

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AND THE ARMENIAN  
COMMITTEES, FROM 1918 TO 1923

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AND THE ARMENIAN COMMITTEES,  
FROM 1918 TO 1923

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This dissertation is the first to study the French policy toward the Armenian issue globally and by a detailed work in the available archives, as well as in the various printed sources. It focuses on the 1918-1923 period, namely when the Armenian independence fails then when the dream of an Armenian autonomy in Anatolia collapses but also provides the necessary background, the 1862-1914 period and the First World War. Non-existence at the eve of this conflict, the alliance of Paris with the Armenian committees develop slowly and remains uneasy during the war. Tense during the year following the armistice, primarily because of the opposition of Paris to the “Integral Armenia” from Black Sea to Mediterranean Sea, the alliance is severed during the decisive period beginning in autumn 1919 and ending in January 1921. The attempts of the committees to prevent the evacuation of Çukurova fail one by one and their only achievement is to provoke the mass emigration of the Christian population. Then, the last projects of an “Armenian Home” (considered impracticable and actually not interesting by the French government) fail during the Paris (March 1922) and Lausanne conferences (November 1922-July 1923), the rapprochement of the Armenian committees with Greece having secured nothing.

**Key words:** Armenian revolutionary movement, Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Aristide Briand, French Republic, Turkish war of independence.

## ÖZ

FRANSIZ CUMHURİYETİ VE ERMENİ KOMİTELERİ ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİLER, 1918-1923

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Bu tez, Ermeni meselesine yönelik Fransız politikasını küresel boyutta, mevcut arşivlerin yanı sıra çeşitli basılı kaynaklarda ayrıntılı bir çalışma ile inceleyen ilk tezdır. 1918-1923 dönemine, yani Ermeni bağımsızlığının başarısız olduğu ve Anadolu'da Ermeni özerkliğinin çöküntüye uğradığı dönemi konu alsa da aynı zamanda bu çalışma 1862-1914 ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı. Dünya Savaşı dönemlerine arka planı sağlamaktadır. Bu ihtilafın arifesinde var olmayan Paris ittifakı, Ermeni komiteleriyle yavaş yavaş gelişir ve savaş sırasında gergin şekilde kalır. Öncelikle Paris'in Karadeniz'den Akdeniz'e "Bütünleşik Ermenistan'a" muhalefeti nedeniyle Mütareke'yi takip eden yıl gergin geçen müttefiklik ilişkisi 1919 sonbaharında başlayan ve Ocak 1921'de belirleyici dönemde kopar. Komitelerin Çukurova'nın tahliye edilmesini önleme girişimleri birer birer başarısız olur ve tek başarıları Hıristiyan nüfusun kitlesel göçünü kışkırtmaktır. Ardından son projelerinden olan "Ermeni yurdu" projesi (Fransız hükümeti tarafından uygulanamaz olduğu düşünülen ve aslında Fransız hükümetinin ilgisini çekmeyen), Paris (Mart 1922) ve Lozan (Kasım 1922-Temmuz 1923) Konferanslarında başarısız olur, Ermeni komitelerinin Yunanistan ile uzlaşması da hiçbir şeyi güvence altına almaz.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Ermeni devrimci hareketi, Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu, Aristide Briand, Fransız Cumhuriyeti, Türk kurtuluş savaşı.

To my mother/À ma mère.



*“The only possible support for the Armenians would come from the one who would occupy all the Transcaucasia. It does not seem to be within our means or our interests. If the Armenians want a mandate for Armenia and Transcaucasia, it is up to them to secure the achievement of this. Our interests and our possibilities are elsewhere.”*  
Staff Colonel Lesieure-Desbière, report to the President of ministers’ Council, 31 August 1919.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Service historique de la défense, Vincennes, 16 N 3187.

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My family constantly supported me during this long research. It was more than precious.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAS: Armenia America Society.

ABCFM: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

ACIA: American Committee for the Independence of Armenia.

AGBU: Armenian General Benevolent Union.

AMAE: Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères.

AN: Archives nationales.

APA: Association patriotique arménienne.

APP: Archives de la prefecture de police de Paris.

ARF: Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

BAC: British Armenian Committee.

BNF: Bibliothèque nationale de France (département des manuscrits).

CADN: Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes.

DNA : Délégation nationale arménienne.

FO: Foreign Office.

HOG: Relief Committee for Armenia.

LC: Library of Congress (manuscript division).

MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SHD: Service historique de la défense.

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## INTRODUCTION

*“I hope that one day soon, we can achieve a calm, fair reading of history.”*

*Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hürriyet Daily News, 11 December 2012.*

The relations between France and Turkey, particularly if the Armenian issue is involved, are the subject of much of confusion. Sometimes, they are remembered the alliance of Francis I (*François I<sup>er</sup>*) and Süleyman Kanuni, or the Ankara agreement signed by Henry Franklin-Bouillon in October 1921; sometimes, on the contrary, it is the attacks of Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (assassination of the Turkish ambassador in Paris, in 1975, then of the tourism attaché, in 1979) and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (such as the Orly bombing, in 1983).<sup>2</sup> During the 2010s, the attempts of legal censorship about events of 1915-16 and their systematic failures (rejection of the Masse bill by the Senate in 2011, censorship of the Boyer bill by the Constitutional Council in 2012 and of a part the Citizenship and Equality law in 2017) maintained this dualistic, not to say contradictory perception. More problematically, even in valuable scholarly publications of the 2000s and 2010s, the description of French policy toward the very end of the Ottoman Empire is minimalist<sup>3</sup> and not always accurate.<sup>4</sup> The main reason is simple: The lack of

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<sup>2</sup> Michael M. Gunter, *“Pursuing the Just Cause of their People”. A Study of Contemporary Armenian Terrorism*, Westport-New York-London: Greenwood Press, 1986, pp. 68 and 103-18; Gäïdz Minassian, *Guerre et terrorisme arméniens. 1972-1998*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002, pp. 37 and 88.

<sup>3</sup> Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War*, New York-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Kemal Karpat, “The Entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I,” *Bellesten*, LXVIII/253, December 2004, pp. 687-733; Sean McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame. War, Revolution and the Making of the Modern Middle East, 1908-1923*, London: Allen Lane, 2015.

detailed monographs. The most significant exceptions are due to Bruce Fulton and Stéphane (Stephanos) Yerasimos, but their papers treat the Armenian issue marginally.<sup>5</sup>

This is not that the Armenian issue has been neglected in the historiography. Long syntheses exist, such as the one of Esat Uras, based on printed sources, or much more recently the one of Bilâl Şimşir<sup>6</sup>—but the 1918-1923 period and the French policy are necessarily a mode part of these general appraisals, and the French archives are not used here. The book of Kâmuran Gürün is one of the few of this kind that makes a certain use of the French diplomatic archives, sometimes very relevantly, but his main aim is to answer the “genocide” accusation and more generally the tendentious description of the fate of the Ottoman Armenians during the late Ottoman period.<sup>7</sup> The approach of Salâhi Sonyel is to study the relations of the minorities with the Ottoman State then with the Ankara government of the Turkish war of independence in using mostly British and Turkish sources and sometimes Israeli sources for the Jews.<sup>8</sup> The contribution is significant but logically teaches very little on what France does and think of the Ottoman State and its minorities, what the Armenian nationalists try to do in this country, and an overreliance on the British sources (or any other source) can from time to time lead to inaccuracies. The Anglo-Saxon powers have indeed been the subject of several monographs, sometimes together,<sup>9</sup> sometimes separately but with a common focus on the importance of the anti-Turkish missionaries in the shaping of the public opinion and

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<sup>5</sup> Bruce Fulton, “France and the End of the Ottoman Empire,” in Marian Kent (ed.), *Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, London-Portland: Frank Cass, 1996, pp. 141-171; Stéphane Yerasimos, « De l’intégrité au partage : la politique ottomane de la France pendant la Première Guerre mondiale », in Hâmit Batu and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *L’Empire ottoman, la République de Turquie et la France*, Paris-Istanbul: ADET/Les éditions Isis, 1986, pp. 419-435.

<sup>6</sup> Bilâl Şimşir, *Ermeni Meselesi, 1774-2005*, Ankara-Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2005; Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, İstanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988 (1<sup>st</sup> edition, in Turkish 1950).

<sup>7</sup> Kâmuran Gürün, *Le Dossier arménien*, Paris : Triangle, 1984.

<sup>8</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, “How Armenian Propaganda Nurtured a Gullible Christian World in Connection with the Deportations and ‘Massacres’,” *Bellesten*, XLI/161, January 1977, pp. 157-175; Salâhi Sonyel, *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire*, Ankara: TTK, 1993; Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey’s Struggle for Liberation and the Armenians*, Ankara: SAM, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Britain, American and the Armenian Question*, London-New York: Routledge, 2016.

policies toward the Ottoman Empire,<sup>10</sup> sometimes in a specific period,<sup>11</sup> or a specific point. These include the mission of Major General Harbord, in 1919, to evaluate the possibility of an American mandate on Armenia, the role of Admiral Mark Bristol or the pro-Armenian movements in the UK and U.S.<sup>12</sup> On Russia, in spite of its importance, the studies are less numerous, but several books based on a detailed study of the Russian sources, regarding the First World War and/or the previous period have been published during the 2010s.<sup>13</sup>

The published PhD dissertation of Robert F. Zeidner on the occupation of Çukurova is an important work, but it suffers of its quasi absence of research in the military archives and of questionable choices, such as the laconism regarding the last period (January 1921-January 1922) and it is silent on the Lausanne conference. The paleo-nationalist Armenian historiography (namely that linked to the traditional Armenian parties) has produced

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<sup>10</sup> Ayşe Tekdal Fildis, "The American Board's Vision of Protestant Anatolia and Fostering Armenian Nationalism 1810–90," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XLVIII-5, September 2012, pp. 735-747; Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America. The Creation of an Enduring Prejudice*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878-1896*, London-Portland: Routledge, 1993; Jeremy Salt, "Trouble Wherever They Went: American Missionaries in Anatolia and Ottoman Syria in Nineteenth Century," *The Muslim World*, XCII-3/4, Fall 2002, pp. 287-313.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Daniel, "The Armenian Question and American-Turkish Relations, 1914-1927," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVI-2, September 1959, pp. 252-275; Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923*, London-Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> Among others: Gregory Aftandilian, *Armenia, Vision of a Republic. The Independence Lobby in Armenia, 1919-1927*, Boston: Charles River Books, 1981; Seçil Karal Akgün, "The General Harbord Commission and the American Mandate," in George S. Harris and Nur Bilge Criss (ed.), *Studies in Atatürk's Turkey. The American Dimension*, Leyden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2009, pp. 55-82; Artin Arslanian, "British Wartime Pledges, 1917-18: The Armenian Case," *Journal of Contemporary History*, XIII-3, July 1978, pp. 517-530; Tal Buenos, "Beyond Complicity. British Responsibilities for the Massacres of Armenians in World War I," in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad, *War and Collapse*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 918-940; Joseph Heller, "Britain and the Armenian question, 1912–1914. A study in Realpolitik," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVI-1, January 1980, pp. 3-26; Heath Lowry, "American Observers in Anatolia ca. 1920: The Bristol Papers," in *Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey (1912-1926)*, Ankara: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1992, pp. 50-70; Mark Malkasian, "The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984, pp. 349-365; Musa Şaşmaz, *British policy and the application of reforms for the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia, 1877-1897*, Ankara: TTK, 2000; Ömer Turan, "Admiral Bristol and the Anti-Turkish Propaganda in the United States within the context of Turkish-Armenian Relations (1919-1922)," *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire. Édition turque*, n° 87, 2007, pp. 177–193; Robert Zeidner, "Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, VII-4, October 1976, pp. 465-483.

<sup>13</sup> Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)-London: Harvard University Press, 2011; Onur Önel, *The Tsar's Armenians: A Minority in Late Imperial Russia*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017; Mehmet Perinçek, *Ermeni Milliyetçiliğinin Serüveni*, İstanbul: Kaynak yayınları, 2015; Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918*, New York-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

publications whose use of sources is merely unacceptable,<sup>14</sup> and its imitation by Vincent Duclert is no better: His book<sup>15</sup> is based on no research in any archives, and is devoted to a very politicized celebration of whoever supported Armenian nationalism and to a vehement pejoration of whoever opposed it. The quality of the argumentation is typified by the reference to the fake quote of Adolf Hitler on the Armenians, called “proved” by Mr. Duclert, in spite of the fact that the version of Hitler’s speech including this quote has been rejected by the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg.<sup>16</sup> The late Ramkavar historian Arthur Beylerian knows better the archives, but beside a more than questionable choice of sources, one of his conclusions is a counter-thesis for this dissertation: “Against Soviet Russia, the Great Powers preferred to set up a homogenous and solid Turkey instead of a few small states.”<sup>17</sup> The Armenian paleo-nationalist historiography has produced one study based on a very significant research in various archives (the history of the Armenian Republic by Richard G. Hovannisian) but, quite logically, it is centered on this country and, more problematically, in several occasions (such as the quality of the Armenian administration in 1920 and the events at Maraş the same year), Mr. Hovannisian bypasses what a personal, political and emotional involvement could excuse, as it will be seen in the relevant chapters.<sup>18</sup>

The neo-nationalist historiography (without affiliation with any specific organizations) has produced a relatively interesting book, but still suffering of politicization, as shown by the neglect of sources exposed below.<sup>19</sup> The PhD dissertation of Kemal Çelik on the occupation of Çukurova is an important contribution, but relying on the Turkish archives and memoirs,

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<sup>14</sup> Gérard Dédéyan, « Le colonel Louis Romieu (1872-1943), la Légion arménienne, et le mandat français sur la Cilicie (1919-1921) », *Bulletin de l'Académie des sciences et des lettres de Montpellier*, XLIX, 2018 ; Guévork Gotikian, « La Légion d'Orient et le mandat français en Cilicie (1916-1921) », *Revue d'histoire arménienne contemporaine*, III, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Vincent Duclert, *La France face au génocide des Arméniens*, Paris : Fayard, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Heath Lowry, “The U.S. Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians,” *Political Communication and Persuasion*, III-2, 1985, pp. 111-140.

<sup>17</sup> Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, p. 371.

<sup>18</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, four volumes, 1971-1996.

<sup>19</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mésopotamie: aux confins de la Turquie, de la Syrie et de l'Irak, 1919-1933*, Paris : Karthala, 2004.

as well as on a limited range of published published French sources.<sup>20</sup> The book of Yücel Güçlü entitled *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia. 1914-1923* is based a on a wide research in the American sources as well as on Turkish sources, but the French ones are very rarely used.<sup>21</sup> The work of Halil Aytekin uses them even less and is focused on an even more limited subject: The camp of the Eastern Legion in Cyprus.<sup>22</sup> The monumental study of Stanford Jay Shaw on the Turkish war of independence obviously has to be taken into account, but this is, naturally, centered on the Turkish perspective and if this late historian has used a considerable amount of Turkish and Anglo-Saxon sources, he has not conducted a particular research in the French archives.<sup>23</sup> The published doctoral dissertation of Bige Sükân Yavuz is a unique example, in Turkey, of a contemporary study based on a significant research in the French sources, but the subject is the relation of France with Turkey; as a result the Armenian issue is certainly treated, but as a secondary aspect, and only from the perspective of Çukurova.<sup>24</sup> Ultimately, there is no overview on France and the Armenian issue that is based on archival sources. As a result, the primary goal of this dissertation is to fill a gap. Its subject is the relations between the French Republic and the Armenian committees, from 1918 to 1923.

The French Republic means all the state institutions, especially the cabinet, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the presidency of the Republic, the Parliament, the military, police and justice—in other words, a series of institutions, with their practices, their traditions and, above all, their men. The word *Republic* is used instead of *state* to emphasize the political culture diffused and imposed by the Republicans by 1880s and which is a quasi-consensus around 1914: secular democracy, defiance toward any kind of personal power, individual emancipation by political liberty and appropriation of knowledge, meritocratic conception of the elites based on a pyramidal system of state schools, civic nationalism, etc.<sup>25</sup> This

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<sup>20</sup> Kemal Çelik, *Millî Mücadele'de Adana ve Havalisi*, Ankara: TTK, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Halil Aytekin, *Kıbrıs'ta Monarğa (Boğaztepe) Ermeni Lejyonu Kampı*, Ankara: TTK, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic. The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923*, Ankara: TTK, 2000, 5 volumes.

<sup>24</sup> Bige Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri: Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından 1919-1922*, Ankara: TTK, 1994 (see mostly pp. 53-63 on the Armenian issue).

<sup>25</sup> Maurice Agulhon, *La République*, Volume I, *L'Élan fondateur et la grande blessure, 1880-1932*, Paris: Hachette, 2002, pp. 24-43 ; Jean-Yves Mollier and Jocelyne George, *La Plus Longue des Républiques*, Paris : Fayard, 1994, pp. 7-10 and passim.

emphasis does not imply, however, that the legacy of the monarchy and of the Bonaparte family is without relevance. On the contrary, this dissertation emphasizes the threads of continuity across the centuries, in the policy of Paris toward the Ottoman Empire. The public opinion—understood here as what express the opinion-makers: journalists, writers, businessmen, etc.—is not a part of the French Republic as such, but in a democratic regime, its impact on the state's decisions cannot be neglected.

The Armenian committees are, first of all, the nationalist parties established at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century: Armenakan in 1885, Hunchak in 1887, Armenian Revolutionary Federation in 1890, Reformed Hunchak in 1896, Ramkavar in 1907, the last two ones merging with the Armenakan to form the new Ramkavar party in 1921. They are also the various groups established by these parties, such as the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) for the Ramkavar. The last category has only one item: The committee in charge of recruiting the volunteers for the Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*) during the First World War, independent of the parties, but in close contact with them. The Armenian communities as such, namely the populations of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, the ones of the diaspora their churches (Gregorian, Catholic, Protestant) and their secular institutions in the Ottoman Empire (regulated by constitution of 1863) are not the subject of this study but, naturally they are an essential element of context, even more when the boundary between committees and the Gregorian church is porous.

Only in the case of the ARF-dominated Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) are these relations a part of the traditional diplomacy. For the rest, they are between a major power of the time (the most powerful land army of the world and the second biggest colonial empire) and non-state actors. However, they are far from being reduced to bilateral relations: A certain consciousness of their weakness and an overestimation of their capacities to influence the British and American policies lead to a permanent temptation to use another power against France in case of tensions. Correspondingly, for the background the Tsar's policy toward the Armenians in general and the Armenian revolutionary nationalists in particular has to be considered.

The chronological limits (from Moudros to Lausanne) have been chosen because this period is exceptionally dense in events, but also because it is the only one when Frenchmen are administrators and occupiers in Anatolia; and the only one, from collapse of the Middle Age's Armenian kingdoms to the fall of the USSR when an independent Armenia exists—when its boundaries are discussed. In these conditions, the main sources for this study are, first of all,

the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the center of La Courneuve, the most noteworthy are the subseries Armenia 1918-1940, Syria-Lebanon-Cilicia 1918-1940 and Turkey 1918-1940. The subseries Armenia contains, in particular, the official correspondence of the Armenian nationalists with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the notes of the Quai d'Orsay's staff for the minister regarding the Armenian issue as well as diplomatic telegrams and reports regarding the Republic of Armenia and a part of those regarding Çukurova. The rest of the central administration's archives regarding this region is in the subseries Syria-Lebanon-Cilicia. The subseries Turkey 1918-1940, for its part, contains indispensable data on the policy toward the Turkish national movement and the fate of Turkey in general. All these three subseries contain copies of military intelligence reports.

The center of La Courneuve also contains quite relevant private papers, such as those of François Georges-Picot, high commissioner in Beirut from 1918 to 1919 (but the papers are mostly useful for the private correspondence concerning the First World War period), Henri Gouraud, Georges-Picot's successor (particularly rich archive, with private correspondence and official documents not always easy to find elsewhere), Albert Defrance, high commissioner in İstanbul from 1919 to 1920 (especially the for internal notes of the High Commission) and Jean Gout (1867-1953), deputy director of political affairs in charge of Asia (notes on the Armenian issue and the rivalry with the UK).

At the center of Nantes, the main sources are the archives of the administration at Adana, which are particularly rich (more than 250 boxes) and which include, among others, intelligence bulletins, official correspondence between the officers of the administration, official correspondence with the Armenian committees, copies and translations of Armenian nationalist newspapers and, sometimes, letters, as well as military court verdicts. In Nantes, too, the records of the High Commission in İstanbul are complementary for the subseries Turkey at La Courneuve and the private papers of Damien de Martel, high commissioner in Tbilissi in 1920, of the subseries Armenia.

The Brémond papers at the National Archives (Pierrefitte) contain official documents not necessarily remaining in the state archives, and even more the personal correspondence and notes of Colonel Édouard Brémond, chief administrator in Adana from 1919 to 1920, as well as some notes of General Julien Dufieux, commander of the occupation troops in Çukurova from 1919 to 1921. The military archives in Vincennes are essential, too. The subseries 4 H (Levant 1917-1946) are particularly useful for the records on the Eastern/Armenian Legion and the intelligence bulletins, to be completed with the series J for the military justice, where

are a part of the military tribunals records (the other part being in Vincennes), an indispensable source for the repression of the crimes committed by Armenian legionnaires and Christian civilians. The subseries 1 BB<sup>7</sup> contain the reports of Navy's Intelligence Service in Turkey, one of the main sources of information for Paris, at least during the period when Captain Henri Rollin is in charge, namely from 1919 to 1921. The series N (Third Republic) include the reports of the military mission in the Caucasus, of the mission for the re-organization of the Ottoman gendarmerie and a part of the documents from the Navy's intelligence service, which are not all in the boxes of 1 BB<sup>7</sup>. Noteworthy, too, in Vincennes are the private papers of Pierre Lyautey, chief of staff of the high commissioner in Beirut from 1919 to 1922, as a supplementary source on the activities and views of that High Commission. The police reports at Pierrefitte (subseries F<sup>7</sup>) and Le Pré Saint-Gervais (archives of the Parisian police, series BA) provide important data on the activities of the Armenian nationalists in France itself—sometimes in Switzerland, too.

The Memoirs and diaries of the French actors have been as systematically as possible used, and their value evaluated in comparing with the documents of the documents. In this regard, the published diary of Paul Bernard, in charge of the finances at the French administration of Adana in 1920, has a special importance. The self-justification of Colonel Édouard Brémont, chief administrator in this region from 1919 to 1920, passes with more difficulties the test of comparison with the documents (including those written by himself) but cannot be neglected, considering the role of the author. For the context, the Memoirs of Charles de Saint-Aulaire, ambassador in London from 1920 to 1924 and of Jules Laroche, member of the delegation at Lausanne (1922-1923) as well as the recollections of Raymond Escholier, deputy chief of staff of President of the Ministers' council Aristide Briand from 1921 to 1922, are among the most useful references. The French press and reviews, on the other hand, are indispensable to know the tendencies and evolutions of the public opinion, the trends supporting Armenians or Turks, why and with what arguments. The mouthpiece of the Quai d'Orsay, *Le Temps*, has a special importance, both because he expresses the view of all (or, in some cases, part) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and because the regional press commonly takes inspiration from its analyses. The dailies *Journal des débats* and *L'Information*, the weeklies *L'Opinion* and *L'Europe nouvelle*, as well as the *Revue des deux mondes* and the *Revue de Paris* have to be consulted in knowing they are references for the elites, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Petit Journal*, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal* and *L'Écho de Paris* in considering they are the five most distributed dailies. Naturally, the *Journal officiel de la République française* is indispensable for the debates in the Parliament and has to be



completed by the archives of the Senate (Paris) for the discussions in the Foreign Affairs and Army committees (the archives of the National Assembly regarding such discussions have been destroyed during the Second World War).

My demands to access the Armenian Revolutionary Archives' Institute, in 2014 and 2019, have been left unanswered and it has been impossible to access the records deposited at the Boghos Nubar library in Paris, in spite of repeated emails, in 2012 and 2013. Filing an application to the Hunchak archives is impossible, as even their exact address remains unknown, outside the party. Only the Shishmanian papers (one box) at the Hoover Institution are freely accessible. Regardless, the subseries 4 H at Vincennes and the records of the administration at Adana contain seized documents, the subseries Armenia 1918-1940 includes telegrams transmitted by the MFA from an Armenian leader to another in 1918-1919. The strategy of the majority of the Armenian nationalists, consisting in trying to use Washington and London against Paris can be studied with the Foreign Office records (National Archives, Kew Gardens-London) and the Montgomery papers at the Library of Congress, manuscript division (correspondence of the Ramkavar Armenian National Delegation and the British Armenia Committee with George Montgomery, director of the Armenia America Society and activities of this organization). The amount of printed sources, particularly the books, booklets and articles published to defend the Armenian nationalist claims, is considerable. The diary of Avetis Aharonian, president of the Delegation of the Armenian Republic, the Memoirs of Alexandre Khatissian, Prime minister of Armenia from 1919 to 1920 and his notes taken during the Lausanne conference (published with his Memoirs in the French translation of 1989) have to be used, too—with the necessary critical distance. For the general scheme of events, the Bristol papers at the Library of Congress are a valuable source.

The main question this dissertation answers is: How and why the French Republic skips in a few years from the alliance with the Armenian committees that has emerged during the First World War to a restoration of the alliance with the Turks? The word *restoration* shows the necessity to insert the short but dense 1918-1923 period in a longer one, namely the French policy toward the late Ottoman Empire—to explain what this policy is, when and why it changes before 1918. Then, the reasons of this restoration have to be analyzed in the period itself: Who supports the continuation of the alliance with Armenian nationalism and why? Who advocates the restoration of the traditional alliance, at which conditions and why—to which extent do they claim pure and simple restoration, to which extent do they consider an update necessary, as a result of the emergence of the Turkish national movement? The

density of the period—not merely as far as the core of the subject is concerned, but also regarding Turkey, the Caucasus, Russia, Eastern Europe, etc.—imposes to take into account the detailed chronology.

That is why this dissertation devotes a first chapter to expose what the French policy toward the late Ottoman Empire is, with an emphasis on the Armenian question and the question of the territorial integrity. The next chapter studies the modifications to the support for this integrity caused by the First World War and above all by its unexpected duration—how significant are these modifications. These changes include an unprecedented but uneasy alliance between Paris and the Armenian committees. The third chapter demonstrates how even more uneasy is the alliance with the Armenian committees during the year following the armistice signed at Moudros by the Ottoman Empire—how different are the perceptions of the partition of the Ottoman Empire, particularly (but not only) as far as Çukurova is concerned, what consequences these differences have. The fourth chapter analyzes the breaking of the alliance from autumn 1919 to January 1921, namely the period when the first negotiations with the Turks take place, when it is decided that Adana will be annexed neither to Syria nor Armenia and will have no special regime, politically speaking, and when the Armenian Republic collapses roughly at the same time than two of its most devoted allies, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson and Greek Prime Minister Eleutherios Venizelos. The fifth chapter explains how the new French cabinet prepares then executes the local peace with the Turks (evacuation of Çukurova, Antep and Killis), confronting the Armenian nationalists. Indeed, they try to prevent this evacuation but only succeed in provoking a mass exodus of the Armenian population. The last chapter is devoted to the alliance of the Armenian committees with Greece (the last state fighting Turkey directly in 1922 but also a state badly perceived by France at that time) and the failure of the last territorial project of the Armenian nationalists until the signature of the Lausanne treaty, namely a “National Home,” an always ambiguous project of autonomous land.

## CHAPTER 1

### FRANCE, THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND ARMENIAN NATIONALISM

*“The interest of France imposes peace; it merges in this regard, and once more, with that of Turkey.”*  
*Maurice Bompard, ambassador at İstanbul (1909-1914), telegram dated 23 November 1912.*<sup>26</sup>

#### 1.1. Soft power *avant la lettre* (1850s-1914)

##### 1.1.1. *The special situation of France: Investments, trade and “moral preeminence”*

As it is commonly known, the French-Ottoman alliance begins in mid-1520s, as a military coalition decided by Francis I (*François Ier*) and Süleyman Kanuni against the Habsburgs. The alliance leads to the establishment of the first embassy of human history that still exists today: The French embassy in İstanbul, relocated in Ankara after 1923. The first main power to make a rapprochement with the Ottoman State, France obtains considerable advantages (the capitulations, securing a special justice for them) and the official protection of the Ottoman Christians. That having been said, as early as 16<sup>th</sup> century, the economic concerns emerge in the French diplomacy, the capitulations being precisely designed for merchants.<sup>27</sup> The eastern trade is particularly important for Marseille, the main port on the Mediterranean Sea, and if other powers, such as England, develop their presence during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> CADN, microfilm 2 Mi 2372.

<sup>27</sup> De Lamar Jensen, “The Ottoman Turks in Sixteenth Century French Diplomacy,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, XVI-4, winter 1985, pp. 451-470; Henry Laurens, John Tolan and Gilles Veinstein, *L’Europe et l’Islam. Quinze siècles d’histoire*, Paris : Odile Jacob, 2009, pp. 227-238.

centuries, France imposes itself as the main commercial partner of the Ottoman State: Around 1788, more than the half of the Ottoman external trade is made with France.<sup>28</sup> After an eclipse from 1815 to 1830s, when the UK supplants France economically and politically in the Ottoman space,<sup>29</sup> the French recover their traditional position, in a more general context of rise of French investments abroad (two billions francs in 1850, more than 15 billion in 1880).<sup>30</sup> Even during this eclipse, this is a Frenchman who establishes, in İzmir, the first nongovernmental newspaper of the Empire, in 1824.<sup>31</sup>

The two main instruments of France's economic penetration during this period are the Imperial Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman debt. The Imperial Ottoman Bank, which is acting both as a central bank and as a business bank, is established in 1863 and controlled at 80% by French banks, a majority which precisely marks the transition from the British preponderance to a return to the French one.<sup>32</sup> It helps the French investors to have the biggest share in the railways (46.9% in 1914) and in the banks sector (37.77% the same year).<sup>33</sup> The Ottoman public finances are carelessly treated until the reign of Abdülhamit II (1876-1909) and the situation leads in 1881 to the creation of an Administration of the Ottoman public debt (*Düyun-u Umumiye*), partly controlled by the creditors, to collect a part of the taxes directly and to reimburse, as a result, the debt. Yet, from 1880 to 1909, the French investors represent around 70% of the capital invested in the Ottoman debt, and 63% for the period 1910-1914.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> François Crouzet, *La Guerre économique franco-anglaise au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris : Fayard, 2008, pp. 221-224 and 233-234 ; Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la deuxième moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale*, Paris : Maisonneuve, 1962 ; Max Roche, *Éducation, assistance et culture françaises dans l'Empire ottoman*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 1989, pp. 8-11 and 23-24.

<sup>29</sup> Max Roche, *Éducation, assistance et...*, pp. 28-67.

<sup>30</sup> Rondo E. Cameron, « L'exportation des capitaux français, 1850-1880 », *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale*, XXXIII-3, 1955, pp. 347-353.

<sup>31</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The End of Modern History of the Middle East*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2011, p. 95. Ronald Grigor Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else"*, Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 56 wrongly claims that it has been established by "Armenians."

<sup>32</sup> André Autheman, *La Banque impériale ottomane*, Paris : Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 1996, pp. 21-32.

<sup>33</sup> Bige Yavuz Sükan, "Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı Sırasında Fransa'nın Anadolu'daki Çıkarları ve Ermeniler," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, 9, 2003.

<sup>34</sup> André Autheman, *La Banque impériale...*, pp. 301-302.

At least for the coastal cities, such as İstanbul, Beirut and Trabzon, or near to the sea (Bursa), the consuls are a source of data and support for the French investors. They are also, of course, the source of information for the government as well as a source for a broader audience, when they decide to be so.<sup>35</sup> Under the Third Republic, the consuls in the Ottoman Empire are recruited either among the dragomans, namely among those who graduate from the School of Oriental Languages (Paris), either by the ordinary diplomatic way: After a degree in law (at least a bachelor) and another from the School of political science, the candidate has to pass the competitive examination of the MFA.<sup>36</sup> The salary is not high during the first years of the career, but most of the consuls do their job honestly, with an acute sense of their mission.<sup>37</sup> The history of the French consuls in the late Ottoman Empire remains to be written. To give a significant example, Auguste Boppe (1862-1922), third secretary at the embassy from 1895 to 1898, then Consul general in Jerusalem from 1902 to 1904, and eventually first secretary, chargé d'affaires at the same embassy from 1905 to 1914, is a kind of traditionalist: Concerned about Catholic missionaries,<sup>38</sup> he writes books about arts in the classical age of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>39</sup> In 1909, he establishes a French library under the patronage of top CUP leaders and works with Hüseyin Cavit to create evening schools.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, he shows no alarmism regarding the situation in Izmir in March 1914, when a boycott of the Greek shops is organized, against the will of minister of Interior Talat, by governor Rahmi (Evrenoszade) Bey (1874-1947).<sup>41</sup> Boppe is “appreciated to the highest point by the Ottoman government and all the Turkish political personnel [namely the CUP and the Liberal Union], by the chiefs of the foreign missions and his colleagues of the diplomatic body,

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 70-71.

<sup>36</sup> Henri Mylès, *L'Autre carrière. Scènes de la vie consulaire*, Paris : H. Floury, 1927, pp. 23-24.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-28, 30-31 and 102-103.

<sup>38</sup> À M. Boppe, 7 mai 1906, Paul Cambon, *Correspondance. (1870-1924)*, Paris: Grasset, volume II, 1898-1911, 1940, p. 215 (edited and annotated by Henri Cambon).

<sup>39</sup> For instance: Auguste Boppe, *Les Peintres du Bosphore au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris : Hachette, 1911.

<sup>40</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 décembre 1909, AMAE, 394 QO 215.

<sup>41</sup> Le chargé d'affaires à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 10 mars 1914, AMAE, P 16738.

by the French community [of the Ottoman Empire] without distinction of categories and by” his chief, ambassador Bompard.<sup>42</sup>

The Catholic missions, the French ones in particular, beginning in 17<sup>th</sup> century, have a historical depth the Protestants do not have. Often, they also have a quite different stance toward the Ottoman Empire. The opposition is probably the clearest in the Balkans. The French Jesuits arrive in Salonika in 1693 and the first Catholic church of the city is unveiled in 1713. The Lazarists replace the Jesuits at the turn of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, without facing any difficulty with the Ottoman authorities, still less after the first significant wave of conversions of Bulgarians, around 1861, these conversions being perceived in İstanbul as a wall against the Russian influence.<sup>43</sup> On the contrary, in 1880, former Grand vizir Said Pasha expresses the deep regret that the Ottoman authorities did not help more than they actually did the Catholic missionaries in Bulgaria. “Had Bulgaria united herself with the Holy Seat, pan-Slavism could not have exerted the smallest influence.” The weekly of the Catholic missionaries quotes this statement with approval, and, at the same time, expresses its satisfaction regarding the now excellent relations between the Ottoman State and the Vatican,<sup>44</sup> in sharp contrast with the Anglo-Saxon Protestant campaigns for Bulgarian independence.<sup>45</sup> The embassy also praises the Lazarists’ mission, “which makes the greatest services.”<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, the missionaries benefit from a de facto agreement with the republican government by 1880: The congregations are submitted to the secular laws in France itself, and even expelled for the most militant of them (in 1880 and 1902-1904), but they enjoy abroad the full support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as “anti-clericalism is not an export product.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Notes annuelles 1909, 394 QO 215.

<sup>43</sup> Arthur Droulez, *Histoire de la mission lazarisite de Macédoine (1839-1939)*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2018, pp. 7-9 and 27-65.

<sup>44</sup> « Correspondance — Constantinople », *Les Missions catholiques*, 10 septembre 1880, p. 434.

<sup>45</sup> Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America. The Creation of an Enduring Prejudice*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, pp. 93-104; Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria (1878-1908)*, Ankara: TTK, 1998, pp. 52-54.

<sup>46</sup> Propositions d’allocations pour les établissements scolaires et hospitaliers de Turquie. 1896, AMAE, P 843.

<sup>47</sup> Note of the ministry of Foreign Affairs for the consuls in the Ottoman Empire, 1 May 1882, AMAE, P 801; Jean Lacouture, *Jésuites. Une multibiographie*, Paris : Le Seuil, 1995, volume II, pp. 270-271, 281-291 and 366 ; Henri Mylès, *L’Autre Carrière...*, pp. 112-133 ; Pierre Vermeren, *La France en...*, pp. 122-129.

In Lebanon, too, the activities of the missionaries begin in 17<sup>th</sup> century and develop during the next century. However, what changes from 1830 to 1861 is the perception and the importance of the Maronites for France. Until 1830s, these Lebanese Christians are not considered quite relevant in France—when they are considered by any aspect.<sup>48</sup> The first stage of the building of the “privileged relation” takes place in the 1830s, stimulated by the concurrence of Catholic missionaries from Piedmont-Sardinia and of Protestant missionaries from the UK. During the 1840s, the increase of the Franco-British rivalry, the intensification of the presence of Italians and Austrians as well as of tensions between Maronites and Druzes reinforces the mutual interests. The 1850s are the time of the intensification of the cultural exchanges, the Maronites furnishing the biggest number of students for the French schools and beginning to adopt the French language as their own.<sup>49</sup> In this process, the Jesuits play a key role, particularly in the fight against Protestants.<sup>50</sup> This is hardly surprising, as the share of Frenchmen among the Jesuits attains its historical climax in 19<sup>th</sup> century (almost one third).<sup>51</sup>

If France is arguably the most centralized power of the time, the city of Lyon needs a special mention. Indeed, the headquarters of the main missionaries’ organization are settled here, as well as a significant part of the companies investing in Lebanon and Syria. As early as 1830, the year of the landing in Algiers, the Chamber of commerce begins to be interested in investments overseas. The companies develop their interest for Africa during the forthcoming decades, but their main concerns are in the East, primarily because of the silk. The textile companies welcome the piercing of the Suez Canal, as it facilitates trade with China, Indochina, and Japan, but the Ottoman Empire is not forgotten.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Yann Bouyrat, *La France et les Maronites du Mont-Liban. Naissance d’une relation privilégiée, 1830-1861*, Paris : Paul Geuthner, 2013, pp. 22-38 and 61-74 ; Charles Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans. The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1923*, London-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 141-142.

<sup>49</sup> Yann Bouyrat, *La France et...*, pp. 74-503.

<sup>50</sup> Chantal Verdeil, *La Mission jésuite du Mont-Liban et de Syrie, 1830-1864*, Paris : Les Indes savantes, 2011.

<sup>51</sup> Jean Lacouture, *Jésuites. Une multibiographie...*, volume II, pp 250-251.

<sup>52</sup> Jean-François Klein, « Une culture impériale consulaire ? L’exemple de la Chambre de commerce de Lyon (1830-1920) », in Hubert Bonin, Jean-François Klein and C. Hodeir (ed.), *L’Esprit économique impérial, groupes de pression et réseaux du patronat colonial en France et dans l’Empire*, Paris : Société française d’histoire d’outre-mer, 2008, pp. 346-378; John F. Laffey, “Roots of French Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of Lyon,” *French Historical Studies*, VI-1, spring 1969, pp. 78-92.

Indeed, if Lebanon and Syria are never, during the period 1860-1914 a source of silk as important as China or Japan, the Lyon's industrialists dominate here the activities completely: The local production is almost entirely made with cocoons produced near Lyon, most of the factories are controlled by the industrialists of the city and the three quarters of the workers are Catholic, a confessional ratio which facilitates the creation of Catholic orphanages near the factories, with the funding of industrialists. By 1912, the State University of Lyon, the big business of the city and the Jesuits cooperate to expand the Saint-Joseph University of Beirut, established in 1875. The school of law is inaugurated in 1913 and only the war prevents the unveiling of the school of engineering, supposed to take place in November 1914.<sup>53</sup>

Yet, Lebanon is the part of the Ottoman Empire raising the biggest questions regarding the French attitude toward the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, because of the intervention of 1860 and of the status of autonomy secured as a result.<sup>54</sup> This issue is obscured by a part of the historiography, including publications of respectable scholars, who see the intervention as primarily motivated by religious solidarity and by "humanitarian" concerns.<sup>55</sup> Actually, the study based on the most various range of sources proves that most of the conservative Catholics are actually reluctant, and sometimes hostile, to the intervention, when it is supported by secular liberals who do not often praise the initiatives of Napoléon III. The operation has two main aims: Impressing the Sultan to accept the breakthrough of the Suez Canal; and securing the investments, particularly of the silk industry, in Lebanon. Quickly, the sultan stops its obstruction toward the canal and accepts the autonomy of the Christians in Mount Lebanon (the pretext of the intervention); right after, the big business finds much more profitable to maintain the Ottoman Empire instead of administrating Lebanon directly,

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<sup>53</sup> Dominique Chevallier, « Lyon et la Syrie en 1919. Les bases d'une intervention », *Revue historique*, CCXXIV-2, avril-juin 1960, pp. 281, 284-291 and 298.

<sup>54</sup> John P. Spagnolo, *France and Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1914*, London: Ithaca Press, 1977, pp. 1-3 and 29-52.

<sup>55</sup> Yann Bouyrat, *La France et...*, pp. 537-546 ; Yann Bouyrat, *Devoir d'intervenir ?*, Paris : Vendémiaire, 2013 ; Pierre Rondot, « L'intervention internationale de 1960 au Liban », *Études*, novembre 1960, pp. 203-212 ; Pierre Vermeren, *La France en...*, p. 101.



at the expenses of the French taxpayers.<sup>56</sup> Actually, “the *Règlement* gave the local representatives of the Powers no special authority.”<sup>57</sup>

That having been said, it is incontrovertible that well before and after the operation of 1860, a series of books describes the Maronites as the best possible clients of France in the Near East,<sup>58</sup> and, more important, the anti-clerical Republic develops without any reluctance the relationship with them. Elias Pierre Hoyek (1843-1931), Maronite patriarch from 1899 to his death, considers himself “absolutely a French citizen, as the religious (and, to a certain extent, political) leader of a nation having claimed the French protection for centuries” (according to the words of a diplomat knowing him personally) and when he comes to Istanbul, he celebrates a mass with the representatives of the French embassy. Ambassador Ernest Constans comments, on his role toward the Maronites and other Uniates: “I have been a freemason for forty years, but I would be an idiot if I remembered it here.”<sup>59</sup> In 1905, when Hoyek comes to Paris, he is received by the President of the Republic Émile Loubet and the President of the Ministers’ Council Maurice Rouvier<sup>60</sup>—between the vote of Chamber of the deputies and the one of the Senate for the separation of the churches and the state.

The missionaries are relatively active in the region of Çukurova (“Cilicia”) by 1880s,<sup>61</sup> but this is not until 1909, when the Crown’s domains are confiscated by the state, that the region becomes a significant target for the French investments. After two failed attempts of investment in agriculture, a contract is signed in April 1912 for the exploitation of the imperial domain of Çukurova, mostly for the production of cereals and cotton. Regardless, the anti-CUP cabinet (July 1912-January 1913) blocks the projects, which cannot be implemented

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<sup>56</sup> Marcel Émerit, « La crise syrienne et l’expansion économique française en 1860 », *Revue historique*, CCVII-2, avril-juin 1952, pp. 211-232. Also see Charles Issawi, “The Transformation of the Economic Position of the Millets in Nineteenth Century,” in Bernard Lewis and Benjamin Braude, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society*, New York-London: Holmes & Meier, 1982, p. 267.

<sup>57</sup> John Spagnolo, *France and Ottoman...*, p. 72.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Arsan, “‘There is, in the Heart of Asia... an entirely French Population.’ — France, Mount Lebanon and the Workings of Affective Empire, 1830-1920,” in Patricia M. E. Lorcin and Todd Shepard (eds.), *French Mediterraneans. Transnational and Colonial Histories*, Lincoln-London: University of Nebraska Press, 2016, pp. 76-100; Yann Bouyrat, *La France et...*, pp. 608-621.

<sup>59</sup> François Charles-Roux, *Souvenirs diplomatiques d’un âge révolu*, Paris : Fayard, 1956, p. 156.

<sup>60</sup> Lettre d’Elias Pierre Hoyek à Ernest Constans, 5 octobre 1905, AMAE, 40 PA-AP 3, ff. 14-15.

<sup>61</sup> « Correspondance — Constantinople », *Les Missions catholiques*, 29 octobre 1880, pp. 518-519 ; « Correspondance — Asie mineure », *Les Missions catholiques*, 8 décembre 1882, pp. 577-580.

because of the WWI.<sup>62</sup> This failure, that having been said, is no proof of a lack of care. As a result, it is clear, that, in 1912-1914, the French policy toward the Ottoman Empire considers the “Greater Syria” a region of special interests, for a combination of economic, political, strategic, religious and sentimental reasons, and this expressed at the highest level by the speech of President of ministers’ council Raymond Poincaré (1860-1934) in December 1912;<sup>63</sup> but does it mean that, at many moment before the outbreak of the First World War, the creation of an “Integral Syria” under French protectorate (and where the Armenians of Çukurova could be the second clients after the Christian Arabs) is seriously considered by the cabinet?

A basic fact may serve as a beginning of answer: From 1861 to 1914, there is no kind of revolutionary nationalist party among the Maronites or Melkites, either of “socialist” kind (like the ARF and the Hunchak) either of “patriotic” and church-linked kind (like the Armenakan/Ramkavar); the 1862-1914 period is not marked by terrorism or insurrections but on the contrary by peace.<sup>64</sup> Yet France has its share in this peace, for example when the Quai d’Orsay fixes a crisis between a Maronite bishop and the Ottoman governor, in 1878, and refuses to back the Memorandum of Daud Ammun, asking in 1912 for the transformation of Mount Lebanon into a quasi-independent realm.<sup>65</sup>

### 1.1.2. *The Great Syria is not enough: Maintaining the Empire*

Napoléon III, together with Britain and the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, allies the Ottoman Empire against Russia; they defeat the Tsar’s armies during the Crimean war (1853-1856).<sup>66</sup> After the short-lived Lebanese crises, the Second Empire becomes the main inspiration of the

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<sup>62</sup> Jacques Thobie, *La France et l’est...*, pp. 227-241. The German investors are more successful: Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton. A New History of Global Capitalism*, London: Penguin Books, 2015, p. 316.

<sup>63</sup> Ministère des Affaires étrangères (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques. Les Affaires balkaniques, 1912-1914*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1922, volume II, p. 305.

<sup>64</sup> Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1993.

<sup>65</sup> John Spagnolo, *France and Ottoman...*, pp. 160-161 and 276-279.

<sup>66</sup> Jérôme Louis, *La Question d’Orient sous Louis-Philippe*, Paris : S.P.M., 2015, pp. 538-539; G. D. Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, London: University of London Press, 1971, pp. 109-118.

Ottoman government. In particular, the lycée of Galatasaray is established in cooperation with the French Ministry of Education, at that time headed by Victor Duruy.<sup>67</sup> Here, one more time, the contrast with the dominant trend of Anglo-Saxon militant Protestantism is striking: The Robert College, the main Anglo-Saxon school, was the place where most of the leading Bulgarian separatists are educated—if not encouraged in their separatists ideas—before the uprising of 1876;<sup>68</sup> on the contrary, the main French contribution to Ottoman education is the stronghold of Ottomanism.<sup>69</sup> Naturally, and no matter how large and generous the views of Duruy are (they actually are), the policy is, one more time, not entirely disinterested: This Ottomanism is French-speaking.

The fall of the Second Empire, the proclamation of the Third Republic (4 September 1870) and the decisive electoral victories of the republicans (1876-1881) do not change the trend beginning with Napoleon III. Essential is the stance of Jules Ferry (1832-1893), minister of National Education (1879-1880; 1881-1883) and President of the ministers' council (1880-1881; 1883-1885). Indeed, Ferry is the main designer of the “republican model,” building the basis of the emancipatory, meritocratic system where the son of an artisan or peasant can become a President of the Republic.<sup>70</sup> Ferry also develops, more empirically, the colonial policy, which is far from being unanimously accepted during the 1880s (it becomes more popular after 1890 only). Yet, his colonialism is based on treaties of protectorate (Tunisia 1881, Tonkin and Madagascar 1885) instead of direct administration, to respect—for the standards of the time—the local populations. For him, there is no irreducible difference between a French peasant and, for example, a Tunisian one. He has seen the direct administration in Algeria and considers it more than problematic. At the end of his life, he chairs the investigative commission of the Senate on Algeria and the abuses of settlers; he advocates, in vain, the emergence of a “French Algerian race” by massive mixed unions between the settlers on one side, the Berbers and Arabs on the other side.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Max Roche, *Éducation, assistance et...*, pp. 206-207.

<sup>68</sup> Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and...*, p. 38; Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority...*, p. 43. The gratitude of the Bulgarian cabinet is intact four decades later: Caleb Frank Gates, *Not to me Only*, Princeton-London: Princeton University Press/Oxford University Press, 1940, p. 226.

<sup>69</sup> Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism and Modernity. A History, 1789-2007*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 91 and 154.

<sup>70</sup> Jean-Michel Gaillard, *Jules Ferry*, Paris : Fayard, 1989, pp. 488-529.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 539-612 ; Jean Ganiage and Denis Émery, *L'Expansion coloniale de la France sous la Troisième République (1871-1914)*, Paris : Payot, 1968, pp. 45-59 ; Raoul Girardet, *L'Idée coloniale en*

In short, the model built by Ferry is inclusive and without particular prejudice toward Muslims. His supremacism is purely cultural and even more linguistic, not racial and still less religious (Ferry is a firm unbeliever). Concerning more specifically the Ottoman Empire, Ferry, at that time an opponent to the Second Empire, spends the autumn 1868 in İstanbul. Discovering the city, he calls the Turks “poets,” considers that the Ottoman capital city would deserve “one hundred times more” than Rome to be “the capital of the world,” then adds: “This domineering and conquering profile, the main beauty of the new Stamboul, it is due to the Turks.”<sup>72</sup> 13 years later, when Greece asks for a military intervention of Western powers to fix the boundary conflict with the Ottoman Empire, Ferry, who is now the president of the ministers’ council, answers negatively. At that time, Ferry’s minister of Foreign Affairs is Jules Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire (1805-1895), author of a book concluding that Mahomet was “one of the most extraordinary and greatest men.”<sup>73</sup>

Beside these strong personalities, it is necessary to underline that if the Third Republic promotes the “new layers” (middle class), the regime is not the enemy of the big business. In spite of the social diversification of the background of the parliamentarians, cabinet members and Presidents of the Republic, the grand bourgeoisie and the political elites remain closely intermixed, at least during the first decades. Most of the owners of banks, big factories, etc., sincerely accept the new regime and legitimize it in the eyes of both national and foreign investors, but in exchange, they expect—and generally obtain—a policy in conformity with their interests, including the investments in the colonial empire and in foreign countries.<sup>74</sup> In the general press, the voice of this big business accepting parliamentary democracy is the *Journal des débats*,<sup>75</sup> one of the two dailies of the republican elites.

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*France, de 1871 à 1962*, Paris : Le livre de poche, 1979, pp. 81-107 ; Pierre Vermeren, *La France en...*, pp. 181-193.

<sup>72</sup> À Madame Ferry-Millon, 26 septembre 1868, in Eugène Jules-Ferry (ed.), *Lettres de Jules Ferry. 1846-1893*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1914, pp. 42-43.

<sup>73</sup> Jules Barthélémy-Saint-Hilaire, *Mahomet et le Coran*, Paris : Didier & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1865, p. V.

<sup>74</sup> Jean Garrigues, *La République des hommes d'affaires. 1870-1900*, Paris: Aubier, 1997, pp. 9-18, 246-256 and passim.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Yet, the *Journal des débats* is until 1914 one of the most constant supporters of the Ottoman Empire, especially as far as territorial integrity is concerned.<sup>76</sup> The other daily of the elites supporting the regime is *Le Temps*, the mouthpiece of the Quai d'Orsay.<sup>77</sup> As a result, the liberal narrative in France has very little to do, as far as the eastern question is concerned, with the one in Britain, as elaborated by William Gladstone, David Lloyd George and Lord Bryce, or the U.S., as promoted by Woodrow Wilson and a large part of the missionary establishment—a narrative where the idea of progress, mixed with racist and religious prejudice, is found incompatible with Islam in general and Turkish/Ottoman Islam in particular.<sup>78</sup>

This economic rationale has a much less material counterpart: The novels of Pierre Loti (1850-1923) on the Turks, namely *Ayizadé* (1879), *Fantôme d'Orient* (1892), *Constantinople en 1890* (idem) and *Les Désenchantées* (1906) where the late Ottoman Empire is defended, including for esthetic reasons<sup>79</sup> (the more political aspects of Loti's defense of the Turks are discussed, in detail, below). Yet, and without insisting on the links between literature and politics in France, it is a fact that Loti is a very fashionable writer, elected at the Academy in 1891 and admired in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by the young diplomats of the embassy at İstanbul<sup>80</sup> but also by Maurice Paléologue, director of political affairs (number 2 of the MFA

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<sup>76</sup> « Paris, samedi 9 septembre », *Journal des débats*, 10 septembre 1876, p. 1 ; « Paris, 19 juillet », *Journal des débats*, 20 juillet 1878, p. 1 ; « Paris mardi 12 septembre », *Journal des débats*, 13 septembre 1882, p. 1 ; Jules Dietz, « Bulletin du jour », *Journal des débats*, 25 septembre 1885, p. 1 ; « À l'étranger — L'annexion de la Crète à la Grèce », *Journal des débats*, 13 août 1896, pp. 1-2 ; « À l'étranger — La question macédonienne », 30 mai 1903, p. 1 ; « Affaires d'Orient », *Journal des débats*, 29 août 1903, pp. 1-2 ; « La crise orientale », *Journal des débats*, 7 octobre 1908, p. 1 ; « L'ultimatum italien », *Journal des débats*, 30 septembre 1911, p. 1 ; « La paix italo-turque », *Journal des débats*, 17 octobre 1912, p. 1 ; « La liquidation balkanique », *Journal des débats*, 23 août 1913, p. 2 ; Claude Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, volume III, 1972, pp. 208-210.

<sup>77</sup> Claude Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, volume III, 1972, pp. 210-212 and 249.

<sup>78</sup> Andrew Mango, "Minorities and Majorities," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXIII-4, October 1987, pp. 516-518; Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America...*, passim; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and...*, pp. 147-148 and passim; Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Britain, America and the Armenian Question*, London-New York: Routledge, 2016, pp. 6-86.

<sup>79</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne de la France. Un témoin, Pierre Loti (1870-1923)*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 1992, pp. 11-27 and 37-42.

<sup>80</sup> Bernard Auffray, *Pierre de Margerie (1862-1942) et la vie diplomatique de son temps*, Paris : Klincksieck, 1976, p. 64 ; François Charles-Roux, *Souvenirs diplomatiques d'un...*, p. 119.

until the position of general secretary is established) from 1912 to 1914.<sup>81</sup> The novelist finds a follower in Turkophilia, Claude Farrère, who becomes an admirer of the Turks during his time in İstanbul as a Navy officer in 1903-1904, just before becoming, too, a successful writer (Goncourt prize in 1906) and to publish a novel about İstanbul (*L'Homme qui assassina*, 1906-1907).<sup>82</sup>

According to Jacques Thobie, who bases his conclusions on the official correspondence of the MFA and on private companies' archives, "the defense of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire [...] remains indeed the basis of the French policy in the east" in the 1890s, because only France and Germany "truly have interest, at this moment [1890s] to safeguard the political and territorial unity of the Ottoman Empire." Yet, for Ambassador Paul Cambon (1843-1924), in İstanbul from November 1891 to November 1898, this safeguard must preserve France from a German-Ottoman alliance.<sup>83</sup>

The successor of Cambon, Ernest Constans (1833-1913), is sent in January 1899, and stays until 1909, to ease the tensions with İstanbul, and in fact, few people are more worthy than him. First of all, as a former governor of Indochina (1887-1888) and minister of Interior (1880-1881; 1889-1892), Constans is in the tradition of the considerable political characters made ambassadors with the goal to show the importance accorded by a country to another one. His stance toward the Turks is even more relevant. As notices François Charles-Roux (1879-1961), a young attaché working under Constans' orders in İstanbul from 1905 to 1907 (Charles-Roux finishes his career as an ambassador, general secretary of the Ministry), Constans "had for them [the Turks] regard and sympathy, preferred them to all their Balkans neighbors, wished the maintain of their Empire, was unprejudiced toward their domestic policy, did not embarrass himself with humanitarian principles, political principles or constitutional doctrines."<sup>84</sup> In fact, the priority of Constans as an ambassador is to develop the French investments and trade. His political career, his links with various newspapers (*Le Temps*, *Le Figaro*, *L'Écho de Paris*, etc.), his friendship with Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau (1846-1904), president of the ministers' council from 1899 to 1902 and the absolute trust he enjoys

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<sup>81</sup> Maurice Paléologue, *Au Quai d'Orsay à la veille de la tourmente. Journal, 1913-1914*, Paris : Plon, 1947, pp. 176-177.

<sup>82</sup> Claude Farrère, *Souvenirs*, Paris : Fayard, 1953, pp. 26-39 ; Alain Quella-Villéger, *Le Cas Farrère. Du Goncourt à la disgrâce*, Paris : Presses de la Renaissance, 1989, pp. 21-102.

<sup>83</sup> Jacques Thobie, *Intérêts et impérialisme...*, p. 210.

<sup>84</sup> François Charles-Roux, *Souvenirs diplomatiques d'un...*, p. 118.

from Georges Clemenceau, Waldeck-Rousseau's successor from 1906 to 1909, give him an exceptional autonomy.<sup>85</sup>

A more symbolic decision—but symbols matter in international relations—is the appointment of Captain Julien Viaud, aka Pierre Loti, as commander of the embassy's stationary ship, from 1903 to 1905. Loti being already known as a Turkophile and as a very successful novelist, the choice has a political dimension, fully understood by the Hamidian state.<sup>86</sup>

After the failure of the counter-revolution in Istanbul, ambassador Constans, disliked by the Young Turks as well as by their Socialist friends in the French Parliament is on leave. Yet, as Constans himself and his minister observe in January 1909, facing the British concurrence, “we need in Turkey an active and firm policy, trustful in the future of the party in power [...] and keeping permanent contact with the administration established since the accession of the constitutional regime.”<sup>87</sup> Such an adaptation needing a new representative, Constans is replaced by Maurice Bompard (1854-1935),<sup>88</sup> a professional diplomat and a former ambassador at St-Petersburg (1903-1908), where he and his wife managed the please the Tsar and the Russian aristocracy, in spite of the fact that they are not from a noble family—and in spite of the ambassador's skepticism toward the stability of the Tsar's regime.<sup>89</sup> If his style is surely different, Bompard is not less supportive of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire than his predecessor. Indeed, until 1909, most of the investments promoted by the French embassy had taken place where political interest already existed. Bompard reverts the perspective, developing an all-round policy of investments, the political interests being

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<sup>85</sup> Lettre de la direction générale de Schneider & C<sup>ie</sup> à Ernest Constans, 15 avril 1906, AMAE, 40 PA-AP 3; Bruce Fulton, “France's Extraordinary Ambassador: Ernest Constans and the Ottoman Empire, 1898-1909,” *French Historical Studies*, XXIII-4, Fall 2000, pp. 683-702. Also see Joseph Caillaux, *Mes Mémoires*, Paris: Plon, Volume I, 1942, p. 255.

<sup>86</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne...*, pp. 43-50 ; Pierre de Saint-Stéban, « Pierre Loti et la Turquie », *Bulletin de l'Académie du Var*, 1985, pp. 51-52.

<sup>87</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. Constans, ambassadeur de la République à Constantinople, 26 janvier 1909 ; L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 31 janvier 1909, AMAE, 40 PA-AP 3.

<sup>88</sup> Bruce Fulton, “France's Extraordinary Ambassador...”, pp. 702-704.

<sup>89</sup> François Charles-Roux, *Souvenirs diplomatiques d'un...*, pp. 57-85.

supposed to follow the economic ones.<sup>90</sup> It is fundamental to notice that such a policy, pursued until 1914 implies maintaining the Ottoman Empire, preferably in its boundaries of 1909 (unlike a concentration of the investments in Greater Syria only, for example).

