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MASTER'S THESIS

**'LAYARD OF NINEVEH'
AS BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN ISTANBUL
(1877 – 1880)**

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ÖZ

İSTANBUL İNGİLİZ BÜYÜKELÇİSİ NİNOVA'LI LAYARD (1877 – 1880)

Nur Aisyah BINTE ARSHAD

Bu tez, Ninova'nın keşfi ile takdir gören ve 1877'den 1880'e kadar İstanbul'a İngiltere Büyükelçisi olarak atanan arkeolog Austen Henry Layard'ın hikayesidir. Göreve geldiğinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Rusya ile savaşın eşiğinde idi. Layard'ın üç yılı, Londra'dan net bir talimatı olmaksızın değişken beklentileri dengelemeye çalışmakla geçirdiği aşırı endişe dolu bir dönem oldu. Bu tez başlıca Layard'ın anılarından faydalanarak onun Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve diğer Osmanlı devlet adamlarını etkisi altına alma yöntemini incelemektedir. Genç bir adam iken okuduklarından ve pahalı seyahatlerinden yola çıkarak doğu için heves geliştirmiş bir Türk hayranı olan Layard, anıları ile on dokuzuncu yüzyıldaki İngiliz-Osmanlı diplomasisinin etkileşimini gözlemleyebilmemizi sağlamaktadır. Bu çalışma sosyal ve diplomatik tarihin her ikisini de kapsamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Diplomasi, Abdülhamid II, Layard, Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı

ABSTRACT

‘LAYARD OF NINEVEH’

AS BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO ISTANBUL (1877 – 1880)

Nur Aisyah BINTE ARSHAD

This thesis is a story of Sir Austen Henry Layard, the acclaimed archaeologist, who discovered Nineveh and was later deployed as the British Ambassador to Istanbul between 1877 and 1880. Having arrived in the Ottoman Empire at the brink of war with Russia, his assignment for three years was a period filled with extreme anxiety as he tried to balance varying expectations without clear directions from London. Extrapolating mainly from his memoir, this thesis examines Layard’s method to influence Sultan Abdülhamid II and other Ottoman statesmen. As a Turcophile, who developed enthusiasm for the East through his readings and extensive travels as a young man, Layard’s memoir provides us insight to analyze the interplay of Anglo-Ottoman diplomacy in the nineteenth century. This study is a blend of both social and diplomatic history.

Key words: Diplomacy, Abdülhamid II, Layard, Russo-Turkish War

PREFACE

I came a long way to embark on this curious journey. I am indebted to many parties, which led to the culmination of my thesis. First and foremost I would like to thank the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (Muis) for approving my request for work-leave and financial grant to undertake this endeavor.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Gültekin Yıldız for the continuous encouragement and guidance he has provided throughout my project. I am very grateful to Assoc. Prof. Gültekin Yıldız for making time to read and correct my work, amidst juggling roles at two different universities. I am thankful to Fatih University, where I started my postgraduate studies. The staff and administrators left an indelible impact in my career and I am thankful to my teachers especially Prof. Mehmet Ipşirli and Dr. George Theotokis. I was very fortunate to be in the wise counsel of Dr. Aysel Yıldız and Prof. Suraiya Faroqhi. Dr. Yıldız was always encouraging and we spent many hours with over Turkish tea discussing anything under the sun. Prof. Faroqhi was always available whenever I needed her, not just as a supervisor but also as a motherly figure. While in Istanbul, I always looked forward to our coffee dates at Emirgan Sütüş.

I am also appreciative to the kindness of the scholars who willingly shared their work and books with me when my access to resources was limited. My gratitude goes to Dr Nalan Turna, Prof. Ismail Hakkı Kadı, Prof. Edhem Eldem, Dr. Beatrice St. Laurent, Mr Sinan Kunalp and Mohamed Imran Bin Taib.

When I arrived in Istanbul in Autumn 2013, I knew no one and knew no Turkish. However Istanbul provided the environment to make new friends, as people generally were hospitable and helpful to foreigners. In this quaint city, I forged close friendships with Haziq Hakimi, Zainab Ramzi, Esmâ Bekiröğlü, Doudja Semmar, Elif Karayel, Yusuf Şafak, Deniz and Cık Adil in Konya. I was always welcomed to the home of Emin Yıldız Abi and Norina Usman Abla and Prof. Turgay Gunduz. They made my stay in Istanbul memorable and meaningful. To my new friend Dr. Dilara Dal whom I met recently in Istanbul University and inspired me when I almost gave up, I am very grateful for all her assistance and for providing critic to my work. She made me find value again in what I was doing.

Last but not least, despite all the challenges that I had faced in trying to put a conclusion to my thesis, I will not forget that I met the love of my life in Istanbul,

Selemani Said Jawa and now we are blessed with two boys, Yusuf Sallaah and Hamzah Saalih. This work is especially dedicated to my husband and my whole family, for all their sacrifices, support and love.



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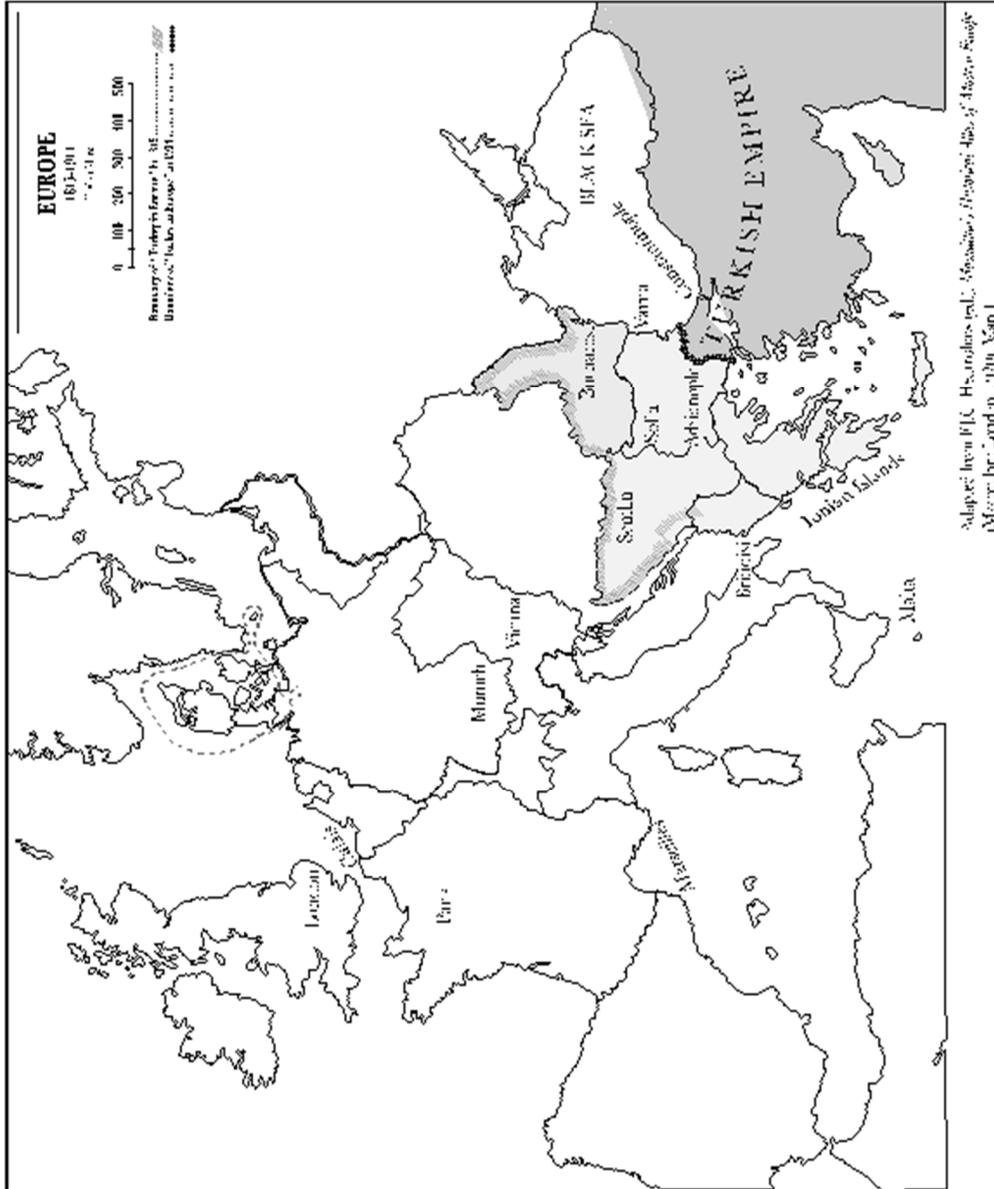
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Map 1: Map Showing Ottoman Empire, taken from G. R. Berridge, *British Diplomacy with Turkey, 1853 to the Present*, (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009)



Map 2: Locations of British Embassy vis-à-vis other Embassies, also taken from G.R. Berridge, *British Diplomacy with Turkey, 1853 to the Present*, (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009)

ABBREVIATIONS

BOA : Bařbakan Osmanlı Arřiv (BOA)

TNA : The National Archives



CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

24 December 1876 – Jan 1877	Constantinople Conference
15 January – 16 March 1877	Convention of Budapest
30 Mar 1877	London Protocol
20 April 1877	Sir Henry Layard's Arrival in Istanbul
24 April 1877	Russian troops crossed the Pruth
31 Jan 1878	Armistice signed between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in Edirne
3 March 1878	Treaty of San Stefano
4 June 1878	Cyprus Convention
13 June – 13 July 1878	Congress of Berlin
2 June 1880	Sir Henry Layard's Departure for Britain

INTRODUCTION

Diplomats as the key mediator in the interaction of nations rarely get the due attention. Doğan Gürpınar rightly points out that the deliberation of modern history and international relations give priority on “the political substance of major foreign policies, the personalities of leading decision makers, and the events of dramatic crisis situations”.¹ This thesis provides an account of the distinguished ‘Layard of Nineveh’, who became the British ambassador in Istanbul in 1877 – 1880. Sir Austen Henry Layard (henceforth referred to as Layard) arrived in the Ottoman Empire at a tumultuous period. The imperium was on the brink of war with Russia and almost bankrupt, while national insurgencies were persisting in the Balkans. Extrapolating Layard’s memoir, which he wrote during his retirement and that of his wife Enid’s, this thesis attempts to understand Layard’s role in impressing British influence and prestige in the Ottoman Empire, through his intimate relationship with Sultan Abdülhamid II² and members of the Porte. Layard’s diplomatic posting preludes the interplay of imperial interactions and the state of the Ottoman Empire at a time of crisis. The diary of Lady Layard is more light-hearted and may seem like a logbook looking at how the entries had been made. Notwithstanding, taken critically, it actually provides a sneak into her daily activities and proves the bustle of the diplomatic service judging from more than 600 personalities mentioned. Taken together, the memoirs illuminate the life of a diplomat and the intricacies of the nineteenth century Anglo-Ottoman diplomacy, in an era loomed with Westernization and the Industrial Revolution.

Ottoman diplomacy has been seen in the negative light especially among Western scholars³ who propel the idea that due to the Ottomans’ absolute superiority of Islam and consequently a contempt for Christian Europe, it worked within the framework of the dichotomy of *Dâr al-Islam* (where Islam law obtains and the Muslims live under the law of Islam) versus *Dâr al-Harb* (where the infidels live outside the law of Islam and with which Muslims are at war). It was well known in

¹ Doğan Gürpınar, *Ottoman Imperial Diplomacy*, (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), p. 67.

² Henceforth referred to as Abdülhamid.

³ Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East and the West* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964), J. C. Hurewitz, “Ottoman Diplomacy and the European States System” in *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 15 (Spring 1961), M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450 – 1919* (London: Longman, 1993)

the Western diplomatic history that the notion of ambassadors was coldly received at the Ottoman courts and even imprisoned in the Second Towers of the Galata.

However, in the nineteenth century, the Ottomans began to treat the foreign ambassadors accredited to the Empire with more respect and in some cases more intimately. The change in the Ottomans' treatment towards the others could be due to three factors. Firstly, the imperium was involved in wars, lost its territories and therefore needed to position itself diligently amongst the Great Powers. Diplomacy was the way of how nations/empires applied influence or avoided subjugation and the last-factor was the Ottoman's realization of the need to have an ally among the Great Powers to remain relevant. The case of Layard's deployment presents us this imperial interaction between the Ottomans and the British, which at the onset began positively but deteriorated towards the end of his term. What could have motivated the change? This study aims to examine the cause for the change in support for the British, to an attitude that was more antagonistic.

A. Sources and Methodology

Layard who had originally intended to pursue a legal profession, became attracted, "in early life, towards pursuits of a less sedentary and restrictive character and took on a journey which determined his career".⁴ Together with Mr. Edward Ledwich Mitford, he set sail for Ceylon, India, passing through the Ottoman Empire; the Balkans and Istanbul, and Persia. It was during this journey to the East that he discovered Nineveh, an Assyrian ancient city, which was believed to have existed before the Egyptians. Layard was attracted by this old civilization and began excavation works between 1839 and 1853. Being confident that his discoveries would garner much public interest, he documented his findings into a series of titles with rich illustrations. His books titled 'Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon', 'Early Adventures in Persia, Susiana, and Babylonia: Including Residence among the Bakhtiyari and Other Tribes before the Discovery of Nineveh' and 'Nineveh and Its Remains' instantaneously turned him to be a celebrity writer. In the field of archaeology, a few other historians have written extensively about Layard

⁴ Sir Frederic J. Goldsmid, "The Right Honorable Sir Henry Austen Layard", G.C.B., in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Oct. 1894), pp. 370-373, accessed on 28 Oct 2015.

referring to his Nineveh discovery and they are among others, Alfred E. Lomax, Sir Arthur John Otway (1903), Robert Silverberg (1964), Gordon Waterfield (1968) and Arnold C. Brackman (1978). According to Shawn Malley⁵, most of these writers, present Layard as a heroic archeologist and their writings center upon appreciation for Layard. Malley brings a refreshing narrative where he considers Layard's journey to the East and excavation exercise, one as espionage and another to affect British influence at a time when Anglo-Persian relations were strained. A recent publication by Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem⁶ informs us that Layard was similar to other European travelers who tried to link their lineage to the biblical past. Their collective work offers a fresh perspective to the European's as well as the Ottoman's appreciation for archaeology. Nineveh or also known as Ninah, writes Dina Rizk Khoury⁷ was being searched for not just by European archaeologists but also travelers. Nineveh sits on the outskirts of Mosul, which was an important Ottoman city, similar like Istanbul and Aleppo and was the trading hub for the mercantile community. Even though Khoury's work does not fall within the period in discussion, it is still worthy to be referred to.

Layard's life has been best shown in John Murray's two-volume work⁸, which consolidates the private letters written by Layard. Published in 1903, the autobiography covers Layard's early life and education, his archeological works at Nineveh, travel accounts and parliamentary career. It however stopped short during his posting in Madrid as the British Minister. This work relies heavily on John Murray's work as one's early life and interactions with others does reflect one's value system, religious beliefs and how one reacts in a difficult situation.⁹ It is perplexing however that upon his death on July 5, 1894, Sir Frederic J. Goldsmid stated in Layard's obituary published in the Royal Geographical Society Journal that

⁵ Shawn Malley, "Victorian Archaeology and Informal Imperialism in Mesopotamia" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40. No. 4 (Nov 2008), pp. 623 – 646, (Cambridge University Press), accessed on 26 May 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40206011>.

⁶ Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem, *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, (Istanbul, SALT: 2011)

⁷ Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul: 1540-1834*, (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1997)

⁸ John Murray (ed), *Sir A. Henry Layard, Autobiography and Letters, Vol. I and II* (London, 1903)

⁹ Steven Richmond, *Voice of England from the East, Stratford Canning and Diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014)

his death “will have been noted with regret by others than his own countrymen”.¹⁰ Layard during his political life was instrumental in the establishment and management of the Ottoman Bank of which he was its first Chairman. Andre Autherman¹¹ and Edhem Eldem¹² in their books provide the history of the Ottoman Bank, though Eldem’s work considers the documents in the Ottoman archives.

R. W. Seton-Watson¹³’s book titled *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question* takes a very critical view of Layard in his deliberation of competing relations between Benjamin Disraeli and Gladstone. Due to Seton-Watson’s admiration for Gladstone, the succeeding Prime Minister of Britain and whom Layard did not have positive relations with, his impressions towards Layard came across as biased. Seton remarked that Layard on taking office tried to emulate his predecessors and “took a strong Russophobe and Turcophile line” like his Prime Minister, Disraeli. Nonetheless, his work is an excellent piece of reference on this issue.

Tekla Sylvia Doris Price¹⁴ describes how Layard had maintained Britain’s importance at the Porte and exerted his influence on the Sultan to leave Cyprus to Britain and other resolutions at the Berlin Congress.

Steven Richmond’s recent publication titled *Voice of England in the East: Stratford Canning and Diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire* has written on Sir Layard’s mentor Stratford Canning, who had drafted him into apprenticeship unofficially at the British Embassy after Layard’s Eastern tour. Even with Canning’s vast diplomatic experience in the Ottoman Empire of 40 years, Richmond contends that it is never easy to come up with a biography with many evidences. Richmond utilized Layard’s autobiography where reflections about Canning was made, however there was no particular write up about Layard. Nonetheless, it is pertinent to look at this work as it provides us an insight into the position of the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis British interests and it informs us to a large extent, Layard could have been

¹⁰ Frederic J. Goldsmid, “The Right Honourable Sir Henry Austen Layard, G. C. B.” in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Oct., 1894), pp. 370-373, Royal Geographical Society, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1773543>, accessed on 28 Oct 2015, p. 310.

¹¹ Andre Autherman, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank*, (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2002)

¹² Edhem Eldem, *A History of the Ottoman Bank*, (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Historical Research Center, 1999)

¹³ R. W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Eastern Question*, (New York, The Norton Library: 1972)

¹⁴ Tekla Sylvia Doris Price, *The Vice Sultan: A. Henry Layard, Ambassador to Constantinople, 1877 – 1880*, (MA Thesis, Alberta, 1997)

influenced by the manner in which Canning had operationalized the Embassy and British foreign policy. Notwithstanding Canning's possible influence on Layard, it is worth to note that Canning's stay in Istanbul had always been in official capacity as an ambassador, while Layard's experience was that of a traveler, then an unpaid attaché and later an ambassador. We can therefore conclude that while Canning's span of 40-years in Istanbul was substantially long, his interaction and therefore knowledge of the Empire was limited to the official and aristocratic circles. The difference with Layard is that prior to his posting, he had socialized with the locals and the various tribes through his travels and excavations works, picked up Persian and Turkish language. For this reason, we can say that Layard had a better comprehension on the Ottoman society.

Very recently, Sinan Kunalp published Layard's memoir¹⁵, which had been deposited in the Western Manuscript Department of the British Library in London. As is mentioned, this memoir contains Layard's own reflections during his short tenure in the Ottoman Empire and it was interspersed with quotations from the correspondence he sent to his chiefs Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury. Kunalp wrote in his introduction that the massive, approximately seven hundred-paged memoir, was written during Layard's retirement years between 1881 and 1888 through internal evidence and he did not have the time to make it edited.¹⁶ Given the manner in which the memoir had been written, it appears that Layard wanted his readers to believe that he had carried out his duties at the highest level as the Queen's ambassador, possibly trying to rid of the impressions that he was totally a Turcophile, an impression people in his home country had for him. More interestingly, it appears that the memoir seems to be an opportunity for him to explain Abdülhamid and fellow Ottomans, on why he had acted the way he did. It must be remembered that Abdülhamid was only thirty-five years old when Layard got his posting in Istanbul and so he probably had hoped that the young Sultan would still have had access to his explanations even if he did not live until its publication. Layard seemed to like using writing to explain himself. In his autobiography, he clearly wrote his main purpose on clarifying the breakdown of funds that he received

¹⁵ Sinan Kunalp (ed), *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy 1877 – 1880*, (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2009)

¹⁶ Kunalp, *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy, (1877 – 1880)*, p. 21.

for the excavation works. It appears that for Layard, people's trust was what he treasured.

The style of writing of Lady Layard's diary¹⁷ is total opposite to Layard's memoir. It can be assumed that Lady Layard is an avid diary writer who wrote the daily happenings for her own recollection. During instances where she met the wives of the Ottoman statesmen or Diplomatic Corp, with no sign to being politically correct, she stated that they were "short and stout" or "poorly dressed". Notwithstanding, her spontaneity in writing allows us to cross-check against Layard's memoir and the political issues during the period as she was her husband's trusted one to cypher documents and unofficially managed the Chancery. For example, the Layards were passing Büyükdere and made a stopover at the Russian Embassy garden. Layard asked where the Russians were. Lady Layard had recorded this incident as, "He (the accompanying man) answered that they were gone... (Henry) was glad they were gone",¹⁸ reflecting Layard's dislike for the Russians. Lady Layard's diary also reveals to us the humanitarian efforts she had undertaken with the Embassy staff and some British ladies, almost the first of its kind among British ambassadors.

Apart from Layard's memoir and Lady Layard's diary, this thesis also looks at the reports submitted by Layard to the Foreign Office as well as reports of military consuls, which was deposited in The National Archives (TNA) in Kew, United Kingdom. In addition to this, a few documents regarding this correspondence are preserved in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul. Although not used extensively, they act as supplementary documents to the main primary sources used; which are the memoirs.

The study of the Layard as a diplomat cannot be done without understanding the diplomatic context, which he was placed into. In his *Imperial Meridian*¹⁹, Christopher Alan Bayly gives a comprehensive introduction to British imperialism, arguing that the wealth of work on British imperialism has been originated primarily to bring the idea that the empire was honorable and fair. The Ottoman Empire was 'used' by Britain as a balance of power and a bulwark against Russian encroachment

¹⁷ Sinan Kunalp (ed), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, (Istanbul: The ISIS Press Istanbul, 2010)

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁹ C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian, The British Empire and the World 1780-1830* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989)

into Britain's Asian possession, India. Russia, a competing monarchy to the other European Powers, was highly concerned with the protection of the Slavs in the Balkans. Barbara Jelavich provides a comprehensive overview of the Slavs in her books titled *History of the Balkans*²⁰ and *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*²¹. Other contemporary scholars like Azmi Özcan have popularly referred to her work in this aspect. Apart from Britain and Russia, Austria and Prussia had their respective interests in the Balkans. *The Great Powers and the Balkans, 1875-1878* written by Mihailo D. Stojanovic²² offers a comprehensive account on the interests of the Great Powers and their involvement in the crises that took place in the Balkans. He propounds that the Great Powers possibly had interests to safeguard the Christian population in the Ottoman dominion, as their plans to disintegrate the Empire had been revealed even in the eighteenth century. Stojanovic to a large extent also provided a chronological order of the Russo-Turkish war. The intent of this thesis is not to provide the whole story of the war, but salient areas worthy of mentioning like Layard's involvement at key junctures of the war and British's interest in the Ottoman military armaments. Jonathan Grant shares with us the composition of the Ottoman military weapons in the nineteenth century.²³ The Ottoman Empire was mindful of being overly dependent on a single supplier and had guns supplied from France, Prussia and England. The Ottomans too tried to produce their own weaponry locally. During the war, Britain's warships were docked at Malta, close enough to the Empire so that they could be set to sail at the earliest instruction by their Government. Matthew Allen in his article²⁴ expounds on the memoir of Admiral Geoffrey Phipps Hornby who was the Vice Commander-in-Chief of one of England's warships as well as his reports to Layard. Allen writes the difficulties Hornby faced in maintaining five warships given the harsh weather conditions as well as the lack of intelligence in the Black Sea.

²⁰ Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (USA: Cambridge University Press, 1983)

²¹ Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1991)

²² Mihailo D. Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and The Balkans*, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1968)

²³ Jonathan Grant, "The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports, 1854-1914" in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Jan. 2002), accessed on 26 May 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2677343e>

²⁴ Matthew Allen, "The British Mediterranean Squadron During the Great Eastern Crisis of 1876-9, in *The Mariner's Mirror*, 85:1, 53-67, DOI: 10.1080/00253359.1999.10656727.

The holder of the British Foreign policy in the nineteenth century straddled from foreign minister to even the Prime Minister. Keith M. Wilson's book titled *British Foreign Secretaries and Foreign Policy: From Crimean War to First World War*²⁵ takes us through this issue of a position that is participatory to one that is non-interventionist. The conduct of foreign policy differs in the Ottoman case. *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*²⁶ written by William Hale informs us that while the Ottoman foreign policy primarily rests upon the Foreign Minister, Sultan Abdülhamid II made the decisions during his reign.²⁷

Many historians promoting the narratives of the Eastern Question and 'balance of power' inform us that the conduct of diplomacy was influenced by the emplacement of all states in their respective place. As Henry Kissinger mentions in his book, *Diplomacy*²⁸ that stronger nations would strive to dominate and the weaker ones in their resistance would come together and form coalitions to enhance their individual strengths. A powerful coalition could check the aggressor, resulting to a balance of power. The British leveraged on this balance of power by developing coalitions with different nations to fend off French attempts to dominate Europe.²⁹

As for diplomatic history, it is worth looking at the work of Doğan Gürpınar³⁰ where he provides the social and cultural facets of diplomatic history, hence making it a refreshing read. Gürpınar assesses that the Hamidian bureaucracy had paved the way for the construction of the Turkish republic. Gürpınar describes that the features of diplomacy,

must include the management of those policies encompassing subtler commercial or 'cultural' questions, the responsibilities of less bureaucratic officials in periods of both turmoil and stability, and the actual administrative machinery or organized context of policy formulation and execution.³¹

The literature of Feroze A. K. Yasamee³² is essential for studies regarding the history of diplomacy and explains the Eastern Question and 'balance of power' as well as the foreign policy employed by Abdülhamid to counter the crises within and

²⁵ Keith M. Wilson (ed), *British Foreign Secretaries and Foreign Policy: From Crimean War to First World War* (Australia: Croom Helm, 1987)

²⁶ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, (USA and Canada: Routledge, 2003)

²⁷ Hale, p. 13.

²⁸ Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 1994)

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³⁰ Doğan Gürpınar, *Ottoman Imperial Diplomacy*, (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014)

³¹ Gürpınar, p. 67.

³² F. A. K. Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy, Abdülhamid II and the Great Powers 1878 – 1888*, (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 1996)

beyond the Ottoman dominions. Further readings on diplomacy have been made on the literature of A. Nuri Yurdusev who evaluates the opinions of J.C. Hurewitz, M.S. Anderson and Thomas Naff. According to Yurdusev, Hurewitz and Anderson hold a dismissive view of Ottoman diplomacy due to the Ottoman's lack of adoption of residence embassies and *Dâr al-Islam* versus *Dâr al-Harb* dichotomy, hence the lack of interests in relations with Europe. Even though follows the ideas of those who depict the conduct of Ottoman diplomacy in terms of *Dâr al-Islam* versus *Dâr al-Harb* duality, Thomas Naff notes that at the beginning the eighteenth century, Ottoman statesmen still maintained feelings of superiority, but they began to move towards integration with the European states system.³³

A comprehensive background of the British diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire is provided by G.R. Berridge, who describes the evolution of the Embassy, Anglo-Ottoman interests, its modus operandi and the people involved from its inception since the deployment of Sir William Harborne in 1578 till this day. As Berridge's book comprises six centuries of diplomacy, Layard's three-year tenure naturally cannot be deliberated in depth.

Layard's post in the Empire witnessed extreme atrocities. Together with Lady Layard and some Embassy officers, they offered refugee relief to the thousands of displaced Ottoman subjects. Although this humanitarian effort is not what Davide Rodogno refers to as humanitarian intervention, the book *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*³⁴ helps us to evaluate the actual intent of nations in offering intervention whether it was done out of goodwill or genuine humanity without considering race, religion or imperial interests.

Reşat Kasaba suggests that the mid-nineteenth century and the "Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 created a secondary wave of migration of Circassians and Chechens, who had been settled in Rumelia earlier in the nineteenth century",³⁵ which changed the social fabric of the Anatolian society. He describes that the attitude of the Ottoman bureaucracy towards tribes and "people on the move"

³³ A. Nuri Yurdusev, *The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 9.

³⁴ Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*, (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2012)

³⁵ Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants and Refugees*, (Seattle and London, University of Washington Press: 2009), p. 117.

changed and begun to embrace modernization, which gave emphasis to sedentary lifestyle. During the Russo-Turkish War, along with the Circassians, the *Başıbozüks* were rallied to support the regular troops. Even though they later plundered villages³⁶, it appeared that Abdülhamid had hesitated to penalize them. Kasaba's work explains to us why the Hamidian regime took such an approach.

Turan Kayaoğlu³⁷ proposes that while the Ottoman Empire had not been conquered or colonized by Britain, the British government had extended its laws into the Empire as it had conquered or colonized the Imperium. He mentions that although the laws only applied to British citizens and protégés, the effect was much like a sovereign ruling its territory. Kayaoğlu also suggests that the capitulations or *Ahidname* issued by the Ottoman Empire to the foreign courts was a measure of extraterritoriality of the Western powers.³⁸

For a broader Ottoman context, abundant literature exists on the nineteenth century and the Hamidian period. This study considered the work of Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw³⁹, Erik J. Zürcher⁴⁰ and Carter Vaughn Findley⁴¹ whose extensive work successfully explain the long history into a palatable read. Given that the Russo – Turkish war of 1877 – 1878 was a historical milestone in the Ottoman history, the latter was naturally mentioned in all the above texts and served as a good backgrounder.

Considering that Layard's deployment happened during the time of Abdülhamid II and was his main host, this study also contemplates the literature of Selim Deringil in his book titled *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909*⁴². Deringil describes the approaches Abdülhamid had undertaken to showcase a regime that was legitimate through educational reform and reinventing the image of the Sultan and the Empire

³⁶ TNA document, "Distress in Asiatic Turkey", No. 00029, CAB-37-2-25_02.jpg.

³⁷ Turan Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire and China*, (New York: Cambridge University Press: 2010)

³⁸ Ibid., p. 44.

³⁹ Stanford J. Shaw & Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977)

⁴⁰ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey, A Modern History*, (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997)

⁴¹ Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010)

⁴² Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909*, (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011)

as a whole. This thesis also examines the work of Azmi Özcan⁴³, who writes about Pan-Islamism. Though possibly a term coined by the Europeans, Özcan says that it was instrumental in uniting and putting across a collective Muslim front for the wider Muslim population in the nineteenth century.

