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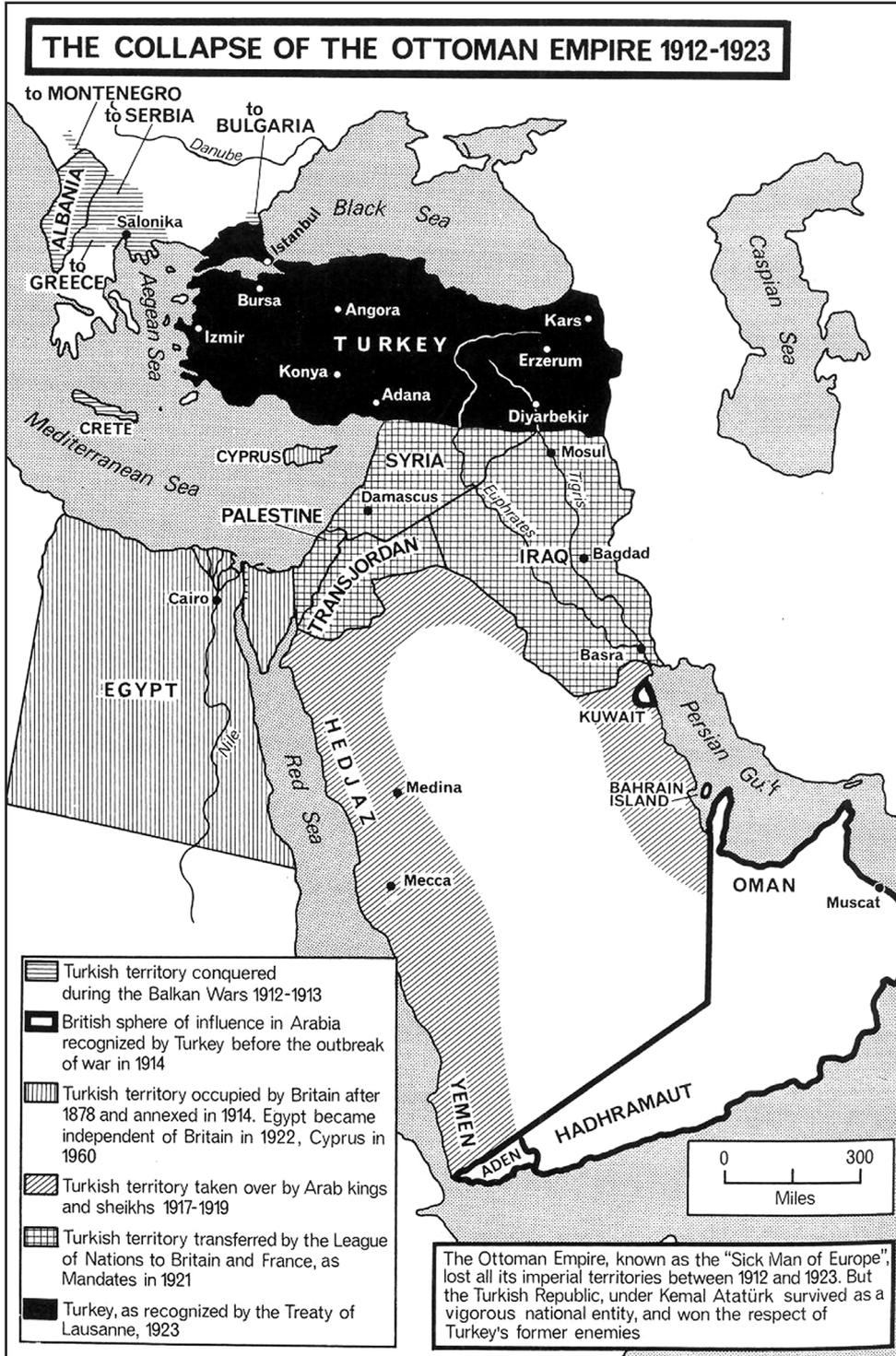


Figure 1. Map of territories lost by Turkey

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire 1918-1922

By Alfred F. Kugel

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Ottoman period dates from 1299 when several small so-called Ghazi principalities achieved independence from the Byzantine Empire. One of these, in the area around Eskişehir in western Anatolia, was headed by Osman I (for whom the dynasty was named). Osman was successful in extending the boundaries of his territory and moving the capital to Bursa in 1326. His successors then advanced along the Eastern Mediterranean and into the Balkans, with the most significant benchmarks being the defeat of the Serbians at Kosovo Polje in 1389 and the capture of Constantinople in 1453.

The most successful of the Ottoman monarchs was Suleiman II (the Magnificent) who occupied Belgrade in 1521, subdued Hungary at the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and added Transylvania, Moldavia and Wallachia to his realm. As a result of these conquests, the Ottomans became the preeminent power in southeastern Europe as well as the ruler of Asia Minor and North Africa. However, the period of expansion reached its high water mark when the Ottoman forces were defeated by a Christian army led by King John Sobieski of Poland in their attempt to capture Vienna in 1683.

In the ensuing period, the Ottoman tide began to ebb in a gradual retreat over several centuries as the Christian inhabitants of one province after another rebelled against their Muslim overlords, resulting in the sequential independence of Hungary, Serbia, Greece, Romania and Bulgaria. Even the predominantly Muslim-populated area of Albania declared its independence in 1912. In fact, by the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 Turkey in Europe had been reduced to its current boundaries, representing the eastern portion of Thrace and extending just 150 miles west from Constantinople (now Istanbul).