The geographical diversification of the investments by 1909 leads to an unprecedented project of railroad in the Black sea's region—precisely a region reserved to Russia by the agreement of 1900, St-Petersburg wanting to prevent the Ottoman Empire from acquiring the capacity for an effective mobilization on a Caucasian front. Initially (1909-1910), only a Samsun-Sivas line is considered, but by February 1911 and with the support of the embassy as well as of the cabinet, the project becomes a plan for a network in north-eastern Anatolia, with a Russian participation to obtain the agreement of St-Petersburg. In 1912, when the Russian policy becomes aggressive again, the Tsar's cabinet asks Paris to pressure İstanbul to renounce a quick construction of the lines close to the Russian-Ottoman boundary, but the Poincaré government refuses—which is hardly a proof of unconditional alignment on Russia. An Ottoman-Russian compromise on the delays of construction is reached in January 1914.<sup>91</sup> Even more explicitly, an undated report of Bompard, which seems written around 1913-1914, explains that the German concurrence in the railroad has to be fought by massive investments, but also in considering that the lines must satisfy “the political, economic *and military* [italics added] needs of the country.”<sup>92</sup>

Beside the investments, Bompard proposes, in 1913, to increase, for the year 1914 the subventions to the French secular schools in the Ottoman Empire from F 311,050 to F 424,350, namely by more than 36%. Yet, it cannot be attributed merely to a design to correct the general balance in favor of these schools, because for Egypt, he asks for a much less significant increase, from F 198,734 to F 203,900, namely 2.6%.<sup>93</sup> Such a proposal, as a result, seems caused by the firm belief that there is a way to keep the Ottoman Empire alive. It is even more likely as he also proposes to increase the subventions for the religious schools in

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<sup>90</sup> Jacques Thobie, « Finance et politique : Le refus en France de l'emprunt ottoman en 1910 », *Revue historique*, CXXXIX-2, avril-juin 1968, p. 344 ; Jacques Thobie, *Intérêts et impérialisme...*, pp. 357-373 and 391-401.

<sup>91</sup> Jacques Thobie, *La France et l'est méditerranéen...*, pp. 183-206.

<sup>92</sup> Maurice Bompard, *Les chemins de fer en Turquie*, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57.

<sup>93</sup> Maurice Bompard, *Subventions aux établissements laïques, 1913*, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 58.



Sivas, Erzurum and Van.<sup>94</sup> The French-Ottoman agreements of April 1914 prove that the Ministry shares the views of Bompard: They confirm the guarantees for the French schools and a new loan of F 500,000,000 is secured in exchange of the purchase of French (instead of German) military material. The unofficial daily *Le Temps* expresses its great satisfaction for “the sincerity of the program of reform of the Porte” and the French participation to the economic development of Anatolia, as well as to the “reorganization” of the Ottoman State.<sup>95</sup>

Such a sale of weapons is surely not disinterested, but it is also strong evidence that the French cabinet does not expect a war with the Ottoman Empire and sees no problem in providing material improving the capacity of the Ottoman military to be more credible in front of Russia. More explicitly, in the report of the embassy on the agreements of September 1913 (preparing the ones of April 1914), it is written that they give “the necessary resources” to “avoid that Turkey in Asia experiences the fate of Turkey in Europe.”<sup>96</sup>

None of that means that the MFA in general or Bompard in particular are blind. They know the hostile context: Unilateral annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908, of Crete by Greece and unilateral proclamation of independence by Bulgaria the same year,<sup>97</sup> Italian-Ottoman war in 1911-1912,<sup>98</sup> Balkan wars in 1912-1913,<sup>99</sup> Russian ambitions toward the Straits and eastern Anatolia by 1912. In fact, the unofficial daily *Le Temps* deplores the independence of Bulgaria<sup>100</sup> and the Quai d’Orsay intervenes to find a compromise, Russia renouncing a part of the remaining war indemnity (1877-1878) and Bulgaria paying to Russia the tribute due to the Ottoman Empire. In 1911, Paris warns Istanbul in vain against the Italian ambitions and in 1912—also in vain—against the Balkanic coalition. André Tardieu, in charge of the foreign affairs in *Le Temps* writes an article supporting the Ottoman point of

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<sup>94</sup> Maurice Bompard, *Subventions aux établissements congréganistes*, 1913, p. 7, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 58.

<sup>95</sup> « Les accords franco-turcs », *Le Temps*, 12 avril 1914, p. 1.

<sup>96</sup> Bernard Auffray, *Pierre de Margerie...*, p. 237.

<sup>97</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, volume II, 1978, pp. 276-277.

<sup>98</sup> Jean-Louis Miège, *L’Impérialisme colonial italien de 1870 à nos jours*, Paris : SEDES, 1968, pp. 81-97.

<sup>99</sup> Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi (ed.), *War and Nationalism*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013.

<sup>100</sup> « Le congrès nécessaire », *Le Temps*, 6 octobre 1908, p. 1 ; « Les succès des Jeunes-Turcs », *Le Temps*, 20 avril 1909, p. 1.

view against Italy and Fethi (Okyar), the military attaché of the Ottoman embassy in Paris, can join Libya thanks to his friends of the Quai d'Orsay.<sup>101</sup> Yet, nobody, in the diplomatic circles, can ignore the unofficial statute of Tardieu's article, as this author previously was a negotiator with Germans at the end of 1908, preparing a bilateral agreement on Morocco signed in 1909.<sup>102</sup> It is equally clear that Tardieu writes what he thinks: He is a "dear and precious friend"<sup>103</sup> of Nahum Efendi, the Ottoman ambassador in Paris.

As early as the beginning of the first Balkan war, ambassador Bompard reports about the policy of ethnic cleansing against the Turks<sup>104</sup> and asks: "What will we become in these lands?" if the enemies of the Ottoman Empire win.<sup>105</sup> This concern has a practical consequence. In mid-1913, the Russian government threatens the Ottoman one of war in case of a definitive reconquest of Edirne then asks for a joint initiative of the Triple-Entente against this recovery, but the French cabinet rejects this demand<sup>106</sup> (in a context of growing German threats<sup>107</sup>). For Paul Cambon, ambassador in London from 1898 to 1920, "Sazonov has lost his head" (sic).<sup>108</sup> This refusal takes even more sense in considering that, by the end

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<sup>101</sup> Opposition en Turquie — Rôle de Fethi Bey, 4 juin 1918, AMAE, P 1572 ; Osman Okyar, « Les rapports franco-turcs à l'époque d'Atatürk vus sous l'angle de la mission militaire de Fetih Okyar comme attaché militaire à Paris », in Paul Dumont and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, *La Turquie et la France à l'époque d'Atatürk*, Paris : ADET, 1981, pp. 7-15. Actually, the verbal agreement of 1899 and the exchange of letters in 1901, between France and Italy, promise that France will never occupy Libya, but it is not a green light for an Italian invasion: Lettre de Camille Barrère à Paul Beau, 16 février 1900, AMAE, P 7764; Abel Combarieu, *Sept ans à l'Élysée avec le président Émile Loubet*, Paris: Hachette, 1932, p. 106.

<sup>102</sup> Joseph Caillaux, *Mes Mémoires...*, Volume I, pp. 274-277.

<sup>103</sup> Annotated visit card, 10 July 1910, AN, 324 AP 12.

<sup>104</sup> See his dispatches of 15 October, 17, 25, 26 November, 1 and 24 December 1912, CADN, 2 Mi 2372.

<sup>105</sup> Rinaldo Marmara (ed.), *Témoignages lazarisistes sur la guerre balkanique*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2011, p. 27.

<sup>106</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. Delcassé, ambassadeur de France à Saint-Petersbourg, 25 juillet 1913, in Commission de publication des documents relatifs aux origines de la guerre de 1914 (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français, 1871-1914*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 3<sup>e</sup> série, volume VII, 1934, pp. 504-505; Maurice Paléologue, *Au Quai d'Orsay...*, pp. 173-175.

<sup>107</sup> Fritz Fischer, *War of Illusions. German Policies from 1911 to 1914*, New York: W. W. Norton & C°, 1975; Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, « La politique extérieure de la Troisième République — Ses traits originaux », Université de Caen and Université de Rennes (ed.), *Centenaire de la Troisième République*, Paris : Jean-Pierre Delarge, 1975, pp. 137-138.

<sup>108</sup> Lettre particulière à M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 août 1913, *Documents diplomatiques français...*, 3<sup>e</sup> série, volume VIII, 1934, p. 23.

of 1911, as a result of the Italian aggression, the mission of re-organization of the Ottoman gendarmerie becomes predominantly French. Indeed, the efforts of reform, both by French and Ottoman officers quickly increase—precisely when Russia wants to use domestic security concerns as a pretext to intervene—and the improved gendarmerie is used by Enver for the mobilization of 1913, to retake the eastern Thrace. Yet, this use does not change anything to the relation of the Ottoman State with the French mission, which remains on place until 2 August 1914.<sup>109</sup>

Even the fact that the General Arab Congress takes in Paris in June 1913 cannot be considered proof of a desire for partition. On the contrary, the participants are requested by the government and its unofficial voices to be quite, to avoid separatist plans and to prefer an improvement of the Ottoman administration.<sup>110</sup> The only actual encouragement to Arab—and more exactly Maronite—separatists, in June 1914, is a personal initiative of François Georges-Picot, consul general in Beirut from March to November of this year. It is not endorsed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; on the contrary, Georges-Picot acts in spite of the refusal of Paris provide weapons to the Maronites who ask so and finds, by himself, a support from the Greek government.<sup>111</sup>

A description of the French policy would be unachieved without its most human aspect: The action organized by Gabrielle Bompard de Blignières (1868-1948), the wife of Ambassador Maurice Bompard, for the wounded soldiers and the refugees during the Balkan wars. She supervises, and directly takes part to the confection of clothes—inside the embassy—for the Ottoman hospitals, then launches an appeal in *Le Matin*, obtaining F 45,000 in two weeks, dispatches the volunteers (physicians, nurses, etc.) coming from France and the food provided by Catholic institutions of İstanbul (295,000 rations). In total, her work represents fourteen hospitals, including seven entirely paid by French money.<sup>112</sup> The words of Ahmet Reşit (Rey) summarize the Ottoman perception of this relief: “What Ms. Bompard did for our

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<sup>109</sup> *Le Capitaine Sarrou, un officier français au service de l'Empire ottoman*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2002, pp. 39-46.

<sup>110</sup> James Barr, *A Line in the Sand. Britain, France the Struggle That Shaped the Middle East*, London-New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011, p. 21; Ludovic de Contenson, *Les Réformes en Turquie d'Asie*, Paris: Plon, 1913, pp. 54 and 62-129.

<sup>111</sup> James Barr, *A Line in...*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>112</sup> Sinan Kunalp (ed.), *Une ambassadrice de France à Constantinople. Les souvenirs de Gabrielle Bompard de Blignières, 1909-1914*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2016, pp. 68-72.

poor wounded soldiers, treating them herself, getting them treated by her daughter, in hospitals she had improvised, we will never forget—never. [...] All Turkey thanks her.”<sup>113</sup>

### 1.1.3. Catholics, Jews and Muslims rather than Gregorian Armenians

Continuously, from the first French-Ottoman alliance to the end of the Turkish war of independence, the Catholics are the main clients of France in the Ottoman space. According to the estimate of Jacques Thobie, based on a survey representing 55% of the students of the French schools, the Catholics are 44.4% of the total (a considerable overrepresentation), when the Orthodox Greeks and the Gregorian Armenians are 22%, roughly their share in the Empire’s population.<sup>114</sup> At the eve of the First World War, the Maronites only represent more than the three quarters of the students in the Lazarists’ schools of Lebanon and Syria.<sup>115</sup> Such a special relationship means a demographic basis for French influence, without need to convert Armenians en masse.

The difference is fundamental with the Protestants. Indeed, only some dozens of individuals convert from Islam to Protestantism, and a total of some thousands among the Greek Orthodox, Maronites and Melkites (3,730 in Lebanon, according to the census of 1921). As a result, the Protestant Armenians (about 65,000) represent most of the Protestant Ottomans.<sup>116</sup> It is quite different for the Catholic Ottomans. At the eve of the First World War, the number of Christians in Lebanon only (who mostly recognize the authority of the pope<sup>117</sup>)

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<sup>113</sup> Georges Bourdon, « En Turquie — Les responsables », *Le Figaro*, 7 février 1913, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> Jacques Thobie, *La France et l’est...*, p. 358.

<sup>115</sup> Jean Riffier, *Les Œuvres françaises en Syrie, 1860-1923*, Paris : L’Harmattan, 2000, p. 71.

<sup>116</sup> Habid Badr, “American Protestant Missionary Beginnings in Beirut and Istanbul: Policy, Politics, Practice and Response” and Barbara Merguerian, “‘Missions in Eden’: Shaping an Educational and Social Program for the Armenians in Eastern Turkey (1855–1895),” in Heleen Murre-van den Berg (ed.), *New Faith in Ancient Lands Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, Leiden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2006, pp. 211-261; Thibaut Jaulin, « Démographie et politique au Liban sous le Mandat », *Histoire & Mesure*, XXIV-1, 2009, pp. 189-210; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and...*, pp. 30-35; Jeremy Salt, “Trouble Wherever They Went: American Missionaries in Anatolia and Ottoman Syria in Nineteenth Century,” *The Muslim World*, XCII-3/4, Fall 2002, pp. 293-297.

<sup>117</sup> About 83% in mid-1890s: Vital Cuinet, *Syrie, Liban et Palestine*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, volume I, 1896, p. 211.

is a bit more than 500,000.<sup>118</sup> In Anatolia, İstanbul and Syria the Greek Catholics are more than 62,000 and the Maronites more than 47,000. The Catholics of all ethnicities in and around Jerusalem are more than 18,000. To these figures, about 108,000 Chaldeans have to be added. At the same time the number of Catholic Armenians is about 68,000.<sup>119</sup> In other words, they represent likely around 10% of the total of the Catholic Ottomans—which is partly due to the fact that the Catholic missions toward Armenians of eastern Anatolia do not begin until 1881.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, Leon XIII orders in 1894 to respect the eastern churches. As a result, the zeal of the missionaries for conversion has to be reduced.<sup>121</sup> They know the ratio will remain the same in the predictable future.

The correspondence of Ambassador Paul Cambon shows a certain contempt for the Catholic Armenians.<sup>122</sup> For obvious reasons, the missionaries have a better perception of this community,<sup>123</sup> but at least in some important cases, it is tainted by disappointment. In particular, the man in charge of the Jesuit mission toward them writes that “the Armenians seem to have none of these high passions” existing in the West: “The love of glory and patria are nothing for them. They replace them by I don’t know what national pride, which is useless [...] Glory, honor, dedication are empty words [for them]. The down-to-earth of finance is their level.”<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Youssef Courbage and Philippe Fargues, *Chrétiens et Juifs dans l’islam arabe et turc*, Paris : Payot, 2005, p. 283.

<sup>119</sup> Vital Cuinet, *Syrie, Liban et Palestine*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, Volume 4, 1901, p. 627; Stanford Jay Shaw, “The Ottoman Census System and Population, 1831-1914,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, IX-8, October 1978, p. 336; Meir Zamir, “Population statistics of the Ottoman empire in 1914 and 1919,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVII-1, January 1981, p. 106.

<sup>120</sup> Philippe Luisier, « Présence des Jésuites en Turquie aux XIX<sup>e</sup> et XX<sup>e</sup> siècles », *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome*, CX-2, 1998, pp. 783-794. Yet, the role of the French culture is inversely proportional: James Etmekjian, *The French Influence on the Western Armenian Renaissance*, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964.

<sup>121</sup> Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and the...*, p. 237.

<sup>122</sup> À sa mère, 8 juillet 1894, Paul Cambon, *Correspondance...*, volume I, pp. 378-379.

<sup>123</sup> « Constantinople », *Les Missions catholiques*, 13 février 1880, p. 75 ; Antoine Poidebard, « En Arménie », *Les Missions catholiques*, 13 février 1908, pp. 79-82 ; Guillaume de Jerphanion, « Chez les Arméniens », *Les Missions catholiques*, 3 avril 1908, pp. 160-163.

<sup>124</sup> Amédée de Damas, *Coup d’œil sur l’Arménie*, Lyon-Paris : Les Missions catholiques/Delhomme et Briguët, 1887, pp. 378-379. De Jerphanion (see the previous note) makes similar critiques, but affirms that the Armenian merchants (the most visible) have by far the biggest part of these flaws.

Beside these mixed impressions, the tensions between Gregorian, Protestant and Catholic Armenians, and more generally between Christian Ottomans, are high, in spite of the establishment of a Catholic Armenian millet in 1830-1831 and of a Protestant (Armenian) one in 1847.<sup>125</sup> Indeed, in 1880, a missionary from Trabzon writes to *Les Missions catholiques*: The “supporters of the sect of Etchmiazine” (“sect” is very pejorative in French, even more if used by a religious person) “have declared an open war to the [Armenian] Catholics, their compatriots” but the governor of Trabzon protects the followers of Rome’s church.<sup>126</sup> The concurrence with the Protestants in Adana is high, too.<sup>127</sup> Regardless, these disputes are modest in comparison with the tensions in Muş, where the Catholic Armenian bishop is the victim of an attempt of assassination by a Gregorian school teacher, in 1888.<sup>128</sup>

Yet, these tensions take all their sense in considering the fate of the Catholics under Orthodox rule. After the Balkan wars, the Greek authorities confiscate churches and restrict the freedom of religion, after local Catholics have been threatened to declare themselves Orthodox.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, in Sofia, the Catholics are concentrated in a specific quarter. For such reasons, “the numerous monks and priests settled in Turkey [...] admit, when they are asked, that their enemies are not the Turks but the Orthodox.”<sup>130</sup> In his diary, François-Xavier Lobry, one of the main missionaries of İstanbul, writes that a monk and a priest teach him “that the Bulgarian committees have massacred 400 Turks at Dedeğaç,” yet, “in wanting to protect the life of the Turks,” the monks “were quite abused.” The same day, M. Cazot, the head of the seminary of Salikoa tells his “his concerns for the future,” as with the Greeks, “it will be the ruin of the mission. For the moment, in Macedonia, Greeks and Bulgarians behave like barbarians, including the indigenous Christians: Robberies, rapes, arsons, these are perpetrated against the Turks on a daily basis.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans...*, p. 259 and 264.

<sup>126</sup> « Trébizonde (Asie mineure) », *Les Missions catholiques*, 5 mars 1880, p. 116.

<sup>127</sup> « Correspondance — Asie mineure », *Les Missions catholiques*, 16 février 1894, p. 73. Also see « Lettre de Constantinople », *L’Univers*, 8 juillet 1889, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> « Arménie », *Œuvre des écoles d’Orient*, n° 167, juillet 1888, p. 317.

<sup>129</sup> Arthur Droulez, *Histoire de la mission...*, pp. 222-225.

<sup>130</sup> Léon Rouillon, *Pour la Turquie. Documents*, Paris : Grasset, 1921, p. 98. For a striking example: Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, *La Bataille à Scutari d’Albanie*, Paris : Émile-Paul Frères, 1913, pp. 119-120.

<sup>131</sup> Rinaldo Marmara (ed.), *Témoignages lazariques sur...*, p. 49 (also see p. 46). François Charles-Roux, *Souvenirs diplomatiques d’un...*, p. 156 calls Lobry “an ecclesiastical of high value,” in friendly terms

The quick development of the Alliance israélite universelle (established in 1860) after 1875 leads to a spectacular overrepresentation of the Jews among the students. Indeed, if they represent 3.5% of the Empire's population, they are almost 27% among the students of the French-speaking schools in 1912, according to the previously cited estimate of Jacques Thobie.<sup>132</sup> A study by cities gives even more striking figures: 85% in Edirne, 58.7% in İstanbul, 58.1% in Bagdad, 43.6% in İzmir—the figure of 79.2% in Salonica being closer to the demographic balance in this particular city. “Like the Maronites in Lebanon, but for entirely different reasons, they were one of the few autochthonous groups in the Middle East for whom French had become indisputably the language of instruction for mass education.”<sup>133</sup> This is noticed at the time. For example, in his long report published on behalf of the *Comité des intérêts français en Orient*, Maurice Pernet (1875-1948), a journalist specialized in foreign affairs, writes that the AIU's schools are “among those where French is the best taught and which make us the biggest services.”<sup>134</sup>

Yet, the Jewish loyalism is so strong that, according the correspondence of the AIU and of the French embassy, Jews join Laz and Kurds in reprisals against Armenians during the hostage taking at the Ottoman Bank, in August 1896<sup>135</sup> (see below about this affair). On the other side, religious, social, political and conspirational forms of anti-Semitism are not uncommon in the Armenian and Greek communities, the Gregorian and Greek Patriarchs themselves showing the example.<sup>136</sup>

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with the embassy. By contrast: Ömer Turan, “American Protestant Missionaries and Monastir, 1912-17: Secondary Actors in the Construction of Balkan Nationalisms,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXXVI-4, October 2000, pp. 124 and 133-135.

<sup>132</sup> Jacques Thobie, *La France et l'est...*, p. 358.

<sup>133</sup> Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews. The Alliance israélite universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling, 1860-1925*, Bloomington-Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1990, pp. 147-148 (quotation p. 148).

<sup>134</sup> Maurice Pernet, *Rapport sur un voyage d'étude à Constantinople, en Égypte et en Turquie d'Asie (janvier-août 1912)*, Paris : Firmin-Didot, 1914, pp. 13-14.

<sup>135</sup> Le chargé d'affaires à Constantinople à Monsieur Hanotaux, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 septembre 1896 ; Rapport de M. de Margerie sur les incidents de Hass-Keui, 6 septembre 1896, AMAE, P 949 ; Stanford Jay Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*, New York-London: New York University Press, 1991 p. 210. On the Jewish loyalism under the CUP: Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2014, pp. 100-111; Carter Vaughn Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom. A Social History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 96.

<sup>136</sup> Le consul général de France à Son Excellence M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 29 mars 1901, AMAE, P 16737; Paul Dumont, “Jewish Communities in Turkey during the Last Decades of the

According to the estimate of Jacques Thobie, the Muslims represent only 6.5% of the students of the French schools in 1912.<sup>137</sup> They are the less numerous, but they are from the majority of the population, who is also the majority of civil servants and ministers. If the French-speaking sultan Abdülhamit II finds the Wilhelmina Germany more adapted to the Ottoman Empire as an inspiration for his regime,<sup>138</sup> most of the Young Turks think otherwise. The clearest example is Ahmet Rıza, who is certainly a Turk first, but right after a positivist.<sup>139</sup> That having been said, the interest in positivism is not limited to Rıza,<sup>140</sup> and in last analysis, the most relevant for the French policy is likely the generation of the Muslim elites born during the 1880s. This is the most educated, and the most often in French schools.

As observes Gabrielle Bompard de Blignières, the wife of Ambassador Maurice Bompard, in her recollections, around 1910, “We have our banks [...], our big companies of roads, railroads and ports. We have *above all* [italics added] our very busy schools where we shape an intellectual, moral and commercial elite who spreads in all the [Ottoman] Empire the French spirit and makes precious adepts for us and make first class subjects for the Turkish state who recognizes it.”<sup>141</sup>

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Nineteenth Century in the Light of the Archives of the Alliance israélite universelle,” in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (ed.), *Christians and Jews...*, volume I, pp. 222-224; Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014 (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1984), p. 55; Stanford Jay Shaw, “Christian anti-Semitism in the Ottoman Empire,” *Belleleten*, LIV/211 December 1990, pp. 1073-1149; Aryeh Shmuelevitz, *Ottoman History and Society*, İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1999, pp. 86-87.

<sup>137</sup> Jacques Thobie, *La France et l'est...*, p. 358.

<sup>138</sup> Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism...*, pp. 157-158.

<sup>139</sup> Ernest Edmondson Ramsaur, *The Young Turks. Prelude to the Revolution of 1908*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, pp. 90-91. For a previous example: Roderic H. Davison, “Halil Şerif Paşa: The Influence of Paris and the West on an Ottoman Diplomat,” *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, VI, 1986, pp. 47-65.

<sup>140</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 203-205.

<sup>141</sup> Sinan Kunalalp (ed.), *Une ambassadrice de France...*, p. 38. Also see Jacques Thobie, *Les Intérêts culturels français dans l'Empire ottoman finissant*, Paris-Louvain: Peeters, 2008.



## 1.2. France and the early years of Armenian nationalism (1862-1890)

### 1.2.1 *The rebellion in Zeytun (1862) and the failure of a French pro-Armenian activism (1863-1869)*

In spite of the background that has just been described, France is the first power to be officially asked for an intervention, by Armenian nationalists, in 1861-1862. Indeed, during the 1850s, the pioneers of Armenian nationalism, namely Mikael Nalbanian (1829-1866) and Melikian Ardzruni Hovagim (executed by the Ottoman authorities in mid-1850s) change the nature of the opposition of the Zeytun Armenians from fiscal revolts to separatism. The first results are the sending of a delegation to Napoleon III in 1861, in vain, then, in spite of this failure, the revolt of 1862 and a new call to France.<sup>142</sup> The reasons for a call to France instead of Russia are not difficult to understand: The treaty of 1856 has significantly reduced the capacities of intervention of Russia—for years. On the contrary, France has intervened in Lebanon in 1861. But these Mountaineers fail to understand the rationale and the scope of the 1860 intervention in Lebanon.

Several errors can be found in the historiography, too. In particular, Louise Nalbandian claims that “a dispute that flared up between the Armenian village of Alabash and the Turkish village of Ketman serv[es] as a pretext for the government’s plans against Zeitun” (without referring to any document on this “plan”) and that the Ottoman forces “then mov[e] toward Zeitun, burning and pillaging villages en route” but are defeated.<sup>143</sup> Simon Payaslian even alleges “subsequent massacres.”<sup>144</sup> Regarding the French position, Robert Zeidner affirms, without source, that “Napoleon III contend[s] himself with mere appeals to clemency at Zeytun when its populace refuse[s] to embrace Catholicism as a condition to active French intervention.”<sup>145</sup>

All these affirmations are wrong, as the Quai d’Orsay’s correspondence proves. First of all, the vice-consul in Maraş explains that the revolt is not provoked by a “dispute” between an

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<sup>142</sup> Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1963, pp. 58-60 and 68-70.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>144</sup> Simon Payaslian, *The History of Armenia. From the Origins to the Present*, New York-London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005, p. 115.

<sup>145</sup> Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus: The French in Cilicia and Vicinity, 1918-1922*, Ankara: TTK, 2005, p. 38.

Armenian village and a Turkish one, but by the attack of a Turkish village by about 500 Armenians from Zeytun, who kill seven villagers, including two children, and burn the village. The vice-consul also asks the embassy to recommend to the Ottoman cabinet a promotion for the governor of Maraş for having prevented any reprisal against the Armenian population of the city.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, as the insurgents have sympathizers among the Maraş Armenians, the authorities seize 55 rifles in the Christian (mostly Armenian) population, but they also protect its quarter: There is “nothing to fear” for its safety.<sup>147</sup> Concerning the perpetrators of the massacre of Turks, a military expedition is sent to Zeytun yet the Armenians of the city refuse to give the offenders and a part of them tries to block the advance of the Ottoman soldiers, but these Armenians are “completely defeated.” Regardless, the Ottoman forces do not enter Zeytun itself, not because of military difficulties (the city is “defenseless”) but because the governor fears he could not prevent indiscriminate reprisals by his men. He stops two hours walk away from the city and welcomes emissaries from Zeytun, who accept the full capitulation and the delivery of the main perpetrators.<sup>148</sup> The claims of counter-massacre, the vice-consul argues, are presented without evidence.<sup>149</sup>

The ambassador, not very interested in this local affair and knowing that the Turks have been attacked “without provocation” trusts his vice-consul, refuses any intervention at the benefit of the insurgents, in spite of the proposal, by delegates speaking on behalf of the Zeytun’s Armenians to convert to Catholicism. Eventually, he asks only for an investigation by a Turkish civil servant, a Gregorian Armenian bishop and a Catholic Armenian bishop.<sup>150</sup> This impartiality seems to be the line of the Quai d’Orsay for the rest of Napoleon III’s reign. Indeed, in 1869—the year when a precursor of Armenian nationalism, Mekertitch Khirimian, is elected as Gregorian patriarch of İstanbul—, the MFA officially publishes an article praising the Ottoman State for the reforms in eastern Anatolia and only asking for a full implementation of the Tanzimat in a near future, as well as an improvement of agriculture

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<sup>146</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Marache, 28 juin 1862, CADN, microfilm 2 Mi 2566.

<sup>147</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Marache, 6 août 1862, CADN, microfilm 2 Mi 2566.

<sup>148</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Marache, 20 août 1862, CADN, microfilm 2 Mi 2566.

<sup>149</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Marache, 3 septembre 1862, CADN, microfilm 2 Mi 2566.

<sup>150</sup> Lettre de l’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople, 17 septembre 1862, AMAE, P 693.

and trade: In such conditions, “any pretext will be taken away to those who, on purpose, to sow among the Armenians germs of disaffection and revolt.”<sup>151</sup>

What is anyway sure is that the insurrection is followed by the attempt to create a pro-Armenian trend in France, around the person of an archeologist, Victor Langlois (1829-1869),<sup>152</sup> a man closely linked to the Mekhitarists of Venice<sup>153</sup> but who, curiously, was not particularly hostile to the Turks before 1860s.<sup>154</sup> Langlois’ main achievement is the publication in the *Revue des deux mondes*, which has an unrivaled domination among the reviews at that time, of his article repeating the allegation of “massacre” by Turks in the region of Maraş.<sup>155</sup> Regardless, this attempt is short-lived. Even before Langlois’ death, the *Revue des deux mondes* changes its position, publishing in 1867 an article of an Armenian praising the Ottoman State for the treatment of his coreligionists. Remarkably, the footnote written by the review’s staff mentions articles previously published on the Armenians, but omits the one of Langlois.<sup>156</sup> The death of Langlois, as early as 1869, marks the very end of the first attempt to create a pro-Armenian movement in France. The development of Armenian nationalism until 1878<sup>157</sup> seems to cause no interest in France. The only Armenian issue provoking some reaction in this country is the schism inside the Armenian Catholic church that takes place in 1871, as a result of the centralization imposed by the bull *Reversurus* in 1867 and Vatican I council in 1870.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Ministère des Affaires étrangères, « Les Arméniens dans l’Arménie turque », *Bulletin de la Société de géographie*, novembre 1869, pp. 337-357 (reprinted as a booklet in 1870).

<sup>152</sup> On his activities as an archeologist: Victor Langlois, *Voyage dans la Cilicie et dans les montagnes du Taurus exécuté pendant les années 1852-1853*, Paris: Librairie Benjamin Duprat, 1861. The date of publication is remarkable, but it is impossible, in the current state of our knowledge, to decide if it is a coincidence or not.

<sup>153</sup> Victor Langlois, *Notice sur le couvent arménien de S. Lazare de Venise*, Venice: Typographie de Saint Lazare, 1863.

<sup>154</sup> Victor Langlois, « Les partis en Turquie », *Revue de l’Orient*, janvier 1856, pp. 1-6.

<sup>155</sup> Victor Langlois, « Les Arméniens de la Turquie et les massacres du Taurus », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 février 1863, pp. 960-991 (reprinted as a booklet the same year).

<sup>156</sup> Mekerdich Dadian, « La société arménienne contemporaine — Les Arméniens de l’Empire ottoman », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 juin 1867, pp. 903-928 (reprinted as a booklet the same year).

<sup>157</sup> Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutiun. 1890/1924*, Milano: Oemme Edizioni, 1989, p. 21; Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary...*, pp. 74-82.

<sup>158</sup> Lettre du patriarche arménien catholique au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 avril 1879, AMAE, 75 ADP 41 ; *La Question arménienne. Appel aux gouvernements d’Europe*, Paris : Typographie Georges

### 1.2.2. *The emergence of the Armenian nationalist organizations (1878-1890)*

The period 1878-1890 is the one of the structuration of Armenian nationalism, with the creation of the Black Cross Society in Van (1878), of the Armenakan party in Van and Marseille (1885) of the Hunchak in Geneva (1887) and of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Tbilissi (1890). The main handicap of these organizations is simple to summarize: The Ottoman Armenians are in minority in every province.<sup>159</sup> These years roughly coincide with the affirmation of the Republic in France.<sup>160</sup> At the same time, after an attempt of liberalism (1876-1878), Abdülhamit II reaches the conclusion that the Empire is not sufficiently mature for a representative system and choses authoritarianism, but also reforms the administration, in particular in multiplying the new, westernized schools.<sup>161</sup> He includes loyal Armenians (as well as other non-Muslims) in the government, in İstanbul (such as Mikael Portakalian Paşa, minister of Finances, and Artin Dadian, general secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1883 to his death, in 1901)<sup>162</sup> but also in eastern Anatolia, Syria and Lebanon.<sup>163</sup>

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Chamerot, 1872 ; *La Question arménienne. Solution des difficultés soulevées par la bulle « Reversurus »*, Paris : Typographie Georges Chamerot, 1872 ; *La Question arménienne. Ses origines, son passé, son avenir*, Paris: Victor Palmé, 1876; Mariam Kartashyan, "Ultramontane Efforts in the Ottoman Empire during the 1860s and 1870s," *Studies in Church History*, LIV, June 2018, pp. 345-358.

<sup>159</sup> Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, pp. 21, 34 and 51-55; Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire*, New York-London: New York University Press, 1983, pp. 47-88; Meir Zamir, "Population statistics of..." , pp. 85-106.

<sup>160</sup> Maurice Agulhon, *La République...*, pp. 29-89 ; Jacques Chastenot, *Histoire de la Troisième République*, volume II, *La République des républicains (1879-1893)*, Paris : Hachette, 1954.

<sup>161</sup> Carter Vaughn Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire. The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980, pp. 227-290; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 178-194; Stanford Jay Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the...*, pp. 172-272.

<sup>162</sup> İnyetullah Cemal Özkaya, *Le Peuple arménien et les tentatives de réduire le peuple turc en servitude*, İstanbul : Belgelerle Türk Tarih Dergisi, 1971, pp. 100-101.

<sup>163</sup> Mesrob Krikorian, *Armenians in the Service of the Ottoman Empire. 1860-1908*, London-Henley-Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977; Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran and Ömer Turan, *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006, pp. 269-272.

The new Zeytun rebellion, that takes place in 1878, at the instigation of Gregorian priests,<sup>164</sup> is this time in support of Russia, in the context of the Russian-Ottoman war (1877-1878) and of the congress of Berlin (1878). This is not that the Armenian revolutionists ignore Paris now. On the contrary, in 1879, Minas Tcheraz (1852-1929), former secretary of the Armenian representation at the Berlin congress, writes to the minister of Foreign Affairs, to ask France, a country he sees as “a natural protector” to “pay a bit more attention to the Armenians” (which shows that the attention is actually minimal).<sup>165</sup> There is no trace of a reply in the MFA’s archives. After this failure, Patriarch Nerses Varjabedian, a pioneer in Armenian nationalism asks for a French intervention on behalf of the victims of a “famine in Armenia” (eastern Anatolia) and an Armenian National Committee of Paris for the hungry people of Armenia is established.<sup>166</sup> However, Aurélien Lacoste, the vice-consul in Erzurum, exposes to the Ministry—after an investigation on place—that these claims are exaggerated, that the lack of food is partly due to the speculations of local civil servants “the Christians at least as much, if not more, than the Muslims” and that Armenians, unlike Muslims have received relief from Armenians of İstanbul and Tiflis as well as from the UK.<sup>167</sup> He also explains that the Gregorian bishop (previously Catholic) “makes systematic agitation, accepts the complaints without any control,” in a nationalist perspective and is a man “without height of views,” who “flatters his nationals” for reasons of personal interest and who has put himself in the hands of the British consul.<sup>168</sup> It may explain why these new demands are left without written response.

More generally, the reports from Erzurum seem to be one of the main reasons why the French cabinet does not intervene in the projects of “reforms” in eastern Anatolia, promoted

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<sup>164</sup> See the manifesto and the letters seized by the Ottoman gendarmerie at Zeytun and translated into French on 19 May 1879 to be forwarded to the Quai d’Orsay: AMAE, 75 ADP 41.

<sup>165</sup> Minas Tcheraz à Monsieur Waddington, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 février 1879, 75 ADP 41. The simple fact that these documents are in the series *Affaires diverses politiques* shows the limited interest of the Quai d’Orsay for the Armenian issue during the period 1878-1895.

<sup>166</sup> Le patriarche Nersès à Monsieur de Freycinet, président du Conseil et ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 février 1880 ; L’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à Monsieur de Freycinet, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 mars 1880 ; L’archevêque Khoren, à Monsieur de Freycinet, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 27 juillet 1880, AMAE, 75 ADP 41.

<sup>167</sup> Dépêche du consul de France à Erzeroum, 28 juin 1880 ; Id., 26 juillet 1880, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>168</sup> Lettre du consul de France à Erzeroum à Monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 juillet 1880, AMAE, P 801.

by the Gladstone cabinet in 1880-1882.<sup>169</sup> Indeed, this vice-consul hardly sees any chance of success for Armenian separatism: “Their goal is not only chimerical, it is unjust,” because the Armenians are in minority everywhere and also because the Armenian administrators during the Russian occupation of Erzurum were by far worse than the Turkish civil servants. Moreover, he argues, the misdeeds of Kurds are not only exaggerated, but distorted: The Muslim victims complain to the Ottoman administration, the Armenian ones to the bishop, who organizes tendentious press campaigns. The solution he advocates is (like the MFA itself in 1869) the full implementation of the spirit and the texts of the Tanzimat.<sup>170</sup> He also reports the seditious incitements of the Russian vice-consul, himself an ethnic Armenian (Gasmaragan), observes that “all the Armenians of Erzurum” are armed (with money collected for “the so-called starving”).<sup>171</sup> Then, his successor A. Castagne reports the “hostile feelings” of archbishop Ormanian, the regional leader of the Armenian nationalism, toward France<sup>172</sup> and meticulously describes the dismantling of the Protectors of the Fatherland, the secret insurrectional committee whose origins dates back 1879.<sup>173</sup>

Correspondingly, the attempts to create a pro-Armenian movement in France fail one after one during the 1880s. In 1880, the first attempt is limited to an anonymous booklet asking for “a Christian administration,” similar to Mount Lebanon, in eastern Anatolia and Çukurova.<sup>174</sup> The same year, the weekly of the French Catholic missionaries express its satisfaction toward Abdülhamit II and his Grand Vizir Sait, who decorate the Catholic

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<sup>169</sup> Question arménienne, mars 1882, AMAE, 75 ADP 41.

<sup>170</sup> Lettre du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à Monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 30 septembre 1880 ; Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à Monsieur l’ambassadeur à Constantinople, 17 décembre 1880, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>171</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à Monsieur l’ambassadeur à Constantinople, 30 octobre 1880 ; Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à Monsieur l’ambassadeur à Constantinople, 20 novembre 1880, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>172</sup> Lettre du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 18 novembre 1881, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>173</sup> Lettre du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 décembre 1882 ; Lettre du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 janvier 1883 ; Dépêche du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à l’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople, 4 mai 1883, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>174</sup> *Les Arméniens en Turquie*, Paris : Imprimerie Balitout, Questroy & Cie, 1880, pp. 5-6, 10-11, 20-21 and 23.

Armenian patriarch.<sup>175</sup> This is not until 1885 that the Patriotic Armenian Association (*Association patriotique arménienne*, APA) is established in Paris, seven years after the one of London. Yet, the only event that seems to be organized by the APA during its decade of activity is a dinner in honor of a Spanish politician, Emilio Castellar (1832-1899), in 1886<sup>176</sup>— and so, not to a French personality, as the APA finds none to be a guest speaker. As late as the end of 1894, the APA has around 50 members.<sup>177</sup>

In terms of relations with the Republic, the achievements seem close to zero. There is, indeed, no trace of any answer to the letters sent in 1888 by the APA to the Quai d'Orsay and to the presidency of the Republic.<sup>178</sup> The fact that the general secretary of the APA has completely misrepresented, two years earlier, the attitude of France during the revolt of Zeytun in 1862 has surely not increased the credibility of his organization.<sup>179</sup> It is true that the Armenakan (the less dangerous, for the Ottoman State, of the three parties established between 1885 and 1890) is transferred in Marseille by Portoukalian, after he is expelled by the Ottoman authorities,<sup>180</sup> but the founders of the Hunchak chose Geneva in 1887, the creators of the ARF-Dashnak settle in Tbilissi in 1890 and, the same year, Minas Tcheraz installs his newspaper *Armenia* in London. Perhaps even more significantly, in 1889, Jean Broussali, after four years of activism without result in Paris, moves to London, to publish his newspaper *Haiastan*, being now a determined Anglophile.<sup>181</sup> Retrospectively, Ambassador Paul Cambon writes in 1894 that “France did not understand anything” to the statements of

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<sup>175</sup> « Correspondance — Constantinople », *Les Missions catholiques*, 9 janvier 1880, pp. 13-14.

<sup>176</sup> *Association patriotique arménienne, Emilio Castellar et la question arménienne*, Paris : Imprimerie Chaix, 1887. There is no reference to this dinner in Bilâl Şimşir (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques ottomans. Affaires arméniennes*, volume I, 1886-1893, Ankara: TTK, 1993, likely because of its lack of importance.

<sup>177</sup> Le ministre de l'Intérieur au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 10 décembre 1894, AMAE, 75 ADP 42.

<sup>178</sup> Lettre de J. Iskender et G. Eknayan au président de la République, 17 janvier 1888 ; Lettre de J. Iskender à Francis Charmes, directeur des Affaires politiques, 8 juin 1888, AMAE, 75 ADP 41.

<sup>179</sup> Jean Broussali, « L'Arménie », *Revue française de l'étranger et des colonies*, février 1886, p. 207.

<sup>180</sup> Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran and Ömer Turan, *The Armenian Rebellion...*, pp. 41-42; Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary...*, pp. 90-103.

<sup>181</sup> Rapport du contrôleur général au cabinet du préfet de police de Paris, 24 décembre 1890, APP, BA 2146 ; Le ministre de l'Intérieur au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 7 janvier 1891, AMAE, 75 ADP 42. Also see Robert Zeidner, “Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, VII-4, October 1976, pp. 477-481.

the Armenian nationalists during the 1880s and “was not interested in them.”<sup>182</sup> The archives and the printed sources confirm his assessment.

One more time, the contrast is clear with the territorial ambitions of Russia, with the anti-Turkish Gladstonian policy and also with the majority Anglo-Saxon Protestant missionaries, exploiting religious prejudices, inciting to disloyalty and rebellion<sup>183</sup>—possibly reaching a direct involvement of the local mission in the plot of Erzurum in 1881-1882.<sup>184</sup>

### **1.3. France, the Hamidian Regime and the Armenian revolutionary parties (1890-1908)**

#### *1.3.1. From the first troubles to the Sasun affair (1890-1895)*

The first sign of concern from the French Republic toward the Armenian committees dates back 1890, as a result of the violence organized in Erzurum and İstanbul by the Hunchak party. The Armenian nationalists are perceived as trouble-makers, who concentrate in London most of their activities in Western Europe.<sup>185</sup>

In these conditions, it is difficult to decide why the French consul, who writes in 1895 the report on the revolt of Sasun (1894) not in his name only but also on behalf of his British and Russian colleagues, includes allegations he knows false, such as the death of Armenians who

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<sup>182</sup> M. Cambon, ambassadeur de la République à Constantinople, à M. Casimir-Périer, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 février 1894, in *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires arméniennes : projets de réformes dans l'Empire ottoman, 1893-1897*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1897, p. 11.

<sup>183</sup> Edward Mead Earle, “American Missions in the Near East,” *Foreign Affairs*, April 1929, p. 417; Ayşe Tekdal Fildis, “The American Board’s Vision of Protestant Anatolia and Fostering Armenian Nationalism 1810–90,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XLVIII-5, September 2012, pp. 735-747; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and...*, pp. 30-61; Felix Valyi, *Spiritual and Political Revolutions in Islam*, London: Kegan Paul, 1925, pp. 155-164.

<sup>184</sup> Lettre du vice-consul de France à Erzeroum au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 novembre 1881, AMAE, P 801.

<sup>185</sup> Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 14 novembre 1890 ; Id., 29 mars 1891 ; Le ministre de l’Intérieur au préfet de police de Paris, 22 décembre 1890 ; Le préfet de police de Paris à M. le ministre de l’Intérieur, 31 décembre 1890, APP, BA 2146. Also see Comte de Cholet, *Arménie, Kurdistan, Mésopotamie*, Paris : Plon, 1892, pp. 106-107, 118-119 and 171. On the context: Stephen Duguid, “The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, IX-2, May 1973, pp. 139-155.



testified in front of the investigative commission.<sup>186</sup> The consulted archives hardly help to answer this question. There is no trace of an instruction from the embassy or the Ministry to be harsh with the Ottoman administration; Ambassador Cambon seems, in reading his correspondence, more misinformed than anything else.<sup>187</sup> That having been said, as late as 1895, the public opinion is, when an interest is perceptible, not in favor of the “Armenian cause”. For example, Viscount R. des Coursons (pen name of Pierre-Abdon Boisson), who has travelled in eastern Anatolia during the previous years, publishes a book sympathetic to the Hamidian state and describing with an important documentation the insurrectional and terrorist strategy of the Hunchaks<sup>188</sup>—a description particularly efficient in the France of mid-1890s, as the country experiences anarchist terrorism.<sup>189</sup> Recommending des Coursons’ book, *La Croix*, one of two main Catholic dailies, uses this provocative title: “Let’s be Turkish rather than English.”<sup>190</sup>

### 1.3.2. *A real tension with Istanbul, but no particular sympathy for the Armenian revolutionists (1895-1897)*

At the end of 1895, during the inter-ethnic clashes in eastern Anatolia, the French diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire seems overwhelmed by the flood of the true and fake news, partly because at that time, there is no consul in cities such as Van.<sup>191</sup> Ambassador Paul Cambon is exasperated, but his comments on the Armenians (“ordinarily so coward, [they] are [now] like enraged sheep, they want to be killed”) are not less harsh the ones on the Turks (we must

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<sup>186</sup> Justin McCarthy, Cemalettin Taşkıran and Ömer Turan, *Sasun: The History of an 1890s Armenian Revolt*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2014, pp. 116-192.

<sup>187</sup> L’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à Son Excellence M. Hanotaux ministre des Affaires étrangères, 14 novembre 1894, AMAE, P 943.

<sup>188</sup> R. des Coursons (Pierre-Abdon Boisson), *La Rébellion arménienne. Son origine, son but*, Paris : Librairie du Service central de presse, 1895.

<sup>189</sup> John Merriman, *The Dynamite Club. How a Bombing in Fin-de-Siècle Paris Ignited the Age of Modern Terror*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2016.

<sup>190</sup> « Un livre par semaine — Soyons turcs plutôt qu’anglais », *La Croix supplément*, 2 octobre 1895, p. 1.

<sup>191</sup> Télégramme de l’ambassadeur de France au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 novembre 1895, AMAE, P 841. A systematic comparison of the French and other sources on the events of 1895-1896, as well as between the originals and the Yellow Book of 1897 remains necessary, but is beyond the scope of this study.

“consider Turkey to be a minor”).<sup>192</sup> Correspondingly, if the report of the embassy is well-informed on the intent of the ARF in August 1896 (the hostage taking at the Ottoman Bank is just one element of a failed plan to ravage İstanbul),<sup>193</sup> it ignores the support for this organization in the lowest category of İstanbul’s Armenians.<sup>194</sup> Moreover, commenting, in September, the seizure of a stock of explosives of the ARF, La Boulinière writes that “the Armenian peril is diminished.”<sup>195</sup>

Gabriel Hanotaux (1853-1944), minister of Foreign Affairs from May 1894 to November 1895 and from April 1896 to June 1898, who worked at the embassy of İstanbul during the 1880s and kept relatively good recollections from these years,<sup>196</sup> is still a supporter of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire continues to practice a soft policy: Maintaining “the statu quo,” in collaboration with Russia.<sup>197</sup> The vice-consul appointed in Maraş in September 1896, Ferdinand Viet, represents the impartiality decided by Hanotaux: For him, the Sublime Porte has to punish all the perpetrators, Muslims and Armenians together; he blames both sides on equal terms, regarding the situation in Zeytun after the revolt.<sup>198</sup> Some of his remarks are particularly lucid, for example this one, on 2 January 1897: “It would be foolish of them [Ottoman Armenians] to nurture again dreams of independence after the events that

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<sup>192</sup> À sa mère, 10 octobre 1895, *Correspondance...*, volume I, pp. 394-395.

<sup>193</sup> Lettre du chargé d’affaires à Constantinople au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 septembre 1896, AMAE, P 949. On the general scheme of the ARF: Gaston Auboyeau, *La Journée du 26 août 1896 à la Banque impériale ottomane*, Villeurbanne : Imprimerie Chaix, 1912, pp. 27-28.

<sup>194</sup> On this support: Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury, 2 September 1896, in Muammer Demirel, *British Documents on Armenians (1896-1918)*, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2002, pp. 214-216.

<sup>195</sup> Télégramme au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 20 septembre 1896, AMAE, P 949.

<sup>196</sup> Gabriel Hanotaux, « Mon temps — II Constantinople », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 février 1941, pp. 433-446 ; « Mon temps — III Les Turcs, le sultan et la Sublime porte », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 mars 1941, pp. 129-139 ; « Mon temps — IV La société à Constantinople », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1941, pp. 359-369. More generally about Hanotaux’s career and thought: Peter Grupp, « Gabriel Hanotaux. Le personnage et ses idées sur l’expansion coloniale », *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer*, LVIII-213, 1971, pp. 383-406 ; Thomas Hams, *Dreyfus, Diplomats and the Dual Alliance. Gabriel Hanotaux at the Quai d’Orsay*, Geneva-Paris: Droz/Minard, 1962.

<sup>197</sup> [Gabriel Hanotaux], « En Orient », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1895, pp. 449-461 ; M. Hanotaux, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. de Montebello, 17 juillet 1896, in Commission de publication des documents relatifs aux origines de la guerre de 1914 (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français...*, 1<sup>re</sup> série, volume XII, p. 690 ; *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires, Chambre des députés*, 4 novembre 1896, pp. 1357-1359.

<sup>198</sup> Dépêche du vice-consul de France au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 octobre 1896, AMAE, P 16738.

occurred [in 1895-1896]. Any attempted uprising would be fatal to them; perhaps the Ottoman building would collapse under their pressure, but all would remain buried under its rubble.”<sup>199</sup>

The fact that the ARF terrorists move from İstanbul to Marseille is sometimes considered a proof of “support” by those who have not worked in the relevant archives.<sup>200</sup> In fact, when the minister of Foreign Affairs writes the embassy to “regret the initiative” to send these men to France, the chargé d’affaires answers it is an improvised solution to avoid the massacre of the Ottoman Bank’s employees and the loss of the values; the ARF men, he adds, “deserve no sympathy.”<sup>201</sup>

Initially, the cabinet does not face serious difficulties: In December 1895, the pro-Armenian movement in France is still a project. Archag Tchobanian (1872-1954) is sent from İstanbul to Paris to create it,<sup>202</sup> but at the beginning, his achievements are hardly better than his predecessors. Indeed, the first pro-Armenian meeting<sup>203</sup> has as speakers Henri Rochefort (1831-1913), a well-known polemicist, but already on the decline in 1895,<sup>204</sup> and a deputy of Paris who is a survivor of Boulangism, namely a completely discredited political tendency (General Georges Boulanger, extremely popular in 1886-1889, has fled in Belgium, scared to be arrested for seditious activities, and committed suicide on the grave of his mistress in 1891). In October of the same year, *La Croix* deplores the “scenes of violence, massacres and troubles barely repressed” but devotes most of its comment to a strong criticism of the Hunchak insurrectional activities and to the support the revolutionists find in Britain. The Catholic daily concludes that the intervention of the powers must be about the rule of law

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<sup>199</sup> AMAE, P 16738.

<sup>200</sup> For example: Gábor Fodor, « La Question Arménienne en France et en Hongrie au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle », in *Entre coopération et antagonismes*, Talmont St. Hilaire : Université de Pécs, 2014, pp. 51-52.

<sup>201</sup> Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères à l’ambassade française, Constantinople, 28 août 1896 ; Télégramme du chargé d’affaires au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 28 août 1896 ; Id., 29 août 1896 AMAE, P 849.

<sup>202</sup> Undated report (1941) of the Parisian police, APP, BA 2031 ; Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CNDP, 1986, pp. 44-46.

<sup>203</sup> Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 29 décembre 1895, APP, BA 2146.

<sup>204</sup> Michel Winock, « Rochefort : la Commune contre Dreyfus », *Mil neuf cent*, n° 11, 1993, pp. 82-86.

and nothing else, the integrity of the Ottoman having to be preserved.<sup>205</sup> This is the dominant tone at the end of 1895.<sup>206</sup>

The situation changes in spring and even more in autumn 1896,<sup>207</sup> when, for the very first time, the Armenian issue is used for domestic policy calculation. All the parliamentarians and intellectuals who suddenly express a solidarity toward a cause they were (almost) never interested in until that are opponents from left and right to the centrist Méline cabinet (1896-1898).<sup>208</sup> However, this stance is never preponderant, even in the intellectual reviews.<sup>209</sup> The pro-Armenian movement attains a highpoint in 1897, with the creation of the Franco-Armenian Committee<sup>210</sup> but a distinction must be made between who demonize Abdülhamit only<sup>211</sup> and the Turkophobic publications of Armenian nationalists.<sup>212</sup> Moreover, the diversity

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<sup>205</sup> « La question arménienne », *La Croix supplément*, 19 octobre 1895, p. 1.

<sup>206</sup> Juliette Adam and Moustafa Kamel, « L'Angleterre et l'Islam », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 octobre 1895, pp. 835-837 ; P. Pisani, « Les affaires d'Arménie », *Le Correspondant*, 10 novembre 1895, pp. 420-446 ; Ernest Judet, « Le sultan et l'Angleterre », *Le Petit Journal*, 21 novembre 1895, p. 1 ; « La vérité sur la question arménienne », *Revue bleue*, 14 décembre 1895, pp. 738-742 ; « Bulletin — Politique étrangère », *Revue bleue*, 4 janvier 1896, pp. 30-31 ; « En Turquie — Les affaires d'Orient », *Journal des débats*, 25 novembre 1895, p. 2 ; « Les manœuvres arméniennes », *Journal des débats*, 16 décembre 1895, p. 2 ; Georges Dalbert, « Mouvements politiques — Questions d'Orient », *La Revue blanche*, IX, 1895, pp. 524-526.

<sup>207</sup> Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 2 novembre 1896, APP, BA 2146 ; Félix Charmetant, *Tableau officiel des massacres d'Arménie*, Paris : Bureau des œuvres d'Orient, 1896 ; Urbain Gohier, *Les Massacres d'Arménie. Réponse du sultan à M. Clemenceau*, Paris : Chamuel, 1896 ; Archag Tchobanian, « Les émigrés arméniens », *La Revue blanche*, XI, 1896, pp. 394-399.

<sup>208</sup> René Pinon, *L'Europe et l'Empire ottoman*, Paris : Perrin, 1911, p. 53.

<sup>209</sup> Juliette Adam, « Lettres sur la politique extérieure », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 1<sup>er</sup> juin 1896, p. 608 ; Francis Charmes, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 septembre 1896, pp. 470-478 ; « Les émeutes de Constantinople », *Le Figaro*, 29 août 1896, pp. 2-3 ; « À l'étranger — Crétois et Arméniens », *Journal des débats*, 3 septembre 1896, pp. 1-2 ; Joseph Denais, « Chez le Sultan », *Le Figaro*, 19 septembre 1896, pp. 1-2 ; Ernest Judet, « Le mois extérieur », *Le Petit Journal*, 2 octobre 1896, p. 1 ; Ernest Bérard, « La cause du mal turc », *Le Petit moniteur universel*, 26 novembre 1896, p. 1.

<sup>210</sup> « En faveur des Arméniens », *Le Temps*, 29 août 1897, p. 3. Also see Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 3 février 1897, APP, BA 2146.

<sup>211</sup> Victor Bérard, *La Politique du Sultan*, Paris : Stock, 1897 ; Hector Depasse, « Portraits contemporains — Abdul-Hamid », *Revue bleue*, 28 août 1897, pp. 258-260.

<sup>212</sup> Aghassi (Garabet Toursarkisian), *Zeïtoun. Depuis les origines jusqu'à l'insurrection de 1895*, Paris : Mercure de France, 1897 (translated from Armenian by Archag Tchobanian) ; Aghassi, *L'Assassinat du père Salvatore par les soldats turcs*, Paris : Mercure de France, 1897 (idem) ; Archag Tchobanian, *L'Arménie. Son histoire, sa littérature, son rôle en Orient*, Paris : Mercure de France, 1897. Pierre Quillard, *La Question d'Orient et la politique personnelle de M. Hanotaux*, Paris : Stock, 1897 tries to avoid Turkophobia (p. 18) but does not always succeed in it (p. 13).

of its personalities explains why it collapses<sup>213</sup> as a result of the Dreyfus affair, that becomes an intellectual civil war at the end of 1897 (in the elites much more than in the people), and until 1899.<sup>214</sup> The evolution of most of its prominent members must be underlined, too.

Maurice Barrès (1862-1923) initially is the left-wing “prince of the youth” but by 1888, he loses his trust in the republican regime and is attracted by the right-wing authoritarianism of General Boulanger. From 1897 to 1902, Barrès advocates a racist nationalism that has been described as proto-Fascist<sup>215</sup> (and criticized by Pierre Loti<sup>216</sup>), in other words compatible with the Armenian nationalism. Regardless, after 1902, Barrès gradually abandons these ideas, integrates himself in republican conservatism, reconciles (partially in 1906, when he is elected as deputy of Paris, and completely by 1914) with parliamentary democracy,<sup>217</sup> then abjures racism and anti-Semitism in a book defending a civic, inclusive, pluralist nationalism.<sup>218</sup> Yet, Barrès becomes interested in the Armenian issue during his authoritarian turn and is involved in pro-Armenian activism during his proto-Fascist years. He begins to distance himself from his pro-Armenian period around 1906, precisely during his ideological evolution.<sup>219</sup> The Barrès of the last years sees the integrity of the Ottoman Empire (a country he visits) as a must, at the eve of the First World War,<sup>220</sup> and then he is the first to help Loti in his pro-Turkish campaign, by 1918 (see below). On the left, Jean Jaurès (1859-1914) becomes the most active supporter of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire by 1908. During his first term as President of the Ministers’ Council (1906-1909), Georges Clemenceau (1841-1929) shows no hostility to the Turks.

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<sup>213</sup> No significant events are recorded, for the years 1898 and 1899, in APP, BA 2146 or in Bilâl Şimşir, *Documents diplomatiques ottomans...*, volume IV, 1896-1900. The committee disappears in 1902.

<sup>214</sup> George R. Whyte, *The Dreyfus Affair. A Chronological History*, New York-London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, pp. 109-301.

<sup>215</sup> Zeev Sternhell, *Maurice Barrès et le nationalisme français*, Paris : Hachette, 2014, pp. 11-313.

<sup>216</sup> Richard M. Berrong, “Pierre Loti’s Response to Maurice Barrès and France’s Growing Nationalist Movement: *Ramuntcho*,” *Modern & Contemporary France*, XVII-1, February 2009, pp. 35-50.

<sup>217</sup> Michel Winock, « Barrès, Maurice (1862-1923) » in Jacques Julliard and Michel Winock (ed.), *Dictionnaire des intellectuels français*, Paris : Le Seuil, 2009, p. 133.

<sup>218</sup> Maurice Barrès, *Les Diverses familles spirituelles de la France*, Paris : Plon, 1930 (1st edition, 1917).

<sup>219</sup> Maurice Barrès, *Le Voyage de Sparte*, Paris : Émile-Paul, 1906, pp. 117-153.

