran 1332 [19 June 1916]); MV 243/58/1/1 (21 Şaban 1334 [22 June 1916]). In the invitation, Hegyei held out the promise to Hubay that he might perform before the Sultan, but he had to make do with Prince Burhaneddin.

THE OPENING AND THE RUNNING OF THE HOSPITAL

The official opening of the Hungarian hospital in Istanbul took place on 10 April 1916, by which time it had already admitted 116 wounded soldiers from other military hospitals. We know from Hungarian press reports that ten large wards, each with twenty beds, were laid out in the three-storey building. There were two operating rooms, a separate dentistry room, an X-ray room, a chemical laboratory and several baths. The ground floor was arranged into stores for bedclothes and food.⁴¹ There was also some brief coverage of the opening in the Turkish press, such as the newspaper *Tercüman-i Hakikat*,⁴² and pictures taken by the photo-journalist Taïb Köpe have been discovered in albums in the Köpe estate. The people that can be identified on them include Enver Pasha, Admiral Souchon, Marquis Pallavicini and his wife, and Suleyman Numan. We can also recognize Countess Semsey and her daughter in white nurse's uniforms, the Hungarian doctors in top hats, and other guests and military personnel.

Another photograph, which was taken at the reception after the opening ceremony, was identified in the archive of the Dezső Laczkó Museum (Veszprém, Hungary) where the confiscated property of the local aristocrats – including that of the Semsey family – was partly transferred during the communist era.⁴³

The hospital was one of the most modern in the region. It continuously admitted war casualties while it was in operation, and also dispensed medicines to those in need.⁴⁴ According to the report by Countess Semsey, 400 wounded soldiers were treated in the first weeks, mostly Turks with chronic diseases,

41 *Az Est*, 12 April 1916, 6.

42 Akgün and Ulutekin, *Hilal-i Ahmer'den Kızılaya*, 211. This devotes one sentence to the Hungarian hospital, derived from Turkish newspaper reports, but erroneously states that it operated throughout the war.

43 I would like to thank Mr. Pál Rainer, senior researcher of the Museum who informed me about the existence of the aforementioned photograph. The picture was previously catalogued as a wedding photo.

44 Gábor Kiss, *Orvosok, katonák*, 83–84, and Frank G. Weber, *Eagles on the Crescent. Germany, Austria and the Diplomacy of the Turkish Alliance, 1914–1918*. Ithaca, 1970, 179.



FIGURE 4
INAUGURATION OF THE HUNGARIAN HOSPITAL
(ANTOINE KÖPE ARCHIVE, COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CHILDRESS)



FIGURE 5
THE RECEPTION HELD AFTER THE INAUGURATION OF THE HUNGARIAN HOSPITAL
(THE HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION OF THE DEZSŐ LACZKÓ MUSEUM,
VESZPRÉM, HUNGARY, NO. 69.1942)

although two wards were reserved for Austrian and Hungarian soldiers.⁴⁵ The hospital was required to admit chronic patients if for no other reason than that the hostilities in the Straits of Gallipoli had ceased with the withdrawal of Entente forces on 9 January 1916. Fighting gradually shifted to Iraq and Syria, so that the combat was taking place further from Istanbul. This may have been why Count Semsey and his family travelled home a month later, even though there had previously been talk of them staying in Turkey until the end of the war.

Some sources state that Semsey's place was taken over by Lipót Bornemissza; others mention Jenő Széchenyi. They may both have been involved. The Hungarian archive delegate Lipót Mosony wrote in his report that he was several times in the company of the delegates of the Hungarian Red Cross, including Bornemissza and "Count Jenő Zichy and the doctors." Since the eminent traveller Count Jenő Zichy had been dead for more than ten years, this was probably a slip of the pen, and the person referred to was actually Jenő Széchenyi.⁴⁶ What seems certain, however, is that management of the nurses was taken over from Countess Semsey by Baroness Mária Fiáth.⁴⁷

Countess Semsey said that before they left, they had time to discover the social life of Istanbul. They received invitations from local notables, once taking tea (which usually meant coffee and cigarettes) with the wife of Enver Pasha and another time with the wife of Canbolat Bey. In general, she found social

45 *Magyarország*, 23 May 1916, 5. As we have seen, there was already a small Austro-Hungarian military hospital in the city and a civilian Austrian hospital on Taksim Square. In addition, the Austro-Hungarian high command, in March 1916, assigned reserve staff medical officer Karl Feismantel to set up institutions to provide comprehensive care for Austro-Hungarian soldiers in the Ottoman Empire. The first stage, however, was to improve hygiene conditions in the garrison, and the sick room admitted its first patients only in December of that year; see Gábor Kiss, *Orvosok, katonák*, 83–84. A Hungarian doctor also wrote about the improving hygiene conditions and the relocation of the garrison. See László Király, 'Kelet egészségügyi képe a világháborúban' [Medicine in the East during the World War] *Magyar Katonai Szemle* 3 (1938) 201–209.