Outside Europe, the Ottomans had also been very successful in expanding their control, with the empire eventually extending across all of North Africa and into much of the Middle East. There, too, the tide turned and provinces were gradually taken over by other powers. In North Africa, Algeria and Tunisia were lost to France in 1830 and 1881, respectively; Morocco to France and Spain in 1906; and Libya to Italy in 1912, while the British increased their influence in Egypt and the Sudan after 1898.

In contrast, control of the periphery of Arabia was maintained until the end of World War I, at which time Hedjaz and Yemen became independent and the Turks gave up their claims to

Kuwait and the Trucial Coast. In the nearby Levant, Syria and Lebanon came under French control, while Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq became subject to British rule. (The Turkish territorial losses are shown in the map designated as Figure 1.)

As a result, then, by 1920 the Ottomans had completely lost their empire, with essentially all of their remaining territory being inhabited by ethnic Turks, the Kurdish minority in southeastern Anatolia being an exception. Indeed, most of the Turks were ready to discard the Imperial regime and support a new Nationalist government in Anatolia headed by Mustapha Kemal Atatürk. In recognition of this fact, the last sultan, Muhammad VI, went into exile on November 17, 1922, thus bringing to an end the Ottoman regime after a continuous reign of more than six hundred years.

TURKEY IN WORLD WAR I

Turkey's pro-German stance in the period leading up to its entrance into the war was importantly influenced by the "Young Turk Revolution," during which members of a highly nationalistic and militaristic younger generation of Turks led by Enver Pasha and the Committee of Union and Progress forced through the adoption of a new Constitution in 1908 and replaced discredited Sultan Abdul Hamid II with Muhammad V in the following year.

These new leaders were concerned about the country's outmoded government and failure to adopt a modern approach to technology. When the Turkish army was quickly defeated by four minor powers in the First Balkan War of 1912, German military advisors were brought in to modernize the structure and tactics of the forces, and large sums were appropriated for the purchase of up-to-date arms and other equipment. Thus, when World War I came, the Turks were ready to fight.

The actual trigger for Turkey's entrance into the war was the arrival of two German warships, SMS *Goeben* and SMS *Breslau*, in Turkish waters. Although pursued by the British Mediterranean Squadron, these vessels had escaped and sailed into Constantinople. In order that they not be interned as combatants, Germany "sold" them to Turkey, so that they were given new names and Turkish flags. However, the crews remained German and the vessels were under the authority of the German Military Mission. At that point, one of the first acts was a raid on Russian naval facilities at Sevastopol and elsewhere, thus opening hostilities on behalf of the Turks. Russia declared war on Turkey on November 5, 1914, followed the next day by Britain and France.

Lest it be thought that they were reluctant participants, most Turks looked forward to reversing the loss of prestige and territory suffered in the Balkans during 1912, not to mention avenging the defeat by Russia in 1878. In particular, the desire to reassert control over Egypt led to the Sinai campaigns of 1915–1916.

Indeed, the problem for the Ottomans was that their forces became overextended by trying to fight on too many fronts, which led to their eventual defeat. They started out by having to hold off a British-French invasion of the Dardanelles, including the landing at Gallipoli, and ended up fighting in the Caucasus, Persia and Mesopotamia, as well as the Sinai and Palestine.

Overall, the war did not go well for the Ottoman monarchy. On the positive side, its forces were successful in defending the Dardanelles and were able to occupy much of Transcaucasia in 1918 after the Russians signed the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. However, their part in the war was decided by defeats in Mesopotamia and Palestine which forced the Turks to sign the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918.

In the four years of war, some 325,000 Ottoman soldiers had been killed in battle. In addition, it is estimated that more than two million of the Sultan's civilian subjects, including both Turks and Armenians, died due to war-related causes.



Figure 2. Fieldpost use by a French soldier in the Dardanelles campaign.

THE ALLIED STRATEGY

Once Turkey entered the war, the Allies developed a plan to attack the Ottomans on a variety of fronts in an effort to force them out of the conflict. This program involved the British (using mostly Indian troops) invading Mesopotamia from the Persian Gulf, the Russians invading Eastern Anatolia from the Caucasus, and stirring up an Arab revolt in the Hedjaz, while British and French forces attacked the Dardanelles. The strategy involved in this latter effort was to capture Constantinople, divide Asiatic Turkey from the European part and open up a warm water route for sending military supplies to Russia. (Figure 2 shows a cover sent by a French soldier in the Dardanelles campaign.)

This plan was bold and had a reasonable chance for success, but did not accomplish its objectives because of poor judgments by the senior naval officers in command, a wasteful landing of infantry on the rugged Gallipoli Peninsula (April 25, 1915) and some quick bolstering of the Turks by the German Military Mission. (See Figure 3 for a postcard depicting Turkish artillery bombarding the Anglo-French fleet off Gallipoli.) As a result, the project was called off in January 1916 after eight months of struggle. In due course, the troops evacuated from the Dardanelles became a part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force that later drove northward from the Sinai Peninsula to liberate the Levant.