<sup>220</sup> Maurice Barrès, *Une enquête aux pays du Levant*, Paris : Plon, 1923 (mostly written in 1914), volume II, pp. 177-184.

In sum, the short-lived movement of 1896-1897, limited in scope and time, without deep impact on the state's policy, is not a significant element of legacy for the period 1918-1923, except in the Armenian nationalist speech of the time, and until today.<sup>221</sup> The kind of *völkisch* racism advocated for some years by Barrès (an Agnostic seeing Catholicism as cultural) has not merged with any radical religious movement, unlike in the thought of Lord James Bryce (1838-1922) in the UK or Johannes Lepsius (1858-1926) in Germany,<sup>222</sup> for instance.

### 1.3.3. "The complaints [...] are, for a great part, unjustified" (1898-1908)

By the end of 1897, the supporters of Armenian claims are not only divided by the Dreyfus affair but deprived of pretexts: In particular, the attack of Sublime Porte in 1897 and the massacre of the women and children from a Kurdish tribe by the ARF are not followed by any bloody reprisal.<sup>223</sup> In 1898, the humiliation of France by Britain at Fachoda causes an exacerbation of the Anglophobia and Cambon is moved from İstanbul to London to ease the relations with Britain. As it has already been seen, he is replaced by Ernest Constans, more concerned about business than by anything else, and Pierre Loti is also sent to Istanbul as a gesture of reconciliation.

The Muslims' restraint showed in 1897 is confirmed after the attempt to assassinate Abdülhamit in 1905, in spite of the fact that the bomb kills about 40 persons.<sup>224</sup> Even more importantly for the perception of the Hamidian state and of the Armenian revolutionaries by

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<sup>221</sup> For a completely apologetic and Manichean interpretation of this kind: Claire Mouradian (ed.), *Arménie, une passion française. 1878-1923*, Paris : Magellan & Cie, 2007.

<sup>222</sup> Tal Buenos, "Beyond Complicity. British Responsibilities for the Massacres of Armenians in World War I," in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 921-924; Hermann Goltz and Axel Meissner (ed.), *Deutschland, Armenien und die Türkei 1895-1925: Dokumente und Zeitschriften aus dem Dr. Johannes-Lepsius*, München: K.G. Saur, 2004.

<sup>223</sup> Telegrams of Ambassador Curie, 10 and 12 August 1897, in Muammer Demirel (ed.), *British Documents on...*, pp. 327-328; Report of the Turkish commission on the raids of Armenians over the Turkish frontier, in Bilâl Şimşir (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques ottomans...*, volume IV, pp. 283-285; William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960, pp. 349-350; Kemalettin Kuzucu, "1897 Bâbiâli Olayı," 19.-20. *Yüzyıllarda Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Sempozyumu*, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi/Türk Ocakları, 2015, pp. 587-616; « La dynamite à Constantinople », *Le Temps*, 20 août 1897, p. 2.

<sup>224</sup> Mikael Varandian, *Rapport présenté au congrès socialiste international de Copenhague par le parti arménien « Daschnakzoutioun »*. *Turquie — Caucase — Perse*, Genève, 1910, pp. 16-17.

the French Republic is the discovery of the plot of İzmir, as a result of the investigation on the İstanbul bombing.<sup>225</sup> Indeed, the consul general in İzmir, Paul Blanc, reports that the investigation is made without unnecessary arrests, by a meticulous work of the investigators. Yet, the seized documents, the confessions and the discovery of caches for dynamite and other explosives, prove that the ARF wanted to destroy “at the same time” the Konak, the barrack, the main post office, the Ottoman Bank, the Public Debt Administration, the bank of Metelin, the Tobacco Régie, the Société des quais de Smyrne, the Crédit Lyonnais, the main cafés of the docks, the Sporting-Club and the railroad stations of Aydın and Kasaba, as well as all the important stations and bridges “until Ouchak [Uşak].” The grenades had to be used against the crowd; indeed, the Dashnaks decided to carry out their project on the anniversary day of Abdülhamit’s accession to the throne, and more specifically at 10:00 p.m. Indeed, at this day and time, İzmir usually is very crowded, maybe more than in any other moment: In the area formed by the Konak, the barrack and the docks only, about 30,000 persons are concentrated. In the dark, the panic and, as a result, the drowning (as most of the population does not know to swim) would have killed even more than the bombs. Consul Blanc comments in writing that he feels “a considerable cooling of the feelings of sympathy I could express for the oppressed Armenians.”<sup>226</sup>

Correspondingly, in February 1908, a former member of the ARF, Davit Dehertzi, leads the Ottoman authorities to several caches of bombs and weapons. The French vice-consul in Van, Pierre Calvière, and the embassy emphasize that the authorities maintain the order during the investigation and restore it very quickly after Dehertzi and eight Muslims are killed by a Dashnak terrorist, the vali having “the best intentions.”<sup>227</sup> Then, in May “quietly” (*dans le calme*) a new series of searches are carried out, as a result of a wave of denunciations: “100 war weapons, 100,000 cartridges, 300 kg of dynamite, a lot of powder, and the archives of the [Dashnak] revolutionary committee; in the villages, about 300 war weapons; [...] Since March 25, the peaceful inhabitants of the region are unmolested. The complaints received by Your Excellency from the Armenian [Dashnak] Committee of Geneva are, for a great part,

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>226</sup> Le consul général de France à Smyrne à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères à Paris, 16 août 1905 ; Id., 19 août 1905, AMAE, P 16737.

<sup>227</sup> L’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 2 avril 1908, AMAE, P 16742.

unjustified [...].”<sup>228</sup> Vice-Consul Calvière and Chargé d’affaires Auguste Boppe praise the governor for his impartiality and wish the pure and simple destruction of the ARF and its “tyranny.”<sup>229</sup> Established by the ARF in Paris in 1902, *Pro-Armenia* publishes articles on this affair which are at the opposite of the truth,<sup>230</sup> surely not an appropriate way to be taken seriously by the government. *Pro-Armenia* stops its publication after the Young Turk revolution and Jean Longuet (1876-1938), deputy editor until 1908, is converted by the CUP to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. He defends it vigorously in 1911-1913.<sup>231</sup>

Concerning the Hunchak, the French government is accurately informed: An intelligence note of the Parisian police describes it as a group perpetrating “racket and assassinations” in the U.S. and Egypt.<sup>232</sup>

#### **1.4. The French leadership, the Young Turks and the Armenian revolutionaries (1908-1914)**

##### *1.4.1 The Young Turk revolution, the Adana affair, and aftermath (1908-1911)*

The taking of power by the Young Turks in 1908<sup>233</sup> changes the perception of the Ottoman Empire itself. The new rulers now have a strong support from the left—namely from those

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<sup>228</sup> Le chargé d’Affaires de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 juin 1908, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>229</sup> Le chargé d’Affaires de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 juillet 1908, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>230</sup> « Les tueries de Van », *Pro-Armenia*, 5 avril 1908, pp. 1261-1262 ; « Les événements de Van », *Pro-Armenia*, 20 avril 1908, pp. 1270-1271 ; « Deux documents », « Les événements de Van », *Pro-Armenia*, 5 juin 1908, pp. 1297-1299 ; « La terreur à Van », *Pro-Armenia*, 8 juillet 1908, pp. 1313-1315.

<sup>231</sup> Jean Longuet, « Les prétentions russes — La France va-t-elle les favoriser ? », *L’Humanité*, 9 décembre 1911, p. 1 ; Jean Longuet, « Les raisons de la Turquie », *L’Humanité*, 4 février 1913, p. 1. He is not isolated in the Socialist International, as far as the Libyan issue is concerned: Madeleine Rebérioux and Georges Haupt, « Le socialisme et la question coloniale avant 1914 — L’attitude de l’Internationale », *Le Mouvement social*, n° 45, octobre-décembre 1963, pp. 31-32.

<sup>232</sup> AN, F7 13070. For confirmations: Hratch Dasnabedian, “The Hunchakian Party,” *Armenian Review*, XLI-4, Winter 1988, pp. 32-33 and 35; “Evolution of the Armenian Hintchakist,” *The New York Times*, 4 August 1907, p. 5; “Assassin is Put to Death,” *The Fort Wayne Sentinel*, 6 December 1909.

<sup>233</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, “Genesis of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908,” *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, III, 1982, pp. 277-300.



who are growing legislative elections after legislative elections (1902, 1906, 1910, 1914).<sup>234</sup> Jean Jaurès (1859-1914), briefly pro-Armenian in 1896-1897, is arguably the most convinced and the most involved, likely because he knows Young Turks' leaders since 1904: For Jaurès, ruled by the CUP, the Ottoman State can become the vanguard of modernization in Islam; the Socialist groups in this empire are insignificant, so the modernization, in the predictable future, can be the fruit of the CUP's efforts only.<sup>235</sup> Jaurès recurrently advocates a concrete support for the work of the CUP and vigorously criticizes the irredentist designs targeting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>236</sup> Addressing himself to the Armenians, Jaurès recommends them, after the inter-ethnic clashes at Adana, to follow the CUP.<sup>237</sup>

At a government level, as it has already been seen, Georges Cernanceau, president of the ministers' council from 1906 to 1909, trusts ambassador Ernest Constans then, when the defiance of the CUP makes his maintain impossible, his cabinet appoints Maurice Bompard for a CUP-friendly policy. Regarding now the events of Adana,<sup>238</sup> they do not change anything to the perception of the French government of Armenian nationalism or of the Ottoman Empire. As early as October 1908, the vice-consul at Mersin warns against the attitude of the Armenian revolutionist, "overweening and unpolitical to a degree," pointing particularly Hunchak leader Geukdérélian, who is "in touch with the Russian consul."<sup>239</sup> After the end of troubles, a note of the Quai d'Orsay's central administration, synthetizing the data, emphasizes that a telegram from the consul at Aleppo, dated 22 April, shows that "the

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<sup>234</sup> On this rise: Jean-Marie Mayeur, *La Vie politique...*, pp. 193-232.

<sup>235</sup> Madeleine Rebérioux, « Jaurès et la Turquie », *Bulletin de la société d'études jaurésiennes*, avril-juin 1988, pp. 8-10.

<sup>236</sup> Jean Jaurès, « Turquie et Maroc », *L'Humanité*, 30 août 1908, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « En Orient », *L'Humanité*, 6 octobre 1908, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « La révolution turque », *L'Humanité*, 28 avril 1909, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « Union nécessaire », *L'Humanité*, 23 juillet 1912, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « Confédération balkanique », *La Dépêche* (Toulouse), 6 novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « Une mer de sang pour les fourbes », *L'Humanité*, 12 novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « Pour la paix », *L'Humanité*, 18 janvier 1914.

<sup>237</sup> Jean Jaurès, « Union nécessaire », *L'Humanité*, 21 avril 1909, p. 1.

<sup>238</sup> For detailed descriptions of these events: Kemal Çiçek (ed.), *The Adana Incidents of 1909 Revisited*, Ankara: TTK, 2011; Yücel Güçlü, *The Armenian Events of Adana in 1909: Cemal Paşa and Beyond*, Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2018. Also see Mehmed Asaf (Mehmet Asaf Belge), *1909 Adana Ermeni olayları ve anıları*, Ankara: TTK, 2002 (1st edition, 1982, translated from Ottoman Turkish by İsmet Parmaksızoğlu).

<sup>239</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Mersine et Adana à Son Excellence M. Pichon, 23 octobre 1908, AMAE, P 16742.

authorities took all the possible measures to restore tranquility” around İskenderun. The consul has been allowed to join the expedition to Akbes, where “Christians” had taken refuge in the Lazarist mission.<sup>240</sup>

In spring 1909, too, the vice-consul at Erzurum, Ferdinand Braquehais, reports that the local officials and the imams have prevented the clashes between Dashnaks and Kurds (clashes provoked by the Dashnaks, who are called “outlaws” by Braquehais) from degenerating in a bloodbath similar to the ones of Adana. He also writes: “The Catholic and Gregorian priests, and even the Protestant ministers, show the spectacle of the most intransigent fanaticism.”<sup>241</sup> The archives of the ARF not being available, it seems impossible to know about the internal tensions in the party concerning Erzurum, but what is sure, it is the blame of Mikael Varandian, ideologue of the ARF, to his fellow Armenian nationalist in Adana. In 1910, he writes that “the Armenians of Cilicia are freer, more secure and less oppressed than ever before. [...] Unfortunately, this has also given rise to a rabid and delirious form of nationalism.”<sup>242</sup> Yet, the Ramkavar ex-archbishop Moucheh Séropian is far from making his self-criticism.<sup>243</sup>

In contrast to these divisions, the CUP regime offers an image of robustness in Adana. Sent as governor, Cemal Bey (Cemal Paşa by 1914), who is in excellent terms with Ambassador Maurice Bompard<sup>244</sup> supervises a work of reconstruction and reconciliation reported by the new French vice-consul in Mersin, Gabriel Barré de Lancy, who praises his impartiality, his effectiveness and his excellent relations with the French community—including the missionaries—, who, too, contributes to the reconstruction of the city and its neighborhood.<sup>245</sup> Barré de Lancy also observes, in September 1909, that “the Christians show

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<sup>240</sup> Note pour le ministre — Au sujet des troubles d’Asie mineure, 12 mai 1909, AMAE P 16742.

<sup>241</sup> M. Braquehais, vice-consul de France à Erzeroum, à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 29 mars ; Id., 2 avril ; Id., 19 juin 1909, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>242</sup> Mikael Varandian, *The Rebirth of a Nation and our Mission* (in Armenian), Geneva, 1910, quoted and translated in Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, İstanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988, p. 822.

<sup>243</sup> Moucheh Séropian (Mushegh Seropian), *Les Vêpres ciliciennes*, Alexandrie : Typo-lithographie centrale I. De La Rocca, 1909.

<sup>244</sup> L’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à Monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 11 août 1909 ; M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 août 1909, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>245</sup> M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 24 août 1909 ; Id., 6 décembre 1909 ; Id., 14 décembre 1909 ; Id., 23 décembre

an impatience I call exaggerated. They could not wish a better general governor.”<sup>246</sup> It is true that in January 1910, Barré de Lancy notes that the Armenian community, unlike the Greek, now “understand how many satisfactions they have obtained” from this governor who “works day and night,” but the consul adds that “the Armenian committees” of İstanbul are actively acting against Cemal and his work of national reconciliation.<sup>247</sup> Cemal works so much that he becomes sick in March 1911<sup>248</sup> and then leaves the province. Similarly, when the governor of Sivas leaves his position in January 1911, the French vice-consul expresses his regrets, as he always had “quite cordial relations with him,” as a man, as a governor and as a friend of France.<sup>249</sup> The same year, the vice-consul in Erzurum reports an improvement of the relations between Muslims and Armenians in his province and an increase of the economic activity as a result.<sup>250</sup>

#### 1.4.2. *The Armenian revolutionists are “ready to all violence, even at the price of general peace” (1912-1914)*

The period 1912-1914 is marked by the Italian aggression in Libya (1911-1912), the Balkan wars (1912-1913), as well as by the Russian ambitions to the Straits (where 90% of the Russian exports of cereals pass), and toward eastern Anatolia.<sup>251</sup> As early as winter 1910-1911, a Russian officer, colonel Schelckonikoff, visits eastern Anatolia, officially as a consul,

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1909, AMAE, P 16742. Also see « Le nouveau gouverneur d’Adana », *Le Figaro*, 17 janvier 1911, pp. 2-3.

<sup>246</sup> M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 7 septembre 1909, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>247</sup> M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 janvier 1910, AMAE, P 16742.

<sup>248</sup> M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 mars 1911, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>249</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Siwas à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 13 janvier 1911, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>250</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Erzeroum à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères à Paris, 5 avril 1911, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>251</sup> Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)-London: Harvard University Press, 2011, pp. 1-41; Norman Stone, *Turkey. A Short History*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2007, pp. 142-143.

in reality to assess the network of roads in the region, to adapt the plan of mobilization in conformity with the reality of the field.<sup>252</sup> More significantly, in 1912, the Tsar's government reconciles with the ARF, the big trial of Dashnaks ending with several acquittals and light sentences for the others. The same year, the Bulgarian branch of the ARF provides volunteers to the Bulgarian army against the Ottomans<sup>253</sup> then the Dashnaks of Van assassinate Bedros Kapamacyan, the pro-CUP mayor of Van, in December, after Kapamacyan refused to accuse Kurds for arsons which actually were a provocation of the ARF.<sup>254</sup>

The Quai d'Orsay is well informed of the sudden change of the Dashnaks' stance and on the Russian ambitions behind this change. In October 1912, S. Zarzecki, the vice-consul Van, reports that Aram Manukian, the main ARF leader of the province, has delivered a speech comparing the fate of the Russian and the Ottoman Armenians, giving a clear advantage to Russia.<sup>255</sup> The fact that ten months earlier his comrades were fighting Russia together with the Young Turks does not seem to bother him. On the contrary, the ARF of Van now does all what is possible to please the Russian authorities.<sup>256</sup> It is enlightened by the admittance of the Russian ambassador to Bompard: The Russian Vice-King has concluded "pact with the Armenians" (in other words, with the Armenian revolutionary parties).<sup>257</sup> These observations are corroborated by the Russian ambassador in Paris on 13 March 1913: "In this affair," the Armenian parties "have the firm intention to follow, in all things, the indications of the

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<sup>252</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Siwas à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 11 janvier 1911, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>253</sup> M. Doulcet, chargé d'affaires de France, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 septembre 1913, AMAE, P 16745 ; Despatch of the British consul in Erzurum, 14 October 1913, FO 195/2450; Richard Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence. 1918*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, University of California Press, 1967, pp. 22-23 and 31; Gaïdz Minassian, *Géopolitique de l'Arménie*: Paris, Ellipses, 2005, p. 15. In claiming, without reference, that on the eve of the World War I tsarist hostility toward Armenian intellectuals and activists culminated in the arrest and massive trial of five hundreds Dashnaks," Ronald Grigor Suny, "*They Can Live...*", p. 205, is at the opposite of the truth.

<sup>254</sup> Hasan Oktay, "On the Assassination of Van Mayor Kapamacyan by the Tashnak Committee," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 1, 2002, pp. 79-89.

<sup>255</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 octobre 1912, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>256</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 30 novembre 1912, p. 38, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>257</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 octobre 1913, AMAE, P 16745.

Russian Government.”<sup>258</sup> They are even more corroborated by the speech delivered on 7 April 1913 by a Russian “journalist”, A. Berezovsky-Godinsky, in Bitlis (*italics added*):

[...] You must arm yourself. [...] *You know well, probably, that all our [diplomatic] representatives in Turkey jointly work with the Dashnaks [...]*

Russia does not want, and never wanted to send you missionaries. She prefers to send you her cannons and soldiers instead of missionaries. [...] I have had a lot of relations with the competent people of the Russian government.

The fact that Berezovsky-Godinsky spends two weeks in Bitlis, welcomed by the Russian consul of the city, leaves few doubts on the accuracy of the last sentence, and Vice-Consul Zarzecki understands that easily.<sup>259</sup> Citing the dispatch, Ambassador Bompard calls Berezovsky-Godinsky “a Russian agent.”<sup>260</sup> Yet, Berezovsky-Godinsky does not limit his activity to Bitlis but visits Van, Erzurum, Diyarbakır and Elazığ, speaking to Armenians but also the Kurdish tribal leaders.<sup>261</sup> The same year, Vice-Consul Zarzercki reports that the ARF, the Hunchak and the Armenakan falsely blame the Ottoman gendarmerie for the killing of an Armenian bystander, during a clash between gendarmes and rogues. He was actually shot by an Armenian. If Zarzecki and the German vice-consul in Mossul try in vain to convince the Armenian parties to stop their grievances, they are “encouraged” in their “aggressive attitude” by the Russian consul.<sup>262</sup> These encouragements are pursued by Noel Buxton (1869-1948), chair of the British Armenian committee, who recommends to the ARF, the Hunchak and the Ramkavar to put their hopes on Russia and to pursue their revolutionary zeal.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> René Marchand (ed.), *Un livre noir. Diplomatie d'avant-guerre d'après les documents des archives russes, 1910-1917*, Paris : Librairie du travail, volume II, 1923, pp. 47-48. Also see Onur Önoł, *The Tsar's Armenians: A Minority in Late Imperial Russia*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017, pp. 146-150 and 181; and the documents of the Hunchak dated 1913-1914 then seized by the Ottoman army: Ahmet Tetik (ed.), *Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents*, Ankara: ATASE, Volume I, 2005, pp. 16-26.

<sup>259</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 2 mai 1913, AMAE, P 16744.

<sup>260</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 18 mai 1913, AMAE, P 16744.

<sup>261</sup> A. H. Zakaryan, “Դուս հրապարակախոս Տ. Օլգենինը Հայաստանի հայկական հարցի մասին”, (On Armenia and the Armenian Question by Russian journalist Olgenin), *Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես/Historical-Philological Journal*, IV, 1989, pp. 56-84 (thanks to Monika Manişak-Paksoy for the translation).

<sup>262</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 16 septembre 1913, AMAE, P 16744.

<sup>263</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 octobre 1913, AMAE, P 16745. Strangely, the Berezovsky-Godinsky case is absent in Onur Önoł, *The*

Yet, the practical consequences are not difficult to guess, as proves a statement of Arshak Vramian (1871-1915), a former ARF deputy at the Ottoman Parliament (1908-1912) to Zarzecki:

It does not matter if the Armenians are killed instead of living as they are living! We are determined to restart the revolutionary action we had suspended for four years; for every assassinated Armenian we will kill ten Kurds, and if necessary, we will attack higher [characters]: valis, ministers and even the sultan.<sup>264</sup>

Commenting the report, Ambassador Bompard calls Vramian a man “ready to all violence” and the revolutionary Armenian parties organizations willing to organize an insurrection, “even at the price of the global peace,” if their aims are not satisfied.<sup>265</sup> Then, Zarzecki and his successor report, in 1913-1914 about the radical improvement of the public safety in Van and the “ingratitude” of the ARF, Hunchak and Armenakan.<sup>266</sup>

The opposition of views is not confined to the diplomatic correspondence. Indeed, in March 1914, Vice-Consul Zarzecki (now in charge of the consulate of Skopje) asks his minister for the permission to publish, in slightly revised version, a report he had sent in October 1913. The permission is given and the text is published in the *Revue de Paris* the next month.<sup>267</sup> Yet, in this article, Zarzecki argues that speaking about an “Armenian issue” is wrong, as the majority of eastern Anatolia is Muslim; it should be called, in Bitlis and Van, “the Kurdish-Armenian issue.” Even more importantly, Zarzecki argues that public safety and progress have two enemies in these provinces: The tribal Kurdish chiefs and the ARF—both having a material interest in maintaining tensions. This publication causes a series of vitriolic articles

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*Tsar' Armenians...*, pp. 150-159. On the Russian expansionism, also see Ronald Bobroff, “Behind the Balkan Wars: Russian Policy toward Bulgaria and the Turkish Straits, 1912-13,” *Russian Review*, LIX-1, January 2000, pp. 76-95.

<sup>264</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van au président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 décembre 1912, AMAE, P 16743.

<sup>265</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 18 mai 1913, AMAE, P 16744.

<sup>266</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 31 août 1913 ; Id., 21 octobre 1913 ; Id., 21 juillet 1914 ; Id., 7 août 1914 ; Id., 10 octobre 1914, AMAE, P 16745.

<sup>267</sup> S. Zarzecki, La question kurdo-arménienne dans les vilayets de Van et Bitlis, 11 octobre 1913, AMAE, P 16745 ; Lettre de S. Zarzecki à Gaston Doumergue, 21 mars 1914 ; Lettre du chef de cabinet à S. Zarzecki, 31 mars 1914, AMAE, 394 QO 1566 ; S. Zarzecki, « La question kurdo-arménienne », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 avril 1914, pp. 873-894. On the importance of *La Revue de Paris*: Thomas Loué, « Une grande revue française à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle : “La Revue de Paris”, 1894-1914 », *Bulletin du Centre d'histoire de la France contemporaine*, n° 11, 1990, pp. 128-132.

in the ARF newspaper of İstanbul, written by Arshak Vramian.<sup>268</sup> One assertion may suffice to evaluate Vramian's honesty: He claims that the departure of Zarzecki is due to the ARF, yet the archives of MFA show, on the contrary, that Zarzecki, the favorite consul of Ambassador Bompard, left for health reasons and against the wishes of the embassy.<sup>269</sup>

That having been said, the most relevant in this clash is the fact that an official organ of the ARF attacks an article allowed by the Quai d'Orsay. It even seems that Zarzecki's piece was more than allowed. Indeed, the two newspapers who recommend his text are *L'Asie française* and the *Journal des débats*.<sup>270</sup> Yet *L'Asie française* is a monthly close to the state apparatus—the organ of a committee put under the patronage of President Raymond Poincaré, edited by Robert de Caix (1869-1970), an *éminence grise* of the Quai d'Orsay, future general secretary of the Beirut's high commission (1919-1923); and de Caix is also a redactor of foreign policy in the *Journal des débats* until 1919. This is not a surprise: As early as winter 1912-1913, *L'Asie française* and its collaborators (including de Caix) are in panic, as a result of the Russian demand for "reforms" in eastern Anatolia. The spectrum of the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire is considered a major threat for the French interests (receiving Syria and Lebanon could never compensate the current French preponderance in the whole empire) and well as for the general peace, because Germany would likely declare war if Russia entered Anatolia and threatened the Berlin-Bagdad.<sup>271</sup>

At the same time, Ambassador Bompard tries (in vain) to convince Russia to renounce its demands of "reform" and to accept, instead, the CUP plan, namely a bilateral agreement with London to send British inspectors in eastern Anatolia. Then, he explains to the Armenian patriarchate that the claim of an autonomous Armenia will never be accepted and that the

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<sup>268</sup> A translation in French of all (but one) these articles are in the despatches of Zarzecki's successor, dated 18 and 28 May 1914, AMAE, P 16745.

<sup>269</sup> Notes annuelles 1911 ; Notes annuelles 1912 ; L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 29 août 1913, AMAE, 394 QO 1566 ; L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 décembre 1913, AMAE, P 16745. He also receives the Légion d'honneur: « Les décorations », *Le Temps*, 2-3 janvier 1914, p. 2.

<sup>270</sup> Robert de Caix, « La question kurdo-arménienne », *L'Asie française*, avril 1914, pp. 151-157 ; « La question kurdo-arménienne », *Journal des débats*, 17 avril 1914, pp. 1-2.

<sup>271</sup> Robert de Caix, « La question des réformes arméniennes », *L'Asie française*, août 1913, pp. 336-337 ; Ludovic de Contenson, « En Turquie d'Asie — La question arménienne », *L'Asie française*, janvier 1913, pp. 15-16 ; Ludovic de Contenson, *Réformes en Turquie*, Paris : Plon, 1913, pp. 49, 54 and passim.

Armenians should ask, instead, concrete measures improving the public safety.<sup>272</sup> The Quai d'Orsay's policy is to avoid any involvement in the pressure on Istanbul regarding the "reforms" issue<sup>273</sup> and the German-Russian compromise is accepted by the Ottoman cabinet at the end of December 1913 then signed in February 1914.<sup>274</sup>

Even more relevant is the pro-Armenian congress of London in 1913. Raymond Kévorkian claims that there is a French committee led and represented by Robert de Caix,<sup>275</sup> but this is entirely false. There is in fact no pro-Armenian committee, but a section in the Comité de l'Asie française (the group of politicians, businessmen, officers and diplomats<sup>276</sup> represented by the monthly *L'Asie française*) and it is not chaired by de Caix, who simply represents the section for the congress in London.<sup>277</sup> That having been said, the most important is: As late as 1913, the man representing France at the major Armenophile congress has in fact no interest in the Armenian people as such, still less in Armenian nationalism, but is only concerned by the consequences of their activities. A private letter written years later shows that de Caix keeps of his relations with the Armenian nationalist leaders the impression to deal with clumsy liars.<sup>278</sup> The presence of de Caix is surely a political decision of the cabinet, but it may be observed there is hardly anybody else.

A last observation has to be made about some circles inside and around the French state apparatus. During the Balkan wars, Pierre Loti (with the support of Jean Jaurès and his

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<sup>272</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 23 mai 1913, AMAE, P 16744 ; Id., 7 septembre 1913, AMAE, P 16745.

<sup>273</sup> L'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 octobre 1913, AMAE, P 16745.

<sup>274</sup> Le chargé d'affaires à Constantinople au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 31 décembre 1913, AMAE, P 16745 ; Joseph Heller, "Britain and the Armenian question, 1912-1914. A study in Realpolitik," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVI-1, January 1980, pp. 10-20. For a detailed study: Ahmet Seyhun, "A Last Attempt to Solve the Armenian Question. The Reform of 1914," in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 656-680.

<sup>275</sup> Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011, p. 846, n. 33.

<sup>276</sup> On the group itself, chaired by Senator Eugène Étienne: Charles-Robert Ageron, *France coloniale ou parti colonial ?*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1978, pp. 139-144; Henri Brunschwig, *French Colonialism, 1871-1914. Myths and Realities*, New York-Washington-London: Frederik A. Praeger, 1966, pp. 117-118.

<sup>277</sup> « La réunion internationale arménienne organisée par le Comité de l'Asie française », *L'Asie française*, novembre 1913, p. 449.

<sup>278</sup> Lettre de Robert de Caix au général Dufieux, 20 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/137.



party<sup>279</sup>) and Claude Farrère (the latter still being a Navy officer: He retires in 1919 only) publish each one a series of articles<sup>280</sup> compiled in two volumes (one by Loti, one by Farrère)<sup>281</sup>—a double campaign they restart during the Turkish war of independence. Yet, they are not alone. Senator Édouard Herriot (1872-1957), a personal friend of several CUP leaders, of Mehmet Cavit Bey (1875-1926) in particular,<sup>282</sup> writes in a mainstream daily: “I dare say that, if Turkey were defeated, it would be civilization and idealism that, at the same time, would be cruelly affected.”<sup>283</sup> Herriot, as we shall see, is in 1920 on the frontline against the Sèvres treaty, and one of his first acts, as President of the ministers’ councils in 1924, is to obtain the ratification of the Lausanne treaty by the Parliament.

Moreover, two diaries written by Frenchmen having experienced the siege of Edirne and describing the Bulgarian war crimes, as well as a book presenting the war seen from the Ottoman side and a compilation of articles by Western European journalists, exposing the sufferings of the Muslim civilians, are printed by publishing houses depending on the French

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<sup>279</sup> Albert Gabriel, « Les Turcs et l’opinion », *La Revue socialiste*, n° 335, novembre 1912, pp. 413-421 ; Jean Jaurès, « La Pologne turque », *L’Humanité*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « Conjectures », *L’Humanité*, 23 juillet 1913, p. 1 ; Jean Jaurès, « La difficulté d’Andrinople », *L’Humanité*, 28 juillet 1913, p. 1 ; Henry Nivet, *La Croisade balkanique. La Jeune Turquie devant l’opinion française et devant le socialisme international*, np, 1913 ; Alain Quella-Villéger, « Jean Jaurès et Pierre Loti. De la littérature à la turcophilie », *Bulletin de la société d’études jaurésiennes*, avril-juin 1988, pp. 4-7.

<sup>280</sup> For instance: « Les adjurations de Pierre Loti », *Le Matin*, 13 octobre 1912, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Les Turcs massacrent ! », *Le Figaro*, 7 novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Lettre sur la guerre moderne », *Le Figaro*, 12 novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Sur la guerre des Balkans », *Gil Blas*, 27 décembre 1912, p. 1 ; « Une lettre de M. Pierre Loti », *L’Humanité*, 30 janvier 1913 ; Pierre Loti, « Turquie agonisante », *Les Annales politiques et littéraires*, 16 février 1913, p. 148 ; Pierre Loti, « Plus de massacres ! », *Les Droits de l’homme*, 30 mars 1913, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Pour Andrinople ottomane », *L’Illustration*, 30 août 1913, pp. 158-159 ; — Claude Farrère, « Les Turcs », *L’Intransigeant*, 5 novembre 1912, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Tchataldja », *L’Intransigeant*, 21 janvier 1913, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Casse-cou ! », *L’Intransigeant*, 6 avril 1913, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Pour Andrinople turque », *L’Intransigeant*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1913, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Il faut qu’Andrinople soit turque », *Gil Blas*, 12 août 1913, p. 1.

<sup>281</sup> Pierre Loti, *Turquie agonisante*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1913 ; Claude Farrère, *Fin de Turquie*, Paris : Dorbon-Ainé, 1913. On the impact of Loti and Farrère: Paul Souday, « Les livres », *Le Temps*, 5 février 1913, p. 3 ; « Les “libérateurs” bulgares », *La Lanterne*, 7 mars 1913, p. 1 ; « Les atrocités bulgares », *Le Radical*, 17 mars 1913, p. 1 ; Hubert Lagardelle, « Autour de la Turquie », *L’Humanité*, 17 mars 1913, p. 5 ; René Lebaut, « La guerre balkanique — Les atrocités bulgares — Pierre Loti avait raison », *Le Petit Journal*, 22 juillet 1913, p. 1 ; P.-L. Lafage, « La revanche de Loti et Farrère », *Le Rappel*, 22 juillet 1913, p. 2.

<sup>282</sup> Édouard Herriot, *Jadis*, volume I, Paris: Flammarion, 1948, pp. 222-224.

<sup>283</sup> Édouard Herriot, « France et Turquie », *Le Journal*, 20 octobre 1912, p. 1.

army.<sup>284</sup> The names of the responsible officers are difficult to identify but what is sure is the fact that Farrère writes in 1913 to Captain Auguste Sarrou (1874-1968), instructor of the Ottoman gendarmerie to decide how to defend the Turks.<sup>285</sup> Yet, as we shall see, an informal group in the military uses similar methods in 1920-1922 to promote reconciliation with the Turks.

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<sup>284</sup> Paul Christoff, *Journal du siège d'Andrinople. Notes quotidiennes d'un assiégé*, Paris-Limoges : Charles-Lavauzelle, 1914 ; Gustave Cirilli, *Journal du siège d'Andrinople (Impressions d'un assiégé)*, Paris : Chapelot, 1913 ; Georges Rémond, *Avec les vaincus. La campagne de Thrace (octobre 1912-mai 1913)*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1913 ; Georges Scott (ed.), *Dans les Balkans, 1912-1913. Récits et visions de guerre*, Paris : Chapelot, 1913. On the siege: Syed Tanvir Wasti, "The 1912-13 Balkan Wars and the Siege of Edirne," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XL-4, July 2004, pp. 59-78.

<sup>285</sup> *Le Capitaine Sarrou...*, pp. 99-100. Also see Cemal Paşa, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman. 1913-1919*, New York: George H. Doran C°, 1922, p. 102.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE LABORIOUS EMERGENCE OF A PRECARIOUS ALLIANCE (1914-1918)

*“When you deal with Armenians, you are sure to be duped.”*

*Vice-Admiral Frédéric Moreau, 1916.<sup>286</sup>*

The beginning of the First World War in August 1914 and the entrance of the Ottoman Empire in this conflict, in November of the same year, certainly mark a rupture, but the way to the French acceptance of the partition of this Empire is far from being easy and the way to the alliance with the Armenian organizations is even more complicated.

#### **2.1. A moderately shared enthusiasm (1914-1915)**

##### *2.1.1. France and the partition of the Ottoman Empire: From opposition to bitter acceptance*

A first point to clarify is the following: In mid-1914, France does not want war. An enduring legend portrays Raymond Poincaré (1860-1934), president of the Republic from 1913 to 1920, as a revengeful nationalist (he is indeed born in Lorraine, near the territory annexed by Germany in 1871) pushing to the war, together with the Russian ambassador in Paris—a legend nurtured by German propaganda and later by Communists, especially. In fact, Poincaré does his best, in 1913-1914, to prevent the outbreak of the war: This is only after

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<sup>286</sup> Lettre du vice-amiral Frédéric Moreau à Albert Defrance, 8 février 1916, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

Germany declares war to France that Poincaré reaches the conclusion that his country must fight until the Alsace-Moselle is recovered.<sup>287</sup> Another important proof is that the Quai d'Orsay is not prepared to a major military conflict, in July-August 1914.<sup>288</sup> Similarly, the Ottoman Empire chooses the German alliance only against Russia and enters the war because Berlin leaves no other choice.<sup>289</sup>

In November 1914, Russia begins to ask for partition, claiming the Straits, with the full support of the British cabinet, and insists in March 1915.<sup>290</sup> The reaction of minister of Foreign Affairs Théophile Delcassé is an embarrassed and discontented silence,<sup>291</sup> except when he forwards to the embassy of Petrograd (St-Petersburg) the bad impression left in Romania by the Russian ambitions.<sup>292</sup> Correspondingly, in his statement of 22 December 1914, President of ministers' council René Viviani says nothing on the Ottoman Empire.<sup>293</sup> However, as often in such cases, an unofficial voice speaks for them: In December 1914, Robert de Caix (the same who has promoted in April the article of vice-consul Zarzecki about

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<sup>287</sup> J. F. V. Keiger, *Raymond Poincaré*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 193-203; Pierre Miquel, *Poincaré*, Paris : Fayard, 1984, pp. 338-343 ; François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré*, Paris: Fayard, 2000, pp. 272-292. Also see Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de la France. Neuf années de souvenirs*, volume III, *L'Europe sous les armes. 1913*, Paris : Plon, 1926, pp. 90-160 ; volume V, *L'invasion. 1914, 1928*, pp. 1-8.

<sup>288</sup> Isabelle Dasque, « Les diplomates français face à la crise de l'été 1914: la faillite du Concert européen », *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, 2016/1, pp. 5-22. Also see Jules-François Blondel, *Au Fil de la Carrière. Récit d'un diplomate, 1911-1938*, Paris : Hachette, 1961, p. 112.

<sup>289</sup> Feroz Ahmad, "Great Britain's Relations with the Young Turks 1908-1914," *Middle Eastern Studies*, II-4, July 1966, pp. 324-325; Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War*, New York-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

<sup>290</sup> M. Paléologue, ambassadeur de France à Pétersbourg, à M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 mars 1915, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915*, Berne: Peter Lang, 2002, volume I, pp. 371-372 ; A. L. Macfie, "The Straits Question in the First World War, 1914-18," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XIX-1, January 1983, pp. 50-59; C. Jay Smith, "Great Britain and the 1914-1915 Straits Agreement with Russia: The British Promise of November 1914," *The American Historical Review*, LXX-4, July 1965, pp. 1015-1034; Nevzat Uyanik, *Dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Britain, America and the Armenian Question*, London-New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 33.

<sup>291</sup> Jules-François Blondel, *Au fil de...*, pp. 126-127 ; Charles de Chambrun, *Atatürk et la Turquie nouvelle*, Paris : Fernand Sorlot, 1939, p. 12 ; Eugene Weber, "Un Fâcheux Incident and a Letter about It," *French Historical Studies*, IX-4, Autumn 1976, pp. 716-724.

<sup>292</sup> M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. Paléologue, ambassadeur de France à Pétersbourg, 9 novembre 1914, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1914*, Berne : Peter Lang, 1997, p. 492.

<sup>293</sup> Christopher Andrew and A. S. Kanya Forstner, *The Climax of French Imperial Expansion. 1914-1924*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981, p. 57.

eastern Anatolia) explains to the readers of *L'Asie française* that the war makes the partition of the Ottoman Empire a possibility, but that it remains “the most unfavorable” hypothesis and, as a result, that France must prevent it, if this is still possible.<sup>294</sup>

This is not the last sign of resistance. A note of the Quai d'Orsay, dated 5 March 1915 and unsigned but written by Ambassador Maurice Bompard (the draft is in his personal archives, and it is his handwriting) sees without illusion the growing possibility of a partition but reiterates that “maintain and vivification of the Ottoman Empire” under French influence is preferable to sharing, even if France receives Syria, Lebanon and the province of Adana.<sup>295</sup> Four days later, another note, this time written by the director of the political affairs himself (Pierre de Margerie, former secretary at the embassy of Istanbul) recommends to postpone to the signature of “the general peace” any decision related to the fate of the Ottoman Empire, even if the Entente's Navies force the Dardanelles. In case of such a victory, de Margerie argues, France must defend its interests against Britain and Russia.<sup>296</sup> This is also the opinion of President Raymond Poincaré and Minister of Finances Alexandre Ribot (1842-1923).<sup>297</sup>

It is affirmed, even in some remarkable scholarly studies, that Paris accepts the Russian demands in March-April 1915.<sup>298</sup> Such an assumption is very questionable, for several reasons. First of all, the agreement of 10 April 1915 gives this important precision that the Russian claims will be implemented if the war is quickly won<sup>299</sup>—typically the kind of exit door used by diplomats, particularly regarding the various war-time agreements on the eastern question, never implemented by lack of will. Then, and more importantly, a letter of minister

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<sup>294</sup> Robert de Caix, « La France et l'aventure turque », *L'Asie française*, décembre 1914, pp. 271-273.

<sup>295</sup> A fac-similé of the typed copy is in Hasan Dilan, *Les Événements arméniens dans les documents diplomatiques français*, Ankara: TTK, 2005, volume I, pp. 59-74; the draft is in AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57.

<sup>296</sup> Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, volume I, p. 379.

<sup>297</sup> A. Ribot (ed.), *Journal d'Alexandre Ribot et correspondances inédites (1914-1922)*, Paris : Plon, 1936, pp. 57-58.

<sup>298</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *La Grande Guerre des Français*, Paris : Perrin, 2014, p. 287 ; Stéphane Yerasimos, « De l'intégrité au partage : la politique ottomane de la France pendant la Première Guerre mondiale », in Hâmit Batu and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *L'Empire ottoman, la République de Turquie et la France*, Paris-Istanbul: ADET/Les éditions Isis, 1986, pp. 426-427. Aaron S. Klieman, “Britain's War Aims in the Middle East in 1915,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, III-3, July 1968, p. 238 even claims that Britain accepts partition after France (without providing any source).

<sup>299</sup> Accord sur Constantinople et les Détroits, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, volume I, pp. 963-964.

of Foreign Affairs Delcassé to minister of War Alexandre Millerand, the same month, proves that Delcassé, no matter what he says to the Russian and British ambassadors, remains absolutely opposed to the partition and to “a holy war.”<sup>300</sup> The next month, Delcassé still declares to François Georges-Picot his skepticism about sharing the Ottoman Empire and about the existence of any advantage, for France, to such a conclusion.<sup>301</sup> As late as June 1915, the same Georges-Picot explains that he is making, at the request of the Quai d’Orsay, a plan of “protectorate” for Syria, with a light French administration, because if the Ottoman Empire is “maintained in Asia” such a plan will not need profound changes.<sup>302</sup>

Correspondingly, even after the failure of Pierre Loti’s mission in November 1914 (trying to convince the Ottoman cabinet to refrain from declaring the Jihad)<sup>303</sup> and the absence of success of the attempt to negotiate in Sofia and Bucharest a separate peace with the Ottoman Empire, with former Ottoman minister Nicolae Batzaria (1874-1952) as go-between (February 1915),<sup>304</sup> the French government, including President Raymond Poincaré, endorses the negotiations of Loti for the same purpose, in spring 1915. Poincaré is even ready to welcome Talat without pre-condition. The discussions fail when the peril (for the Ottomans) at the Dardanelles decreases, in mid-1915,<sup>305</sup> and in September of the same year, Poincaré states with bitter regret to the British representative that it is too late to ask Russia to renounce İstanbul; London should have never made such a promise, but what is done is

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<sup>300</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 28 avril 1915, SHD, 7 N 2150. A part of the British government expresses, the same month, the hope to cancel the agreement with Russia by a quick victory in the Dardanelles: Aaron S. Klieman, “Britain’s War Aims...”, p. 248. Also see Harry N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey: a Diplomatic History*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1931, pp. 124-125.

<sup>301</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert Defrance, 30 mai 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2. Also see Christopher Andrew and A. S. Kanya Forstner, *The Climax of...*, pp. 58, 66 and 69.

<sup>302</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert Defrance, 17 juin 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

<sup>303</sup> Gaëtan Gallieni (ed.), *Les Carnets de Gallieni*, Paris: Albin Michel, 1932, pp. 117-119 ; Pierre Loti, *Soldats bleus. Journal, 1914-1918*, Paris : La Table Ronde, 2014, p. 71 ; Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne de la France. Un témoin : Pierre Loti*, Paris : L’Harmattan, 1992, pp. 136-138.

<sup>304</sup> M. Blondel, ministre de France à Bucarest, à M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 février 1915, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, volume I, pp. 289-290. On Batzaria: Kemal Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, Leyden-Boston-Köln: E. J. Brill, 2002, pp. 562-585.

<sup>305</sup> Pierre Loti, *Soldats bleus. Journal...*, pp. 91 and 96 ; Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de...*, volume V, p. 272.

done.<sup>306</sup> Regardless, even after that, the door is never completely closed: Nihat Reşat (later: Nihat Reşat Belger, 1882-1961), who is the main activist of the Turkish national movement in France in 1920-1923, is allowed to stay in Paris during the whole world war.<sup>307</sup>

Meanwhile, the road to the Sykes-Picot agreement is taken, without enthusiasm. In fact, the turn of September-October 1915 seems due not only to the decline of the hope to maintain the Ottoman Empire as it was in 1914 but also to the fear that if the occasion is not taken now, France could lose even Syria, as London could become less favorable to Paris in a near future, as far as the Near East is concerned.<sup>308</sup> It explains the campaign of the big business of Lyon and Marseille by June 1915, and even more the one of Georges-Picot and Albert Defrance (1860-1936; representative in Cairo), as early as November 1914.<sup>309</sup> In a personal letter written in October 1915, Georges-Picot expresses his satisfaction to see his ideas progressing in the Quai d'Orsay, in the embassy at London (where he is currently working) and in the opinion. His ambassador, Paul Cambon, has just submitted a note written by him, Georges-Picot, claiming that the French interests "in Syria and Cilicia" cannot "suffer any sharing." Ambassador Maurice Bompard has told Georges-Picot his regret to see the thesis of a direct domination on Syria winning; as a result, says Bompard, this Syria must be integral (including Adana, Jerusalem and Mosul), to diminish the cost of the domination.<sup>310</sup> The next month, Georges-Picot is officially delegated to the British government to negotiate the boundaries of Syria, and in his instructions (mostly written by himself),<sup>311</sup> more than one quarter is devoted to deplore the end of "the privileged situation" of "our citizens and our country" in the "eventuality" of a partition of the Ottoman Empire. As "very little will remain in the provinces separated from the Empire" and given to others than France, Syria has to

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<sup>306</sup> Raymond Poincaré, Notes journalières, 18 septembre 1915, BNF, NAF 16031, f. 144 ; Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de...*, volume VII, p. 104.

<sup>307</sup> Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 18 janvier 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13486.

<sup>308</sup> F. W. Brecher, "French Policy toward the Levant, 1914-1918," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXIX-4, October 1993, pp. 641-663.

<sup>309</sup> Dominique Chevallier, « Lyon et la Syrie en 1919. Les bases d'une intervention », *Revue historique*, CCXXIV-2, avril-juin 1960, p. 306 ; Christopher Andrew and A. S. Kanya Forstner, *The Climax of...*, p. 68 and 76-77.

<sup>310</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert Defrance, 5 octobre 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

<sup>311</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert Defrance, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1915 ; Id., 24 décembre 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

include Lebanon, Adana, Maraş, Mosul, Diyarbakır, and—Georges-Picot is requested to “insist” on this last point—Jerusalem.<sup>312</sup>

A compromise is reached with the British (Jerusalem is decided to become international, most of the other French demands are accepted) and found satisfactory by Georges-Picot, even more as the new president of ministers’ council, Aristide Briand, changes the instruction about Jerusalem, a territory he does not want. Then, the negotiator is sent—with, one more time, a full autonomy—to Russia to obtain the agreement of Petrograd, which is not, according to him, particularly difficult: Van and Bitlis are exchanged with Kayseri.<sup>313</sup> After the trilateral agreement is obtained, Georges-Picot expresses a last concern, this time about the implementation by military force of this agreement.<sup>314</sup>

This chain of events is congruent with the general war aims of France: “The essential war aim, the only one that is supported by a great movement of opinion, in all sectors, from the far left to the far right [...] is the restitution of the Alsace-Moselle.” For the rest, including against Germany, the opinion and the government are divided.<sup>315</sup> Chronologically, for the war aims other than the Alsace-Moselle, in terms of military guarantees against Germany as well as economically, there is radicalization-crystallization at the end of 1915 and even more during the year 1916 then at the beginning of 1917, followed by a decrease of the ambitions later

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<sup>312</sup> M. Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. Georges-Picot, chargé du consulat général de France à Beyrouth, 2 novembre 1915, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, volume III, pp. 341-345. On the importance of Mosul: Edward Peter Fitzgerald, “France’s Middle Eastern Ambitions, the Sykes-Picot Negotiations, and the Oil Fields of Mosul, 1915-1918,” *The Journal of Modern History*, LXVI-4, December 1994, pp. 697-725. On Jerusalem: Jean-Marc Delaunay, « L’Espagne, protectrice des intérêts français en Palestine au crépuscule de la domination ottomane, 1914-1918 », in Walid Harbid and alii (ed.), *Méditerranée, Moyen-Orient : deux siècles de relations internationales. Recherches en hommage à Jacques Thobie*, Istanbul-Paris : Institut français d’études anatoliennes/L’Harmattan, 2003, pp. 93-107.

<sup>313</sup> M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 novembre 1915 ; Pourparlers franco-anglais concernant les limites de la Syrie, 21 décembre 1915, *ibid.*, pp. 546-547 and pp. 786-789; M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 5 janvier 1916, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1916*, Berne : Peter Lang, 2017, pp. 45-48 ; Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert DeFrance, 17 mars 1916, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2 ; James Barr, *A Line in the Sand*, London-New York : Simon & Schuster, 2011, pp. 29-32. The Russian account presents the discussions as a bit less easy than what Georges-Picot describes: Richard G. Hovannisian, “The Allies and Armenia, 1915-18,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, III-1, January 1968, pp. 160 and 162.

<sup>314</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert DeFrance, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1916, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2. Also see Pierre de Margerie, Note sur les conditions de la paix, 7 décembre 1916, AMAE, 64 PA-AP 1.

<sup>315</sup> Pierre Renouvin, « Les buts de guerre du gouvernement français (1914-1918) », *Revue historique*, CCXXXV-1, janvier-mars 1966, pp. 3-8, 12-14, 21 and 34-35 (quotation p. 3).



in 1917 and in 1918.<sup>316</sup> It is also coherent with the domination of the German issue (preventing this neighbor from attacking in the future, achieving industrial parity) in these war aims.<sup>317</sup> However, it is in formal contradiction with the ambition of the Armenian nationalists. Obviously, maintaining the Ottoman Empire is against their will, but the Sykes-Picot agreements contain nothing on an independent Armenia. Yet, in 1914-1915, the Armenian committees actively work for Russia—which also pursues its interests only.

### 2.1.2 *The Armenian nationalists: A gap between the contributions to France and Russia*

During the congress of the ARF in July-August 1914 (the exact dates remain unclear), the CUP representatives initially ask the party to remain neutral, but, when they learn that the ARF of Russia recruits volunteers for the Russian army, they propose an autonomous Armenia in exchange of a return to the anti-Russian alliance of 1907-1912. The Dashnak leadership refuses, claiming that Armenians from Russia and the Ottoman Empire will fill their duty for their respective states.<sup>318</sup> In fact, Garegin Pasdermadjian, the leader of the attack against the Ottoman Bank in 1896, later deputy of Erzurum at the Ottoman Parliament (1908-1912), moves to Russia as early as August 1914. Together with Alexandre Khatissian (1874-1945), another ARF leader who is also the mayor of Tbilissi, Pasdermadjian establishes a joint committee to recruit Armenian volunteers for the Russian Empire<sup>319</sup>—mostly from the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Bulgaria and Romania. According to its own statements, the

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10, 15, 19 and 21; Roy A. Prete, "French Military War Aims, 1914-1916," *The Historical Journal*, XXVIII-4, December 1985, pp. 887-899; Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'Or et le Sang. Les buts de guerre économiques de la Première Guerre mondiale*, Paris : Fayard, 1989, pp. 141-144, 191, 242-243, 258, 270, 297, 364 and passim ; David Stevenson, "French War Aims and the American Challenge, 1914-1918," *The Historical Journal*, XXII-4, December 1979, pp. 877-894.

<sup>317</sup> Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'Or et le Sang...*, p. 145 ; Georges-Henri Soutou, « La France et les marches de l'est, 1914-1919 », *Revue historique*, CCLX-4, octobre-décembre 1978, pp. 341-388. Also see the articles cited in the previous note.

<sup>318</sup> Morgan Philips Price, *War and Revolution in Asiatic Russia*, London: George Allen & Uwin, 1918, pp. 243-245. Also see Onur Önoğ, "The Eighth World Congress of the Dashnaksutyun and Its Aftermath," in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse. World War I and the Ottoman State*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 781-799.

<sup>319</sup> Aram Turabian, *Les Volontaires arméniens sous les drapeaux français*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1917, p. 40.

Hunchak party actively participates to the recruitment.<sup>320</sup> Volunteers from the Ottoman Empire are organized in special units, the *druzhinys*.<sup>321</sup>

Such choices by the revolutionary parties are at least for a part due to internal dynamics. The ARF confirms the recruitment by its congress of 13 and 14 September 1914, in formal contradiction with the statement of the previous month.<sup>322</sup> In the case of the Hunchak, it is simple: As early as September 1913, the party decides to assassinate minister of Interior Talat.<sup>323</sup> In the case of the ARF, attributing the decision to the Dashnaks “in the Caucasus” only<sup>324</sup> is a simplification. In the introduction, it has been seen how Archak Vramian announces the return to “revolutionary action” in 1913. Correspondingly, at its congress of Paris on 4 January 1914, the student branch of the ARF asks this “national-socialist” (sic) party to focus on “revolutionary” action and announces having collected 27,549.63 francs (about 84,852.86 euros of 2017) for the purchase of weapons to be distributed among Ottoman Armenians.<sup>325</sup>

An important question is this regard is the number of these volunteers. As early as October 1914, the British consul in Batumi estimates the total number of Armenian volunteers to be almost 45,000.<sup>326</sup> These volunteers are even more efficient as they are only a side of the Armenian nationalist revolutionaries’ strategy, the other being a series of insurrections, with

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<sup>320</sup> « Les volontaires arméniens », *Le Temps*, 22 février 1915, p. 2 ; « Les volontaires arméniens de l’armée russe », *L’Homme libre*, 22 février 1915, p. 2 ; « La vaillance des volontaires arméniens au Caucase », *L’Homme libre*, 24 février 1915, p. 2. Also see Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins...*, pp. 164-165.

<sup>321</sup> On these units: Gabriel Korganoff (Gorganian), *La Participation des Arméniens à la guerre mondiale sur le front du Caucase (1914-1918)*, Paris : Massis, 1927, pp. 9-53.

<sup>322</sup> Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the...*, p. 117; Hovannes Katchaznouni, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutiun) has Nothing to do Anymore*, New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955, p. 5.

<sup>323</sup> Hratch Dasnabedian, “The Hunchakian Party,” *Armenian Review*, XLI-4, Winter 1988, p. 34; Talat Paşa, *Talat Paşa’nın Anıları*, İstanbul: İletişim, 1986, pp. 63-67; Ahmet Tetik (ed.), *Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents*, Ankara: ATASE, Volume III, 2006. Also see the report of the Okhrana agent who has followed this Hunchak congress: Hoover Institution, Stanford, Okhrana records, reel 385. Thank you to Jean-Louis Mattei for the translation.

<sup>324</sup> Kapriel Serope Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted*, Boston: Baika Press, 1934, p. 38.

<sup>325</sup> Undated report of the Okhrana (almost certainly January 1914), Hoover Institution, Okhrana records, reel 385. Thank you to Jean-Louis Mattei for the translation.

<sup>326</sup> Muammer Demirel (ed.), *British Documents on Armenians (1896-1918)*, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2002, p. 665.

a particular focus on the Ottoman lines of communications, a series starting as early as October 1914,<sup>327</sup> and culminating with the revolt of Van in April 1915, a revolt prepared and greatly facilitated by the uprisings in the countryside, Aram Manukian (the local ARF military leader) having understood the crucial importance of the villages for an unconventional warfare.<sup>328</sup> It is a significant contribution to the Russian war effort on the Caucasian front, a conflict “in accordion” from the Black Sea to the North-West of Iran,<sup>329</sup> even more as one million peasants of Russia marry in 1914-1915 to avoid conscription.<sup>330</sup> On 31 August 1914, Lieutenant-General Yudenich, chief of staff of the Caucasian army, asks for 25,000 extra rifles and 12 million cartridges for the Armenian guerilla, insisting on the necessity to provide these weapons and ammunition before the entry of the Ottoman Empire into war.<sup>331</sup> However, both the Armenian insurgents and volunteers of the Russian army practice, as early as November 1914, a policy of ethnic cleansing, including by indiscriminate massacres—a series of acts blamed, and sometimes punished, by a large part of the Russian command, less for humanitarian reasons than because such acts make the occupation of eastern Anatolia much more difficult.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Note of Minister of Interior Talat to Grand Vizir Sait Halim Paşa, 26 May 1915, in Hikmet Özdemir and Yusuf Sarıncay (ed.), *Turkish-Armenian Conflict Documents*, Ankara: TBMM, 2007, pp. 58-59; Edward J. Erickson, *Ottomans and Armenians. A Study in Counter-Insurgency*, New York-London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, pp. 161-188; Kâmurân Gürün, *Le Dossier arménien*, Paris: Triangle, 1984, pp. 227-247; Maurice Larcher, *La Guerre turque dans la guerre mondiale*, Paris : Chiron, 1926, p. 395 ; Justin McCarthy, *Turks and Armenians. Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire*, Madison: Turko-Tatar Press, 2015, pp. 111-140; Stanford Jay Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, Ankara: TTK, volume II, 2008, pp. 864-875 and 899-917.

<sup>328</sup> Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran and Ömer Turan, *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006, pp. 176-232 and 258; Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins...*, pp. 168-169.

<sup>329</sup> Stéphane Yerasimos, « Caucase, la grande mêlée (1914-1921) », *Hérodote*, n° 54-55, 4<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1989, pp. 155-159.

<sup>330</sup> Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front. 1914-1917*, London: Penguin Books, 1998, p. 213.

<sup>331</sup> Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins...*, pp. 154-156. Also see G. Tchalkhouchian, *Le Livre rouge*, Paris: Imprimerie Veradzenount, 1919, pp. 11-15 and 106-107.

<sup>332</sup> Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran and Ömer Turan, *The Armenian Rebellion...*, pp. 233-257 and 279-281; Rafael de Nogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, New York-London: Charles Schribner's, 1926, pp. 39 and 45; Mehmet Perinçek (ed.), *11 Aralık 1915 Tarihli Resmi Ermeni Raporu*, İstanbul : Doğan Kitap, 2009; Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 156-158.

Regardless, the Tsar's government takes care to avoid any formal promise. A statement of the Hunchak proves that this party understands this absence of commitment and bets that, this time, the "supreme devotion" of the Armenian revolutionaries shall, this time, and unlike in the 1890s, obtain results.<sup>333</sup> This shows a lack of prudence, but this lack pales in comparison with the attitude of the Dashnaks, who largely believe, in 1914-1915, to hear promises. Indeed, in his speech of 1923, ARF leader Katchaznoui notices: "We had embraced Russia whole-heartedly without any compunction. [...] We had implanted our own desires into the minds of others." Unable to accept the very existence of their errors, the Dashnaks later blame Russia, but, as notices Katchaznoui, "With the politically immature mind peculiar to inconsequential men, we fell from one extreme to another."<sup>334</sup> Indeed, it is clear from the beginning that Russia gives weapons and ammunition to the Armenian nationalists for its own interests only.<sup>335</sup> This irrational mind is essential to understand the forthcoming events, including the relations with the French Republic from 1918 to 1923.