46 OSZKK Analekta 10.144. Lipót Mosony's report on his research in Istanbul, 30 December 1916. Published in: György Csorba and Gábor Fodor, 'Mosony Lipót – történeti kutatás és magyar kultúrpolitika Konstantinápolyban 1914–1916' [Lipót Mosony – Historical Research and Hungarian Cultural Policy in Istanbul 1914–1916], *Századok* 2 (2018) 317–350.

47 *Az Újság*, 17 May 1916, 12. Mária Fiáth was the widow of Pál Sennyey, judge royal, speaker of the House of Magnates and knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

life limited and female conversation mundane. She also attended a talk given for women by Besim Ömer Pasha.⁴⁸ Some clues to the social life of the mission can be found in a report by the theology lecturer and military chaplain Pál Ferenc Schrotty. He records that on Sundays, mass for Red Cross delegates was held in Hungarian and German by Mosony, another priest, and after he left, by Schrotty himself. Perhaps more interesting than this is a remark at the bottom of a report dated 4 November 1916: the letter “is being taken to Budapest directly, uncensored, by Professor Géza Lobmeyer, staff medical officer and consultant-director of the Hungarian Red Cross in Istanbul, who has been ill for some time.”⁴⁹ We do not have direct information on Lobmeyer’s illness, but a report by a Hungarian military doctor who had a good knowledge of health conditions in Istanbul at the time, Dr László Király, we may reasonably suspect it to have been malaria.⁵⁰

When the Semseys departed, there were only about 250 patients in the hospital. After their return to Hungary, as a reward for their efforts, the Countess and her daughter were awarded the Ottoman Order of Şefakat 2nd and 3rd class, and gained royal approval to wear them in 1917.⁵¹ We have very little information on the story of the hospital after that time, but for the reasons given above, it probably ceased operation some time in summer 1916. This is supported by an Ottoman archive document that mentions several of the hospital staff going on an outing to Bursa in July 1916,⁵² and the report of the Red Cross Society for 1914–1919, which states that after the Romanian offensive that started in late August, the surgical unit was assigned to the Transylvanian

48 *Magyarország*, 23 May 1916, 5

49 Kalocsai Főegyházmezei Levéltár (hereinafter: KFL) I. 1.a 132.ND Missio 1901–1918. Letter from Pál Schrotty to L. Árpád Várady, archbishop of Kalocsa, 4 November 1916. Pál Schrotty was sent to Istanbul by Archbishop János Csernoch and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Education on a mission to enquire about the possibility of setting up a Hungarian pilgrims’ house and to take the appropriate action if there was a possibility, following the expulsion of Entente citizens, of establishing Hungarian possession of requisitioned Catholic property.

50 László Király, *Kelet egészségügyi képe*, 202–203.

51 BOA, Í.DUÍT. 68/136/1/1 (12 Recep 1334 [15 May 1916]); Í.DUÍT. 68/136/2/1 (15 Recep 1334 [18 May 1916]); cf. *Budapesti Közlöny*, 1 July 1917, 5.

52 BOA, DH.EUM. 5. Şb. 26/27/1/1 (11 Temmuz 1332 [24 July 1916]); DH.EUM. 5. Şb. 26/27/2/1.

Hungarian army.⁵³ Further clues are that the Ottoman Red Crescent Society decided in September 1916 to award silver and bronze medals of merit to the sixty-seven staff of the mission,⁵⁴ and the Iron Crescent and Silver Liyakat medals to the six doctors and one pharmacist.⁵⁵ Lobmayer was detained by his illness and was the last to come home, in November or December 1916.