THE END OF THE WAR

THE TREATY OF SÉVRES

The Allies were determined to strip the Turks of their empire, and extremely severe terms were dictated in the Treaty of Sèvres. (See Figure 4 for a postcard mailed by a French delegate to the negotiations.) Although this was signed by the Ottoman government after a considerable delay on August 10, 1920, the terms were not accepted by the Nationalists, whose forces were by then larger than the Allied garrison in and around Constantinople and much more



Figure 3. Picture Postcard of Turkish artillery on the heights of the Dardanelles.

highly motivated—so that the most negative aspects of the treaty were never enforced and were later superseded by the much more favorable Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

Among the humiliations in the earlier treaty were the establishment of an occupation “Zone of the Straits” encompassing the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles, which was to be administered by the Allied powers and enforced by a substantial military presence. Moreover, there were zones of economic interest carved out for various of the Allies (especially France and Italy) in other former Ottoman territories, the establishment of a

Figure 4. Postcard mailed by a participant in the negotiations of the Sèvres Treaty.





Figure 5. Cover from the Italian Naval Contingent in Constantinople.

large independent Armenia at Turkey's expense and the authorization of a Greek presence in eastern Thrace and western Anatolia. In addition, as noted previously, large parts of the empire inhabited by Arabs were transferred to British and French control.

The next section of this article will review the disintegration of the former Ottoman Empire into a remainder state and a number of successor states. It will be organized geographically from west to east, starting with the territory around Constantinople, which was under Allied occupation from the armistice until the exile of the sultan, and separately for the Anatolian area that was under the control of the Nationalist government in Ankara.

Essentially, nearly all of the areas that were inhabited by non-Turkish ethnic groups were stripped from the empire, including those in the Arabian Peninsula (Hedjaz, Yemen) and the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Transjordan) as well as Mesopotamia and Kurdistan (Iraq). In addition, there were several territories lost temporarily, including western Anatolia, eastern Thrace and Cilicia, until they could be liberated by the Nationalist forces.

OTTOMAN TURKEY

Once the armistice was signed, Turkish resistance to the Allied advance ended, and governing of the empire was taken over by an Allied Control Commission headquartered in Constantinople, although the Sultan remained as a temporary figurehead. British, French and Italian troops entered the capital and their warships steamed through the Dardanelles and anchored in the harbor on November 12, 1918. Figure 5 shows a cover from the Italian warship "Sardinia" based in Constantinople.

In actuality, all authority of the Sultan at that point depended on the presence of the Allied military forces in and around Constantinople. However, it should be noted that from

mid-1919 on the strength of the Allied forces was gradually reduced as one unit after another was demobilized in response to the increasing political pressure to bring the troops home.

Although the Sultan nominally remained the Caliph or supreme leader of the Muslim religion until November 19, 1922, his authority was clearly diminished by the fact that the three holiest cities of Islam—Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem—were no longer part of the Empire, as two were then in independent Hedjaz (today a part of Saudi Arabia) and the other in British Mandated Palestine.

With the Allied occupation in the west and the takeover of power in Anatolia by the Nationalists, the Ottoman government became increasingly irrelevant and lost support among the populace. It was blamed for getting Turkey into a losing war, for signing the Sèvres Treaty giving up the former empire and for acquiescing in the occupation of large chunks of Turkish territory by foreign troops. On this basis, support for the imperial regime gradually diminished from 1919 on, and the last Sultan went into exile in November 1922.

NATIONALIST TURKEY

In Anatolia (or Turkey in Asia) outside of the zone of Allied occupation, dissatisfaction with the Ottoman government was rising and opposition to the proposed dismemberment of Turkey was being organized. The first overt move was the Amasya Agreement in June 1919 in which a group of Nationalist leaders declared that the Ottoman government in Constantinople had become simply a tool of the Allies and was unable to carry out its responsibilities to the Turkish people. This led to a series of larger Congresses of like-minded patriots during the ensuing months.

Eventually, a Grand National Assembly convened in Ankara in April 1920 with Mustafa Kemal Pasha (later known as Kemal Atatürk) being declared president. This Nationalist movement thus provided an alternative political entity to carry out the mobilization of the country for the struggle against the Allies and the Sèvres Treaty in an effort to preserve the territory inhabited by ethnic Turks. Military resources were organized and eventually deployed successfully against the Greeks (who had invaded western Anatolia on June 15, 1919), Armenian separatists in the northeast, and the French in Cilicia.

In the ensuing period these efforts eventually met with success in that the French agreed to evacuate Cilicia in March 1921 and agreement was reached with the Bolsheviks over the Armenian-Turkish border in October of that year. Next, the Greeks were driven out of Anatolia in September 1922. In due course, the Allies agreed to evacuate Constantinople and the occupation zone, which was completed in September 1923. This was then followed by the declaration of the Republic of Turkey on October 29, 1923.

THE LOST TERRITORIES

In the end, the Nationalists were successful in preserving the traditional Turkish territories and replacing many of the most severe provisions of the Sèvres Treaty with the more lenient new arrangement called the Lausanne Treaty in 1923. However, essentially all of the old non-Turkish territories of the Empire were stripped away and came under the control of other powers. In the Levant, the French became the occupying power and eventually the administrator of a League of Nations mandate for Syria and Lebanon, while Britain assumed the same role in Palestine and Transjordan. Mesopotamia and the Mosul area of Kurdistan were joined to create the new country of Iraq under British supervision.