In this context of opposition of policies and of Russian orientation (with a support from British circles), the only concrete element of alliance is the recruitment of volunteers for the French army's *Légion étrangère* (Foreign Legion). Beside the individual enrolments, the recruitment is the fact of an ad hoc committee created in Marseille in August 1914 and led by Aram Turabian (born in 1883, deceased after 1939<sup>336</sup>). In his autobiography, Turabian claims he never was involved in politics between his arrival in Marseille, in 1898, and 1914—except in distributing copies of an anti-Turkish tract during the visit in France of a CUP delegation in 1909—and indeed, his file by the intelligence department of the Parisian police mentions no such activities before the First World War.<sup>337</sup>

His committee, established by a man almost without political past, is—and remains— independent of the Armenian National Delegation (DNA) in Paris (Ramkavar). On the

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<sup>333</sup> Mélik Serge David-Beg, « Les Arméniens et la guerre », *L'Homme libre*, 8 mars 1915, p. 2. Also see « Un manifeste du comité arménien hentchakiste », *L'Homme libre*, 20 juillet 1915, p. 2.

<sup>334</sup> Hovannes Katchaznoui, *The Armenian Revolutionary...*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>335</sup> Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, New York-Oxford: Philosophical Library/George Ronald Publisher, 1952, p. 10; Sean McMeekin, *The Russian origins...*, passim.

<sup>336</sup> Le directeur des Renseignements généraux et des Jeux à M. le préfet de police de Paris, 22 janvier 1935, APP, BA 2032 ; Ministère du Travail, Direction générale du travail et de la main-d'œuvre, à M. Aram Turabian, 11 décembre 1939, APP, BA 2146.

<sup>337</sup> Aram Turabian, *Trente ans en France. Ma vie*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1928, pp. 7-13 ; APP, BA 2032.

contrary, the relations of Turabian with Archag Tchobanian (in charge of public relations at the DNA) are, by 1917, execrable: Turabian sees Tchobanian as a selfish incompetent who “tries to steal the fruit of my work.”<sup>338</sup> These divisions and the improvised nature of the recruitment show the level of unpreparedness in 1914 (the legacy of the failures from 1862 to 1914). The concrete consequence is that the DNA in Paris cannot even use this very modest recruitment as a direct argument, unlike the ARF in the Caucasus. Similarly, there is no trace, either in the books of Turabian, either in the police records, either in the MFA records,<sup>339</sup> of any involvement of the ARF in Turabian’s efforts of recruitment. Such a silence suggests that France is far from being a priority for the Dashnaks. The Hunchak, however, collaborates with Turabian for the recruitment in the Foreign Legion and its leader in France, Kourken Tahmazian (1889-1936), sets the example in enrolling himself. Wounded and reformed in August 1915, Tahmazian goes back to Paris.<sup>340</sup>

By 1918 Armenian nationalists have claimed that the number of Armenian volunteers in the Foreign Legion is 900, including 850 (or 820, the figure varies) killed in fighting.<sup>341</sup> But these figures are false. In his book published in 1917, Aram Turabian provides a list of 277 names and continues in affirming that “at least one hundred” others (who are not in contact with his recruitment committee) are fighting in 1917 under the French flag. He concludes that the total is at least 400, out of 4,000 Armenians in France in 1914.<sup>342</sup> A French document from the Ministry of War confirms the first of these two estimates: During the whole conflict, 380

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<sup>338</sup> Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime...*, p. 186. In his apologetic book (*Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CRDP, 1986), Edmond Kahyadjian avoids any discussion of these tensions, any reference to Turabian. Similarly, Ramkavar historian Arthur Beylerian is silent on Turabian and his activities in « L'échec d'une... » and *Les Grandes Puissances...* This silence allows to think that Turabian’s grievances against Tchobanian are not necessarily the most inaccurate of all.

<sup>339</sup> AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13070 ; APP, BA 2032 ; APP, BA 2146 ; AMAE, P 16670 ; Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*

<sup>340</sup> Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 5 mars 1915, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13070 ; Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 25 octobre 1919, APP, BA 2146 ; Aram Turabian, *Les Volontaires arméniens...*, p. 30.

<sup>341</sup> Boghos Nubar, « Les Arméniens et les Turcs », *L'Écho de Paris*, 5 novembre 1918, p. 3 ; Mikael Varandian, Mémoire du Parti socialiste arménien, septembre 1918, p. 7, AMAE, P 16670 ; Karabet J. Basmadjian, *La Nation arménienne*, Paris : J. Gamber, 1923, p. 18 ; Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L'Heure de l'Arménie*, Geneva: Société générale d'imprimerie, 1922, p. 19 ; Garegin Pasdermadjian, *Why Armenia Should be Free*, Boston: Hairenik, 1918, p. 41 ; Garegin Pasdermadjian, *Armenia. A leading in the Winning of War*, New York: American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, 1919, p. 22. Avetoon Pessak Hacobian, *Armenia and the War*, London-New York-Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917, p. 80 even claims “between 1,000 and 1,500,” including “only some 250 [who] have survived.”

<sup>342</sup> Aram Turabian, *Les Volontaires arméniens...*, pp. 9-34.

volunteers of the Foreign Legion have declared the Armenian nationality and 108 (28.4%) are dead.<sup>343</sup>

Such a contribution is symbolic, not to say insignificant. During the First World War, the mobilization in France and among Algeria's Frenchmen represent 7.9 million men; 1,397,000 die during the conflict (17.7% of mortality), for a population of about 40 million (39.6 million according to the survey of 1911, plus a bit more than 300,000 in Algeria), which means a mobilization rate of almost 20%. On the European battlefields, France also mobilizes 139,000 soldiers from Black Africa, among whom 31,000 die (22.3% of mortality, the difference being explained by the epidemics, themselves due to the climatic shock and the lack of adequate infrastructures at the beginning of the war). 218,000 Berbers and Arabs from North Africa are enrolled under the flags, too.<sup>344</sup>

Even worse, perhaps, for the credibility of the Armenian nationalists, this mobilization is less than disinterested. As Turabian inadvertently confesses, the mobilization is about "participating to the great effort of liberation of Armenia, with the sympathy of France,"<sup>345</sup> and, like the recruitment for the Russian army, it means "scarifying a part of the current [Armenian] generation [in Anatolia] for the future of the race," as reprisals are the consequence, accepted in advance, by him and by the committee of Tbilissi.<sup>346</sup>

### 2.1.3. *The first projects and operations landings in Çukurova*

The first proposals of cooperation and insurrection, for a landing in İskenderun and/or Mersin, are made by Armenian nationalist leaders during the first months following the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the world war. The chief of the Ramkavar/AGBU, Boghos Nubar (1851-1930), presents his first offer to French representative in Egypt Albert Defrance on 20

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<sup>343</sup> Le ministre de la Guerre à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 février 1923, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>344</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *La Grande Guerre des Français*, Paris : Perrin, 2014, p. 421 ; Bernard Lugan, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord des origines à nos jours*, Monaco-Paris : Le Rocher, 2016 ; Marc Michel, *Les Africains et la Grande guerre. L'appel à l'Afrique (1914-1918)*, Paris : Karthala, 2014, p. 196.

<sup>345</sup> Aram Turabian, *Trente ans en...*, p. 13.

<sup>346</sup> Aram Turabian, *Les Volontaires arméniens...*, p. 42.

November 1914.<sup>347</sup> Then, on 3 February 1915, Nubar submits a memorandum to the British government, asking for an intervention and promising that the Armenians of the region will support the expeditionary corps “by all means.”<sup>348</sup> Without direct coordination, Mikael Varandian, one of the main leaders of the ARF, presents his own plan in March 1915, to both British and French governments. He is introduced to the French representative in Bulgaria by the Russian representative—another proof of the Russian role in the anti-Ottoman activities of the Armenian committees. More precise than Nubar, Varandian proposes to concentrate in Cyprus about 20,000 Armenians born in Çukurova but currently living in the Balkans, in Egypt, in Western Europe and, above all, in America. To gain the support of his interlocutors, Varandian exposes a vision of eastern Anatolia as divided between the Russians in the north, the British and the French (or, when he speaks to His Majesty’s representatives, the British only) in the south.<sup>349</sup> Varandian’s project is rejected by the Quai d’Orsay, as the concentration of a military force in Cyprus would indicate to the Turks where the next operation is planned, and also because it could provoke “massacres” in reprisals.<sup>350</sup>

Moreover, the simple fact that there are several proposals show the absence of joint action on this strategic field, in spite of the establishment of the Armenian National Delegation in 1912 and of outbreak of the WWI. More seriously, according to Boghos Nubar, the Egyptian branch of the ARF “dare to impose their will on [the Ramkavar], oppose [this party] and create ambiguity” in pretending that Nubar is against the recruitment of volunteers for the Entente’s armies. They also answer they have “no current plan” for a landing in İskenderung when Nubar asks for a joint proposal.<sup>351</sup> On the other side, the ARF, and particularier its

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<sup>347</sup> M. Albert Defrance, ministre de France en Égypte, à M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 novembre 1914, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume I, pp. 244-245.

<sup>348</sup> Memorandum, 3 February 1915, in Vatche Ghazarian (ed.), *Boghos Nubar’s papers and the Armenian question 1915-1918: Documents*, Waltham: Mayreni Publishing, 1996, pp. 3-5.

<sup>349</sup> Copie d’une communication du ministre français à Sofia, 3 mars 1915, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 12-13 ; Memorandum of Mikael Varandian to Sir Edward Grey, 20 February 1915, FO 371/2484/37609; Ciphred telegram of the British minister in Sofia to the Foreign Office, 3 March 1915, in Muamer Demirel (ed.), *British Documents on...*, p. 667. Arthur Beylerian does not see the necessity to mention the discrepancy between what Varandian says to the French and what he says to the British.

<sup>350</sup> M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. de Panafieu, ministre de France à Sofia, 13 avril 1915, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>351</sup> Letter of Boghos Nubar to Mikael Varandian, 7 April 1915, in Vatche Ghazarian, *Boghos Nubar’s Papers...*, p. 10.

Egyptian branch, sees Nubar as “an instrument.”<sup>352</sup> These divisions can only displease in France at the time of the *Sacred Union (Union sacrée)* which suspends the disputes of domestic politics.<sup>353</sup>

In Zeytun, after troubles as early as 1913,<sup>354</sup> and again in 1914<sup>355</sup> a serious revolt organized by the Hunchak (like in 1895-1896) erupts in February 1915. The Russian diplomacy supports the insurgency, asking the British and French allies to land at İskenderun and to provide here weapons for the insurgents, but the demand is answered negatively for practical reasons (the distance between this port and Zeytun).<sup>356</sup> In March, the rebels capture the armory of the gendarmerie, kill several gendarmes and destroy the telegraphic line.<sup>357</sup> The next month, the Russian diplomacy insists, using a short report of the Hunchak party, where the number of rebels at Zeytun only is estimated to be 15,000, under the leadership of those who had conducted the uprising of 1895-1896, but this time, too neither the UK nor France give weapons, one more time because of the obstacles of physical geography.<sup>358</sup> Remarkably, the fact that it is an uprising organized by the Hunchak (which, unlike the ARF, takes part to the recruitment for the Foreign Legion) does not change anything for Paris. Similarly, the repeated discussions with representatives of the Hunchak, Reformed Hunchak and Ramkavar

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<sup>352</sup> This is the word of L. Barteveian, editor of *Houssaper* (Cairo) and leader of the ARF: Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, p. 29.

<sup>353</sup> Jean-Jacques Becker, « Union sacrée et idéologie bourgeoise », *Revue historique*, CCLXIV-535, juillet-septembre 1980, pp. 65-74 ; Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de...*, volume IV, *L'Union sacrée*.

<sup>354</sup> Report of British Vice-Consul Fontana (Aleppo) to his chargé d'affaires, 21 October 1913, FO 371/1773/ 52128.

<sup>355</sup> Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Facts on the Relocation of Armenians (1914-1918)*, Ankara: TTK, 2002, pp. 47-48.

<sup>356</sup> Note de l'ambassadeur de Russie à Paris, 23 février 1915, Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, p. 7 ; The Foreign Office to the Army Council, 1 March 1915, FO 371/2484/22083 ; M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Delcassé, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 mars 1915, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, volume I, p. 364; George Abel Schreiner, *From Berlin to Bagdad: Behind the Scenes in the Near East*, New York-London: Harper & Brothers, 1918, pp. 197-198.

<sup>357</sup> Yusuf Sarıınay (ed.), *Osmanlı belgelerinde Ermeni İsyancıları*, Ankara, volume IV, 2008, pp. 105-108 and 113-115. Thanks to Sümeyye Hoşgör for the translation. Also see Ciphred telegram of Cemal Paşa, Commander of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army, to the Supreme Command Headquarters, 10 April 1915, in Hikmet Özdemir and Yusuf Sarıınay (ed.), *Turkish-Armenian Conflict...*, p. 13.

<sup>358</sup> Note de l'ambassade de Russie à Londres, 17 avril 1915 ; Minutes, 20 April 1915, FO 371/2484/46942.



with the British authorities between March and July fail one by one,<sup>359</sup> in spite of the fact that the Ramkavar-dominated Armenian Committee for National Defense estimates the number of insurgents in Çukurova to be 25,000 and in “neighboring regions” to be 15,000.<sup>360</sup>

That having been said, neither the British nor the French army ignore the gulf of İskenderun. From December 19, 1914 to the beginning of February 1915, the *HMS Doris*, commanded by Captain Frank Larkin (later Rear Admiral Sir Frank Larkin) attacks several facilities in the region. Among other damages, Larkin’s vessel destroys five bridges and lands men who cut a telegraphic line. Larkin reports, on December 27: “The Armenian railway officials themselves are smashing the electric batteries on the lines with particular satisfaction.”<sup>361</sup> In reaction to this intervention, and to mark the French presence in front of Syria, the ships *d’Entrecasteaux* from 4 to 23 January and *Requin* from 13 to 24 January attack Ottoman communications near Mersin and İskenderun.<sup>362</sup> The *Requin* is congratulated, including by the French representative in Cairo,<sup>363</sup> but unlike the *HMS Doris*, the French ships have the order to avoid any shore operation, “any useless bloodshed where France has so many moral and material interests and so many supporters.”<sup>364</sup> In April of the same year, the *d’Entrecasteaux* bombs the coast of Çukurova and in May the *d’Estrée* destroys an oil depot in İskenderun.<sup>365</sup> Such operations are enough to scare the Ottoman authorities, which include the majority of the Armenians of these regions in their scheme of counter-insurgency by forced relocation, in

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<sup>359</sup> Justin McCarthy, “Cilicia. A Missed Opportunity in World War I,” in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 810-811.

<sup>360</sup> Note to the British government, July 1915, in Jean-Claude Montant (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1915...*, p. 98. Arthur Beylerian, « L’échec d’une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, p. 356, claims that “nothing proves the alleged betrayal of the Armenians” without discussing the sources. This is unscholarly.

<sup>361</sup> Edward J. Erickson, “Captain Larkin and the Turks. The Strategic Impact of the HMS Doris in Early 1915,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XLVI-1, January 2010, pp. 151-162. Also see the report of the governor of Adana, 24 February 1915, in Ahmet Tekit (ed.), *Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents*, Ankara: ATASE, volume I, 2005, pp. 57-58.

<sup>362</sup> État-major de l’armée, service historique, *Les Armées françaises dans la Grande guerre*, XI-1, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1936, pp. 10-12.

<sup>363</sup> Lettre du capitaine Remy à Albert Defrance, 8 février 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

<sup>364</sup> Louis Dartige du Fournet, *Souvenirs de guerre d’un amiral (1914-1916)*, Paris : Plon-Nourrit, 1920, pp. 17-18, 36-37 and 41.

<sup>365</sup> Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia. 1914-1923*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, pp. 65-67.

conformity of the standards of the time,<sup>366</sup> but these local successes of the Entente do not expand into a massive operation during the months when it would be the most efficient, namely from November 1914 to spring 1915, when the region is the less protected.

This seems to be paradox. Rear Admiral (later Vice-Admiral) Gabriel Darrieus (1859-1931) submits a report to his superior, in May 1915, advocating an operation with 100,000 men in İskenderun, in cooperation with the Armenian insurgents of Dörtyol and neighboring towns.<sup>367</sup> Captain Charles Dumesnil (1868-1946), later Rear Admiral Dumesnil, grand-cross of the *Légion d'honneur* in 1923, travels along the coast of Anatolia in 1914, just before the outbreak of the war, and comes back "very struck by the special situation of Alexandretta's region and by the absolute necessity of an expedition on this side," that is why he writes a letter, in spring 1915, advocating such an expedition, as the road and railroad connecting Anatolia and Syria are strategically important and the Ottoman army in this region is weak. In his recollections, published in 1922, he argues that in case of a massive landing, "we would have had for us the entire mountain Armenians."<sup>368</sup> Yet, in 1922, Dumesnil may hardly be called pro-Armenian (see the last chapter) and his conclusion is similar to the ones defended both during and after the war by British officers such as Thomas Edward Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia").<sup>369</sup> Even more remarkably, Generalfeldmarschall Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934) affirms, in his memoirs: "Perhaps not the course of the whole war, but certainly the fate of our Ottoman Ally, would have been settled out of hand if England had secured a decision in that region, or even seriously attempted it."<sup>370</sup>

Such learned opinions necessarily raise the question to know the reasons of the failure and more particularly, in the context of this study, the reason why the plans of the Armenian

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<sup>366</sup> Telegram of Minister of Interior Talat to the governorate of Adana, 2 March 1915, in Hikmet Özdemir and Yusuf Sarıay (ed.), *Turkish-Armenian Conflict...*, p. 11; Edward J. Erickson, *Ottomans and Armenians...*, pp. 79-96 and 123-197.

<sup>367</sup> Le contre-amiral Darrieus, commandant la 2<sup>e</sup> division de la 3<sup>e</sup> escadre de la Méditerranée, à M. le vice-amiral, commandant la 3<sup>e</sup> escadre, 7 mai 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198. Such an ambitious plan is congruent with Darrieus' aggressive conceptions of the Navy: "Never be weak!" (Gabriel Darrieus, *La Guerre sur mer. Stratégie et tactique*, Paris : Augustin Challamel, 1907, p. 274).

<sup>368</sup> Charles Dumesnil, *Souvenirs de guerre d'un vieux croiseur (1914-1915)*, Paris : Plon-Nourrit, 1922, pp. 107-109. Similar view, in 1915 and after, in Louis Dartige du Fournet, *Souvenirs de guerre...*, pp. 18 and 33-34.

<sup>369</sup> James Barr, *A Line in the...*, pp. 14-15; Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...*, pp. 56-58.

<sup>370</sup> Paul von Hindenburg, *Out of My Life*, London-New York-Toronto-Sydney: Cassel & C°, 1920, p. 294.

nationalists are not implemented. An important beginning of answer is provided by the first French plans of landing. On 8 December 1914, Pierre Roche, former *chef de division* (head of department) in the state railroad company of the Ottoman Empire (in İzmir and Aleppo) sends a four-page long memorandum to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, explaining how landing in İskenderun, occupying Aleppo, cutting the railroad to the Arab provinces. The Christian Arabs, particularly those of Aleppo, are explicitly cited as able to join the invading forces. The Armenians are not.<sup>371</sup> Even more strikingly, a report submitted at the end of the same month by the former director of the Darnas-Harna rail line, a French citizen who has left the on 1 December 1914, focuses on Beirut as possible place of landing and, too, never mentions Armenians as possible supporters.<sup>372</sup>

Similarly, in the detailed study submitted by General Albert Baumann to the cabinet and the general staff in January 1915, the suggested solution includes three points of landing in Lebanon, one in Mersin and one in the gulf of İskenderun, with Arab and Greek volunteers in addition to French units, but an Armenian collaboration is never mentioned. The special interests of France in Lebanon and Syria as well as its special relationship with the Lebanese are discussed, but Armenian nationalism is purely and simply ignored.<sup>373</sup> Actually, the only part of the Ottoman territory occupied by French forces in the region during the year 1915 is an island in front of Lebanon—an idea of François Georges-Picot to ease the impatience of the Lebanese and Syrian separatists.<sup>374</sup>

A larger part of the explanation is provided by two notes of the French general staff, in January 1915 and February 1915. The first assesses the possibilities for a landing and warning against the concurrence of the UK in the Near East. İskenderun is “very eccentric” (in the

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<sup>371</sup> Note relative aux conditions topographiques et climatériques d'une attaque française contre Alexandrette et Alep, et aux immédiats résultats de guerre de l'occupation des deux villes, 8 décembre 1914, SHD, 16 N 3198, dossier J.

<sup>372</sup> Extraits d'un rapport de M. Marceaux, directeur de l'exploitation du chemin de fer Damas-Hama et du port de Beyrouth, 28 décembre 1914, SHD, 16 N 3198, dossier J. On the support for such an operation from the most radical elements of the colonial party: Christopher Andrew and A. S. Kanya Forstner, “The French Colonial Party and French Colonial War Aims, 1914-1918,” *The Historical Journal*, XVII-1, March 1974, p. 81.

<sup>373</sup> Le général de brigade Baumann, ex-chef de la mission militaire de réorganisation de la gendarmerie en Turquie à M. le général commandant en chef des armées françaises, 4 janvier 1915, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>374</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert DeFrance, 12 août 1915 ; 5 octobre 1915 ; Lettre du vice-amiral Dartige du Fournet à Albert DeFrance, 23 août 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2 ; Louis Dartige du Fournet, *Souvenirs de guerre...*, pp. 41-42.

sense of peripheral) “to the Syrian regions, the center of our interests,” but Beirut is at the core of this center and at least a large part of its population would welcome a French landing.<sup>375</sup> The second notes observes, in purely practical terms, that an operation in the gulf of Iskenderun would face the obstacle of the recurrent epidemics in this region and the fact that the railroad is not finished yet makes such a project of limited value, except if the expeditionary corps reaches Aleppo then destroys its station, but “at the very least until the end of April, the plain from Amanus to Aleppo is a vast swamp.” On the contrary, the gulf of Beirut is much saner. Politically, the Lebanese Christians are the traditional clients of France. On the contrary, around the city and in its hinterland “the mountain populations, largely Armenian and Kurdish, would be the only interesting ones [in military terms], but *they feel only indifference for France* [italics added], who until now made very few efforts to develop her influence on them.”<sup>376</sup> This observation is corroborated by a letter of Aneurin Williams (1859-1924), chairman of the British-Armenia Committee, to Foreign Secretary Edward Grey (3 April 1915). Williams explains that Armenians “recognize that Russian protection over, or perhaps annexation of, their country is inevitable” but wish to see other powers involved and “they look above all to England.” France is not mentioned, even as a possible concurrent for Britain.<sup>377</sup>

Yet, by an exchange of letters between Navy Secretary Winston Churchill and his counterpart Jean-Victor Augagneur (1855-1931), the two cabinets agree, on 27 January 1915, that the British will command in the Dardanelles, but the French will continue to command in front on the Syrian coast, including in case of a landing.<sup>378</sup> Regardless, in London, the trust toward Paris is far from being perfect, especially because the Navy wants Iskenderun—and, as a result, is not enthusiast for any operation led by the French on this port.<sup>379</sup> On the other side, the next month, Paris vetoes an increase of the British naval activities in and near the gulf of

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<sup>375</sup> Projet de débarquement d'un corps expéditionnaire en Orient, 20 janvier 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198.

<sup>376</sup> Hypothèse d'un débarquement à Alexandrette, 8 février 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198 (quotation p. 3). Also see, in the same box, Projet d'intervention en Syrie, 7 février 1915.

<sup>377</sup> FO 371/2484/4027.

<sup>378</sup> Syrie, 31 août 1915, AMAE, P 1511. Also see Telegram of the Foreign Office to Sir Henry MacMahon (High Commissioner in Egypt), 17 March 1915, FO 371/2484/30729.

<sup>379</sup> Justin McCarthy, “Cilicia. A Missed...”, p. 803. Prof. McCarthy touches here an essential explanation, but eventually (p. 815) reaches a wrong conclusion, attributing the British refusals to “prejudice.”

İskenderun.<sup>380</sup> Regardless, this veto does not provoke high tensions, as, following the proposal of Winston Churchill, the British cabinet gives, roughly at the same time, the priority to the operation against the Dardanelles at the same time.<sup>381</sup>

To make the situation only worse, from their point of view, they are divided, and in the case of the Ramkavar, inconsistent. In 1913, the Ramkavar National Committee of National Defense advocates a Russian conquest of the north-eastern Anatolia and autonomy in Çukurova.<sup>382</sup> In April 1915, Boghos Nubar presents similar demands.<sup>383</sup> However, Archag Tchobanian, Nubar's main collaborator for public relations, asks—also in April 1915—for an integral Armenia, from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, under Russian protection.<sup>384</sup> The next month, during his meetings at the Quai d'Orsay with Jean Gout, in charge of the Asia department of the MFA, and Philippe Berthelot (1867-1933; another diplomat), Boghos Nubar claims Çukurova for Armenia, but faces a double refusal: At that time, Paris does not advocate partition; and if a partition happens, Çukurova must a part of Syria, not Armenia.<sup>385</sup> Then, in June, François Georges-Picot also opposes the demands of Nubar, who has “a good place” among “those who agitate themselves a rather inopportune way.” The Armenians “are in minority everywhere” (contrary to the Nubar's claims) and the integral Armenia would be “a hotbed of anarchy.”<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> James Barr, *A Line in...*, p. 15.

<sup>381</sup> Christopher M. Bell, *Churchill and Sea Power*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 59-75; État-major de l'armée, service historique, *Les Armées françaises dans la Grande guerre*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, volume VIII-1, 1923, pp. 7-14 ; Marc Ferro, *La Grande Guerre. 1914-1918*, Paris: Gallimard, 1969, pp. 116-117 and 121-124. Pierre Loti warns in vain against such a “crazy” project: Cl. Périolaz, « Un inédit de Pierre Loti », *Le Figaro*, 23 juillet 1930, p. 5; Max Schiavon, *Le Front d'Orient. Du désastre des Dardanelles à la victoire finale, 1915-1918*, Paris : Tallandier, 2014, p. 44.

<sup>382</sup> Comité arménien de la défense nationale, *La Question arménienne et les solutions qu'elle comporte*, np, 1913.

<sup>383</sup> Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>384</sup> A. Tchobanian, Les aspirations arméniennes, 7 avril 1915, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume II, pp. 152-167 (also in FO 371/2484/56472); Letter of Tchobanian to Sir Edward Grey, 13 April 1915, FO 371/2484/43561; Archag Tchobanian, *L'Arménie sous le joug turc*, Paris : Plon, 1915, pp. 29-30.

<sup>385</sup> Vatche Ghazarian (ed.), *Boghos Nubar's Papers...*, pp. 29-33.

<sup>386</sup> Lettre de François Georges-Picot à Albert Defrance, 17 juin 1915, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2. Interestingly, the same year, Sir Mark Sykes, too, expresses his distrust toward Armenian nationalists: Mark Sykes, *The Caliphs' Last Heritage*, London-New York-Toronto: MacMillan, 1915, p. 417.

These inconsistencies and this incapacity to understand the importance of Çukurova for France in case of a partition of the Ottoman Empire are a symptom, among others, of the absence of state traditions. This absence is clearer in considering that the Armenian committees show no interest for a collaboration with Maronites and other Christian Arabs to solve the difficulties that represents for them the preference of most of the French officers for Beirut.<sup>387</sup> Similarly, in his comment on the plan of Varandian, the British representative does not contest the effectiveness of the Armenian insurgents or the one of the volunteers Varandian promises to recruit, but writes that this ARF leader “seemed” to him “quite ignorant of any military details or practical schemes for effecting a landing.”<sup>388</sup> Actually, knowing about guerilla in mountains never made anybody an expert in landings.

It still takes another year for the emergence of an alliance, mostly due to the acceptance of partition by Paris, to the Musa Dağ affair and later to the change in Russian policy.

## **2.2. The turning point (1915-1916)**

### *2.2.1. The Musa Dag affair and the new projects of landing*

In August-September 1915, Armenians of Musa Dağ revolt against the Ottoman State, mobilizing even the children. In one of these villages, the Ottoman army finds 1,000 weapons. The insurgents are defeated, but those who have not been killed during the flight take refuge on French military ships, together with their families: A total of 4,080 persons, including at least 500 men still able to fight and wanting to do so.<sup>389</sup> The revolt is a part of the second

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<sup>387</sup> Even after the independence of Lebanon, the relations between the ARF and the Maronites are, to say the very least, fluctuating: Lucien Georges, « Des affrontements ont opposé miliciens phalangistes et arméniens à Beyrouth-Est », *Le Monde*, 11 mai 1979; Gaïdz Minassian, *Guerre et terrorisme arméniens. 1972-1998*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 2002, pp. 23, 42 and 79.

<sup>388</sup> Despatch of the British Legation in Sofia to the Foreign Office, 6 March 1915, FO 371/2484/37609. The Greek volunteers, on the contrary, are not backed by any insurgency in Western Anatolia and raise doubts on their discipline as well as on their efficiency, doubts that are confirmed by the operations using them in Western Anatolia: Telegram of the War Office to the British minister in Athens, March 9, 1915, FO 371/2484/27117; Le ministre de la Guerre à M. le général d'Amade, 14 avril 1915 ; 18 avril 1915 ; Avis du lieutenant-colonel Delavau, 15 juin 1915; Télégramme chiffré du général Bracquet au ministère de la Guerre, 14 janvier 1916, SHD, 7 N 2150. That is why Yves Ternon, *Les Arméniens, histoire d'un génocide*, Paris : Le Seuil, 1996, p. 243, in comparing the Varandian plan and the Greek volunteers only proves his ignorance of the archives.

<sup>389</sup> Louis Dartige du Fournet, *Souvenirs de guerre...*, pp. 43-44 ; Edward J. Erickson, “Bayonets on Musa Dagh,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, XXVIII-3, June 2005, pp. 540-548.

wave of insurrections (June-October 1915) organized by Armenian nationalists during the First World War, after the first from autumn 1914 to May 1915.<sup>390</sup>

As a result of this failed rebellion, France receives for the first time 500 potential volunteers on a field (the Near East) where its land army is weak. The immediate context is also less unfavorable than during the first semester 1915. Indeed, at the end of August 1915, a report from the Eastern Bureau of the General Staff advocates a “diversion” attack on İskenderun, with Aleppo as main goal, and, unlike the previous projects of this kind, the document explains that such an attack “would permit to link a French action with the actions of the Armenians from the region of Zeytun [perhaps a confusion with Musa Dağ, as the Zeytun rebellion has been suppressed] and of the Kurds of Kharput [Elazığ].”<sup>391</sup> In London, Lord Kitchener prepares a new project of amphibious operations, but it is coldly commented by the French General Staff.<sup>392</sup>

Indeed, these changes are not enough to reverse the French policy quickly: The main idea of Briand, regarding the military operations in the east, is to focus on Salonika—a thesis he defends since autumn 1914, but even more in the context of the entry of Bulgaria in the war, on the side of the Triple-Alliance.<sup>393</sup> Yet, this focus on the Balkans, too, has its supporters in the general staff, as shows a note of October 1915.<sup>394</sup> Then, a report commenting this note affirms that the failures at the Dardanelles prove the lack of efficiency of the British army in offensive and makes highly problematic a joint operation in İskenderun. Yet, if the French acted alone, it would mean “very probably” the final failure in these same Dardanelles (soldiers being taken from here) and “certainly” the crushing of Serbia. The report concludes

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<sup>390</sup> Edward J. Erickson, *Ottomans and Armenians...*, pp. 198-212.

<sup>391</sup> Opération sur Alep, 28 août 1915, p. 1, SHD, 16 N 3198.

<sup>392</sup> Rapport sur un projet soumis par Lord Kitchener à son gouvernement, 13 novembre 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198.

<sup>393</sup> Alfred Aubert, *Briand*, Paris : Étienne Chiron, 1928, pp. 117-118 ; Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand, le ferme conciliateur*, Paris : Fayard, 2005, pp. pp. 298-304 and 308-311 ; Max Schiavon, *Le Front d'Orient...*, p. 152.

<sup>394</sup> Note sur un projet d'opération clans la région d'Alexandrette, 22 octobre 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198. Similar critiques (but without recommendations regarding the Balkans or any other point) in Note sur une action possible en Syrie, 5 novembre 1915 (same box).

that concentrating “all our forces” to save Serbia and, ultimately, to cut the roads connecting Germany to the Ottoman Empire is the right thing to do.<sup>395</sup>

That is why, in November 1915, answering the demands of the Ramkavar-dominated National Committee of National Defense (July) and the repeated demands of Rear Admiral Darrieus (September and October), Pierre de Margerie, on behalf of Briand, gives a negative response: “An attempted insurrection [of Armenians] in the indicated conditions only could have had provoked general massacres for which the powers [of the Triple-Entente] would have bearded the responsibility.”<sup>396</sup>

It does not mean, however, that the ex-insurgents of Musa Dağ are unanimously considered useless by the French and British officers, but for a year, both they and the Ramkavar representatives fail to convince those who take decisions. British General Maxwell and the Intelligence Office recommend a limited operation using “500” of the refugees and “15,000” French and British soldiers, but the French minister of War Alexandre Millerand blocks the project, “as long as the Allies have not definitely abandoned any project in this direction” (because it would alert the Turks on the scope of the danger).<sup>397</sup> Correspondingly, Vice-Admiral Dartige du Fournet observes in his war recollections that the Armenians from Musa Dağ are initially not welcomed in Egypt for any military operation and that he does not remember “a thank you from anyone”<sup>398</sup> (either among the French, either among the British, either among the Armenians) for the rescue action he had ordered. Indeed, the French and British authorities decide in October to use these Armenian refugees as a working force and an unsigned note of the minister of War’s staff wonders: “Work being not in the habits of the Armenians, it is necessary to make sure, first, that we will find, among the 4,000 refugees, a sufficient number of men *decided to work*” (underlined in the text).<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Rapport sur un projet d’expédition à Alexandrette, 23 octobre 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198. On the Serbian context: Max Schiavon, *Le Front d’Orient...*, pp. 131-169.

<sup>396</sup> Le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. le ministre de la Marine, 10 novembre 1915, SHD, 16 N 3198.

<sup>397</sup> Lieutenant de Saint-Quentin à Guerre, section Afrique, 23 septembre 1915 ; Le ministre de la Guerre à M. le lieutenant de Saint-Quentin, 24 septembre 1915, SHD, 7 N 2150.

<sup>398</sup> Louis Dartige du Fournet, *Souvenirs de guerre...*, p. 45.

<sup>399</sup> Analyse — Travailleurs auxiliaires arméniens, 3 octobre 1915 ; Le ministre de la Guerre à M. le lieutenant de Saint-Quentin, 5 octobre 1915, SHD, 7 N 2150. These documents are deliberately



On the other side, the repeated demands of the French representative in Egypt, Albert Defrance, toward the Armenian nationalist leadership (particularly Ramkavar) of this country, to provide a material help to the refugees from Musa Dağ are in vain, as explains the Quai d'Orsay on 27 November in a letter to a "Dear Sir."<sup>400</sup> Even among the refugees, out of 400 robust men, only 2 or 300 are ready to be volunteers for a military action (the others needing "some pressure" to do so), a few know French and one has a certain education.<sup>401</sup>

In spite of this less than enthusiastic beginning and in spite of the absence of opportunity for a landing in Çukurova, Vice Admiral Moreau orders in December 1915, to give a military instruction the male refugees who want it.<sup>402</sup> However, in February 1916, Moreau is concerned by the lack of clarity and unity from the Armenian and pro-Armenian side as well as from the British side. Indeed, if Arakel Nubar (the son of Boghos Nubar) is in favor of the establishment of a volunteers units, the last time Moreau has spoken with Boghos, he was against (like Lord Bryce). Moreover, Sapah Julian (Hunchak) and Abah Bedrossian (Ramkavar) have claimed to speak on behalf of these parties (the ARF is not cited) but Moreau has gotten no official confirmation, and his letter to British General Maxwell remains unanswered.<sup>403</sup> In trying to clarifying the situation, he finds, thanks to Albert Defrance and General Maxwell, that Julian and Bedrossian have "distorted" his words and left unanswered his demand of written confirmation that they are actually speaking on behalf of the Hunchak and Ramkavar. To only make the situation worse, General Maxwell, too, leaves his first demand (for his opinion regarding the possible creation of an Armenian unit) without response. Moreau explains in a personal letter to Defrance, is: "[...] In these conditions, I shall propose to General [Maxwell] to renounce to give to the Armenians a military instruction that now represents disadvantages only, in my eyes, and causes me troubles only."<sup>404</sup>

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omitted in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes puissances...* (Arthur Beylerian has worked in the box 7 N 2150).

<sup>400</sup> Hasan Dilan, *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume II, pp. 246-247.

<sup>401</sup> Lieutenant de Saint-Quentin à Guerre section Afrique, 11 octobre 1915, SHD, 7 N 2150.

<sup>402</sup> Commandant Benoist-d'Azy, « L'origine de la Légion d'Orient », *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, janvier-mars 1939, p. 15.

<sup>403</sup> Lettre du vice-amiral Frédéric Moreau à Albert Defrance, 5 février 1916, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2.

<sup>404</sup> Lettre du vice-amiral Frédéric Moreau à Albert Defrance, 8 février 1916, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 2. These incidents are hidden by Ramkavar official Charles-Diran Tékéian in his book (*L'Action franco-arménienne pendant la guerre*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1919, pp. 30-32).

Defrance's report to the Quai d'Orsay confirms the letters of Moreau. Defrance considers the affair to be an attempt of the Hunchak and of a part of the Ramkavar to put the French authorities and Boghos Nubar in front of a "fait accompli." He understands the bitterness of Moreau but argues that men able to fight and knowing the field are needed; as a result, the general staffs should consider the use of these men according to military criteria only. The director of political affairs of the MFA reacts in endorsing Defrance's views: The use or not of Musa Dağ's Armenians is the business of the general staffs, "without being stopped by the intrigues these unfortunate populations are always ready to engage."<sup>405</sup>

Anyway, a coincidence of the calendar makes that Moreau is moved to Salonika a couple of months after this letter and General Maxwell does not follow the recommendation to stop the training of Musa Dağ's Armenians. On the contrary, the Russian General Staff and Sir Mark Sykes push for a large-scale landing at İskenderun, after the failure of the Dardanelles, but General Joseph Joffre (1852-1929), chief of the French General Staff, is very skeptical about the effectiveness of the British army and recalls how the "the Armenian patriarch" previously opposed the Armenian participation to such an operation "by fear of bloody reprisals."<sup>406</sup> He blocks the project. This may be attributed, at least for a part, to the precedent of the Dardanelles: He always had serious doubts about the success of this operation,<sup>407</sup> and the following events had proven him right. Political considerations also play a role, as Paris sees these British projects as a threat against the Sykes-Picot agreements.<sup>408</sup>

Regardless, in April 1916, a group of 100 men who has learnt how to handle explosives is about to be landed in İskenderun. This time, the Armenian (Gregorian) bishop of Egypt vetoes

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<sup>405</sup> M. Defrance, ministre plénipotentiaire de la République française au Caire, à M. Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 10 février 1916 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 15 mars 1916, SHD, 7 N 2150. Vatche Ghazarian, *Boghos Nubar's Papers...* does not contain any document on the incident, but the archives of the Nubar library and the Armenian National Archives Yerevan being closed to those who disagree with the Armenian nationalist historiography, it is impossible to know if it is a deliberate omission. Regardless, see pp. 308-309 the letter of Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V (4 February 1916): "The partisan discord has reached a new peak among the Armenians of the Caucasus [...]."

<sup>406</sup> A. de Fleuriau à Son Excellence M. Briand, président du Conseil, 16 avril 1916 ; Le colonel de la Panouse, attaché militaire à l'ambassade de la République française en Angleterre, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 14 avril 1916 ; Le général commandant en chef des Armées françaises à M. le président du Conseil, 27 avril 1916, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume I, pp. 300-309.

<sup>407</sup> Robert A. Doughty, *Pyrrhic Victory. French Strategy and Operations in the Great War*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)-London: Harvard University Press, 2009, pp. 213-214 and 219-220; Raymond Poincaré, *Au service de...*, volume VII, p. 46.

<sup>408</sup> Marc Ferro, *La Grande Guerre...*, p. 124.

the operation at the last moment, fearing reprisals—an opinion shared by Boghos Nubar himself.<sup>409</sup> Then, another veto comes from Paris. In July 1916, General Joffre, writes to President of the Ministers' Council Aristide Briand (1862-1932), to insist: "No operation against the Turks is to be considered for the moment; moreover, in the current state of the French law, we cannot accept in our rank any subject of an enemy country." The only possibility he sees for Ottoman Armenians to be useful is as workers.<sup>410</sup> Actually, in his posthumous Memoirs, Joffre does not speak about any project against the Ottoman Empire, in his list of projects presented under his leadership in 1916, and he explains that his "first conclusion" at that time is: "Germany was our main enemy and its defeat would immediately provoke the decomposition of the coalesced forces that were opposed to us." Concerning the East, Joffre gives the priority to an action against Bulgaria.<sup>411</sup> It also bears noting that in the two volumes (more than 1,400 pages) of his Memoirs, Joffre never refers to the Armenians.

As a result, the project changes one more time, into the concentration in Cyprus of a 5,000 men corps (former insurgents at Musa Dağ and prisoners of war) to be a subject of concerns for the Ottoman Army and to prevent a transfer of all the available forces to Arabia, against the revolt of Sherif Hussein. This time, Joffre agrees. Only "*if appropriate*" (underlined in the original) writes Joffre, this force could help the Arab insurgency.<sup>412</sup> Then, and for the first time, the Franco-British rivalry incites to an agreement with Armenian nationalists. Indeed, the deputy director of the MFA for Asia, Jean Gout, is alarmed, in September 1916, by a letter of Lieutenant-Colonel Édouard Brémond (see below about him) that the refugees would

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<sup>409</sup> M. Defrance, ministre plénipotentiaire de la République française au Caire, à M. Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 avril 1916, SHD, 7 N 2150.

<sup>410</sup> Le général Joffre, commandant en chef des armées françaises, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 juillet 1916, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, p. 212. The best study on Joseph Joffre is arguably Rémy Porte, *Joffre*, Paris: Perrin, 2016; but the book is silent on the Armenian issue.

<sup>411</sup> Joseph Joffre, *Mémoires du Maréchal Joffre (1910-1917)*, Paris : Plon, 1932, volume II, pp. 346-351 (quotation p. 347).

<sup>412</sup> M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 juillet 1916 ; M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, au général Roques, ministre de la Guerre, 19 juillet 1916 ; Le général Roques, ministre de la Guerre, au général Joffre, commandant en chef des armées françaises, 27 juillet 1916 ; Le général Joffre, commandant en chef des armées françaises, au général Roques, ministre de la Guerre, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1916, in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 213 and 216-220. Arthur Beylerian omits to mention that "*if appropriate*" is underlined in the original (SHD, 7 N 2150).

come back on a now-French dominated region, but if they are not taken in charge by France, there would be “Anglicized, Americanized, Armenianized.”<sup>413</sup>

In sum, there is no automaticity between the Sykes-Picot agreement and the use of the Armenian nationalists, but a twisted way. The increasing fear to see the agreements poorly implemented by lack of soldiers with the French uniform seems leading in the decisions taken during the second half of 1916.

### 2.2.2. *The agreement of 1916: The establishment of the Eastern Legion*

The position of Boghos Nubar changes roughly at the same time than the one of the French government. On 2 October 1916, Nubar meets Jean Gout, deputy director for Asia at the MFA, and “clearly” says that the pro-Russian policy of his committee and of the rest of Armenian nationalism was based on “errors” and that is visible now by the policy of Russia in “Great Armenia” (north-eastern Anatolia). Nubar now wants France to take the biggest possible number of Armenians—but his reiterated demand for an Armenian autonomy in Cilicia is presented in vain to Gout.<sup>414</sup> Indeed, in December 1915, the accumulation of reports of Russian officers complaining about the massacres, rapes and plunder perpetrated by Armenian volunteers, the *druzhinys* (units made of Armenian volunteers only) are dissolved, a part of their members fired from the army and the rest integrated in regular regiments.<sup>415</sup> This repression does not end the distrust of the Russian authorities toward the remaining Armenian volunteers. The movement of return of Armenian refugees in eastern Anatolia is stopped and the autonomous Armenian administration in Van is suppressed.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Note du sous-directeur d’Asie-Océanie, résumant une lettre du lieutenant-colonel Brémond ; M. Defrance, ministre de France au Caire, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 15 septembre 1916, in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 237-240.

<sup>414</sup> Note du sous-directeur d’Asie-Océanie, octobre 1916, *ibid.*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>415</sup> Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires...*, pp. 157-158; Azmi Süslü, (ed.), *Russian View on the Atrocities Inflicted by the Armenians against the Turks*, Ankara: Köksav, 1991, pp. 31-33. Also see Mehmet Perinçek (ed.), *11 Aralık 1915...*

<sup>416</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, “The Allies and Armenia...”, pp. 163-164. Mr. Hovannisian writes (p. 163) that “The volunteers were accused of lawlessness and looting,” but it is not about lawlessness and looting only, it is primarily about massacres: Beside the references in the previous note, see Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 100; Kara Schemsi (Reşit Safvet Atabinen), *Turcs et Arméniens devant l’histoire*, Geneva: Imprimerie nationale, 1919, pp. 36-75; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic. The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923*, Ankara: TTK, 2000, p. 922; Arnold Talbot Wilson,

In these conditions, President of Ministers' Council Aristide Briand concludes, also in October 1916, that the Armenian committees have abandoned their dream of an Armenia from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea and now trusts France for "an acceptable fate." That is why he allows the creation of a military unit made of Armenians from Musa Dağ, Egypt and camps of war prisoners.<sup>417</sup> Meanwhile, all the Armenian leaders of Egypt, including Archbishop Torkom, who had vetoed a British-orchestrated operation in April of the same year, by fear of reprisals, validates the scheme of a legion for the French army.<sup>418</sup> As a result, in November, the Eastern Legion, made of Armenian and Arab volunteers, is established. The officers are Frenchmen; the volunteers have the same pay than the French soldiers, for the time of "the war" but no right to any pension.<sup>419</sup>

The agreement in itself is known, but the Armenian nationalist historiography<sup>420</sup> omits to say what its immediate aftermath is. Commander Louis Romieu (1872-1943), sent to lead the Eastern Legion, is relatively optimistic right before the unit is created, in spite of some concerns for the future discipline.<sup>421</sup> Regardless, as early as December 1916, Romieu expresses his skepticism. He observes that the words "military auxiliaries" will be "very difficultly" accepted by the volunteers, but, he argues, it is justified by the "very mediocre" results of the "Oriental" volunteers of the Foreign Legion. Romieu continues by these words, underlined in the original: "We cannot deceive ourselves about this desire to fight. It is rather

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*Loyalties: Mesopotamia. A Personal and Historical Record*, volume II, 1917-1920, London: Oxford University Press, 1930, pp. 31-32.

<sup>417</sup> M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, au général Roques, ministre de la Guerre, 6 octobre 1916, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 257-258.

<sup>418</sup> M. Defrance, ministre de France au Caire, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 8 novembre 1916, *ibid.*, pp. 265-266.

<sup>419</sup> Le ministre de la Guerre au contre-amiral Lacaze, ministre de la Marine, 20 novembre 1916 ; Le général Roques, ministre de la Guerre, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 25 novembre 1916, *ibid.*, pp. 272-277. Also see Copie d'un télégramme chiffré de Port-Saïd, 9 novembre 1916, SHD, 16 N 3199.

<sup>420</sup> Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée... », p. 362 ; Gérard Dédéyan, « Le colonel Louis Romieu (1872-1943), la Légion arménienne, et le mandat français sur la Cilicie (1919-1921) », *Bulletin de l'Académie des sciences et des lettres de Montpellier*, XLIX, 2018 ; Guévork Gotikian, « La Légion d'Orient et le mandat français en Cilicie (1916-1921) », *Revue d'histoire arménienne contemporaine*, III, 1999.

<sup>421</sup> Le commandant Romieu à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 28 octobre 1916 ; Le commandant Romieu, chargé de mission en Égypte et à Chypre, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, section d'Afrique, 10 novembre 1916, SHD, 7 N 2148.

a need to be helped and rescued.” The officer of the Ministry of War annotating the message writes in the margin: “We are persuaded of that.” Concerning the costs for the wounded soldiers, Romieu argues that it should be covered by the “committees” but he only got “promises,” something “of little value in the East.” He continues with this merciless remark: “Faced with this state of mind, we could abandon to their fate the Armenian and Syrian populations [sic].” The only reason Romieu sees to continue the Eastern Legion is “political”: Through a “military cooperation,” “to make glimpse the protection of France to populations that claim it.”<sup>422</sup>

The same month, Romieu asks for “exclusively” French officers, because he fears that Armenians and Arabs “too often” consider authority as a right to “laziness.” In the margin, the answer to this demand is: “Yes.”<sup>423</sup> In his fat compilation of French documents, Ramkavar historian Arthur Beylerian omits these two crucial documents. Considering the scope of his work, it is difficult to think that this omission is only due to genuine ignorance.

### **2.3. The ambiguous alliance and its first difficulties (1916-1918)**

#### *2.3.1. Political ambiguity and strategic hesitation (1916-1918)*

After the first Russian revolution, an inflexion of the French attitude is visible, including as far as the Ottoman Empire is concerned. The economic mission sent in Russia in November 1916 finds the situation “serious” and the loyalty of the Russian ally, at least economically, somewhat dubious.<sup>424</sup> Then, in January 1917, in a context of increasing fear for the stability of Russia, the Briand cabinet sends Gaston Doumergue in Russia to secure the maintain of the Russian alliance, at the price of the mutual recognition of maximalist war aims: political autonomy of the Rhineland to diminish the Germany’s power, annexation of the Alsace-Moselle, of a part of Saarland and of some neighboring cities; free hands to Russia for its western boundaries. The agreement is signed on 10 March, six days before the collapse of

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<sup>422</sup> Le commandant Romieu, chef de la mission militaire française en Égypte, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 11 décembre 1916, SHD, 7 N 2148.

<sup>423</sup> Le commandant Romieu, chef de la mission militaire française en Égypte, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 14 décembre 1916, SHD, 7 N 2148.

<sup>424</sup> M. Tirard, chargé de mission économique et financière en Russie, à S. E. M. Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 novembre 1916 ; Id., 23 janvier 1917 ; Note sur Moscou, 7 février 1917, AMAE, 64 PA-AP 1.

the Tsarist regime.<sup>425</sup> After a clumsy statement of the new minister of War, General Hubert Lyautey (1854-1934), the conqueror of Morocco, who knows better about the Berber and Arab tribes than about the habits of the French Parliament, the Chamber of the deputies forces the Briand cabinet to resign. The new cabinet is formed by Alexandre Ribot, the same who has opposed the Russian ambitions on the Straits in 1915. Meanwhile, Paris faces the aggressive demands of Rome, Italy having declared war to Germany in August 1916 and having claims inversely proportional to its actual contribution to the war efforts. The agreement of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, supposed to give İzmir to Italy, is signed without any enthusiasm, the Quai d'Orsay having tried in vain to prevent this concession. However, an exit door is left: The agreement is conditioned to the approval by the Russian cabinet.<sup>426</sup>

Actually, the context of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne is reminiscent of March-June 1915—signing one thing and trying the opposite in practice. Indeed, in June 1917, a prominent journalist, Berthe Georges-Gaulis (1870-1950), sends a first essay balloon in the elites' weekly *L'Opinion*. This is an analysis of the reasons why the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War. The author unequivocally writes that the entry was mainly decided by fear of Russia, and after hot debates within the CUP. Then, she continues on the current situation, arguing that the Ottoman Empire is exhausted, that the alliance with Germany is only considered the less bad choice by most of the Ottomans, certainly not as an ideal. She finishes in noticing that the Ottomans now hope that the new Russia shall renounce the ambitions of the Tsar.<sup>427</sup> These remarks, are, to a large extent, true.<sup>428</sup> However, the most relevant is the fact that Berthe Georges-Gaulis works for the French propaganda office during the First World War, and is even one of the two persons who remain from 1914 to 1918, in spite of the repeated

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<sup>425</sup> Note du prince Lvov, janvier 1917 ; Conférence des alliés à Péetrograd, janvier 1917 ; Conclusions des représentants alliés à la commission des armements, 17 février 1917, AMAE, 64 PA-AP 1 ; Pierre Renouvin, « Les buts de guerre... », pp. 14-19.

<sup>426</sup> L'ambassadeur d'Italie à Paris à M. Ribot, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 août 1917, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57 ; Stéphane Yerasimos, « De l'intégrité au... », pp. 431-435.

<sup>427</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « En marge de la guerre — Quelques pages d'histoire turque », *L'Opinion*, 2 juin 1917, pp. 519-521.

<sup>428</sup> Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York: W. W. Norton & C°, 1967, pp. 165, 196-197, 232, 255, 320, 374, 491 and 517; Edgar Granville, *Le Tsarisme en Asie mineure*, Lausanne: La Revue politique internationale, 1917; Frank Weber, *Eagles on the Crescent: Germany, Austria, and the Diplomacy of the Turkish Alliance, 1914-1918*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970. For a first-hand, but not dispassionate account: Mahmout Moukhtar Pacha (Mahmut Muhtar Paşa), *La Turquie, l'Allemagne et l'Europe. Depuis le traité de Berlin jusqu'à la guerre mondiale*, Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1924, pp. 245-302.

changes in the staff.<sup>429</sup> This is not to pretend she does not believe in what she writes in that case. This is evidence that her article is not merely a personal initiative, still less something allowed by error by the censorship.

Such a publication may be attributed, for a part to the “moral crisis”<sup>430</sup> of 1917: Political instability, exasperation of many civilians, mutinies, and strikes in several factories.<sup>431</sup> Regardless, and this is quite significant, the attempts of opening continue even after the Clemenceau cabinet (November 1917-January 1920) vigorously restores the situation. Indeed, in January 1918, Auguste Sarrou, a former instructor of the Ottoman gendarmerie, linked to Claude Farrère as it has been seen in the first chapter, receives a mission from the Ministry of Navy: Trying to obtain a separate peace with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>432</sup> It is true that a leading factor in the French policy during the Turkish war of independence, namely the rivalry with the UK toward the post-Ottoman space and the disagreements regarding Germany, begin in winter 1917-1918, with the suppression of the French protectorate toward Christians in Jerusalem and the doubts of Paris regarding the will of David Lloyd George to accept the recovery of the Alsace-Moselle without referendum.<sup>433</sup>

That having been said, this rivalry is not the only reason. For example, former ambassador at İstanbul Maurice Bompard suggests to the MFA, in May 1918, to use French citizens “in good personal relations with Talat Pasha” to send the following message: The Ottoman Empire is seeing the end of the Russian threat; now the Bulgarian threat is rising; but France is ready to return to its traditional policy.<sup>434</sup> The Sarrou mission and the note of Bompard are subjects for further researches, but it can safely be said that Sarrou continues to be used as an expert

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<sup>429</sup> Lettre de Berthe Georges-Gaulis à Hubert Lyautey, 5 juillet 1918 ; Id., 2 août 1918, AN, 475 AP 282.

<sup>430</sup> Alexandre Ribot, *Lettres à un ami. Souvenirs de ma vie politique*, Paris : Bossard, 1924, p. 261.

<sup>431</sup> André Loez, *14-18. Les refus de la guerre*, Paris : Gallimard, 2010 ; Pierre Renouvin, « L’opinion publique en France pendant la guerre (1914-1918) », *Revue d’histoire diplomatique*, octobre-décembre 1970, pp. 311-325.

<sup>432</sup> But de la mission du commandant Sarrou, 20 janvier 1918, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume I, pp. 397-399.

<sup>433</sup> Colonel Brémont, Note à Monsieur de Margerie, 16 janvier 1918, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume I, pp. 387-392 ; Un officier, « La France et ses rivaux dans l’Empire ottoman », *L’Opinion*, 27 avril 1918, p. 330 ; Pierre Renouvin, « Les buts de... », pp. 34-35. It is possible that Brémont is actually the author of the article in *L’Opinion* but for now it is merely a hypothesis. Also see Rémy Porte, « De l’Entente à la mésentente cordiale : cas africains et moyen-orientaux », *Revue historique*, 2009/4, pp. 875-896.

<sup>434</sup> Maurice Bompard, Note pour le ministre, 6 mai 1918, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57.



of Turkey after 1918 (member of the commission of evacuation of Çukurova in 1921-1922, later military attaché in Ankara) and that Bompard enjoys, when he writes his note, the trust and even the friendship of minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon.<sup>435</sup> By comparison, Woodrow Wilson and David Lloyd George are literally obsessed by the destruction of the Ottoman Empire—the main interruption, and for the British policy mostly, being the first months of 1918.<sup>436</sup>

Regardless, the desire to preserve what still can be preserved of French interest leads to contradictory projects, depending on the point of view of the men in charge. New plans of landing are presented, but they fail for the same reasons than the ones of 1914-1915. In April 1917, General Maurice Bailloud (1847-1921) advocates an operation in Lebanon, mentioning the Syrian volunteers and Algerian soldiers, but not the Armenian legionnaires at all.<sup>437</sup> A few months later, the same Bailloud presents a somewhat different plan, involving the Eastern Legion as a whole, but he does not decide if the place of landing should be İskenderun (now better fortified), Beirut or Haïfa. The plan is backed by Albert Defrance, representative in Cairo, but Defrance only sees the Legion as a “vanguard” for the operation.<sup>438</sup> The idea is discussed<sup>439</sup> but not implemented. In fact, the general staff considers that “*currently*” (underlined in the original) the number of available men is insufficient and the British War Office, without vetoing the projects, argues that the harvests in Cyprus are mediocre and that the action from this island depends on the Russian action, which is unknown.<sup>440</sup> Eventually, the collapse of Russia (even before the Bolshevik revolution), or maybe the

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<sup>435</sup> Lettre de S. Pichon à Maurice Bompard, 19 juin 1918, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57.

<sup>436</sup> Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'Or et le...*, p. 450; Nevzat Uyanik, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, pp. 59 and 74. Also see Artin Arslanian, “British Wartime Pledges, 1917-18: The Armenian Case,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, XIII-3, July 1978, pp. 517-523.

<sup>437</sup> Note du général Bailloud, 28 avril 1917, SHD, 16 N 3199.

<sup>438</sup> Le ministre de France au Caire à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 juillet 1917, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume IV, pp. 368-372 ; Le général de division Bailloud (réserve) à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 26 juillet 1917 ; Note du général Bailloud sur le Mont-Carmel et le chemin de fer d'Apulée, 17 août 1917, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>439</sup> Action éventuelle de la France en Syrie, 17 juillet 1917 ; Conditions d'une intervention française en Syrie, 5 août 1917 ; Plages et points de débarquement sur la côte syrienne, 5 août 1917 ; Pierre de Margerie, Note personnelle au général Bailloud, 10 août 1917 ; Note, 14 août 1917 ; Réponse aux questions posées par M. le commandant Lacombe, 17 août 1917 ; Intervention française en Syrie, 29 septembre 1917, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>440</sup> État-major de l'armée, section d'Afrique, Intervention de M. Georges-Picot, 4 août 1917 ; Télégramme chiffré du chef d'état-major impérial au colonel Spiers, 20 août 1917, SHD, 16 N 3195.

successes of the British army in Palestine, lead to the abandonment of the project, in October 1917.<sup>441</sup>

In January 1918, apparently unimpressed, Colonel Brémond (the future chief administrator in Adana) presents a last plan, taking argument from the British, and, to a lesser extent, Italian concurrence for an action, and emphasizing the reliability of the Armenian nationalists. But this plan includes at least one “inaccurate” allegation, regarding the number of possible recruits, as the officer annotating the report writes in the margin.<sup>442</sup> The same month, General Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929; French representative at the Supreme War Council and soon joint commander of the Entente’s armies in the West) and his assistant, General Maxime Weygand, (1867-1965) block the Anglo-Saxon proposal of a massive attack against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>443</sup>

That having been said, these failures of the landing projects in 1917-1918 are not only due to the priority given by Foch and Weygand to the Western front, and to the reinforcement of İskenderun. They are also the result of the mediocrity of the Eastern Legion.