This study is not without limitations. There are definitely plentiful of literature in Turkish language, which the writer does not have access to due to language constraints. The entries of Layard and his wife could be better analyzed with the availability of accounts of Abdülhamid II or more correspondences exchanged with the Ottoman and British Foreign Office. Notwithstanding, Layard's memoir is a substantive compilation to begin with, and which along with the memoir of Lady Layard and some documents, have been examined against secondary literature to provide a balanced account of a diplomat and his host. Considering the current political climate where Turkey tries to manage its relations with Russia and Syria, and the humanitarian efforts revolving the millions of displaced people in the region, this study allows one to appreciate how the imperial relations and relief efforts were organized during the nineteenth century.

B. Summary of Chapters

There are four chapters subsequent to introduction. Chapter one attempts to provide the diplomatic context to introduce reader to the varying interests the Great Powers in the Balkans in the nineteenth century, their interaction which affected the constitution of their foreign policies. The foreign policies and the key holders in the Ottoman and British Empires are discussed. This chapter then provides a brief summary on the British-Ottoman diplomacy.

Chapter two introduces the key personality in discussion, Sir Austen Henry Layard, a Parisian born who developed a great interest of the East from reading "Arabian Nights" as a child. An archeologist, writer, historian, diplomat and a member of the parliament, Sir Henry Layard travelled to Europe, Istanbul and Persia in his youthful days and later discovered the ancient city, Nineveh. Sir Stratford Canning, then British ambassador in Istanbul found his experience in Asia Minor

⁴³ Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, (Leiden, New York and Koln: Brill, 1997)

valuable and made him an unpaid attaché of the British Embassy. Subsequently his archaeological works in Nineveh gained him popularity in England and his return after more than eight years being away from home, got him into political and later diplomatic work, first in Madrid and consecutively to Istanbul. During his political career, Layard was also instrumental in the establishment and management of the Ottoman Bank, as its first Chairman.

Chapter three attempts to provide a chronology of the Russo-Turkish war, to examine Layard's impressions of the situation and subsequently how he leveraged his influence on Abdülhamid at its key points to effect British interests. It also provides an insight to the nineteenth century warfare armaments used by the Ottoman Empire as well as Layard's impressions of the Ottoman army given the reports supplemented by the military consuls.

Layard was one who religiously followed the footsteps of his predecessors who believed that the British interests in India could only be maintained through rigorous reform of the Ottoman Empire. Chapter four showcases some of the Layard's reform ideas through several documents presented by the Foreign Office and in the British Cabinet. Based on the memoirs, it also shares how Layard negotiated imperialism with altruism through the relief work chiefly undertaken by Lady Layard. It concludes with Layard's impressions of Abdülhamid and relations with the Ottoman statesmen.

CHAPTER ONE

DIPLOMATIC CONTEXT

1.1 The Great Powers and the Balkans

The nineteenth century witnessed the presence of Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia as the Great Powers which regarded the Ottoman Empire, as a middle power, whom they held an alliance with or against, depending on the interests at that particular point in time. Dilek Barlas defines middle power based on population, economic, resources and military strength.⁴⁴ Barlas, who quotes Carsten Holbraad Barlas attempts to describe middle power. Barlas mentions that middle power can be distinguished by their hostility towards unnecessary control by Great Powers, their inclination to form alliances and influence.⁴⁵ However, unlike the Great Powers whose population demographics were homogenous, the Ottoman society was pretty unique, which comprised of subjects of various creeds, religions and possessed varying languages. Faith, rather than nationality, was the primary basis on which people differentiated themselves in the nineteenth-century Ottoman society. But once the primary religious division was made between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, the system broke these groups into further subdivisions by variation of religious sects and ethnic identity.⁴⁶ In the Muslim category were the Sunni, Shiite and Pomaks and for Christians were Nestorians, Protestants, and Roman Catholics. Also, there were even the Orthodox Jews. As part of the millet system, each religion had a leader that looked after their needs and adding to which they too came under the protection of the Great Powers. The Protestants were the interests of the British while the Orthodox were under Russians. Some historians⁴⁷ have suggested that it was due to this notion to protect the interests of the non-Muslim groups of the Ottoman Empire

⁴⁴ Dilek Barlas, "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for Middle-power Activism in the 1930s", in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Jul. 2005), pp. 441-464, accessed on 7 May 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30036337>.

⁴⁵ Ibid., taken after Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics* (London, 1984). Holbraad had quoted from G. deT. Glazebrook, "The Middle Powers in the United Nations System" in *International Organization*", in *International Organization Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (June, 1947) p. 308.

⁴⁶ Roderick Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963) p. 8.

⁴⁷ Numerous historians subscribe to this notion. Among them are Mihailo D. Stojanovic, p. 269.

had possibly led them to war with the Empire. Some have instead suggested that the protection of the Christians were just secondary reasons. The main reason for the subjugation of the Empire was due to its geopolitical reason; its strategic position linking the East and West for none other than economic interests.

We begin first with Britain, a hegemony heralding vast territories Asia and Latin America, and its expansion, which was formal and informal; formal in the form of colonization and informal in the way of trade agreements with weaker nations. To Gallagher and Robinson, “informal empire” is the classic form of overseas expansion for modern Europe, and formal colonial administration was revived only under conditions of panic and failure.⁴⁸ Seeley pointed out that “the exports of capital and manufactures, the migration of citizens, the dissemination of the English language and ideas and constitutional forms, were the radiations of the social energies of British peoples. Between 1815 and 1880, it is estimated that 1,187,000,000 pounds in credit had accumulated abroad, but no more than one-sixth was placed in the formal empire.⁴⁹ Britain considered itself as “one of the first nations” and “the principle is that when you bring the English in contact with inferior races, they will rule, whatever the ostensible format of their presence”.⁵⁰

Christopher Alan Bayly in his *Imperial Meridian*⁵¹ He described three main factors that gave rise to European invasion in the Asian countries. Firstly, the social conditions of the colonized nations urged the locals to seek foreign intervention to ameliorate their status as the local notables were fighting against the rulers or authorities. Secondly, Britain created a situation based on demanding local products, which was decreased hence the British merchants could charge a premium for their products. Thirdly, communications made inroads for Europe extended its influence. In a similar vein, Unlike Bayly, who argued the expansion was based on economic and political motivations, Kayaoğlu observes that Britain extended its extraterritoriality through legal imperialism. The Ottomans, in British eyes, were not on par with enlightened Europe, denouncing the Orient as backward and despotic

⁴⁸ Ralph A. Austen, *Modern Imperialism: Western Overseas Expansion and Its Aftermath, 1776-1965*, (The United States of America, D. C. Heath, and Company: 1969), p. 21.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵⁰ Keith Wilson, *British Foreign Policy, and Secretaries*, p. 2, quoting Lord Salisbury’s speech to the Primrose League in May 1898.

⁵¹ Christopher Alan Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780 – 1830*, p. 3.

and hence required jurisdiction akin to Europe.⁵² In doing so, the legal reform imposed by Britain would only widen opportunities for European markets when their merchants' rights were protected.⁵³ Kayaoğlu further tells us that legal imperialism had its roots from positivism, an ideology widely spread in the nineteenth century.⁵⁴ Unlike formal colonization where the host country needed to invest in military forces overseas like in the case of British India, Britain's extraterritoriality of the Ottoman Empire did not cost Britain a large budget but still afforded relative influence. Refuting some arguments that capitulations introduced in the Ottoman Empire since the sixteenth-century projects the Empire's engagement with Europe, Kayaoğlu emphasizes that capitulations were the European's way to have greater control over the Empire because when legal imperialism took effect, it allowed Europe to apply any imposition or sanction on the Empire easily. Kayaoğlu further suggests that the Treaty of Paris of 1856, did not eradicate extraterritoriality of the West on the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁵ It was signed by the Ottomans, the Russians, and the Western allies at the end of the Crimean War, formally admitting the Ottomans into the Concert of Europe.⁵⁶ F. A. K. Yasamee explains that the treaty obliged Russia to cede European and Asiatic territory to the Ottoman Empire and forbade her from maintaining a fleet or fortifications in the Black Sea. Being drafted into the concert, the Ottomans' independence and territorial integrity fell under the collective guarantee of the Great Powers, and the Ottomans freely granted to the rights of the non-Muslim subjects under the Tanzimat reforms.⁵⁷ With the arrival of the Tanzimat Reform Era, the Ottomans went through many changes in the provincial administration, military, commercial and land law and common citizenship regardless of confessional differences, among others.⁵⁸ The signed treaty however at the same time thrust the Empire the role of maintaining the balance of power weighted against Russia, justified neither by its independent strength nor by the

⁵² Kayaoğlu, p. 31.

⁵³ Kayaoğlu, p. 39.

⁵⁴ Kayaoğlu, p. 4.

⁵⁵ Kayaoğlu, p. 113.

⁵⁶ Turan Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China*, Chapter 4, pp 104 – 148.

⁵⁷ Yasamee, p. 8.

⁵⁸ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*, (Cambridge University Press, 1977) pp 55 – 171. Many historians have also written on the Tanzimat. It is not within the scope of this work to dwell deeply into it.

guarantees furnished by the Western allies.⁵⁹ Kissinger writes that Britain became the balancer of the European equilibrium, first almost by default, later by conscious strategy. “Without Great Britain’s tenacious commitment to that role, France would almost surely have achieved hegemony over Europe...and Germany would have done the same in the modern period”.⁶⁰ The Ottoman Empire was leveraged by Britain as a bulwark against the Russia, to protect its Asian dominion; India. India was Britain's colony, highly populated by Muslims. In the nineteenth century, Britain held a robust naval force, but it did not have the mass to maintain a large army. India was hence her conduit for the supplies of men and also by putting her foot in the subcontinent; she foresaw the possibility of extending her exports to the other Asian countries. Russian's possible encroachment further into the East would, therefore, threaten Britain's Asian possession.

The Black Sea and the Straits bordering the Ottoman Empire had a prime strategic importance to Russia.⁶¹ Russia, firmly entrenched on the Black Sea Coast⁶² In the eighteenth century, was sharing the control of the Black Sea with the Ottoman Empire. Russia was using the Black Sea as a passage to transport its products, especially wheat to the Balkans and onwards other parts of Europe. Apart from the Asiatic dominion, the territory of the Ottoman Empire also transcended to Balkans, namely Eastern Europe, a geographic region inhabited by seven significant nationalities and speaking different languages. Barbara Jelavich in the *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century* took us through a comprehensive literature about the Balkans. Jelavich introduced that the name Balkan is a Turkish word for a “chain of wooded mountains”⁶³ Situated strategically at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe, the Balkan peninsula had proved both a tempting object of conquest and a passageway to other regions in the nineteenth century.⁶⁴ Jelavich further wrote that even though the mountains influenced a degree of isolation among its people, they were not “shields against outside invasion”.⁶⁵ The entire peninsula is cut through by significant corridors, which run chiefly through the vast river valleys

⁵⁹ Yasamee, p. 11. There is an excellent work by Candan Badem who has written about the Crimean War and the Concert of Europe. Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853 – 1856)*, (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 1970)

⁶⁰ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, p. 74.

⁶¹ Barbara Jelavich, *Russia’s Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914*, p. 24.

⁶² Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 1

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

and the mountain passes. Along these relatively few great routes, invading forces could easily enter, whether they were nomadic tribes with their ponies and herds or modern great powers with railroads, cars, trucks, and tanks.⁶⁶ In the late nineteenth century, Ottoman provinces in the Balkans such as Romania, Wallachia, and Moldavia, became independent with the help of Russia. The national revolutions were carried through on an individual basis with comparatively little cooperation among the Balkan nationalities, yet the activities of the separate groups shared specific common characteristics. The increasing inability of the Ottoman central government to defend its possessions became prizes coveted by other Great Powers. Although the Balkan states, lacking the necessary capital, resources, expertise, and experience, needed assistance, they feared foreign exploitation or imperial domination. According to Jelavich, the theme of the conflicting attraction and rejection of international political, ideological, and economic influence has thus been a constant element in Balkan history. Although Balkan societies, either willingly or under pressure, have accepted much from the outside world, it must be emphasized that even where foreign institutions and ideas were adopted, they were subsequently molded and changed to fit national traditions and prejudices. Indeed, the dominant element in Balkan life was drawn from the long historical experience of people and their unique reactions to the outside interferences to which the peninsula had been so vulnerable. The people in Balkans were mainly Slavs, which gave them a close affinity to Russia. Russia adopted a paternalistic composure towards the nearly twelve million Christians in the Balkans; that it was their moral duty to ensure that their interests were safeguarded. Hence, this was often the factor disclosing how their foreign policy was formulated. Therefore, apart from providing that the Straits were safe for their merchants to travel, the protection of the Christians in the Balkans shaped their interests.

It is also important to share that the European Powers were influenced by liberalism, an ideology originated from the eighteenth-century Revolution in France, which expressed the idea that every human being should experience happiness. The other spectrum was nationalism, an idea that God had created all human beings in one nation, having the same religion or race and speaking the same language. Conservative Russia disagreed with liberalism but supported nationalist intentions.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 3

Great-power intervention in the Balkans was selective and capricious. Each government sponsored that party or nationality which would support in general diplomatic interests.⁶⁷ Austria held a long frontier with the Ottoman Empire on the Danubians. Having already too much on their plate in controlling the multinational population, Austrian political leaders ceased to work actively toward the incorporation of any more Balkan people into the empire.⁶⁸ Well aware of the advantages Russia enjoyed among the Orthodox people, and they feared that a further extension of Russian territory or influence would endanger Austrian security on the eastern and southeastern frontiers. Prussia preferred to wait and see the policy with regards to the Ottoman Empire. It feared that showing too much interest in the Imperium would wake the other European states namely Britain and France. Compared to all the Powers, France had the most extended diplomatic relation with the Ottoman Empire. However, after Napoleon Bonaparte's lost in the war against Prussia, it took a passive policy. Russia then formed Britain's chief rival to its world position, whose significant attention rested in the protection of its vast colonial domains and the commercial routes to the East.⁶⁹ According to Jelavich, it was due to this reason that British supported the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire and its continued domination over its extensive territories. Steven Richmond quoted Sir Stratford Canning's words in the year 1877:

We are dependent on the Porte for our most direct and speediest communication with India. In proportion as Her Majesty's territories in that country become more identified with the Government at home, it is desirable that the traditional means of intercourse between both should be, as much as possible, rapid and sure.⁷⁰

However, the non-interventionist policy of Britain was soon to change, which we will come to observe in Layard's tenure.

Although British Foreign policy was very much expounded, the same cannot be said of the Turkish or Ottoman Foreign policy, according to William Hale. In *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, Hale says that the "Ottoman state was largely non-assimilative and lacked the technical, economic and institutional resources to integrate its diverse populations into a single political community, even if it had

⁶⁷ Jelavich, p. 275.

⁶⁸ Jelavich, p. 186

⁶⁹ Barbara Jelavich., p. 187.

⁷⁰ Times, 16 April 1844, p. 5. Richmond, p. 3.

wanted to”.⁷¹ The Ottoman society remained highly diverse. Its subjects retained their languages and religions, with some degree of formal political autonomy. Non-Muslims could be seen as second-class citizens as they could not be conscripted into the army but were subjected to individual taxes. They however were not forced into conversion. Every religiously defined community, or *millet*, had its hierarchy and was represented in theory by its religious head called the *milletbaşı*. The Ottoman government recognized the patriarch as the voice of his millet and henceforth found it necessary to listen and cooperate with the Ottoman government, which was the ultimate sanction for his civil authority.⁷²

As an active foreign policy maker, Abdülhamid evidently had a low opinion of the way it had been conducted. Having suggested that every state needed a “fundamental goal” and a “policy which accords with its circumstances and position”,⁷³ He regretted that:

The Ottoman Empire has no definite and decided goal and policy: in every question, the person in power acts by his own opinion, and in the event of failure successor blames predecessor and predecessor-successor, and in the process, the sacred interests of the state suffer.⁷⁴

In fact, the Sultan probably did his predecessors as well as himself an injustice, since late Ottoman foreign policy was arguably more consistent and efficient than he suggested, according to Hale.⁷⁵ From around the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ottoman political leaders had evidently recognized that the Empire could not win a war for territory against the major European powers unless it was supported by one or more nations. They hoped that in the long run, they could restore the Empire to its former strength by modernizing state structures and the economy, and by rebuilding its army and finances, but to do this they needed time, with sufficient external stability and security. They thus had to consider how to exploit the international situation to their advantage. Territorially, the principal threats arose in three main zones of conflict: first, in the Balkans, where local nationalist movements, aided by Russia and sometimes by other powers emerged, and threatened to end the Ottoman rule; second, in the straits of the Bosphorus and

⁷¹ Hale, p. 10.

⁷² Davison, pp 13 – 14.

⁷³ Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy*, p. 43.

⁷⁴ Hale, p. 13.

⁷⁵ Hale, p. 13

Dardanelles, which was assumed that Russia aimed to dominate as a means of securing access to the Mediterranean and thus the world's oceans; third, in Egypt and to a lesser extent the rest of the Arab Middle East, where France and Britain had ambitions. Against this, it could be expected that, at least to some degree, Russia and Austria (aided later by Germany) could cancel one another out in the Balkans, Russia and Britain at the straits, and Britain and France in Egypt.⁷⁶

In this situation, Ottoman political leaders had two broad options in policies towards the major powers. One would be to avoid both conflicts and form alliances with any of them, meeting each crisis as it arose, and relying on the workings of the balance of power to preserve the status quo. This policy would also avoid the danger that too close relations with any control or group of forces might mean the subordination of Ottoman interests to those of the partner or partners. As an alternative, the Ottoman government could try to negotiate a reasonably stable alliance with one or more of the European powers. This assumed that one power could positively be identified as the enemy, intending to destroy the Empire or to reduce it to impotence, while another power or combination of forces could be potential allies, who were not capable of reaching an accommodation with the enemy, and was genuinely committed to maintaining the Ottoman Empire. These two broad options were adopted depending on the circumstances at the time, the relative strength of the leading powers, and their perceived intentions. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire “tactically tried to ward off any intervention or war between the European powers, unless their conflict happened within own territory”⁷⁷: at most, it could hope to sell its friendly neutrality to whichever side offered the most favorable terms.

According to Hale, should the second option be chosen, then the Ottoman policy-makers obviously had to decide which power the enemy and which others were actual or potential allies.⁷⁸ During the middle part of the century that is, roughly between 1840 and 1878—the answers to both these questions seemed fairly obvious. Russia was identified as the most determined foe, since it was best placed to launch a land invasion of Ottoman territory. It had an assumed interest in gaining control of or

⁷⁶ Hale, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Hale, p. 14 and Davison, p. 6.

⁷⁸ Hale, p. 14.

at least free passage through the Straits and presented itself as the patron and protector of the Sultan's Orthodox Christian subjects.⁷⁹

On the other hand, Britain, supported on occasion by France and Austria, appeared as the apparent ally, since the British had a (probably exaggerated) fear that if Russia achieved its assumed ambitions at the Straits, or managed to conquer or subordinate the Empire as a whole, then it could challenge British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean and the sea route to India.⁸⁰ However, this calculation could not be applied at all times or in all circumstances. In the first place, Russian power or ambitions might not be as far-reaching as the calculation assumed: faced with obstacles to the achievement of a maximalist and expansionist programme, Russia might be prepared to accept the status quo, or even to offer protection to the empire against other enemies. Equally, alliance with Britain was far from risk-free, or necessarily effective. First, Britain had its ambitions in Egypt and the Middle East and might use an agreement with the Empire to further its interests at the Ottoman expense. Second, Britain's strength lies in its navy, rather than its army. Hence, it is safe to say that the British fleet could not adequately protect the Ottomans from the Russian military, or vice-versa. Consequently, it is common to find the Ottomans avoiding any alliance or seeking a partnership with another power, possibly even with Russia.⁸¹ By the end of the century, Germany was emerging as the most likely candidate for alliance, although this connection eventually led to the Ottoman Empire's destruction in the First World War.^{15.}

In 1839, the Ottomans embarked on a programme of domestic reforms called the *Tanzimat*.⁸² These improvements consisted the modernization of the central bureaucracy and the armed forces, to be accomplished through the importation of European technology, institutions and education; the strengthening of government control in the provinces, reduction of the independent power traditionally wielded by provincial landowners, tribal chiefs and other local notables; pacification of the Empire's non-Muslim communities.⁸³ With the new reforms, the non-Muslims qualified for the military and were placed on equal standing with the

⁷⁹ Hale, p. 14.

⁸⁰ Hale, p. 15.

⁸¹ Hale, p. 15.

⁸² Shaw and Shaw, p. 55.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 7

Muslims. It, however, resulted in different reactions among the Muslims.⁸⁴ The conservative Muslims disapproved the *Tanzimat* as according to their interpretation of the *şeriat*, non-Muslims should not be on par with Muslims given that the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic sovereign. On the other spectrum, the Muslims who were more progressive in outlook celebrated the change. The rapid advancements in steamships, railways and printing press had accelerated the contact with Europe, also owing to the geographical location of the Empire is at the crossroads of the East and the West.

On the international front, the Ottoman Empire joined a coalition with Britain and France against Russia and won the Crimean War. Resulting from the war, the Ottoman Empire entered the Concert of Europe through the Treaty of Paris in 1856, which officially instituted it as a member of Europe. The signing parties of the Treaty recognized the independence of the respective nation/empires and the implementation of the *Tanzimat* reforms came under the guarantee of the powers. Russia's warships, however, could not pass through the Black Sea in effect of their loss. Leveraging on this article of the Treaty of Paris, Russia supported the insurgencies in the Balkans namely in Bulgaria and Herzegovina to have the Straits opened to them again and to penetrate into the Ottoman Empire. In short, Britain held a policy of maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, while the Russians looked forward to its disintegration so that it could advance further its expansionist objectives.

1.2 British Embassy in Istanbul

Given the backdrop of British interest in the Ottoman Empire, it is worth to provide an insight to the British Embassy in Istanbul, which was established since 1583, when Sir William Harborne, was commissioned as the Britain's first permanent resident ambassador in the Orient.⁸⁵ G. R. Berridge⁸⁶ provides a historical background of Britain's diplomacy with Turkey where its primary objectives were to

⁸⁴ Davison, p. 247.

⁸⁵ A more comprehensive work by S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne, and the Trade with Turkey (1578 – 1582), A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977)

⁸⁶ Geoff R. Berridge, *British Diplomacy in Turkey, 1583 to the present – a study in the evolution of the resident embassy*, (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009)

maintain the welfare of the Christians, especially those of the ‘true Protestant religion’ and the Greek Orthodox Church, and to facilitate communications with India, where the East India Company was enlarging its operations. As English horizons broadened and Istanbul became of greater importance as a center of diplomacy, the advancement of English prestige in the Ottoman capital also became a significant interest in its right.⁸⁷ It was for this reason, as well as for reasons rooted in the balance of power, that importance became attached to mediation between the Turks and their enemies – whether Poles and Venetians in the early days or Austrians, Greeks and Russians later. Successful conciliation also had a cash value to ambassadors. In the old days, the Embassy was financed through the local tax imposed on the English merchants who required protection. The ambassador was expected to supervise not just the English traders in the capital but also those in the English factories elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁸ The ambassador, therefore, was not only the champion of the English nation at the Porte – he was required by his instructions to appear in person before the grand vizier or other senior ministers when an English factor had a severe complaint but also peacemaker between, and judge under English law and moral chastiser of its members.⁸⁹

It was not until 1804 that the ambassador’s exclusive responsibility was on sensitive matters. Even with the demise of the Levant Company in 1825, commercial duties were the responsibility of an ambassador. Due to the long-standing wars, which the Empire fought against Russia, the role of the Embassy became more pronounced. An insight into the features of the Embassy during the posting of Sir Henry Layard will provide us a snapshot of its inner workings, which we will start with the English Palace.

The British Embassy – an immense stone building built on the model of the Farnese Palace, “very grand with marble staircase, a large courtyard glazed over, lofty rooms with silk and gold furniture, very cold and dull and grand.” The bedrooms are on the upper floor up a very steep staircase but when once there the view is lovely as the seas across Petits Champs the Golden Horn over Stamboul to the Sea of Marmara.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Berridge, p. 4.

⁸⁸ Berridge, p. 31

⁸⁹ Berridge, *Ibid*, p. 48 taken after Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe*, pp. 134, 142; Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire 1642-1660*, ch. 8.

⁹⁰ Sinan Kunalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2010), p. 15.

Such was the description of Lady Layard when she stepped into the Embassy, her residence for the upcoming years. The British Embassy, which was known as the English Palace for its grandeur, had been the residence for the previous ambassadors. For foreign embassies, Pera was a favorite spot where the British Embassy operated mainly in winter until its transfer to Therapia for the summer months. Here, apart from the hosting the Chancery, which served its primary business, it also served as a meeting point for the Levantine families to socialize and carry out religious practices like the Sunday service or for passing British merchants or official attaches to lodge. It also housed the diplomatic family, usually the ambassador and his wife, with a body of servants, a butler, grooms, cooks, housemaids, footmen and pages, all supervised by a steward. This included the secretary, private secretary, doctor, chaplain, and through Lady Layard's memoir, illustrated the interaction the Layards had with the other Embassy staff such as having group meals, playing tennis and guitar and performing choir practice. Lady Layard often wrote how she occupied her time when bored by painting her servants, whom she considered just like a close family member.

As a means of transport, the English fleet was used for diplomatic entertaining, reaching Turkish ministers at their summer palaces, greeting newly appointed British ambassadors at the Dardanelles, taking ambassadors and others on special missions, and providing reassurance to the British colony.⁹¹ The official fleet consists of a sea-going 'yacht,' a smaller steamer, an ornate ten-oared 'state caique' with a crew to match, and a three oared ordinary caique.

In the nineteenth century, a final spur to staff growth was provided by the new and intense reforming interest taken by successive British governments in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire.⁹² Direct staffers of the Embassy were frequently mentioned in Lady Layard's memoir. As an ambassadress, Lady Layard was a valuable asset in organizing his household, counseling and showing the ropes to junior staff and coordinating entertainment, which was also an essential part of the business. Gürpınar referred to this as aristocratic socialization.⁹³

Apart from the Chancery staff, the Embassy often had the presence of military attaches or consuls, who were deployed in different areas to report on the

⁹¹ Berridge, p. 22.

⁹² Berridge, p. 47.

⁹³ Gürpınar, Chapter. 3.

country's defenses. The British military attaches were formerly employed as instructors to the Turkish army but doubled informally as gatherers of military intelligence. It was through the military attaches that the Ottoman Empire's defense was assessed. An example of an army attaché was Colonel Wilbraham Oates Lennox, a distinguished officer of engineers who had won a mark of distinction in the Crimean War. Appointed in October 1876, he was instructed to report directly to the ambassador on all matters of interest relating to military affairs in the Empire.

Sir Alfred Sandison was an interpreter, who served as a local expert during Layard's tenure. Always accompanying Layard in his meeting with the Sultan and his ministers, he was instrumental in getting official documents translated. Interpreters were message bearers, intelligence gatherers and they provided institutional memory and continuity in the practice of the embassy.⁹⁴ Student interpreters had been mentioned in Lady Layard's memoir. The English Consuls in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which were established chiefly in the major ports of the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean seas, had unusually important responsibilities. Not only were they the representatives of the local authorities of the English factors settled at these ports, especially on questions concerning their capitulatory rights, but also magistrates and mediators in their communities.⁹⁵ Also, they were political consuls, tasked to encourage reforms in Ottoman provincial administration, prevent violence against Christians, and provide early warning of events in the provinces that could have broad implications.⁹⁶ Such was the indispensability of the consular network to the leading role taken by Britain in pursuing Ottoman reform that in Anatolia, 'military consuls' were added to political ones after 1878 to strengthen security although spying on Russian moves on the frontier was probably the more important of their tasks.⁹⁷ In 1877 there were 28 of these in Turkey alone.⁹⁸

The Embassy in Istanbul was receiving a Queen's Messenger from London once a week and the chancery was expected to send dispatches home. The

⁹⁴ Berridge, p. 50

⁹⁵ Berridge, p. 75, taken after Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, pp. 217-20; Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey*; Platt, *The Cinderella Service*, ch. 1; Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642-60*.

⁹⁶ Berridge, p. 87.

⁹⁷ Berridge, p. 89 taken after Platt, *The Cinderella Service*, pp. 132-3.

⁹⁸ Berridge, p. 89 taken after Temperly and Penson, *A Century of Diplomatic Blue Books, 1814-1914*, p. 252.

messengers could have come with messages from home or from fellow consuls. However, during the time Layard was in Istanbul, it seemed that they had a lapse in a messenger at disposal so he laboriously sent telegrams home. Additionally, he felt that foreign posts were not to be trusted with.⁹⁹ It appeared very frequently in Lady Layard's memoir that she had painstakingly copied or cyphered correspondences for her ambassador husband, which could also be to ensure the embassy kept a good archive for fear of fire, which was a norm during that period. Layard did not trust the members of the chancery like some of his earlier predecessors. By the second half of the nineteenth century, Turkey was of such political importance to Britain that, at least in the decade after 1856, and the Foreign Office appeared to have had a greater volume of correspondence with the embassy at Istanbul than with any other diplomatic mission.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Sinan Kunalp (ed), p. 59. Due to diseases, everything that passed through the borders had to be quarantined. Hence secret documents could possibly be exposed in the process.

¹⁰⁰ Berridge, p. 109.