Hedjaz and Yemen became independent Arab states, and the Turks relinquished their claims to areas along the Persian Gulf (especially Kuwait) and parts of Transcaucasia. Comments on the various areas that fell away from the old Ottoman Empire are given in the following

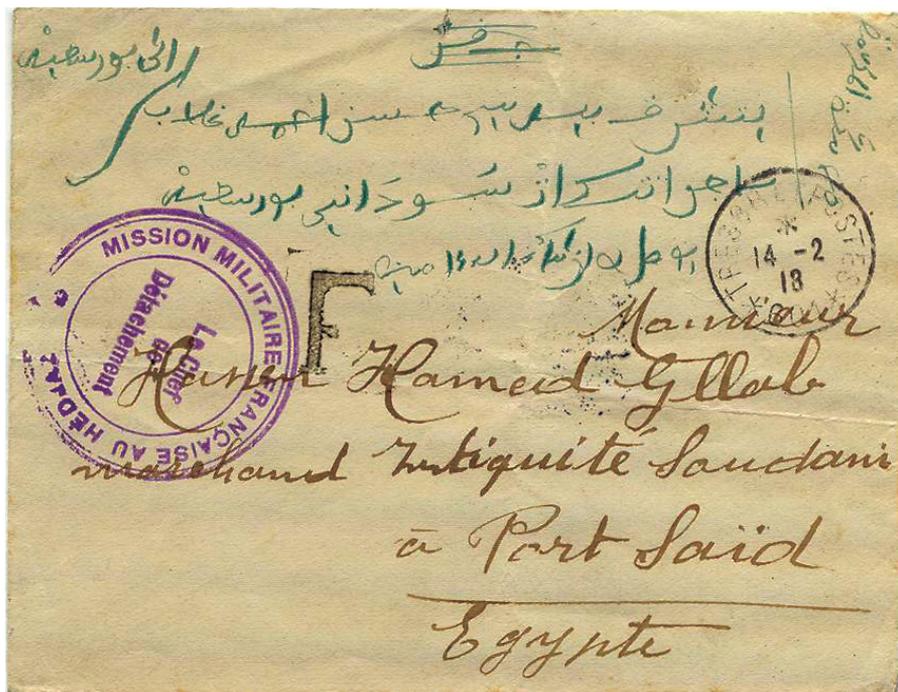


Figure 6. Cover from the French Military Mission in Hedjaz.

sections in mostly chronological order, starting with Hedjaz as the first territory liberated and moving to the north and east as the Allied troops advanced into the Levant, i.e. Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon. At the same time, forces were moving from the Persian Gulf through Lower Mesopotamia, Upper Mesopotamia and Kurdistan, which were later joined together to form Iraq.

HEDJAZ

The Allies believed that significant damage could be inflicted on the Ottomans if they could foment an Arab revolt in the southern part of the Empire. In fact, a deal was made between the British and Sharif Hussein of Mecca, who was promised an independent Arab state in Syria in return for his help in fostering the Arab revolution. A number of Arabs did join the revolt in Hedjaz, which was the Ottoman province along the northern part of the Red Sea coast of Arabia and, under the command of Col. T. E. Lawrence, they succeeded in capturing the port of Aqaba and cutting off the Hedjaz from the rest of the Ottoman Empire. The French sent forty officers and about one thousand men (mostly Muslim troops from North Africa) to assist in the uprising. (See Figure 6 for a cover from the French Military Mission in Hedjaz.)

However, later Arab activity in the Levant was modest at best, and it was left up to regular British and Imperial (mostly ANZAC) troops, augmented by small expeditionary forces of French and Italians, to invade Palestine and drive the Turks out of the remaining territories inhabited by ethnic Arabs.

PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN

Following the successful repulsing of Turkish attacks on the Suez Canal via the Sinai Peninsula, the initiative shifted in 1915 to the British in Egypt, who began to gather resources



Figure 7. Letter from the French Garrison at Jerusalem.

for an attack on Palestine. In due course, the invasion got underway in 1916 but was held up by stiff resistance for an extended period in the area around Gaza. (The British forces were augmented by French and Italian Contingents, with the former consisting of 2,500 men—See Figures 7 and 8 for covers from these latter units.) Eventually, the Allies broke through at Beersheba and were able to capture Jerusalem on December 8, 1917. (See Figure 9 for a postcard depicting the British honor guard at the Jaffa Gate awaiting the arrival of General Allenby.) The campaign then gradually pressed northward, clearing northern Palestine and the area to the east of the River Jordan as well as entering today's Syria in late 1918.

To govern the area of the former Ottoman Province of Syria, an Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA) was created. There were four sectors within this area: British-controlled Palestine and Transjordan were OETA South; French-controlled Lebanon and coastal Syria were OETA West, and French-occupied Cilicia was OETA North; while the Arab state in the interior of Syria was OETA East. (Such designations can be seen on contemporary official mail and censorship markings.)

The British administration over Palestine and Transjordan was confirmed when the area was designated as a League of Nations Mandate on July 24, 1922. Then, the two territories were separated on September 16, 1922, with Palestine remaining under direct British rule and Transjordan becoming an autonomous kingdom under the Hashemite family.

SYRIA AND LEBANON

In the period prior to the war, the areas known collectively as the Levant were part of the Ottoman province of Syria. Historically, there was a French interest in this area going back to at least the time of the Crusades, when the Frankish kings and their Christian allies battled for



Figure 8. Letter sent by a member of the Italian Detachment in Palestine.

Figure 9. Postcard depicting the British entry into Jerusalem.





Figure 10. First day cover commemorating the enthronement of King Faisal in Syria.

two hundred years starting at the end of the eleventh century in the eventually unsuccessful attempt to liberate the Holy Land from Muslim control.

This interest was briefly rekindled at the end of the eighteenth century when Napoleon I invaded Syria as part of his abortive effort to seize control of Egypt, but it remained a French ambition to establish a role in the governance of this area.