### *2.3.2. The Eastern Legion, from indiscipline to victorious battles (1917-1918)*

One of the main reasons for this mediocrity of the Eastern Legion is independent from the Armenian and Syrian committees: This is the entry of the USA in the war in April 1917, a considerable help for the Entente in general, but a factor of difficulties of recruitment for the Legion. On 1 February 1918, the unit has 2,669 volunteers (2,433 Armenians and 236 Arabs). Nine months later, the total is 4,606, including 1,013 not yet trained,<sup>444</sup> a modest result. However, all the other difficulties, particularly the lack of discipline, are due to the Armenian committees and the Armenian legionnaires themselves. Dr. Eliezer Tauber rightfully points that the Syrian legionnaires, too, raise issues of discipline, mostly because of their weak

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<sup>441</sup> *Les Armées françaises...*, pp. 75-81.

<sup>442</sup> Note du colonel Brémond, 16 janvier 1918, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>443</sup> Avant-propos de l’éditeur, in Ferdinand Foch, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de la guerre de 1914-1918*, Paris : Plon, 1931, pp. L-LI.

<sup>444</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Romieu, Situation d’effectifs au 1<sup>er</sup> février 1918 ; Tableau des effectifs à la date du 10 décembre 1918, SHD, 4 H 39, dossier 1.

desire to fight;<sup>445</sup> but, as it often happens for a specialist touching a peripheral subject, she misses the most important problem: The Armenian volunteers. In October 1917, General Bailloud, inspector of the French troops in the Near East, asks for the promotion of Commander Louis Romieu, chief of the Eastern Legion, as Lieutenant-Colonel (which is done), because he has the most painful job of the French army in the Near East.<sup>446</sup> Indeed, Bailloud deplores that the Armenian legionnaires from America have “no notion of discipline” and no experience of the military life.<sup>447</sup> Paris seems aware of the quality of the volunteers. Indeed, in a telegraphic dispatch dated 12 September 1917, the minister of War rejects the idea to merge the Brémond military mission in Hedjaz (today’s Saudi Arabia), the French detachment of Palestine and the Eastern Legion, particularly because “the value” of such a group “would be mediocre and not quite able to increase our military prestige.”<sup>448</sup>

These negative appreciations cannot be attributed to prejudice, as prove the registers of punishments in 1917-1918 (missed calls of the officers, unauthorized visits in the Arab part of the city, drug smuggling, etc.).<sup>449</sup> Regardless, these incidents are minor by comparison with the mutiny of May 1918. On 14 and 15 of this month, eleven legionnaires from Musa Dağ, already punished, are missing during the calls, because they went to the families’ camp of refugees. The second day, at 6:00 pm, 23 others escape from jail and go to the same place. Remarkably, the French high command initially requests Hagop Nevrouz, the leader of the ARF in Egypt, to intervene as mediator to settle the rebellion, but instead of coming, he sends one of his collaborators, L. Meguerditchian, who does not seem quite efficient, at least as far as this mutiny is concerned. On the contrary, on 16 May, the 1<sup>st</sup> company of the Eastern Legion as a whole refuses packing, and, in spite of the arrest of this new movement’s leaders, the refusal to obey degenerates, in the families’ camp, into a clash with the French officers and soldiers: After the regular warning, the order is restored with the bayonets and a few

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<sup>445</sup> Eliezer Tauber, « La Légion d’Orient et la Légion arabe », *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer*, LXXXI-303, 2<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1994, p. 173. Beside the sources cited by Dr. Tauber, see, on the Arab volunteers, \*\*\*, « Le soldat syrien », *Le Correspondant*, 25 septembre 1924, pp. 865-877.

<sup>446</sup> Le général de division Bailloud, inspecteur général des troupes françaises en Égypte, en Palestine et à Chypre, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 4 octobre 1917, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>447</sup> Extrait du rapport d’inspection du général Bailloud, chargé de mission en Orient, 4 octobre 1917, SHD, 7 N 2150.

<sup>448</sup> SHD, 7 N 2150. This document and the one cited in the previous note are deliberately omitted in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*

<sup>449</sup> SHD, 4 H 34, dossier 1.

gunshots, who defeat the throws of stones and shards of bottles. One legionnaire is killed, fourteen others and one woman are wounded. 47 are put in jail, six are monitored but exempted of punishment. The officers in charge suspect a part of the Armenian civilians to be responsible for the revolt.<sup>450</sup> 36 legionnaires are put on trial, including seven sentenced during the summer to a time inferior to the period spent in custody and 29 to a longer time, but released by anticipation on 5 September and re-sent to the Legion.<sup>451</sup> Yet, if the silence of the Armenian nationalist literature on this mutiny<sup>452</sup> is due to obvious reasons, the absence of reference to these events in studies defending other theses is more surprising.<sup>453</sup>

The leniency of the punishments is very likely due to the need of a military presence with French uniforms on the Near East's field, in 1918. The reasons for the attitude of the ARF are less easy to understand, as its archives are not available. However, at least a part of the explanation is the weakness of the alliance signed in 1916 (establishment of Eastern Legion), as already seen, and another part is the failure of the last projects of landing in Çukurova, from mid-1917 to January 1918. Indeed, in a long letter sent to Boghos Nubar in October 1917, L. Meguerditchian (the same one who is so passive during the mutiny of May 1918) exposes the "difficulties" and "unfortunate consequences" of the use of the Eastern Legion on the Gaza front instead of İskenderun: The propaganda of the ARF and Ramkavar has been made, until autumn 1917, with the argument that the Armenian volunteers would fight "only on the Armenian front" (in spite of the fact that the official documents vaguely mention

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<sup>450</sup> État nominatif des légionnaires manquants aux appels des 14 mai, 21h, et du 15 mai, 5h 30 ; État nominatif des légionnaires évadés de prison, le 15 mai ; Note du service de la place, 16 mai 1918 ; Bureau de la place, Rapport sur la mutinerie du camp des réfugiés du Djébel Moussa, 21 mai 1918 ; Lieutenant-colonel Louis Romieu, Incidents des 16 et 17 mai à Port-Saïd, 23 mai 1918, SHD, 4 H 34, dossier 2.

<sup>451</sup> Le lieutenant Damez, commissaire rapporteur près le conseil de guerre, à M. le chef de bataillon commandant la Brigade française de Palestine et de Syrie, 29 août 1918 ; Base française de Port-Saïd, Note de service, 5 septembre 1918, SHD, 4 H 34, dossier 2.

<sup>452</sup> Karabet J. Basmadjian, *La Nation arménienne...*, pp. 11-12 ; Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...* ; Gérard Dédéyan, « Le colonel Louis Romieu... » ; Guévork Gotikian, « La Légion d'Orient... » ; Taline Papazian, « Engagement militaire et droits politiques des Arméniens : la Légion d'Orient, exemple de négociations entre une nationalité non souveraine et ses Alliés européens », *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, CXLI, 2017, pp. 121-137 ; Charles-Diran Tékéian, *L'Action franco-arménienne...*, pp. 31-33. The only exception I found is: Rapport [sur] la Légion arménienne et la constitution de la Légion d'Orient, présenté au ministère des Affaires étrangères par la Délégation nationale arménienne, in Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime...*, p. 90. Guillaume de Jerphanion, « La Légion d'Orient », *Études*, 5 février 1919, pp. 312-335 admits problems of discipline (p. 332) but is equally silent on the mutiny.

<sup>453</sup> Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010; Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, Ankara: TTK, 2005.

“Turkey in Asia”). Meguerditchian concludes that the solutions would be a formal statement from the Entente securing the “autonomy” of “Great Armenia” (north-eastern Anatolia) and “Cilicia” as well as a quick recognition, even before the armistice of Nubar’s delegation as a provisory Armenian government, on the model of Eleutherios Venizelos in Saloniki.<sup>454</sup> Yet, nothing of all that ever happens.

Indeed, the French cabinet never makes, either during the First World War either after, any concrete promise for an Armenian state, still less an autonomous or independent Armenia in Çukurova. Even the word “Cilicia” is not used in the letter of Aristide Briand to Nubar (8 November 1916) or in the speech of Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon after the capture of Jerusalem (27 December 1917).<sup>455</sup>

Whatever could be the full explanation, in September and October 1918, the Eastern Legion experiences its only (and short) period when it gives a significant satisfaction to the French (and British) commands. General Allenby states he is “proud of the fact that your Armenian compatriots in the Oriental Legion took an active part in the fighting and shared in our victory.”<sup>456</sup> Pierre Lefèvre-Pontalis, who has recently succeeded Albert DeFrance as representative in Cairo, makes a similar appreciation.<sup>457</sup> However, as early as October 1918, Dr. Simon, a military physician, writes in his notebook (published a year later) that the spirit of the Armenian legionnaires is often bad. Beside the plundering of a Muslim house in Acre (today’s Israel), where some of them believe to be a kidnapped Armenian woman, they are “very whiny” and “what we do individually for them, they are inclined to attribute it to fear their chiefs inspire us and readily they would to add to this fear, by barely veiled threats, calls for the omnipotence of the Armenian committees.” That is why the physicians working for Algerian units do not want, at any price, to move to the Eastern Legion.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> M. L. Meguerditchian à Boghos Nubar, président de la Délégation nationale arménienne, Paris, 18 octobre 1917, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens...*, volume I, pp. 371-379.

<sup>455</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. de Selves, président de la commission des Affaires étrangères au Sénat, 28 décembre 1920 ; Id., 13 février 1921, AMAE, P 16670.

<sup>456</sup> Garegin Pasdermadjian, *Armenia: A Leading Factor...*, p. 22.

<sup>457</sup> M. Lefèvre-Pontalis, ministre de France au Caire, à M. Stéphen Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 septembre 1918 ; Id., 2 octobre 1918, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 671-674.

<sup>458</sup> Docteur Simon, « Avec le détachement français de Palestine et de Syrie », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1919, pp. 552 and 559-560.

However, these problems of October 1918, or even the mutiny in May of the same year, pale in comparison with the experience of Armenian (and Assyrian) volunteers in Iran.

### 2.3.3. *Iran, Caucasus and Anatolia: Failures, French reluctance and Armenian disappointment (1918)*

The use of Armenian and Assyrian volunteers by the French military in Iran is rarely discussed in the historiography. A few words on the background and strategical context are indispensable. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Assyrians have no separatist movement similar to the Armenakan/Ramkavar, ARF or Hunchak, but the situation changes with the election of Mar Shimun (1887-1918) as Nestorian (schismatic Assyrian) patriarch in 1905. In 1913, S. Zarzecki, the French vice-consul in Van, calls him “one of the most active agents of Russia.”<sup>459</sup> As usual, Zarzecki’s appreciation is confirmed by the facts: Right after the entry of the Ottoman Empire in the world war, Shimun organizes the assassination of his own uncle, because this man was a loyal subject of the Ottoman State, opposed to revolt.<sup>460</sup> After this murder, Shimun leads, at the Russian instigation, an uprising, in the context of the Armenian insurrection, leading to violent clashes with the Kurds, and, in 1915, to an exodus to Iran.<sup>461</sup>

The Assyrian separatists continue to work for the Tsar’s Russia until 1917 (in the “Christian Army of Revenge” against the Ottomans),<sup>462</sup> but after the first Russian revolution and even more after the Bolsheviks take power, the British and French military attachés in Tbilissi re-activate the idea of a “Christian front” (Pontian Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, Assyrians), from the Black Sea to Urmia, with the aim to block the Ottoman and German advances

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<sup>459</sup> Le vice-consul de France à Van au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 24 mai 1913, AMAE, P 16744.

<sup>460</sup> Nicolas Gasfield, « Au front de Perse pendant la Grande guerre — Souvenirs d’un officier français », *Revue d’histoire de la Guerre mondiale*, II-3, juillet 1924, p. 129 ; Bülent Özdemir, *Assyrian Identity and the Great War*, Dunbeath, UK: Whittles Publishing, 2012, pp. 51-53.

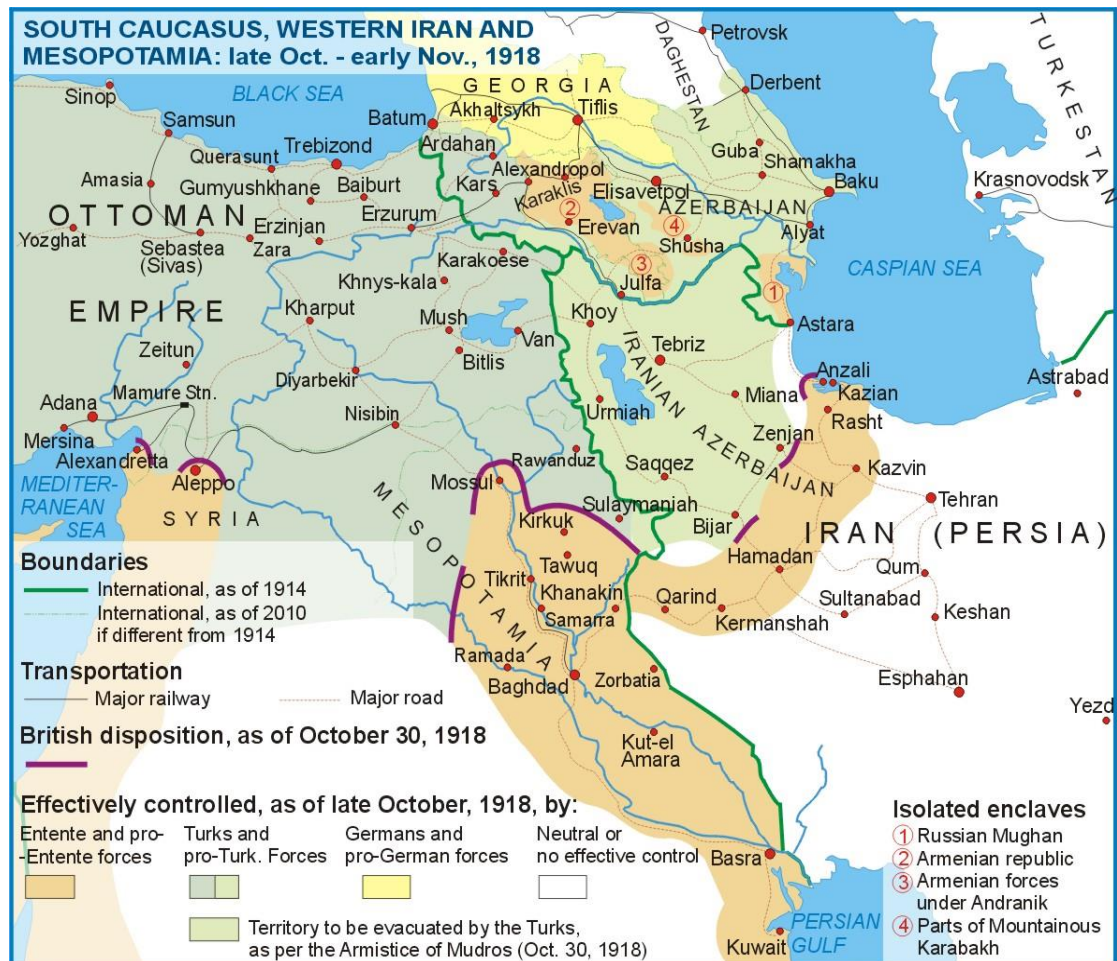
<sup>461</sup> Le colonel Chardigny, chef de la mission militaire française au Caucase, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 13 avril 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/138 ; Yonca Anzerlioğlu, “The Revolts of Nestorian Christians Against the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey,” *The Muslim World*, C-1, January 2010, pp. 48-51 ; Florence Hellot, « L’ambulance française d’Ourmia (1917-1918) ou le ressac de la Grande guerre en Perse », *Studia Iranica*, XXV-1, 1996, pp. 50-51 and 60.

<sup>462</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, p. 922.

through the Caucasus, as Iran (and its oil) and India now are considered threatened.<sup>463</sup> In mid-1918,

Map 1. Source:

[http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/The%20Caucasus/Cauco\\_Mesopotamia\\_WI/Nr6\\_Oct\\_Nov\\_1918.jpg](http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/The%20Caucasus/Cauco_Mesopotamia_WI/Nr6_Oct_Nov_1918.jpg)



<sup>463</sup> État-major général de l'armée — Groupe de l'avant — 3<sup>e</sup> bureau A, Note sur la question arménienne, 14 décembre 1917, SHD, 16 N 3205 ; Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Chardigny au général Berthelot, 3 avril 1918 ; Note historique sur la mission du colonel Chardigny, 25 août 1918, SHD, 7 N 800 ; Letter of Aneurin Williams to Lord Robert Cecil, 15 December 1917; Telegram of the Foreign Office to Sir C. Marling, Tehran, 14 December 1917, in Tolga Başak (ed.), *British Documents on the Armenian Question (1912-1923)*, Ankara: AVİM, 2018, pp. 131-132; Antoine Poidebard, *Voyages au carrefour des routes de Perse*, Paris : Georges Crès & Cie, 1923, pp. 4-9 and 32-33 ; Stéphane Yerasimos, « Caucase, la grande mêlée... », p. 160.

the total of Armenian and Assyrian volunteers is estimated to be 10,000 in the region of Urmia.<sup>464</sup>

Yet, the difficulty to organize these units in Urmia is left to only 60 French soldiers, coming from Archangelsk (northern Russia). They are led by a military physician, Dr. Paul Caujole, and a second lieutenant, Nicolas Gasfield, both arrived in Russia in 1917. These officers definitely lack of experience and manpower to transform these irregulars of dubious ethics into soldiers respecting the laws and customs of war. Their job is made even more complicated by the state of disorganization in Urmia in the context of the retreat of most of the Russian military.<sup>465</sup> In February 1918, Assyrian volunteers from Anatolia (the men of Mar Shimun) kill dozens of local Muslims, in a series of assassinations that leads to an inter-ethnic clash. During this clash, the Assyrians from Anatolia make no prisoners but do not attack the unarmed civilians; on the contrary, the Armenian volunteers and the Assyrians from Yerevan take profit of the defeat of the Muslim side to butcher hundreds of Muslim civilians indiscriminately. About 2,000 others are protected, not without difficulties, by the French mission. Dr. Caujole describes the massacre as follows:

Girls disemboweled, the intestines unwound on the snow, still alive and holding their entrails in their hands. A child, his eye drawn from the orbit, screaming his pain and handing me his bloody stump for me to pull it out of the smoky rubble where his executioners had thrown it.

Shattered skulls, brains whose spit has sprayed on the walls!<sup>466</sup>

The Muslims, however, are not the only victims: A white Russian officer is assassinated by Armenian volunteers with his wife and his son; their “atrociously mutilated corpses” are

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<sup>464</sup> Tableau comparatif des forces alliées sur le front de Mésopotamie à la date du 4 juillet 1918, SHD, 16 N 3205.

<sup>465</sup> Le consul de France à Tauris à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 décembre 1917, AMAE, P 16775 ; État-major de l’armée, 2<sup>e</sup> bureau A, Les incidents d’Ourmia [1918], SHD, 7 N 1662 ; Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une ambulance française en Perse*, Paris : Les Gémeaux, 1922, pp. 7-28 ; Nicolas Gasfield, « Au front de... », pp. 120-122 ; Florence Hellot, « L’ambulance française d’Ourmia... », pp. 56-69.

<sup>466</sup> Le consul de France à Tauris à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 5 mars 1918, AMAE, P 16775 ; Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une...*, pp. 73-94 (quotation p. 83) ; Nicolas Gasfield, « Au front de... », pp. 132-133 (endorsing Caujole’s quote) ; Émile Zavie, *D’Archangel au Golfe persique. Aventures de cinquante français en Perse*, Paris : La Cité des livres, 1927, pp. 173, 248-250, 258-260 and 266 (description similar to the quotation of Caujole p. 266). Edgar and William Ainger Wigram, *The Cradle of Mankind. Life in Eastern Kurdistan. Second Edition*, London: A & C Black, 1922, p. 379 describe the massacre in these terms: “the Moslems were crushed decisively, and the Assyrians remained masters of the town.” Their wording is self-explanatory about the difference between a friend of the *ordinary* Assyrians such as Dr. Caujole and this kind of Anglo-Saxon missionaries.



found,<sup>467</sup> a kind of warning for the French officers. The next month, local Kurds assassinate Shimun and his bodyguards. As a result, Assyrians and Armenians kill hundreds of Kurds.<sup>468</sup> Émile Zavie (1884-1943), a member of the French mission, estimates the total of the victims in February and March 1918 to be 4,000, including one hundred of Assyrian and Armenian volunteers killed with arms in hands, most of the others being Muslims.<sup>469</sup> Dr. Caujole bitterly writes in his diary, later used as a basis for his recollections:

The gangs of armed brigands who are the Christian troops inspire no confidence in me. We already have been threatened several times because we had welcomed Muslim refugee. [...] In the end, we have armed them for looting and massacre only.<sup>470</sup>

Indeed, the Christian units are unable to stop the Ottoman offensive.<sup>471</sup> The French mission leaves Urmia at the end of April and Iran in November. They arrive in Syria, then go back to Paris, arriving in February 1919.<sup>472</sup>

Yet, this bloody failure is only one example of the quick and general collapse of the “Christian front” during the first months of 1918. As early as February 1918, Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Chardigny (1873-1951), chief of the French military mission in the Caucasus, warns that “The 10,000 Armenians who are on the [Caucasian] front are unable of resistance,” and, initially attributes this inability to the “Muslims” (probably Azeris) who are “preparing an

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<sup>467</sup> Le médecin principal de 2<sup>e</sup> classe Caujole, médecin-chef de l’ambulance alpine du Caucase, à M. le consul de France à Tauris, 23 avril 1918, SHD, 7 N 1662 ; Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une...*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>468</sup> Le consul de France à Tauris à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 mars 1918, SHD, 7 N 1662 ; Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une...*, p. 101.

<sup>469</sup> Émile Zavie, *D’Archangel au Golfe...*, p. 270, n. 1. Edgar and W. A. Wigram, *The Cradle of...*, p. 381, claim: the “massacre of the Kurds [...] was quickly arrested by the interposition of their chiefs.” Yet, Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une...*, p. 103 observes that the Assyrian and Armenian volunteers “do not listen to anybody.”

<sup>470</sup> Paul Caujole, *Les Tribulations d’une...*, p. 103. Similar observations in Le médecin principal de 2<sup>e</sup> classe Caujole, médecin-chef de l’ambulance alpine du Caucase, à M. le consul de France à Tauris, 23 avril 1918, SHD, 7 N 1662.

<sup>471</sup> M<sup>gr</sup> Sontag, délégué apostolique en Perse, à M. le consul général de France à Tauris, 15 juillet 1918, AMAE, P 11837.

<sup>472</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Chardigny, commandant le détachement français du Caucase, à M. le général Lavergne, attaché militaire près l’ambassade de France en Russie, 16 mai 1918, SHD, 7 N 800 ; Le ministre de la République en Perse à Son Excellence le ministre des Affaires étrangères, AMAE, P 11837 ; Florence Hellot, « L’ambulance française d’Ourmia... », pp. 77-79.

insurrection in favor of the Turks.”<sup>473</sup> However, Chardigny later changes his analysis, emphasizing more the “disorganization,” the ineffectiveness of the Armenian troops and the incompetence of Armenian General Nazarbekhoff (Nazarbekian).<sup>474</sup> Roughly at the same time (March 1918), the ARF of Baku saves the situation of the Bolsheviks in this town by a large-scale massacre of Azeris (more than 8,000 victims in the city only). The Armenian units, as observes the British Intelligence Service, prefer killing Muslim civilians instead of fighting the advancing Ottoman army.<sup>475</sup> These acts and choices leave an unpleasant impression to at least a part of the French military mission in the Caucasus, particularly Colonel Bertren, who succeeds Chardigny in 1919.<sup>476</sup> That is probably why the demands of the ARF for a direct intervention of the French army in the Caucasus are in vain. The Ottoman army eventually enter Baku in September 1918<sup>477</sup>—and restores the order against the part of Muslim

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<sup>473</sup> Télégramme du lieutenant-colonel Chardigny, 19 février 1918, SHD, 7 N 800.

<sup>474</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Chardigny, commandant le détachement français au Caucase, à M. le général Lavergne, attaché militaire près l’ambassade de France en Russie, 12 mai 1918 ; Id., 16 mai 1918, SHD, 7 N 800.

<sup>475</sup> Leonard Ramsden Hartill, *Men Are Like That*, London-Indianapolis: John Lane/The Bobbs-Merrill C°, 1928, p.

206; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for...*, pp. 71-75; Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile. The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995, p. 248, n. 171; Rahman Mustafayev, *L’Azerbaïdjan entre les grandes puissances (1918-1920)*, Paris: Presses du Châtelet, 2019, pp. 61-77. At the same time (1917-1918), the remaining Armenians of the Russian army try to eradicate all the Muslim presence in north-eastern Anatolia: Telegram of Captain Ahmet Refik to Seyfi Bey, 4 May 1918; Id., 8 May 1918, in Ahmet Tetik (ed.), *Armenian Activities in...*, volume II, pp. 238-239; Congrès national turc, *Documents relatifs aux atrocités commises par les Arméniens sur la population musulmane*, İstanbul: Société anonyme de papeterie et d’imprimerie, 1919; Lieutenant-colonel Valdimir Twerdokhleboff, *Notes d’un officier supérieur russe sur les atrocités d’Erzérourm*, İstanbul, 1919; Justin McCarthy, “The Report of Niles and Sutherland,” *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara: TTK, 1994, Volume V, pp. 1828-1830, 1842 and 1850.

<sup>476</sup> Compte-rendu des évènements politiques du Caucase, 12 décembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/3.

<sup>477</sup> Bülent Gökay, “The Battle for Baku (May-September 1918): A Peculiar Episode in the History of the Caucasus,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXIV-1, January 1998, pp. 30-50. It must be noted that this capture does not belong to any “pan-Turkist” or “pan-Turanist” plan (Michael A. Reynolds, “Buffers, Not Brethren: Young Turk Military Policy and the Myth of Pan-Turanism,” *Past and Present*, No 203, May 2009, pp. 137-179) contrary to what is often claimed (for example: Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011, pp. 699-714). To correct other wrong claims from this book of Mr. Kévorkian, see Cipher Telegram of director of immigrants (Aleppo) to the ministry of Foreign Affairs, 22 October 1915; Cipher telegram of Minister of Interior Talat to Şükrü (Kaya) Bey, 26 October 1915; Cipher telegram of Cemal Paşa, commander of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army, 15 March 1917, in Hikmet Özdemir and Yusuf Sarınoy (ed.), *Turkish-Armenian Conflict...*, pp. 335, 351 and 487; Order of Cemal Paşa, 16 November 1917, in Ahmet Tetik (ed.), *Armenian Activities in...*, volume VIII, p. 294; and (with some reservations) Hilmar Kaiser, “Regional resistance to central government policies: Ahmed Djemal Pasha, the governors of Aleppo, and Armenian deportees in the spring and summer of 1915,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, XII-3/4, 2010, pp. 173-218.

population who takes justice herself with homicidal violence.<sup>478</sup> The ARF military units leave the city without fighting, and it provokes the fear that the Armenian nationalists could be considered unreliable cowards.<sup>479</sup> Meanwhile, the armistice of Moudros is negotiated. The transitional Ottoman government chooses the UK as its interlocutor, in spite of the fact that the Ottoman Empire's decision to give is primarily motivated by the collapse of Bulgaria in front of the French army. The decision seems caused by the situation of the British Empire, which has the biggest number of Muslim subjects in the world.<sup>480</sup> Anyway, it opens the 1918-1923 period with one of its dominant aspects: the Franco-British rivalry.

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<sup>478</sup> W. E. D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields. A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Borders*, London-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1953, p. 495. Also see Account of the conversation between S. Liddel and Nuri in London, March 6, 1920, FO 371/5089/E 1065; and S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 301, 12 février 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 231.

<sup>479</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Chardigny, chef de la mission militaire française au Caucase, à M. Clemenceau, président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, 28 octobre 1918 ; Boghos Nubar, président de la Délégation nationale arménienne, à M. Clemenceau, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 30 octobre 1918 ; Communication du Bureau d'information arménienne au Département, reçue le 2 novembre 1918, in Arthur Beylerian (ed.), *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 698, 701 and 706-707. Also see Arnold Toynbee, Note to the War Department, 24 September 1918, in Tolga Başak (ed.), *British Documents on...*, pp. 155-157.

<sup>480</sup> Gwynne Dyer, "The Turkish Armistice of 1918," *Middle Eastern Studies*, VIII-2, May 1972, pp. 143-178.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE BEGINNINGS OF A CONFLICT (OCTOBER 1918-AUTUMN 1919)

*“France, this bitch, has hurt us a lot.”  
Letter seized from the Ramkavar committee of Cairo to Armenian legionnaires, seized by the  
French military censorship (1919).<sup>481</sup>*

The main aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the French policy toward Armenian nationalism and Turkey begins to change *before* the emergence of the Kemalist movement, and that this change explains, at least for a part, why an agreement with this movement is searched as early as the end of summer 1919. Considering the high density of events, a strictly chronological structure is impossible.

#### **3.1. The basis of the conflict in the context of the Paris peace conference**

##### *3.1.1. The French situation*

On the top of the state, there are few signs of action from President Raymond Poincaré toward the Ottoman and Armenian issues during his last year at the Élysée (his term begins in January 1913 and ends in January 1920), except in January 1919, when he delivers a speech to thank the nations having joined the Entente (including Panama and Guatemala) or at least severed their diplomatic relations with Germany (including Uruguay) but refrains from referring to the Armenians;<sup>482</sup> and in June of the same year, when he short-circuits President

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<sup>481</sup> 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>482</sup> « L'ouverture de la conférence de la paix — Discours de M. Raymond Poincaré », *Le Temps*, 19 janvier 1919, pp. 1-2.

of the Ministers' council Georges Clemenceau in kindly answering a message of courtoisie from the Ottoman crown prince. David Lloyd George expresses his displeasure to Clemenceau; the Turkish newspapers of İstanbul logically react otherwise.<sup>483</sup>

Clemenceau, precisely, concentrates most of his efforts on Germany, at least until summer 1919, the treaty of Versailles being signed on 29 June, ratified by the British Parliament in July and by the French one in October. In February of this year, Clemenceau explicitly says that the eastern question is complex should be fixed after the German one,<sup>484</sup> in spite of the claims of the Ramkavar Armenian national delegation, who pretends that the Armenians have more suffered than the Serbians and Belgians.<sup>485</sup> A frequent error consists in considering Clemenceau a permanent Turkophobe. Such an error is based on highly selective vision of his political life, mainly his short-lived involvement in the pro-Armenian movement in 1896-1897 and a one speech (discussed below) in 1919. Yet, as it has been seen, he trusts Ambassador Ernest Constans completely in 1906-1908 and in 1909 a friend of the Young Turks, Maurice Bompard, is appointed by the Clemenceau cabinet at Constans' place. The three actual reasons for Clemenceau's bitterness toward the Turks until mid-1919 are the German-Ottoman alliance,<sup>486</sup> his own friendship (sincere but not blind) toward Greece<sup>487</sup> and above all his ignorance of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman space. Clemenceau knows about the Anglo-Saxon world, and even about Japan,<sup>488</sup> but very little about the Near East. As late as June 1919, he states: "On how we will dispose of the Turkish Empire, I must say that after our last conversations, I do not know where we are."<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> Paul Mantoux, *Les Délibérations du Conseil des Quatre*, Paris : CNRS, 1955, volume II, pp. 327-328.

<sup>484</sup> Henri Mordacq, *Le ministère Clemenceau. Journal d'un témoin*, volume III, *Novembre 1918-Juin 1919*, Paris : Plon, 1931, p. 119.

<sup>485</sup> Délégation nationale arménienne, *Mémoire sur la question arménienne*, Paris: Imprimerie Flinikowski, [1919], pp. 5-6.

<sup>486</sup> Henri Mordacq, *Le ministère Clemenceau...*, p. 327.

<sup>487</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions en politique internationale. La Grèce et ses revendications à la conférence de la paix (1919-1920)*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1963, pp. 57-59.

<sup>488</sup> Sylvie Brodziak and Michel Drouin (ed.), *Clemenceau et le monde anglo-saxon*, La Crèche : Geste éditions, 2005 ; Matthieu Séguéla, *Clemenceau ou la tentation du Japon*, Paris : CNRS éditions, 2014.

<sup>489</sup> Paul Mantoux, *Les Délibérations du...*, volume II, p. 517 ; Jacques Chastenet, *Histoire de la Troisième République*, volume V, *Les Années d'illusion (1918-1931)*, Paris : Hachette, 1960, p. 323, n. 9.

It is more difficult to discernate the personal views of S. Pichon, Clemenceau's minister of Foreign Affairs from November 1917 to January 1920 (namely during the time of the last Clemenceau cabinet). It can be observed that Pichon previously served at the same position from 1906 to 1911, appointing Bompard in İstanbul for a policy of Entente with the CUP, and in 1913, namely when Paris vetoed the Russian project of an Entente's intervention against the Ottoman reconquest of Edirne. As far as evidence goes, it seems that the main subject of interest of Pichon in the Near East, right after the armistice, is to secure the French domination in Lebanon and Syria.<sup>490</sup> Moreover, Clemenceau monitors the Foreign Affairs and all the decisions are taken during meetings between him and Pichon.<sup>491</sup> In these conditions, the main characters who follow the events and prepare the decisions in 1918-1919 are Jean Gout and Robert de Caix. Jean Gout is deputy director of political affairs, in charge of Asia. A note written, if not by him directly, at least by his order, one week after the armistice of Moudros, summarizes his views on the policy to follow. The note advocates "maintain of the sovereignty of the Osman family between Andrinople and the Taurus," in clear contradiction with the Greek claims. Most of the other items are about the Ottoman Debt, the Ottoman Bank, the Bagdad railway and an international control (but not an international state) of the Straits. Even the word "Armenian" is never used.<sup>492</sup>

It does not mean that Gout is not interested in the Armenian issue. On the contrary, another note from his personal papers is entirely devoted to the subject, and more than 33 pages-long. The note shows an inaccurate knowledge of the forced relocation of 1915-1916 (the killings are described as systematic<sup>493</sup> and co-organized by Germans), but for the rest, it cannot be called pro-Armenian, still less sympathetic of the claims presented at that time by the Armenian nationalists. "The Armenians," writes the author (Hugues de Montbas, one of Gout's assistants) "have more momentum than energy, more tenacity than will." Worse, they

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<sup>490</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. le haut-commissaire français au Caire, 16 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 17783.

<sup>491</sup> Henri Mordacq, *Le ministère Clemenceau...*, volume III, p. 118 ; Lord Riddell, *Lord Riddell's Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference and After*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 20.

<sup>492</sup> Pour la paix, 7 novembre 1918, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 6.

<sup>493</sup> The description of the forced relocation as such is beyond the scope of this study. On this subject: Kemal Çiçek, "The Question of Genocidal Tendency in the Minority Politics of the Young Turks," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXIII-1, March 2013, pp. 1-28; Maxime Gauin, "Uneven Repression. The Ottoman State and its Armenians," in Edward J. Erickson (ed.), *A Global History of Relocation in Counterinsurgency Warfare*, London-Oxford-New York: Bloomsbury, 2019, pp. 115-140; Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005, pp. 162-241.

have proved themselves “unable of judgement, weighting, fairness, clear-sightedness,” “bindly individualists” as well as lacking of sense of measure. They have “enslaved their winners” (Turks and Kurds), are vainglorious and represent about 25-30% of the population of the six vilayets (Sivas, Elazığ, Diyarbakır, Van, Bitlis, Erzurum) as a whole; in none of them individually they are in majority. The Hunchak and the ARF, continues the note, have organized “riots and uprisings” during the 1890s, their behavior in 1908-1909, at the origin of the bloody events in Adana is particularly inexcusable, and their claims in 1912-1913 were “unacceptable.” The text briefly mentions a part of the massacres of Turks and other Muslims.

Now, the solution faces three main obstacles: The ARF, the Hunchak, ready to all violence to achieve their “exaggerated” aims, and the incapacity of many Armenians not affiliated to these parties (the author is probably thinking to the Ramkavar) to understand that there is no Armenian issue but an “Armeno-Islamic issue.” The note advocates the complete exclusion of Çukurova from an Armenian state, and this state should be “federal” but also securing the complete equality of all its inhabitants, including the Muslims. As “the Armenians” become “tyrannical” as soon as they are the masters, or even the equals, of the Muslims, a major power has to control this federal state. The note does not advocate a French mandate, but explicitly rejects the idea of a British mandate.<sup>494</sup> In short, the views of Jean Gout are in formal contradiction with the ones of the Armenian committees, and he knows that. Actually, he even fears the assassination of “some prominent Allied statesman” by an Armenian nationalist, inspired by the hostage taking at the Ottoman Bank in 1896.<sup>495</sup>

Even more biting, perhaps, is Robert de Caix—the one who has promoted, in spring 1914, the article of Vice-Consul S. Zarzecki calling the ARF one of the two main obstacles to peace and prosperity in Van and Bitlis. An unusual character, de Caix is a journalist by profession but also an *éminence grise* of the Quai d’Orsay until October 1919, when he becomes the general secretary of the high commission at Beirut, where he remains until 1923. From 1923 to his retirement in 1938, he represents France at the committee of the League of Nations

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<sup>494</sup> Note sur l’Arménie, 9 février 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 8, pp. 3, 9, 11-13, 15-19, 23-25 and 27-33. The manuscript is in AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>495</sup> Mr. Garahame to Mr. Balfour, 2 December 1918, in Tolga Başak (ed.), *British Documents on the Armenian Question (1912-1923)*, Ankara: AVİM, 2018, p. 176.

for the territories under mandates.<sup>496</sup> Regardless, his role in the Armenian issue is commonly ignored<sup>497</sup> or underestimated.<sup>498</sup> As early as October 1918, de Caix submits a note to Philippe Berthelot (1866-1934), deputy director (and soon director) of political affairs at the MFA,<sup>499</sup> that deserves to be quoted: “This is the role of France, and not of Germany—a very difficult role, in front of the English and Armenians—to preserve Turkey as much as possible. She is our traditional client, and the establishment, under nominal Turkish suzerainty, of effective French control in Syria and English control in Mesopotamia would be, if it is still possible, the best solution for an affair that has badly begun for us.”<sup>500</sup>

In October 1918, too, de Caix has a lunch with Boghos Nubar and the Armenian National Delegation, then reports to Jean Gout, with his comments—which suggests a mission ordered by the Quai d’Orsay. De Caix argues that “three forces are fighting” the French presence in the east: The “excessive enthusiasm” for “the right of the peoples to dispose of themselves,” the “faith” in this right and “this kind of political Malthusianism” that “makes a large of our bourgeoisie hostile to any action in Asia minor.” Yet, continues de Caix, “no people is more able than the Armenians to use against France’s expansions the use of these forces,” because of their strong connections with the Anglo-Saxon political milieu, but also because “Armenia” (north-eastern Anatolia and the Republic of Armenia) is not attractive for those who look for short-term profit. “The Armenians” have begun “a clamor” against French expansion—against the Sykes-Picot agreement. De Caix wonders if, in the context of Autumn 1918, the most efficient solution would not be a French mandate on Armenia, where the mandatory power would use “the majorities” (Turks and Kurds) against the desire of ethnic cleansing of the Armenian leadership,<sup>501</sup> a solution of course unacceptable for any Armenian

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<sup>496</sup> Gérard D. Khoury (ed.), *Une tutelle coloniale. Le mandat français en Syrie et au Liban. Écrits politiques de Robert de Caix*, Paris : Belin, 2006, pp. 6-132.

<sup>497</sup> Garabet Krikor Moumdjian, “Cilicia under French Administration,” in Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Armenian Cilicia*, Mazda Publishing, 2008; Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, Ankara : TTK, 2005.

<sup>498</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mésopotamie: aux confins de la Turquie, de la Syrie et de l'Irak, 1919-1933*, Paris : Karthala, 2004 ; Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia. 1914-1923*, Salt Lake City : University of Utah Press, 2010.

<sup>499</sup> On Berthelot: Jean-Luc Barré, *Le Seigneur-chat. Philippe Berthelot, 1866-1934*, Paris : Plon, 1988.

<sup>500</sup> Note à Philippe Berthelot, 28 octobre 1918, AMAE, P 11203.

<sup>501</sup> Robert de Caix, Le 26 octobre 1918, AMAE, P 16670.



committee (see below). He insists in spring 1919: “Cilicia is Turkish, not Armenian” and “*does not concern the English*” (underlined in the original).<sup>502</sup>

These remarks raise another key issue in 1918-1919 (and later): the rivalry with Britain and the United States. A part of the MFA, including Jean Gout and François Georges-Picot, has not accepted the renunciation of Aristide Briand to Jerusalem in 1916, and still less the agreement between Clemenceau and Lloyd George to exchange Mossul with the German part of the Turkish petroleum company (December 1918 and April 1919). The bullying of Francophile Arabs, French schools and French diplomatic agents by a part of the British officers in Mesopotamia, Syria and Lebanon on one side, the promotion of Emir Feysal—who asks for an unified Arab state—on the other side finish to exasperate the Quai d’Orsay: A formal protest is sent to London in January 1919<sup>503</sup> (in a context where the French forces are in minority in the Near and Middle East, even in Syria and Lebanon until summer 1919). The companies involved in the trade and investments in the Near East, the State University of Lyon (namely the big sister of the French schools in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire) are equally embittered, as early as 1918-1919. They want an integral Syria, and on 28 November 1918, the Lyon’s chamber of Commerce welcomes Feysal in offering him a... *vin d’honneur*.<sup>504</sup> This has to be understood in the context of Lyon’s preponderance in the production of silk in Lebanon, described in the first chapter, but also of the ambitions toward the cotton in Çukurova: The price of the cotton increased by 121% between 1892 and 1913; the cost of the production is rising in the U.S. and India; yet, all the attempts to develop the production of cotton in the French colonies have failed until now (and fail during the 1920s,

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<sup>502</sup> Lettre à Philippe Berthelot, 12 avril 1919, AMAE, P 11203.

<sup>503</sup> Note au ministre, 10 octobre 1918 ; Note pour le ministre, 2 novembre 1918, AMAE, P 1426 ; Le haut-commissaire de la République française à Beyrouth à la direction des Affaires politiques et commerciales, 6 décembre 1918 ; Note sur les menées anglaises en Asie mineure, 31 janvier 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 6 ; Note sur les intérêts moraux et matériels de la France en Syrie, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 8 ; Note sur la question de Mossoul, 30 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 1511 ; James Barr, *A Line in the...*, pp. 64-78 ; John Fisher, “Syria and Mesopotamia in British Foreign Policy in 1919,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXXIV-2, April 1998, pp. 129-170 ; Harry N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey: a Diplomatic History*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1931, pp. 242-243 ; Stéphane Lauzanne, *Les Hommes que j’ai vus*, Paris : Fayard, 1920, p. 248 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route des Indes, un siècle après Bonaparte*, Paris : Société d’éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1932, pp. 167-168 and 209-212 ; Jean Pichon, *Le Partage du Proche-Orient*, Paris : J. Peyronnet, 1938, pp. 164-165.

<sup>504</sup> Dominique Chevallier, « Lyon et la Syrie en 1919. Les bases d’une intervention », *Revue historique*, CCXXIV-2, avril-juin 1960, pp. 307-312 ; Daniel Pipes, *Greater Syria. The History of an Ambition*, New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 94-95. Also see Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Le congrès de Syrie », *L’Opinion*, 11 janvier 1919, pp. 24-25 ; and Édouard de Keyser, « France et Syrie », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 9 novembre 1918, pp. 193-203.

too).<sup>505</sup> Clemenceau himself expresses his disappointment May 1919. Moreover, Woodrow Wilson tries to prevent the Council of Four from deciding who will obtain the mandate on Syria,<sup>506</sup> and to give a maximal authority to the King-Crane commission, considered a frontal and inexcusable attack by the French colonialists, particularly Robert de Caix, even more after the commission advocates, in its report, for an American mandate on Syria and Jerusalem.<sup>507</sup> At İstanbul, the replacement of İzzet Bey by Damat Ferit Paşa as Grand Vizir, on 4 March 1919, cannot please Paris. “Naïve to the point of being simple,” Ferit is a determined Anglophile.<sup>508</sup>

Yet, these tensions are only a part of a large, not to say general, disagreement on the conditions of the peace. Lloyd George and even more Wilson oppose the idea of an annexation of all or part of Saarland by France (except if a referendum legitimates it) as well as a permanent occupation of Rhineland,<sup>509</sup> two aims defended in Paris since 1915-16 for military and economic reasons.<sup>510</sup> Aristide Briand, out of the cabinet until his return to power, in January 1921, calls the peace treaties of 1919 “a Protestant peace,” as they are, at the request of the UK and USA, harsher for the Catholic Austria than for the predominantly Protestant Germany.<sup>511</sup> Without repudiating the treaty he has signed, Clemenceau states to Lloyd George, in 1921: “Right after the armistice, I found you the enemy of France.” The

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<sup>505</sup> Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton. A New History of Global Capitalism*, London: Penguin Books, 2015, pp. 344 and 348; Daniel Lefeuvre, *Pour en finir avec la repentance coloniale*, Paris, Flammarion, 2008, pp. 102-108; Jacques Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français*, Paris : Albin Michel, 2005, pp. 117-118 ; Bige Yavuz (Sükan), *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri: Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından 1919-1922*, Ankara: TTK, 1994, pp. 84-85.

<sup>506</sup> Paul Mantoux, *Les Délibérations du...*, volume I, pp. 378-379.

<sup>507</sup> James Barr, *A Line in...*, pp. 84-87; Harry N. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission. An American inquiry in the Middle East*, Beirut: Khayats, 1963, pp. 31-238; Joseph Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East. Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971, pp. 157-164 and 197-206. Also see Stacy Fahrenthold, *Between the Ottomans and the Entente. The First World War in the Syrian and Lebanese Diaspora, 1908–1925*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 85-111.

<sup>508</sup> Gwynne Dyer, “The Turkish Armistice of 1918,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, VIII-2, May 1972, p. 166.

<sup>509</sup> Paul Mantoux, *Les Délibérations du...*, volume I, pp. 41-48, 63-75, 92-95, 193-194, 196, 203-207, 209-213, 224-228.

<sup>510</sup> Roy A. Prete, “French Military War Aims, 1914-1916,” *The Historical Journal*, XXVIII-4, December 1985, pp. 887-899 ; Georges-Henri Soutou, « La France et les marches de l’est, 1914-1919 », *Revue historique*, CCLX-4, octobre-décembre 1978, pp. 341-388.

<sup>511</sup> Joseph Caillaux, *Mes Mémoires*, Paris : Plon, volume III, 1947, p. 219. Also see « La paix anglo-saxonne ou la paille et la poutre », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 3 mai 1919, pp. 826-827.

British Prime minister answers: “Well, was it not always our traditional policy?”<sup>512</sup> In fact, the whole period 1918-1922 is marked by an accumulation of political and economic tensions between Paris and London, regarding Western Europe and the Near East, and gradually crystallizing on the person of Lloyd George, even if the causes are certainly not limited to this sole man.<sup>513</sup> Yet, as early as December 1918, the Quai d’Orsay calls Nubar “very anglophile” and in February 1919, the French Navy concludes that the Gregorian Patriarch of İstanbul, Zaven, has been “bought [sic] by the British.”<sup>514</sup> This does not lead automatically to a conciliation with the Turks and the breaking with the Armenian committees, but it is definitely an element of context explaining the choices of Paris, including under the Clemenceau cabinet.

Regarding now the public opinion, the presence of the Armenian and pro-Armenian Turkophobes in the press, in 1918-1919, is real but relatively modest.<sup>515</sup> On 31 October 1918, Jacques de Morgan (1857-1924) writes a letter to his friend Archag Tchobanian, finding “discouraging” the absence of reply from five newspapers after he has asked if they would accept an op-ed from him to defend the nationalist Armenian claims.<sup>516</sup> The main success against the Turks in the French press is the Greek campaign, and it is mostly concentrated in spring 1919 (it begins to change after the representative in İstanbul, Albert Defrance, asks the Quai d’Orsay to make the necessary against this flow).<sup>517</sup>

On the other side, it is fundamental to notice that the campaign of Pierre Loti begins as early as autumn 1918 and that, from the beginning, he is not alone. His first article is published on 1 November 1918, covering one third of the frontpage of *L’Écho de Paris*, a mainstream daily

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<sup>512</sup> Georges Clemenceau, *Grandeurs et misères d’une victoire*, Paris: Plon, 1930, pp. 92-93.

<sup>513</sup> Jacques Bardoux, *Lloyd George et la France*, Paris : Félix Alcan, 1923 ; Alfred Fabre-Luce, *La Crise des alliances. Essai sur les relations franco-britanniques, 1919-1922*, Paris : Grasset, 1922.

<sup>514</sup> Note, 3 décembre 1918 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, au général commandant en chef des armées alliées d’Orient, 23 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>515</sup> Louis Bresse, « La résurrection de Lazare », *Le Rappel*, 21 décembre 1918, p. 1 ; Edmond Driault, « Devant Constantinople », *Revue bleue*, 4 janvier 1919, pp. 18-19 ; Auguste Gauvain, « La capitulation de la Turquie », *Journal des débats*, 2 novembre 1918, p. 1 ; Antoine Meillet, *La Nation arménienne*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1919 ; Jacques de Morgan, « L’Arménie belligérante et autonome », *L’Information*, 30 octobre 1918 ; Archag Tchobanian, « La résurrection de l’Arménie », *L’Information*, 8 novembre 1918 (*L’Information* turns pro-Turkish as early as 1919).

<sup>516</sup> Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et...*, p. 270.

<sup>517</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions...*, pp. 188-196.

of conservative nationalism. Loti reminds the old tradition of the Franco-Ottoman alliance and the crimes of the Bulgarian forces during the Balkan wars, explains the entry of the Ottoman Empire in the world war by the fear of Russia and describes the Armenian nationalists as unreliable, giving as evidence their absence of fight in Baku in September.<sup>518</sup> As Camille Mauclair (1872-1945), a friend and associate of Ramkavar leader Archag Tchobanian, bitterly observes, the publication, in spite of the censorship, of such an article in such a mainstream daily is due to the help from Maurice Barrès, the strong man of *L'Écho de Paris*,<sup>519</sup> who had defended the Armenian cause during the 1890s, namely during his far rightist years, before shifting to civic nationalism and republican conservatism. The best today's specialist of Loti confirms that Barrès is on Loti's side in his last campaign of defense of the Turks.<sup>520</sup> Similarly, Louis Barthou, a key figure of the center-right, past president of the ministers' council<sup>521</sup> and now an excellent friend of Loti,<sup>522</sup> helps him to be published in 1919, including in the relatively anti-Turkish daily *L'Éclair*.<sup>523</sup> By his own connections, Loti publishes four articles in *Le Figaro* and one in the widely distributed weekly *L'Illustration* during the five first months of 1919, exposing the sufferings of the Turks (massacres by Armenians, famine and malnutrition) and their respect for the French citizens during the war.<sup>524</sup> Beside the help in the lobby, Loti receives even before his first article, and even more after, numerous letters from veterans of the Balkan front and from his compatriots residing in Turkey, presenting their testimony in defense of the Turks and encouraging him to continue.<sup>525</sup> His article of

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<sup>518</sup> Pierre Loti, « Les Turcs », *L'Écho de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1918, p. 1.

<sup>519</sup> Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CRDP, 1986, pp. 244-245.

<sup>520</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne de la France. Un témoin : Pierre Loti*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 1992, p. 176.

<sup>521</sup> On Barthou: Robert J. Young, "Cultural Politics and the Politics of Culture in the Third French Republic: The Case of Louis Barthou," *French Historical Studies*, XVII-2, Autumn 1991, pp. 343-358.

<sup>522</sup> Louis Barthou, « Pierre Loti », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 février 1930, pp. 952-972 ; Pierre Loti, *Soldats bleus. Journal intime, 1914-1918*, Paris : La Table ronde, 2014, pp. 228, 232, 316-317, 324 and 331-332.

<sup>523</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne...*, p. 172.

<sup>524</sup> « Un appel de Pierre Loti », *Le Figaro*, 23 janvier 1919, p. 1 ; « Une lettre de Pierre Loti », *Le Figaro*, 23 février 1919, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Plaidoyer suprême pour les condamnés à mort », *Le Figaro*, 18 mars 1919, p. 1 ; « Turcs et Arméniens — Une lettre de Pierre Loti », *L'Illustration*, 19 avril 1919, p. 415 ; Pierre Loti, « Le khalife de l'islam », *Le Figaro*, 23 mai 1919, p. 1.

<sup>525</sup> Pierre Loti, *Les Alliés qu'il nous faudrait*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1919, pp. 105-126.

1918 is also positively echoed in the left-wing daily *La Lanterne*. The socialist organ *L'Humanité*, for its part, has one critique to formulate: Loti did not submit them the text for a publication in their columns.<sup>526</sup>

Beside this militant Turkophilia—and the fact that Turks begin to defend their point of view in French as early as the first half of 1919, including in pointing the British Turkophobia<sup>527</sup>—, quickly after the armistice, three important journalists advocate realism toward the Turks René d'Aral in *Le Gaulois* (the daily of the nationalist-conservative bourgeoisie), Saint-Brice in the mainstream daily *Le Journal* and Jacques Bainville,<sup>528</sup> the foreign policy specialist of *L'Action française* (far right), now at the climax of its influence, because the organization and its newspaper temporarily soften the tone in domestic politics, focusing on Germany<sup>529</sup> and because Bainville is by far its less aggressive voice.<sup>530</sup> During the following years, d'Aral, Saint-Brice and Bainville persistently oppose Turkophobia, with fact-based arguments. For now, they are reinforced by the echoes, in France, of the call from Caleb Frank Gates, director of the Robert College, who sides against the destruction of Turkey.<sup>531</sup> Similarly, the left-wing daily *L'Œuvre* is not yet, at the end of 1918, the fiercely Turkophile and pro-Kemalist organ it becomes in mid-1919, but right after the armistice, it explains that the Frenchmen's interest

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<sup>526</sup> « Un jugement de M. Pierre Loti sur les Turcs », *La Lanterne*, 2 novembre 1918, p. 2 ; Amédée Dunois, « Loti à "L'Humanité" », *L'Humanité*, 10 novembre 1918, p. 3 (Dunois dies in Bergen-Belsen in 1945). — Maurice Prax, « Il faut secourir les Français de Constantinople », *Le Petit Parisien*, 19 novembre 1918, p. 3 answers Loti in affirming the existence of "violence" against certain Frenchmen during the war (deportations, incarcerations), but "always at the instigation of Germans."

<sup>527</sup> Halil Halid, *La Turcophobie des impérialistes anglais*, npnd [1919].

<sup>528</sup> Saint-Brice, « L'Orient est à nous », *Le Journal*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1918, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Les bonnes solutions », *L'Action française*, 2 novembre 1918, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « La carte grecque », *Le Gaulois*, 5 février 1919, p. 1. *L'Action française*, 24 mai 1919, p. 3 also positively summarizes an article of Loti in *Le Figaro*. Nationalist Armenians and Greeks begin to complain about the French press in June 1919: Edgar Pech, *Les Alliés et la Turquie*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1925, p. 66.

<sup>529</sup> Pierre Nora, « Les deux apogées de l'Action française », *Annales. Économies, sociétés, civilisations*, XIX-1, 1964, pp. 127-141.

<sup>530</sup> Olivier Dard and Michel Grunewald (ed.), *Jacques Bainville : profils et réceptions*, Berne : Peter Lang, 2010.

<sup>531</sup> « En Turquie — Déclarations du prince héritier », *Le Figaro*, 28 novembre 1918, p. 1. Also see Caleb Frank Gates, *Not to me Only*, Princeton-London: Princeton University Press/Oxford University Press, 1940, pp. 243-254 and 261-263.

is not “to act as conquerors.”<sup>532</sup> The weekly of the liberal elites, *L’Europe nouvelle*,<sup>533</sup> begins in January 1919 to publish articles asking for a peace leaving to the Turks the eastern Thrace, İstanbul and most (if not all) Anatolia.<sup>534</sup>

That having been said, the most relevant for this study, in the elaboration of the public opinion on the Armenian and Turkish issues by 1918-1919, is the role of authors connected to the state. Henri Gilson (1883-1952), who signs his books and articles: Henri Mylès, was consul in İstanbul in 1913-1914. He had a conflict with the consul general but, backed by his hierarchy, he replaced him in January or February 1914.<sup>535</sup> Mobilized after the entrance of the Ottoman Empire in the conflict, Gilson/Mylès finds his health hardly compatible with a return to active diplomacy, in 1919. Having a personal fortune (particularly a farm), he asks for his *mise en disponibilité sans traitement* (remaining in the registers of the Ministry without being paid and without having a specific mission) and obtains it at the end of November. Yet, as his career files teaches, he continues to render “priceless services” to the Quai d’Orsay, including by his articles defending the Mudania armistice with the Kemalist government in autumn 1922.<sup>536</sup> The rest of his campaign for a peace leaving to the Turks the territories where they are in majority, that begins in mid-1919—even before he is formally *mis en disponibilité*—and intensifies in 1920,<sup>537</sup> is not explicitly mentioned, but the list does

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<sup>532</sup> Charles Saglio, « Les Alliés à Constantinople », *L’Œuvre*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1918, p. 1.

<sup>533</sup> On this newspaper: Christine Manigand, « Louise Weiss, Aristide Briand et *L’Europe nouvelle* », in Jacques Bariéty (ed.), *Aristide Briand, la Société des nations et l’Europe. 1919-1932*, Strasbourg, Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007 pp. 264-278.

<sup>534</sup> Georges Samné, « La question de Constantinople et des Détroits », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 4 janvier 1919, pp. 15-16 ; « Berlin-Saint-Germain-Versailles-Vienne », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 17 mai 1919, p. 923 ; « Allah est grand, Messieurs ! » ; Z. Marcas, « La Turquie vue de Constantinople », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 23 mai 1919, pp. 970-975. Without being exactly a mouthpiece of the Quai d’Orsay, Samné (1877-1938; a Syrian Greek Catholic settled in Paris) is funded by the French government: Asher Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: The Search for Identity in Lebanon*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014, pp. 82-84; Daniel Pipes, *Greater Syria...*, p. 37. Z. Marcas is the pen name of “a personality” in touch with the MFA, if not of a diplomat.

<sup>535</sup> L’ambassadeur de France à Constantinople à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 septembre 1914 ; Notes annuelles 1913, AMAE, 394 QO 698.

<sup>536</sup> Henri Gilson, consul de France, à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 23 novembre 1919 ; Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. Gilson, consul de 2<sup>e</sup> classe à la disposition, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1919 ; M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. le ministre des Pensions, 30 avril 1930 ; Le sous-secrétaire d’État à la présidence du Conseil à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 juillet 1930, AMAE, 394 QO 698.