CHAPTER TWO

BIOGRAPHY OF SIR AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD

2.1 Early Years and Travels

Sir Austen Henry Layard was born on March 5, 1817, in Paris. His father had retired from government service before he married his mother, the daughter of Mr. Nathaniel Austen, a banker at Ramsgate. Layard's brief description of his ancestors informs us that he came from the upper class of society. Layard's two-volume autobiography, which was published by John Murray in 1903, conveys us to Layard's childhood, travels and career. It is through his writings that we learn his interests, character and what he felt important and they serve as the key sources for this chapter. At the end of the autobiography, the editor included the letters, which he wrote to his mother and relatives, just so as to give true examples of Layard's literary expressions. Without a doubt, Layard was a prolific writer of his time. We will commence with Layard's childhood. Layard wrote that his father had contracted asthma during his official posting in Ceylon, and had decided to move to Italy, where the air was possibly more suitable, on doctor's advice. The move took place just three years after the young Layard was born. As a child, it was not the only move Layard had to deal with. As his maternal relatives were of the opinion that he was better off schooled in England, his parents had practically sent him off there like a parcel at the age of eight while the rest of the family resettled in Moulins, France, where he later would join them. Layard had been exposed to the traveling and the uncertainties that came along with it since childhood.¹⁰¹

The health condition of Layard's father had partly caused his frequent switching of schools. From Moulins College in France, he transferred to a boarding school in Interlaken, Switzerland. In school, Layard was frequently bullied as he held different religion and nationality compared to his fellow schoolmates. To protect himself, he had at times developed an unruly behavior, which caused him further problems with the schoolmaster. Here we learn how nineteenth-century politics shaped the mindsets of lay people. According to Layard's autobiography, the

¹⁰¹ John Murray (Ed.), Sir A. Henry Layard, Vol. 1, p. 12 – 14

hatred and contempt possessed by his schoolmates were due to the long wars, which “Napoleon had engendered between the English and French”, and had not cleared by peace. Neither the air in France nor Switzerland proved to be suitable for his father’s health. The whole family finally returned to Florence, Italy where he developed the fondness for Italian history, culture, arts and people.¹⁰²

In Florence, Italy, Layard was enrolled in Signor Rellini *Instituto*, a school headed by a priest and he became acquainted with the likes of Ubaldino, Peruzzi, and Fabroni who hailed from the best Florentine families. They later grew up to be “the men of eminence, influencing the unity and independence of Italy”.¹⁰³ Layard spoke of his mother as an avid reader who loved history, biography, and travels but the account of his childhood gave the impression that the presence of his father had been more instrumental in his social and intellectual development. Notwithstanding, from his subsequent life story, we can safely say that Layard had inherited both his parents' inclinations. Layard truly enjoyed his childhood in Italy. Layard’s account in his later years informs us that his love for Italian art and culture never waned. Apart from frequently visiting art galleries and museums where his father will usually point out the worth of the portrait or item they were looking at, they often visited bookstores and Layard also was brought to watch operas when the opportunity arises. Due to his father's attachment for reading, the older Layard kept a library and this rubbed on the younger Layard. In his youth, he often copied arms and badges of principal Florentine families into a book, savoring his affection for Italian history. His father often had the company of Italian artists and men of letters, like Niccolini, a poet, and dramatist, and Migliarini, in charge of archaeological collections in the Uffizi, Charles Mathews, celebrated as an actor but then studying architecture whose conversations developed Layard’s love of the arts, and stimulated his desire to travel.¹⁰⁴ When his father’s English visitors swung by Florence, his father would send him as a guide. Here, his wanderings around in the city during his free time were placed to good use.

Though fully captivated by life in Florence, his parents felt that the education he received in Italy would not serve him well for a decent career. In the spring of

¹⁰² John Murray, (Ed), p. 11.

¹⁰³ John Murray, (Ed), *Sir A. Henry Layard Autobiography and Letters*, Vol. I, (London: 1903), p. 23

¹⁰⁴ John Murray, p. 27.

1829, his father brought Layard and his brother to England and on arrival; he was enrolled in a school in Richmond. He did not possess the same interest as his other schoolmates and filled most of his time reading on literature and history and at this point, he felt that he would be a writer. To prepare him for law school, Layard was often tasked to read legal related texts so that he would be well versed with the intricacies of the field. It was not an easy feat for Layard. Behind the "Blackstone's Commentaries", a law-related book, he would hide beneath it a book on history or literature. He finally stopped studying in the autumn of 1833.¹⁰⁵

On January 24, 1834, Layard commenced his apprenticeship as an articled clerk under his uncle, Mr. Benjamin Austen, who was a renowned solicitor in England. Already learning how to manage his own finance at sixteen, Layard had lived on his own at Gray's Inn and he was to copy documents until dinnertime and expected to return to the office before resuming work till nine or ten at night. He acquainted himself with the debating club where they often talked about politics and with some young men founded "The Metropolitan Debating Society". Layard soon later found himself into the habit of writing and started writing articles for a periodical, "London Magazine". The printing industry gained importance in the nineteenth century through the introduction of printing houses. Layard's weekends were spent at his uncle's, an opportunity for him to be absorbed in conversations with his aunt's friends, mainly from the circle of literature and the arts. Even though he first met Benjamin Disraeli when he was six or seven while on a trip from France to Italy with his father, the stay in London had got him better familiarized with Benjamin Disraeli, who later became a member of Parliament in the Conservative Party and then Prime Minister of Britain. Layard marveled his literary works like "Vivian Grey" but felt that Disraeli did not really intend to reciprocate a friendship, as the former never entertained his questions about his travels to the East. This frustrated Layard. When Layard joined politics, they were in different camps but Disraeli never failed to offer him career advances, if only he had chosen to switch parties.¹⁰⁶

In 1835, a year after his father's death on October 4, 1834, he traveled to Sweden, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Italy, and while in Copenhagen, he was introduced to some Russian families, which Danilefsky was one of them. General

¹⁰⁵ John Murray, p. 39.

¹⁰⁶ John Murray, p. 47-8.

Danilefsky was aide-de-camp and private Secretary to the Emperor Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov. He had written an account of the Russian Campaign of 1814 in France and wished its history be translated into English. Through him, Layard secured a letter of permission to go to Russia.¹⁰⁷ In Sweden later, he made acquaintance with several Polish gentlemen, who were in the employment for the Russian government. They found in him a warm sympathizer, and their relationship was described by Layard with the following statement:

They were consequently very open in their communication with me, giving me a good deal of interesting information as to the conditions of Russia, and the proceedings of the Russian Government. It was probably from what I learned from them, and their description of the oppression and cruel treatment to which not only the Poles but the other population of the Empire was subjected by the Russian Government and its agents, that was derived that detestation of Russian despotism and of Russian rule that I retained through life.¹⁰⁸

Layard later returned to England where he forged a close relationship with Mr. Henry Crabb Robinson, trained as a lawyer. They met in Paris in August 1835 when he was on a tour in France and Switzerland. Mr. Robinson was an Englishman who cultivated the German language and introduced works of German scholars to his people, and philosophically radical. Layard often joined him for breakfast and since he possessed an extensive and well-selected library, comprising the best French, Italian and German authors; it further encouraged Layard's taste for literature. His further conversations "undermined the religious opinions he had grown up with and he became independent in his religious and political opinions".¹⁰⁹ His very liberal and independent opinions about politics and religion were at variance with his uncle, Mr. Austen, who was a fervent follower of Tory school.¹¹⁰ The exposure at the uncle's company would have landed him a well-paying solicitor job if he had had the interest to pursue it professionally, but the interest never grew as he felt he lacked passion and proper university education. Upon his uncle, Mr. Charles Layard's suggestion, he decided to travel Ceylon to acquire his Bar training as he did not find any hope of advancement in England.¹¹¹ As he had 5 years of training in the legal industry, Layard took an examination to be recognized as a solicitor, which he

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁰⁹ Murray (Vol. 1), p. 103

¹¹⁰ Tory is a political party which later metamorphosed into Conservatives Party.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 99.

passed without much difficulty. On June 10, 1839 Layard was sworn in as an attorney of H.M. Court of Queen's Bench at Westminster.¹¹²

Layard's uncle, Mr. Charles Layard introduced him to Mr. Edward Ledwich Mitford who also wanted to travel to Ceylon. The latter who possessed some knowledge of natural history and especially ornithology¹¹³, suggested going to Ceylon by land through Europe, Central Asia, and India. Layard sprang at the suggestion as it matched his love for traveling and adventure and would 'enable me (him) to realize the dreams that had haunted me (him) from my childhood when I (he) had spent so many happy hours over the "Arabian Nights"'.¹¹⁴

On July 10, 1839, Layard left London on a steamer to Ostend. Consequently, Layard visited monuments, museums, and galleries, which had been his amusement and finally met Mr. Mitford in Brussels, crossed the river to Mannheim, passing through scenic lakes and mountains and finally landed in Montenegro. It would be interesting to highlight his visit to Montenegro, a principality of the Ottoman Empire that held an important position on its frontiers. The Montenegrins bore the same faith and religion as the Russians and were always at war with the Turks and Albanians inhabiting the country surrounding the Black Mountain.¹¹⁵ When he was with the *Vladika* (chief), his men came with heads of children whom they had shot.¹¹⁶ Layard learned from his meeting that despite the *Vladika*'s intention to civilize his people, "he permitted them to commit acts so revolting to humanity and so much opposed to the feelings and habits of all Christian nations."¹¹⁷ The *Vladika* further replied with the following words:

The practice of cutting off and exposing the heads of the slain was shocking and barbarous, but it was an ancient custom of the Montenegrins in their struggles with the Turks, the secular and blood-thirsty enemies of their race and their faith, and who also practiced the same loathsome habit. He was compelled and he went on to explain to me, to tolerate, if not to countenance, this barbarous practice, which he condemned on every account because it was necessary to maintain the warlike spirit of his people. Continually in enmity with their Ottoman neighbors. Did not want Moslem to have a footing in their mountains.¹¹⁸

¹¹² Ibid., p. 100

¹¹³ Ornithology is a branch of zoology that concerns the study of birds.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 102

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 140.

¹¹⁶ Murray (Vol. I), p. 132.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 132.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 131 – 132.

Later when Layard became the Queen's ambassador in Istanbul, Montenegro had revolted against the Ottoman Empire for the independence of the principality and in that process, Turkish residents were decapitated and their noses were cut off. Mr. Gladstone, who was a Turcophobe¹¹⁹ publicly denied this barbarous habit of the Montenegrins.¹²⁰

From Montenegro, Layard and his travel companion continued on horseback, to Istanbul, where they were excited to be in. Carrying an Imperial *firman* usually given to European travelers, they proceeded to Asia Minor, where they discovered Greek and Roman edifices and were sometimes reputed to be an Ottoman official from their European dressing and Turkish fez. From Asia Minor, they proceeded to Syria, Libya, Lebanon, Jerusalem, and Mosul where they encountered with the Bedouins and finally discovered Nineveh. His visit to the East gave Layard the opportunity to learn about various communities and their cultures, which were dissatisfied with the Ottoman rule. In Baghdad, Layard said:

They give the truest, the liveliest, and the most interesting picture of manners and customs which still existed amongst Turks, Persians, and Arabs when I first mixed with them...¹²¹

and Layard described his stay in Istanbul as follows:

We had everywhere received the greatest attention and civility from the authorities and the people, and during the whole of our journey we had been exposed to no difficulty and had not suffered the slightest loss. The person and property of a traveler appeared to us indeed to be as safe as in England.¹²²

2.2 Introduction to Diplomatic Work

In 1842, after traveling for two years, instead of proceeding to India, Layard went back to Istanbul carrying with him dispatches from the British Resident at Baghdad and hoping to apply for a passport for his onward journey to England. He also hoped that his observations made during his travels might be found useful by the Embassy. He was however displeased with the manner in which he was received possibly due to his simple garments that he had worn for traveling. This was

¹¹⁹ Turcophobe: Having morbid fear of Turks.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 138.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 27.

¹²² Ibid., p. 157.

something he expected from the people of aristocracy, which he thought would not treat the other classes fairly. Layard lodged a complaint to Sir Stratford Canning about his unhappiness and then requested to meet him at Büyükdere, where another exciting adventure would start for him. Layard's first meeting with Canning convinced the legendary ambassador that the young man's experience regarding the territory, which was in dispute and claimed both by Turkey and Persia, would come in handy for the Embassy, since England's mediation may be expected.¹²³ Layard was happy with the long conversation but after not hearing from Lord Canning for a few days, he decided to head home until a *cavass* (guard) from the Embassy was sent to deliver him a message. Sir Canning wrote that he went on a secret mission to Western Turkey Bosnia and Serbia in particular¹²⁴ to bring back reports on the political agitation, which had already commenced amongst the Christian populations of Rumelia upon the Russians' instigation. Layard who always enjoyed traveling and adventure set out on a steamer to Salonica and went to Bosnia, Serbia, and Belgrade. In there, secret societies had already formed to cause insurrection against the Porte. Being considered as having the same faith as the Greeks, Bulgarians formed a small community at that time. In Layard's subsequent posting to Istanbul, they were recognized as a distinct nation¹²⁵ and were no longer classified as Greeks. The Bulgarian question, which later led to a war and caused the Ottoman Empire to lose its territory in 1878, had already started on the horizon. Layard's findings in his secret mission confirmed Sir Stratford Canning's earlier opinion of Serbia. Shortly after Layard's mission to Rumelia, Britain, jointly with Russia offered to mediate the rift between Ottoman Empire and Persia over a part on their frontiers; the united waters of the Tigris and Euphrates and certain mountains in the districts of northern Iraq. Sir Stratford Canning continued to leverage on Layard's "knowledge of the territory, history, and traditions of the tribes, which inhabited it proved of much use".¹²⁶ Layard drew up a draft dispatch, which was approved by Sir Stratford Canning, who then submitted the proposals to Lord Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lord Aberdeen, unfortunately, was pro-Russian and refused to adopt the views of his ambassador.

¹²³ John Murray (Ed), *Sir A. Henry Layard Autobiography and Letters, Vol. II*, (London: 1903), p. 18.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 21.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Layard felt devastated after getting his proposals rejected. Just when he thought of returning to England, his friend Colonel White proposed that Layard took up the correspondence at Morning Chronicle. Out of courtesy, Layard referred this matter to Sir Stratford Canning who encouraged him to start as he “needed the support of the English and European Press”.¹²⁷ Layard’s writings were well received but he disliked newspaper publicity. Apart from writing, the free time he acquired was spent studying Turkish, Hebrew and Chaldean languages. Again, Layard broached the idea of returning to England with Sir Stratford Canning as his means were running out. Possibly to pacify the young man, Sir Stratford Canning brought Layard, wearing a borrowed uniform, to the Imperial Palace to meet Sultan Abdülmecid.¹²⁸ Here the young man, who had aspired to earn a Foreign Service position in the East, observed the palace protocols, which would be useful for him in the later years.

During this time, a reform was underway. Layard got acquainted with the leading men of the reform party who were then led by Reşid Pasha, who was a good politician and an opportunist,¹²⁹ “earnestly endeavoring to regenerate their country and to bring its institutions into conformity with those of the most civilized and liberal of the European States”.¹³⁰ Reşid Pasha later became the Grand Vizier and since Sir Stratford Canning gave full support for reform in the Ottoman administration, the ideas of the reformer were much welcomed. Reşid Pasha had his ardent followers and disciples who were sincere and earnest advocates for the introduction of European constitutional institutions in the administration of the Ottoman Empire.¹³¹ His disciples, Fuad, Ali and Cabouli Effendi became Layard's good friends. Layard could connect with them very well as they held liberal opinions, acquainted with the French language and literature of Europe. Ali and Fuad in their career alternated with each other as Grand Vizier and Cabouli Efendi also joined the bureaucracy and later met Layard in Madrid when he was an ambassador. Another gentleman whom Layard acquainted with was Kiamil Bey, who later became Grand Master of the Ceremonies during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 102.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 110.

¹²⁹ Davison, p. 37.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 57.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 56.

Layard was certainly one who strived to do good work. Probably inspired by the success of the Armenians in education, Layard together with Lady Canning promoted the establishment of schools for the poor Christian and Jewish populations; to introduce Western methods into the local public. It was well received and Sultan Mahmud, happy with the efforts, conferred a place to Sir Stratford Canning to operate a school.

Layard's autobiography tells us that he took every opportunity to learn positively to build up his experience. During his stint in Istanbul, not only was he able to put his knowledge acquired during his travels to good use, he was also able to learn how his mentor, Sir Stratford Canning, operationalized British foreign policy on the ground, diplomatic protocols and the desired attributes of a diplomat. Layard was also involved in the investigation and settlement of certain claims of the British government on the Porte. He described his relations with Sir Stratford Canning as follows:

We discoursed on politics in general, and especially on the foreign policy of England in relation to the European Powers. He would refer to his own experience of English political life. We talked about art and literature, and especially of poetry, of which he was very fond, employing his leisure hours in writing verses...he had the habit of working till very late, writing dispatches.¹³²

2.3 Archaeological Efforts in the Orient

Layard's overland journey in the Asiatic dominion of the Ottoman Empire namely Baghdad, Mosul, Jerusalem, and Mesopotamia would excite readers, who have an interest in daily life in the Orient. Layard's autobiographies enlighten the reader on the physical description of the deserts and cities he laid his feet on as well as the culture and idiosyncrasies of its inhabitants. Having traveled to Mosul and Mesopotamia in 1840, he discovered the mounds of ancient cities of Nineveh; Kouyunjik and Kalah Kouyunjik, he subsequently made further visits in 1845, 1846 and 1847. Although Botta, the French Consul in Iraq, began digging trenches in the mound of Koyunjik in Nineveh in 1843, the main discoverer of Nineveh seemed to

¹³² John Murray (Ed), *Sir A. Henry Layard Autobiography and Letters, Vol. II*, p. 139.

be Layard. This fact was even mentioned in the Ottoman *salname* (provincial yearbook).¹³³

Mosul, another Ottoman province like Aleppo, Egypt, and Istanbul was not any less important. Dina Rizk Khoury, basing her work on Ottoman and Iraqi archival sources, mentions that Mosul was a frontier city whose mercantile community was active in regional trade of southeastern Anatolia, Iraq, and Iran.¹³⁴ Coffee and Indian cotton became the major commodities of long-distance trade among Mosulian merchants, and gallnuts continued to be the major local item sold to European merchants in Aleppo.¹³⁵ The Ottoman state was actively engaged in defining its frontiers through forging alliances with provincial capital and mobilizing resources. During this period, great households functioned as economic enterprises, contractors of protection and coercion, and political brokers.¹³⁶ These households pay a dominant role in the city's economic life and administrative and scholarly sectors.¹³⁷

The Rassams were considered notables of the Christian community in Mosul. Due to their conversion and sponsorship of Catholicism their association with the Aleppo trade was enhanced further.¹³⁸ The Rassams became the consuls of Britain in Mosul. The Chaldean merchants, on the other hand, were allied with the French.¹³⁹ Apart from being an important trading center, many archaeologists also flocked to Mosul, specifically Nineveh or Ninah, which was the other name most often recorded by the eighteenth-century travelers, and other parts of the East, in search of antiquities. Ancient cities like Mesopotamia and Nineveh gained a great popularity in Victorian England due partly to its association in biblical (and therefore Western and Christian) history. The traces of the biblical past have been narrated in a near linear account of the progress of the passage of civilization. The progress began in Mesopotamia and Egypt, passed to Greece and Rome, and then headed to Europe, bypassing the inhabitants of the East entirely. The European travelogues and autobiographies, according to Zainab Bahrani, often depict the East as bearing no

¹³³ Zeynep Çelik, "Defining Empire's Patrimony: Late Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities" in p. 454.

¹³⁴ Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul: 1540-1834*, (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 142.

¹³⁵ Khoury, p. 142.

¹³⁶ Khoury, p. 20.

¹³⁷ Khoury, p. 20.

¹³⁸ Khoury, p. 147.

¹³⁹ Khoury, p. 148.

relationship to classical or Near East antiquity.¹⁴⁰ The search for antiquities indirectly became a race for intellectual superiority with regard to the past.

In addition to wanting to connect with the biblical past and intellectual superiority, emerging nation-states also flocked to the East to assess claims of lineage and connection with identity.¹⁴¹ Layard joined the same trajectory as other European travelers. He wrote that it “seemed that human progress had developed, through Greece and Rome, into our present civilization that dated as far back as the seventh century”.¹⁴² His book, ‘Nineveh and its Remains’ that came in two parts; firstly, contains a travelogue with numerous anecdotal accounts and the subsequent section contains descriptions of digging at a site with perhaps copied texts and sketched images of monuments. As an insight, the sculptures and inscriptions illustrated the manners, arts, sciences, urban planning, and literature of the Assyrian people to a certain extent. The palace of the Assyrians showed the chambers, the hunting scenes, costumes and also the war scenes. Layard’s book mentions that the captives from foreign countries were employed in public works undertaken by the Assyrian kings, inferring from the variety of costume represented in the bas-reliefs, and from the fetters on the legs of some of the workmen.¹⁴³

The involvement of locals in European sources seemed minimal. Bahrani says that “the idea of native ignorance of antiquity, fear of images, and related awe of western knowledge were widespread in European accounts”.¹⁴⁴ Hormudz Rassam, a British consul in Mosul who considered himself an Englishman and still a Mosulian, accompanied Layard in his visit to Nineveh. Hormudz Rassam claimed that he was the one who mainly discovered the antiquities. In Layard’s account, however, his role was reduced to just an archaeological worker. This impression about locals being clueless about antiquities was related to the Ottomans’ attitudes towards these antiquities prior to the nineteenth century. According to Edhem Eldem, the Ottoman Empire did not have much regard for these antiquities, reducing the value of the artifacts and monuments to “old stones decorated with figures and

¹⁴⁰ Zainab Bahrani, “Untold Tales of Mesopotamian Discovery” in *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, pp. 125-156, Edited by Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, and Edhem Eldem, (Istanbul, SALT: 2011) p. 126.

¹⁴¹ Bahrani, p. 132.

¹⁴² Austen Henry Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains: A Narrative of An Expedition to Assyria* (London, Spottiswoode, and Shaw: 1867).

¹⁴³ Layard, p. 29.

¹⁴⁴ Bahrani, p. 132.

inscriptions,” which were devoid of any form of historic or aesthetic context,¹⁴⁵ during the “dark ages” of the field.¹⁴⁶ The western archaeologists used this approach of the Ottomans to lay claim to the findings obtained after excavation works and to bring them to their own lands.¹⁴⁷ It was in 1869 that the Ottomans realized the importance of preserving the antiquities laying throughout the large territorial expanse of the empire and excavations started to be carried out only upon approval.¹⁴⁸ The Ottoman Imperial Archives contain records of requests for excavation permits as well as complaints regarding foreigners who had smuggled the antiquities to their countries and not giving the Istanbul museum its share.¹⁴⁹

Shawn Malley departs from the usual ‘archaeology expedition’ narrative about Layard’s second visit to Nineveh.¹⁵⁰ Malley opines that the second trip made by Layard was classic espionage and a part of the Great Game of Imperialism. Layard’s chief, Sir Stratford Canning had eyes on the artifacts¹⁵¹ and needed someone to monitor the governor of Mosul. As earlier mentioned by Khoury, Mosul was an important frontier city and was a key passage for European goods.¹⁵² Canning thought that Layard's presence would be useful in providing updates of happenings in the East since the young man did not have an official appointment. As Layard would take the front of a typical English traveler who desired interests in the Orient, he would not arouse any suspicions. For some reason or other, Steven Richmond's biography of Canning did not mention this fact or it possibly tries to suggest that the ambassador truly wanted to keep the matter as a secret. In some ways, it can be said that Malley's opinions are confirmed by Layard's own accounts where he wrote that his nights were spent mostly listening to the grouses of the inhabitants. Layard wrote that

¹⁴⁵ Edhem Eldem, “From Blissful Indifference to Anguished Concern: Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities, 1799-1869”, in *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, pp. 281-330, Edited by Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem, (Istanbul, SALT: 2011) p. 294.

¹⁴⁶ Eldem, p. 320.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 320.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 312-4.

¹⁴⁹ Bahrani, p. 139 and Çelik, p. 461.

¹⁵⁰ Shawn Malley, “Layard Enterprise: Enterprise: Victorian Archaeology and Informal Imperialism in Mesopotamia” in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Nov 2008), pp. 623-646, Cambridge University Press, accessed 26 May 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40206011>,

¹⁵¹ Stratford Canning had written to Mehmed Reşid Pasa on June 4, 1826, commander of the Ottoman forces in Greece, requesting that the antiquities of Athens be spared from the violence of war. Edhem Eldem had included a copy of this letter in his article on p. 300.

¹⁵² Khoury, p. 142.

The evening was spent with the principal people of the village, talking with them about their prospects, taxes, harvests, and the military conscription, now the great theme of discontent in southern Turkey¹⁵³

2.4 Political Life

After eight and a half years, Layard returned to London and published his book, “Nineveh and Its Remains” that earned him a great reputation with an unexpected sale of 8000 copies. His good work subsequently conferred D.C. L Degree from the University of Oxford. In Feb 1852, he was named Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs but when the parliament dissolved in July 1852, he was elected as a member for Aylesbury constituency¹⁵⁴, a small town where his family had moved to after leaving Florence, under the Liberal party.

As a parliamentarian, Layard was one who did not mince his words. In his first speech in the House of Commons, during the Crimean War, Layard passionately said:

We have committed, “said Layard, “two great errors: (1) having the knowledge of the Russia-Turkish Treaty and the information of Russia’s vast military preparations on the Turkish frontier, we should have insisted on disarmament, as proof of a pacific policy; (2) on Russia informing us that she was about to cross the Pruth (at that time the frontier of the Danubian Principalities) we should have intimated that her doing so would be taken as a *casus belli*, and the fleet should have been sent to Constantinople (Istanbul). As a result of our action, or inaction, Turkey has received a fatal blow. The Russian occupation of the Principalities is accepted, and Great Britain is regarded by the weaker states that look to her support as helpless against Russian encroachment¹⁵⁵

He wound up in these words:

I have witnessed all these circumstances with extreme pain and regret. The day will come when we shall see the fatal error we have committed, and repent a policy against which, as a humble member of this House, I can only record my solemn protest¹⁵⁶

The speech temporarily affected his position in the House of Commons and developed hostility on the part of several members towards him. In another speech,

¹⁵³ Austen Henry Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon: A Narrative of a Second Expedition to Assyria*, (London: 1867), p.13.

¹⁵⁴ John Murray (Ed), *Sir A. Henry Layard Autobiography and Letters, Vol. II*, p. 194.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

he supported the Turkish government and said, “People had freedom and liberty as compared to those under the Russian and Austrian rule”.¹⁵⁷ Here, he further amplified his Turcophileness.

Layard then went on a journey to Crimea with Mr. Delane, the editor of the Times. Layard’s experience in Crimea, which witnessed the great suffering endured by the troops during the war, caused him to bring about extensive administrative reforms. He proposed to excite public opinion by denouncing the maladministration, which led to the loss of many lives during the war, at some great public meetings. He blamed the administration with the following statements:

...Two months, while the greatest events were occurring, no Cabinet Council was held; with the exception of two members, all the Ministers were away amusing themselves in the country, while the soldiers were sent to the Crimea with old arms and old tents, and thousands of lives had been sacrificed on the shrine of incompetence and neglect.¹⁵⁸

Layard took an active part in the establishment and management of the Ottoman Bank, of which he was the first Chairman.¹⁵⁹ As mentioned, the Ottoman Empire had introduced the Tanzimat in 1839, which stated the implementation of a series of reforms in military, social, and financial areas. The reform program was temporarily suspended by the Crimean War and following the end of the war in favor of the allied powers, the Ottoman Empire needed loans to continue the reform program which would also maintain its alliance with Britain and France. Europeans took advantage of this opportunity by trying to establish banks in the Empire. Some achieved while some others did not, possibly because the Empire borrowed also from the Galata bankers, who were mainly Armenians, Jews, and Greeks and had direct links with foreign banking houses in Paris, London and elsewhere.¹⁶⁰ Layard and a few friends decided to establish the Ottoman Bank.

Andre Autheman’s book titled *The Imperial Ottoman Bank*, attempts to provide a history of the Ottoman Bank¹⁶¹. By utilizing the archives in the Ottoman

¹⁵⁷ *The Ottoman Empire in British Parliamentary Debates*, Extracts from Hansard, Vol. 1, (February 1839 – May 1856), (The ISIS Press: Istanbul, 2015), p. 541.

¹⁵⁸ Murray, p. 251.

¹⁵⁹ Murray, p. 195 and 210.

¹⁶⁰ Christopher Clay, *Gold for the Sultan: Western Bankers and Ottoman Finance 1856 – 1881*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), p. 19.

¹⁶¹ Andre Autheman, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank*, (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2002). The original work is entitled *La Banque Imperiale Ottomane* dated in 1996. The French version was later translated into English by J. A. Underwood. This thesis cites the English version.

Bank, Edhem Eldem tries to provide a story, which was not mentioned in Autheman's work, in his book titled *A History of the Ottoman Bank*. In addition to those, *Gold for the Sultan: Western Bankers and Ottoman Finance 1856 – 1881* written by Christopher Clay, provides a history of the bank but also general finance in the Ottoman Empire during the period mentioned. While Autheman and Eldem discuss Layard's involvement during its formative years, it appears in Clay's book that Layard had some influence even after he left the Chairmanship position. Through the work of Edhem Eldem, we learn that there were two initiators of the Ottoman Bank before it was officialized on June 13, 1856. The initiation of the Ottoman Bank was mentioned in a private diary, which Eldem found and could possibly have been written or commissioned by Sleigh.¹⁶² In the initial stages, two men, Stephen Sleigh and Peter Pasquali had been doing a lot of discussion and works, which were underway for the formation of a bank in the Ottoman dominions. However, at the time when Sleigh was waiting for the *firman* to be issued by the Ottomans, Layard and the rest had proceeded to launch the bank. It took Sleigh by surprise and he continued to request to be part of the board members by asking for some shares. In brief, the promised shares were never fulfilled which got him very upset.

The Ottoman Bank started out very much a British based bank but the Ottoman bureaucracy was fearful that the bank would be overly biased towards the British. The Porte then proposed for French members to be included in its board so that the bank would not be dominated by a single country. In order to give the bank an Ottoman character, the Ottoman statesmen had to participate as board members. After the inclusion of all these, the Ottoman Bank was upgraded to the Ottoman Imperial Bank on 4 February 1863. The chairmanship was initially undertaken by Layard and later passed on to Mr. Henry Austin Bruce, a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons.¹⁶³ Following this change, the bank had more responsibilities and given the privileged status of a state bank.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Edhem Eldem, *A History of the Ottoman Bank*, p. 53. Taken after Ottoman Bank Archives (OBA), London Archives (LA) 23,964. Extracts from a Private Diary and Correspondence. 1855-1856 (London, 1856) p, 3. According to Edhem's notes, this little volume has 72 pages, printed by Waterlow and Sons of London, contains a detailed account of events that led to the foundation of the Ottoman Bank, from February 1855 to the end of June 1856, with passages from relevant letters and documents.

¹⁶³ Edhem Eldem, p. 42.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

In 1857, Layard finally visited India when it was suppressing the Sepoy Revolt, and he observed that the “disaffection to the English rule was deep and widespread”.¹⁶⁵ Layard was later appointed as the Chief Commissioner of Works, to superintend adornment of public buildings.¹⁶⁶ However, he was unhappy with the appointment as he felt that the government gave more weight to keeping costs low rather than the aesthetic value of the projects. He was also appointed as the Minister of Public Works and his immediate responsibility was the restoration of the House of Parliament. Layard was one who cared for aesthetics but not his chief. Hence when a budget was made the issue, he expressed his dissatisfaction. He continued to be in politics for seventeen years but it appeared that his interests in the arts and history never waned. He associated himself with the Arundel Society, an organization promoting the “preservation of the record, and the diffusion of the knowledge of the most important monuments of painting and sculpture, by engravings and other mechanical means of reproduction”.¹⁶⁷

He resigned from the posting and became Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Madrid, and Ambassador to Madrid in 1870 to 1871 during a political turbulence.¹⁶⁸ While there, he was recalled to London to take on diplomatic duty in Istanbul, which will be mentioned in the following chapter.