Modern-day French interest was part of the World War I effort of the Allies to defeat Turkey, a member of the enemy Central Powers. At the beginning of that conflict in 1914, the Ottoman Empire controlled large areas of the Middle East, including the Levant and the entire west coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Among the aims of the Allies was to force divestiture by the Ottomans of lands populated by non-Turks, especially those of the Arabs.

This idea had progressed to the point that in August 1916 a secret treaty (the Sykes-Picot accord) was signed by the foreign ministers of Britain and France, setting forth a detailed plan for the postwar division of administrative authority for the Arab territories of the Ottoman Provinces of Syria and Mesopotamia.

Under this agreement, the northern part of the area, which eventually became Syria (as presently constituted) and Lebanon, was to be assigned to the French. The southern part, which became Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq, would go to the British.

In the final stage of the war, British forces moving north from Palestine entered Syria, capturing Damascus on October 1, 1918, and Aleppo on the twenty-sixth. Meanwhile, a French naval force landed at Beirut on October 1, and this expedition then moved to take over the entire Mediterranean coastal area from southern Lebanon through Cilicia.

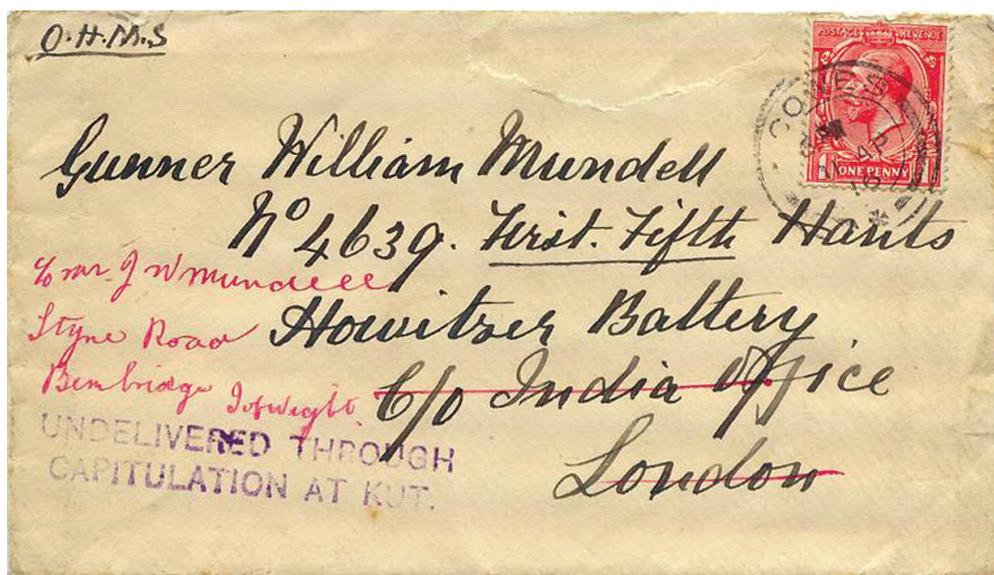


Figure 11. Cover sent to British soldier at Kut but undeliverable due to the siege.

CONFLICT WITH THE ARABS

However, in accordance with the agreement between the British and Sharif Hussein, an Arab Government was proclaimed on October 5, 1918, at Damascus. This state controlled the interior area of the Levant from a line just to the west of Damascus, Homs and Aleppo eastward out into the Syrian Desert. In due course, Hussein's son, Faisal, was declared King of Syria on March 8, 1920. Figure 10 shows a first day cover with an overprinted stamp commemorating the event.

Nevertheless, the French were determined to exert their authority over all of Syria as specified in the Sykes-Picot treaty. On July 14, 1920, General Gouraud, the French High Commissioner for Syria and Lebanon, sent an ultimatum to Faisal, and soon afterward French troops began an invasion of the Arab state. Quickly defeating the Arab forces at Maysalun, the French then occupied Damascus and took control of the balance of Syria. (As an aside, it can be noted that Faisal fled to Transjordan, and the British subsequently found employment for him as King of Iraq.)

Pursuant to the official peace settlement, France was confirmed in its authority to administer Syria and Lebanon as mandates under the League of Nations, although it was required to hold out the promise of eventual independence. The Arabs were naturally quite displeased with this outcome, and there were several episodes of indigenous uprisings in Syria that had to be put down by the use of French troops, especially in 1920 and 1925–1927. The French mandates for Syria and Lebanon remained in effect legally until 1941 and in actuality until after the end of World War II.

IRAQ

The campaign in Mesopotamia got underway in November 1914 when a contingent of Indian troops with British officers landed at the port of Fao on the Persian Gulf. This force was primarily intended to provide a buffer between the Ottomans and the British-owned oil fields and refinery at Abadan in Persia just across the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. Subsequently,

the troops moved gradually up the Tigris River, occupying Lower Mesopotamia as far as Kut-al-Amara in October 1915. There, the attack stalled and the British were eventually trapped in a siege which forced them to surrender in February 1916. (See Figure 11 for a cover that could not be delivered to Kut due to the siege.)

However, reinforcements were sent and the northward advance resumed, resulting in the capture of Baghdad on March 11, 1917. In due course, Upper Mesopotamia was occupied as well. At the time of the Turkish surrender, the British rushed to extend their control to Kurdistan to insure that they would control the oil fields there, with the capture of Mosul on November 14, 1918. In spite of strong opposition by the Kurds, this area was included in the British mandate of Iraq that was authorized by the League of Nations on November 11, 1920.