<sup>537</sup> Henri Mylès, « Comment régler la question turque », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 21 juin 1919, pp. 1176-1177 ; Henri Mylès, « Ce qu’il faut faire avec les kémalistes », *L’Information*, 4 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Henri Mylès, « La situation en Asie mineure », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 5 décembre 1920, pp. 1796-1797 ;

not pretend to be comprehensive, so this is not a considerable extrapolation to conclude that this campaign is encouraged by at least a part of the MFA—still less as a reviewer of his book published in 1921 notes: “Mr. Henri Mylès, who belongs to the personal of our diplomacy [...]”.<sup>538</sup>

A better known case is Berthe Georges-Gaulis, the one who launched an essay balloon in 1917, when she was still working for the state propaganda organization (*Maison de la presse*). By May 1919, she begins to advocate a Turkey made of the territories inhabited by a majority of Turks, and more generally a restoration of “our traditional relations with the East.”<sup>539</sup> Some months later, she becomes an admirer of the Turkish national movement. As her campaign is the most active of all, it shall be described in the rest of this dissertation, step by step. For now, it has to be emphasized that she serves as unofficial negotiator in autumn 1919 and May 1921, as liaison agent by 1920 between Kemal (Atatürk) and Marshal Hubert Lyautey, general resident in Morocco and personal friend of her,<sup>540</sup> and as a de facto diplomat during the Lausanne conference 1922-1923. Like for Gilson/Mylès, her sincerity is beyond doubt; but her constant contact with the MFA and Lyautey is clear as well. It is equally clear that the first booklet published in Paris by Turks against Armenian nationalism<sup>541</sup> could not have been printed in spite of the censorship without supporters in the administration and that from the beginning, the High Commission at İstanbul rarely welcomes the Armenian solicitations.<sup>542</sup>

Even more direct evidence exists for the military. Indeed, Lieutenant-Colonel Raoul de Thomasson (1858-1939), the military chronicler of *Le Petit Journal*, expresses, right after the armistice, “pity” for “the unfortunate Turkish people,” a pity he is far from feeling for

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Henri Mylès, « Ce que l'on attend de la conférence de Londres », *L'Information*, 2 février 1921, p. 1 ; Henri Mylès, *La Fin de Stamboul*, Paris : R. Chiberre, 1921 ; Henri Mylès, « Quelques éléments de psychologie orientale », *La Revue universelle*, 15 juillet 1922, pp. 215-223.

<sup>538</sup> « Chez le libraire », *Le Figaro. Supplément littéraire*, 7 août 1921, p. 2.

<sup>539</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Les Français d'Orient », *L'Opinion*, 31 mai 1919, pp. 488-489 (quotation p. 489) ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La question ottomane », *L'Opinion*, 12 juillet 1919, pp. 33-34.

<sup>540</sup> On their friendship, see in particular the letter of Berthe Georges-Gaulis to Lyautey, 21 June 1918, AN, 475 AP 282. As Lyautey is almost openly gay, their relationship is without ambiguity.

<sup>541</sup> Nihat Reşat (Belger) and alii, *Les Turcs et les revendications arméniennes*, Paris : Imprimerie A.-G. L'Hoir, 1919.

<sup>542</sup> Edgar Pech, *Les Alliés et...*, p. 27.

Germany.<sup>543</sup> Among the officers who send letters to Pierre Loti in 1918-1920 and allow him to publish the text with their name, one deserves a particular attention: Henri Rollin (1885-1955).<sup>544</sup> Indeed, Rollin expresses his gratitude to Loti for the chivalrous treatment he has received during this captivity in Turkey, after his submarine was sunk, in 1917. Then, Rollin affirms that there is no Frenchman who knows the East and who disagrees with Loti on the Armenian massacres (namely: they were reciprocal and provoked by the rebellion of the Armenian nationalists). Yet, Rollin is, from January 1919 to spring 1921, the head of the French Navy's intelligence service for Turkey and Southern Russia, and his letter has been sent when he is already arrived in Istanbul, as the signature proves. As a result, the only explanation for this publication of Rollin's letter with his real name, as early as mid-1919, is that he knows he is backed (not to say encouraged) by his hierarchy. Then, Rollin's service provides to Paris first-hand reports on the situation in Anatolia, including the exemption of relocation for most of the Armenians of the provinces of İzmir and Konya.<sup>545</sup> At least two other prisoners of war report about such exemptions (one concerning the north of Mersin, one concerning a part of the Armenians of Sivas), as well as about the generally respectful treatment they received.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>543</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Raoul de Thomasson, « Les conséquences de la capitulation turque », *Le Petit Journal*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1918, p. 1.

<sup>544</sup> Pierre Loti, *Les Alliés qu'il...*, pp. 113-114. The best biographical account of Rollin is: Gérard Berrédy, « Le faux et son usage », introduction to Henri Rollin, *Une mystification mondiale*, Paris : Allia, 2000, pp. 7-16. Indeed, Rollin is mostly remembered, today, for his book published in 1939 on the Nazi propaganda, and more particularly the meticulous demonstration that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* are a forgery.

<sup>545</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 833, 14 juin 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1351, 25 novembre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 235 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, 16 décembre 1920, SHD, 7 N 3211. In a letter to General Townshend, on 10 February 1921, Charlton Wittal, a businessman and “a representative of one of the oldest British families residing in Turkey” confirms that “in the province of Smyrna,” “Armenians lived in peace and received a fair treatment” (FO 371/6499/2265). The account on Konya is corroborated by O. J. Campbell, Report on the Vilayet of Konya, p. 8, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University (California), Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920), U.S. territorial section, box 4; and Ernest Jackh, *The Rising Crescent. Turkey Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, New York-Toronto: Farrar & Rinehart, 1944, p. 44.

<sup>546</sup> Rapport à monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères concernant les principales observations faites par le premier maître-électricien Goulin (Georges), du sous-marin *Mariotte*, pendant l'internement en Turquie des prisonniers de guerre du *Mariotte*, 5 juillet 1919, p. 24, CADN, 36/PO/1/6 ; Francis Gutton, *Prisonnier de guerre chez les Turcs. Une captivité pas comme les autres (1915-1918)*, Paris : Bibliothèque de la captivité, 1976, p. 52.



To finish with the big business, the French representatives of the Imperial Ottoman Bank express to the MFA their opposition to any partition of Turkey.<sup>547</sup> All these elements prove that the informal group, in and around the state apparatus, advocating a peace respecting the Turkish people and the French traditions emerges *before* the rise of the Kemalist movement, even if, of course, this rise only reinforces what could be called the conciliation lobby.

### 3.1.2. *The Armenian nationalists' position*

If France is a victorious albeit weakened major power in 1919, Armenia is a small, landlocked and miserable country. The countryside already was archaic in 1914, and the cities, somewhat improved by the Russian domination, have suffered because of the World War, particularly the mutual destructions between ethnic Armenians and Azeris. The statist policies of the ARF dissuade the rich Armenians of the diaspora from investing in the country.<sup>548</sup> As most of the nationalist elements among these rich Armenians belong to the Ramkavar party, this absence of financial and human investments remains a grievance of the Dashnaks toward the Ramkavars for decades, even more as the Ramkavar also tries in 1919 to obtain not only a participation to the Yerevan's cabinet but a right to veto all its main decisions. The ARF refuses,<sup>549</sup> and from 1918 to 1920, the Armenian cabinet remains completely dominated by the Dashnaks—a Bolshevik-styled dictatorship with the “veil” of

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<sup>547</sup> Note, 23 mai 1919, reproduced in Bige Yavuz (Sükan), *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri: Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından 1919-1922*, Ankara: TTK, 1994, appendix III ; Groupement des intérêts français dans l'Empire ottoman, *Les Intérêts financiers de la France dans l'empire ottoman*, Paris : Imprimerie centrale de la Bourse, 1919, p. 38 (“only the Arab-speaking parts” of the Empire can be “detached”) and passim (a copy is in the Bompard papers: AMAE, 417 PA-AP 58; the one of the National Library has been given by Maurice Barrès).

<sup>548</sup> Louis Nettement, *L'Arménie. Notes de voyages, 1920*, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>549</sup> Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1955, pp. 207-208 and 215-218. Also see Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*, volume I, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1971, p. 259.

democratic forms, according to the first Primer minister of this Republic.<sup>550</sup> The Quai d'Orsay knows about this Ramkavar-ARF split.<sup>551</sup>

Regardless, this hegemony itself does not prevent internal conflicts: Minister Kachadour Garijigian is assassinated by another ARF member on 14 November 1918, as a result of a dispute that remains unclear until now<sup>552</sup> (the impossibility to access the archives at Watertown and Yerevan does not help to find the explanation). Neither does this hegemony prevent contradictory actions. After having helped the Soviets against the Azeris in Baku in 1918, the ARF provides them men to destroy the Turkic separatism in Central Asia, from January 1918 to spring 1919.<sup>553</sup> Right after, the ARF government of Yerevan begins to support the White Russians of Denikin fiercely, preferring them to an U.S. mandate.<sup>554</sup>

In the U.S., precisely, Vahan Cardashian (1883-1934) joins the Ramkavar in 1918 and is during this year hostile to the Dashnak administration, but in 1919, he becomes a member of the ARF and establishes the most powerful organization promoting Armenian nationalism, the American Committee for Independence of Armenia (ACIA), under the nominal leadership of James Gerard (1867-1951), former U.S. ambassador in Berlin. As early as 1919, Cardashian shows no interest for the missionary settlements, precisely what the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) want to preserve in priority. On the contrary, by autumn 1918, Cardashian considers the ABCFM unreliable, and this institution has little sympathy for the revolutionary nationalism of the ARF.<sup>555</sup> Correspondingly, and in spite of his

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<sup>550</sup> Hovannes Katchaznoui, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutiun) has Nothing to do Anymore*, New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955, pp. 8-9.

<sup>551</sup> Note de M. [Jean] Gout, 24 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>552</sup> Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation*, Milan: OEMME edizioni, 1989, p. 129, n. 8; Kapriel Serope Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted*, Boston: Baikar Press, 1934, pp. 69-70. Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, I, is silent about the murder.

<sup>553</sup> Marco Buttino, « Ethnicité et politique dans la guerre civile : à propos du basmačestvo au Fergana », *Cahiers du monde russe*, XXVIII-1/2, janvier-juin 1997, pp. 206-210.

<sup>554</sup> Dispatch of Admiral Bristol to the American delegation in Paris, 21 November 1919, LC, Bristol papers, box 66; Georges Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes des Caucasiens entre URSS et puissances occidentales : le cas de la Géorgie (1921-1945)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2009, pp. 20-21.

<sup>555</sup> Gregory Aftandilian, *Armenia, Vision of a Republic. The Independence Lobby in Armenia, 1919-1927*, Boston: Charles River Books, 1981, pp. 23-25; Mark Malkasian, "The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984, pp. 353 and 361.

hostility, at that time, toward the Turks,<sup>556</sup> secretary of the ABCFM James Barton (1855-1936) favors a mandate on Turkey and the Caucasus instead of Armenia alone. As a result, the Armenian nationalists and their Protestant supporters are divided even before the Kemalist movement emerge. The tensions are less strong in Paris, but the Armenian National Delegation, established in 1912 by order of the Catholicos and supposed to represent the Ottoman Armenians, never merges with the Delegation of the Armenian Republic, established by the Dashnak government and the personal rivalry between Nubar and Aharonian is known.<sup>557</sup> Their effectiveness is also judged in the most severe terms by one member of the ARF delegation: "It is a big error, detrimental to the Armenian people and nation, to judge them" according to the delegates in Paris.<sup>558</sup>

All these weaknesses, divisions and contradictions can only reduce the credibility of the Armenian committees in the eyes of the French government's officials, but their negative effect is exacerbated by the extreme aggressiveness of the emerging Armenia Republic. At the end of 1918, it attacks the neighboring Georgia. The Armenian army is defeated and this war between Republics supposed to be solidary against the Bolshevik threat is interpreted by British and French officers as a proof of ineptness.<sup>559</sup> In his Memoirs, Alexandre Khatissian, minister of Foreign Affairs (1918-1919) and Prime minister (1919-1920) of Armenia uses these illuminating words: "The Armenians were convinced by the righteousness of their cause. It has to be said: In spite of the cold and the famine, the war was popular. Intuitively, our people rushed to the issue blocked by Georgia. From there, he expected his bread; he expected his liberty to communicate with the external world."<sup>560</sup> The responsibility of the generalization ("our people") has to be left to Khatissian, but his description shows that the

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<sup>556</sup> James L. Barton, "The Effect of the War on Protestant Missions," *The Harvard Theological Review*, XII-1, January 1919, pp. 1-35.

<sup>557</sup> Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne : l'Arménie*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1929, p. 178. Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, pp. 367-371 omits most of these tensions inside the Armenian nationalism, but this hardly can be attributed to genuine ignorance, considering the scope of the late Beylerian's research in various archives and libraries.

<sup>558</sup> Jean Loris-Mélicof, *La Révolution russe et les nouvelles républiques transcaucasiennes*, Paris : Félix Alcan, 1920, p. 84.

<sup>559</sup> Georges Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes...*, p. 19.

<sup>560</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Éclosion et développement de la République arménienne*, Athènes : Publications de la F.R.A. Dachnaktoutioun, 1989, p. 133. Norman Stone, *Turkey. A Short History*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2007, p. 150, describes this attack as an example of "megalomania."

Dashnaks and those who support them in this regard consider that the best solution for a small, landlocked country experiencing a famine is not to find an agreement with its neighbors but to dislocate them and, as a result, to reach the seas.

This paradox between the actual capacities of the Republic of Armenia and its hostility toward its neighbors can be explained in one word: racism. The myth of the purity of blood helps to create an artificial unity of Armenians of Moscow and St-Petersburg, increasingly Russified, with Armenians of Çukurova, who speak Turkish more than Armenian, to ease the religious tensions between Gregorians, Catholics, Protestants and unbelievers, and so on. The belief in a racial superiority is also the update of the inordinate arrogance and violence of the Armenians of Zeytun, an essential center in the development of Armenian nationalism. Lieutenant Ferdinand Bennet, British vice-consul in Maraş, describes them in June 1881 as:

“a semi-barbarous and depraved community, little better than savages and so ignorant, self-opinionated and conceited that it is impossible to do any good with them by argument or persuasion. Strongly convinced that they are a Power of themselves, that the Turkish government is afraid of them, very excitable, reckless, idle to a degree and utterly ignorant of what goes on outside their own mountain.”<sup>561</sup>

In 1897, the French consul in Maraş hears from a Zeytun's Armenian: “I am not worthy of the name of Zeytunli; I killed three Turks only” (sic).<sup>562</sup>

The choice of Aryanist racism is congruent with the fashion in Russia under the last Romanov<sup>563</sup> and even more with Western supporters of the Armenian cause, such as Lord Bryce and Johannes Lepsius. Emerging in 19<sup>th</sup> century among the Armenian nationalists,<sup>564</sup> the Aryanist theories are widely spread among them in 1912-1914<sup>565</sup> and after 1914 they

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<sup>561</sup> Bilâl Şimşir, *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, volume II, 1880-1890, Ankara: TTK, 1989, p. 237.

<sup>562</sup> Copie d'un rapport du vice-consul de France à Marache à l'ambassade de France à Constantinople, 21 décembre 1897, AMAE, P 16739.

<sup>563</sup> Marlène Laruelle, « Le mythe aryen en Russie au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. La création d'une cosmogonie nationale, entre science et idéologie », *Revue des études slaves*, LXXIV-1, 2002, pp. 221-225.

<sup>564</sup> Mehmet Perinçek, *Ermeni Milliyetçiliğinin Serüveni*, İstanbul: Kaynak yayınları, 2015, pp. 31-40; Augustus W. Williams and Mgrditch Simbad Gabriel, *Bleeding Armenia: Its History and Horrors*, Chicago: Publishers' Union, 1896, p. 425.

<sup>565</sup> Frédéric Macler, *Autour de l'Arménie*, Paris : E. Nourry, 1917, pp. 181-192 (summarizing a book published in Armenian by the ARF's ideologue, Mikael Varandian, in 1912) ; editorial of *Haiastan*, organ of the ARF in Bulgaria, 19 August 1914, translated in *Aspirations et agissements révolutionnaires*

may be considered consensual. Both Mikael Varandian, the ideologue of the ARF, and Kourken Tahmazian, the Hunchak leader in France, justify their hostility to the Turks in explicitly racist terms, opposing the “Aryan race” and the “Turanian race,”<sup>566</sup> a racial opposition also claimed by the patriarch of İstanbul, Zaven, and with a barely less violent wording by the Armenian Delegations in Paris.<sup>567</sup> Bertha Papazian, author of a book promoted by the ABCFM, and Vartan Malcolm, whose book is promoted by Ambassador James Gerard (ACIA), too, support Aryanism.<sup>568</sup> These racist theories affirm that the Turks are congenitally criminal and unable to create.<sup>569</sup> Yet, such a racism has no connection with any “trauma,” not only because it emerges in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but also because the Persians, in spite of the reciprocal killings of 1918, are explicitly excluded from this racism,<sup>570</sup> and because the Kurds are attacked for strictly religious reasons: They are called “Aryans” during the world war, then, as early as 1919, Boghos Nubar signs an agreement with the first Kurdish nationalist leader, justifying it in alleging that Kurds and Armenians “belong to the same

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*des comités arméniens, avant et après la proclamation de la Constitution ottomane*, İstanbul : Matbaai Orhaniye, 1917, p. 155.

<sup>566</sup> Kourken Tahmazian, *Turcs et Arméniens. Plaidoyer et réquisitoire*, Paris : Imprimerie H. Turabian, 1919, p. 45 ; Mikael Varandian, *L’Arménie et la question arménienne*, Laval: Imprimerie G. Kavanagh & Cie, 1917, pp. 14-15 and 23-24 ; Mikael Varandian, *Le Conflit arméno-géorgien et la guerre du Caucase*, Paris : Imprimerie Flinikowski, 1919, pp. 32, 69, and 100-101.

<sup>567</sup> Letter of Zaven to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 18 February 1921, AMAE, P 16675; Délégations arméniennes réunies, Aide-mémoire pour la question du foyer national arménien, 20 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>568</sup> Bertha S. Papazian, *The Tragedy of Armenia. A Brief Study and Interpretation*, Boston-Chicago: The Pilgrim Press, 1918, p. 8, 23 and 43; Vartan Malcolm, *The Armenians in America*, Boston-Chicago: The Pilgrim Press, 1919, pp. 7-8.

<sup>569</sup> Aram Andonian, *Documents officiels concernant les massacres arméniens*, Paris : Imprimerie H. Turabian, 1920, pp. 161-168 ; Armenian Bureau of London, *The “Clean-Fighting” Turk*, London: Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & C°, 1918, pp. 52-53 and passim; Délégation nationale arménienne, *Mémoire sur la...*, pp. 9-13; Avetoon Pesak Hacobian, *Armenia and the War*, London-New York-Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917, pp. 38-39, 44-47 and 56-61 ; Jean Loris-Mélicof, *Les Nouvelles Républiques...*, pp. 4-5, 30-31, 161 and 176; H. Seignobosc, *Turcs et Turquie*, Paris: Payot, 1920, pp. 218-233; Aram Turabian, « La vipère turque », *Aiguillon*, 25 avril 1919, p. 4; Nevzat Uyanik, *Dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Britain, American and the Armenian Question*, London-New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 70 (quoting a note of Vahan Cardashian written in 1917).

<sup>570</sup> Jean Loris-Mélicof, *Les Nouvelles Républiques...*, p. 161, calls them “peaceful” (sic). Similar affirmation in Armenian Revolutionary Federation, *L’Action du Parti S. R. Arménien dit « Daschnaktzoutioun »*. 1914-1923, Paris : Vostan, 1923, pp. 11-12 ; and Kourken Tahmazian, *Turcs et Arméniens...*, p. 9.

Aryan race” (see below). In fact explicit racism can be found in the dominant Armenian nationalist narrative until today.<sup>571</sup>

Yet, this racism has a very concrete consequence on the aims and actions of the Armenian committees, as well as on their relationship with France. Deeply thinking they belong to “the Aryan race,” the Armenian nationalists see no reason to care about the demographic balance, or even about the plans of the French authorities, and constantly ask for Çukurova to be included in the “Integral Armenia.” In their joint memorandum, Boghos Nubar (for the Armenian National Delegation) and Avetis Aharonian (for the Delegation of the Armenian Republic) claim “The four Cilician Sanjaks, i. e. : Marash, Khozan, (Sis), Djebel-Bereket, and Adana, including Alexandretta,” in addition to the existing Armenian Republic, “The seven Vilayets of Van, Bitlis, Diarljekir, Harpoot, Sivas, Erzerum and Trebizond [...], excluding there from the regions situated to the south of the Tigris and to the west of the Ordu-Sivas line,” Kars, Ardahan and the south of Georgia. They justify these extreme claims in affirming that “Armenians are the only element in Armenia capable of setting up a civilized and free State.” The irrationality of the claims goes further when they state that “Cilicia [...] is essentially Armenian and that it has always [sic] constituted an Integral part of Armenia.”<sup>572</sup>

Yet, beside the fact that there never was any Armenian state between the 14<sup>th</sup> century and 1918, the British High Commission at İstanbul estimates in 1919 that the population of the “Cilicia” claimed by Nubar and Aharonian was made in 1914 of 436,000 Muslims (72.3% of the total), 130,000 Armenians (21.56%), 21,000 Greeks, 1,000 Assyrians, 1,000 Maronites and Roman Catholics, as well as 14,000 Jews and “miscellaneous.”<sup>573</sup> Opposing to the Turks the false figures of Krikor Zohrab (who used the misleading pen name of Marcel Léart),<sup>574</sup>

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<sup>571</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, “Children as Victims of Genocide: The Armenian Case,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, V-3, September 2003, p. 423 (“the Ottoman Turks were quite appreciative of the value of the gene pool that Armenian children embodied”).

<sup>572</sup> Avetis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar, *The Armenian Question Before the Paris Peace Conference*, New York: The Armenian National Union of America, 1919, pp. 7-11. Also see « La population du futur État arménien », *Bulletin arménien*, 15 juillet 1919, pp. 2-3 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, p. 215; and Kévork Mesrob, *L’Arménie au point de vue géographique, historique, ethnographique, statistique et cultural* [sic], İstanbul, 1919. Even the small “Armenian Center of Brazil” presents a similar claim: Le ministre de France au Brésil à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 23 février 1919, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>573</sup> Meir Zamir, “Population statistics of the Ottoman empire in 1914 and 1919,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVII-1, January 1981, pp. 102 and 104.

<sup>574</sup> Even a supporter of the “Armenian genocide” label has demonstrated that the figures of Zohrab are actually different from the ones of the patriarchate, and that these late figures are not the best:

Kourken Tahmazian also invokes an “intellectual superiority” of the Armenians to justify his claims for an “Integral Armenia,” insisting on Çukurova as much as Nubar and Aharonian do.<sup>575</sup> An even clearer sign of the importance of this region is the booklet written in 1919 by Vahan Kurkjian (one of main leader of the AGBU in the United States), entirely devoted to the justification of the claims toward Adana, Mersin and the neighboring towns.<sup>576</sup>

It may be argued that this insistence is due, at least for a significant part, to the support of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson for an “Integral Armenia,” during the first weeks of 1919 but the Wilson administration is divided (his Secretary of State seeing a mandate on Armenia and İstanbul as a burden for the American taxpayers).<sup>577</sup> Furthermore, there is a source that is too rarely cited: The recollections of Ambassador Henry Morgenthau. Morgenthau’s testimony has to be taken with special precautions, considering the numerous contradictions between his own archives and his so-called Memoirs from the İstanbul embassy.<sup>578</sup> But this is neither the same book nor the same context. Indeed, in his second volume of recollections (1922), Morgenthau affirms:

It [Morgenthau’s work in 1919] involved, among a mass of other details, many interviews with the Armenian and French representatives and the spokesmen of the other interested parties. The French were determined to have Cilicia; the Armenians would not consider my advice that they should surrender it, and, by this concession, win French support for their other ambitions.<sup>579</sup>

Morgenthau certainly tried to mislead his readers in his 1918 book, but lying against the Turks and Germans at that time in the U.S. was easy. Distorting the truth in 1922 against the Armenian nationalist leadership is the certitude to be answered mercilessly, including in mainstream media. Correspondingly, if key assertions of Morgenthau in his 1918 book are proved misleading by his own archives, it has been impossible to find any document

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Fuat Dündar, *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question (1878-1918)*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008.

<sup>575</sup> Kourken Tahmazian, *Turcs et Arméniens...*, pp. 6-30.

<sup>576</sup> Vahan Kurkjian, *The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia*, New York: American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, 1919.

<sup>577</sup> Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, pp. 89-96.

<sup>578</sup> Clinton Hartley Grattan, *Why We Fought*, New York: The Vanguard Press, 1929, pp. 250-251; Heath Lowry, *The Story Behind Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story*, İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990. Also see George Abel Schreiner, *The Craft Sinister*, New York: G. Albert Geyer, 1920, p. XXII: “at best a record of backstairs gossip perpetuated by the mighty master of the house.”

<sup>579</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *All in a Lifetime*, New York: Doubleday, Page & C°, 1922, p. 337.

contradicting his affirmation of 1922—about his vain warning made in 1919. In other words, it seems that Nubar, Aharonian and the rest of the Armenian nationalist leadership—except Hovhannes Khatchazouni, Prime minister from 1918 to 1919 and Ruben Ter-Minassian (1882-1951)<sup>580</sup>—fail to understand what Morgenthau, an amateur diplomat, understands, and that they do not want to listen to him in this regard. One more time, only the deep belief that the Turks are racially inferior and could be defeated easily can explain such an irrational position. In fact, even a political scientist with a strong involvement in Armenian nationalism criticizes not only the exaggerated expectations of the Armenian delegates after 1918, expectations due to an absence of state tradition, but also “the underestimate by the Armenians in general of the Ottoman and Turkish elites, and of their long state, diplomatic and military tradition.”<sup>581</sup>

### 3.1.3. *The first clash (November 1918-March 1919)*

The signature of the armistice itself by the Ottoman Empire is far from favoring a climate of mutual trust. The ARF choses to express his disappointment brutally. Its ideologue and delegate for Europe Mikaël Varandian presents his “stupefaction” as Çukurova (“Cilicia”), eastern Anatolia (“the six Armenian vilayet”) “and even Transcaucasia” are left to “the Turkish troops.” He continues by an unequivocal threat to break the alliance: “When the unhappiest people [sic] will find justice? From whom?”<sup>582</sup> The Ramkavar prefers perfidy. On one side, its person in charge of PR, Archag Tchobanian, presents congratulations to Paris, but on the other hand, Boghos Nubar tells Sir Mark Sykes in Rome that he is “very troubled” by the conditions of the armistice regarding the Armenians and emphasizes that the Turks “know how to divide” the victorious powers. What Nubar does not expect, it is that Camille

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<sup>580</sup> Le capitaine Poidebard au colonel Chardigny, 26 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671 ; Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, volume I, p. 251.

<sup>581</sup> Gérard Chaliand and Yves Ternon, *1915, le génocide des Arméniens*, Bruxelles : Complexe, 2006, pp. 191-192 (part written by Gérard Chaliand).

<sup>582</sup> M. Mikaël Varandian, délégué en Europe de la Fédération révolutionnaire arménienne, à M. Stéphen Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 31 octobre 1918, in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*, p. 709.



Barrère, the French ambassador in Italy, obtains a copy of Sykes' telegram summarizing his conversation with the Ramkavar leader.<sup>583</sup>

In sum, when the armistice is signed, the alliance between the French Republic and the Armenian committees remains particularly weak. The military cooperation has led to no impressive result and there is no significant convergence in political aims; on the contrary, the temptation of Armenian nationalists to turn to London and even more Washington is already visible. This situation is indispensable to understand the next five years.

The rapidity with which the clash begins is particularly striking, and shows the primary responsibility of the Armenian committees. Indeed, and beside the facts already exposed, such as their weakness they cannot ignore, and the warning from Morgenthau, the interlocutors of the Armenian committees on the field are from being all determined adversaries, during the first months. In particular, François Georges-Picot, high commissioner in Beirut from autumn 1918 to autumn 1919, has changed partially his mind when he arrives in Lebanon. In November 1918, he advocates a military cooperation with Armenia to limit the cost of the occupation of Çukurova.<sup>584</sup>

A more obvious ally for the Armenian committees is Colonel Édouard Brémont, chief administrator in Çukurova from 30 January 1919 to 4 September 1920.<sup>585</sup> Brémont is clearly pro-Armenian,<sup>586</sup> even more during the first months of 1919 than in summer 1920. Misunderstanding the instructions he receives orally, he goes to believe he has to "facilitate the emigration" of the Turks from Adana.<sup>587</sup> However, it would be wrong to confuse Brémont with the Anglo-Saxon kind of Turkophobe: A former officer in Algeria then in Morocco and

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<sup>583</sup> M. Archag Tchobanian, président de l'Union intellectuelle arménienne, à M. Stéphen Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 30 octobre 1918 ; M. Camille Barrère, ambassadeur de France à Rome, à M. Stéphen Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 3 novembre 1918, *ibid.*, pp. 704-705 and 707-708.

<sup>584</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 4 novembre 1918, AMAE, P 16670.

<sup>585</sup> Édouard Brémont, *Historique résumé de l'installation et du fonctionnement des services administratifs dans les Territoires Ennemis Occupés nord (Cilicie)*, AN, 594 AP 5.

<sup>586</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en Cilicie*, Aix-en-Provence, éditions du *Feu*, 1929, pp. 23 and 32 ; Édouard Brémont, *Notes historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie*, Le Caire: Imprimerie El-Maaref, 1918. This book of Brémont is published and spread by the Ramkavar: Le secrétaire général de l'Union générale arménienne de bienfaisance à M. le colonel Brémont, administrateur en chef en Cilicie, 14 août 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

<sup>587</sup> Directive générale [janvier 1919], AN, 594 AP 5 (also in AMAE, P 17784).

an Agnostique personally, Brémond is a self-defined Islamophile who has graduated in Arabic.<sup>588</sup> During the First World War he tried, with the limited means he had received, to challenge T. E. Lawrence (“Lawrence of Arabia”) in the Arabic peninsula.<sup>589</sup> His prejudices toward Turks and Armenians are ethnically and politically, not religiously, rooted. They are aggravated by his virtual absence of coordination with İstanbul and Beirut and the fact that he never leaves Adana to investigate the situation by himself.<sup>590</sup>

Brigadier General Jules Hamelin (1866-1958), who commands the French army in the Near East from October 1918 to October 1919, is never a friend of Armenian nationalism, but his recurrent disputes with High Commissioner Georges-Picot, by January 1919, diminish his effectiveness.<sup>591</sup> Albert Defrance, high commissioner in İstanbul from January 1919 to December 1920, is not hostile to a viable Turkey, in Thrace and Anatolia. On the contrary, in 1920, he calls the draft of the Sèvres treaty criminal.<sup>592</sup> But Defrance is not an authority in Turkish affairs: He never was consul general or chargé d’affaires in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>593</sup> To make his situation only more difficult, his Greek wife and his British son-in-law are used by the British High Commission against his attempts to defend the Turks.<sup>594</sup> The most understandable choice of the Quai d’Orsay would have been to appoint Auguste Boppe, former consul general in Jerusalem and chargé d’affaires in İstanbul (described in the introduction). The reasons why the Quai d’Orsay does not listen to the desperate demands

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<sup>588</sup> Le préfet de Constantine à M. Brémond capitaine d’état-major de Constantine, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1904 ; Édouard Brémond, Résumé des services [1931] ; A. Pellegrin, « Un ami de l’Islam — Le général Édouard Brémond », *La Tunisie moderne*, n° 1, 1950, pp. 21-24 (press clipping), AN, 594 AP 1 ; Lettre d’Édouard Brémond à Albert Defrance, 18 octobre 1916, AMAE, 56 PA AP 2.

<sup>589</sup> Paul Le Pautremat, « La mission du colonel Brémond au Hedjaz, 1916-1917 », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 221, 2006, pp. 17-31 ; Rémy Porte, « Lawrence d’Arabie et le colonel Brémond au Hedjaz : entre guérilla, subversion et lutte d’influence », in François Cochet and Olivier Dard (ed.), *Subversion, anti-subversion, contre-subversion*, Paris : Riveneuve, 2009, pp. 95-105 ; Rémy Porte, « Le colonel Brémond et la mission militaire française au Hedjaz (1916-1919) : entre intérêts britanniques et ambitions hachémites », *Les Cahiers de l’Orient*, n° 117, hiver 2014, pp. 67-85.

<sup>590</sup> Édouard Brémond, Note, mi-juin 1920 ; Général Henri Gouraud, Notes inscrites sur le feuillet individuel de campagne du colonel Brémond, 12 octobre 1920, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191 ; Note de M. [Charles] Escande, mars 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>591</sup> Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministère de la Guerre, 13 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 1426 ; Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, Ankara : TTK, 2005, p. 67.

<sup>592</sup> Lettre du général Gouraud à Robert de Caix, 2 juin 1920, AMAE, P 11203.

<sup>593</sup> On his career: « Mort de M. Albert Defrance », *Le Temps*, 21 janvier 1936, p. 6.

<sup>594</sup> Commission des Affaires étrangères, 27 décembre 1920, Audition de M. Franklin-Bouillon, p. 6, Archives du Sénat, Paris, 69 S 268.

of Boppe, now ambassador in China (from 1918 to his death, in 1921), to leave this country,<sup>595</sup> are a mystery.

Whatever could be these causes, a fact clearly appears: Instead of using the relatively favorable situation on the field to diminish the influence of the re-emerging lobby for a conciliation with the Turks, most of the Armenian nationalist leadership chose the conflict from the beginning.

The main object of the conflict is the fate of Çukurova ("Cilicia"). As early as 25 December 1918, a note of the MFA reiterates the opposition to the inclusion of this territory in the Republic Armenia, arguing that the Armenians are in minority in eastern Anatolia and already were in most of this territory in 1914. Even for Van, Bitlis and Erzurum, it would be "difficult." The note continues in observing with a certain concern that "the most violent" of the Armenian nationalists advocate the expulsion of the Turkish/Muslim majority, an unacceptable method. That is why, explains the note, the French government has not endorsed the claim for the independence of an Armenia from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>596</sup> Three days later, Pichon informs the High Commission in İstanbul: "Regarding Cilicia, you may relieve the Muslims [who do not want to be included in an Armenia state]; France being a great Muslim power, she will never permit that their legitimate interests be sacrificed."<sup>597</sup> Then, having received a police report on a meeting organized by Ramkavar leader Archag Tchobanian, the MFA concludes that Tchobanian "opposes the intellectual friendship of France and the material help from America."<sup>598</sup> The opposition is even more badly perceived at the Quai d'Orsay that this Ministry already has attributed 500,000 francs, from the special funds, for the Armenian refugees of the Caucasus, Iran and the Near East.<sup>599</sup> However, Çukurova is not the only issue. Colonel Pierre Chardigny, military representative in the Caucasus, is usually presented as pro-Armenian, and not

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<sup>595</sup> Notes annuelles 1919, AMAE, 394 QO 215.

<sup>596</sup> Note pour le ministre, 25 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 16670. Also see Note, 3 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>597</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au conseiller politique du Haut Commissariat de France à Constantinople, 28 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>598</sup> Conférence sur l'Arménie, 31 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 16670. The text of the lecture is published: Archag Tchobanian, *L'Œuvre américaine en Arménie*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1919.

<sup>599</sup> Note pour le ministre, 20 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 16670.

without good reasons,<sup>600</sup> but in January 1919, even Chardigny warns that an expanded Armenia is premature, considering the situation in the current Caucasian Republic. He suggests a federative Republic of the Caucasus and a territorial statu quo until Armenia recovers.<sup>601</sup>

Such documents enlighten the refusal, in January 1919, to accept the Armenian delegates at the peace conference for the time being. This decision provokes the “deep disappointment” of the (Ramkavar) Armenian national delegation and the Armenian National Union of Egypt (Ramkavar, Reformed Hunchak, Hunchak, ARF).<sup>602</sup> Correspondingly, the Italian branch of the Ramkavar sends two delegates, introduced by past President of the Ministers’ Council Luigi Luzzati (1841-1927), to express protests to the French ambassador in Rome, Camille Barrère. Barrère notes that “the Armenian activity in Italy” is supported by past Luzzatti “under the benevolent eye of the Italian cabinet.” Minister of Foreign Affairs Pichon answers in emphasizing (not unlike Chardigny) that an immediate independence is impossible, anywhere, and finishes by these words: “Regarding the indiscipline of the Armenian organizations, one can only notice it. That is almost impossible to bring remedy.”<sup>603</sup>

Indeed, instead of understanding that the balance of power is not in their favor, the Armenian nationalists begin to express hostility toward France. In January 1919, A. Courmyantz, a French citizen of Ottoman Armenian origin, warns the Ministry of Interior about “an anti-French and anti-Entente propaganda” by the ARF and the Hunchak. The police officer commenting his letter affirms that not all his claims are accurate, but that they are partly corroborated by the strong statement of Hunchak official Melik Serge David-Beg (1870-1938) against the Sykes-Picot agreement in a public meeting, on 4 January 1919.<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>600</sup> Le colonel Chardigny, attaché militaire français à l’état-major russe du Caucase [1918], SHD, 7 N 800.

<sup>601</sup> Le colonel Chardigny, commandant le détachement français du Caucase, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, état-major de l’armée, 2<sup>e</sup> bureau, 6 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>602</sup> Télégramme de l’Union nationale arménienne d’Égypte à M. Clemenceau, 9 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>603</sup> Télégramme de Camille Barrère au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 25 janvier 1919 ; Télégramme de S. Pichon à Camille Barrère, 30 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 16670. Also see Camille Barrère, La question arménienne, 12 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671. For samples of similar reactions in the U.S.: “Armenia and the Peace Conference,” *The New Armenia*, April 1919, pp. 63-64.

<sup>604</sup> A. Courmyantz, À Monsieur le chef de la Sûreté, 26 janvier 1919 ; Au sujet d’un mouvement d’opinion arménienne, 28 février 1919, APP, BA 2146 (also in AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436).

The clash intensifies the next month. On 15 February, Avetis Aharonian meets Jean Herbette (1878-1960), foreign policy editor of *Le Temps*, namely the unofficial voice of the MFA (actually, Herbette finishes his professional life as ambassador, first in Moscow, then in Madrid).<sup>605</sup> Aharonian insists on the inclusion of Çukurova (“Cilicia”) in the Armenian state, but Herbette consistently and unequivocally opposes the idea: “I am very sorry that, even before she is organized, Armenia has taken imperialistic airs.”<sup>606</sup> Less than two weeks later, Herbette publishes an editorial entitled “The Armenian Empire.” The tone is certainly not yet the one of 1921, but the content is clear: The Armenian nationalists are too ambitious, in territorial terms; an “Integral Armenia” would have a Muslim majority.<sup>607</sup> This editorial seems even more inspired by the Quai d’Orsay as about twenty-four hours before it is published, Jean Gout, deputy director for Asia, writes (or orders to write) a note reiterating the MFA’s opposition to the Armenian nationalists’ ambition in and around Adana. Even historically, argues this text, the claim is baseless.<sup>608</sup> Gout easily convinces his minister, Pichon, who answers the proclamation of the “Integral Armenia” in Yerevan in requesting the chief the military mission in the Caucasus, Chardigny, to do the necessary against the action of “megalomaniacs” who ask for “a huge Armenian Empire where only the Armenians would miss.”<sup>609</sup> Regardless, Archag Tchobanian for the Ramkavar, Mikael Varandian and Vahan Cardashian for the ARF, maintain their claims intact.<sup>610</sup>

Similarly, the representative of the French High Commissioner (Consul) in Trabzon, Paul Lépissier (1884-1954), calls “foolish” the project of an Armenia from the Black sea to Mediterranean sea and “extremists” the Dashnaks: After interviews with the ARF leaders in Istanbul, “I was struck by their absolute incomprehension of the realities, most of them

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<sup>605</sup> On Herbette: Yves Denéchère, *Jean Herbette (1878-1960). Journaliste et ambassadeur*, Berne-Paris : Peter Lang/Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2003.

<sup>606</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary,” *Armenian Review*, Part I, XV-3, Autumn 1962, pp. 5-6 (quotation p. 6).

<sup>607</sup> « L’Empire arménien », *Le Temps*, 28 février 1919, p. 1.

<sup>608</sup> Note sur quelques cartes de l’Arménie, 26 février 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 8. Also see Maurice Bompard, Note sur la Cilicie et le Kurdistan, 9 mars 1919, AMAE, 417 PA-AP 57.

<sup>609</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au ministre de la Guerre, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>610</sup> Réunion arménienne du 28 février 1919; Telegram of Vahan Cardashian to the Quai d’Orsay, 18 March 1919, AMAE, P 16671. Varandian receives “frenetic applauds” from the audience. The texts of the speeches are published more than one year later, in July 1920: *Pour la libération de l’Arménie*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1920.

display a narrow patriotism, and a chauvinism which could quickly become aggressive.” The ARF, continues Lépassier, blames the Entente’s governments for being too soft in the probes against “the perpetrators of massacres and looting” and for having given more satisfactions to the Syrians—as the ARF “feels contempt only” for these Arabs. France is the most targeted, as Paris made no clear statement on the future independent Armenia, but the ARF is also embittered against Boghos Nubar for having not obtained what the Dashnaks expected him to obtain<sup>611</sup> (likely territorial guarantees and more money). The consul general in Alexandria reports similar grievances from the “Armenian community of Egypt.”<sup>612</sup>

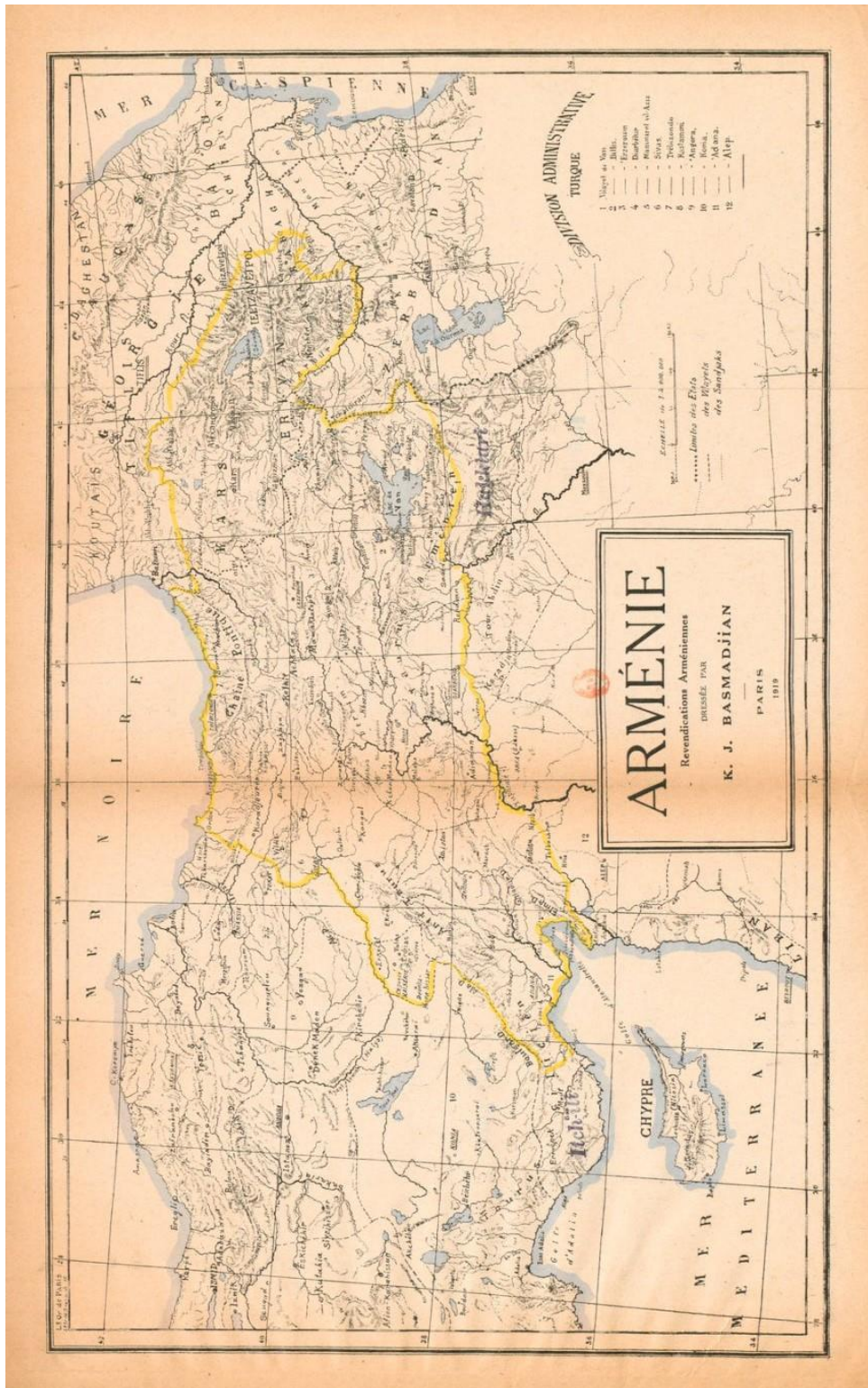
In sum, at the beginning of 1919, only Aram Turabian finds acceptable the French point of view, arguing that the Armenian National Delegation had not opposed the Sykes-Picot agreements between the moment they have been revealed (1917) and the signature of the armistice at Moudros.<sup>613</sup> To make the tensions only more intense, the representative of France in Tehran warns

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<sup>611</sup> Télégramme de Paul Lépassier, 3 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671 (also in CADN, 36 PO/1/9). Lépassier is today mostly remembered for his early (September 1940) participation to the Charles de Gaulle’s *Free France*.

<sup>612</sup> Le consul général de France à Alexandrie à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>613</sup> Translation into French of an editorial of Turabian in *Aiguillon*, 23 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 16670.



Map 2: The territorial claims presented in 1919 by the United Armenian Delegations

against the claims of the Armenian delegates toward Urmia, arguing that the Iranian administration here certainly was bad, but an Armenian domination would be no better for the protégés of France, the Chaldeans. As a result, he advocates a support for the Iranian point of view.<sup>614</sup>

An event which is never mentioned, still less commented, in the publications supporting Armenian nationalism and studying its relations with France<sup>615</sup> is the end of *La Voix de l'Arménie*. On purpose, this bulletin has not been discussed until now. In April 1916, Avetis Aharonian recommends to re-start the publication of *Pro Armenia*<sup>616</sup> but the proposal is not implemented. At the end of 1917, the (Ramkavar) Armenian National Delegation obtains the creation, with a semi-official endorsement (as shows the patronage committee, where Clemenceau himself is present) of *La Voix de l'Arménie*, which is in practice its bulletin for the French politicians, journalists, etc.<sup>617</sup> The first issue is printed in January 1918. Yet, suddenly, and without any explanation, the fortnightly review becomes a monthly in January 1919, then the last issue is published in February, one more time without explanation. This cannot be a mere coincidence, still less as the conflict cristallizes in Çukurova at the same time, even more than in Paris. The main reason is the behavior of the Armenian legionnaires.

By November 1918, the Eastern Legion is sent from Lebanon to Çukurova, its presence in Lebanon, particularly an armed clash of its Armenians with local Arabs, undermining the French domination.<sup>618</sup> Not surprisingly, the military governor of İskenderun urgently asks for

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<sup>614</sup> Le ministre de la République en Perse à Son Excellence le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>615</sup> Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique*, Beyrouth: Imprimerie catholique, 1945 ; Edmond Khayadian, *Archag Tchobanian et...* ; Claire Mouradian (ed.), *Arménie, une passion française. 1878-1923*, Paris : Magellan & Cie, 2007 ; Philippe Videlier, "French Society and the Armenian Genocide," in Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide. Cultural and Ethical Legacies*, New Brunswick-London, 2007, pp. 325-333.

<sup>616</sup> Report of the Parisian office of the Okhrana, April 1916, Hoover Institution, Stanford, Okhrana records, reel 385. Thank you to Jean-Louis Mattei for the translation.

<sup>617</sup> Boghos Nubar Pacha, président de la Délégation nationale arménienne, à M. Anatole France, 6 décembre 1917 ; Boghos Nubar Pacha, président de la Délégation nationale arménienne, à M. Jean Gout, sous-directeur d'Asie au ministère des Affaires étrangères, in Arthur Beylerian, *Les Grandes Puissances...*, pp. 428 and 652-653.

<sup>618</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 21 novembre 1918 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 24 novembre 1918 ; Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministre de la Guerre, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1919, AMAE, P 1426 ; Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Lebon au sujet des incidents survenus le 18 novembre au soir à Beyrouth, 30 novembre 1918, SHD, 4 H 3, dossier 5.



Algerian *tirailleurs* as early as 12 December 1918, because it is “impossible to secure order” with Armenian legionnaires and four days later, he is alarmed by “the acts of terrorism by Armenian soldiers” (“threats, plunder, rapes”).<sup>619</sup> The Eastern Legion is divided in January 1919 between an Armenian Legion (in today’s Turkey) and a Syrian Legion (in Lebanon).<sup>620</sup> On 24 February 1919, Brémond forwards to the High Commissioner in İstanbul a list of almost thirty cases of hold-up or plunder, as well as one affair of death threats against the inhabitants of a whole quarter—all perpetrated by Armenian legionnaires—and the murder of four Turks by Armenian civilians. These crimes have been committed between December 28, 1918 and February 15, 1919.<sup>621</sup> The connection between civilian and military Armenian criminals is clear. In particular, in January 1919, when the Armenian Legion arrives at İslahiye, its members steal 300 Mausers and distribute them in the Armenian population.<sup>622</sup> Yet, the list of Brémond is not comprehensive. Gustave Gautherot, a leading and well-informed French officer, mentions the assassinations of eleven (possibly twelve) other Turks by Armenians (mostly legionnaires) as well as one case of racketeering followed by rapes—in January 1919 alone. Seven of these legionnaires, who vainly resist with their rifles, are killed by Algerian *tirailleurs*, sent to restore order, and these soldiers are congratulated by their hierarchy.<sup>623</sup>

Gautherot also explains that the Armenian legionnaires occupying Belen (south of İskenderun) are replaced by Algerian *tirailleurs* after an assault of Turks by two of these legionnaires, a serious affair of indiscipline after the perpetrators are incarcerated and the murder of another Turk, the investigation having failed to identify the perpetrators precisely but having concluded that they are Armenian legionnaires—all these events taking place in December 1918.<sup>624</sup> To the cases listed by Brémond and Gautherot, at least a double murder

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<sup>619</sup> SHD, 4 H 8, dossier 3.

<sup>620</sup> Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>621</sup> CADN, 36 PO/1/9.

<sup>622</sup> Commandant Morbieu, Renseignement, n° 10, 2 février 1920, AN, 594 AP 4.

<sup>623</sup> Gustave Gautherot, *La France en Syrie et en Cilicie*, Courbevoie : Librairie indépendante, 1920, pp. 146-150.

<sup>624</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142. Confirmations in Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France s’est installée en Syrie (1919-1920)*, Paris : Plon-Nourrit, 1922, pp. 54-55 ; and Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, p. 236. Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique...*, p. 31 and Stanley Kerr, *The Lions of...*, pp. 281 and

of Arab traders from Damas, “mercilessly killed” by Armenian legionnaires, to steal their cash (30,000 Ottoman liras), and an unknown number of assaults near Pozanti, in February 1919, have to be added.<sup>625</sup>

This series of crimes is not unnoticed. As early as December, a note of the Quai d’Orsay for minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon summarizes the situation in the Near East and warns against the “unfortunate incidents” which “certainly will be exploited against us” by the “Anglo-Egyptians” and Italians.<sup>626</sup> Similarly, High Commissioner François Georges-Picot, seeming to regret his pro-Armenian hopes of November 1918, calls “a fault” the use of Armenian units only in Çukurova, because of the tensions of Armenians with Turks and Greeks, tensions fuelled, in the case of the Turks, by the “murders” committed by Armenian legionnaires. Georges-Picot continues in exposing the risk that “the English—our adversaries” take Anatolia as a whole and use Feysal (the *bête noire* of the MFA) to control Syria.<sup>627</sup> These crimes are taken even more seriously as the French authorities know they are far from being spontaneous. Indeed, in a retrospective note written in 1920, Brémont gives this important precision that, as early as the first weeks of 1919, “the French military police, made of Armenian legionnaires belonging to the Reformed Hunchak Party [...] favored all the misdeeds of the legionnaires and gave to their desertors all the means to shelter in Adana and to dress themselves as civilians.”<sup>628</sup> Considering the closeness between the Reformed Hunchak Party and the Ramkavar, the charge makes sense. Indeed, beside the fact that the Ramkavar has been the main responsible for the recruitment of the Eastern/Armenian Legion, the Ramkavar-dominated Armenian National Union incites, as early as the end of

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283, cite Gautherot positively, but omit the parts of his book on the crimes of the Armenian legionnaires.

<sup>625</sup> Chukri el Eyoubi, officier de liaison, au major Brayne, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1919, CADN, 1/SL/1V/128 ; Commandant Morbieu, Renseignement, n° 10, 2 février 1920, AN, 594 AP 4 ; CADN, 1/SL/1V/183.

<sup>626</sup> Note pour le ministre, 21 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>627</sup> 2<sup>e</sup> lettre à M. Pichon, 11 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 17784. Also see Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 19 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>628</sup> Historique résumé de l’installation et du fonctionnement des services administratifs dans les T[erritoires] E[nnemis] O[ccupés] nord (Cilicie), AN, 594 AP 5 (confirmation in a letter from the same Brémont to the director of political affairs of the MFA, 1 March 1919 : AMAE, P 16671). In his published self-justification he omits both the (partial) list of crimes perpetrated between November 1918 and February 1919 he had forwarded to İstanbul and his own remark on the role of the Reformed Hunchak Party: Édouard Brémont, *La Cilicie en 1919-1920*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1921, pp. 7-26.

1918, the legionnaires to attack the Turks and to disregard the contra orders of the French officers.<sup>629</sup>

It is not a surprise: Only a policy of ethnic cleansing could change the demographic balance in Çukurova, and the argument of “revenge” is particularly weak, as “in the absence of a large Kurdish population, no massacre took place in Cilicia, and a substantial part of the Armenian exiles sent to southern Syria and Palestine survived.”<sup>630</sup> Brémond himself seems having been aware of the actual conditions in the camps of Syria and Palestine.<sup>631</sup>

Yet, the desertions become common as early as January 1919,<sup>632</sup> and, in spite of the multiplication of the court cases in front of the newly established French military tribunal (*conseil de guerre*) of Adana and of the firing of legionnaires,<sup>633</sup> the lack of manpower makes the repression particularly difficult. For example, the trial of two legionnaires who committed on 19 January 1919 a “collective theft on a public road, with weapons” takes place six months after the crime, and if they are sentenced to life-term hard labor, this is in absentia.<sup>634</sup> Brigadier General Hamelin complains about the “derisory numbers” he has in December 1918, but Paris begins to react one month later only, and then the British command blocks, until spring 1919, the arrival of three battalions of infantry and four squadrons of cavalry.<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>629</sup> Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, p. 136 ; Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France...*, p. 54 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, p. 165. Another possible cause is the attitude of the Catholicos of Cilicia, who, in a telegram to Nubar, on 21 January 1919, calls “the Turkish administration” in the province of Adana “an insult to our martyrs,” without feeling insulted, of course, by the crimes of the Armenian Legion (AMAE, P 16670).

<sup>630</sup> Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005 pp. 186-187, 202-203, 218-220 and 252 (quotation p. 252). For confirmations: Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia. 1914-1923*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, p. 82; *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*, London-New York-Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1916, p. 652; Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, London-Bombay-Sidney: Constable & C°, 1922, p. 312, n. 1.

<sup>631</sup> Note du colonel Brémond, 16 janvier 1918, SHD, 16 N 3195.

<sup>632</sup> Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, p. 149.

<sup>633</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149 ; Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministre de la Guerre, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1919, AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>634</sup> Conseil français des troupes du Levant — Jugement, 27 juin 1919, CADN, 1/SL/1V/183.

<sup>635</sup> Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministre de la Guerre, 5 décembre 1918 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, à M. le maréchal commandant en chef les armées du nord et du nord-est, 7 janvier 1919 ; Note, 3 mars 1919, AMAE, P 1426 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, p. 301.

To only worsen the situation, Boghos Nubar presents in January a list of unsubstantiated claims against French officers, such as a difference of revenue with the Algerian soldiers, a difference which is actually due to the longer time these North African *tirailleurs* already have served under the tricolor flag. Visibly exasperated, Hamelin answers on 3 February point by point, then reiterates that he has been seized everyday, since November 1918, “both during their stay in Syria [Lebanon] and since their arrival in Cilicia” of “complaints, unfortunately most of the time founded,” for “thefts, hold-ups, pillages, murders, etc.”<sup>636</sup> Regardless, Hamelin has not seen anything yet.

On February 16, 1919, dozens of Armenian legionnaires clash with Algerian soldiers, and another group attacks the Turkish civilian population, killing, plundering and burning. The “canons and machineguns” of the French Navy have to be used to put an end to the mess, and, the next day, a group of prisoners tries an uprising. The French officer in charge has to open fire “to defend himself,” killing three and seriously wounding seven others. Algerian *tirailleurs* kill six other Armenian mutineers, to protect their officer. One sergeant is sentenced to fifteen years of hard labor for plunder, two legionnaires are sentenced to ten years, two to eight years and one to five years in jail. Twenty civilians are sentenced (between two months and two years in jail, depending on the cases) for deal in stolen goods. The fate of fifty-four other legionnaires, sent in front of the military tribunal, is difficult to know. Anyway, the whole 4<sup>th</sup> Armenian battalion is suppressed: 400 men are sent to a disciplinary battalion in Egypt, and the 400 remaining, considered “non-suspect,” are dispatched to other units. The Algerian *tirailleurs* have this cry from the heart to express their ire: “*Ces gens-là, c’est pire que les Boches !*” (“These people, it is worse than the Boches!”).<sup>637</sup> The consul of

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<sup>636</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et en Arménie, 3 février 1919, AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>637</sup> Télégramme de l’amiral Cassard au ministre de la Marine, 18 février 1919 ; Id., 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1919 ; Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 19 février 1919, AMAE, P 1426 ; Rapport du gouverneur militaire d’Alexandrette, 18 février 1919 ; Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Romieu, 28 février 1919 ; Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministère de la Guerre, 21 février 1919 ; Id., 27 février 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/126 ; Jugement rendu par le conseil de guerre de la Légion arménienne, n° 70, 26 février 1919 ; Id., 6 mars 1919 ; Id., 26 mars 1919, SHD, 11 J 3073 ; Le général Hamelin, commandant les Troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 22 mars 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6 ; Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, pp. 153-166. Gérard Dédéyan, « Le colonel Louis Romieu (1872-1943), la Légion arménienne, et le mandat français sur la Cilicie (1919-1921) », *Bulletin de l’Académie des sciences et des lettres de Montpellier*, XLIX, 2018, p. 6, mentions the attacks against the Algerians but not the ones against the Turks.

France at Port-Said sees the ex-legionnaires as a source of troubles and calls “an error” the attempt to “make the Armenian a soldier.”<sup>638</sup>

As a result, finishing a job that has begun as early as January, the British command discharges the Armenian Legion from its posts.<sup>639</sup> Georges-Picot observes that this measure “does not increase our prestige”<sup>640</sup> and “insists for sending a French troop which will permit to Colonel Brémond to maintain an equal balance between the Armenians and the Muslims elements and to have a force able to execute the orders,”<sup>641</sup> a barely implicit admittance that the Armenian Legion as a whole does not obey the orders easily. In mid-March 1919, the situation seems eased,<sup>642</sup> but the core of the problem remains. Indeed, as observes the intelligence officer of Adana, “many Armenians [of the city] say that if Cilicia is not given to the Armenians, the biggest injustice of history [sic] will be committed as a result” and a “war,” they claim, could be declared soon or late by Armenia to the power controlling this territory.<sup>643</sup> On the other side, Brigadier General Hamelin warns that the Armenians are “a people not second to the Turks and Kurds in barbarity when he disposes of force [...] who dreams of revenge only, who is himself deeply divided by internal rivalries, who counts on the inexhaustible resources of France, to which he shows no gratitude, and will never show [...]”<sup>644</sup> With a less harsh wording, the chief of the Entente’s joint command, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, and his assistant, General (later Marshal) Maxime Weygand veto the transfer of Russian Armenian prisoners of war from Germany to the Republic of Armenia, because it

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<sup>638</sup> M. Laffon, consul de France à Port-Said, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 mars 1919 AMAE, P 16671. Also see: Le général commandant les T.F.L. à M. le président de l’Union nationale arménienne, Alexandrie, 22 mars 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>639</sup> Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, pp. 185-186 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, pp. 224-227.

<sup>640</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 9 mars 1919, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>641</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 13 mars 1919, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>642</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 mars 1919, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>643</sup> Renseignements du 4 mars 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/134.