¹⁶⁵ Murray, p. 217.

¹⁶⁶ Murray, vol. 2, p. 258.

¹⁶⁷ Murray, p. 203

¹⁶⁸ Murray, vol. 2, p. 262.

CHAPTER THREE

RUSSO-TURKISH WAR

A day after the arrival of Layard in Istanbul on April 20, 1877, the Queen's ambassador made his way to Yıldız Palace, the official lodging of Sultan Abdülhamid II. His arrival was witnessed with a great pomp - a battalion of imperial guards was on the sides of the road while the military was playing the Sultan's march and other martial music, welcoming him to the exotic city, akin to the standard practice of receiving foreign ambassadors called the ceremony of exchange. The return to Istanbul possibly also managed to rekindle his previous visits to this city some 35 years ago, a pit stop for his supposedly onward journey to India, which subsequently made him an unpaid attaché at the British Embassy.¹⁶⁹

Layard's return to Istanbul proved not to be an easy one. On April 24, 1877, just a couple of days upon his arrival in the city, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire. This section illustrates the chronology of events during the war and how Layard affected Britain's interests at crucial junctures of the war. After the eight-month battle, the Imperium lost most of its populated areas, inhabited by up to 5 million people, mostly non-Muslims.¹⁷⁰ Even though he was a new ambassador at the Porte, he received reports not just from his military consuls but also from Abdülhamid's ministers. This allowed him to give the needed advice as to the cause of action even though he did not receive direction from Lord Derby, Britain's Foreign Minister or any member of the government. Before his departure, Disraeli was to impress Britain's neutrality upon the Porte.

We learn from Layard's memoir that Alexander Nelidov, Russian Charge d' Affairs in Istanbul, informed him that the Russian government had suspended all diplomatic relations with the Porte. However, he was suggested at the same time not to hint any allusion about war. According to Nelidov "there was no reason to apprehend immediate hostilities",¹⁷¹ and he called on the Sultan in a few days time as

¹⁶⁹ John Murray, Sir A. Henry Layard, Vol II, (London, 1903), pp. 16-41.

¹⁷⁰ Mustafa Tanrıverdi in "The Treaty of Berlin and the Tragedy of the Settlers from the Three Cities" in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, (Utah: The University of Utah, 2011), p. 451.

¹⁷¹ The Queen's ambassador, p. 48.

an indication of the Emperor's courtesy. Layard was under the impression that a war could be avoided. Surprisingly, Nelidov and his entire Embassy staffers left Istanbul on April 23, 1877, leaving behind a note to the Porte that the departure did not signify a declaration of war and the same message was delivered to the foreign representatives of France and Austria. Layard's Russophobe attitude was therefore not unfounded. He remarked that "(the Russians are) so trained to habits of deception and dissimulation that their word can rarely be depended upon and that they are ever ready to lie even when no advantage can be gained by concealing the truth."¹⁷²

By winning the Romanian principality over their side, the Russians entered the Romanian territories and continued their movement on April 21, three days before the declaration of war against the Empire. The Russian government opined that the Ottoman Empire had been unsuccessful in quelling the insurrections in the Balkans and had been "compelled to have recourse to arms".¹⁷³ The Russian army staged the war on two fronts; on the Balkan side through Pruth¹⁷⁴ and on the Asiatic side through Gumru and Batum. The Porte then contemplated on the expulsion of all Russian subjects, which was a common practice during a war in those times. Layard was against this execution and advised the Porte "the protection of those who lived peacefully and conformed to the law".¹⁷⁵ The Russian subjects in the Ottoman Empire were namely Greeks, Armenians, and other Christian subjects. Layard believed that the Russians in the Empire were "notorious spies, conspirators and intriguers"¹⁷⁶ who had been employed by the Russian Embassy to bring about the war. He felt that their presence was to be a threat to the Empire, but their expulsion would result in a public outcry in England. The Ottomans would be painted with a face of a cruel and unjust government. The Porte decided on issuing a *firman* that gave its Russian subjects five days allowance to take leave from the Ottoman lands, yet those who wished to remain behind would continue to be protected. Three days allowance was also granted for Russian vessels to depart from Ottoman ports with no grant of re-entry. The issue with regards to Russian subjects was to be Layard's first

¹⁷² Sinan Kunalp (Ed), *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy 1877-1880*, (Istanbul, The ISIS Press: 2009), p. 49.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁷⁴ J. W. Arrowsmith, *Czar, and Sultan* (London, Archibald Forbes: 1879), p. 7.

¹⁷⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 51.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 51.

advice to the Porte as Britain's representative, and subsequently he was frequently consulted by the Porte.

The same day the war was declared (April, 24) and the Porte made an appeal to the Powers for mediation, considering that Russia had violated its rights. Abdülhamid was naturally perturbed with Russian's act however he preferred to avoid war as much as possible. Abdülhamid sent Said Pasha to seek Britain's opinion. Layard wrote that he would check with his government and advised Abdülhamid and his advisors "to act with greatest prudence and moderation in these critical circumstances."¹⁷⁷ According to the law of nations, treaties and international engagements were either annulled or suspended during a war.

Layard, who acknowledged his insufficient military knowledge, proposed for an experienced military officer to be attached to the British Embassy. He suggested General Sir Collingwood Dickson of the Royal Artillery, who was a commander of the Ottoman contingent during the Crimean War and had knowledge of the Ottoman Empire, its language, and customs. Layard further advised for Sir Arnold Kemball to be deployed to watch over the Ottoman army in the eastern provinces. Layard was a wise ambassador who knew that intimate knowledge of the geography and language of the inhabitants were necessary for the officers to carry out their duties efficiently. Sir Arnold Kemball was the British Consul General at Baghdad and member of the Anglo-Russian Commission for the settlement of the frontiers of Persia and the Ottoman Empire.

In the mid-nineteenth century, there were already a few Prussian army officers who were engaged to enhance the capabilities of the Ottoman military forces. A good example was Bluhm Pasha, a Prussian officer of Engineers who was ordered to commence a line of fortifications from Buyukçekmece on the Sea of Marmara to Derkos on the Black Sea for the protection of Istanbul.¹⁷⁸ He was also directed the preparation of plans to fortify Edirne. The Russians had taken the mouth of the Danube, Europe's second longest river and were preparing to cross into Dobruja. The Ottoman army did not resist and abandoned most of their fortified positions, which the Russians had no intention of assaulting, but their appearance served to deceive the command of the Sultan. Issues about shipping and commerce

¹⁷⁷ The Queen's Ambassador, p. 50.

¹⁷⁸ TNA document, Report from Captain Swaine to Sir Henry Layard which was forwarded to Marquis of Salisbury, CAB 37_1_4 No. 00016, dated Jan 10, 1880, p. 2

arising from the blockade; complaints of British shipmasters and merchants whose business had been affected and privileges of foreigners under the capitulations kept Layard very occupied.¹⁷⁹

On May 12, the irregular troops of the Ottoman army who mainly comprised of the inhabitants of Lazistan gained victory over the Russians in the Asiatic dominion of the Empire.¹⁸⁰ In the intense fight, 4000 Russian soldiers died. In the mid-nineteenth century, modern technology had revolutionized warfare with the advent of rifled firearms and breech-loading, rifled steel artillery. These technological advancements brought about two implications: “strengthening the government’s control over the populace in the first and potentially weakening it in the second, as rebellious subjects acquired advanced weaponry.”¹⁸¹ The strength of the standing army, William Hale predicts, was around 200,000 by the 1870s, and 470,000 by 1897.¹⁸² Modern weapons and tactics, and an officer corps trained in both, also increased the Empire’s military strength. Hale comments that the Ottoman army could still win battles - especially defensive ones - however its main deficiencies were its almost total reliance on imported weaponry, its lack of logistical backup and modern transport, the financial weakness of the state, and above all, the sheer number and strength of its potential enemies compared with the relatively small size of the Muslim population and the immense length of frontiers it had to defend. Layard’s memoir and works by other scholars inform us that the soldiers were poorly paid or did not receive their salaries for months since the Empire was bankrupt and had little funds in the Treasury. The lack of material gains did not deter the soldiers from defending the Empire. He describes them to be:

Excellent in every respect, equal, if not indeed, superior to that of any European nation, in calm, courage, sobriety, physical endurance, obedience and devotion to his sovereign’.¹⁸³ Though poorly paid, those (military attaches) who accompanied the Turkish soldiers displayed admirable conduct, forbearance, and humanity and considering the provocation they had received and whilst witnessing the wanton invasion of their country by a Christian Power, and the slaughtering of their fellow countrymen, they had shown much self-restraint, and had not taken a bloody revenge upon their enemy and upon the Christians to whom they attributed all their sufferings and misfortunes.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 68

¹⁸⁰ The Queen’s ambassador, p. 71.

¹⁸¹ Findley, p. 154.

¹⁸² William Hale, p. 12

¹⁸³ Kuneralp, (Ed), p. 59.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 155 and p. 234.

Despite the absolute number of regular troops, many soldiers were required to build the defense in the frontier regions. The Sultan's subjects, Circassians and Albanians came to the fore to form the irregular troops (*Başıbozüks*) to build the Empire's defense. Armed with breach loading rifles, these mountain tribes were to form the party at Redut Kale, whose responsibility was to cut the railway to Tiflis and interrupt the Russian communication. However, according to Layard, Hobart Pasha and Baker Pasha, whose role was to organize the gendarmerie, considered that the Porte should not rely on the promises of these Caucasian tribes. The Russian occupied Bayezid and Kagisman, but they were halting before other fortified places.¹⁸⁵ 35 battalions of the Ottoman regular troops were defending the principal passes between the frontier and Erzurum.¹⁸⁶ At this point, Layard received reports from various sources that the Russians were crossing the Danube and thought the statements were unfounded as the waters were usually high.¹⁸⁷ In the thick of war, Abdülhamid consulted Layard on a possibility of taking up a loan from England. Layard declined to give an opinion or advice. He wrote that he retained his position of neutrality, considering that Sultan asked about the purchase of arms and ammunition from England.¹⁸⁸

3.1 Pan-Islamism

Layard expressed his worry to Lord Derby on May 30, 1877, that the Sultan "could appeal to the fanaticism of the Muslims world and convert the war into a religious one between Christianity and Islam."¹⁸⁹ Layard's worry was not without basis. Having visited India with Mr. Delane, who was the Times correspondent in 1857 during the Mutiny, Layard observed how the Sepoy, (Indian soldiers) had revolted against the British whom they considered not their rightful leaders. This issue with leadership arose following the death of Bahadur Shah II, the last Mughal emperor. Provincial leaders were seeking power and this fight over who should lead subsequently brought the British to the Near East to lead a country highly populated

¹⁸⁵ The Queen's Ambassador, p. 72.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁸⁹ The Queen's Ambassador, p. 87.

by Muslims. Historian Azmi Özcan writes that Pan-Islamism¹⁹⁰, a term possibly coined by the Europeans to show opposition of Muslims against Europeans. Providing the different debates about Pan-Islamism, Özcan mentions that the feeling of Muslim unity is not new in Turkish scholarship. He quotes the word *Ittihad-ı İslam* or the terms *Ittihad-ı Din* and *Uhuvvet-ı Din*¹⁹¹ used in the various local newspapers that burgeoned during the nineteenth century. Along with Özcan, Michael Christopher Low also discusses on Pan-Islamism in his article.¹⁹² Even though the Ottoman Empire was the guardian of the holy lands, the British feared that the interaction of differing Muslim communities coming together would excite ill feeling towards the British. Notwithstanding, the British managed to curtail their paranoia. Under political pretext, the British assumed that it was their responsibility to circumvent the disease outbreaks, which many had claimed them to come from India, as India was their colony. Hence, the Indians Layard felt, could rise against the British should they fear the safety of their leader. In the same telegram to Lord Derby, Layard expressed his fear of India should the Russians annex part of Armenia, placing Persia at her mercy and cause Russia to have possible “control over the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris”.¹⁹³

Layard proposed his government to mediate with the Russians on the possibility of peace. Count Pyotr Andreyevich Shuvalov, the Russian ambassador in London, whom Barbara Jelavich quotes as one preferring peace, confidentially informed Lord Derby the peace conditions:

(1) Bulgaria to be constituted into a vassal autonomous province under the same guarantee of the Powers: The Turkish troops and functionaries to be withdrawn and the fortresses to be disarmed and raised and self-government to be accorded to the population with the support of a national militia to be organized as soon as possible. (2) The Powers to agree for securing to that part of Bulgaria south of the Balkans as well as to the other Christian provinces of Turkey the best possible guarantees for regular administration. (3) Montenegro and Servia to receive an augmentation of territory to be determined upon in common. (4) Bosnia and Herzegovina to be endowed with institutions judged by common consent to be suitable to their internal conditions and proper to secure them an excellent native administration. The situation of these two provinces on the frontiers of Austro-Hungary would, it was added, give the following power an equal voice in their future organization.

¹⁹⁰ Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism, Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, (Leiden, New York, and Koln: Brill, 1997)

¹⁹¹ Özcan, p. 24

¹⁹² Michael Christopher Low, “Empire and the Hajj Pilgrims: Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1908” in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (May 2008), pp. 269-290, Cambridge University Press, accessed on 26 May 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30069613>

¹⁹³ Kuneralp, (Ed), p. 87.

(5) Serbia as well as Bulgaria, to remain under the suzerainty of the Sultan, whose relations with his vassals were to be defined in such a manner as to prevent conflicts. (6) These questions of the independence of Rumania (which she had already proclaimed) to be decided by joint agreement.¹⁹⁴

The Russians stated that if the Porte accepted these conditions before the Russian troops cross the Balkans, Tsar Alexander II would consent to cease military operations and suspend hostilities.¹⁹⁵ The Russians demanded Bessarabia, the region east of the River Pruth that had been a part of Romania¹⁹⁶, and the cession of Batum. In exchange, Romania was given Dobruja, a region with a Muslim Turkish/Tatar majority.¹⁹⁷ Count Shuvalov later hinted that if Austria demanded compensation either for the acquisitions made by Russia or as a pledge of security against the advantage to be given to the Christian principalities of the Balkan Peninsula, Russia would not object to her seeking that compensation in Bosnia and part of Herzegovina.¹⁹⁸ If the Porte refused these conditions, Russia would pursue war until the Ottoman Empire was forced to subscribe to an entirely new term of peace.¹⁹⁹ The terms were shared with Layard on June 12, 1877 by telegraph, and Lord Derby asked whether in his judgment there was any possibility of the Porte consenting to these.²⁰⁰ Layard in his dispatch on June 13, 1877 opined that Abdülhamid and his Ministers would not accept the terms and that British would lose her influence over the Porte.²⁰¹ Here, Layard stated his expert advice that although the Ottomans had lost the traditional Muslim cities of Doğu Beyazıt, Ardahan, Kars and Erzurum, the Russians did not cross the Danube and made any winnings in the European territories.²⁰² The Ottomans were encouraged by the little progress made by the Russian army and elated by some signal successes they had achieved in repulsing the attack made on the Danube and in Asia and in their war against Montenegro which

¹⁹⁴ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 94-5.

¹⁹⁵ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 97.

¹⁹⁶ Justin McCarthy, "Minorities and New States" in *War and Diplomacy: Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, Edited by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 434.

¹⁹⁷ McCarthy, p. 435.

¹⁹⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 95.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p.95.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p.95.

²⁰² M. Hakan Yavuz, "European Diplomacy and the Exclusion of the Ottoman "Other" in *War and Diplomacy: Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, Edited by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 40 and Kunalp (Ed), p. 95.

they were occupying.²⁰³ The acceptance of the conditions would only speed up the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, and to hand over to Russia the key to Armenia and Asia Minor – Batum – which she had failed to seize. The whole Muslim world would be stirred up against Britain and the consequence on India should be taken with highly seriously. Layard added that should Russians cross the Danube and at the Balkan passes, and in possession of Armenia, his opinions would differ.²⁰⁴

Even before the conditions had been agreed, Count Shuvalov, through Lord Derby came back by saying that it was not good to break Bulgaria into two provinces. Russia foresaw the formation of one autonomous vassal province, which would have extended from the Danube to the Aegean Sea.²⁰⁵ Layard, on June 19, 1877, wrote in a dispatch that should the conditions be acceded to, would lead to the speedy dismemberment and end of the Ottoman Empire and Romania would be speedily converted into a semi-independent Principality like Servia, and only as a matter of time, Bosnia and Herzegovina would be cut off from Istanbul by sea and land, and would be formed into an autonomous Province or would be annexed by Austria, or would be divided between her, Servia and Montenegro.²⁰⁶ Greece would demand Thessaly and Epirus and some parts of Macedonia and Thrace.²⁰⁷ Nothing would remain in Europe for the Sultan apart from Istanbul and a portion of Thrace. Layard reiterated to Lord Derby that the Sultan had bitter experience in the dishonoring of treaties and engagements entered with Europe.²⁰⁸ The acceptance of these conditions would break the Ottoman Empire further. Egypt, Tunis, and Tripoli would be detached from it. Syria, Armenia, and Arabia would follow.²⁰⁹ The disruption of the Empire would bring the relative strength of the Great Powers and might be of some advantage to Christianity, notwithstanding wars, desolation, and misery.²¹⁰ Layard asked on Britain's readiness to renounce her imperial position and interest.²¹¹ Should that position be undertaken, Russia would then dictate her terms with the Porte. Layard observed the new English policy and cautioned his

²⁰³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 95.

²⁰⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 96.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 96.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 96.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

²⁰⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 97.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 97.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 97.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 97.

government not to be the medium party in relating the conditions to the Sultan and the Porte, lest England be seen as an abettor and not a mediator. England's influence and prestige in the East would subsequently be tarnished.²¹² Layard thought that England had one of the courses - to prevent Russia by decisive measures that England was prepared in order to avoid; that was the destruction of the Ottoman Empire or allowed matters to take its course until a more favorable moment came or to fold her arms and do nothing, leaving everything to chance. Layard wrote how he tried to appear clueless in front of Abdülhamid but was later consulted on the peace conditions.²¹³ Prince Reuss, the German Ambassador in the Porte, raised the matter with Edhem Pasha and led the Grand Vizier to believe that Germany was prepared to be the arbiter of peace, insinuating that the Ottoman Empire must be developed for massive concessions in favor of its Christian populations in Europe, loss of Batum and surrender claims to close the Dardanelles and Bosphorus against Russian ships of war.²¹⁴ In the same vein, Layard was of the view that Russia never thought that their excessive demands would be accepted but was resolved to pursue their plans to invade the Ottoman Empire.²¹⁵

At this point, Layard commenced a direct correspondence with Lord Beaconsfield or when the latter sent a private and secret letter. Layard's relationship with Lord Beaconsfield or then the Prime Minister, as Benjamin Disraeli went a long time back when he was still young. Disraeli was a friend of his uncle's wife, Mrs. Austen. Henceforth, Layard's memoir tells us his direct communication with Lord Beaconsfield, without the knowledge of Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary. The politics in the Foreign Service is reflected here. Lord Salisbury, Britain's Viceroy in India wrote the following in May: "Our foreign policy has lacked a bold initiative and a settled plan"²¹⁶. Lord Beaconsfield asked the possibility of having the British fleet in Istanbul with the following statements, "still asserting our neutrality, on the ground that we are taking a material guarantee for the observance of existing

²¹² Kunalp (Ed), p. 97.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 97.

²¹⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 98.

²¹⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 98.

²¹⁶ Seton, quoted in Life of Salisbury, ii. p. 146.

treaties?”²¹⁷ Layard felt that the defenses on Gallipoli were more crucial than bringing the fleet up to Istanbul.²¹⁸

On June 27, 4,000 Russians had crossed the Danube in boats without opposition and attacked the Ottoman position at Matchin.²¹⁹ The Czar then arrived at Ibraila, and his troops were “forming in and passing over the river in large numbers”.²²⁰ The Russians had succeeded in establishing themselves in Dobruja. On the other war front, on the Asiatic side, Beyazid was retaken by 12,000 soldiers and the contingent led by Muhtar Pasha won over the Russians. The Ottoman troops also had commanding success on the side of Montenegro.²²¹ The Danubian side did not favour the Ottomans. On June 27, Lord Loftus telegraphed to Lord Derby that 50,000 Russian soldiers crossed the Danube at Sowintza and occupied Sistowa and the surrounding highlands.²²² Layard reported approximate 70,000 or 80,000 Russian soldiers at the south of the river.²²³ Nicopoli was reported to be in flames and Rustchuk was heavily bombarded. Accordingly, Abdul Kerim Pasha, the Ottoman Commander-in-chief remained at Shumla, seemed indifferent to the passing of the enemies across the river.²²⁴ Layard presented the serious conditions to his Government and reminded them to provide “definite instructions” and the decision came for the deployment of the British fleet to Beshika Bay, and the measures to strengthen the British naval force in the Mediterranean.²²⁵ To avoid any suspicion on that the part of the Porte, Layard sent Mr. Sandison to explain the situation to the Sultan.²²⁶

By July 3, the army of Muhtar Pasha triumphed along the whole line from Delibaba to Zevia that caused the Russian forces to retire at Tahrir.²²⁷ The Russians continued to advance in the Balkans, which got Layard to consult Disraeli whether Russia should be left to dictate their peace conditions. Foreigners and Turks, according to Layard reasoned that the presence of the British fleet the mouth of the

²¹⁷ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 121 and Mikhail, p. 182.

²¹⁸ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 121.

²¹⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 105.

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 105.

²²² Kunalp (Ed), p. 109.

²²³ Ibid., p. 109.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 109 and 151.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

²²⁶ Ibid., p. 110.

²²⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 112.

Dardanelles would prevent the occupation of Istanbul and the Straits.²²⁸ Layard had the support of Admiral Hornby, who agreed for this step to be taken and was prepared to “land a body of 1500 sailors and marines, and with the aid of his ships would be able to hold the Gallipoli lines until additional forces were sent to them”.²²⁹ The occupying of the Boulair lines, Layard suggested for it to be done with the Sultan’s invitation or with his sanction, which Layard believed he could attain. Layard “desired to see England pursuing a policy which may lead to peace”.²³⁰

On July 19, the Russian troops had quickly captured the Shipka Pass in the Balkan Mountains.²³¹ Although the Porte reported an approximate of 30,000 Russian troops penetrated to the south of the Balkan range, the British consul at Edirne found the figures exaggerated. He estimated that there were only 8,000 Russians and 10,000 Bulgarians who were supposed to be the vanguard of the Russian Army. Layard’s memoir mentioned about Abdülhamid’s demanded an explanation for the lack of defense in the Danube and the mountains. When the question was posed to Redif Pasha, Abdülhamid found the explanation dissatisfactory. Abdülhamid was known to be one who would not hesitate to fire his ministers immediately should they be found to be incompetent and replaced Redif Pasha with Mehmed Ali Pasha and later the latter was also replaced with Osman Pasha.²³²

3.2 Fortification of the Dardanelles and Miscommunication over the British Fleet

The undefended passes further opened the way for the Russian army to advance further south. Interrupting the railway between Edirne and Filibe, the Russians crossed the river, Maritza.²³³ Considering that it would be very easy for the Russians to march into Gallipoli, Layard expressed privately to Lord Beaconsfield and officially to Lord Derby the importance of securing the Boulair lines with a

²²⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 114.

²²⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 121.

²³⁰ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 122.

²³¹ Ömer Turan, “The Rhodope Resistance and Commission of 1878” in *War and Diplomacy: Russo-Turkish War 1877-1878*, edited by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 512.

²³² Kunalp (Ed), p. 122-3.

²³³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 28.

British force.²³⁴ The Cabinet was divided in opinion.²³⁵ Instead of receiving an explicit instruction, the British Government showed their indecisiveness by sending Layard a telegram with more questions. Lord Derby instructed him “to obtain the fullest information”²³⁶ regarding the fortifications of the Dardanelles. The Foreign Minister also inquired for the removal and disarmament of the Ottoman’s heavy guns, so that they would not fall into the hands of the Russians, or better still to sell them to the British.²³⁷ The British Government placed Layard in an awkward position. Logically, nations and countries do not divulge details about their military equipment and they were highly secret. Surprisingly, the Ottomans disclosed the information to Sir C. Dickson, who had good relations with the Ottomans when he was sent to check on the site. Layard felt confident that Abdülhamid might agree to his suggestion in bringing the British fleet to Istanbul with a condition that “its retreat was secured and only when England had actual possession and command of the Straits” and protect the Empire against Russia.²³⁸ On July 29, Disraeli wrote to Layard in his “personal and most confidential telegram” that:

The Cabinet opens a prospect of returning to the wise and ancient policy of England. The British fleet in the Turkish waters with the consent of the Sultan may be the first step in the future preservation of the Empire. I must depend upon your energy and skill in both of which I have the utmost confidence.²³⁹

On August 1, Layard again expressed it would be “very hazardous”²⁴⁰ sending the fleet to Istanbul and if it had to be done, it must be impressed upon the Porte that the act was a necessary protection against Russia and not merely for British interests to protect Europeans and Christians.²⁴¹ After explaining at length, Layard knew that the decision at the end resided with his government, and he concluded the telegram with the following words: “if we are resolved to maintain the honor, dignity, and interest of England, we should be able to do so.”²⁴² At about the same period, the Porte sent instructions to Kostaki Musurus Pasha, the Porte’s ambassador in London, informing Lord Derby of the Porte’s refusal should Britain

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 128.

²³⁶ Kunalp (Ed), p. 128.

²³⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 128.

²³⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 129 – 130.

²³⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 129.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 129.

²⁴¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 130.

²⁴² Kunalp (Ed), p. 128.

persist in their intention in sending her fleet to Istanbul, as it would be in violation of the Treaty of Paris.²⁴³ The sending up of her fleet right up to the Golden Horn could be done “only as an ally of the Empire, prepared to take part in the war” as there was “no call for its presence on account of any danger to the British subjects or interests which the Porte itself was quite able to protect”.²⁴⁴ What subsequently came about got on Layard’s nerves. The Times correspondent telegraphed that Layard had requested for the British fleet to come to Istanbul and the ambassador’s request was immediately rejected.²⁴⁵ Layard confronted Server Pasha for clarification, as what appeared in the media was contrary to what he advised. This episode was explained at length in Layard’s memoir. According to Server Pasha, the telegram sent to Kostaki Musurus Pasha was modified and was known only to one or two persons in the Porte, and he had no knowledge about its information being shared with the media.²⁴⁶ Accordingly, Server Pasha explained to Layard that the Porte’s ambassador to England, Musurus Pasha had a conversation with Lord Derby and the latter had said that should the lives of the British community in Istanbul be in danger, it would be necessary to send the British fleet to the Empire to offer protection. After that conversation, Musurus Pasha wrote to the Porte of Britain’s position. On hearing this, Layard later conveyed to Lord Derby what had transpired. Lord Derby responded that the British Cabinet, having considered Layard’s telegrams and communication “considers seriously sending up the fleet”.²⁴⁷ Lord Derby further explained that Musurus Pasha had approached him for clarification, after he got word about the possible deployment of the British fleet from Count Shuvalov, Russian ambassador to England.²⁴⁸ In this case, we notice that the British liked finger pointing at the Russians, indicating imperial rivalry. Lord Derby clarified with Musurus Pasha that while such a request might be made, the British Cabinet would not decide without permission of the Porte and except to secure public order.²⁴⁹ On this conversation with Lord Derby, Musurus Pasha telegraphed to the Porte on what

²⁴³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 130.

²⁴⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 128-9.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 130.

²⁴⁶ Kunalp (Ed), p. 131.

²⁴⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 131.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 131.

transpired, and came to inform Lord Derby on “what they had to say about it”.²⁵⁰ Since Layard’s telegram came again during this period, Lord Derby assuaged Musurus Pasha that no decision about the fleet was made and the application for it was not necessary.²⁵¹ Layard’s memoir reflected his frustration about how decisions and discussions could reach the ears of other foreign agents in Istanbul although they were meant to be highly secret. Layard cited an incident where Count Zichy, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Istanbul, learned about a particular discussion at Downing Street even before Layard received any official notice. Layard felt that this incident was “prejudicial to the public interest and embarrassing for a diplomat who should be the first to know about any decision by his government”.²⁵²

3.3 Disunited Government

On August 10, through the Foreign Office, Layard wrote that three memoranda were sent to him by high military authorities outlining the plans that the British would undertake should the Russians invade the capital. The means of defense possessed by the empire were to be destroyed, which included “fortifications, artillery, ammunition” for “a British fleet, with a British force, might subsequently drive the Russians out again”.²⁵³ Layard in acknowledging his “limitation in military knowledge”²⁵⁴ felt that the suggestions did not consider diplomacy and did not consider the opinions of the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, Layard consulted Lord Beaconsfield whether the efforts necessitated one through peaceful means or via force. Either way, Britain, Layard said, “run the serious risk of driving Turkey into a separate peace with Russia, much to the injury of the British interests”.²⁵⁵ Shortly later, Disraeli replied, tabbed as secret:

As we have the command of the sea, why should not British ‘corps d’armee (via Batum) march into Armenia and occupy Tiflis? We might send another to Varna and act on the Russian flank. But all this requires time...the danger is if the Russians really, again successfully advance and reach Edirne this autumn. What then is to be done? That is why

²⁵⁰ They here would refer to the Porte. The memoir did not disclose the Porte’s opinion. Kunalp (Ed), p. 131.

²⁵¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 131.

²⁵² Ibid., p. 131.

²⁵³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 132.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 132.

I should like to see our fleet in her immediate waters, and Gallipoli in our possession as a material guarantee, and with her full sanction. We should then be able to save Turkey.²⁵⁶

The different policy positions were undertaken by Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Derby and he wrote that they “could not come to an agreement”²⁵⁷ as to the measures that should be undertaken by England, whether to “prevent Istanbul falling into the hands of the Russians or should wait till that event occurred to decide upon the course to be pursued”.²⁵⁸

After about four months of fighting, the Turkish army commanded by Osman Pasha checked the Russians in Plevna.²⁵⁹ It was a momentous victory that the local papers were calling him as the hero of Plevna. Layard considered the victory extraordinary, taking into account the inferior number of Ottoman soldiers with inadequate artillery in comparison to the Russians. The news about the heroic defense of the Ottoman soldiers also spread to India. Gazi Osman Pasha captured the imagination of every Muslim household in India and gained great fame and reputation.²⁶⁰ The Ottoman army continued to be successful in the Balkans.²⁶¹ Muhtar Pasha on several occasions drove the Russians out and followed into their territory, that the Ottomans felt that Russians would pay a heavy indemnity for their losses.²⁶² Surprisingly Muhtar Pasha received instructions from the Porte to abandon the high positions, which he followed without question. The success of the Ottoman troops did not last. On October 16, 1877, Muhtar Pasha was defeated, and most of the armies had fallen into the hands of the Russians.²⁶³ Given this defeat in Anatolia, attack on Plevna as well as the impending winter, Layard considered the time to lucrative for England to step in and mediate for peace.²⁶⁴ Layard wrote in his memoir that Abdülhamid had the same idea and requested that Russia cease the hostilities. Layard assisted with recommending the peace conditions but placed a caveat that he had done so in his personal capacity and without any instructions from his government. In winter, the situation continued to worsen. Even though the lines of

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 133.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 133.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 133.