THE GRAECO-TURKISH WAR

The greatest postwar threat to the Turks came from an aggressive attitude by Greece which, encouraged by strong support from Britain and France, submitted claims to the Peace Commission for a vast enhancement of its territory. There was an especially close relationship between Prime Ministers Lloyd George of Great Britain and Venizelos of Greece. In due course, the preliminary decisions of the Commission were that the Greeks should have Thrace (except for a small area around Constantinople that would be administered by the Allies jointly) and a portion of Western Anatolia radiating out from the city of Smyrna.

In order to put more pressure on the Turks, the Allies authorized the Greeks to land an expeditionary force at Smyrna and take over the administration of the surrounding area. The landing actually took place on August 15, 1919. The city was decked out in blue and white flags, and the Greek troops were greeted enthusiastically by the majority of the residents of the city that were of Greek extraction. The Ottomans were finally induced to sign the Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920, which provided for the transfer of territory extending for an average of roughly seventy-five miles out from Smyrna. At that point, then, this area was considered to be Greek *de jure*.

The Turkish Nationalists neither accepted the Treaty nor favored giving up any territory of Turkey proper (as opposed to the outlying parts of the old Ottoman Empire). Therefore, they continued to bide their time and build up their military capability against the day when they would be strong enough to attempt to drive the Greeks into the sea. The high command in Athens recognized the threat posed by the Nationalists and decided to occupy more of Anatolia as a buffer against future attacks. Thus, in the summer of 1920, the Greeks advanced more than a hundred miles to the east.

Although unrecognized at the time, the Greek parliamentary elections on November 14, 1920, proved to be a crucial turning point. In a surprising outcome, Prime Minister Venizelos and his party lost badly to the royalists who, once back in power, recalled King Constantine to the throne. This move greatly offended the Allies, who were supportive of the Venizelists but suspicious of the royalists, who had favored a neutral policy during the Great War. (The king was even suspected of pro-German bias as he was married to the sister of the Kaiser.)

Although the Ottoman government had signed the Sèvres treaty, it was unable to enforce the peace terms anywhere beyond the range of the Allied troops and warships in Constantinople. The Greek generals could not agree on a new plan so decided on more of the same—an even deeper penetration of Anatolia. As a result, the front advanced another seventy-five miles to the east by early 1921.

In 1921 the Greek General Staff apparently concluded that if they could only take Ankara, Turkish resistance would collapse. However, geographic and logistical factors that would become crucial to the outcome were given insufficient attention. The interior of Anatolia



Figure 12. Ottoman stamps commemorating the Armistice of 1918 on cover.

changes as the fertile plain near Smyrna becomes an arid upland plateau further east, with no possibility of living off the land. Worse yet, the army would have to traverse the Anatolian salty desert in mid-summer. Although some units penetrated to only forty miles from Ankara, supplies of water and ammunition ran low, and the effort simply petered out.

THE TURKS STRIKE BACK

In the meantime, prospects improved for the Turks. France decided to evacuate its forces from Cilicia, an area it had occupied in southern Anatolia. This move not only freed up the Turkish forces that had been in place facing the French, but the latter left behind considerable ammunition and other war materiel, which could be used against the Greeks. A second event was the signing of a treaty of friendship between the Turkish Nationalists and the Russian Communists in March 1921, which resulted in a Soviet Military Mission under General Frunze providing arms and money to Kemal in 1922.

By mid-summer, the Turks took the offensive with a concerted attack against the Greek positions starting on August 26, 1922. Once the main Greek line of defense had been breached, retreat became inevitable. Many units merely picked up and headed west in a scene described by one observer as “weary disorder.” The Greek forces were eventually evacuated from the mainland to nearby Greek-controlled islands. With the departure of the High Commissioner from Smyrna on a British warship on September 8 the Greek state in Asia Minor ceased to exist.

The Sèvres treaty also provided that Greece could annex all of Thrace up to the Chatalja fortified line just a few miles outside Constantinople, including the Gallipoli Peninsula. This transfer thus became effective in the summer of 1920. However, in the armistice following the Greek military disaster in Anatolia, the Greeks were required to give up eastern Thrace as well, thus restoring the boundary to the one which had been in effect in 1914.



Figure 13. Cover using Nationalist overprints in Asia Minor.

Figure 14. Nationalist Turkey stamps issued in 1922 on cover.



THE PHILATELIC CONSEQUENCES

Needless to say, the territorial changes outlined in the prior sections were reflected in the postal situations on the ground in the respective areas. There were a number of new stamp-issuing entities and a variety of provisional issues were provided for various areas of the former Ottoman Empire. This policy was viewed as having benefits from the publicizing of the new status of the territories, whether they were independent countries, mandates or occupied entities.

FINAL OTTOMAN ISSUES

After the war, there were several stamp issues by the Ottoman government in Constantinople. The first set issued on January 21, 1919, was, as far as I am aware, the only example of a country issuing a set of stamps to commemorate the armistice in a war that they had just lost. In fact, overprints reading “Souvenir of the Armistice 1918” were applied to ten of the current Imperial definitives as well as three stamps that had been prepared but never issued. (See Figure 12.)

On December 14, 1919, four overprints commemorating the first anniversary of the enthronement of Muhammad VI were issued. Aside from a few stamps surcharged with new denominations, the last Ottoman issue on March 25, 1920, consisted of a new printing of nine denominations with similar scenes to the 1917–1918 pictorials but showing the tughra (symbol) of the new Sultan.