<sup>644</sup> Copie, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, d’un télégramme chiffré du Caire, le 5 mars 1919, Commandant T.F.L. à Guerre, Section Afrique, 5 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

could only maintain the “effervescence” that dominates in a country “whose statute is still to be determined.”<sup>645</sup>

### **3.2. The conflict encysts (spring-summer 1919)**

#### *3.2.1. The Ramkavar and the ARF against France in Çukurova*

At the end of April 1919, Brigadier General Hamelin writes that the Armenian Legion still has three battalions (against four in January) but “the selection of the legionnaires is pursued.”<sup>646</sup> Indeed, the increasing number of the desertions incites at least a part of the officers on place to wish for massive resiliation of the contracts,<sup>647</sup> but an even bigger problem is the new series of crimes by Armenian legionnaires. Describing these crimes, Robert F. Zeidner claims that “French sources are utterly unrevealing” in this regard and “the great bulk of evidence [...] emerge from Turkish documents.”<sup>648</sup> Such a claim, in fact, shows an insufficient research in the French archives and over reliance on a few printed sources.

The first day of spring, a Turk is assassinated by an Armenian policeman, helped by Armenian legionnaires: The intelligence officer in Adana writes that the Armenian side is entirely responsible.<sup>649</sup> On 16 May 1919, a group of sixteen Armenian desertors resists the French authorities with weapons. Two are eventually sentenced in absentia, for armed rebellion and conspiracy, to twenty years of hard labor and twenty years of a ban of residence in Cilicia, two to fifteen of hard labor and twenty years of a ban of residence, one (who does not escape) to five years in jail and a last one, a minor, is returned to his parents and placed under probation until his twenty-first birthday.<sup>650</sup> However, the perpetrators do not escape always. On 27 May of the same year, the military tribunal of Adana pronounces two death sentences,

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<sup>645</sup> Le maréchal, commandant en chef les armées alliées, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 13 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>646</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le général commandant le XXI<sup>e</sup> corps d’armée, 22 avril 1919, SHD, 4 H 8, dossier 7.

<sup>647</sup> Le lieutenant Adge, commandant la première compagnie, à M. le commandant du 1<sup>er</sup> bataillon, 24 avril 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>648</sup> Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>649</sup> Renseignements du 21 mars 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/134.

<sup>650</sup> Jugement n° 65/180, 26 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/182.

one to five years of hard labor and 17 others to jail (between one and three years). None of them are sentenced in absentia; all the perpetrators are desertors from the Armenian Legion, who have left a concerted way their unit after having committed several crimes. The military prosecutor concludes that the trial has proved “their ignorance or their contempt for the most elementary rules of discipline” as well as the danger of the interferences of the Armenian committees.<sup>651</sup> Similarly, in the night from 4 to 5 June 1919, an official of the Ottoman railways is assassinated (29 stab wounds) by at least two Armenians, including an ex-legionnaire. The affair is left to the local justice and two perpetrators, one legionnaire and one civilian, are sentenced to death.<sup>652</sup> In spite of this repression, in spring and summer of the same year, legionnaires desert in the region of Mersin to “kill and loot the Turks.”<sup>653</sup> One of these desertors from Mersin is sentenced in absentia to 20 years of hard labor for burglary of state property in night time (committed in July), another one is sentenced to death (also in absentia) for the same crime and for an attempt of arson (also committed in July).<sup>654</sup> The simple that the French authorities of Mersin cannot catch these authors of crimes perpetrate against their property proves, one more time, the lack of troops, even after May 1919.

However, if the men lack, the information circulates. In a report to joint command of the Entente’s forces, Lieutenant-Colonel (soon Colonel) Louis Mougin (1873-1955), liaison officer to the Ottoman government,<sup>655</sup> writes that the Gregorian Armenians are “very indisciplined, of anarchic temperament, speaking about vengeance and reprisals only, outrageously nationalist, of an ambition difficult to justify, of a fear without example, constantly ungrateful, they don’t stop creating to the Allies the worst difficulties.” Regarding France, “the numerous incidents that were reported to me and those I witnessed during my travel

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<sup>651</sup> Jugement n° 79, 29 mai 1919, SHD, 11 J 3074 ; Télégramme, commandant Troupes françaises Cilicie à Général commandant T.F.L. à Beyrouth, 29 mai 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6 ; Le capitaine Genardi, commissaire du gouvernement, rapporteur près le conseil de guerre des troupes françaises de Cilicie à M. le colonel commandant les T.F.C., 30 mai 1919 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 16672. The death sentences are canceled on 20 June 1919 for defect of form. The kept copy of the new verdict does not contain the new sentence (SHD, 11 J 3074).

<sup>652</sup> Notice sur l’affaire Mouza Fareddine Bey, 7 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

<sup>653</sup> Renseignements, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1919, CADN 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>654</sup> Jugement par contumace, 20 septembre 1919 ; Jugement par contumace, 9 octobre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/183.

<sup>655</sup> On Mougin: Paul Dumont, « Un officier des forces d’occupation Françaises en Turquie: Le colonel Louis Mougin (1919-1922) », *IX Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara : TTK, 1989, volume III, pp. 1547-1563.

are typical.” The Armenian Legion “discredits our army” by its recurrent “thefts, plunders, assassinations.” “They [the Armenian legionnaires] have all the shortcomings of the soldier, none of his qualities,” and that is why the commander of the Armenian Legion considers its pure and simple suppression, as he told Mougin. Mougin adds: “The power that will be in charge of the protection of Armenia really will to be pitied; let’s wish it will not be France.”<sup>656</sup> With a less sharp tone, High Commissioner Albert Defrance forwards to the MFA a translation into French of a speech delivered by Caleb Gates, director of the Robert College, warning against the use of the Armenian Legion and opposing “the exaggerate pretensions presented by the Armenian delegation in Paris.” The diplomat reading this report in Paris writes in margins: “Faire lire à M. de Caix,” an indication that de Caix, a fierce enemy of the Armenian nationalism, is listened.<sup>657</sup>

The harshness of Mougin and the distrust of Defrance toward Armenian nationalism are even more understandable as the violence by Armenian legionnaires is fuelled from Ramkavars of Egypt, preaching rebellion: “Don’t rejoice the Turk or the French” (a self-explanatory parallel, in the context of anti-Turkish racism). On the other side, a letter from a legionnaire seized by the postal controls affirms: “France, this bitch, has hurted us a lot” and “They [the French officers] are well with the Turks.” Even more virulent, another legionnaire writes that “in their relations with the Armenians, they fell lower than the Turks.” Still another one complains that “the smallest fault from us is punished by 15 days in jail” and a third one and another one claims: “What France did to our nation is unspeakable.”<sup>658</sup> The common reaction of Hamelin is to fire the identified legionnaires.<sup>659</sup> He also contacts the British command in Egypt to silence the Ramkavars of this country, then asks the French cabinet to do the same,

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<sup>656</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Mougin, chef de la liaison militaire française près le ministère de la Guerre ottoman à M. le général en chef des armées alliées, 24 juin 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/10.

<sup>657</sup> M. Defrance, haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 5 mai 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>658</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les Troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le général commandant le XX<sup>e</sup> corps britannique, 20 mars 1919 ; Rapport du lieutenant Aulagne, président du contrôle militaire, sur la marche du service pendant la semaine écoulée, 30 mars 1919 ; Le lieutenant Aulagne, président de la commission de contrôle postal, à M. le général commandant les T.F.L., 17 mai 1919 ; Copie de télégramme au général commandant les T.F.L. [1919] ; Lettre retenue au contrôle sous n° 61 ; Lettre non signée à Gulassorian Danéale ; Lettre écrite par Mme Hasraf, Port-Saïd, à Bagdassarian, 1<sup>re</sup> compagnie ; Lettre à M<sup>lle</sup> Keuchéian, Le Caire [1919] ; Lettre recommandée conservée sous n° 60 [1919], SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6. The letters are too numerous to be all quoted.

<sup>659</sup> Le lieutenant Aulagne, président du contrôle postal, à M. le général commandant les T.F.L., 20 avril 1919 ; Le général Hamelin, commandant les Troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le commandant de la Légion arménienne à Adana, 28 avril 1919, SHD, 4 H 127, dossier 2.



arguing that the Armenian committees certainly were useful during the world war but now are a source of troubles only.<sup>660</sup> The ARF is also involved, as an issue of its organ published in Boston, *Hairenik*, is seized by the postal control, because of an article blaming France for the maintain of the Turkish administration and its officers for the encouragement to the legionnaires to ask for the end of their contract.<sup>661</sup> Without using such a violent wording, a joint letter of Boghos Nubar and Avetis Aharonian to the Quai d'Orsay blames the great powers for the epidemics and famine in Armenia<sup>662</sup>—as if the Yerevan's government and the embezzlement by the local officials of the Near East Relief were not the main cause.<sup>663</sup>

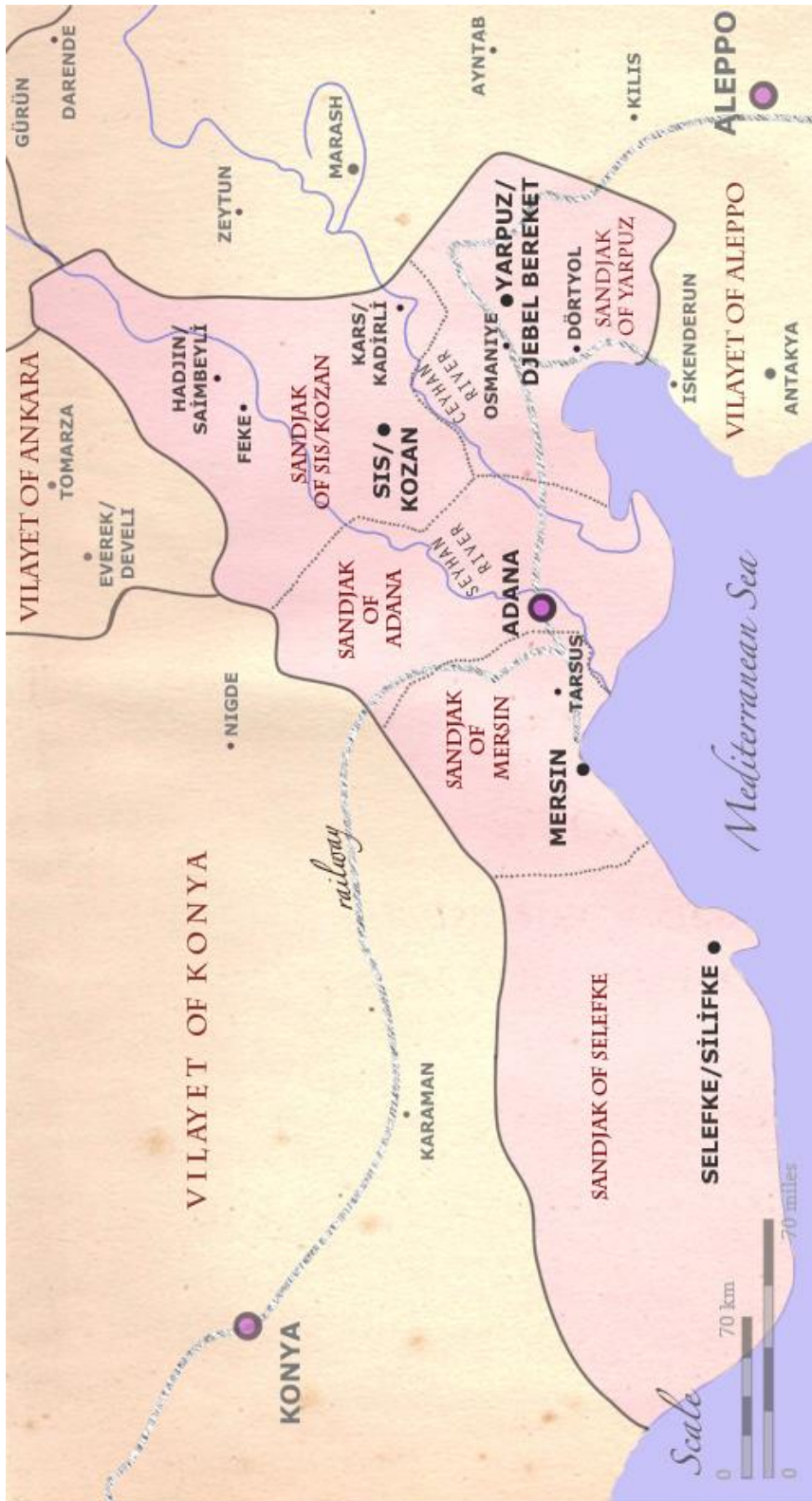
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<sup>660</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les troupes françaises au Levant, à M. le général commandant le XXI<sup>e</sup> corpds britannique, 20 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16673 ; Le général Hamelin, commandant les troupes françaises au Levant, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, section d'Afrique, 27 juin 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>661</sup> Traduction d'un article paru dans le journal arménien *Hairenik*, journal publié à Boston [1919], SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>662</sup> Lettre de Boghos Nubar et Avétis Aharonian à S. Pichon, 25 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671. Aharonian insists a bit more than a month later: Le président de la Délégation de la République arménienne à M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 mai 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>663</sup> Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover*, volume I, *Years of Adventure, 1874-1920*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951, pp. 386-387.



Map 3 Çukurova around 1919

Source: <https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottomanempire/vilayet-of-adana.html>

Another indication that the campaign is not an initiative of the Egyptian branch, is that after the attacks from Cairo stop, Azk, the organ of the Ramkavar in the U.S., continues the

Francophobic campaign, calling Brémond and his men “traitors to the Armenian cause and to the innocent blood” and the officers commanding the Armenian Legion “infernal sensualists” (sic) in its issue of 25 September 1919.<sup>664</sup> Letters preaching “revenge” against the Turks (including in “breaking” their teeth) are also sent from the U.S. to Armenian legionnaires, in June of the same year. They are blocked by order of Brigadier General Hamelin.<sup>665</sup> These sources on the crimes of the Armenian Legion and their causes also prove the particularly high level of bad faith reached by Paul de Rémusat (aka Paul du Véou), who retrospectively calls the spring and summer 1919 “a golden age” for Çukurova.<sup>666</sup>

Yet, these attacks seem more counter-productive than anything else, including among the few Frenchmen supporting the claims for an “Integral Armenia.” One of them, the writer Paul Poulgy, affirms, as early as April 1919, that the only responsables for the “conflict” between the Ramkavars and the French Republic are the Ramkavars themselves, chiefly Boghos Nubar and Gabriel Noradounkian. They are “men of plaster,” who have skipped from a power to another “like the harlot in search of a lover” since the world war and who do not accept any contradiction, even from other Armenians (reference to Aram Turabian). In sum, argues Poulgy, Nubar and Noradounkian are unable to understand that powers act according to their interests and that the Delegation should have given evidence to Paris that an “Armenian Cilicia” is in its interests.<sup>667</sup> The same month, Adrien Barthélémy (1859-1949), former vice-consul in Maraş then consul in Syria, now professor of Arabic at the School of Oriental languages (Paris), writes a letter to Georges Clemenceau against the attribution of Çukurova to Armenia and to warn him against “the anti-French intrigue” that characterizes the

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<sup>664</sup> A French translation of the article and an original copy of *Azk* (in Armenian) are in CADN 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>665</sup> Rapport du commandant Aulagne, président de la commission de contrôle postal, sur le fonctionnement du service du 1<sup>er</sup> au 7 juin, à M. le général commandant des T[rroupes] F[rançaises du] L[evant], 5 juin 1919 ; Le général Hamelin, commandant les T.F.L., à M. le colonel commandant les T[rroupes] F[rançaises de] C[ilicie], 7 juin 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>666</sup> Paul de Rémusat, « Cilicie (1918-1922) », *Revue des sciences politiques*, LIV, 1931, p. 352.

<sup>667</sup> Paul Poulgy, « Le différend franco-arménien en Cilicie — Les hommes de plâtre », *La France extérieure*, 10 avril 1919 (press clipping, AMAE, P 16671). The article is reproduced in Turabian’s monthly: *Aiguillon*, 25 avril 1919, p. 4.

Armenian nationalism at least since 1890s, as well as against the danger of the claims presented by its “megalomaniac” leaders for the general peace in the region.<sup>668</sup>

It is true that during the first days of July 1919 one Ramkavar leader of Adana, Mihran Damadian, asks his coreligionists “who absolutely want Cilicia” to continue to cooperate with the French,<sup>669</sup> but he changes his position the same month,<sup>670</sup> being not able to challenge the influence of ex-archbishop Moucheg Séropian (one of the main agitators responsible for the bloody events of 1909), back in Çukurova in April: Séropian provokes the day of his arrival “an indescribable enthusiasm.”<sup>671</sup> Yet, an intelligence note describes Séropian as follows, as early as 1919: “Gets involved with all the questions that do not concern him. Notorious Francophobe. Element of trouble among the Armenians.”<sup>672</sup> A bit more than three months after the return of Séropian, another intelligence officer advocates his “pure and simple” ban from residence: “If he remains here, he will lead the Armenian nation to ruin and will organize a violent anti-French propaganda that could cause troubles by the Armenians. [...] A pure and simple expulsion order, unceremoniously, would do the job and would render a very great service to the Armenians.”<sup>673</sup> Brigadier General Hamelin also blames him as one of the reasons for the desertions and indiscipline in the Armenian Legion, pointing his false grievances regarding the material situation of the legionnaires and his attacks against the “friendship” of French officers toward “the criminal and enemy Turkish nation” (these are Séropian’s words).<sup>674</sup> The reasons why the demand for a deportation is not implemented until March 1920 is, to this day, a mystery. The consulted archives and printed sources cannot explain this paradox. In particular, neither in his recollections nor in his public and private papers does Brémond provide an explanation on this point.

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<sup>668</sup> M. Adrien Barthélémy, consul de France en disponibilité, professeur d’arabe oriental à l’École des langues orientales, à M. Clemenceau, président du Conseil des ministres, 17 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>669</sup> Colonel Normand, Renseignements, 7 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

<sup>670</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>671</sup> Renseignements du 1<sup>er</sup> avril [1919], CADN, 1SL/1V/134.

<sup>672</sup> AN, 594 AP 4.

<sup>673</sup> Note, 12 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

<sup>674</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les Troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, 10 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

A smaller affair reveals that the pro-Armenian biases are not shared by all the officers in charge. Indeed, on 1 July 1919, an intellectual review publishes an article written by the wife of Commander Gaston Anfré, the governor of Mersin—a text based on her personal notes, from February to May of the same year. The author affirms that the French domination can be accepted by the Arabs, the Catholic Armenians and even the Turks, but hardly by the Gregorian Armenians “who hoped to rule Cilicia, where they represent a slim minority only.”<sup>675</sup> Vahan Portoukalian, second lieutenant of the Armenian Legion and son of M. Portoukalian, who has established the Armenakan Party in 1885 (an organization on its way to merge with the Ramkavar, the fusion being completed in 1921), writes a rather strange letter to François Georges-Picot, where he complains about the article but claims his intent to avoid any “polemic.”<sup>676</sup> This attitude pales in comparison with that of the ARF. Indeed, its organ in Adana, *Guiliguia*, tries to publish a wittingly inaccurate translation of Ms. Anfré’s article and changes the signature, to allege that it was actually written by her husband. The article is censored, and, informed by Brémont, Anfré sends a rebuttal, with the original article. Even more aggressively, the slanderous rumor is spread by a group from an unknown affiliation (it may be Dashnak or Ramkavar) that Anfré has regretted that “the Turks” have not massacred all the Armenians during the world war.<sup>677</sup>

One more time, and not unlike the Ramkavars, the Dashnaks use their Egyptian branch to preach rebellion. Indeed, their organ in Cairo, *Houssaper*, publishes an extremely vehement editorial, using the dispute with Mr. and Ms. Anfré as a pretext to blame “the consciousness of the civilized peoples, who are led by the worst versatility of the dominant classes” and “the vile material interest.” The Western powers, affirm the editorial bear all the responsibilities for all the suffering of the Armenians “for centuries” (sic). In quite a big confusion, *Houssaper* first denies that the Armenians are and were a small minority in Mersin, then admits it, but affirms that the Turkish majority has little, if any value, as this is “a half-savage race, naturally unfit for civilization.” The editorial finishes in attacking “the

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<sup>675</sup> L.-M. Enfrey, « Impressions de Cilicie », *La Revue mondiale*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1919, pp. 50-55 (quotation p. 54). Similar analysis in Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, pp. 187-188 and 191.

<sup>676</sup> Vahan Portoukalian à M. le haut-commissaire de la République française dans les Territoires ennemis occupés, 29 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

<sup>677</sup> Le commandant Anfré, gouverneur militaire du sandjak de Mersina, à M. l’administrateur en chef des T.E.O. nord (Cilicie), 13 août 1919 ; Id., 21 août 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/130.

infamous sophistry of the imperialists,”<sup>678</sup> a strange wording for a party using racist arguments to justify considerable territorial claims. Beside its dispute with Commander Anfré, the ARF, in Çukurova as a whole, “continues to make revolutionary and anti-French agitation,” including in threatening to death the *mudir* (director) of the Adana police, a noted Francophile.<sup>679</sup>

Such facts enlighten a retrospective assessment by an anonymous officer: “Used by necessity, by lack of French troops, in Cilicia, the Armenian legion caused many incidents, most of them tragic. It was a fighting troop; it was in no way a troop of occupation. [...] [The Armenian] is very patriotic, but his patriotism is essentially vindictive. If you give him weapons, he judges it is to slaughter the Turks [...] The modes of collective action which seem to him normal, it is the secret society, it is the conspiracy.”<sup>680</sup>

According to the French administration, the ARF counts 2,500 members and 5,000 supporters in Çukurova and has a budget of 22,000 Ottomans liras for the year 1919, largely coming from Yerevan. The party “desires to take power,” yet it has worked for the British Intelligence Service, as “a formidable instrument of Francophobic propaganda” and it defends “a nationalism pushed to the limit” added to “Bolshevik” ideas in economy. The Hunchak Party and its 4,500 members does not challenge—for now—the French domination, on the contrary<sup>681</sup> (if true, it shows a split between the Hunchaks of Adana and those of Paris). However, in mid-1919, this is the ARF and not the Hunchak which replaces the Ramkavar as the dominant force that the Committee of the Armenian National Union, and the use of the Union’s fund by the new staff is even more criticized by the French officers (and by a part of the Armenian population) than the management of the previous organization.<sup>682</sup> Yet, even before this local success of the ARF, more precisely on 31 March 1919, the central administration of the Quai d’Orsay has taken from its archives a copy of the report written on 11 October 1913 by Vice-Consul S. Zarzecki (Van), where the Dashnaks and the leaders of

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<sup>678</sup> M. Georges-Picot, haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie et en Arménie, à M. le colonel Brémont, administrateur en chef des T.E.O. (nord), 30 août 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>679</sup> Renseignements, 20 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129. Such clashes are never discussed in Arthur Beylerian, « L’échec d’une percée... », p. 370 (one laconic and tendentious paragraph on Çukurova).

<sup>680</sup> \*\*\*, « Le soldat syrien », *Le Correspondant*, 25 septembre 1924, pp. 867-868.

<sup>681</sup> [Commandant Morbieu], *Les partis politiques arméniens en Cilicie [1919]*, CADN, 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.* ; [Commandant Morbieu], *Rapport relatif à la lutte entre les hintchakistes et les dachnakistes, et au Mouvement arménien contre le C.U.N.A.*, 16 septembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/131.

the nomadic Kurdish tribes are described as the obstacles to order and prosperity in Van and Bitlis<sup>683</sup> (the same report that had provoked the vitriolic reactions of the İstanbul branch of the ARF, after it was published as an article). Such a reminder surely not improves the image of the Dashnaks in this Ministry.

It is incontrovertible that these tensions with the Ramkavar and the ARF do not prevent the mass repatriation of Armenians in Çukurova. The number of repatriated Armenians receiving a help in January 1920, when the repatriation has ended, is 40,751.<sup>684</sup> However, it is wrong to confuse this migration with an explicit or implicit support for the claims of the nationalists, even the ones of the Hunchak. It is even less an indication of cooperation that the Armenian National Union (Ramkavar, Hunchak, ARF) of Beirut illegally sales laissez-passer to Armenians and non-Armenians at an expensive price. A large part of the refugees themselves exasperates the French military in taking, against the regulation, alcohol and fabrics in their luggages, instead of restricting themselves to the strictly personal things. Moreover, for the intelligence officers of Adana “the overwhelming majority of the [Armenian] population does not belong to any party and constitutes an amorphous mass [...] ready to follow any tendency which dominates the situation.”<sup>685</sup>

Actually, in Haçin (today’s Saimbeyli), in spite of the past Armenian rebellions, the repatriation does not raise problems initially, neither with the French authorities nor even with the Turks, except the desertion of seven Armenian legionnaires, who are quickly arrested by order of the French local governor, Captain Ferdinand Taillardat<sup>686</sup> (the attacks by Armenians against Turks in and around this city begin in autumn). It is also true that the arbitration commission in Dörtyol is initially misled “false Armenian witnesses” and wrongly orders to give beasts and furnitures which actually belonged to Turks, but these wrong

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<sup>683</sup> AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>684</sup> Colonel Édouard Brémond, État des prévisions budgétaires mensuelles nécessaires au Service de l’Assistance aux déportés arméniens dans les T.E.O. nord, janvier 1920, pp. 2-4, AN, 594 AP 5. The decision of repatriation, including for Adana, has been taken by the Ottoman government in October 1918: Circular of Minister of Interior Ali Fethi, 23 October 1918, in Hikmet Özdemir and Yusuf Sarınoy (ed.), *Turkish-Armenian Conflict Documents*, Ankara: TBMM, 2007, p. 507.

<sup>685</sup> Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France...*, pp. 98-99 ; [Commandant Morbieu], *Les partis politiques arméniens en Cilicie [1919]*, CADN, 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>686</sup> Le capitaine Taillardat, gouverneur du sandjak de Khozan, à M. l’administrateur en chef, 17 juillet 1919 ; Télégramme du capitaine Taillardat au secrétaire général, Adana, 11 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129.

decisions stop in July 1919, when the commission realizes its error.<sup>687</sup> In Adana, the reaction is stronger: An Armenian is sentenced to one month in jail and 200 Ottoman liras of fine for having claimed a field he had freely sold before the First World War, as if this property had been illegally seized.<sup>688</sup> Turkish testimonies regardless blame the arbitration commissions,<sup>689</sup> but it seems that most of the abuses are concentrated to the period November 1919-February 1920,<sup>690</sup> which would be, in this case, a local reaction to the turn of the French policy and to the first difficulties of Armenian nationalism in the U.S. (see below).

Correspondingly, if the Armenian nationalists invite their coreligionists from central Anatolia (Konya and Kayseri in particular) to settle in Çukurova with the aim to change the demographic balance, even Antoine Poidebard, the generally pro-Armenian<sup>691</sup> officer in Yerevan warns, as early as April 1919, against this attempt to impose a “*fait accompli*”<sup>692</sup> a warning repeated in September by Lieutenant Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil (1894-1955), an intelligence officer working for the high commission in İstanbul until December 1919, then for the high commission in Beirut.<sup>693</sup> Brémond himself is likely not against an Armenian Cilicia as such,<sup>694</sup> and certainly bears a part of responsibility, if only for ignorance of the actual situation in central Anatolia, in the flow of internal immigrants from Kayseri (he initially

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<sup>687</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Normand, Rapport de l'enquête faite pendant le voyage du capitaine Ahmed, 16 juillet 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/129 ; L'Union nationale arménienne de Hadjine à M. le colonel Brémond, administrateur en chef des T.E.O. nord (Cilicie), 27 août 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/131.

<sup>688</sup> Tribunal militaire du sandjak d'Adana, 7 août 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/182.

<sup>689</sup> Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 132-135.

<sup>690</sup> Rapport du commandant Tommy Martin, 9 novembre 1920, pp. 1-2, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191.

<sup>691</sup> Antoine Poidebard, « Rôle militaire des Arméniens sur le front du Caucase après la défection de l'armée russe (décembre 1917-novembre 1918) », *Revue des études arméniennes*, I, 1920, pp. 143-161. This article is based on a report written by an officer of the Armenian general staff and sent to Paris by Poidebard on 28 April 1919: SHD, 16 N 3187.

<sup>692</sup> Le capitaine Poidebard au colonel Chardigny, 22 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>693</sup> Le lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil à M. Defrance, haut-commissaire haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, 13 septembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/10 (also in AMAE, P 16672). Lemaigre-Dubreuil is still remembered for his successful career of industrialist, and for his original political course, from a staunch conservatism (1930s) to liberalism (1950s), through nationalist Resistance during the WWII: Clotilde de Gastine, « La conversion libérale de Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil au Maroc (1950-1955) », *Outre-mers*, n° 364, 2009, pp. 345-365; William A. Hoisington, *The Assassination of Jacques Lemaigre Dubreuil. A Frenchman between France and North Africa*, London-New York: Routledge, 2004.

<sup>694</sup> Édouard Brémond, La Cilicie — Son avenir, 14 août 1919, AMAE, P 17783 ; Note de M. [Charles] Escande, mars 1921, AMAE, P 16675.



believes this flow is caused by unsafety)<sup>695</sup> but, on the other hand, he also finds the context of 1919 inopportune for such a massive immigration.<sup>696</sup> Concerning Georges-Picot, he remains relatively pro-Armenian until the emergence of the Kemalist movement, but his idea is to use the masses, not the political parties, in a concentration of population, not in an independent state or an “Integral Armenia.”<sup>697</sup> Any Armenian Cilicia would be, anyway, against the instructions from the Quai d’Orsay, as we already have seen. Eventually, in November 1919—when the French policy experiences a significant turn (see next chapter)—the service of repatriation blocks the undesired flow of immigrants.<sup>698</sup>

### 3.2.2. *Armenian nationalists for an American mandate*

As early as the first half of 1919, it is clear that the power the most likely to accept a mandate over Armenia is America, not only because of the support the maximalist claims of the Armenian delegations from most of the U.S. Protestant churches and because of the personal ideas of President Wilson, but also because unlike Britain, France and Italy, the U.S. have not suffered of the world war on their territory.<sup>699</sup> Initially the Quai d’Orsay does not oppose that much an extension of Armenia toward north-eastern Anatolia (we shall see the first sign of change in this regard at the beginning of October 1919) but, as it has already been seen, the Ministry is firmly against an “Integral Armenia,” even under an American mandate. As a

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<sup>695</sup> Le lieutenant Lemaige-Dubreuil à M. Defrance, haut-commissaire haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, 13 septembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/10 (also in AMAE, P 16673). For claims of unsafety by Mihran Damadian, see his telegram to Nubar, forwarded by Brémond and then by the high commission in Beirut, 8 September 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>696</sup> Le colonel Brémond, en permission, à M. le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et en Cilicie, commandant en chef de l’armée du Levant, 6 octobre 1920, AN, 594 AP 4. The forceful answer of Gouraud, on 8 November 1920, does not contest this specific point: AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191.

<sup>697</sup> Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France...*, p. 97 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route...*, p. 215.

<sup>698</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire. Les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l’entre-deux-guerres*, Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004, p. 60.

<sup>699</sup> Woodrow Wilson to Newton Diehl Baker (Secretary of War), 8 February 1919; Woodrow Wilson, Remarks to Members of the Democratic National Committee, 28 February 1919, in Arthur S. Link and alii (ed.), *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, vol. 55, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 27-28 and 322-324; James B. Gidney, *A Mandate for Armenia*, Oberlin (Ohio): Kent State University Press, 1967, pp. 77-82; Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America. The Creation of an Enduring Prejudice*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, pp. 271-273.

result, the Armenian nationalists' attempts for such a mandate have to be analyzed as another aspect of their conflict with the French Republic—as an attempt to use U.S., and a to a lesser extent the UK, against France.<sup>700</sup>

As early as March 1919, the (Dashnak) American Committee for the Independence of Armenia (ACIA) asks for an Armenia from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, with the American assistance or, if needed, mandate. As a result, the ACIA “with other Armenophile groups in Europe accused the French of conspiring with the Turks against the Armenians.”<sup>701</sup> James W. Gerard, the nominal chairman of the ACIA (the actual leader being, as we saw, Vahan Cardashian) argues in *The New York Times* (6 July 1919) for such a mandate, to help “The Armenian, an Alpine Aryan” to continue to be “a stumbling block in the way of Asiatic invaders toward the west” and “Armenia should not be mixed up with any other neighboring region or nation” (reference to Turkey).<sup>702</sup> Interestingly, even the word “France” is not used in the article, perhaps because Gerard knows that any reference would make the situation even more problematic than silence. Regardless, the same Gerard previously cabled the American delegation in Paris, on 26 April 1919, to accuse the French officers of joint persecution of the Adana's Armenians with the local Turks.<sup>703</sup> Whatever could be the reason, Cardashian uses the same arguments, particularly the claim that “The Armenians are European Alpines by race, one of the three principal branches of the Aryan family [...]”<sup>704</sup>

Boghos Nubar is somewhat more prudent in public, but as early as the end of 1918, in an interview to *La Libre Parole*, the example he gives as an inspiration for the independent Armenia he claims is Cuba, a “people the United States educated before launching them alone in the world.”<sup>705</sup> One step further, Archag Tchobanian calls for an American intervention and criticizes both the UK and France for “procrastinating” regarding the

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<sup>700</sup> Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 119-123.

<sup>701</sup> Gregory Aftandilian, *Armenia, Vision of...*, p. 29.

<sup>702</sup> *America as Mandatary for Armenia*, New York: The American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, 1919, pp. 5 and 10. Also see Cablogram of James W. Gerard to the White House, 5 March 1919, in Arthur S. Link and alii (ed.), *The Papers of...*, volume 55, p. 448.

<sup>703</sup> James B. Gidney, *A Mandate for...*, p. 89.

<sup>704</sup> *America as Mandatary...*, p. 27. Avetis Aharonian asks for a mandate “given to Britain or the United States”: Minute of conversation with Mr. Aharonian, 17 June 1919, in Tolga Başak (ed.), *British Documents on...*, p. 219.

<sup>705</sup> Kevork Aslan, *Armenia and the Armenians. From the Earliest Times until the Great War*, New York-Toronto-London: The MacMillan Company, 1920, pp. XXIII-XIV.

establishment of the Armenia he dreams.<sup>706</sup> Even more clearly, when Nubar writes to the American delegation to the Paris peace conference, in January 1919, he asks for a mandate of Washington.<sup>707</sup> Similarly, the same month, the U.S. Ramkavars endorse a letter to the *New York Times*' editor calling for "the American public opinion" against the speech of minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon regarding Çukurova. The author even accuses Pichon and his government to promote "friendship with the Turks."<sup>708</sup>

The position of the French authorities in this regard is simple: In June 1919, the postal control of the Armenian Legion blocks the arrival of an issue of *Hairenik*, because of an article describing the demands presented by the ACIA to President Wilson.<sup>709</sup> Even Colonel Brémond is somewhat alarmed, in spring, that "the Armenian opinion [in Adana] is turning to America."<sup>710</sup> Brémond's concerns are even more understandable as at least a part of the British officers in this city works to present France as "the greatest enemy of the Armenians" and "a second Germany." Yet, they seem to find a favorable field, as local Armenians "say bitter things against France" because of Çukurova but think that "America is here to protect" them. More particularly, "several members of the Armenian National Union," even if they approve the policy of repatriation and the Armenophilia of Brémond, "show themselves hostile to France." Reciprocally, the intelligence officer who writes these quoted reports calls these leaders "incapable" and "dishonest."<sup>711</sup> The Armenian Catholics themselves affirm to the King-Crane commission their wish of an U.S. mandate<sup>712</sup> and the "mercantile

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<sup>706</sup> "The Cause of Armenia," *The New Armenia*, May 1919, pp. 78-79.

<sup>707</sup> Ralph Elliott Cook, *The United States and the Armenian Question, 1894-1924*, PhD dissertation, The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, 1957, pp. 164 and 169-170. Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée... », p. 367, falsely presents Nubar as rather "favorable to a French support" and "mandate."

<sup>708</sup> Vahan H. Kalenderian, "Armenia and France," *The New York Times*, 12 January 1919, p. 38. Also see "Armenia's Supreme Appeal to Civilization," *The Armenian Herald*, February-March-April 1919, p. 124; Paul S. Leinbach, "America and Armenia" and "An American Mandate for Armenia," *The New Armenia*, August 1919, pp. 113-117.

<sup>709</sup> Le général Hamelin, commandant les troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le colonel commandant les troupes françaises en Cilicie, 24 juin 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

<sup>710</sup> Télégramme du colonel Brémond à François Georges-Picot, 10 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>711</sup> Note de renseignements, 25 mars 1919 ; Renseignements du 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1919 ; Renseignements du 6 avril [1919], CADN, 1SL/1V/134.

<sup>712</sup> Harry N. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission...*, p. 140.

philanthropy” of the American missionaries does not escape to the French military intelligence.<sup>713</sup>

These attempts to use Washington against Paris are not without contradictions. Until the end of 1919, they provoke a serious difficulty, including in the U.S., with Greek nationalists, who ask for Trabzon.<sup>714</sup> The difficulty is perhaps even more sensitive as President Wilson support Greek nationalism, too.<sup>715</sup> Remarkably, the most vocal criticism of this demand for an American mandate comes from Aram Turabian, whose hatred toward the Turks is not second to that of the Ramkavar or ARF. In his book trying to identify the reasons why Armenian nationalism has failed, Turabian explains that the Armenian National Delegation has misled the volunteers in claiming that Çukuruova would be detached from Turkey, then committed another “blunder” in asking Washington for the protection of an Integral Armenia. This second “blunder,” argues Turabian, “exposed us to the collective hostility of the powers.” He calls the policy of the Ramkavars “dementia” and emphasizes that it has been marked by “incompetence and inexperience.”<sup>716</sup> This is not merely a retrospective grievance: As early as 1919, he says the same.<sup>717</sup> Turabian’s publications certainly have to be used with special precautions, but his accusations are largely confirmed by the archives, and more basically by the failure of the Armenian nationalists. The main flaw of his reasoning in this regard is the lack of criticism toward the Dashnaks, particularly Vahan Cardashian.

Indeed, as early as 1919, the attempts to obtain an American mandate not only prove their ability to exasperate the French authorities but also begin to prove themselves fruitless. Indeed, President Wilson sends in eastern Anatolia an investigative commission chaired by

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<sup>713</sup> Le lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil, chargé d’une mission en Anatolie, à M. le haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, 4 août 1919, p. 3, CADN, 36PO/1/10.

<sup>714</sup> Télégramme de Paul Lépassier au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 29 mars 1919, AMAE, P 16671 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 729, 22 mai 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232; Bestami Bilgiç, “A Failed Project: The Ponto-Armenian Federation. 1919-1920,” *Bellefen*, LXXV/273, August 2011, pp. 549-557; Ioannis Hassiotis, “Shared Illusions: Greek-Armenian Cooperation in Asia Minor and the Caucasus,” in *Greece and Great Britain During World War I*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1985, pp. 146-157; D. E. Siramarc, *Armenia and the Pontus*, New York: The American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, 1919.

<sup>715</sup> Nevzat Uyanik, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, p. 94.

<sup>716</sup> Aram Turabian, *L’Éternelle victime de...*, pp. 66-70. Not surprisingly the Ramkavar historian Arthur Beylerian avoids any discussion on this point in « L’échec d’une percée... » Edmond Khayadjian, who is a Ramkavar author, too, is equally silent on that in *Archag Tchobanian et...*

<sup>717</sup> See in particular the article of Paul Poulgy already mentioned and reproduced in Turabian’s monthly.

Major General James G. Harbord (1866-1947). The result is hardly what the ACIA expected: Harbord presents a fair description of the Turkish national movement (see below about this actor), mentions a part of the massacres perpetrated against Turks and other Anatolian Muslims by the Armenians of the Russian army and is quite reluctant regarding a mandate on Armenia only.<sup>718</sup> The separate report of his collaborators Emory H. Niles and Arthur E. Sutherland is even more embarrassing for Armenian nationalism.<sup>719</sup> The result is the beginning of the end for the project of an American mandate, the U.S. administration being too divided between the adversaries of any mandate (such as Herbert Hoover), the proponents of an Armenian one (in particular Wilson himself) and those who consider necessary to take in charge all the territories from İstanbul to the Caucasus (such as Admiral Bristol).<sup>720</sup>

Yet, the hostility of the Armenian nationalists toward France is so strong, as early as 1919, that if America renounces, they “would prefer Great Britain.”<sup>721</sup> However, such a preference is particularly misguided, including for their own interests: Never the British cabinet considers a mandate on Armenia, and “even staunch [British] Armenophiles” find such a scheme impossible.<sup>722</sup>

A last point to clarify in the context of the Armenian nationalist activities in U.S. and the UK is the position of Georges Clemenceau in mid-1919. If his Anglo-Saxon orientation is clear,

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<sup>718</sup> Seçil Karal Akgün, “The General Harbord Commission and the American Mandate,” in George S. Harris and Nur Bilge Criss (ed.), *Studies in Atatürk’s Turkey. The American Dimension*, Leyden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2009, pp. 55-82; James G. Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East. Report of American Military Mission to Armenia*, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920.

<sup>719</sup> Justin McCarthy, “The Report of Niles and Sutherland—An American Investigation of Eastern Anatolia after World War I,” in *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara: TTK, 1994, volume V, pp. 1809-1852.

<sup>720</sup> Thomas Bryson, “Admiral Mark L. Bristol, an Open-Door Diplomat in Turkey,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, V-4, September 1974, pp. 450-467; Laurence Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-1924*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965, pp. 270-273; James B. Gidney, *A Mandate for...*, pp. 93-96; Joseph Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and...*, pp. 186-238; Ömer Turan, “Admiral Bristol and the Anti-Turkish Propaganda in the United States within the context of Turkish-Armenian Relations (1919-1922),” *Revue internationale d’histoire militaire. Édition turque*, n° 87, 2007, pp. 177-193.

<sup>721</sup> Charles Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, Boston-New York: Houghton Mifflin C°, 1928, volume IV, p. 199.

<sup>722</sup> Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923*, London-Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 116-119 and 142-143 (quotation p. 143). Also see Lord Riddell, *Lord Riddell’s Intimate...*, p. 118.

his disappointment as early as 1919 is equally clear.<sup>723</sup> Now regarding the Turks and the Armenians, one speech pronounced in response to the intervention of the Ottoman delegation in June 1919 is commonly presented as a proof of his hostility for the first and his blind support for the seconds. It is true that the speech, perhaps prepared by a British subject, contains two Turkophobic paragraphs, mirroring the traditional allegation of “destruction” following the conquests by Turks in history.<sup>724</sup> Without insisting on the fact that this response is firmly criticized by a part of the press as unfair and unpolitical,<sup>725</sup> a close reading of the response itself as well as of the diary of General Mordacq, Clemenceau’s chief of staff,<sup>726</sup> prove that the virulence of the text is due to the claims presented by Grand Vizir Damat Ferit Paşa: Maintain of the Ottoman Empire in its boundaries of 1914, affirmation of “rights” on Egypt, Tunisia and even Algeria.

Correspondingly, the unofficial daily *Le Temps* avoids any outbidding. On the contrary, it stresses that Clemenceau answered quite exaggerated demands. The daily even criticizes barely implicitly Clemenceau for having read a text he had not written instead of presenting concrete proposals—something, *Le Temps* affirms, that would have been more in his habits. The mouthpiece of the MFA continues in arguing that even if it were for reasons of national interests only, an excessively harsh peace for the Turks should not be wished.<sup>727</sup> Only three days later, *Le Temps* deplores the Greek landing in İzmir as a completely misguided operation that provoked “regrettable events” and concludes that “the huge majority of the Frenchmen” opposes any intervention against the Turks fighting the Greek army.<sup>728</sup>

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<sup>723</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Clemenceau*, Paris : Fayard, 1988, pp. 748-772.

<sup>724</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les Alliés*, İstanbul-Paris : éditions du *Bosphore*, 1922, pp. 41-46.

<sup>725</sup> Saint-Brice, « Les Turcs invités à partir — L’insoluble question d’Orient », *Le Journal*, 30 juin 1919, p. 1 ; « Les délégués turcs sont priés de retourner chez eux », *L’Œuvre*, 30 juin 1919, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Notre politique en Turquie », *L’Action française*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1919, p. 1 ; « Solution ajournée — Le sort de l’Empire ottoman », *La Lanterne*, 2 juillet 1919, p. 1 ; « Le départ des Turcs et les jeux de l’impérialisme », *Le Populaire*, 4 juillet 1919, p. 1 ; Georges Samné, « L’anarchie orientale », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 juillet 1919, pp. 4-5 ; « La conférence piétine en Orient — L’agonie de la Turquie », *La Lanterne*, 21 juillet 1919, p. 1. Even Auguste Gauvain, generally not friendly to the Turks, finds this harshness counter-productive: Auguste Gauvain, « La question turque », *Journal des débats*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1919, p. 1.

<sup>726</sup> Henri Mordacq, *Le ministère Clemenceau...*, volume III, pp. 327 and 360-361.

<sup>727</sup> « Le départ des envoyés turcs », *Le Temps*, 4 juillet 1919, p. 1.

<sup>728</sup> « La France et les pays turcs », *Le Temps*, 7 juillet 1919, p. 1.

Regarding Clemenceau himself, at the end of August, Pierre Loti publishes another op-ed, this time focusing on the interest of France to maintain a viable Turkey,<sup>729</sup> then his friend Louis Barthou gives a copy to Clemenceau. Barthou writes to Loti on 2 September: "I believe Clemenceau has returned to better feelings toward the Turks."<sup>730</sup> It means that Clemenceau now is ready to understand the analyses provided by the representatives in Turkey regarding the national movement led by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk).

### **3.3. Facing the Turkish national movement (July-October 1919)**

#### *3.3.1. A new actor: the Kemalist movement*

The movement initiated by the future Atatürk in May 1919 and affirms itself during the summer and autumn 1919 (congresses of Erzurum and Sivas), unifying the local initiatives (such as the one General Kazım Karabekir in Erzurum) against all the foreign ambitions (but particularly the Greek and Armenian ones) toward Anatolian and eastern Thrace.<sup>731</sup> It emerges with a certain support from Italy. Indeed, as a result of the appointment of a new cabinet in June 1919 and of the Greek landing in İzmir (a city the most aggressive Italian expansionists wanted to control), the Italian policy radically changes. The ideas defended by Carlo Sforza, high commissioner in Istanbul in 1918-1919 and a supporter of Kemal (Atatürk) from the beginning (even before May 1919) dominate Rome's policy until Benito Mussolini takes power, at the end of 1922: Italy has to support an independent Turkey led by Kemal, without partition or spheres of influence, for the stability of the region, to get economic

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<sup>729</sup> Pierre Loti, « Nos intérêts en Orient », *L'Information*, 27 août 1919, p. 1.

<sup>730</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne...*, pp. 170-171.

<sup>731</sup> George W. Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk: From Ottoman Soldier to Statesman of Turkey*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013, pp. 69-100; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic. The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923*, Ankara: TTK, 2000, volume II, pp. 661-731.

interests and, at least by 1920, as a wall against Bolshevism.<sup>732</sup> Italians provide weapons by mid-1919.<sup>733</sup>

Even more importantly, the intelligence services of the Navy and Army in Turkey, respectively headed by Captain Henri Rollin in İstanbul (Navy), Major Brissaud in Bursa and Major Roger Labonne in Afyon (Army), understand as early as 1919 that this national movement is not Bolshevik, not religiously fanatic and not made of Christian-killers. Rollin informs in detail his hierarchy about the officers and civil servants who join Kemal<sup>734</sup> and reports about the “prudence” of the national movement, including toward Christians.<sup>735</sup> Labonne is never a supporter of the Kemalist movement, but, from the beginning, he recommends “to enter in contact” with it, emphasizing its strength in Anatolia. Labonne also notices with satisfaction the decline of Anglophilia among the Turks and criticizes the part of the French press which has sold itself to Greek Prime Minister Eleutherios Venizelos.<sup>736</sup>

Similarly, Lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil, sent by High Commissioner DeFrance in Anatolia at the end of July 1919, including to evaluate the rising movement of Kemal,<sup>737</sup> concludes that the movement led by Kemal is the logical reaction to the Greek and Armenian nationalism and is not the continuity of the CUP. Concerning “Bolshevism in the Russian sense of the word,” this doctrine is “against the habits, the religion and the mentality of the country.” At

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<sup>732</sup> Le vice-amiral De Bon, commandant en chef de la 1<sup>re</sup> armée navale, à M. le ministre de la Marine, 7 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 1573 ; Berthe Georges Gaulis, « La Turquie nationaliste — Koniah », *L'Opinion*, 13 décembre 1919, pp. 587-588 ; Carlo Sforza, *Makers of Modern Europe*, London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot, 1930, pp. 346-362; Georges Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes des Caucasiens entre URSS et puissances occidentales : le cas de la Géorgie (1921-1945)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2009, p. 34.

<sup>733</sup> [Albert Fouques-Duparc ?], *Origine du mouvement national* [1919], AMAE, 74 PA-AP 12 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1079, 16 septembre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Le Nationalisme turc*, Paris : Plon, 1921, p. 63 ; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-1, pp. 1437-1439.

<sup>734</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 859, 2 juillet 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233 ; Id., n° 1134, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>735</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1033, 4 septembre 1919 ; Id., n° 1048, 13 septembre 1919, p. 1, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233 ; Id., n° 1143, 3 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>736</sup> Le commandant Labonne à M. le général commandant en chef des Armées alliées, 31 août 1919, CADN, 36PO/1/10. Also see Roger Labonne, « Les origines du mouvement nationaliste turc », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1922, pp. 477-501.

<sup>737</sup> Points sur lesquels devront particulièrement porter les enquêtes des lieutenants Dubreuil et Deboigne au cours de leur mission en Anatolie, 28 juillet 1919 ; Le général Franchet d'Espèrey, commandant en chef des armées alliées d'Orient, à M. le haut commissaire de la République en Orient, 26 juillet 1919, CADN, 36PO/1/10.



most, argues Lemaigre-Dubreuil, a part of Kemal's followers uses this word "as a spectrum" to scare the Western powers. Eventually, regarding the situation of the Christians in Anatolia, the only problem Lemaigre-Dubreuil mentions is largely due to "the atmosphere of anarchy and revolt" developed by the Greek nationalists wishing to create a Republic of Pontus. The accumulation of weapons by the Turks in the interior, this officer argues is not made—contrary to what a significant number of Armenians and Greeks claim—to slaughter Christians but to defend the territorial integrity of Anatolia. For the moment, the Greeks and Armenians have nothing to fear; only a dismembering of Turkey by the peace conference could change this situation.<sup>738</sup> These observations prove the opposite claims of Boghos Nubar and Patriarch Zaven<sup>739</sup> on the alleged project of "extermination" to be baseless. The conclusion of Lemaigre-Dubreuil on Bolshevism is corroborated by Turkish sources.<sup>740</sup>

General Foulon, General Inspector of the Ottoman gendarmerie (the inspectors now are back) also notices, even before the capture of Konya, that "the [Turkish] population supports the rebels" and "almost all the officers help the resistance's forces," when they have not joined them purely and simply.<sup>741</sup> General Franchet d'Espèrey, commanding the occupation troops in Istanbul is clearer in September 1919, advocating an agreement with Kemal. It is true that even before the emergence of the Turkish national movement, Franchet d'Espèrey was endorsing a rapprochement of his officers with the Turks, including by marriages.<sup>742</sup>

Correspondingly, the high commission in Istanbul has a positive opinion of Kemal and his men as early as 1919. High Commissioner Defrance observes that "the Turks, when the Greeks massacred the Muslims at Menehem, have protected the Armenians." Then, Defrance suggests to Paris conciliation with Kemal and orders it to the officers coming to Anatolia.<sup>743</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Le lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil, chargé de mission en Anatolie, à M. le haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, 4 septembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/10. A minute in the margin says this report has to be sent to Paris with a letter recommending this "interesting" document.

<sup>739</sup> Lettre de Boghos Nubar à Stephen Pichon, 8 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 16664.

<sup>740</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, pp. 693-694.

<sup>741</sup> Le général Foulon, inspecteur général de la gendarmerie ottomane, à M. le haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, 16 septembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/10.

<sup>742</sup> Télégramme du général Franchet d'Espèrey au ministre de la Guerre, 9 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 1573; Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 151-152. On Franchet d'Espèrey : Pierre Gosa, *Franchet d'Espèrey, un maréchal méconnu*, Paris : Nouvelles éditions latines, 1998.

<sup>743</sup> Télégramme d'Albert Defrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 25 juin 1919 ; Id., 17 septembre 1919 ; Id., 21 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 1573.

It is even more understandable as the personal papers of Albert Fouques-Duparc (1863-1932), in charge of the political affairs at the high commission, contain a report describing Kemal as “Germanophobe, Enverophobe, Francophile and patriotic.” The note emphasizes that he looks for support only from Soviet Russia; he has no desire to spread Communism in Turkey and he is also connected to the anti-Soviet Republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan. The conclusion of the note affirms: “Our position is excellent if we want to take party for the non-partition of Turkey.” The note is preceded by an 11 pages report, written at the end of August 1919, also opposing a complete dismembering, and particularly an Armenia that would expand in such limits that it would become a state with a Muslim majority.<sup>744</sup> Another official supporting such views, by August 1919, is Lieutenant-Colonel Mougin, already cited.<sup>745</sup>

The Kemalist movement also develops when the French public opinion is more concerned by the east that during first six or seven months following the armistices. Indeed, after the end of the negotiations concerning the treaties with Germany and Austria, the Parisian press becomes concerned by the danger for the French interests in the East. For example, *Le Figaro*, the reference daily of the center-right bourgeoisie, publishes with explicit approval a letter of Frenchman (likely a businessman) settled in İstanbul: “In ten months of armistice [...] we have lost the fruits of the centuries-long work that our diplomacy, since François Ier, had elaborated patiently [...] We are losing a revenue that was, before the war, not less than *two billions* [underlined in the text] per year.”<sup>746</sup> Meanwhile, the treaty imposing a quasi-protectorate of Britain on Iran is badly perceived in Paris.<sup>747</sup> The Ministry of Navy is particularly sensitive to the “breaking of balance” at the benefit of the UK and Italy.<sup>748</sup>

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<sup>744</sup> Origine du mouvement national [1919] ; La situation en Turquie et le rôle des puissances alliées [1919], AMAE, 74 PA-AP 12. Similar appraisal in S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 858, 2 juillet 1919, pp. 1-3 and 6 ; and Id., n° 1045, 7 septembre 1919, p. 8, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233.

<sup>745</sup> Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Mougin, chef de la liaison française près le gouvernement ottoman, sur la situation en Anatolie, 24 août 1919, AMAE, P 1573 ; Paul Dumont, « Un officier des forces d'occupation Françaises en Turquie : le colonel Louis Mougin (1919-1922) », in IX. *Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara : TTK, 1989, volume III, pp. 1547-1553.

<sup>746</sup> « Les intérêts de la France en Orient », *Le Figaro*, 11 août 1919, p. 2.

<sup>747</sup> Pertinax (André Géraud), « L'Angleterre en Perse et en Syrie », *L'Écho de Paris*, 15 août 1919, p. 1 ; « Le cas de la Perse », *Le Temps*, 17 août 1919, p. 1 ; Georges Samné, « L'accord anglo-persan », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 15 septembre 1919, pp. 103-106 ; « Le traité anglo-persan et la politique britannique », *L'Asie française*, août-novembre 1919, pp. 257-262.

<sup>748</sup> Le ministre de la Marine à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 16 août 1919, AMAE, P 17783.

Beside these rivalries of interests, *L'Œuvre* (liberal left), benevolent toward the Turks since the armistice, as we already have seen, turns fiercely pro-Turkish in mid-1919, describing without understatement the arsons and murders by the Greek forces<sup>749</sup> and affirming, in reference to the territorial claims presented by Eleutherios Venizelos: “One cannot admit that a small people who never knew to rule himself be suddenly able to rule an empire.”<sup>750</sup> This is even more regrettable, argues *L'Œuvre*, that such a passivity toward British ambitions and its Greek proxy is highly detrimental to the national interest.<sup>751</sup> The Armenian issue is not touched yet, but the Turks now are presented as victims as well, by another channel than Pierre Loti. Such a combination of pity for the Turks and of will to re-start the oldest alliance of France, for reasons of national interests is also visible in the campaign of Robert Raynaud (aka Rober-Raynaud), a journalist specialized in foreign policy: Even before commenting the emergence of the Turkish national movement, he asks for moderation toward the Turks,<sup>752</sup> then he describes this movement as led by a “clever” man and defending reasonable claims. Raynaud wishes for a new Ottoman cabinet where Kemal would be the minister of War. Anyway, Raynaud insists, the interest of France is definitely not the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>753</sup>

*L'Information*, the most distributed of the newspapers for the elites, takes a similar stance in mid-1919: Dismembering the Ottoman Empire completely is both unfair and against the national interest; the Anglo-Saxon ambitions represent a major danger in this regard.<sup>754</sup> Not surprisingly, the first editorial of *L'Information* about the emerging Kemalist movement observes that a military intervention against it is practically impossible and, on the contrary, that the right policy is conciliation—explicitly endorsing the views expressed by Robert

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<sup>749</sup> Charles Saglio, « Les Turcs contre les Grecs aux portes de Smyrne », *L'Œuvre*, 18 juillet 1919, p. 1 ; « Les cinq en Anatolie et en Silésie », *L'Œuvre*, 22 juillet 1919, p. 1.

<sup>750</sup> Charles Saglio, « Les ambitions grecques et la question d'Orient », *L'Œuvre*, 31 juillet 1919, p. 1.

<sup>751</sup> Charles Saglio, « L'abdication de la France en Orient », *L'Œuvre*, 28 juillet 1919, p. 1.

<sup>752</sup> Rober-Raynaud, « La Turquie de Loti », *L'Information*, 3 juillet 1919, p. 2 ; Rober-Raynaud, *Une enquête en Orient. La paix avec la Turquie*, Paris : Imprimerie Levé, 1919.

<sup>753</sup> Rober-Raynaud, « Le mouvement nationaliste en Turquie », *Journal des débats*, 17 octobre 1919, p. 2 ; Rober-Raynaud, « Le mouvement national en Turquie », *Journal des débats*, 27 octobre 1919, pp. 1-2.

<sup>754</sup> Vérax, « Les droits de la France en Orient », *L'Information*, 29 juillet 1919, p. 1. Also see « Autour du Conseil interallié — La situation en Orient », *L'Information*, 3 septembre 1919, p. 1 ; and Georges Scelle, « L'ajournement des règlements orientaux », *L'Information*, 9 septembre 1919, p. 1.

Raynaud.<sup>755</sup> The East, not unlike the West, needs justice, and this is the duty of France to impose justice in this part of the world.<sup>756</sup> These articles help to understand why, in September, Sultan Mehmet VI (1861-1926) expresses his satisfaction that the French press has softened the tone toward the Turks.<sup>757</sup>

Even more clearly, the left-wing daily *La Lanterne* calls the Kemalist movement “an adventure of great style” which has the merit to remind “the reality” to the peace conference.<sup>758</sup> The nationalist-conservative daily *Le Gaulois* does not support the Kemalists immediately, but blames the brutal treatment of the Ottoman delegation in June as one of the reasons for the emergence of this movement which has “chosen an excellent field: Patriotism.”<sup>759</sup> In the middle, the mainstream daily *Le Journal* emphasizes the power of the Turkish national movement, which has “a serious army”<sup>760</sup> and the Socialist organ *Le Populaire* describes “the formidable nationalist movement” in Anatolia as inevitable, the peace conference having not respected “the rights of the Turks to live.”<sup>761</sup> Without naming Kemal yet, Saint-Brice (the same one who has advocated prudence toward the Turks after the armistice of Moudros) publishes in a mouthpiece of the colonial interests (Near Eastern wing) a ferocious editorial against Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George, arguing that the treaty with Austria, as well as their policy toward the Hungarians and the Turks are already in bankrupt. Saint-Brice finds the Turkish reaction to the Greek invasion fully justified and the perspective of “the Balkanization of Turkey” a disaster, both ethically and in terms of French interests.<sup>762</sup> With a less virulent wording, Berthe Georges-Gaulis asks for the end of “the occupation’s yoke” and

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<sup>755</sup> Vérax, « L’Asie mineure en feu », *L’Information*, 11 août 1919, p. 1.