²⁵⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 134.

²⁶⁰ Azmi Özcan, p. 71.

²⁶¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 138.

²⁶² Kunalp (Ed), p. 144 – 5.

²⁶³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 169.

²⁶⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 171.

Gallipoli and Buyukçekmece were ready, no soldier was available to defend them. At this point, Britain's policy position was still not clear.²⁶⁵

3.4 Territorial Concession to England

In Layard's memoir, Server Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, shared with Layard, Musurus Pasha's report of his conversation with Disraeli.²⁶⁶ In the report, Musurus Pasha appealed for a loan to enable the Ottoman Empire to partake on a second campaign and the British Prime Minister "hinted at some territorial concession" as a guarantee.²⁶⁷ In addition, the report stated on the possibility of a British administration in Crete.²⁶⁸ Lord Beaconsfield in his private letter to Layard had offered for substantial assistance should the Ottoman Empire agree to part with its territory, "which was conducive to British interests."²⁶⁹ Lord Beaconsfield did not mention a place but he described the position to not be in the Mediterranean as that "might excite jealousy", not a port in the Black Sea as "difficulties might arise from the Straits Treaty", and not "a commanding position in the Persian Gulf (as it) might be a great object to Britain if Armenia was lost to the Porte" and if the Straits were free to all nations, Batum would be advantages to all.²⁷⁰ Lord Beaconsfield further added:

If we could combine with it the presence of the English fleet in the Bosphorus, and a British army corps at Gallipoli and Derkos: and all this without a declaration of war against Russia, I think the Ottoman Empire, though it may have lost a province or two, which every power had in its turn, might yet survive, and though not a first-rate Power, an independent and vigorous one.²⁷¹

Though Disraeli denied giving any hope to the Ottoman ambassador in London, Musurus Pasha caught the hint on the possibility of continuing the campaign should England extend a small loan for a cession of territory. Musurus Pasha henceforth telegraphed to Server Pasha who showed Layard the contents.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 171.

²⁶⁶ Kunalp (Ed), p. 191.

²⁶⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 191.

²⁶⁸ R. W. Seton-Watson, p. 243.

²⁶⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 191.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 191.

²⁷¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 191.

Layard, acting clueless asked for his opinion. Server Pasha having put some thought into it with the Grand Vizier was of the view that the Sultan would never agree to a territorial cession for money, as it would only open the opportunity for other Powers to make the same request. It was stated in Layard's response to Disraeli that the Porte would not accede to any territorial cession as the Sultan and his ministers still stuck to the formula of the "independence and integrity of the Empire" and giving up territory would be to renounce the latter.²⁷² Layard in his further response to Disraeli agreed that Russia would conscientiously object the idea of Batum being ceded to Britain. He counter suggested Muhammerah, a place Layard had visited in his youthful days. Muhammerah was located "near the mouth of the Euphrates, near the junction of that river with the Karoun, which traversed one of the richest provinces of Persia."²⁷³ Layard felt that the position was strategic, that a railway could be constructed to the "east of these rivers, through the provinces of Khuzistan (Iraq), Fars, and ultimately through Balochistan to Scinde".²⁷⁴ Layard further gave his opinion that the Porte would not cede any island in the Mediterranean to England. Crete had a splendid harbor, named Suda while Cyprus would not bring any much use to England. Layard, however, felt that the fall of Plevna opened the road to Istanbul. He was not sure that there were sufficient people to hold the defense in Edirne.²⁷⁵

3.5 Defensive Measures

The Ottoman army employed necessary measures to obstruct the Russian's passage in the Balkans and defended Edirne in case the Russians managed to cross the mountains and continued with the war.²⁷⁶ Süleyman Pasha was instructed to lead this effort and to make proper defense of the Danubian fortresses and the Quadrilateral. Transports were sent to Varna so that the army could be embarked for Istanbul and Dedeagatch, and later transferred to Edirne by train.²⁷⁷ The new demand for 180,000 men was patriotically and speedily responded to. Recruits poured into

²⁷² Kuneralp (Ed), p. 192.

²⁷³ Ibid., p. 192.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 192.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

²⁷⁶ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 206.

²⁷⁷ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 207.

Istanbul from the Asiatic provinces and were at once forwarded to the army in Rumelia and immediately disciplined and instructed in their duties.²⁷⁸ The military, with the addition of about 20,000 men brought from Bulgaria and of approximately 50,000, with five battalions of artillery and two regiments of cavalry marched across the Balkans and rose to a very considerable and capable force.²⁷⁹

On December 19, 1877, Lord Beaconsfield wrote privately to Layard informing him of the upcoming Parliament where “a considerable increase of force would be proposed”²⁸⁰ and that Britain would enter into direct communication with Russia for mediation if the motion were agreed upon.²⁸¹ Simultaneously, Abdülhamid shared with Layard that Lord Beaconsfield had communicated with Musurus Pasha to make an appeal to England for their mediation, hinting that they would be prepared to offer arbitration even if she was neglected by other Powers, and Russia’s resistance of the offer and persistence to continue with the war, England would undertake additional measures to end the war.²⁸² Layard compared the language of Lord Beaconsfield and that of Lord Derby and concluded the varying in opinion between the two statesmen.²⁸³ Abdülhamid was exhilarated with Lord Beaconsfield’s offer that he requested Layard to telegraph Lord Beaconsfield his warm appreciation. Layard counter-proposed that Abdülhamid write directly to the Queen as he had not received any official correspondence on this matter.²⁸⁴ It would be inappropriate for him to extend the appreciation. Layard exhibited professionalism and cautiousness.

3.6 The Waiting Game – Request for Armistice

At the end of December, the Russian troops continued to take charge of the mountains in the Balkans until large groups of the population had to vacate Sofia for Edirne or Istanbul.²⁸⁵ The end of the heroic defense by Osman Pasha’s army in Plevna on December 10 was the end of the war in practical terms, which inferred the

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 207.

²⁷⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 207

²⁸⁰ Kunalp (Ed), p. 208.

²⁸¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 208

²⁸² Ibid., p. 208.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 208.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 208.

²⁸⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 209.

definite defeat of the Ottomans.²⁸⁶ In January 1878, the Russians captured Sofia, Samokov, Kyzalik, Filibe, and Edirne.²⁸⁷ The refugees were suffering from cold and hunger. On January 7, 1878, General Said delivered a message from the Sultan to Layard in his personal capacity on the possibility of procuring an immediate armistice, stating that in case of the refusal of the Russian Emperor for the suspension of arms the Empire would be left to face Russia on her own, and to agree to the best conditions that she could obtain. It was evident that Abdülhamid was seeking assistance from Britain through Layard. The memoirs of Layard insinuate the desperateness of Abdülhamid in search of a political ally since he was faced with a dominant war party. This is stated in the same records with the following words: “as he had often told me to England as the best and truest friend of Turkey, and he was determined to do so as long as he possibly could”.²⁸⁸ At this point, Russians occupied the whole of Rumelia, and the Ottoman army was forced to break up into smaller parts which could be separately attacked and defeated before they concentrated on the defense of Edirne. Furthermore, opposing a nearly 200 Russian battalions was not an easy feat.²⁸⁹ Layard appealed to Said Pasha to impress the idea upon the Sultan that, he was with the “most earnest desire to serve him”²⁹⁰ and deepest sympathy for the difficult situation the Empire was in. Layard explained that it was difficult for him to advise as a friend, knowing Britain’s neutral position in this situation, which would only lead to further disappointment.²⁹¹ Layard advised the Porte to hold on for an answer on the armistice proposal and should the outcome be unfavourable, Britain’s hope for peace would diminish. Accordingly, Layard encouraged the Porte “to decide upon the wisest and most prudent course in the interest of the Empire”.²⁹²

In Layard’s dispatch on January 8, 1878 he mentioned of the Ottoman’s hope for Britain’s assistance.²⁹³ Hence, Layard informed Lord Derby that Britain needed to be decisive without making the Porte wait any further. Layard’s statement was indeed fair. However, Lord Derby came back with disappointing news that their

²⁸⁶ Ömer Turan, p. 513 and Mikhail, p. 183.

²⁸⁷ Ömer Turan, p. 513.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 221.

²⁸⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 222.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 222.

²⁹¹ Ibid. P. 222.

²⁹² Ibid., p. 222.

²⁹³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 224.

appeal for possible overtures was unsuccessful.²⁹⁴ Sultan Abdülhamid received the news with “great disappointment and bitterness of feeling.”²⁹⁵ Layard felt that unless an armistice were obtained, Edirne would fall to the Russians as the irregular troops, which were holding the defense in Edirne could not maintain an effective resistance due to their inadequate training.

On January 10, 1878, the Ottoman army, intimidated by the significant number of the Russian was surrendered at the Shipka Pass.²⁹⁶ General Said Pasha wired an application for an armistice to the Russian side.²⁹⁷ The Russian Minister of War responded that the demand for a truce could only be made when the peace conditions were decided. The Russians’ response, Layard believed only indicated that they were not keen for peace.²⁹⁸ In normal circumstances, peace negotiations took a long time, but the more important issue was to end the hostilities as the Russian army continued to advance towards Edirne. It was stated in Layard’s memoir that, “Süleyman Pasha had dispersed troops that the large number of them were soon surrounded by Russians and compelled to surrender”.²⁹⁹ By then the Russians had occupied and destroyed a part of the railway between Edirne and Filibe.³⁰⁰ The Ottoman army was without supplies, and commissariat and the fear of Russian troops marching into the Capital was immense.³⁰¹ Given the focus on this matter, Abdülhamid appealed to Layard to be abdicated to England and requested to stay on board the Queen’s ship.³⁰²

The Ottoman delegates Server Pasha and Namık Pasha went to Edirne on 15 January 1878, to commence the negotiations for an armistice.³⁰³ Layard wrote that the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, Server Pasha mentioned that should the Grand Duke Nicholas request for “conditions of too onerous a nature”, he would prolong or break off the negotiations and he harboured the hope that the representatives would resist terms which might be dangerous to the existence of the Ottoman Empire and the interests of England. Layard wrote how he received

²⁹⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 227.

²⁹⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 228.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 229.

²⁹⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 230.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 230.

²⁹⁹ Sinan Kunalp, (Ed), *The Queen’s Ambassador to The Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard’s Istanbul Embassy 1877-1880*, p. 235.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 225.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 225.

³⁰² Kunalp (Ed), p. 236.

³⁰³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 237

authorization by the British government to hint to the Sultan that his government was preparing to send a fleet to the Dardanelles. The offer pleased the Sultan and the Porte. However, given the negotiations for an armistice, the idea was not put to fruition. Layard felt that the decision was apt to gain time. On January 18, 1878, Edirne was fallen to the Russians. The following day, Layard wrote that he was requested by the Porte to make an urgent request to the British government to send up the British fleet to Beshika Bey or to Makri to check the Russian's entry along the Boulair lines. On January 22, 1878, Layard wrote that Lord Derby in his telegram said that Britain received Prince Gorchakov's pledge that Russia had no intention of directing her military operations on Gallipoli unless the Ottoman regular troops concentrated there.³⁰⁴

The Ottoman army consolidated their forces. Suleyman Pasha returned to the southern coast of Thrace with a force of 50,000 men. With seventeen battalions rounded at Kirk Klisia and a significant movement of stragglers from the Quadrilateral and Asia, approximately 100,000 men were ready to defend the Capital and about 30,000 at the Bolair lines. Layard managed to convince Abdülhamid not to leave the city yet; requested Lord Derby for a ship to be ready, however, the request was not entertained. Russian Grand Duke Nicholas demanded the bases of peace be accepted by the Porte before the armistice could be in effect. He emphasized the conditions to be kept secret, neither to be written nor to be shared to any of the powers.³⁰⁵

The British Cabinet began to feel the extreme danger that threatened her influence in the East by Russian's advance to Istanbul and by the conditions of peace, which Russia was determined to obtain from the Ottoman Empire. On January 24, Layard received a telegram from Lord Derby informing that the British fleet was instructed to enter the Dardanelles and would be within the Straits the following morning. Layard was asked to report the Sultan that "orders should be sent to the forts not to fire upon H. M. ships".³⁰⁶ In the middle of the night, Layard sent his dragoman to the Ministers to acquire such a *firman*, and even though he did, the Cabinet decided to recall the British fleet. This case showed the indecisiveness of Britain, which brought about a lot of indignation in the papers.

³⁰⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 242.

³⁰⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 255.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 246.

Having failed to stop the Russian advances into the interior, the Ottoman Empire signed an armistice with Russia on January 31, 1878,³⁰⁷ which did not stop Russia to advance towards Istanbul. As the Porte believed Britain's assurance of Prince Gorchakov's undertaking that the Russians would not occupy Gallipoli the Ottomans withdrew the bulk of the troops from the lines of Bolayır and left them defenseless. Five days elapsed but there was no sign for the text of the Protocols at the Porte. On February 8, 1878, Ottoman representatives returned to Istanbul from Edirne where they concluded and signed the bases of peace and the armistice.³⁰⁸ However, when the armistice was signed the Russian troops were already before the walls of Istanbul.³⁰⁹ The following day, on February 9, 1878, Lord Derby wrote a telegram to Layard indicating that the British fleet would be sent to protect the British subjects. Such a measure would serve to be detrimental since the armistice had already been signed. The intent of the British at this point is indeed questionable. On February 11, 1878, Abdülhamid received a personal telegram from the Emperor of Russia, which was also stated in Layard's memoir: "The Emperor desires a durable and solid peace and reestablishment of good relations between Russia and Turkey."³¹⁰ During the ongoing negotiations, Britain decided on sending a part of their fleet to the Bosphorus to protect the lives and properties of the British subjects.³¹¹ Other Powers also took the same steps.³¹² The Emperor of Russia wrote to Abdülhamid that they too felt the necessity of protecting the lives and properties of the Christians.³¹³ The Sultan hesitated to allow Russia to come any closer to Istanbul. Sultan Abdülhamid affirmed that his subjects were protected and he knew how to maintain the rights of his Empire. He implored upon the Emperor to not carry out their intentions.³¹⁴ Layard's memoir perpetually informs us that the Ottomans genuinely desired peace and attempted to leverage on diplomacy and it appears that the other Powers were the ones who defied the treaties. The Ottomans turned to diplomacy as their treasury was running out, and their military supplies were insufficient.

³⁰⁷ Mustafa Tanrıverdi, p. 451.

³⁰⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 270.

³⁰⁹ Stojanovic, p. 183.

³¹⁰ Kunalp (Ed), p. 276.

³¹¹ Ibid, p. 276.

³¹² Ibid, p. 276. Layard did not mention who are the other Powers but we can assume them to be France, Austro-Hungarian Empire etc.

³¹³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 276.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 276.

The Ottomans' attempt at diplomacy had left them disappointed. Negotiations over the British fleet took place between Layard, the Porte, and Derby Lord three days until the Sultan finally wrote to the Queen reinforcing the negative implications that sending a fleet would risk his security and that of this Empire.³¹⁵ It would also trigger social discord among the Russians and Muslims in the Capital. The negative implications far outweighed its benefits. Layard managed to go midway, as the fleet would have already set sail, he suggested for it to anchor at Princes Islands, before the Capital.³¹⁶ The British Vice Consul at the Dardanelles reported on February 13, 1878, that the British fleet managed to proceed up the Straits without resistance from the Ottoman authorities. The other Powers having learned that a detachment of the British fleet was coming up to Istanbul requested for a *firman* for their ships to sail up with the similar purpose of protecting their subjects. The requests of the Austrians, French, Italians, Germans, and Greeks were all turned down.³¹⁷

3.7 Ottoman Military Armaments

The war with Russia informs us of the war armaments used by the Ottomans in the nineteenth century. Britain, through her Foreign Minister, Lord Derby, requested to purchase “four of the Ottomans most powerful ironclads”³¹⁸; steam-propelled warships. Jonathan Grant in his article, reveals to us that since the 15th century the Ottomans had manufactured their military and naval equipment, using foreign expertise and copying external models.³¹⁹ Several factories dealing with weaponry were established in Istanbul. The Artillery foundry (*Tophane*) manufactured and repaired cannons, mortars, wagons, mines, and projectiles and supplied the latest techniques of metal alloy. The new Gun Factory (*Tüfenkhane*) on the Bosphorus assembled muskets, carbines, pistols lances, bayonets and axes, and Imperial Gunpowder Mills (*Baruthane-i Amire*) at Bakirkoy and Yeşilkoy produced

³¹⁵ Ibid., p. 280.

³¹⁶ Kunalp (Ed), p. 292.

³¹⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 284.

³¹⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 293. The names of the ironclads were not mentioned by Layard but one of them was called Hamidiyeh and it was built in the Thames. Kunalp (Ed), p. 294.

³¹⁹ Jonathan Grant, “The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports, 1854-1914” in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Jan. 2002), accessed on 26 May 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2677343> p. 10.

far more stable compounds.³²⁰ Grant informs us that even though the quality of manufacturing fell behind during the eighteenth century, the Ottomans regained a high level of production in the early nineteenth century through the help of technical expertise from Europe. Stanford and Kural Shaw remark that while considerable progress was made, general inefficiency and lack of high standards motivated the Porte to seek imports.³²¹ The Ottomans, however, tried to minimize risks by avoiding exclusive reliance on any single supplier.³²² On the eve of the war, Grant shares that the Ottoman army appeared to use a “hodgepodge of assorted systems of guns and ammunition”.³²³ The artillery consisted of muzzleloaders, breechloaders, bronze and steel guns, rifled and smoothbore cannon. Within the same regiment, French, Prussian and English systems existed side by side. Almost all artillery units possessed four-pounder and six-pounder Krupp guns from Germany.³²⁴ The forts on the Straits had mostly heavy caliber Krupp guns, although Fort *Mecidiye* also had a pair of heavy Armstrong guns from Britain.³²⁵ In the forts on the Caucasian front, the number of domestically manufactured 15-cm guns exceeded the number of comparable Krupp guns.³²⁶ Grant mentions that the weapons used in the infantry were as varied as that of the artillery service, comprising rifles from the United States and Britain. The Ottoman infantry units had breech-loading Remingtons rifles from the United States, 600,000 English Snider rifles in their hands and 80,000,000 Snider cartridges were in store by 1875.³²⁷ Their imported Martini-Peabody repeater rifles from Rhode Island numbered 600,000 in 1876.³²⁸

This incident informs us even though Britain was producing weaponry for exports overseas, and they also wanted to be appraised of the sophistication of the Ottoman imported armaments, for further assessment and matching up, if needed.

³²⁰ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*, pp. 44-5.

³²¹ Shaw and Shaw, p. 45.

³²² Grant, p. 10.

³²³ Grant, p. 15.

³²⁴ TNA document from Captain Swaine to Mr Goschen, CAB 37_2_33, No. 00183, dated Jul 5, 1880.

³²⁵ Grant, p. 15 taken after Colonel Lennox to Istanbul, 13 February 1877, War Office (WO) 106/2, PRO; Lennox to Istanbul, 5 June 1877, WO 106/2; Edmund Ollier, *Cassell's Illustrated History of the Russo-Turkish War* (London: Cassell, Pelter and Galpin, 1880), 1: 138; *War Correspondence of the Daily News*, 27.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15 taken after Dangall to Layard, No. 9, 1878, WO 106/2; Ertem, *Kafkas Cephesi*, 41-2.

³²⁷ Grant, p. 15.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Britain's position was clear – they did not want the Russians to possess guns which they did not have.

Bouhair lines would be held against a Russian attack, provided that assistance was afforded to the Turkish troops by British ships of war; that the orders to the Commandant of the Dardanelles as to the removal and destruction of the guns in case of a Russian advance, the breeches of the weapons to be taken away if the guns themselves could not be removed; and that at the same time the Forts on the opposite side might be occupied by foreign troops. Abdülhamid could not consent to the occupation of the posts by England if she so as a neutral power. In that case, she must declare herself an ally of Turkey.³²⁹

3.8 Open Passage in the Straits

Britain's imposition on the Porte to make the Straits a "free passage"³³⁰ further tells us her ulterior motive in the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire. The Straits were her gateway to her Asian dominions, and Britain did not wish to see any hindrance to her sea travel. The British government, being convinced of Layard's influence on the Sultan further inquired whether Layard would suggest "any way of getting possession of the Forts of the Dardanelles to destroy or remove the guns in the event of the Russians being masters of the Bouhair lines."³³¹ Layard responded that since he was not competent in military issues, the issue should be assessed by those with military and naval knowledge.³³² It could also be possible that Layard had found England's request to be peculiar. Notwithstanding his personal reservation towards the request, Layard proceeded to chat with Abdülhamid on this matter. After deliberating on the issue for two days, Ahmed Vefik Pasha was sent to share the Sultan's agreement on opening the Straits, however with the conditions that assistance be offered to the Ottoman troops in a situation of a Russian attack, the breeches of the guns be removed even though the guns could not be removed and that the forts might be occupied by foreign troops.³³³ This communication of the England occupying the forts at the Dardanelles and the purchase of the best four ironclads reached the knowledge of the Russian government. Layard was under the impression that Server Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs had been disclosing the Russian government of discussions at the Porte, even of the most secret nature.³³⁴

³²⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 296.

³³⁰ Kunalp., p. 294.

³³¹ Ibid., p. 296.

³³² Ibid., p. 296.

³³³ Ibid., p. 296.

³³⁴ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 297.

3.9 Treaty of San Stefano

The Russians made onerous conditions upon learning that Porte had succumbed to England's intention to purchase the ironclads. Layard learnt about the conditions imposed by the Russians by Abdülhamid's permission. One of the Britain's paramount strategic goals was to prevent imperial Russia from gaining control over the Straits and having a base in the Mediterranean.³³⁵ The terms of the San Stefano Treaty were as follows:

The frontiers of Bulgaria to the East were to pass through Tchorlu, Loule-Bourgas to Media on the Black Sea. Russia was to retain 50,000 men in Bulgaria for two years at the expense of the Government of the Principality; All Mohammedans were to leave the new Principality and to dispose their land and of other property belonging to them within one year. All vakouk (waqif) and State property were to be confiscated; Russian officials were to make arrangements for the administration of the Principality; The Prince of Bulgaria was to be a native of the Principality; A new organic law was to be conceded to Crete in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants of the island. The Greek frontiers were to be rectified; political arrangements for Armenia in the direction of autonomy; Servia and Montenegro were to be extended to cut off Bosnia from the rest of Turkey in Europe. Austria was to be consulted as to the political arrangements to be made concerning those principalities; an indemnity was to be paid to the Bosnian and Herzegovinan refugees; much compensation was to be reimbursed to Russia by the Porte for war expenses, commercial losses, etc. The surrender of the Turkish fleet. No ship of war was to be allowed on the Danube, and the fortresses on that river in Bulgaria were to be razed.

The indemnity requested by Russia was subsequently more clearly specified by General Ignatiev. Ardahan, Kars, Bayezid and Batum with part of the province of Lazistan adjoining that port, and of Armenia to the Soghanli Dag; the Asiatic frontiers of the two empires to be settled and chosen by Russian officers; bonds to be issued by the Porte for 40,000,000, the interest and sinking fund of which were to be secured and guaranteed by the tributes of Bulgaria and Egypt, the revenue of Anatolia and the coal mines of Heraclea; and the cession to Russia of certain specified districts in the Dobrujda and of the islands in the Danubian Delta to be exchanged by her for that part of Bessarabia taken from her in 1856 and then annexed to Rumania. In addition, Prince of Bulgaria should be elected by Assembly of Bulgarian notables subject to the sanction of the Great Powers and the Porte, that the scheme for autonomy submitted at the first sitting of the Istanbul Conference for Bosnia and Herzegovina would be insisted upon as well as the reforms suggested for the other Christian provinces. Russia would demand that the Straits should be closed to the vessels of war of all nations as heretofore but should be open for their merchant ships even in times of war and that Turkey to pay the expenses of maintaining her prisoners of war in Russia and of the work required for reopening the Sulina mouth of the Danube.³³⁶

Abdülhamid attempted to employ personal favor at these distressing moments, and he wrote a particular appeal to Emperor Alexander to inform him about his intent to deploy a special envoy, Namık Pasha in the hope of obtaining

³³⁵ M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Ed), *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, (Utah, The University of Utah Press, 2011) p. 2.

³³⁶ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 303 – 304.

considerable modifications in terms. However, he was curtly told that his envoy would not be received and the idea was aborted. Abdülhamid was determined not to give up his ships to Russia nor England.³³⁷ He was even willing to sink his boat rather than to have the enemies taken them. Layard supported Abdülhamid's intent and the young Sultan was very pleased with the ambassador's support. After forcing the Ottoman Empire to sign the Treaty of San Stefano on March 3, 1878³³⁸, the Russians continued their preparations for a renewal of war³³⁹ and cruelties continued in the southern Balkans.³⁴⁰ San Stefano (Yeşilköy) was the diplomatic setting for the peace treaty discussion. According to Mustafa Tanrıverdi, the Russians intended to prove its might both to the Slavs in the Balkans and to European Powers.³⁴¹

Upon the conclusion of the San Stefano signing, Abdülhamid invited Layard over for dinner in the presence of Said Pasha, and he wished that Russia and England could go to war so that he would be able to recover the loss of his territories. Layard attempted to assuage the Sultan that though he had lost a large part of his boundaries, a wise and focused development in the Asiatic dominion would serve the Empire well. Layard did not fail to emphasize British interests in his conversation. He was then shown the treaty secretly after the ratifications were made. He later gave his comments to his government, and this was presented in the Parliament.³⁴²

Russia, possibly wanting to replenish its supplies at the aqueduct, requested for the Porte's permission to the Büyükdere Bay. Layard's memoir tells us that the Sultan's ministers, possibly the Pro-Russians encouraged the Sultan to accept the request and shared with the ambassador the draft response to the Russians. Layard advised against conceding to Russian's request. Abdülhamid followed suit and turned down the request.³⁴³ Grand Duke Nicholas requested to make a courtesy call on Abdülhamid on March 27. The Emperor had initially demanded a public and pompous entrance while entering Istanbul through Edirne, riding through the whole city and suburbs to Yıldız Kiosk. Abdülhamid expressed to Layard that it would

³³⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 315.

³³⁸ Edin Radusic, "The Ottoman Wrong Horse: The Question of Bosnia and Hercegovina in the Last Phase of the Eastern Crisis." in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, Edited by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 175.

³³⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 419.

³⁴⁰ Ömer Turan, p. 514.

³⁴¹ Mustafa Tanrıverdi, p. 451, taken after Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, p. 64.

³⁴² Kunalp (Ed), p. 317-8.

³⁴³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 323-4.

seem demeaning to him. After much discussion, Grand Duke Nicholas reached Dolmabache in his yacht Livadia. He then crossed the Bosphorus to the Palace of Beylerbeyi where the Sultan returned the visit.³⁴⁴

3.10 Abdülhamid's Private Consultations with Layard

On March 28, 1878, Layard met Abdülhamid in the residence of his mother for fear that their movements were being watched.³⁴⁵ He wrote in his memoir the following:

He related to me all that had passed between himself and the Grand Duke Nicholas, speaking with much animation and with remarkable clearness. His manners were such as to convey an impression of his sincerity and truthfulness.³⁴⁶

Then on April 2, again at his mother's residence, Abdülhamid discussed with Layard on England's policy following Lord Derby's resignation.³⁴⁷ Abdülhamid confided in Layard that the Russians demanded the use of Büyükdere for the onward embarkation of their troops.³⁴⁸ Layard advised not to accede to the requests, as that would give them the opportunity to equip their military better. Abdülhamid summoned for the construction of fortifications to protect the Capital should the Russians advance further. The Grand Duke Nicholas learned about the fortification works and accused them of distrusting the Russians. The Porte was of the opinion that having the fortifications in place would allow Istanbul to be defended for about twenty days. On April 7, 1878, again privately but this time at a "small kiosk in the little valley of Ihlamur below Yildiz",³⁴⁹ Abdülhamid asked the course that he should take. The following day, the Grand Duke gave an ultimatum until 3.30 p.m. for the discontinuation of construction of trenches and earthworks.³⁵⁰ To bring to some negotiations, again employing diplomacy, the Sultan sent Safvet Pasha to the Russian headquarters. The Grand Duke, according to Layard's memoir, was "violent

³⁴⁴ Kunalp (Ed), p. 330.

³⁴⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 330.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 330.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 339.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 339.

³⁴⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 339.

³⁵⁰ Kunalp (Ed), p. 345.

and peremptory in his language,³⁵¹ hurling that the construction was perceived as an insult and defiance to Russia, “acting in connivance” and distrust of Russia.³⁵² Britain advised the Porte to “gain time and avoid a break with the Russians” but keep them out of positions commanding the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.³⁵³ As a result of the response, the Porte discontinued the works immediately in front of the Russians but continued to proceed with areas along Bosphorus and above the Büyükdere.³⁵⁴

Abdülhamid shared with Layard secret information that 60,000 Russians would occupy all the strategic positions around Istanbul in four hours, and he bitterly complained that while the Russians were making these plans and constructing military roads to carry them out, he was forbidden to continue the works necessary for the defense of his capital.³⁵⁵ On April 19, 1878, Layard wrote that he was instructed to inform the Sultan on a written agreement “to permit the British fleet to reenter the Dardanelles if the Russians should return to the vicinity of Istanbul and Gallipoli.”³⁵⁶

3.11 Recovery of the Ottoman Forces

The Russians, on the other hand, concentrated their supplies and ammunition of war at San Stefano, within the range of the guns of the British fleet. Layard's sources informed him that the Russian forces were in shortage of supplies, sickness prevailed amongst them and that their numbers were exaggerated.³⁵⁷ The Turkish army on the other spectrum “was rapidly recovering their confidence”, in good health and ready to defend Istanbul should the Russians attempt to attack it.³⁵⁸ They were secretly continuing the construction of earthworks albeit the preemptory demand made by Grand Duke that its operations should cease.³⁵⁹ The war situation with Russia dragged on until it led to the one-month Congress of Berlin (June 13 to

³⁵¹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 345.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 345.

³⁵³ Kunalp (Ed), p. 346.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 344-6

³⁵⁵ Kunalp (Ed), p. 355.

³⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 355.

³⁵⁷ Kunalp (Ed), p. 361.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 361.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 361.