NATIONALIST ISSUES

After Mustafa Kemal proclaimed a new Nationalist government in Asia Minor with its capital in Ankara in the summer of 1920, it was necessary to provide new stamps. The first such issues consisted of overprints in Arabic reading “osmanli postalari,” some with surcharges of new denominations, on Ottoman postage stamps and a wide variety of revenue stamps of various kinds that could be found. Several series were issued between October 1920 and April 1921. An example of the overprints is shown as Figure 13.

The next issue occurred on December 1, 1921, with a new set of overprints to commemorate the liberation of Adana following the French withdrawal from Cilicia. The first new Nationalist definitives were not provided until 1922–1923 (Figure 14).

Figure 15. Prepared but unissued stamps for the Ottoman occupation of Egypt.



OCCUPATION ISSUES

Most of the stamps that were issued in the annexed and occupied territories during this period are adequately covered in the major philatelic catalogs. Therefore, emphasis in this article has been given to the more unusual issues, including a number of stamps that were prepared but not actually issued. One of the more interesting of these was a set of six pictorials prepared by the Ottoman authorities for the expected Turkish occupation of the Sinai and Egypt. The images included several desert scenes and the stamps had small pictures of the Sphinx and the Pyramids of Giza at the bottom. As the plan was unsuccessful, the stamps were never issued but some ended up in philatelic hands as shown in Figure 15.

Comments on the postal activities in the various former Ottoman territories follow, generally in the same order as the political comments provided above.

HEDJAZ

The British did not establish fieldpost facilities in Hedjaz and the Ottoman postal service ceased to function with the Arab uprising. However, Sharif Hussein declared the old Turkish stamps invalid and ordered supplies burned. Thus, for an interim period—from June 24 to October 14, 1916, in Mecca—letters were charged 1 piaster and marked with “Fee Paid” in Arabic or English or both until new stamps could be printed and distributed. (See Figure 16.)

The British ordered a supply of new stamps to be prepared by the Egyptian government printers. The first denomination of 1 piaster was issued on August 20, 1916. It was inscribed entirely in Arabic, with “Hedjaz Post” in the top panel, “Holy Mecca” in the center, “One Piaster” in the bottom panel and “1334 (1916)” at the sides. Five additional denominations were issued later. Figure 17 shows a cover franked with the new Hedjazi stamps.

Figure 16. Unfranked cover from Hedjaz with “Fee Paid” marking,

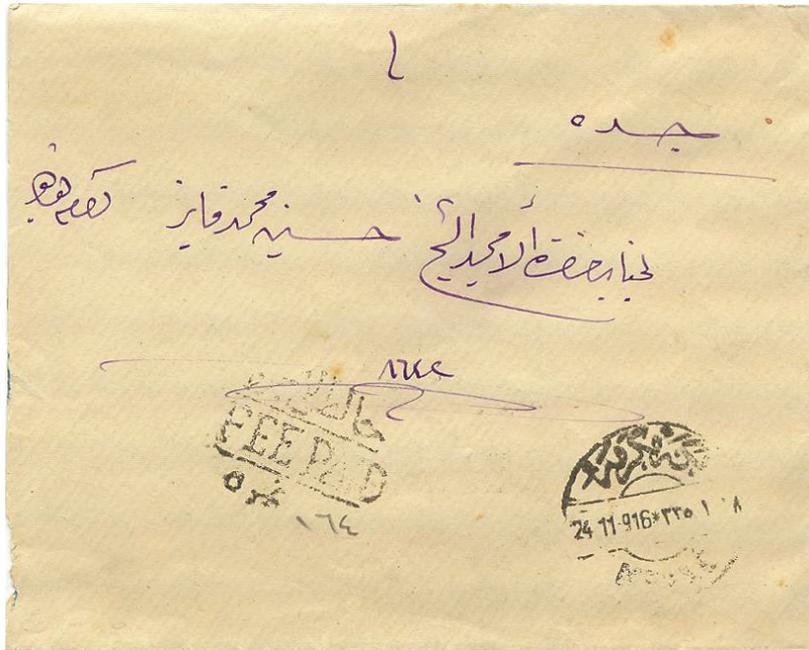




Figure 17. Cover with Hedjazi stamps produced by the British.

Figure 18. EEF stamp (Palestine #1) printed for the occupied territories on cover.





Figure 19. Philatelic cover franked with complete set of EEF stamps.

PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN

Shortly after the liberation of Jerusalem both military and civil mail was handled free of charge by the British APOs for a three-month period starting in December 1917. Then, on February 10, 1918, the EEF issued its first stamp (Figure 18) for civilian use and to pay additional fees (such as registration) on military mail in the OETA. It was inscribed “E.E.F. (Egyptian Expeditionary Forces) and had a denomination of 1 piaster. Additional values were then printed so that by the end of 1918 eleven values with denominations up to 20 piasters had been issued. (See Figure 19 for a philatelic cover with the complete set of EEF stamps.)

Figure 20. EEF stamps overprinted “East of Jordan” on cover.





Figure 21. Cover with French Levant stamps overprinted “T.E.O.” for use in Syria.

Although initially placed on sale in Palestine, these stamps were used in all parts of the OETA, including Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria and Cilicia, in some places as late as February 1922. Some of these stamps were subsequently overprinted in November 1920 with the wording in Arabic “East of Jordan” for use in Transjordan (Figure 20).

SYRIA AND LEBANON

As to the payment of postage, stamps of the Egyptian Expeditionary Forces were those normally used on mail from the French-controlled territories until the French issued their own occupation stamps. In fact, the first French issue appeared on November 21, 1919, in the form of French Post Offices in the Levant stamps overprinted “T.E.O. (Occupied Enemy Territory)” and surcharged with new denominations (Figure 21). These stamps were used throughout the French-occupied areas. In due course, overprints of T.E.O. Cilicie (Figure 22) were issued for that territory.