CONCLUSION

The short and partly forgotten history of the Hungarian hospital in Istanbul was consistent with other Hungarian initiatives during the WWI. During these four years, Hungarian decision-makers sent an archiving expert and a church liaison officer to Istanbul and opened a Hungarian department in the Darülfünûn. The Turkish–Hungarian Friendship Society was formed, followed by the Hungarian–Turkish counterpart, a Hungarian language course and research institute started up in the Turkish capital, and on the symbolic level, streets were renamed on both sides. In addition, Islam was recognized as a religion in the Hungarian half of the empire in 1916.⁵⁶ Most of these initiatives were clearly inspired by developments in German–Turkish relations, and the Hungarian leaders strove to overtake or outshine the Austrian half of the empire. The Hungarian hospital also stands out as the only recorded case of active female involvement, and the interview with Countess Semsey is one

53 *A Magyar Szent Korona Országainak*, 20.

54 BOA, İ.DUİT. 73/75/1/1 (3 Zilhicce 1334 [1 October 1916]); İ.DUİT. 073/75/2/1; 73/75/3/1; 73/75/4/1 73/75/5/1 (14 Eylül 1332 [27 September 1916]); MV. 245/39/1/1 (2 Zilhicce 1334 [30 September 1916]). The list of honours includes the sixteen nurses mentioned above, but the figure of fifty-one medical orderlies conflicts with the press reports. The most likely explanation is that in addition to the thirty medical orderlies, the figure includes the “tradesmen” mentioned in the press as having worked on converting and maintaining the buildings.

55 I have found no information on doctors Bochkor and Torday, but they may be presumed to have been included in these honours.

56 Yücel Namal, ‘İ. Dünya Savaş Yıllarında Türk-Macar Dostluğuna Bir Örnek: Macaristan’da İslamiyet’in Resmi Din Olarak Kabulü (1916)’, *Avrasya Etüdüleri* 55:1 (2019) 119–165.

of the few Hungarian sources that gives a woman's view of social life in Istanbul and the practicalities of setting up the hospital.

When the hospital closed, the Hungarian Red Cross Society did not completely lose contact with the Committee for the Support of the Red Crescent or the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, although the change of Hungarian government in 1917 and the protracted hostilities restricted the scope of interaction to a few high-profile gestures. The last and certainly the most spectacular was undoubtedly the Bulgarian and Turkish tour by the Honvéd Military Band in spring 1918, led by Richárd Fricsay and escorted by Gyula Germanus. The band was joined by Géza Hegyei and its concerts were highly successful. The proceeds went to aid Turkish war orphans and finance a project for the construction of a mosque in Budapest.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ The plan for a mosque in Budapest had first been floated in 1909, chiefly as a gesture towards Muslims from Bosnia and Turkey, and it re-emerged several times in the interwar period.

CLOSING REMARKS: MY FATHER ANTOINE KÖPE

Elizabeth Childress

Regarding Antoine Köpe, I can only write about my feelings. To me my father was the unexceptional model of a loving and faithful husband, the loving father of his children, loyal to his Hungarian country, and thankful to the country which accepted us and so many refugees.

My memories as I was growing up, were, the security I felt in my father. My crib was next to his bed, and when sometimes I had a childish nightmare, I would call for him and he knew to extend his hand which I would grab, and contended would go back to sleep. He used to take me on rides on his NSU motorcycle, sitting me on the gas tank, and happily we would go into the countryside. I loved those rides, and I would sing, and he would say “sing my little one, sing”. When I wanted to sit in his lap, I would say “the hole papa, the hole”, which meant the empty space made by his left ankle resting on his right knee. The hours he spent hiding in the formal salon, preparing the Christmas tree, which we were not allowed to see until Christmas eve (mother of course was helping too). Sundays, as I grew up were spent as a family. We made music, (all of us played an instrument) he taught us songs of his childhood, talked about growing up with his parents. He was a very good son.

He also could be very strict. As much as I loved my father I also respected his rules. Never would I go against his orders. What he said was law for us children. I would never even think of disobeying. But, do you know I do not regret any part of my young life. Would gladly return to them.