July 13, 1878) where Russia finally agreed to go to peace, but with the Ottoman Empire losing vast territories in the Balkans.



CHAPTER FOUR

NEGOTIATING PRINCIPLES, IMPERIALISM AND ALTRUISM

Sultan Abdülhamid came to the throne on August 31, 1876, which was approximately eight months later than Layard's arrival in Istanbul. Layard's memoir informs us about the intimate relationship he fostered with the Sultan and how Abdülhamid intently listened to his ideas and suggestions. Layard's memoir and reports provide an account of the reform ideas he constructed for the development of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, Abdülhamid also instituted a series of reform during his reign and some of these reforms coincided with Layard's reform ideas. According to Davide Rodogno, eighteenth-century philosophers argued that the "secular and universal claims of the human spirit went beyond maintaining and preserving order, and aimed to transform, to improve, and to regenerate humanity".³⁶⁰ The philosophers' aspiration was the abstention of war and torture, institution of religious tolerance, promotion of science and improvement of hygiene and health, development of education, abolishment of poverty and slavery, in the spirit of recognizing the fundamental rights of human beings, as citizens of the Earth.³⁶¹ Originating from France, this humanitarian spirit encompassed ideas of secular benevolence and philanthropy, which sometimes worked in accordance to or opposite to Christian charity.³⁶² In the eighteenth century, the idea involving the right to live for every individual, the practice of international police action, the organization of domestic and transnational pressure group and other philanthropic societies with humanitarian purposes had all existed.³⁶³ However in the nineteenth century, humanitarianism cut across politics and religion. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, the European Powers considered two solutions: its dismemberment (a radical remedy impossible to enforce for various reasons) or its modernization through the implementation of reforms.³⁶⁴ An intervention could be humanitarian if it was directed towards the saving of lives of particular groups of people but not when there were ulterior motives. At the same time, altruistic motives were a pretext to

³⁶⁰ Rodogno, p. 17

³⁶¹ Rodogno, p. 17, in accordance with Immanuel Kant's Cosmopolitan Law.

³⁶² Rodogno, p.6

³⁶³ Rodogno, p. 8.

³⁶⁴ Rodogno, p. 9.

enhance political, imperial, strategic interests of the intervening state (s).³⁶⁵ Given England's foreign policy towards the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, it would be quick for one to decide that Layard had intended to safeguard his home country's imperial ideas. However, his memoir and memorandums also tell us that he too possessed the humanitarian spirit to allay the suffering of people, as a fellow human. Layard actions showed that he had to straddle between altruism and imperialism.

4.1 Layard's Reform Ideas

After the war with Russia, Abdülhamid expressed to Layard his grief of losing vast territories in the Balkans. Layard pacified Abdülhamid by saying that he still had his Anatolian dominion, which would flourish through intensive reforms. Several documents in the Ottoman Archives convey us the reform ideas Layard had during his appointment. Three months upon Layard's arrival in Istanbul and during the war, he wrote the first memorandum to the Sultan.³⁶⁶ Layard mentioned that at times he deliberately wrote this to get Abdülhamid's attention. He commenced the memorandum by first reiterating that his views were written "out of sincere intentions towards the welfare and protection of the people of the Empire"³⁶⁷, and that would have a positive impact on the European public opinion. He later outlined the proposed reforms as follows.³⁶⁸

- (1) Re-establishment of the security and order within the imperial domains,
- (2) Enhancements for the financial standing of the Empire,
- (3) Measures concerning legal affairs
- (4) Conditions of the provinces and their urgent needs together with an increase in agricultural resources.

In explaining his points, Layard first described how the war exhausted the Ottoman army, which brought about disorder in all regions especially in Anatolia.

³⁶⁵ Rodogno, p 9 – 10.

³⁶⁶ BOA YEE.7.010.002. p. 5. Layard to the Porte dated July 1877. I am grateful to Dr. Aysel Yıldız for her assistance in translating the original document from Ottoman Turkish to English.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

³⁶⁸ BOA YEE.7.010.002

Layard remarked about the continued attacks and murders causing the regions to almost collapse. As people could not carry out their daily routines in agriculture and commerce, revenues of the provinces became affected negatively.³⁶⁹ Apart from these, some civil servants attempted to iron out the unpleasant issues in the administration, but the lack of soldiers posed a challenge. For this reason, an investigation about their economic conditions became necessary. Layard further suggested in his memorandum that promotion should be offered to the loyal officers while those who did not perform their job were to be introduced to the wrath of the Sultan. According to him, Van, Sivas, Diyarbakir, Mosul, and Syria, were in the dire situation.³⁷⁰ He asked for the better control of the tribes in the provinces, who were oppressing both the Sultan's Muslim and Christian subjects. Despite the Ottoman state's attempts to integrate the Circassians as soldiers, they served only as irregulars (*başıbozüks*).³⁷¹ The Circassians typically lived in small communities were forced to subsist on agriculture and plunder (allegedly), not receiving sufficient pay for their livelihoods as soldiers.³⁷² As a solution to this problem, Layard thought that a good commander in the military forces would make them obedient by imposing punishment. He also states, that "where security of life and honor are non-evident, improvements and obedience to the Centre could not be expected."³⁷³ Layard reminded Abdülhamid that since the gendarmerie had been established with the employment of British commanders, the plans to increase its effectiveness should take into effect.

Layard subsequently mentioned about the establishment of a commission to reform the Ottoman financial system. As the first Chairman of the Ottoman Bank instituted in 1856, he proposed that this committee should encompass people who were "not under the influence of local networks, free from local concerns, personal interests and completely trustworthy even though they know the ropes of the Ottoman finances very well."³⁷⁴ Layard proposed the import of Europeans who could address the dire financial situation of the Empire, under the recommendation of the

³⁶⁹ TNA Document, "Distress in Asiatic Turkey", CAB 37_2_25, No. 00030, dated May 25, 1880.

³⁷⁰ In Layard's report to his government, he deliberated at length the case in Asiatic Turkey. See TNA, CAB 37/2 dated 25 May 1880.

³⁷¹ BOA. YEE. 7. 010.020.

³⁷² Brad Dennis in "Patterns of Conflict and Violence in Eastern Anatolia" in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, Edited by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 276.

³⁷³ BOA. YEE. 7.010.020.

³⁷⁴ BOA. YEE. 7.010.020.

Foreign Powers. It is worth noting that from his memorandum, it appears that Layard often recommended the presence of Europeans in effecting control and undertaking the reform, giving an impression that according to him, the Porte did not have the capacity to embark on a reform through his people. His memorandum further suggests that the Porte should extend an invitation to those who were skilled, loyal and experienced to be appointed as *mufettish* and would be posted to Istanbul, Izmir, Selanik, and Beirut. In referring to his previous posting in Madrid, Layard pointed out how the Spanish government had faced a similar situation and mentioned about their solution. Depending upon this, Layard proposed a mature and trustworthy servant to be sent to Europe to negotiate with the creditors or their representatives and called Abdülhamid's attention to the *sarrafs* (money changers) who would use this opportunity to increase their wealth.

Layard's reform ideas, as well as his actions, could have been shaped by eighteenth-century liberalism, an ideology which he had taken a deep interest in reading when he was a young man. As one who had visited and interacted with the community in Mesopotamia, he naturally developed an affinity for the region. Layard had an excellent geographical knowledge, and his acumen for the economy and financial investments was exemplified in his further recommendations to Abdülhamid. His memorandum describes the importance of restoring the lands surrounding the Fırat River. Previously, the navigation of British and Ottoman ships had motivated progressive trade around Baghdad. To boost its commerce, Layard suggested the construction of a new road around the Persian Gulf as such successful reforms would encourage investments from foreign and local capitalist. Layard viewed that the increase of more resources in Anatolia and Arabia was necessary and supported the immediate construction of a highway in the direction of Istanbul to Baghdad leading to the Persian Gulf. Layard expressed that like Baghdad, the lands in Anatolia had been ignored. Subsequently, his memoir again gives a stable reference for Europe where he wrote, that "if these provinces partook in active exports with the capital and Europe, they would be revitalized".³⁷⁵ Back to the recommendation of the highway, he proposed that it would be able to reconnect Diyarbakir, Mardin, and Erbil; gratify the Sultan's name in Anatolia and contribute to trade in the northeastern Mediterranean region. This highway would also open two

³⁷⁵ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 409.

roads to India; one owned by the Ottoman Empire.³⁷⁶ The highway or railroad (*shinanfar*) would serve as the jugular vein to the Anatolia connecting the shores and the private lands. Layard later explained the British imperial interest in the new road: A new route to India would enhance commercial and political relations and benefit Britain greatly. The construction of the highway would attract the investments of financiers and people of distinction in Britain who were Turcophile. He believed that the capitalists would invest in education, agriculture, and source of wealth. Here, Layard's memorandum conceals what Rodogno mentions about European's claim of superiority. Layard had suggested that it would only through implementing "science and capital from Europe that the Empire would succeed".³⁷⁷

Even though Layard informed Abdülhamid that he would keep his recommendations succinct, the part of his Memorandum regarding proposed reforms was pretty long. Layard referred that some small countries attached vital importance to reform programmes, which were successfully carried out even though he did not specify their names. As earlier mentioned, the recommendations of Layard often received the Sultan's interest by his nods or him scribbling in his notebook. Layard's memorandum and memoir reflect his interest in the development of the Empire, however at the same time, British interests took a priority. Layard did what civil servants generally do best, effecting government's interests and in Layard's case, British imperialism.

Layard's memoir informs us about Abdülhamid's awareness on the reforms that were essential for the Empire but required time and money. So, could Abdülhamid have listened to Layard's reform ideas? The answer could be both a 'yes' and a 'no.' Even Richmond propounds the notion that Layard's mentor, Sir Stratford Canning could not possibly be the main influencer of the Tanzimat reforms in the Ottoman Empire. The reform ideas, according to Richmond, were essentially "motivated by the enlightened reformers" in the Ottoman Empire and it was purely coincidence that it took place during his tenure in Istanbul. He opines that no foreign representative could ever do anything like this for the state to which he was accredited. The reform movement of the Ottoman Empire was homegrown and comprehensive, "indigenous to Ottoman history" and "conceived and enacted by

³⁷⁶ Kunalalp (Ed), p. 410.

³⁷⁷ BOA. YEE. 7. 020.010.

Ottoman statesmen”.³⁷⁸ An opposite claim made by Joan Haslip³⁷⁹ states that the Tanzimat reforms were purely the work of Canning and Abdülhamid’s admiration for Britain arose from his first impressions of Canning as a child.

As Abdülhamid continued reigning for the remaining thirty years, we need to examine the literature written on the Hamidian regime.³⁸⁰

4.2 Refugee Relief

The war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia was an epoch of extreme atrocities. Layard’s memoir informs us about the sufferings of large groups of people displaced from their homes. Deprivation, homelessness and being caught by the cold winter and various diseases reflect the negative repercussions of war on civilians.³⁸¹ Groups of people traveled to the Capital to seek refuge, but the Porte was not ready for the sudden massive movement of people. As they came mostly by train, the Porte assigned a large building or *khan*, which was close to the railway station and could temporarily receive 1500 fugitives. As many as 2 million Muslims left Russia and the Balkans for Ottoman lands.³⁸² They were then distributed to different parts of Istanbul in villages, mosques.³⁸³ The Turkish writer Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil described the heartbreaking scenes of cold and poverty that engulfed these refugees in Istanbul:

Mosques, prayer halls, lodges, and ruins were all filling slowly; death was persistent in claiming chunks of this humanity, but the spaces left behind were nowhere close to being sufficient to absorb the newcomers. Wherever there was a hole or a ditch, there went mothers hugging their babies, sick old people, and children crying and holding onto their mothers’ legs – all Turkish Muslim refugees from the fires of war.³⁸⁴

Layard's memoir tells us that the Palace at Beylerbeyi and even houses of high functionaries of the state including those of the Grand Vizier and members of the Ministry as well as wealthiest Turks used to reside in them.³⁸⁵ Layard expressed:

no such war of massacre and destruction had been carried on for centuries...flourishing provinces had been reduced to a desert, and populations of different races and creed, which

³⁷⁸ Richmond, p. 2.

³⁷⁹ Joan Haslip, *The Sultan*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973)

³⁸⁰ An excellent reference for this period would be a book, *Well-Protected Domains* written by Selim Deringil.

³⁸¹ TNA Document, “Distress in Asiatic Turkey”, CAB 37_2_25, p. 4 dated May 25, 1880.

³⁸² Reşat Kasaba, p. 117 taken after Kocacık, “XIX. Yüzyılda Göçmen Köylerine İlişkin Bazı Yapı Planları,” p.419.

³⁸³ Richmond, p. 233.

³⁸⁴ Reşat Kasaba, p. 117 taken after Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Kırk Yıl* (Istanbul: Varlık, 1987), p.80.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

have hitherto lived in peace with each other, have been taught the lesson of mutual extermination.³⁸⁶

Azmi Özcan's book titled *Pan-Islamism* reveals the Official Ottoman Register, *Defter-i Iane-i Hindiye* which reveals organizations and individuals in India who were active in raising donations for the war refugees.³⁸⁷ Indian Muslims organized themselves into societies to raise funds for the displaced Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, calling themselves *Anjuman-i Islam*, the *Anjuman-i Teyyid-i Turkiye* (the Society of Aid to Turkey), and the *Meclis-i Mueyyid-i Islamiyye* (the Assembly of Islamic Aid).³⁸⁸ According to Özcan, the available data suggest that all the sections of the Muslim community came to the aid, to the extent that some women sold off their jewelry to contribute to the charity. Pro-Ottoman sentiments were active among the Indian Muslims as they revered the Ottoman Sultan as the caliph. Accordingly, they felt it was their responsibility to assist as they thought the Empire had no ally in Europe. The Ottoman register shows that a total of 124,843 Ottoman liras were collected towards the end of the war. Apart from Muslims, Hindus also supported the Ottomans because they were an Asian power and deserved help in its hour of need.³⁸⁹

The ravages of the war also brought about public outcry in Britain. The memoirs of both Layard and his wife provide a stimulating portrayal of refugee relief exhibited in the nineteenth-century society. Albeit having his hands full providing "one-stop advice" to Abdülhamid and maintaining communications with England and his counterparts, Layard took a keen interest in his wife's efforts for refugee relief. From a startup of 1000 pounds contributed by Lady Bournett Count and 80,000³⁹⁰ pounds from the Strafford House Fund founded by Duke of Sutherland³⁹¹, Lady Layard together with Major de Winton, who was one of the military attaches, and Mr. Masters, an Englishman took upon themselves to spearhead the making of bandages, mattresses and its covers, jackets, pillows, bolsters, split pads, soldiers jackets, flannel bandages, slippers out of cork soles, and clothes, which were the primary necessities required of those affected by war. On top of making the above

³⁸⁶ Kuneralp (Ed), p., 141.

³⁸⁷ Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, p. 69.

³⁸⁸ *Defter-i Iane-i Hindiye*, 46, 54, quoted by Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism* p. 69-70.

³⁸⁹ Özcan, p. 70 taken after Benares Akhbar, 5 April 1877, L/R/5/54; Guzarat Mitra, 6 Dec 1877, L/R/5/131, *JOR*.

³⁹⁰ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 142.

³⁹¹ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 141.

items, they also undertook distribution of money and things to Consuls at Rustchuk, Edirne, and Filibe for the relief of refugees. Lady Layard rallied the assistance of other Embassy staff, the British families in Istanbul as well as those who passed the Embassy in producing those items.³⁹²

The cold winter and snow posed a challenge to medical care. In her diary, Lady Layard wrote that when she visited the mosque at St Sophia with her husband, smallpox, typhoid and other diseases had already begun to spread.³⁹³ Some of these could be passed through physical contact, and for this reason, the complete isolation of affected people became required. To overcome this crisis, the Layards set up a quarantine hospital in Kavak for the segregation of patients.³⁹⁴ The hospital consisted of 8 little houses with four rooms, which stood on one side of the valley and the ash houses, kitchens, pharmacy on the other.³⁹⁵ To cater to the increasing number of infected people, Layard wrote that Ahmed Vefik Pasha turned a college building into a smallpox hospital.³⁹⁶ A lady of English descent, Miss Edith Camara also built a hospital dedicated to women and children.³⁹⁷ English gentlemen distributed bread, soup, and charcoal.³⁹⁸

The works of Lady Layard as the President of the Ladies Association and her team was remarkable. Lady Layard's diary tells us that her team never hesitated at any request made by any of their representatives or even Ahmed Vefik Pasha. She wrote that Mr. Fawcett, the British Consul General had reported about poor refugees in Tekirdağ and Edirne who were walking around naked. Mr. Fawcett begged for clothes to be sent to them. As Mr. Fawcett already had some prototypes ready, Mrs. Fawcett and Lady Layard made 237 shirts so that Mr. Fawcett could carry them to Rodosto.³⁹⁹ When Major de Winton requested for some arm badges to distinguish

³⁹² Kunalalp (Ed), p. 141.

³⁹³ Kunalalp (Ed.), p.260.

³⁹⁴ Sinan Kunalalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 50.

³⁹⁵ Sinan Kunalalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 50.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

³⁹⁸ Sinan Kunalalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 73.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

them from the others, the team expedited with no complaints.⁴⁰⁰ On Ahmed Vefik Pasha's request, two bales of clothing and bandages were posted to Bazardjik.⁴⁰¹

It is also during a challenging period that how society responds to crises is observed. Layard's memoir informs us regarding the impressions of the Englishmen on the Ottomans during his rounds at the hospital. In his report to his government, Layard wrote, "My own experience of the refugees...they have conducted themselves well. The majority of the refugees will make good colonists, and if properly cared for, will settle down and become well-ordered peasantries".⁴⁰² He stated that they spoke highly of their kind and showed considerate behavior. Another statement about their situation was made by the Chief Doctor, who was an Armenian and knew French. He said that "the wounded were all quiet and contented, not a murmur, not a groan, not a word was heard, they were comfortably lodged, and all was very clean".⁴⁰³

The relief efforts did not stop when the war was over. Lady Layard highlighted the fact that people needed help to recover from the ill effects of war and carry on with their livelihood. One of the recovery initiatives Lady Layard implemented was teaching women how to spin wool and knit socks, under the tutelage of a German lady.⁴⁰⁴ Their efforts bore fruit. The women picked up good enough skill that one day Layard came home with two full suits, which he bought from a fugitive for a lira.⁴⁰⁵ Apart from these, the Embassy organized a Diplomatic Corps Concert to raise funds for those found wounded in the war.⁴⁰⁶

The efforts of British Embassy for the refugee relief bring along the question of whether the attempts made by Lady Layard were genuinely out of humanity or they were to please the vast Indian Muslim public who denounced Britain's lack of support. Lending reference to Richmond's opinion of Canning's support for Ottoman domestic reform, as well as for Ottoman international peace, Richmond remarks that Canning's support was not inspired by sentiment for the country of its peoples - although he was on many occasions throughout this career motivated by genuine humanitarian concern. Instead, it was purely a calculation of British foreign policy

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 82.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., p. 60.

⁴⁰² TNA, CAB 37/2, Layard to Foreign Office, 25 May 1880.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 73.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 258.

relating to the so-called Eastern Question where the policy was intended to promote the stabilization of the Ottoman Empire in the hope of creating a strategic balance between it and the Russian Empire which would prevent war between the two powers. The other goal of the policy was to check Russian expansion to maintain the British imperial route to India, which ran through Ottoman Anatolia and Egypt.⁴⁰⁷ Layard seemed to have done it for the same reason as his mentor Canning. He wrote

I undertook this work cheerfully, for it was one of humanity and moreover I was anxious to give as public proof as possible that in England there was as much compassion for the misfortunes and sufferings of Musulmans as for those of the Christians. I believe that the impression produced upon the Mohammedans would at the same time be of no little advantage to our interests and influence especially amongst the Musulman populations of our Indian Empire who were known to have sincere sympathy for their coreligionists in Turkey and to be much concerned about the issue of the war.⁴⁰⁸

4.3 Ottoman Bureaucratic Practices

4.3.1 Intelligence and Information Gathering

The advent of the telegram accelerated communication across continents but not without difficulties. Layard was deciphering the Morse codes himself but often with the help of his wife. His memoir tells us that, apart from acquiring information through official dispatches, telegrams, and meetings, some of the information was relayed to him and some paid by him. His memoir narrates to us his frustration that whatever he wrote, which was meant for Cabinet consumption got to the ears of his colleague in the diplomatic corp.⁴⁰⁹ This was apparently common in the nineteenth century. It was also popularly mentioned that the Russian government spent a considerable sum annually paying remuneration for spies so that they could be intimated with the latest news. The Ottomans even did not want to lose out on information. Cengiz Kırılı in his article shares with us how coffeehouses were made way for intelligence gathering judging from the spy reports available in the Prime Ministers Archives.⁴¹⁰ He informs us that in an illiterate society, the oral became

⁴⁰⁷ Kunalp (Ed.), p. 695.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 143.

⁴⁰⁹ Kunalp (Ed), p. 131.

⁴¹⁰ Cengiz Kırılı, "Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire," in *Public Islam and the Common Good*, ed. Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman, Brill Academic Publishers, 2004, pp. 75-97, accessed on 22 Dec 2013, http://www.fatih.edu.tr/~ayasar/HIST349/Cengiz-Kirli_En.pdf.

written, projecting the realities on the ground.⁴¹¹ The work by Kırılı makes us question the reliability of Layard's memoir when he wrote only niceties about the Ottoman society. It could just mean two possibilities: firstly, he was too occupied handling communication concerning the war and issues on British subjects and secondly, he knew that his reports would eventually appear in the newspapers and wanted to shift the public opinion of the British to one that was more sympathetic to the Ottomans, he chose to project only the positive attributes.

4.3.2 Image-Building through Decorations and Gifts

Gift giving, a tool used in Ottoman diplomacy ran deep.⁴¹² Despite being busy with the war, Layard's contact with Abdülhamid informs us how they valued this tradition by extending gifts to Layard and his wife. Layard's memoir on the other hand never makes any mention about offering gifts to Abdülhamid or any of the statesmen he forged a relationship with. To acknowledge the contributions of Lady Layard, the Sultan conferred the decoration titled "*Nishan Shevakat*" (The Order of Mercy),⁴¹³ for her humanitarian efforts during the Russo-Turkish War.⁴¹⁴ The decorations were "a manifestation of the integrative symbolic code" given "as a form of investment in the goodwill it hoped they would foster in the recipient."⁴¹⁵ Layard's memoir informs us that spouses of ambassadors were also hoping to get a similar decoration from the Sultan. Hence, receiving such honors was to be considered as an honor in the nineteenth century. In 1878, Abdülhamid awarded Ottoman insignia to three of the seven French correspondents residing in Istanbul, possibly as a "royal favor" so that they would make only positive reporting of the Empire.

⁴¹¹ Kırılı, p. 76.

⁴¹² Cihan Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks, Imperial Warfare and Diplomacy in the Islamic World*, (New York, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014). Muslu has written substantively about gift-giving as an imperial diplomacy diplomatic tool.

⁴¹³ Kunalp (Ed.), p. 498.

⁴¹⁴ Kunalp (Ed.), p. 498.

⁴¹⁵ Deringil, p. 35.

4.3.3 Absolutism versus Consultation

Many historians had written about the absolute character of the Hamidian regime, that the Sultan took decisions in his comprehension and controlled the daily affairs of the state. Gürpınar writes that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was redundant during the Hamidian period. While that could have been the case from a long-term study, in the early part of his reign, Abdülhamid had been seen as consultative, at least according to the Layard's memoir. In one instance, Layard wrote, "the Sultan commanded his Ministers to sleep at Yıldız Kiosk" so that he might "consult them at all hours of the night and day."⁴¹⁶ If Abdülhamid had intended to have the decisions to himself, he would not require his ministers to huddle together in his kiosk. Layard's memoir tells us that during his tenure in Istanbul, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in a practical operation. Musurus Pasha, who had been sent to the London office, telegraphed directly to the Foreign Office at the Porte to update his conversation or meeting with Lord Derby. Musurus did not write directly to Abdülhamid but to Safvet Pasha, who was then Minister for Foreign Affairs. Safvet then updated Abdülhamid. It was only at the height of the war that Abdülhamid consulted Layard in private and in the presence of Said Pasha. It could be expected for Abdülhamid to take up this issue personally as it was a natural response, for it concerned the survival of his Empire and him being its leader.

⁴¹⁶ Kunalalp (Ed), p. 232.

4.4 Palace Factions

The memoir by Layard is also crucial for us to get some insights into the palace factions or which Layard often mentioned as “palace intrigues” in the late nineteenth century Ottoman Empire. In Layard’s second year of appointment (1878), some changes were made in the Turkish Ministry. Rauf Pasha was made Minister of War and “English” Said Pasha the Minister of Marine. Layard found them both to be honest, intelligent and active. They were “still hampered by the pernicious influences and intrigues that again prevailed in the palace”⁴¹⁷ and which enabled Mahmud Damad Pasha, though the brother-in-law to Abdülhamid apparently had played a role in the dethronement of Sultan Murad before Abdülhamid came to the throne. In the nineteenth century, it was a norm for high-ranking political leaders to be married to the sultan's daughters and sisters and emerged as heads of factional alliances that united influential figures from the palace and the ruling elite.⁴¹⁸ Abdülhamid probably knew of these other mischiefs but might prefer to let him be to safeguard his position. Additionally, it appeared from Layard's memoir that the ministerial makeup changed too frequently which logically would not allow any minister to follow through a particular policy or reform at hand.

In one incident, Ahmed Vefik Pasha was driven to resign as governor of Adrianople as he had opposed to the execution of the Bulgarian prisoners and had attempted to conciliate the Christians and Muslims. Cemil Pasha, son of Namık Pasha who was the chief intriguer against him, had succeeded him. Cemil Pasha as young, inexperienced and vain, Layard argued that although speaking French with fluency, very plausible and with polished European manners, he was “ignorant, pretentious and a confirmed intriguer” but succeeded in gaining the favorable opinion of the British.⁴¹⁹

Layard highlighted a critical incident involving the appointment of negotiators for the Berlin Congress (1878). In planning the deployment of a meaningful negotiation, Abdülhamid had appointed Sadık Pasha to be assisted by Caratheodori Pasha also known as Alexander Pasha as Second Commissioner (a Greek with Bulgarian origin). Abdülhamid after selecting him changed his mind and

⁴¹⁷ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 218.

⁴¹⁸ Leslie Pierce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford, 1993), pp 21 – 5, 58 – 79.

⁴¹⁹ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 218.

made Caratheodori the First Plenipotentiary. Caratheodori was raised to the rank of *müisir* and named Minister of Commerce with a seat in the Cabinet. He had for some time filled the office of Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and had for many years employed in very confidential posts at the Porte. Layard provided essential details about his career and views of Caratheodori:

Initially, from Adrianople, he was a man of astute mind, well versed in all the arts of his coreligionists, a highly skilled diplomatist of the intrigue, thoroughly understanding the character of the Ottoman, and with the broadest knowledge of all affairs connected with the domestic and foreign policy of the Ottoman Empire. He was of good manners and handsome appearance, with refined and subtle features, spoke several European and Oriental languages, and had diplomatic experience having at one time represented his sovereign at Rome.⁴²⁰

Layard felt though Caratheodori Pasha had the qualities, the latter did not originate from Istanbul so he might not be able to defend the Empire competently. He raised an issue with Abdülhamid who replied that since he had put aside Sadık Pasha, his only choice was Safvet. The former could not travel due to poor health. Abdülhamid actually wished to prove that he was resolved to act upon the principles of the Constitution, which abolished all distinctions of creed in the public service. Caratheodori was one of European and Christian origin and General Mehmet Ali to be assisted by Sadullah Bey. Abdülhamid had chosen the first on account of his intimate knowledge of the Balkan Ottoman provinces and the other in consequence of his diplomatic experience. Abdülhamid said Sadık Pasha's abilities had been overrated, for which "he moved too fast, to introduce change into the country for which it was not ready. He expected that his own rights would be equally respected by his own subjects". Abdülhamid had lost confidence in Sadık Pasha because he had reasons to know that the statesman had intended to interfere with and restrict his prerogatives. Layard's earlier impressions appeared to be balanced. Being a Greek and a Christian, Caratheodori Pasha did not have the influence and authority at the Congress, and as a Greek, he was timid and irresolute in dealing with the questions, which affected Greece and the Greeks, fearful of committing himself or exciting the dissatisfaction of either. Mehmed Ali Pasha received little consideration as he was a German and a renegade. Caratheodori Pasha's failure at the Berlin Congress resulted in his removal from service.⁴²¹ This encounter informs us that Abdülhamid

⁴²⁰ Ibid., p. 416.

⁴²¹ Kunalalp, (Ed), pp. 416-7.

had attempted to implement the idea of Ottomanism, where every individual was to be treated equally regardless of their race and religion and being a leader of the Empire had to lead the way. He possibly wanted to also impress upon the other Powers that he strove to honor the Article 32 (4) of the Treaty of Paris (1856) where “Christian subjects of the Porte must be assured their religious and political rights, Austria, France, Great Britain, and the Porte now agree and Russia must agree, also”.⁴²²

4.5 Relations with Ottoman Statesmen

Layard's memoir continually mentions about Abdülhamid's ministers or Abdülhamid's impressions of his ministers as “want of energy”, “lacking in courage”, dire need of men who are resolute however in the same vein, the memoir mentions of Ottoman statesmen whom he forged close relations with and who were also in the near contact with Abdülhamid.

It will appear subsequently in the Layard's memoir that Said Pasha was often present in his courtesy calls with Abdülhamid and was one of the Ottoman statesmen who had a close rapport with Abdulhamid. Sometimes Abdülhamid would send Said Pasha to send messages to Layard privately. Said Pasha was Minister of Interior in 1876 and then nominated as Minister of Justice in 1878. He was later raised to the position of *müşir*. Heralding the Grand Vizierate position for nine times, he was also named “Marechal du Palais”.⁴²³ Born in Erzurum, Said Pasha attended *medrese* education and in private study went through Western sciences and French. Head of Abdülhamid's household, he studied for some years at the Royal Military College of Woolwich where he had acquired knowledge of the English language, which he spoke and wrote with ease. Thoroughly trustworthy, so straightforward, patriotic and liberal in his views, and possessed so much good and practical common sense that the Sultan could not have had a better adviser. Layard's memoir described him as extremely industrious, learned, honest and intelligent. Distantly connected to the Imperial family by marriage, his wife was the sister of Mahmud Pasha, the Damat, or bro-in-law of the Sultan. Layard's memoir described Said Pasha as:

⁴²² www.archive.org viewed on 29 Nov 2015.

⁴²³ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 609.