The TEO issues was superseded in early 1920 by new overprints inscribed “O.M.F. (French Military Occupation) Syrie” and “O.M.F. Cilicie” which were then used in the respective French-occupied territories. After the French deposed the Arab Government, some of the stamps that had been issued by that entity were also overprinted “O.M.F. Syrie.” See Figure 23.

There was one anomaly with regard to the postage used in Syria. This is because two currencies were in circulation there—piasters left over from the Turkish times and piasters based on the Egyptian pound. These were not equal in value, as the Turkish ones had depreciated. Postage rates in Syria depended on which currency was circulating in a specific area. To identify which had validity, the stamps used in towns where the cheaper currency was in use were overprinted with a small geometric figure in a square, thus prohibiting their use where

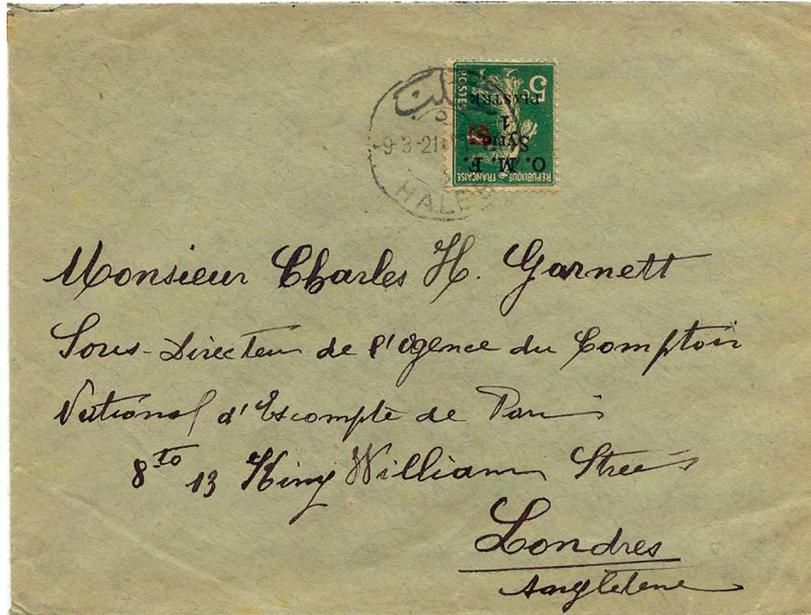


Figure 24. Cover franked with a “discount” stamp for Syria with square red overprint.

By 1923, Cilicia had been returned to the Turkish Republic which succeeded the Ottomans, which rendered those issues as obsolete. Moreover, the occupation of the Levant had come to an end and was replaced by a French administration.

Figure 25. “Baghdad/In British Occupation” overprints used on cover.





Figure 26. Unissued denominations of “Baghdad/In British Occupation” stamps.

This change was noted by newly overprinted stamps inscribed “Syrie-Grand Liban.” The use of the term “Greater Lebanon” was used to signify that the original modest Lebanese area populated heavily by Maronite Christians had been expanded on September 1, 1920,

Figure 27. High values of “Iraq/In British Occupation” overprints on cover.





Figure 28. Overprints for Kurdistan on cover.

to include Muslim-inhabited territories in Tripoli, Sidon and the Bekaa Valley to produce a more geographically viable state, an action still resented by the Syrians.

IRAQ

The first stamps used in occupied Mesopotamia were Indian definitives overprinted “I.E.F. (Indian Expeditionary Forces),” which were used on civil mail in the occupied areas as well as to pay any postal charges on military mail. After the liberation of Baghdad, modest supplies of twenty-five different captured Turkish stamps were overprinted “Baghdad/In British Occupation” and placed on sale on September 1, 1917. Most of these are very elusive on cover (see Figure 25). Eight additional stamps were overprinted but quantities available were so small that they were not issued. However, small quantities of these got out into philatelic hands and have become considerable rarities sought after by specialist collectors as shown in Figure 26.

A second series of overprints inscribed “Iraq/In British Occupation” was issued on September 1, 1918, providing a full run of denominations up to 10 rupees. Quantities provided were more than adequate so these stamps were used well into the 1920s. There was not much commercial demand for the higher values, but some can be found used on philatelic covers. See Figure 27.

As to Kurdistan, which is now the northern part of Iraq, a separate postal system was created for the territory based on Mosul. This activity involved different sets of overprints on Turkish fiscal stamps (see Figure 28).

GREEKS IN ANATOLIA AND EASTERN THRACE

The Greek invasion of western Anatolia began on August 15, 1919, when the first Greek troops landed at Smyrna and began to occupy the surrounding area. No new stamps were issued for this territory, so collectors of the postal history need to look for postmarks of the occupied towns on ordinary Greek stamps, which were used until the evacuation in mid-1922. (See Figure 29.) In addition to civil mail, the Greek forces used their fieldpost system with appropriate military postmarks.



Figure 29. Cover with Greek stamps used during the occupation of Anatolia.

Figure 30. Cover with overprinted Greek stamps for Eastern Thrace.



Similar conditions applied in Greek occupied eastern Thrace, except that the stamps used in that area were those of Greece and Turkey overprinted “Administration of Thrace.” These can be found used between 1919 and 1922. Examples on cover are shown as Figure 30.

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