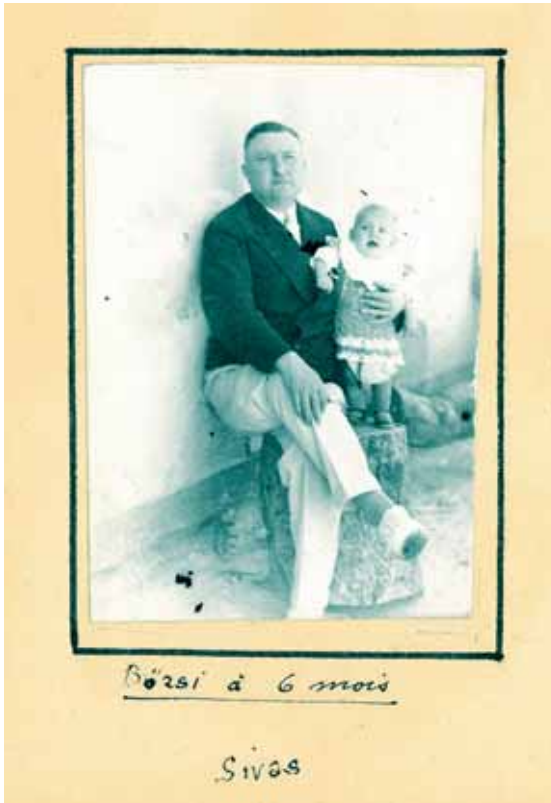


FIGURE 1
ANTOINE KÖPE AND ELIZABETH
CHILDRESS (BÖZSI) IN SIVAS

During the war years, he sacrificed a lot so his family had more. He strongly believed in vitamins. Every winter coming home from school for lunch, I remember having to swallow a big soup spoon of cod liver oil followed by sucking on a lemon to cover that awful taste. He believe in his "one apple a day keeps the Dr. away". Who knows, Nazar deymesin? But I have been healthier than a lot of my friends. Maybe it did some good. In those days, it was easier to obtain medicine without a prescription, so when we had a bad cold mother would come with the "ventouses" (the sucking flamed cups) and apply them my back to draw out the cold. He used to vaccinate us for small pox. Unbelieving to hear this today. But life was so much simpler and happier in those days.

He was very patriotic. When they went to Hungary in 1936, he visited all the cousins, and General Egon Köpe who was in the Hungarian royal military had a home like a museum. With communism, they ended living in one room and poverty. My brother, Karoly, made his first trip back to Hungary during the regime and told us of the situation, but through it all they still had dignity. Father tried, through Red Cross, to send them clothes since nothing else was allowed.

He made sure the boys had a Hungarian education. They studied at the Hungarian Jesuit Gymnasium of Kalocsa, Hungary. We were a Hungarian colony (we were white Hungarians) and our club on İstiklal Caddesi over the pastry shop Gloria, was a huge flat with living cook and his wife and open all day for anyone to stop, relax and play ping pong, eat. There was also a stage. We carried all the traditions and eventually father became the President of the Free Hungarians of Turkey. We had no contact with the consulate because they were Red Hungarians and they had none with us. When father retired from his position, to move to the USA, he received a letter of thanks and appreciation from the United Nations.

As a whole my father was very loyal. To his dying days, after 56 years of marriage he never saw mother as old, he kept telling her she was as beautiful as the day he married her. I told mother, she was so lucky to have such a love, which does not exist in our modern days. He remained faithful to her his whole life, faithful to his children and faithful to his traditions. As a matter of fact, it was the loyalty to his dead comrade's memory that gave him the inspiration to write his memoirs, and look where it has all come to. He would have been so happy and grateful.

I do thank God for the family I had, the life they gave me, the happiness and closeness we had, and installing in us the love of country and home. My years in Turkey have been to this day, the happiest of my life. I wish every girl could have a father like mine. Rest in Peace papa, knowing that your grandson, Tony, has made your memoirs known.

Requiem aeternam dona eis.

Amen



This volume – directly connected to the exhibition entitled as *Between Empires, Beyond Borders: The War and Armistice Years through the Eyes of the Köpe Family*, opened on the 15th of September, 2020 at the Salt Beyoğlu, Istanbul – intends to shed lights on eight different topics by eight scholars from Turkey, France, Hungary, and the United States. Built on a family history as it moves from the 19th to the 20th century, and on the valuable family archive of the Köpe family, this publication also draws attention to the different nationalities in the Ottoman Empire’s capital, the mutability of identities, the mobility of lives, the city of Istanbul before and during the war, the Austro-Hungarian armed forces and visiting notables in the Empire; shortly to an extraordinary journey from Salonica to the Palestine front, from Turkey to the United States, as seen in photographs, caricatures and memoirs.

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