A man of small stature and somewhat mean appearance. Affected a modest and deferential bearing in his intercourse with the representatives of the Foreign Powers and with much of his fellow countrymen who had any position or rank. When in the presence of the Sultan he was cringing and obsequious to exaggeration and when invited to sit down in H.M.'s (Sultan Abdülhamid) presence would reduce himself to the smallest compass with his head almost buried between his shoulders, his hands clasped and pressed upon his stomach, and his feet gathered up under him. When he stood before H.M. it was with downcast looks and in the humblest and most servile of attitudes but he had a bright, restless eye, which followed every movement and appeared to watch with the greatest curiosity all that passed around him. I was much struck by the singular watchfulness of his dark eyes piercing from under half-closed lids in the following slyly my every movement and every word.⁴²⁴

Said Pasha, according to Layard possessed very considerable natural intelligence. Ercuman Kuran writes with praise of Said Pasha's administrative ability.⁴²⁵ Bringing forward Said Pasha's first memorandum, the Ottoman statesman had proposed financial reform to improve the organization of the army, legislative change in the central and provincial governments to address the trend for autonomy, and education to strengthen allegiance of Muslim subjects to the Sultan. Kuran further highlights the large-scale reform Said Pasha undertook to establish directorates of education in the provinces to supervise new schools. After being appointed as Minister of Justice in 1879, Kuran shares that Said Pasha achieved many judicial reforms by promulgating laws stabilizing procedural rules for criminal and civil matters.⁴²⁶ To improve the Ottoman Nizamiye courts, the Office of Public Prosecutor was created.⁴²⁷ The changes resulted in the development of the modern judicial system, which eliminated many defects in the administration of justice.⁴²⁸ Said Pasha did not agree to the policy of Ottomanism, believing that creating an Ottoman nation through a form of different ethnic communities was doomed to failure.⁴²⁹ He preferred a policy based on strengthening the loyalty of Muslim subjects in the Empire to the Sultan and caliph.⁴³⁰ He too opposed the project of Abdülhamid for accepting Arabic as an official language for the Ottoman states.⁴³¹ It was probably for this reason that he was initially posted out as governor of Angora

⁴²⁴ Kunalalp (Ed), p. 609.

⁴²⁵ Ercumend Kuran, "Küçük Said Pasa (1840-1914) as a Turkish Modernist" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Apr. 1970), pp. 124-132, Cambridge University Press, accessed on 3 Nov 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/162436>.

⁴²⁶ Kuran, p. 129

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 129.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., p. 129.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., p. 131

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. 131.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 131

after being alleged as the principal cause of ministerial change. But he requested to be nearer the capital and was appointed a vali of Bursa.

Safvet Pasha was the Minister for Foreign Affairs (1877 – 1878) who came from the circle of Mustafa Reşid Pasha was the other Ottoman statesman whom Layard had developed a close rapport with. Spoke French fluently, he had commenced his career in the foreign department of the Porte, filling the important post of First Interpreter of Sultan Abdul Majid, father to Abdülhamid. Layard found him honest, trustful and just and sincerely liberal in his political and religious opinions. Though Layard found him “had calm and equal temperament but he lacked energy, courage and resources which were necessary in this trying period”.⁴³² Notwithstanding his lack of energy, Layard commended the diplomatic experience Safvet Pasha possessed saying he “had more experience in the conduct of diplomatic negotiations than any other statesmen. His honesty was above suspicion. Thoroughly trustworthy and the interest and honor of his Empire were considered safe in his hands”.⁴³³ Later made the General inspector of all ministerial departments, he was tasked to superintend and push forward the introduction of the promised reforms with a seat in the cabinet and charged with the duty of communicating directly with the Sultan upon all public affairs. Layard was in discussion with Safvet Pasha on the issues of Bulgarian prisoners who had gone on a rampage,⁴³⁴ Montenegrins⁴³⁵ and possible increase of territories Thessaly and Epirus to Greece.⁴³⁶ Safvet Pasha resigned in Jul 1877, but like other ministers who after leaving could continue to be reinstated into government, he was made President of Council of State in February 1878. Given his diplomatic experience, Safvet Pasha represented the Empire in Berlin Congress on 16th February 1878. Layard was privileged to know the conditions of peace stipulated by General Ignatiev, the Russian representative though the negotiations were meant to be kept a secret between the two governments, on Abdülhamid’s consensus. Given Safvet Pasha’s continuous support for the British policy, Layard had proposed that his government confer him the Grand Cross of the

⁴³² Kunalp, (Ed), p. 301.

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 301.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., p. 106.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 391.

Star of India, which he received at the British Embassy in a quiet setting.⁴³⁷ However, just before his receipt of the award, Abdülhamid felt that Safvet Pasha often procrastinated in carrying out instructions. Layard shared the sultan's views. He was in discussion with Layard on the issue of the suppression of slave trade, the appointment of Baker Pasha to a high military command in Northern Iraq but they all went to a standstill. As a result, Safvet Pasha was sent out to Paris as the Empire's ambassador.

Hayreddin Pasha replaced Safvet Pasha's position as Grand Vizier Pasha.⁴³⁸ A Libyan Sheikh Muhammed Zafir Efendi who was residing in Istanbul and knew Hayreddin Pasha had presented Sultan Abdulhamid a copy of Hayreddin Pasha's book.⁴³⁹ According to Layard's memoir, this sheikh was one of the sheiks attached to the imperial household. A Circassian origin and later raised in Tunisia⁴⁴⁰, Hayreddin Pasha, also known as Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi or Tunuslu Hayreddin Pasha had, according to Wasti developed a book that attempted to reconcile Islamic tenets with modern civilization. Hayreddin Pasha presents a survey of progress made in the fields of philosophy, culture, art, and science in Europe from the age of Charlemagne until the nineteenth century. Wasti who had taken the translation of Hayreddin Pasha's book from Brown⁴⁴¹ further writes that the book was to serve a twofold purpose: to rouse conservative Muslim politicians and religious leaders who resisted change, and to convince European politicians who discounted the strength of the Islamic community.⁴⁴² Hayreddin Pasha wrote that if the countries of Islam were to survive and not to be taken over by the European powers, they would have to fight Europe with its weapons of rational thought, its institutions, and its technology.⁴⁴³ As Hayreddin Pasha thought that it was necessary to learn from Europe and for which an adoption of technique seemed inevitable, it probably tells us why Layard placed

⁴³⁷ Ibid., p. 514.

⁴³⁸ Syed Tanvir Wasti, "A Note on Tunuslu Hayreddin Pasha" in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 36:1, 1-20, DOI: 10.1080/00263200008701294 published on 6 Dec 2006.

⁴³⁹ Wasti, p. 11.

⁴⁴⁰ Wasti tells us that Hayreddin Pasha was probably born in 1822 though it is not conclusive.

⁴⁴¹ L.C. Brown, *The Surest Path: The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth-Century Muslim Statesman* (Cambridge, MA, 1967). In his article, Wasti also considered numerous works of Green, Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Princeton, 1962), Article on Hayreddin Pasha by Th. Henzel, *Islam Ansiklopedisi [Encyclopedia of Islam]*, (Ankara, 1993), Vol. V-1, pp. 392-3 and Ibnülemin Mahmud Kemal Inal (1870-1957), *Son Sadrazamlar [Last Grand Viziers]*, 3rd edition (Istanbul, 1982), among others.

⁴⁴² Wasti, p. 7.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., p. 7.

Hayreddin Pasha in his good books. Layard narrated in his memoir how personally impressed he was with Hayreddin Pasha's intelligence and liberal views, as well as his favorable position towards England.⁴⁴⁴ Before the brief appointment of eight months as the Grand Vizier, which he reluctantly accepted, Hayreddin Pasha headed the 'Financial Reform Commission' of the Ottoman Empire, given his experience with the 'International Finance Commission' in Tunisia.⁴⁴⁵ During the crucial aftermath of the Russo-Turkish war, together with Caratheodory Pasha, Hayreddin Pasha conducted skillful negotiations with the Russians that brought to Russian evacuation of territory, an exchange of prisoners as well as the prospects of peace.⁴⁴⁶ Hayreddin Pasha was also responsible for bringing about the Bosnia-Herzegovina settlement by the treaty of Novi Bazar in 1879 and the Montenegro and Cyprus issues.⁴⁴⁷ Although Hayreddin Pasha had arrived in Istanbul "not well acquainted with the norms of the Ottoman Empire and also spoke terrible Turkish"⁴⁴⁸, according to Layard, the biographical survey made by Wasti, informs us that Hayreddin Pasha was an able statesman with a marked scholarly attribute. One with unwavering principles, he too did not give in to the palace cliques that were prevalent in those times.

The introduction of Edhem, Said, Safvet and Hayreddin Pashas inform us of Ottoman political leaders who appeared to be on favorable terms with Abdülhamid. However, another high-profile officer whom Layard forged deep relations with, was not considered to be in the similar situation. Midhat Pasha in many narratives was known to have caused the deposition of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861 – 1876), the younger brother to Sultan Abdulmecid and indirectly caused Abdulhamid to be drafted into power. When Midhat Pasha was appointed the Grand Vizier on 19 December 1876,⁴⁴⁹ People shouted 'Long live the Sultan and Midhat!'⁴⁵⁰ It was said that Midhat Pasha had made Abdulhamid accept the constitution declared on 23 Dec 1876, before inviting Abdulhamid in taking the throne.⁴⁵¹ Midhat Pasha's public popularity

⁴⁴⁴ Kunalalp, p. 515.

⁴⁴⁵ Wasti, p, 11.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁴⁸ Kunalalp, p. 515.

⁴⁴⁹ Davison, p. 381.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 317 taken after Zaydan, Tarâjim, pp. 256-257.

⁴⁵¹ Davison provides the exchanges that transpired between Midhat Pasha and Abdulhamid in Ottoman Reform, p. 381.

irated Abdülhamid, and the latter then sent him into exile to Paris. Layard's knowledge about Midhat Pasha came from his predecessors and on arriving in Istanbul tried to convince the Sultan to bring Midhat Pasha to the Porte or possibly to Crete. Before his exile, Midhat Pasha had served three times as governor of the provinces of Bulgaria, Danube, and Baghdad, and twice as grand vizier⁴⁵² Instead, Midhat Pasha was posted to Damascus. Layard's memoir informs us that Midhat Pasha was an excellent candidate to effect reforms in Syria. Midhat Pasha had written to the Porte on his plans for reform but had received a lukewarm response. Despite the unfavorable reaction, Midhat Pasha persisted with his ideas and started to reform the civil service. Among his grit-teeth initiatives included eradication of corruption. He dismissed members of the Council of Administration in the Ba'labak district because they took bribes⁴⁵³ and Holo Pasha, the corrupt district head of Biqua.⁴⁵⁴ Najib E. Saliba in his article on Midhat Pasha's achievements informs us that Midhat Pasha introduced a regular pay system for the civil service and reduced the number of tax collectors.⁴⁵⁵ He too abolished the departure of the hajj or pilgrim's caravan from Damascus, which had been a practice for centuries. Traditionally, Damascus had served as the departure points for the pilgrims from Iran and the Northern provinces (Istanbul, Syria, and Iraq) in their annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The expenses for the caravans were born by the Damascus treasury, costing between 100,000 and 120,000 liras per year. To save the treasury from incurring these costs, Midhat Pasha proposed that the caravans take off directly by sea from Istanbul to Jeddah.⁴⁵⁶ Midhat Pasha, who had ruled justly, had earned the respect of both Christians and Muslims in his 20 months of the governorship in Syria. Every successful endeavor will meet with challenges. Midhat Pasha attracted the hatred of conservative Muslims who disbelieved in his position inequality between Muslims and Christians, and those who thought that he was a product of European ideas and loved authority.⁴⁵⁷ Abdülhamid, quite apart from his wariness of Midhat Pasha and

⁴⁵² Najib E. Saliba, "The Achievements of Midhat Pasha as Governor of the Province of Syria, 1878-1880" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 307 – 323, (Cambridge University Press, Oct 1978), accessed on 28 Oct 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/162767> , p. 307, quoted after FO 195/1263, Jago to Malet, Damascus, 14 April 1879; AAE2 21, Tricou to Waddington, Beirut, 27 November 1878. (AAE = Archives des Affaires Etrangères)

⁴⁵³ Najib E. Saliba, p. 309 made after FO 78/2985, Jago to Layard, Damascus, 31 December 1878.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 309, taken after FO 195/1262, Jago to Layard, Damascus, 15 February 1879.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 310, taken after FO 195/1263, Jago to Malet, Damascus, 14 April 1879.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 310.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 317.

due to his strictness in Islamic principles had commented on Midhat Pasha's drinking habits. Layard narrated:

The Sultan frequently spoke to me in this sense, and indulged in-jokes at Midhat's expense, alluding to his adoption of European customs, habits, and dress, and especially to his fondness for wine and brandy which, with H.M. was an unpardonable sin.⁴⁵⁸

Abdülhamid knew of Layard's close relationship with Midhat Pasha. In one occasion, Layard wrote that the Sultan had pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket and jokingly mentioned to Layard, "Here I have a letter from your friend which proves that he is 'rouge'"⁴⁵⁹.

Above all Ottoman statesmen, we can confidently admit that Layard formed the most intimate rapport with Ahmed Vefik Pasha for the latter was his longtime friend. Layard's memoir, which tended to be full of political overtures, described quite extensively his relations with Ahmed Vefik Efendi. Layard's story about Ahmed Vefik Pasha appears to be livelier, akin to his first autobiography, which was written more than 30 years before he embarked on the memoir. This section also considers the Ph.D. dissertation of Beatrice Saint Laurent who has dedicated a chapter about Ahmed Vefik Pasha.⁴⁶⁰ We also know that Ahmed Vefik Pasha's correspondences had survived through the work of Francois Georgeon.⁴⁶¹ Ahmed Vefik Pasha was born in Istanbul on 6 July 1823 and came from a family of interpreters. He was the grandson of Bulgarzade Yahya Nadii, a dragoman of the Porte who converted to Islam and according to historian Shamszade Ata Allah Efendi was of Jewish origin.⁴⁶² Having a familiar face during an overseas posting made Layard's adjustment to Istanbul a smooth one. Lady Layard narrated in her memoir how Ahmed Vefik had given Turkish lessons to her when she arrived.⁴⁶³ Layard had met Ahmed Vefik Efendi when he was 16 or 17 years of age. Describing him as an excellent Turkish, Persian and Greek scholar, Ahmed Vefik was well versed in

⁴⁵⁸ Kunalp (Ed), p. 496.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 496.

⁴⁶⁰ Beatrice St. Laurent, "Ottomanization and Modernization. The architectural and urban development of Bursa and the genesis of tradition, 1839-1914.", (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1989)

⁴⁶¹ François Georgeon, *Abdulhamid II: Le Sultan Calife* (Paris: Fayard, 2003)

⁴⁶² Encyclopedia of Islam, Vol I, p. 298. Written as Ahmad Wafik Pasha.

⁴⁶³ Sinan Kunalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 44.

Oriental Literature. Layard and Ahmed Vefik together found joy in indulging in the best English classics like Gibbon, Robertson, and Hume and studied political economy in those of Adam Smith and Ricardo and also read Shakespeare and Dickens. Layard's autobiography relays to us how, through their friendship, he had learned the intricacies of Turkish life and habits, which came useful to him subsequently in connecting with functionaries. Layard spoke fondly about the tiny cottage Ahmed Vefik lived with his family, his two daughters, and son, where it was attached to the old tower of the early Turkish castle and where he said his last breath on April 2, 1891.⁴⁶⁴ Layard also knew his father, Ruhuddin Mehmet Efendi, a Greek descent yet “polished, upright and dignified with Turkish gentleman of the old school, simple in his habits, hospitable, charitable and exercising all the virtues that his religion commends and commands”.⁴⁶⁵ Layard described Ahmed Vefik’s father as one who “had quick and prompt intelligence, close to a genius”.⁴⁶⁶ Ruhuddin Mehmet Efendi was made the Charge d' Affairs to Paris, and it was during his father’s posting in Paris that Ahmed Vefik delved into French language and culture. On his return to Istanbul, Ahmed Vefik was appointed as the first Muslim to hold the position of dragoman in the newly formed Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Odasi*) of Mahmut II.⁴⁶⁷ By his abilities and knowledge, Ahmed Vefik Pasha made a rapid career. He was sent as special commissioner to the Danubian provinces and subsequently to the *Pashalec* (province) of Bursa where he was tasked to hear out the complaints of the inhabitants.⁴⁶⁸ Layard described Ahmed Vefik’s disposition as follows:

His uncompromising honesty and patriotism, his undisguised contempt for the corrupt and ignorant officials by whom he was surrounded, and his impetuous and sarcastic speech made him many enemies and had prevented him from attaining a position in which his recognized integrity, his considerable knowledge and his capacity for business might have enabled him to be of real use to his country. Sir Stratford Canning and the foreign diplomatists, for the most part, disliked him for his outspokenness, for his brusque manners and for the air of equality he assumed when treating with them on public affairs.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

⁴⁶⁵ Kunalalp (Ed.), p. 149.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 53 – 57.

⁴⁶⁷ Beatrice made the following notes in her dissertation at p.51. His grandfather's name was Bulgarzade Yahya Naci. J. Deny, in his Encyclopedia of Islam, 2, article indicates that the historian Şanizade ‘Ata Allah Efendi indicates that he was of Greek origin and A. D. Mordtmann, *Sambul und das Modern Turckenthum* (Leipzig, 1877), 167-173, suggests that he was Jewish.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 149.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 149.

Describing Ahmed Vefik Pasha as impatient and overly critical,⁴⁷⁰ Beatrice St. Laurent takes us through the various positions Ahmed Vefik undertook in his lifetime.⁴⁷¹ He was made the President of the Chamber, and among other posts, the Governor of Adrianople⁴⁷² to exterminate the outrages committed by the audacious marauders and mediate relations between the Muslims and Christians. He was also sent to Serbia, placed in charge of refugees from Hungary to the Empire, and became High Commissioner of Wallachia and Moldavia. In 1851 he became a member of the Academy of Science in Istanbul and was sent as ambassador to Teheran, remaining in that position until 1854 when he was sent first to Baghdad and then to inspect the political situation in Northern Iraq. After 1855, he served on several imperial commissions under Sultan Abdülmecid and figured prominently in the development of the government's judicial and educational program.⁴⁷³ After his deployment to Adrianople, he was made a Member of the Senate,⁴⁷⁴ Then Minister of Public Instruction⁴⁷⁵ And later as President of the Chamber of Deputies in the Ottoman Parliament of February 1877.⁴⁷⁶ It was during his tenure as President that Lady Layard had attended the Diplomatique Tribune, a gathering comprising 130 members and supposedly the first time a lady had attended such a big meeting.⁴⁷⁷ Ahmed Vefik Pasha was particularly interested in eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideas from Western Europe, which are reflected in his literary works and revealed his politically conservative beliefs.⁴⁷⁸ According to St. Laurent, although Ahmed Vefik Pasha was active in the modernization of the reform government, his essential conservatism had allied him with Sultan Abdülhamid II and led him to oppose Westernization and the constitution.⁴⁷⁹ His publication of Hoca Tarihi and translations of Persian poetry and Çagatay mystical literature also reflect his adherence to traditional Islam values.⁴⁸⁰ Ahmed Vefik Pasha was dismissed as Grand

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., p. 52.

⁴⁷² Sinan Kunalalp (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 55.

⁴⁷³ St. Laurent, p. 52.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 231.

⁴⁷⁶ St. Laurent, p. 52.

⁴⁷⁷ Kunalalp, Sinan (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 28.

⁴⁷⁸ St. Laurent, p. 54.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 54.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 54.

Vizier upon his request to dismiss the Sultan's Private Secretary, Said Pasha.⁴⁸¹ In May 1878, he was made Governor of Bursa.⁴⁸² He complained that some of the intended works had to slow down due to the Capital's request for rechanneling of the taxes go to the Capital. Notwithstanding that, he made remarkable improvements in the living conditions and education. Knowing that the society was still conservative and there was a dire need for female teachers, he established a school to train female teachers. He too demolished old buildings to give way to new construction. Some of the works caused unhappiness amongst the population but when they saw the fruits of the initiatives, the people became happy. St. Laurent described the various projects undertaken by Ahmed Vefik to restore Bursa. The projects included building a theater in 1879, widening of streets, added new hotels and warehouses, major public works project to channel water from the mountain and to develop irrigation to foster agricultural development on the plain, water system to supply water to the citadel and established a water company to support the newly commissioned hospital.⁴⁸³ Ahmed Vefik was also responsible for the revitalization of the ceramic industry, for he needed traditional tiles for his restoration projects, particularly of the Yeşil Cami.⁴⁸⁴

Though not an Ottoman statesman, Layard in his memoir mentioned about Yorgo Zarifi or sometimes known as Zarifi Pasha was a Greek born in 1806.⁴⁸⁵ In Zarifi's memoir, his introduction to the Ottoman financial circles was during the liquidation of the Ottoman Bank (Banque de Constantinople). The Ottoman government had delegated the task to Zarifi and some Galata bankers and their efforts bore fruit. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, Zarifi had contributed significantly to the financing of the war by providing reasonable credit terms. Layard's memoir tells us the Abdülhamid liked Zarifi personally but did not entirely trust him. Zarifi's memoir tells otherwise. Zarifi wrote that his relationship

⁴⁸¹ Kunalalp, Sinan (Ed.), *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy, 1877-1880*, p. 352.

⁴⁸² Kunalalp, Sinan (Ed.), *Twixt Pera and Therapia, The Constantinople Diaries of Lady Layard*, p. 177.

⁴⁸³ St. Laurent, p. 58, Taken after Tansel, Belleten, 28, no. 110, and Erder discuss these public works projects.

⁴⁸⁴ St. Laurent, p. 61, taken after Cuinet, p. 4. Cuinet indicates that Vefik Pasha devoted time to this end and continued his efforts later in his career.

⁴⁸⁵ Seriyee Akan, "Osmanli Rum Bankeri Yorgo Zarifi" in *Toplumsal Tarih*, (26 Haziran 2014), pp. 42-8. I am thankful to Duygu Yazici for helping me with the translation of this article.

with the Sultan depended on mutual trusts such that Abdülhamid refers to him as his grandfather. Zarifi had accumulated a considerable fortune, which he liberally spent in works of charity and in promoting education among his people. Zarifi was always a welcome visitor at Yıldız and whose presence received with unusual familiarity. On a daily basis, Layard wrote that Abdülhamid would send Said and Zarifi to him.⁴⁸⁶

Layard's Memorandum to his government mentioned a few Ottoman statesmen whom he considered as "the most enlightened and patriotic Turkish statesmen and functionaries, and the most intelligent Turks" and they are Mahmud Nedim, Safvet, and Hayreddin Pasha.⁴⁸⁷ It would be worth noting the similar attributes of the personalities Layard mentioned. Firstly, all the Pashas were familiar with French, the lingua franca for diplomatic correspondence in the nineteenth century, and this standard language helped to bridge the communication gap when Turkish was the primary language used in the society. Secondly, Ahmed Vefik, Midhat, Safvet, Hayreddin, Said Pashas either had European training or had some level of exposure to European values or ideas. This similarity indirectly made it easier for them to connect to Layard's Western viewpoints and found the incorporation of European techniques valuable for the reform of Ottoman society.

4.6 Layard's Relationship with Sultan Abdülhamid

The literature on Sultan Abdülhamid is quite substantive as he was the longest reigning Sultan in the nineteenth century and as part of Turkish nationalist historiography to understand the transition from an Empire to that of a nation. Several attributes of Abdulhamid are also well known; from his frugal spending to his strict religious behavior yet fondness for nature and European ideas and very strongly, his absolute rule. Layard's memoir also expounds on some of these attributes. However, what sets Layard's memoir apart from most sources is that it serves as an excellent document in portraying the closely knitted relationship of a European foreign representative and an Ottoman sultan. Taken together with the diary of Lady Layard, we can safely attest to the authenticity to Layard's claims of

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 66.

⁴⁸⁷ TNA, CAB 37/1, Layard to Foreign Office, 6 May 1880.

this closeness. Raised and educated in the palace⁴⁸⁸, Abdülhamid, born on Sep 21, 1842, was the fifth child of Abdulmecid.⁴⁸⁹ Being reserved yet intelligent, he never had the opportunity to be trained in a *sanjak* or province like his predecessors. Falling into the category of sedentary sultans, who reigned more than ruled, as opposed to warrior sultans, who ordered and commanded on campaigns,⁴⁹⁰ Abdülhamid came to power on August 30, 1876, after the dismissal of his brother, Sultan Murad V who was alleged to be suffering from mental problems.⁴⁹¹ Virginia Aksan, in writing about the experience of foreign diplomats in the eighteenth century, mentioned that it was a usual practice for foreign representatives to expect one interview with the sultan and might never privately see him again.⁴⁹² The situation was otherwise in the case of Sir Henry Layard in his three year posting in Istanbul. Layard was a regular figure at Yıldız Palace, often having dinners with the Sultan two to three times a week. Before the investigation on his relations with Layard, this section firstly looks at Layard's observations of Abdülhamid.

Layard wrote, as someone new to the throne, Abdülhamid was eager to learn best practices from others given that he was not privileged to acquire experience in public administration prior to becoming sultan. During Layard's maiden meeting with the young sultan, he had asked many questions about the constitutional relations between the Queen and the Ministers.⁴⁹³ In Layard's second courtesy call to the Sultan, after the Russians declared war, the ambassador had given his views on the weaknesses of the Turkish army in Ardahan, the Anatolian side of the empire. Sultan Abdülhamid listened intently without any displeasure. This positive attribute of the sultan was reflected in numerous meetings Layard had with him as well as when he was in the audience of British guests. When Admiral Hornby, the British military consul made a call on the sultan, he requested that a visit is secured to the

⁴⁸⁸ TNA document, CAB 37_1_20, Layard to Foreign Office, dated 6 May 1880, No. 00214.

⁴⁸⁹ H. A. R. Gibb, J. H. Kramers, E. Levi-Provencal, J. Schacht (Ed), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol I, A –B*, (Leiden, E. J. Brill: 1986), p. 63.

⁴⁹⁰ Findley, Carter Vaughn, in *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Vol. 3, The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, Ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi, p. 66

⁴⁹¹ Yasamee, p. 15 and TNA, CAB 37/1, Layard to Foreign Office, 25 May 1880.

⁴⁹² Virginia Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace, Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700 – 1783*, p. 44

⁴⁹³ Kunalalp, Sinan, (Ed), *The Queen's Ambassador to The Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy 1877-1880*, p. 73.

Ottoman fleet so that he could hear out his feedback and further improve their function.⁴⁹⁴

Unlike his predecessors, Layard's memoir described Abdülhamid's openness to adopt and adapt European culture in his private life as well as public administration. He often conversed with Layard about having his children educated in Europe probably attributed to his visit to England with his uncle, Abdülaziz.⁴⁹⁵ He spoke fondly of his visit and meeting with the Queen and at one time raised his intention to retire in Europe given the overwhelming challenges he faced with the war and internal conflicts. The Sultan was even open to trying European cuisines had engaged a French cook but had to send him back due to his high fees subsequently. Abdülhamid too did not dress up in a long gear like his ancestors. He was always in his uniform, akin to the costume of the Europeans with a fez. When Lady Layard got the opportunity to visit the Harem⁴⁹⁶, an innovation which no foreign ambassadress had ever received, she noticed that the Sultan's wife and children had with them French lace, etc. Another change on the part of the Sultan was that he would sit Lady Layard on his right whenever the Layards visit him at Yıldız Kiosk and in his last meeting pressed his hands against Lady Layard's hand.⁴⁹⁷ A quick look into the diary of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, an acclaimed 18th-century ambassadress, illustrated that while she met Sultan Hafise in her harem, Lady Montagu never had the privilege to be in the audience of the sultan, let alone to be able to sit beside him.⁴⁹⁸ The Sultan opined that he would see to the day where the Muslims will have just one wife just like the Christians, and Muslim women would be able to mingle more freely in society, unlike today.

Acknowledging the dire financial constraints of his empire, the Sultan was frugal in the spending.⁴⁹⁹ He kept enough for himself to dress and eat well and for the operational needs of his Harem and when he came to the throne, he reduced the Harem expenses from 10 to 2 piasters. The only habits he divulged in were his aviaries, gardens, and stables, which too were not expensive. Unlike his ancestors

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 169.

⁴⁹⁵ TNA document, CAB 37_1_20, Layard to Secretary of State of Foreign Office, dated No. 00215, dated May 6, 1880, p.2

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 196

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 687.

⁴⁹⁸ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, Ed. Malcolm Jack, (Great Britain: Virago Press, 2009), pp. 115 – 7.

⁴⁹⁹ TNA, CAB 37/1, Layard to Foreign Office, 6 May 1880.

whose palaces were opulent, he lived quietly and modestly at Yıldız Kiosk, and his servants wore an ordinary dress and were slipshod.⁵⁰⁰ It was only when the Frenchman Capt. Dreyse came to introduce reform after the European fashion into his household that the servants were placed in livery with a good deal of gold lace.⁵⁰¹ While the frugality of the Sultan had been acknowledged in many sources, it was necessary for Layard as a foreigner to take notice of this aspect, as many European sources tend to highlight the frivolous spending of the sultans. Layard in his years engaging with Abdülhamid found him an excellent conversationalist. Layard described:

He could hold his conversations very well and spoke varied topics. Those who had his audience always left the meeting impressed with their conversations with the Sultan. Even with his simple mannerisms, he could joke. He talked unaffectedly, agreeably and sensibly, like a well-educated intelligent gentleman.⁵⁰²

Sultan Abdülhamid who came to the throne at thirty-four years old would confide in Layard, sixty years of age his insecurities and worries, quite natural of how a young man would turn to someone older for counsel and wisdom. He continued to track the Western press coverage personally. Abdülhamid II established a bureau in the Yıldız Palace to follow foreign press coverage,⁵⁰³ so it would not be surprising for Abdülhamid not to be aware of Layard's credentials. In the incident where he requested for refuge from Layard, he related about how Layard had helped Marshall Serrano, Grandee of Spain and his family during his posting in Madrid.⁵⁰⁴

Layard considered Abdülhamid as his trump card in the Empire is shown by his first letter to Salisbury as his chief where he wrote:

When you saw the Sultan, he was laboring under the highest possible disadvantages. He is naturally timid, and his manners did not make a favorable impression on you. But the more I see of him, the more I am satisfied that he is a man of very sound judgment, excellent intentions and a just and humane disposition and that at the same time he has much firmness of character and is not to be led if he is on his guard...No foreigner has seen so much of a Sultan as I have of the present sovereign. It appears to me of the highest importance that the influence I possess over the Sultan should be maintained. It is through it alone that we may hope to effect any real improvement in this country.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁰ Sinan Kunalp, (Ed), *The Queen's Ambassador to The Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy 1877-1880*, p. 538.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 538.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁵⁰³ Gürpınar, p. 147.

⁵⁰⁴ Kunalp, (Ed), p. 385.

⁵⁰⁵ R.W Seton, 406 taken after Layard Papers, 3 April, Layard to Salisbury.

Abdülhamid was not without weaknesses. He was given to sudden fits of anger, which were, however, quickly suppressed.⁵⁰⁶ Ali Suavi's plot to replace Sultan Murad on the throne caused him a lot of insecurities. Due to that incident, Abdülhamid rarely stepped out of the Palace except the Friday prayers in town, which had been a custom by his predecessors, through "a hedge of soldiers".⁵⁰⁷ In one of Layard's visit to his residence, there was a sound of siren and marching, and Abdülhamid thought that it was a signal to the assassins but in actual case was a change of guards.⁵⁰⁸ He even thought that Layard too had the idea to kill him. Given this fear of being assassinated, Layard observed that "the Sultan distrusted almost everybody: his ministers, palace servants and even the woman who raised him. He looked at people around him with a watchful eye".⁵⁰⁹ Layard narrated an incident where a madman had forced his way through the palace, and the Sultan thought that the man intended to kill him. The Sultan instructed for his persecution without delay. His ministers whom he perceived had malicious intent were dismissed or seconded to faraway provinces. He was overly frightened of being dethroned that a couple of times he requested for him and his family to seek refuge in the British ship.⁵¹⁰ Layard could not turn the Sultan down and prepared vessels subsequently for contingency but this then led to the Sultan's surprise, and Sultan Abdülhamid then requested for it to be further away for fear it would give false signals to Russia of England's support for Turkey. The Sultan even engaged a military attaché to be his Palace Secretary as he would be more convinced that his security would not be compromised. While Abdülhamid distrusted almost no one, he trusted in the Queen's ambassador that from the pages of Layard's memoir, Abdülhamid's consultation upon Layard came out very frequently. Surprisingly, Abdülhamid was not just meeting Layard in the official premises but on two occasions had requested that his confidante meet him at his mother's house, away from public scrutiny. In one incident, Abdülhamid was overly struck with anxiety that Layard had to calm him down and just as Layard left for his residence, he was called again to the Palace,

⁵⁰⁶ Encyclopedia of Islam, p. 65.

⁵⁰⁷ Kuneralp, (Ed), p. 381 and TNA document, CAB 37_1_20, Layard to Secretary of State for Foreign Office, dated May 6, 1880.

⁵⁰⁸ Kuneralp, (Ed), p. 386.

⁵⁰⁹ Kuneralp, (Ed), pp. 381 – 2.

⁵¹⁰ Kuneralp (Ed), p. 236.

which Layard could not make a return to the Palace after the long and tiring journey home.

Although Abdülhamid was from the beginning on intimate terms with Layard, the latter observed that Sultan their relations had taken a different trajectory towards the end of his tenure. Sultan Abdülhamid appeared suspicious of Layard and Layard's visit to Syria further pulled their relations apart. Sultan Abdülhamid was under the impression that Layard went to Syria to arrange the return of Midhat Pasha.⁵¹¹ But Layard's intent was, in fact, to survey whether the reforms in the Asiatic side of the Empire was taking effect. Layard too felt that Abdülhamid was beginning not to truthfully acknowledge the actions of his ministers, which were carried out based on his instructions. Layard narrated an incident about Said Pasha writing in the newspapers denouncing England when Layard asked Abdülhamid the reliability of the article, Abdülhamid denied giving such instructions. Layard got frustrated and preferred henceforth to take Abdülhamid's words with a pinch of salt.

It was possible that Abdülhamid had allowed for the relationship to progress intimately as he wanted to be in the good books of England, who he believed truly wanted the peacefulness and stability of the Ottoman while other Great Powers had different desires. Abdülhamid's position and disposition towards Layard and England possibly changed after he realized that the rules of the game had changed. The grieved Sultan having lost a significant part of his territories after the war with Russia seemed to believe that Layard and England, through raising hopes of assistance, had induced the Ottomans to go to war. Britain's request for a territorial concession of Cyprus was definite proof that the Great Power whom he depended on too had ulterior motives in the Empire. Abdülhamid who signed the Cyprus Convention when his mind was disturbed with the Ali Suavi threat, subsequently turned to Germany.

⁵¹¹ Ottoman statesman whom Sultan Abdülhamid placed on exile.

CONCLUSION

The deployment of 'Layard of Nineveh' to Istanbul on the onset of the war with Russia proved to be challenging 3 years for the diplomat. Layard developed his interests in the East through mulling over "Arabian Nights", and spent his early years in France, Italy, Switzerland and Britain. Being bored as a legal clerk in his uncle's office, he began to associate himself with a debating club where he discussed political issues in England and attempted to write in the London magazine. His stay in London exposed him to be interested in arts and literature, an interest area, which his father helped to develop while they lived in Italy. In his youthful days, Layard, who was keen on travelling and adventure, went to different parts of Europe where he developed affinity for the Poles, Russophobia and deep relations.

Wishing to take on a new lease of life, Layard undertook a journey to the East, where he developed appreciation of the culture, customs, languages of the local tribes, Bedouins, Nestorians and Yezidis, the primitive practices of the Montenegrins and the grace of the Turkish people in the Ottoman Empire. His tenure as an unpaid attaché in the British Embassy equipped him with very early exposure to diplomatic protocols and he had a chance to observe how the British foreign policy was implemented under the tutelage of Sir Stratford Canning, the Queen's legendary ambassador. His secret missions to Albania and the Western provinces of the Ottoman Empire made him to be exposed to the undercurrents of the minorities in the Ottoman Empire, who were grappling with the reformation efforts. His stay in Istanbul during his early years opened up his relations with Mustafa Reşid Pasha, the leading figure in shaping reform discourse in the Empire as well as his disciples, Fuad, Ali and Cabouli and Kamil Bey.

His well-illustrated book regarding the discoveries in Nineveh earned him a substantive reputation, which brought him a place in politics following his return to England after eight and a half years of travelling. Being in political life for seventeen years, he assumed posts of Minister of Works, Member of Parliament of Aylesbury and finally took on diplomatic post in Madrid before being sent to Istanbul. During his political life, Layard was also involved in the establishment and management of the Ottoman Bank, of which he was the first Chairman.

Layard's deployment to the Ottoman Empire happened within a context where the Great Powers, especially Britain and Russia both wanted to maintain

certain influence. Britain wanted to protect her interests in the smooth passage to the East as well as her Indian dominion, whereas Russia on the pretext of protecting the rights of Christians, too was looking forward to dominate the Straits, for economic interests. The British Embassy in Istanbul established since 1583 was set up to maintain the welfare of the Christians and facilitate communication with India. However as the English prestige in the Ottoman Empire broadened and for the maintenance of the 'balance of power', the Embassy's role became more significant. The British Embassy also known as the English Palace had the presence of military attaches or consuls, who were deployed to look into the reform efforts of the Empire and provide report on the country's defenses. The diary of Lady Layard depicts the aristocratic activities and life of the Embassy and shows how Layard leveraged on his wife's presence not only to manage the Embassy activities but also to cipher and copy the correspondences exchanged as he did not trust anyone else and wanted to maintain the highest confidentiality in the course of diplomatic business. The British Embassy during the Russo-Turkish War had undertaken substantial work in refugee relief. This work which was spearheaded by Lady Layard gained Sultan Abdülhamid's deep appreciation.

Layard's tenure in Istanbul narrates to us the operational aspects of the nineteenth century diplomacy and how Layard attempted to influence British imperialism in the Ottoman Empire by fostering an intimate relationship with Abdülhamid II and good relations with Ottoman statesmen. In those days, it was common for foreign envoys to meet the Sultan only once at the beginning of their deployment and they subsequently interacted only with the Foreign Minister. It was a rarity in the case of Layard. Layard was often called to Yıldız Palace or Sultan Abdülhamid would call him privately to his mother's residence to avoid suspicion. Even Lady Layard met Sultan numerous times, as recorded in Layard's memoir and Lady Layard's diary.

The Russo-Turkish war conceals the strength of the Ottoman armaments; the weapons were produced locally and the European system existed side by side, namely the French, Prussian and British. Matthew Allen's article⁵¹² lends us an interesting account of the British fleet based on the memoir and reports of Vice-

⁵¹² Matthew Allen, "The British Mediterranean Squadron During the Eastern Crisis of 1876-9" in *The Mariner's Mirror*, 85:1, 53-67, DOI 20.2080/00253359.1999.10656727.

Admiral Hornby⁵¹³, who was then the Vice Commander-in-Chief of *Alexandra*, one of the warships. Accordingly, Britain had five ironclads as part of its Mediterranean squadron and was on standby at Beshika Bay on standby in case they were needed to enter the Bosphorus “where it was poised to give ambiguous messages of support or threat to the Porte”.⁵¹⁴ Ironically, Britain too had requested that the Ottomans sell to them their warships, when no other Great Powers could match up to their naval power. Russian had two small ships, similarly Austria and Italy.⁵¹⁵ Britain’s request for their ironclads to be sold to them suggests us that Britain would want to be considered to be having the most superior naval power. The additional warships could possibly also be utilized for their new naval base which they had been eyeballing, that was Cyprus. Layard could have followed his Government’s instructions to ensure the sale of the ironclads to Britain; however he respected Sultan Abdülhamid’s intent to retain the ironclads for the Empire. The presence of the British fleet on the Ottoman waters signified a great deal in the nineteenth century as steamships inferred a certain level of fear as well as protection to the population. The Ottoman people conceived the presence of the British fleet as the Great Power’s protection however Abdülhamid feared that other Powers would perceive that Britain was on her side and could encourage Russian and other Powers to further crush the Empire. The fight to keep the Ottoman Straits open to ships was evident during the war. Layard was perpetually asked by his superiors to request that passage be kept open. British’s interest to safeguard his Eastern dominions was strongly reflected during this period.

The Russo-Turkish war also shows us how the Empire tapped on *Başbozüks* (auxiliaries) mainly the Circassians and Tatars to supplement the manpower for the war, which was held on two stages; one in the Balkans and the other in the Asiatic frontier. The *Başbozüks* were instrumental at the initial phase of the war, however they succumbed to plunder and destroying of villages towards the later progression of the war. Notwithstanding the need for the *Başbozüks*, the war projected the strength of the Ottoman army. Layard observed that the army fought with great pride despite not given sufficient salary and lacked proper command of Generals. Towards the end of the war when the Russian army fell sick and lacked supplies, the Ottoman

⁵¹³ In Layard’s memoir, he was simply referred to as Admiral Hornby.

⁵¹⁴ Allen, p. 55.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., p. 55.

army consolidated their strength and continued to build defenses against the Russians. Pan-Islamism, a term coined by the Europeans to signify a unifying front of Muslims, existed in the nineteenth century. The fear of the rise of Muslims in India had caused Britain to be very cautious of their policy and moves towards the Ottoman Empire, for it might incite anger among the Muslims which may lead to her losing her Eastern dominion.

The memoir of Layard opens up us how Sultan Abdülhamid sought Britain's advice and Layard's assistance at various points of the Russo-Turkish war. Layard, who persistently sent telegrams to seek guidance from his chiefs, Foreign Minister Lord Derby and Prime Minister Lord Beaconsfield was often left exasperated with their disunited and undecided policy about the Ottoman Empire. Layard employed substantive wisdom and diligence in wielding his way through the Russo-Ottoman crisis. He tried to ensure British's interest to protect the rights of Christians and stability of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the passage to India was maintained. At the same time, he was also empathetic towards Sultan Abdülhamid such that in incidences where he felt that the young Sultan was right, he supported his proposals. Such instances like the request to purchase ironclads which Sultan refused, Abdülhamid's refusal for the Russian Duke to make a pompous arrival in Istanbul and Russian's request to harbor at Büyükdere received Layard's agreement. The population continued to suffer due to the onslaught on the war and the Capital had to deal with the refugee crisis. Lady Layard's diary highlighted the refugee relief efforts, which was aplenty and substantial for their three years stay in Istanbul.

After the war, Britain departed from her non-interventionist policy to prove their actual intentions in the Ottoman Empire, which was also shown in Layard's memoir that she was eyeing Cyprus, an island in the Mediterranean to become her naval base. Layard, who freely got his hands onto the official documents of the Ottoman Empire often with the instructions from Sultan Abdülhamid, was acting like Abdülhamid's 'one-stop' counter for advice. It was through Layard's influence that the Ottomans ceded Cyprus to Britain. Layard deliberated at length his involvement in getting Sultan's agreement to part with Cyprus. On knowing his Government's intent for a 'territorial concession', Layard proposed Muhammerah, a place close to the Tigris and Euphrates which he came to be familiar to as a young man, not knowing that his Government was looking at Cyprus. After bring pressed to get

Sultan Abdülhamid's agreement, Layard approached the Sultan who was depressed due to the Ali Suavi incident to attain his commitment. Abdülhamid, in Layard's accounts agreed willingly and expressed appreciation to the Queen for her kind thoughts in ensuring the safety of the Empire and kept the agreement secret until the Berlin Congress. Layard's explanation in his memoir refuted claims that he had acquired Sultan's agreement through forceful means. Even though Layard's relationship was very close with Sultan Abdülhamid on the onset, the relation took a different trajectory after Layard returned from his visit to Syria. Sultan Abdülhamid became more suspicious of Layard and possibly thought that Britain had induced the Empire to go to the war against Russia with her undue hopes of an assistance, of which Layard refuted.

Layard's memoir extrapolates how he negotiated principles, imperialism and altruism in his short tenure. His reflection through his memoir many a times indicate how he opted to maintain Britain's interests, however other incidences also showcase that Layard was one with principles and cared genuinely for humanity. In summary, Layard had all the required characteristics of a diplomat; astuteness, firmness, wisdom and experience, language ability and courage. His firm belief of strong principles gained the trust of the Sultan and the Ottoman statesmen, Edhem, Said, Safvet and Hayreddin Pashas, who were Sultan Abdülhamid next in command; either as Grand Vizier or the Minister of Foreign Affairs. His return to Istanbul reconnected him with his old friend Ahmed Vefik Efendi, who was frequently referred to in Layard's memoir. Layard's observations recorded in his memoir after his deployment to Istanbul also allows us an insight into the Ottoman bureaucratic practices such as information gathering by the Porte and its deep tradition of offering gifts and decorations.

'Layard of Nineveh' was not only a reputed archaeologist and diplomat, but also a prolific writer. His acumen for geography, economy, investments and governance was displayed in his memoir and memorandum to the Sultan. Even though the context of his deployment happened during the pre-modern Ottoman Empire; confronted with Western ideologies and modernization, the struggle for usage of the Straits, displacement of millions of people and fighting across borders in the world today, provides relevancy for this study.

Given a substantive compilation of Layard's memoir, we intend this research to be assumed as an exciting endeavor to apply a proper study of hermeneutics, so that we may be able to interpret more deeply into Layard's writings. Undeniably, one's language is shaped by his frame of mind, in accordance with the context one is in, and the interaction one has with others and preferences and not simply to pass a message, and this requires a totally different study. This work has provided to extend an idea of Layard as a diplomat. It is noteworthy from the memoir that Layard was involved in a great deal of issues provided the intense political overtures during his tenure. The existence of the printing press also meant that many newspapers were writing about the Russo-Turkish War. The War not only affected the Empire at the international front but relations within the Empire were also disturbed. The deplorable state of the Empire during the war and the relief efforts that ensued were deliberated at length in the *British Medical Journal*. These areas could possibly be the themes and opportunity for subsequent research.

Layard described his last meeting with Sultan Abdülhamid with the following words:

When we were to depart and had to take our formal leave of him he was affected even to tears. My wife, whose hand he pressed with both hands and to whom he said the kindest and most touching words, was nearly breaking down and we were both glad when the scene, undoubtedly painful to us both came to an end and we could leave the room. It was midnight before we reached Therapia, having spent the greatest part of the day with the Sultan.⁵¹⁶

Layard's intimate relationship with Sultan Abdülhamid and Ottoman statesmen tells us that the Ottoman Empire no longer held the *dar-Islam* and *dar-Harb* dichotomy as described by some Western scholars. The Ottomans employed and preferred diplomacy in their relation with others for they preferred peace and financially constrained. Taking the Layards' memoirs and sources together, Layard's deployment to Istanbul during a tumultuous period was a true case of friendship between an Ottoman Sultan and a European ambassador.

⁵¹⁶ Sinan Kunalp (Ed.), *The Queen's Ambassador to the Sultan, Memoirs of Sir Henry A. Layard's Constantinople Embassy, 1877-1880*, p. 688.

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APPENDICES

1.1 Layaard Memorandum to the Ottoman Empire (Original copy from BOA, YEE.7.010.002)

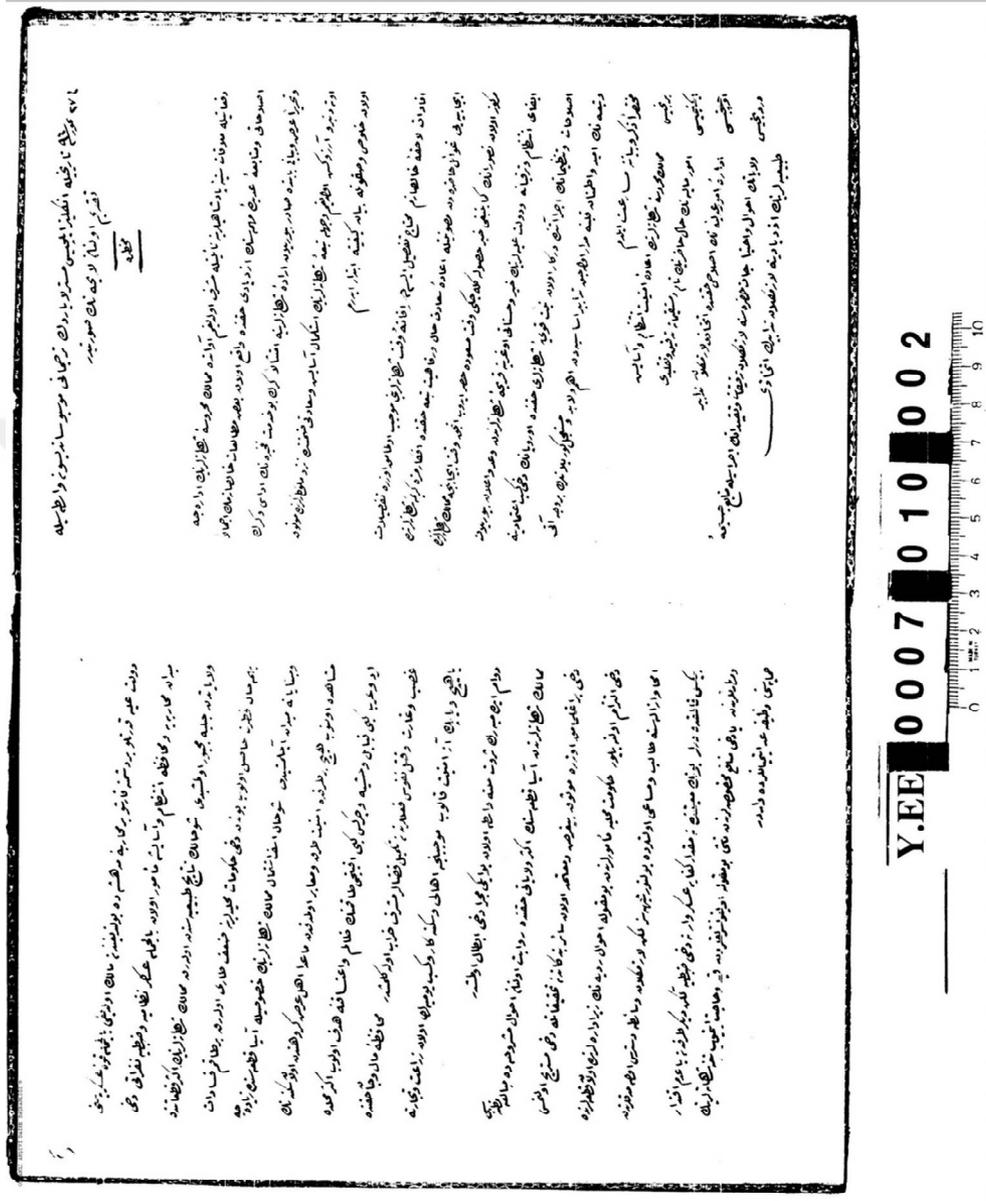


Figure 4: First page of Memorandum

- 1.2 Translation of Layard Memorandum to the Ottoman Empire (BOA YEE.7.010.002)

BOA YEE.7.010.002

**Copy of the translation of Memorandum dated to July 1294,
presented by Mr. Layard's interpreter (Sansun)**

[Memorandum]

During the time when I had the honor of talking to his Majesty, I had some ideas or considerations in increasing some important reforms in this country. The Sultan ordered me to pen down all my views about these reforms. In line with the order of the Majesty and also out of my sincere intentions towards the welfare of the people of this country, I herewith offer the following memorandum.

Although a long explanation was required, I had refrained from writing a long memorandum in order not to take too much time of my Majesty. Therefore, without going into the details of the present problems, I presented my views that would contribute to the welfare and protection of the people. I chose only to mention very substantial measures that would increase the sincere aim of the Sultan in the European public opinion. However, the more novel and optimistic way in the Ottoman society are as follows:

1. Reestablishment of security and order within the Imperial domains
2. Improvement of financial status of the Empire
3. Measures concerning the legal affairs
4. Conditions of the provinces and their urgent needs. Increase in agricultural resources

Since the Ottoman Empire got involved with the Great Powers, it had employed all of its military forces to the battlefield and had sent all the soldiers and commanders from the provinces to the frontiers. As a natural consequence, there was disorder in all regions of Ottoman Empire. This disorder also damaged the civil order in the provinces, especially in Anatolian provinces. In general, but especially so in Anatolia, there is no security of life under the oppression of the Arabs (Messiah and Circassians) and another group for the innocent as well as honorable (pride) people. Most regions are in the verge of

collapse and in complete ruins due to the sudden attacks and murder, which have been prolonging.

Protecting life and property became a challenge. The people could not continue their tasks in the agriculture nor the commercial sectors. This damaged the revenue of the Empire in majority of the regions in the Ottoman Empire, mainly in Anatolia. It is proposed that an investigation be carried out to learn about its economic conditions. Without doubt, some civil servants at the provincial and local level would like to get rid of the unpleasant things in the regions under their administration. Most of them are not able to enforce control in their lands and therefore could not do anything. They do not have sufficient number of soldiers or commanders, so they have no power in the regions, due to their personal interests.

No. 6 (a)

I suggested to the Sultan to promote those who loyally and in regular way continue to serve the Empire and for his own Sultan. They should be encouraged. On the contrary, those who do not perform their jobs properly or do not care about their jobs or have invited complaints, should be introduced to the wrath of the Sultan. For the reestablishment of peace and security, the soldiers of the Sultan can be employed in whatever region. Without wasting time, the appointment and deployment of regular soldiers should be implemented to the required regions and its order established. There is a real dire situation in certain regions such as Van, Sivas, Diyarbakir, Mosul, and Syria. If immediate measures are taken to bring to obedience the above-mentioned tribes, both the Muslims and Christian subjects, would be relieved from the oppression. The Circassian immigrants in several regions upon resettlement, caused problems for the local people especially in the western part of Anatolia. They acted as highway robbers; looting and plundering animals, properties of the religion or townsmen. Should anyone from the village or town attempt to retaliate, they do not hesitate to kill. Despite all these problems, under the leadership of a good commander in the military forces, they could be made obedient through punishment. In any region where security of lives and honor is in evident, will not witness any improvements and we cannot expect the local people to be obedient to the Centre. Unless

every corner of the imperial domain is taken under control, in which order prevails, there is no chance of the reforms that the Majesty have in mind. Therefore, our emphasis on this point, is to encourage my Majesty to employ the necessary purpose. With the favor of my Majesty, previously regular unit of gendarmerie has been established and some British commanders had been employed in its units. These units should be immediately implemented.

II

Most important thing for the Ottoman Empire is the reform of Ottoman financial system. It should be completely investigated and for this purpose, the commission should be established with extraordinary rights (power). With the help of this commission, the Ottoman finance should be reorganized to the very root (investigated and corrected). I acknowledge that it is also the primary purpose of the Sultan and wanted by the Sultan's establishment. With the permission of the Sultan, I would like to talk about my sincere views or considerations regarding this issue. (He reminded the Sultan to pay particular attention to what kind of people should be in the commission.) The commission should encompass people who are not under the influence of local networks, be free from local concerns, personal interest and completely trustworthy in his conducts even though they are well acquainted and experienced in the finances of the Ottoman Empire. Such commission then will prove to be useless. Such people may be imported from Europe, who can solve the great financial situation of the Empire and increase its revenue to a stable level. The Sultan may also appoint the people who are recommended by the Foreign Powers; those of whom are experienced in their jobs and have proved their ability in solving serious problems. From Europe, skilled, loyal and experienced people should be invited in Istanbul, Izmir, Selanik, Beirut and some other port cities, and appointed as inspectors (mufettish) with full power for the employment of regulations. If such measures are taken, good results will be witnessed in a short period of time. In this department of the state, the revenue will be increased; those who have general debts, such measures should be taken. With the order of Mahmud Nadim Paşa, the glory of the state had been "glorified?" because it should put people into a good position, benefiting both the state and the 'matlus' and creditors.

Previously the Spanish government suffered from a similar financial situation but they had it solved. The creditors should immediately be invited for an agreement and tesfiye (payment). Asab Matube should be invited for payment. Only through this way can this issue be solved.

Creditors in London and Paris.

For the negotiation with creditors, a mature and trustworthy servant should be sent to Europe. Or the deputy of the creditors can be sent to Istanbul. If the Porte is unable to establish its financial credibility, getting cash (money) for their very urgent needs will be very costly, as it is evident from the debts taken from Galata. The sources of the Ottoman Empire are very sufficient and perfect [municipal affairs and the Kaime (paper money)]

For the municipality affairs, the money required for all these things cannot be found at a fair price. Since our Majesty's domain, paper money is a painful process. The lack of financial credibility could not match the issue with paper money. My Majesty should pay more attention to another issue to the saraf, money lenders, who consider it as an opportunity to increase their wealth. To solve all of these requires new borrowing but from thereon it should be paid, used as tasaruf in accordance to the regular way.

Since the general security in Mesopotamia had placed it in ruins, caliphs have lost most of his former fame. The bigger Euphrates river (Firat) flow in the lower delta from its bed. And thus, not suitable for irrigation and trade. These ignored lands which are abundant, can be returned back to their former self and the cultivation can be greatly improved and as an evidence for this we can give the example of the navigation of British and Ottoman ships that motivated the flourishing of trade around Baghdad. We can give the example of blocking of roads for Erzurum and Trabzon due to the last war and open a new road around the gulf of Basra, which will lead to the increase of commercial relations in the region.

His Majesty is known for his benevolent ideas/views on reforms on domestic administration, if these reforms are successful, it is clear that they will encourage the foreign and local capitalist. The most important public affair to

be done is the increase of resources of Anatolia and Arabia and an immediate construction of a railroad from Istanbul to Baghdad and from there to the Basra gulf. This railroad will also contribute to the welfare/improvement of the region. My Majesty has abundant fertile lands, mines as well as rich forests in Anatolia. But like Baghdad, the provinces of Anatolia have greatly been ignored. Even Konya, which was a real urban center during the time of our ancestors, is now in ruins. If these cities had commercial relation (exportation) with the capital and also with European countries, they would make good progress in their commerce/trade and revitalize. If a rail road is constructed following the line of flow of the river around the region, it would reconnect Diyarbakir, Merdin, Erbil etc. the gates of Anatolia will be opened charming new and rich investors to the Ottoman towns and cities. This railroad will gratify his Majesty's name in Anatolia and also contribute trade in northeastern Mediterranean region. In the same way, a new way will be opened to India, which will be beneficial for both Ottomans and British. Two roads to India, one owned by Ottoman state.

The railroad (shinanfar) will serve as the heart of the jugular vein to the Anatolia. In this way connections could also be established between the shores and inner lands. Through this method, a new road to India would also open which would contribute directly to commercial and political relations. Such a road will also benefit Britain greatly. According to my opinion, it will also attract the attention of capital owners and powerful people in Britain. They are Turcophile and would not hesitate from spending money for this purpose.

Real attempts in this regard had been appreciated and known by Sermidu/investors known by Europeans. To my knowledge this capitalist will invest in education, agriculture, and source of wealth. They will provide money to these investors. The imperial domains are rich in agriculture, and mines, but without the European science and capital there will be no great benefit from these natural resources. The independence of the state, the mining sector, highways, road improvements, agriculture, forestry, and management and in short everything that is required in advanced society/modern society. Thanks to the improvement in many small countries in comparison to the Porte, they have become a great power and independent. There were many problems in

the Empire, rifts in between them and great sources of wealth. These are the points I mentioned to my Majesty. There are two great territories, Arabia and Lebanon and now known as Baghdad. This region had hosted two great Kingdoms namely Suriyani and Babylon (Mesopotamia and Tigris). After the collapse of these two great civilizations under the pressure of Arabic rulers they become the most advanced and richest. The rule passed to the Ottomans, The Baghdad (Mosul, Basra) and some other cities were very strong and rich countries. These are recorded in history. All this richness is attributed firstly to the Muslim caliph who employed certain measures and secondly due to the natural resources such as the navigation facilities. In the past the king had employed engineers to make projects for them even though most of these projects have been destroyed, there is evidence in the ruins. The rich flora of the same regions and the lively commercial life, also showed important achievements.

Such urban and fertile lands, are now nothing and making very little contribution to the treasury and may be even more than Egypt. Since the security of life and property for the public of this region is very poor, agriculture never developed especially due to the tribes coming from the desert plundering and damaging public safety. The revenue of these lands cannot be compared with that coming from Egypt. The residence of the places enjoys little protection for life and property.

- 1.3 Layard Interview in a Journal 'Granor' (BOA PRK.EŞA.4401, original copy)
- 1.4 Translation of Layard Interview in a Journal 'Granor' (BOA PRK.EŞA.4401)
- 1.5 Layard's Report on the Ottoman Empire which was printed for Cabinet dated May 6, 1880.
- 1.6 Layard's Report on Asiatic Turkey which was printed for Cabinet dated May 25, 1880.

2. Photo of Sir Austen Henry Layard, taken from G. R. Berridge, *British Diplomacy with Turkey, 1853 to the Present*, (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009), taken from *photogravure by Walker & Cockerell from a photograph by Fradelle & Young*.