<sup>756</sup> Vérax, « La France et la Turquie », *L’Information*, 23 septembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>757</sup> Robert Raynaud, « Une interview de Mehmed VI », *Journal des débats*, 22 septembre 1919, p. 4.

<sup>758</sup> « Le réveil de l’Islam », *La Lanterne*, 11 août 1919, pp. 1-2.

<sup>759</sup> René d’Aral, « De Budapest à Constantinople — Le péril turc », *Le Gaulois*, 14 août 1919, p. 1.

<sup>760</sup> « Les insurgés turcs maîtres de l’Asie mineure — Ils s’emparent de Konya », *Le Journal*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1919, p. 3.

<sup>761</sup> « Politique internationale — L’affaire turque », *Le Populaire*, 8 octobre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>762</sup> Saint-Brice, « Le gâchis oriental et la paix future », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 septembre 1919, pp. 97-103.

for maintain of a Turkey “made of the purely Turkish provinces.” The needed protection of the Greeks and Armenians should not mean “oppressing the Muslim populations.”<sup>763</sup>

In *Le Figaro*, Raymond Recouly, a specialist of the military issues, argues that it would be “foolish” to underestimate the strength of the Turkish national movement, even more as no country of the Entente has the will and capacity for a new war. A treaty signed by the cabinet of İstanbul would have no value and an American mandate on Turkey and Armenia would be likely “inapplicable.” As a result, the only rational policy is to leave Anatolia to the Turks, to bury the illusion of a “Great Armenia” in exchange of maintain of the French investments and schools.<sup>764</sup> The diplomatic columnist of *L'Écho de Paris* reaches a rather similar conclusion.<sup>765</sup>

Even more importantly, the unofficial voice of the Quai d'Orsay, *Le Temps*, advocates, at the end of August “a French policy in the east” in favor of “Muslim independences,” including the independence of the Turks, and against the maximalist British ambitions.<sup>766</sup> Then, in September, *Le Temps* describes Kemal and his movement a rather positive way: He now has a significant military force and has has been “the personal enemy of Enver” (surely the best point for many Frenchmen in 1919); as a result, “a new spirit” is necessary.<sup>767</sup> “It should be possible to discuss with the Sultan’s cabinet as well as with some leaders of the Turkish national movement. But to discuss with people, you must offer them something else than the role of the suicided by persuasion. It is necessary to tell them: ‘Your patria will subsist. Let’s find an agreement to reorganize it.’”<sup>768</sup> And at the beginning of October, the editorial of *Le Temps* is entitled “The Victory of the Turkish Nationalists”: As nobody can even consider “an European crusade against the Turkish nationalists, from Ismid to Van, from Mersine to

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<sup>763</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « L’avenir turc », *L’Opinion*, 20 septembre 1919, pp. 288-289.

<sup>764</sup> Raymond Recouly, « La conférence et l’Orient », *Le Figaro*, 23 septembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>765</sup> Pertinax (André Géraud), « Les nationalistes turcs approchent de Constantinople — Qu’allons-nous faire ? », *L’Écho de Paris*, 14 octobre 1919, p. 1. One pro-Armenian, anti-Turkish exception to this trend: François Jean-Desthieux, « Du sort de la Turquie dépend la paix en Orient », *L’Homme libre*, 4 septembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>766</sup> « Une politique française en Orient », *Le Temps*, 22 août 1919, p. 1 ; « La question du Levant », *Le Temps*, 8 septembre 1919, p. 1. Levon Marashlian, “The London and San Remo Conferences and the Armenian Settlement: the Belated Decisions February-April, 1920. Part I” *Armenian Review*, XXX-3, Autumn 1977, p. 232 seems to ignore the French press entirely.

<sup>767</sup> « Le conseil suprême et la question d’Orient », *Le Temps*, 9 septembre 1919, p. 1. These articles are appreciated by Turks: Commandement en chef des armées alliées en Orient, 2<sup>e</sup> bureau, Le mouvement nationaliste en Asie mineure, 22 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 1573.

<sup>768</sup> « La crise de l’Orient », *Le Temps*, 24 septembre 1919, p. 1.

Erzérourm,” the peace “should keep Turkey from Andrinople to the Taurus and to the Persian boundary.”<sup>769</sup> If this last editorial deliberately leaves an ambiguity on the fate of Adana, it proves that the Quai d’Orsay would not be annoyed, on the contrary, if the Turks kept Van and Bitlis, in addition to Edirne and Izmir. With a less diplomatic language, the elites’ weekly *L’Europe nouvelle* advocates an agreement with Kemal as a part of a more general policy countering the offensives of David Lloyd George against the French interests.<sup>770</sup> Seeing the situation changing, Aram Turabian expresses an ire which does not seem to interest anybody at the Quai d’Orsay or General Staff.<sup>771</sup>

Meanwhile, in the Parliament, Senator Lucien Hubert (1868-1938), rapporteur of the Versailles treaty for the part concerning the German interests abroad, emphasizes “that France has in Turkey quite a special situation, morally and economically.” Senator Hubert calls a “fault” the “secretly” given permission to Greece to land in İzmir, “an essentially Turkish province” and compares the lack of firmness in Paris with the British policy, whose makers know what they want. Likely on purpose, he does not say a word about Çukurova and north-eastern Anatolia but insists on the fact that France is “exhausted” and, at the same time, a Muslim power.<sup>772</sup> Such remarks are logical from him: He is elected from the Ardennes, a part of France largely devastated by the world war, he is also a specialist of colonial issues, particularly in Black and North Africa and he is linked to Georges Samné,<sup>773</sup> a previously mentioned Catholic Syrian, close to the MFA, who opposes brutality toward the Turks.

The Turkish national movement itself faces an articulation of the concerns of domestic policy and international relations. Indeed, Kemal (Atatürk) and his associates not only have to deal with secondary concerns such as the diversity of their emerging group (in particular the difference between the proponents and adversaries of an American mandate with a minimal control) and the hostility shown, at least by September, by the Damat Ferit Paşa cabinet but

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<sup>769</sup> « La victoire des nationalistes turcs », *Le Temps*, 8 octobre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>770</sup> « La question d’Orient — M. Lloyd George plaide non coupable devant l’opinion anglaise », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 11 octobre 1919, pp. 1930-1932.

<sup>771</sup> Aram Turabian, « On dans sur nos cadavres », *Aiguillon*, 5 octobre 1919, p. 2. Also see « Le triomphe des nationalistes en Turquie », *Bulletin arménien*, 15 octobre 1919, pp. 1-2 (a copy is in AMAE, P 16673, but without comments by the Quai d’Orsay).

<sup>772</sup> Lucien Hubert, Rapport sur les clauses du traité avec l’Allemagne relatives aux intérêts allemands hors de l’Allemagne [1919], pp. 26-34, Archives du Sénat, Paris, 69 S 40.

<sup>773</sup> Notes, 13 octobre 1919, p. 3, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1.

has to impose its legitimacy to populations often exhausted by the war, to reconstitute an efficient army and law enforcement, both to replace the authority of İstanbul government in Anatolia and to relieve the foreign high commissions, in particular in proving that the safety of the Christians is secured, in the context of Greek and Armenian territorial ambitions and military threat. In other words, the ambition, and, as early as 1919, the achievement of the Turkish national movement is to impose the motto “Either independence or death” internally and externally, in front a divided Entente.<sup>774</sup> On the contrary, Armenia, including by the fault of its own government, is unable to secure an external military support.

### 3.3.2. *No military support for Armenia*

In July 1919, U.S. Colonel William Haskell is appointed as High Commissioner in Armenia, representing his country, France and Italy.<sup>775</sup> Yet, if the sympathy of Haskell for the ordinary Armenians is incontrovertible, particularly in 1919, his opinion of Armenian nationalists is low.<sup>776</sup> Regardless, this remains a minor issue of concern for them initially. Indeed, in summer 1919 and at the beginning of autumn, the withdrawal of the British forces from the Caucasus (except a small garrison in Batum)<sup>777</sup> provokes a panic in Yerevan and the Armenian delegations abroad, even more as the repeated demands of Colonel Chardigny for the sending of French troops to replace them are not satisfied.<sup>778</sup> In August, the Supreme Council decides that the issue of the military presence in Armenia is left “without solution.”<sup>779</sup> As Georgia and Azerbaijan had proposed in vain to pay for the cost of the British military presence,<sup>780</sup> this decision may be due the primary interest of the British cabinet for the

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<sup>774</sup> George Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk...*, pp. 69-100; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, pp. 709-725.

<sup>775</sup> Note du président de la Conférence de la paix [Georges Clemenceau], 13 juillet 1919, AMAE, 166 PA-AP 97.

<sup>776</sup> William Haskell Memoirs, Hoover institution, Stanford, California (one box).

<sup>777</sup> Antoine Poidebard, *Voyages au carrefour des routes de Perse*, Paris : Georges Crès & Cie, 1923, pp. 248-249.

<sup>778</sup> Le colonel Chardigny, chef de la mission militaire française au Caucase, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, état-major de l'armée (2<sup>e</sup> bureau), 16 août 1919, SHD, 16 N 3187.

<sup>779</sup> Résolution du Conseil suprême, 11 août 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>780</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan et...*, p. 88.

Middle East, especially the oil fields of Iran and Iraq.<sup>781</sup> Anyway, it has something to do with the divisions in the government between the supporters of Denikin's White army, those of the southern Caucasian state and those who see no interest in the region.<sup>782</sup>

The concerns regarding this absence of solution are substantiated: As a result of the ethnic cleansing practiced by the Armenian Republic, Kurds from North-Eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijanis multiply the offensives. Georgia, on the contrary, has signed a treaty with Azerbaijan to create a joint front against the ambitions of White Russians to reconstitute the empire of the last Romanov. The treaty includes a military assistance and a joint diplomatic action.<sup>783</sup> The most obvious solution for Armenia would be to join the alliance and to end the territorial claims against Azerbaijan, but, invited to sign the treaty, the cabinet of Yerevan declines.<sup>784</sup> One of the main reasons, if not the main, for this refusal is the insistence of Yerevan for the inclusion of the Karabakh and Nahçivan in the Republic of Armenia.<sup>785</sup> To make the situation even more complicated for the Dashnak government, its assault against Georgia in December 1918 and its refusal to sign an alliance create difficulties in the procurement of products for Armenia through Georgia.<sup>786</sup> Similarly, after the Dashnak cabinet asks the French government for 10,000 rifles, Paris requests the opinion of the British War Office, but this Ministry considers that such a sale "could only increase the disorder that reigns in Armenia." As a result, the French general staff decides to answer negatively.<sup>787</sup> In short, instead of dislocating its neighbors and to create a state from Karabakh to Mersin, the program of an "Integral Armenia" is undermining the Republic as it actually exists, as early as

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<sup>781</sup> Revaz Gachechiladze, "Geopolitics and Foreign Powers in the Modern History of Georgia," in Stephen F. Jones (ed.), *The Making of Modern Georgia*, London-New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 21.

<sup>782</sup> John Fisher, "On the glacis of India': Lord Curzon and British policy in the Caucasus, 1919," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, VIII-2, 1997, pp. 50-82.

<sup>783</sup> Le colonel Chardigny, chef de la mission militaire française, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, état-major de l'armée, 2<sup>e</sup> bureau, 22 juin 1919 ; Id., 19 juillet 1919, SHD, 16 N 3187.

<sup>784</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan et...*, p. 85.

<sup>785</sup> Kamala Imranli-Lowe, "The Paris Peace Conference and the Armenian arguments on Garabagh," *Central Asian Survey*, XXXIV-2, 2015, pp. 219-236; Kamala Imranli-Lowe, "Nakhchivan, the Armenian arguments and the Allied Powers in 1919," *Middle Eastern Studies*, LII-2, 2016, pp. 295-317.

<sup>786</sup> Conseil suprême économique, séance du 17 juillet [1919], AMAE, P 16672.

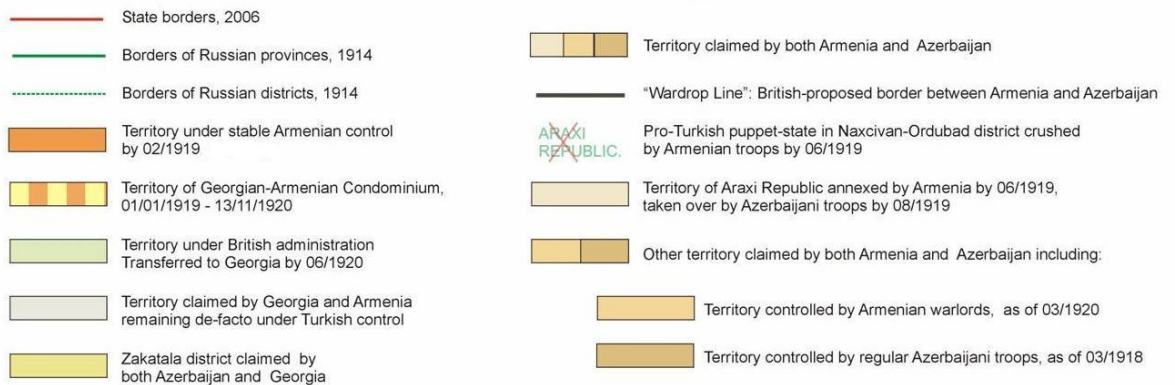
<sup>787</sup> Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 juillet 1919, AMAE, P 16672.



1919.



**ARMENIA, .Mar./1919 - Mar./1920**  
**ARAXI WAR,**  
**2nd ARMENO-AZERBAIJANI WAR**



Map 4. Source: <http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/Armenia/disp.htm>

In these conditions, the repeated demands from Aharonian and Nubar, asking for a military intervention and even for a repatriation of the refugees from eastern Anatolia,<sup>788</sup> are without effect. A manuscript note from a member of the Quai d'Orsay's central administration attached to a telegram from the consul general in Izmir, explaining the grievances of the Armenian community of this city, concerning the situation in the Caucasus, deserves to be quoted entirely:

<sup>788</sup> La délégation de l'Arménie intégrale à M. le président de la conférence de la paix, 7 juillet 1919 ; La Délégation de la République arménienne à M. Georges Clemenceau, président de la conférence de la paix, 22 août 1919, AMAE, P 16672 ; La Délégation de la République arménienne à M. Georges Clemenceau, président de la conférence de la paix, 20 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

“Answering we do nothing (the truth) would be a bit harsh. Answering we take note would be ironical. Answering we will act would be ridiculous, since we don’t act. Conclusion: Don’t answer.”<sup>789</sup>

Eventually, the Supreme Council of 25 August 1919 decides that “a small contingent” of about 12,000 men could be sent, taken from the Eastern Army of General Franchet d’Espèrey,<sup>790</sup> but this is a dead-born project. High Commissioner in Istanbul Albert Defrance opposes a purely French intervention, arguing that France’s forces in Anatolia are already very weak, that Armenia will not be in the French sphere of influence and that the power that will send soldiers in this country will lose any sympathy from the Muslims of Anatolia and the Caucasus.<sup>791</sup> In the same sense, Captain Henri Rollin, chief of the Navy’s intelligence service for Turkey, Caucasus and southern Russia, argues that the Armenian, Georgian and (in spite of its success against Bolsheviks) Azerbaijani cabinets are unreliable and that only a joint authority on the south Caucasus, suspending the independence of the three countries, could stop the territorial and ethnic conflicts. One of the main conditions for peace, Rollin emphasizes, would be the end of the “exaggerated” and “disproportionate” territorial claims presented by the Armenian nationalists. Another would be to force Armenia to give to its regions where the Muslims are the most numerous (Charour, for example) the autonomy given by Azerbaijan to Karabakh. Rollin concludes that union will happen soon or late, either by a confederation either by a Russian reconquest.<sup>792</sup>

Regardless, the main reasons for the failure of this modest project seem even more practical. Indeed, the British army and the French embassy in London evaluates the number of needed soldiers to be “in excess of 100,000,” a figure merely impossible to obtain either from Britain either from France. The embassy emphasizes that any new troops should be sent in Çukurova and Syria instead of “protecting the American missions and works” in Yerevan.<sup>793</sup> The ARF

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<sup>789</sup> AMAE, P 16672. Also see the silence answering Nubar, on the same subject, during the public meeting of 17 July 1919: *L’Amitié franco-arménienne*, Paris: Imprimerie Flinikowski, 1919, p. 15.

<sup>790</sup> Protection des Arméniens, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673 (also in 166 PA-AP 97).

<sup>791</sup> Télégramme d’Albert Defrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 7 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>792</sup> Henri Rollin, La situation en Transcaucasie, 10 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>793</sup> Télégramme d’A. de Fleuriau au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 15 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673. In summer 1919 Herbert Hoover estimates the necessary number of soldiers to be 150,000 in case of an U.S. intervention and mandate: Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of...*, volume I, p. 455.

does not ignore the situation, as proves a telegram from Aharonian to Alexandre Khatissian, at that time Prime minister of Armenia: The main reason why the situation is “alarming,” Khatissian explains, is the absence of decision in the U.S. (he does not mention France or the UK).<sup>794</sup> Indeed, Wilson’s own State Secretary, Robert Lansing (1864-1928), is reluctant toward a mandate (at least on Armenia only), the American ambassador in London does not believe in the possibility to raise the sufficient armed forces or to convince a majority in the public opinion to give up the Monroe doctrine and the American High Commissioner in Istanbul, Mark Lambert Bristol (1868-1939), pushes for a mandate on Turkey and the Caucasus.<sup>795</sup> All these divisions surely not incite anybody in Paris to intervene. Regardless, the offensives of Kurds from Anatolia almost stop at the beginning of October 1919 and the remaining ones are blocked. Only remains, for the time being, the conflict with the Azerbaijanis regarding Zangueour.<sup>796</sup>

Anyway, the main issue in the east, for France, in September-October 1919, is the agreement for the replacement of the British troops by French in Çukurova and Syria. Supposed to be completed for 1 November, it is not achieved in Adana until 19 November.<sup>797</sup> Laboriously negotiated, it is presented by London as concrete evidence that the UK does not want to expel its allies from the Near East completely. However, this agreement is far from satisfying the “Syrian Party” in France: It confirms the renunciation of Clemenceau to Mossul, does not give Damas to France yet and leaves Jerusalem to the UK instead of internationalizing this province; it does not include the requested guarantees against the British “intrigues” among the Muslim Arabs of Syria, through Feysal in particular; and it is a temporary agreement.<sup>798</sup> It does not satisfy the military either, as the number of French soldiers is inferior—in Çukurova in particular—to the number of British soldiers on leave.<sup>799</sup>

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<sup>794</sup> Télégramme d’Avétis Aharonian, 18 septembre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>795</sup> Nevzat Uyanik, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, pp. 136, 140-141 and 144.

<sup>796</sup> Capitaine Antoine Poidebard, Situation générale de l’Arménie russe, 3 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>797</sup> C. Thibault, *Historique du 412<sup>e</sup> régiment d’infanterie*, Paris-Limoges-Nancy : Charles-Lavauzelle & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1923, pp. 222-225.

<sup>798</sup> Saint-Brice, « L’accord syrien », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 septembre 1919, pp. 145-152.

<sup>799</sup> Raoul Desjardins, *Avec les Sénégalais par-delà l’Euphrate*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1925, pp. 23-25 ; Testis [Commandant Michel Canonge], « L’œuvre de la France en Syrie », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1921, pp. 810-811 ; C. Thibault, *Historique du 412<sup>e</sup>...*, p. 223.

It could even less satisfy the officers as the Armenian legionnaires continue to be a source of problems. Indeed, an unsigned report of October 1919, attributed to Vahan Portoukalian by a handwritten comment, admits that the Armenian Legion experiences “a crisis,” among other reasons because the French and Armenian members are not treated on equal terms (an Armenian sergeant or second lieutenant cannot give any order to a French soldier or corporal, for example). Portoukalian even dares to criticize the scope of the purges decided in 1919, but he also gives this interesting indication that 160 legionnaires already have deserted.<sup>800</sup> Portoukalian’s hopes are far from being satisfied at the end of 1919. The new men arriving in the East have no sympathy for Armenian nationalism.

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<sup>800</sup> Rapport sur la Légion arménienne [1919], pp. 13-22, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 1.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE BREAKING OF THE ALLIANCE (AUTUMN 1919-JANUARY 1921)

*“They are exactly politicians, and of the worst kind... The Armenian one!”  
Commander Tommy Martin, military governor of Adana.<sup>801</sup>*

The resignation of Damat Ferit Paşa in October 1919, the not hidden support of the French and even more of Italians for the Kemalist movement, and the absence of reaction—initially—from the UK<sup>802</sup> seem to mark a radical turn. This is actually a major turn, but it takes more than a year of new events to change the policy completely. The intent is clear in Paris: Georges Clemenceau now states that *“Nous en avons assez des Arméniens !”*<sup>803</sup> and his choices for the high commission of Beirut are congruent with this statement. However, the slow economic recovery of France, the attempts of the Armenian committee to prevent any peace between Paris and Ankara, the return of Lloyd George to an aggressive policy in March 1920 delay the announced change. After the fall of the Armenian Republic, the fall of the General Wrangel, the last main White Russian leader fighting the Soviets, the electoral fall of Eleutherios Venizelos and of Woodrow Wilson’s candidate for his succession, the last battles between Poland and Soviet Russia—all events taking place in Autumn 1920—the situation is clarified.

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<sup>801</sup> Tommy Martin, Renseignements, 20 septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>802</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1139, 2 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>803</sup> Hourì Berberian, “The Delegation of Integral Armenia: From Greater Armenia to Lesser Armenia,” *Armenian Review*, XLIV-3, Autumn 1991, p. 57.

During this dense and long year, the context of rivalry with Italians and British only exacerbates<sup>804</sup> and the tensions with the Americans reach Anatolia. The Navy's intelligence service warns against the Near East Relief: Its "real aim" is "to work to buy Turkey, and more especially Armenia, discreetly, by formidable distributions of food and clothes, all that with a luxury advertisement, to impress the Oriental imaginations [...]." The NER "acts as an intelligence service," including in interviewing Armenian legionnaires in Adana, and it seems, continues the report, that some of them now are recruited by this American organization.<sup>805</sup>

#### **4.1. The failure of the "equal balance" (Autumn 1919-April 1920)**

##### *4.1.1. Henri Gouraud, Robert de Caix: the men and the context*

At the end of September 1919, Georges Clemenceau decides to reorganize the high commission as well as the army in Beirut, replacing High Commissioner François Georges-Picot and Brigadier General Hamelin by one person, General Henri Gouraud (1867-1946), a hero of the First World War and a personal friend of General Edmond Buat (1868-1923), assistant chief of the general staff from 1918 to 1920, then chief from 1920 to his death.<sup>806</sup> Gouraud has fought at Çanakkale, where he has lost his right arm, then against the German army on the Western front, playing a decisive role in the victory of 1918, after a short interim (December 1916-March 1917), when he has replaced his mentor, General (later Marshal) Hubert Lyautey, as resident general in Morocco.<sup>807</sup> Gouraud, in his own words, has "known

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<sup>804</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1176, 13 octobre 1919 ; Id., n° 1177 13 octobre 1919 ; Id., n° 1181, 13 octobre 1919 ; Id., n° 1186, 16 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>805</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1174, 11 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>806</sup> Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général Edmond Buat, 1914-1923*, Paris: Ministère de la Défense/Perrin, 2015, pp. 141, 409, 417, 468 (on their friendship) and 830 (on Clemenceau's decision).

<sup>807</sup> Julie d'Andurain, « Le général Gouraud, chef du corps expéditionnaire des Dardanelles, 1915 », *Revue historique des armées*, n° 258, 1er trimestre 2010, pp. 46-56 ; Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général...*, p. 688 ; Pierre Lyautey, *Gouraud*, Paris : Julliard, 1949, pp. 129-159. Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, mentions Gouraud only one time and calls him (p. 153) "Gourard" (sic).

during the war only one chivalrous enemy,” namely the Turk,<sup>808</sup> an opinion shared by various officers and soldiers of the Dardanelles, Balkan front and to a lesser extent Palestine front.<sup>809</sup>

Gouraud forms a duo with his general secretary, Robert de Caix, appointed to Beirut at the same time, already described in the previous chapter and the introduction. The general, a liberal conservative, is an old and good friend of this civilian who is a conservative liberal. In a letter to his father, de Caix even explains that he could not occupy such a function in Beirut if his chief was not Gouraud, “who is, by every aspect, a gentleman.”<sup>810</sup>

In a personal letter to Gouraud, written right after the decision of Clemenceau, de Caix exposes the difficulties with the British, with Faysal and “the Turkish problem, much bigger, and which would need a policy toward Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his nationalist government.”<sup>811</sup> De Caix announces this policy in an editorial for the *Journal des débats*. Strangely, this article seems unnoticed, including by Gérard Khoury, author of a study on de Caix followed by a selection of his political writings, published and unpublished.<sup>812</sup> Yet, it is fundamental, because of its content and because it is a published text. De Caix presents the Turkish national movement, led “by an energetic soldier,” as the logical consequence of the errors of the Entente. His knowledge of the movement is not perfect, as he suspects a hidden agenda of pan-Turanism and pan-Islamism, but he considers the “dismembering” of Turkey (amputating this country from the Straits, İzmir and eastern Anatolia) impossible and in

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<sup>808</sup> Léon Rouillon, *Pour la Turquie*, Paris : Grasset, 1921, p. 55.

<sup>809</sup> See the letters reproduced *ibid.*, pp. 103-106 ; in *Écho de l’islam*, 5 mars 1920, p. 4 ; and in Pierre Loti, *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1920, pp. 75-76, 197-204, 207-208, 211-213, 235-238, 251-256 262-274 and 276-277. Even the turkophile Michel Paillarès admits, with bitter regret, that this is the dominant opinion in the occupation corps of Istanbul: Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les alliés*, İstanbul-Paris : éditions du *Bosphore*, 1922, pp. 72-79, 82, 91-96, 117 and 119-120.

<sup>810</sup> Lettre à son père, 2 décembre 1919, Gérard D. Khoury (ed.), *Une tutelle coloniale. Le mandat français en Syrie et au Liban. Écrits politiques de Robert de Caix*, Paris : Belin, 2006 p. 179. On their personal relations prior Beirut, see the letter of de Caix to Gouraud (“my dear friend”), on 4 September 1919, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1.

<sup>811</sup> Lettre de Robert de Caix au général Gouraud, 6 octobre 1919, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1.

<sup>812</sup> Gérard D. Khoury (ed.), *Une tutelle coloniale...* Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*; Vincent Duclert, *La France face au génocide des Arméniens*, Paris: Fayard, 2015; Garabet Krikor Moumdjian, “Cilicia under French Administration,” in Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Armenian Cilicia*, Mazda Publishing, 2008; Claire Mouradian (ed.), *Arménie, une passion française. 1878-1923*, Paris : Magellan & Cie, 2007; and Philippe Videlier, “French Society and the Armenian Genocide,” in Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide. Cultural and Ethical Legacies*, New Brunswick-London, 2007, pp. 325-333 ignore de Caix entirely.

opposition to the French interests. The peace conference, concludes de Caix “must have a policy for Turkey, a policy which now must be made, for a large part, of compromises.”<sup>813</sup> De Caix knows his article will be read in İstanbul and Anatolia. In other words, he wants his general intentions to be known before his arrival in Beirut. Indeed, there is no evidence for a double speech. As it has been seen in the previous chapter, these views are in the continuity with those expressed by him even before the emergence of the Kemalist movement.

On 29 September, François Georges-Picot meets in Konya Refet (Bele) Bey, the new Kemalist representative. He concludes that the fear of “massacre” of Christians or foreigners by the new masters of the city or their troops are, at least for now, based on imagination only and he reports the warning of Refet Bey: France has the choice between a “privileged situation” in Turkey in case of an agreement and a general weakening of its position in the Muslim world if she continues to occupy “some square kilometers” (Mersin, Adana, etc.). Georges-Picot, as a result, sees a “great interest” in knowing what think “the leaders of the nationalist party who is the master of Anatolia” but needs to come to Sivas.<sup>814</sup> The MFA sees no problem in that,<sup>815</sup> but for an unknown reason, this is not until the end of November that Georges-Picot has a meeting in Kayseri, then meets Kemal himself from 5 to 7 December. The former high commissioner asks for mutual assurances of non-aggression in the occupied territories of the south and proposes, as a “personal” idea, an evacuation of most of these territories (Çukurova, Maraş, Antep, Urfa) in exchange of economic advantages in Adana. The non-aggression is accepted by Kemal (Atatürk), the answer to the proposed conditions of evacuation is less easy to determine.<sup>816</sup>

Another mission, that seems almost completely forgotten in the scholarly literature, is the one of Berthe Georges-Gaulis, that takes place in autumn 1919, too (October-November). Her published report in de Caix’s daily does not hide that her aim is not merely to inform the

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<sup>813</sup> Robert de Caix, « La question turque », *Journal des débats*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1919, p. 1. Also see Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East. The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921*, London-Boulder: Mansell/Westview Press, 1987, p. 133.

<sup>814</sup> Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 3 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1573.

<sup>815</sup> Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères à François Georges-Picot, 17 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>816</sup> Sina Akşin, “French-Turkish Relations at the end of 1919,” in Hâmit Batu and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *L’Empire ottoman, la République de Turquie et la France*, İstanbul-Paris : Les éditions Isis, 1986, pp. 441-444 ; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, pp. 913-915.



readers about the strength of the Turkish nationalists and their achievements in terms of public safety, or even to express her certitude that dealing with the Kemalist movement is a must, but also to have “an actual action” toward officials of this same movement (to persuade them that the Entente does not want their destruction). Actually, in the own words of her hosts, she is introduced to the zone of military operations, where no foreigner had been admitted until now.<sup>817</sup>

That having been said, presenting Kemal’s men positively to her compatriots and her country in its best light to the Turks is not all her work. She also writes a kind of intelligence report for General Gouraud personally: In short, the French authorities have to “deal” with this movement, even more as it is rooted in the national fear of partition; otherwise the situation in Syria will be out of control, and one of the conditions is to speak firmly to London against the action of British agents in Turkey and Syria. Berthe Georges-Gaulis also argues that “the best instrument of propaganda” is “the young intelligence officer, of very good education, elegant and amiable, even if inexperienced.”<sup>818</sup> This last remark enlightens another of her articles, where she mentions “the only French intelligence officer [present at Konya when the Kemalists took the city], in making the huge effort to remain impartial, closely followed what any French loves in the secret of his hearth: The eclosion of a patriotism.”<sup>819</sup>

Without being as favorable to this eclosion as this intelligence officer of Konya is, several of his colleagues request their hierarchy to find an agreement with Sivas. In particular, the Navy’s intelligence service notices that the Turkish national movement in Balıkesir, and more generally in North-Western Anatolia, is led by “very francophile” men.<sup>820</sup> With a broader perspective, Lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil argues in a report (forwarded to Paris by the high commissioner) that a coordination between the Kemalist movement on one side, a part of the CUP (those who had opposed the entry of the Ottoman Empire into WWI) on the other

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<sup>817</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « En Anatolie », *Journal des débats*, 11 novembre 1919, pp. 1-2 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « L’éveil national turc », *L’Opinion*, 15 novembre 1919, pp. 511-512 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Lettre de Turquie — Le mouvement nationaliste », *Journal des débats*, 6 décembre 1919, pp. 3-4. Also see Edgar Pech, *Les Alliés et la Turquie*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1925, p. 88.

<sup>818</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Les nouveaux nationalismes*, 29 novembre 1919, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1. The popularity of the National movement is confirmed (at least for İstanbul) in S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, n° 1164, 10 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>819</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La Turquie nationaliste », *L’Opinion*, 13 décembre 1919, pp. 587-589 (quote p. 588).

<sup>820</sup> S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, n° 1192, 16 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

side, is desirable, even more if France achieves such a coordination in obtaining that “D...” comes back to Istanbul. As the return of this “D...” would be facilitated by the cancellation, for procedural reasons, of the sentence of the ministers’ trial, it is more than likely that “D...” is former Minister of Finances Mehmet Cavit Bey (written Djavid in the French sources of the time).<sup>821</sup> Correspondingly, “a very reliable agent” of the land army’s intelligence service writes: “let’s support the nationalists” and concludes in considering that “without the Adana issue, the prestige of France in Turkey would be completely different.” A copy of the report is sent by the Ministry of War to the Quai d’Orsay.<sup>822</sup>

Commander Auguste Sarrou, former instructor of the Ottoman gendarmerie, already presented in the introduction, does not understand, initially, the sensitivity of the Adana issue, but he fully understands that the Turkish national movement is neither Bolshevik nor controlled by Germans or Germanophiles, and advocates a quick agreement with Sivas. Concerning the Armenian issue, the solution he advocates is a “temporary” cooperation of his country with the Turkish authorities to improve the local administration; no expansion of Armenia is ever considered. Regarding the Greeks, he suggests the following deal: Opposing their ambitions against the Turks, but supporting them against Bulgaria.<sup>823</sup> Colonel Pierre Chardigny, in the Caucasus, is more favorable, as usual, to the Armenians, but he emphasizes that Yerevan cannot ask for more than the province of Van, a part of the province of Bitlis and a small (the most oriental part) of the province of Erzurum, contrary to “the dream” of “Armenian megalomaniacs.” He also underlines the issue of the Muslims in the Republic of Armenia itself, and advocates an exchange of populations with Azerbaijan.<sup>824</sup> In short, even the views of a genuinely pro-Armenian officer are far from satisfying the ambitions of Armenian nationalism, in 1919.

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<sup>821</sup> Lieutenant Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil, Turquie, 11 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1574. High Commissioner DeFrance is convinced that the sentence of Cavit and some others, by a martial court, “may be called political sentences,” as these CUP leaders seem actually innocent: Monsieur DeFrance, haut-commissaire de la République en Orient, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 19 novembre 1919, CADN, 36PO/1/7. On 1 August 1919, even the British High Commission concludes that since May these trials “are proving to be a farce” (FO 371/4174/118377, f° 256).

<sup>822</sup> Note de renseignements d’un agent très sûr provenant de Constantinople, 27 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1574. Similar views in Rapport du capitaine Lafranque, de la mission de réorganisation de la gendarmerie ottomane, sur le mouvement national dans la région d’Angora, 14 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>823</sup> Note du commandant Sarrou sur la situation actuelle en Turquie, 20 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>824</sup> Colonel Chardigny, La question arménienne, 30 octobre 1919, SHD, 16 N 3187.

Meanwhile, in the press, the end of the censorship finishes to liberate the criticism. Maurice Barrès writes in *L'Écho de Paris* that “the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire is a huge loss for the French influence. France has the duty to ensure that this diminution does not turn to disaster.” Barrès advocates, in this perspective, a reinforcement of the presence in Lebanon and Syria. Nowhere are the Armenians mentioned.<sup>825</sup> This comment is soft in comparison with the series of vehement critiques explicitly affirming that Turkey that must keep Anatolia and eastern Thrace, otherwise the French interests would suffer terribly. The most merciless in this regard, is, one more time, Saint-Brice, who describes Lloyd George and Wilson as funest ignorants who have violated “the most elementary rules of logic.”<sup>826</sup> Similarly, *L'Action française* on the far right, *L'Europe nouvelle* on the liberal side roughly support the same conclusion: The Turkish national movement merely defends its homeland; such an action is legitimate.<sup>827</sup> Both the support in the press and in the state apparatus provoke bitter reactions from the Liberal Union, a strong indication for the seriousness of the help.<sup>828</sup> A more direct indication is a personal letter from Max Choublier (1873-1933), former consul in Salonika and now a businessman, to the director of the political affairs at the MFA (31 October 1919), explaining that he is conducting “a very active propaganda” in the Parisian

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<sup>825</sup> Maurice Barrès, « Nos droits seront maintenus en Syrie », *L'Écho de Paris*, 20 octobre 1919, p. 1. Barrès now is a friend of Kemalist Reşit Safvet Atabinen : Reşit Safvet Atabinen, *Pierre Loti, héroïque ami des Turcs*, İstanbul, 1950, p. 19.

<sup>826</sup> Edward Spencer Pratt, « Le problème de l'Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 23 octobre 1919, p. 1 ; Saint-Brice, « L'éternelle Turquie », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 30 octobre 1919, pp. 241-247 (quotation p. 241) ; Charles Saglio, « Qu'ont fait les Grecs à Smyrne ? — La question turque sur le tapis vert », *L'Œuvre*, 9 novembre 1919, p. 1 ; Saint-Brice, « Après le départ des Américains — Ce que M. Clemenceau va négocier à Londres », *Le Journal*, 10 décembre 1919, p. 1 ; « La paix avec la Turquie », *Le Figaro*, 15 décembre 1919, p. 2. René Moulin, « Notre patrimoine oriental en péril », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 15 novembre 1919, pp. 371-395 defends similar views, except that he suggests an autonomous (albeit not independent) Armenia on a part of north-eastern Anatolia he does not define. Interestingly he uses the demographic argument to exclude Adana—an argument that could be used for all the other Anatolian provinces claimed by the Armenian nationalists. One exception: Denys Cochin, « L'Empire ottoman », *Le Figaro*, 29 décembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>827</sup> Jacques Bainville, « Une journée obscure », *L'Action française*, 8 octobre 1919, p. 1 ; Édouard Bernier, « La Turquie et la paix — Le mouvement national et le rôle de l'Angleterre », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 25 octobre 1919, pp. 2029-2030 ; Édouard Bernier, « La Turquie et la paix — La question arménienne », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 29 novembre 1919, pp. 2176-2177. Also see Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Question turque. Une page d'histoire turque et d'erreurs européennes (1919-1931)*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1931, p. 98.

<sup>828</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1173, 11 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

press, to “give to the Turks [who read these newspapers] the impression of a necessary friendship.”<sup>829</sup>

Regarding the missionaries, Turkophobia certainly still exists among second-rank personalities,<sup>830</sup> but Father Claudius Chanteur (1865-1949), head of the Jesuit Mission “in Syria and Armenia,” well connected to the government as he was in charge of the creation of the schools of law and engineering at St-Joseph University in 1912-1914, has a different view. In a report written in August 1919 and forwarded in October to General Gouraud by Louis Jalabert (1877-1943), another leading Jesuit, ex-professor at St-Joseph University, Chanteur writes that Çukurova has a Turkish majority (even if he thinks that most of them could accept a French domination), explicitly rejects the Armenian nationalists’ claims toward this region and, concerning the rest of Anatolia, “the best would be to keep the Turkish Empire, monitored by a French control.”<sup>831</sup> The fact that General Gouraud is an observant Catholic,<sup>832</sup> that this report is kept in his personal papers and even more the direct reference of Gouraud to Chanteur in a personal letter to de Caix, in 1920,<sup>833</sup> are as many elements showing that the document does matter for him. Not necessarily as influential, but even more striking, is a letter of Father Rigal, a missionary in Adana: “When France will be definitely established [in Çukurova], all the population will be happy, except, perhaps, the Armenians, who dream of their kingdom: The planet would not be enough for them!”<sup>834</sup>

In sum, if the French policy, in October-November 1919, is not yet similar to the active support of Italy, the contrast is sharp with the hostility of the UK toward the Turkish national

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<sup>829</sup> AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>830</sup> For instance: Henri Riondel, « La guerre et le catholicisme en Turquie », *Études*, 20 octobre 1919, pp. 172-190. To evaluate the level of accuracy of this article, let’s compare its claims with the first-hand testimonies of French missionaries in Pierre Loti, *La Mort de...*, pp. 274-275; and with the sources already presented here regarding Ourmia in 1917-1918.

<sup>831</sup> Père Claudius Chanteur, Note sur la Syro-Palestine et la Turquie, août 1919, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1. The fact that Jalabert is an administrator of the *Études* and sends the Chanteur report precisely when this review publishes an anti-Turkish article written by Riondel (cited in the previous note) suggests a deep division among the Jesuits regarding Turkey and the Armenians, in 1919.

<sup>832</sup> Pierre Lyautey, *Gouraud...*, pp. 10 and 28.

<sup>833</sup> Lettre du général Gouraud à Robert de Caix, 2 juin 1920, AMAE, P 11203.

<sup>834</sup> R. P. Rigal, « Le collègue d’Adana », *Les Missions catholiques*, 10 octobre 1919, p. 485.

movement, in particular its support for the Kurdish separatists—a support actually found dangerous for the French presence in the Near East.<sup>835</sup>

#### 4.1.2. *The Maraş affair*

The occupation of Maraş, from November 1919 to 10 February 1920, the Turkish rebellion and the evacuation of the city by the French troops (Metropolitan soldiers, Armenian legionnaires, and Senegalese *tirailleurs*) constitute one of the most controversial aspects of the occupation of Çukurova and neighboring regions. It is also the pretext found by David Lloyd George to impose the reinforcement of the occupation of İstanbul.<sup>836</sup>

To clarify the issue, one inaccuracy and one lie have to be exposed: First, the accusations, in a part of the Turkish historiography, presenting Brémond, from the beginning to the end, “as a symbol of wickedness,”<sup>837</sup> then, a false assertion made by Brémond himself, by 1921, and according to which “the region [of Çukurova] was quiet at the end of 1919,”<sup>838</sup> namely before the rebellion of Maraş. The action of Brémond, by October 1919, is not systematically and constantly anti-Turkish, but what he does to conciliate the Turks illustrates the classical expression: Too few, too late. *Le Courrier d’Adana*, the organ of the French administration, reproduces (9 November 1919) an editorial of *Le Temps* entitled “The Victory of the Turkish nationalists,” a clear signal to the Turkish elites—but not necessarily understood by the ordinary people, and still less likely believed, if translated. Brémond and the officers in charge also carry out a policy of public works, at the benefit of the whole population.<sup>839</sup> More significantly, the repatriation is stopped in November 1919, as it has been explained in the

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<sup>835</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1148, 4 octobre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234 ; Télégramme de François Georges-Picot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 21 octobre 1919, AMAE, P 15505.

<sup>836</sup> Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 175-205.

<sup>837</sup> Kâmurân Gürün, *Le Dossier arménien*, Paris : Triangle, 1984, p. 337.

<sup>838</sup> Édouard Brémond, *La Cilicie en 1919-1920*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1921, p. 25.

<sup>839</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-25 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en Cilicie*, Aix-en-Provence : éditions du Feu, 1929, passim. Gaston Anfré acts similarly in Mersin: Commission pour l’embellissement de la ville de Mersine, séance du 11 décembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/133.

previous part of this work and the Armenian legion is now reduced to a “small unit.” The MFA stresses, as early as November 1919, that its presence has “no political character.”<sup>840</sup>

Regardless, Brémond is utterly wrong in pretending that “the region was quiet” at the end of 1919, and he cannot ignore how wrong he is. After the departure of the British troop, and until the end of February 1920, the arbitration commissions commit “numerous abuses.” Reduced to the litigations equal or inferior to 50 liras right after the Maraş revolt, they are completely suppressed in June or July. It may certainly be argued that the Armenians working under the orders of Brémond act “like a screen” between him and the Turks.<sup>841</sup> However, a direct evidence of his knowledge of the most serious issue is the summary of an intelligence report Brémond forwards to the military governors of Adana, Mersin, Tarsus, Kozan and Osmaniye at the end of October 1919. The report has been made by Commander Bruneau, who has been in eastern Anatolia for “more than five months.” Bruneau affirms: “My conviction is that the Turks will not move if they are not attacked. On the other hand, the presence of the Armenian Legion is very antipathetic to them.” Brémond continues: “According to Commander Bruneau, it is the only cause that could provoke a revolt. The behavior to have, considering these two pieces of information: A policy of great prudence has to be followed, avoid any provocation, and withdraw *as soon as possible* [underlined in the original] from Marache [Maraş], Aintab [Antep] and Ourfa [Urfa] the Armenian troops and to replace them by tirailleurs.”<sup>842</sup> This crucial document (never used in the existing literature consulted for this study) proves that the Armenian Legion, even weakened, still represents a danger if used at the contact of the Turkish population, and that Brémond is not, in Autumn 1919, the caricature of himself he later gives in his self-justifications. The chief

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<sup>840</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au représentant français à Izmir, 15 novembre 1919, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>841</sup> Rapport du commandant Tommy Martin, 9 novembre 1920, pp. 1-2, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191. The abuses are hidden in Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne*, Paris: Imprimerie Araxes, 1943, p. 61 (the author represents the Catholics at the Armenian National Union of Adana during the French occupation). Similar abuses also take place in Bursa, in autumn 1919, covered by the British occupation: Le chef de bataillon Brissaud, chef du S.R. de Brousse, à M. le général commandant en chef des armées alliées, 4 novembre 1919, p. 3, CADN, 36 PO/1/10.

<sup>842</sup> Le colonel Brémond, administrateur en chef des T.E.O. nord, à MM. les gouverneurs d'Adana, Mersine, Tarsous, Kozan, Osmanié, 31 octobre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/132. Also see Id., 3 décembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/133 (about twelve desertors of the Armenian Legion).

administrator is also informed that the arbitration commission of Kozan (Sis) “is the opposite of justice” because of the Armenian National Union.<sup>843</sup>

Brémond’s concerns are proved only too justified by events of November 1919. For example, the murder of two prominent Turks by Armenians in November 1919 (one high-ranked civil servant in Adana and one professor in Erzin) provokes “a big emotion” and the majority of the Armenian legionnaires settled in Antep is displaced to the hinterland the same month.<sup>844</sup> Even more seriously, Captain Ferdinand Taillardat, governor of Kozan, also notices an increasing number of “crimes, attacks” in his own district during the year 1919 and sees, too, the month of November as a turning point for the exasperation of the Turks.<sup>845</sup> Taillardat’s observations are partially corroborated by an article published in the organ of the Reformed Hunchak in İstanbul, *Aravod*, on 9 August 1920. The article blames a Hunchak official, Armaghanean, for having provoked the Armenian volunteers of Kozan to “insurrection.” Having succeeded, Armaghanean has created “a deplorable situation” for the Armenians of the city.<sup>846</sup> In these conditions, an essential question to solve is: Why are Armenian legionnaires sent to replace British and Indian soldiers in Maraş?

A part of the explanation is, one more time, the lack of soldiers from Metropolitan France and its colonies—even more in Maraş than in Antep. Another part is a problem of coordination between the decision-makers. Indeed, as we saw, Gouraud and de Caix arrive in November, and, even if Brémond is concerned by the actions of Armenian nationalists, it does not incite him to coordinate more often his action with Beirut. Even more problematically, this is not until December 1919 that Major General Julien Dufieux (1873-1959) arrives in Adana to command the occupation troops in Çukurova and Maraş. Dufieux who has pursued a double carrier of staff officer and of commander on the battlefield,<sup>847</sup>

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<sup>843</sup> Le capitaine Taillardat, gouverneur du sandjak de Kozan, à M. l’administrateur en chef [1919], CADN, 1SL/1V/138. Garabet Krikor Moumdjian, “Cilicia Under French...” treats the issue superficially, having not worked at all in the French archives.

<sup>844</sup> Maurice Abadie, *Opérations au Levant. Les Quatre sièges d’Aïntab (1920-1921)*, Paris : Charles-Lavauzelle & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1922, pp. 32-33 ; Lieutenant-colonel Flye Sainte-Marie, Rapport hebdomadaire sur la situation militaire et sur la situation politique du cercle d’Aïntab, 11 novembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/166. Also see Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Question turque...*, p. 97.

<sup>845</sup> Protection des minorités chrétiennes en Cilicie, 11 décembre 1920, p. 2, CADN, 1 SL/1V/144.

<sup>846</sup> Tommy Martin, Renseignements, 7 septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>847</sup> Maréchal Maxime Weygand, « Le général Dufieux », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1959, pp. 28-32.

receives written and oral orders to ease the situation, to conciliate the Muslims, “particularly the Turks,” to diminish the direct administrative control, to “relax, on the contrary, the ties between the French authorities to the Armenian organizations, the development and the claims were deemed dangerous.” “In one word, holding an equal balance between the various races and religions.”<sup>848</sup> As a result, it clearly appears that the intentions of Dufieux are not antagonistic, at least not at his arrival, but when he begins to command, the Armenian Legion already is in Maraş. This is a typical error of command, during a transitional period.

However, this is not only an issue of command. In this regard, a key document is the intelligence note of Commander Morbieu, chief of the administrative control in the district of Maraş during the brief French occupation. The report is merciless for the first officer in charge, Captain Pierre André. Morbieu argues that from the beginning, André is misled by his Armenian dragoman, Vahan Kourbesserian, who erases the French influence, replaces it with the Armenian one and multiplies the provocations, not only by aggressive statements and by the replacement of the Turkish flag by the French one in the city, but also by sending one hundred Armenian legionnaires to villages neighboring Maraş: The villages are burned by these Armenians. In addition to the series of murders, plunders and other crimes of the Armenian Legion against Turks and Arabs since January 1919, this aggressiveness provokes the rebellion of the Turkish population of Maraş (January 1920), according to Morbieu.<sup>849</sup> Yet, Commander André’s ignorance of the actual situation is confirmed by the intelligence notes he forwards to Adana on 3, 10 and 11 December 1919, affirming that the Turkish population of Maraş only wants to remain in peace and undisturbed.<sup>850</sup> At the same time, General Dufieux, who stays in Adana, seems more concerned than his subordinate about the weapons (especially the machine-guns) accumulated on the Turkish side, and its level of organization.<sup>851</sup>

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<sup>848</sup> Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

<sup>849</sup> Renseignement, n° 10, 2 février 1920, AN, 594 AP 4. Also see Commandant Morbieu, Note sommaire sur la situation politique du sandjak de Marasch, depuis l’occupation française jusqu’au soulèvement du 21 janvier 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

<sup>850</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/133.

<sup>851</sup> Le général Dufieux à M. le général commandant en chef de l’armée du Levant, 4 décembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/166. Also see Renseignements, 4 décembre 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/133.



Concerning the crimes of Armenian legionnaires as described by Morbieu, an intelligence bulletin of the French Navy's intelligence service confirms the existence of murders of Turks by these legionnaires in Maraş city.<sup>852</sup> Similarly, a Turkish military report explains that "Armenians welcomed them shouting 'Long live Armenia' while randomly shooting Muslims in the streets" and another one explains how "an Ottoman gendarme was killed."<sup>853</sup> These three documents have been written in November 1919 and, as a result, cannot be considered, at any degree, attempts to justify the uprising of January-February 1920. The accusation of Morbieu toward the interpreter of André, Vahan Kourbesserian, is also confirmed by Colonel Robert Normand, chief of the last rescue unit, who asks for the revocation of the dragoman and sees the activity of Kourbesserian as "a new intrigue of Armenians to fully involve France militarily when I tried to ease the future."<sup>854</sup>

The correspondent of *L'Europe nouvelle* in Turkey, Édouard Bernier, defends the same conclusion than Morbieu on the cause of the Turkish revolt in Maraş, and more generally about the battles in the region: The Armenian Legion, as well as "the incorporation of Armenians in the police and gendarmerie were more than a fault. It was a crime [...]." Bernier continues in arguing that the "plunders, rapes, arsons, massacres, looting of villages" are "very numerous" and could be checked by "an investigation commission" that would be in charge of deciding which sanctions are appropriate "against those of our agents who, by repeated abuses of power, have compromised the interests of France" in Çukurova.<sup>855</sup> The reader may wonder where Bernier has found a sufficient amount of data to accuse Brémond and some of his subordinates so seriously. The answer is in a note written in March 1921 by the general secretary of the French administration in Adana, Charles Escande (a former governor). Escande explains that, having lost his hopes to convert Brémond to a complete

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<sup>852</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1327, 20 novembre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 234.

<sup>853</sup> Reports dated 13 and 20 November 1919, translated in Stanford Jay Shaw, "The Armenian Legion and its Destruction of the Armenian Community in Cilicia," in Türkkaya Ataöv (in.), *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, Ankara: TTK/TBMM, pp. 159-160. Also see Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...*, p. 121; Yalçın Özalp (ed.), *Ermeni intikâm alayı Maraş'ta (Vesikâlar, 1919-1920)*, Karamanmaraş: Karamanmaraş Belediyesi Kültür Hizmetidir, 2005; and the report of the Ottoman ministry of Interior, 14 February 1920, in Yusuf Sarıınay (ed.), *Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri*, Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2001, volume II, pp. 760-762.

<sup>854</sup> Le colonel Normand à M. le général commandant la 156<sup>e</sup> division, 3 février 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

<sup>855</sup> Édouard Bernier, « La question turque — Dans l'attente de la solution », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 28 février 1920, p. 342.

reversal of his policy, he gave informations to journalists and members of the Parliament who advocate such a change.<sup>856</sup> The case of Escande shall be discussed more in detail below.

A last confirmation for the anti-Turkish actions of André's Armenian interpreter, the assaults, assassinations and arsons by the Armenian legionnaires and their determining role in the uprising is found in the report of Ilhami Bey, the interpreter of the rescue unit. Ilhami even accuses Kourbesserian to have sabotaged the efforts of Colonel Normand to make peace with the insurgents, in February.<sup>857</sup> Yet, Ilhami is a Turk, but also fiercely anti-CUP and anti-Kemalist.<sup>858</sup> His testimony cannot be called, at any degree, supportive of the insurgents.

As the causes have been established, the next issue to study is the allegation of "massacre" of Armenians by the Turkish side during this revolt.<sup>859</sup> Admiral Ferdinand de Bon, chief of the French Navy in the Mediterranean Sea, who is present, at that time, in Istanbul, exposes in a report that he systematically checked the accusations, speaking with French, British and Armenians: "As a result, so far, it is impossible to say that there was somewhere massacres of Armenians. It is widely discussed, but no one could provide me with a safe and accurate indication. [...] Armenians have participated in [this] action and suffered losses as all fighters. A serious study of the figures suggests that the Armenian losses did not exceed a thousand."<sup>860</sup> The account published by *Le Petit Parisien* is congruent, estimating the Armenian losses due to the "violence" (not "massacre") in Maraş to be less than 1,600.<sup>861</sup>

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<sup>856</sup> Note de M. [Charles] Escande, mars 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>857</sup> Ilhami Bey, Rapport sur les événements de Marache et la marche de la colonne Normand, 26 février 1920, pp. 4-11, AN, 594 AP 4.

<sup>858</sup> Ibid., p. 16; Ilhami Bey, Rapport sur le voyage avec la mission Normand, 20 janvier 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/138. The Kemalist point of view on Maraş (not fundamentally different in this case) is in: « Historique des événements de Marache », *Échos de l'Islam*, 20 avril 1920, pp. 2-3.

<sup>859</sup> Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006, pp. 300 and 309; Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, New York: Perennial, 2004, p. 180; Édouard Brémond, *La Cilicie en...*, p. 40 ; Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*, vol. III, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1996, p. 42; Paul de Rémusat, « Cilicie (1918-1922) », *Revue des sciences politiques*, LIV, 1931, p. 357. Ronald Grigor Suny, *They Can Live in the Desert bu Nowhere Else*, Princeton-Oxford : Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 340 even claims, contradicted by his own source (Stanley Kerr), that the "massacre" takes place after the evacuation by the French. Altıar (Avétis Aharonian), *Le Problème de Cilicie et l'avenir de la France au Levant*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1921, p. 13 interestingly speaks of "Turkish vengeance" in Maraş but does not elaborate.

<sup>860</sup> Télégramme du président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à l'ambassadeur français à Londres, 7 mars 1920, AMAE, P 16673.

<sup>861</sup> « Le faux bruit de la prise d'Alexandrette », *Le Petit Parisien*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1920, p. 3.

Similarly, Henri Rollin, the chief of the French Navy's intelligence service for Turkey and southern Russia concludes that the "so-called massacres" claimed at the beginning of March 1920 in Antolia were "at the very least grossly exaggerated."<sup>862</sup> The charge of "massacre" is also rejected by very different commentators: Pierre Loti, the far rightist journalist Jacques Bainville, the liberal columnist Hyacinthe Philouze (1876-1938) and the Socialist-Feminist Fanny Clar (1875-1944).<sup>863</sup>

It may be argued that a part of these comments come from İstanbul, the others from Paris. Regardless, beside the fact that Captain Rollin has agents in Anatolia, the conclusions of U.S. Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol are largely based on the report of Dr. Lambert, who is in Maraş during the revolt, and who affirms that there was "no one-sided massacre."<sup>864</sup> U.S. Colonel Charles Furlong, sent in Anatolia by President Woodrow Wilson confirms: "The so-called Marach massacres have not been substantiated, in fact, in the minds of many who were familiar with the situation, there was a grave question whether it was not the Turk who suffered at the hands of the Armenian and French armed contingents which were occupying that city and vicinity."<sup>865</sup> The sources of Major General Dufieux, namely officers having fought in Maraş, do not seem quite different. Indeed, in his 34-pages final report on the events in this city, he blames the indiscipline and "plunder" by a part of the Armenians, but does not charge the Turkish side for killing of unarmed civilians.<sup>866</sup> Similarly, neither in his report to Dufieux nor in his published recollections does Colonel Normand, the chief of the last rescue unit sent to Maraş, affirm the existence of any "massacre of Armenians" in this city—but he describes the arsons committed here by Armenians.<sup>867</sup> In these conditions, it is unscholarly

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<sup>862</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 19 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>863</sup> Hyacinthe Philouze, « Luther contre Mahomet », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 28 février 1920, p. 338 ; Fanny Clar, « L'escroquerie à la pitié », *Le Populaire*, 3 mars 1920, p. 2 ; Jacques Bainville, « Notre rôle en Orient », *L'Action française*, 9 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Une cynique imposture », *Échos de l'islam*, 20 avril 1920, p. 2.

<sup>864</sup> Mark Bristol, War diary, 4 and 22 March 1920, Library of Congress (LC), Washington, Bristol papers, box 1.

<sup>865</sup> Letter to President Wilson, April 4, 1920, quoted in Mesut Uyar, "An American Military Observer of the Turkish Independence War: Colonel Charles Wellington Furlong," in Sinan Kunalalp (dir.), *A Bridge between Cultures: Studies on Ottoman and Republican Turkey in Memory of Ali İhsan Bağış*, İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2006, p. 189.

<sup>866</sup> Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920 (quotation p. 28), CADN, 1SL/1V/166. For Turkish sources: Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey's Struggle for Liberation and the Armenians*, Ankara: SAM, 2001, p. 95.

<sup>867</sup> Colonel Robert Normand, Historique de la colonne de secours de Marach, 15 février 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166 ; Robert Normand, *Colonnes dans le Levant*, Paris-Limoges : Charles-Lavauzelle & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1924,

to use, as Vahé Tachjian does, a telegram<sup>868</sup> written by Dufieux at a time when he has no direct contact with Maraş,<sup>869</sup> *before* having spoken with the officers who later have evacuated Maraş—and to neglect his last word on the affair. Similarly, the general staff in Paris concludes that “there were no massacres strictly speaking,” but 3,000 Armenians killed during clashes and later by snow.<sup>870</sup>

Two very brief mentions of a “massacre” have to be analyzed. In his 200 pages book written in 1921 and published three years later, Maxime Bergès, a lieutenant of artillery in an unit sent to rescue the French occupation forces in Maraş, this allegation is present in a unique and ambiguous sentence. Bergès indeed mentions a “massacre” of adults he can see in the “eyes” of Armenian children.<sup>871</sup> But he never claims having *spoken* with them, still less having seen the event, and the misuse of the word “massacre” is common in French literature during the interwar to describe a particularly violent fight—the hypothesis of such a misuse by Bergès is reinforced by the fact that only adults were killed, according to him. On the other hand, Bergès’ description of the looting and arsons by Armenians, in Maraş city as well as in the countryside, is unequivocal and based on his direct observations.<sup>872</sup> Similarly, in the recollections of Georges Boudière, a second lieutenant of infantry at that time, there is only the half of a sentence alleging a massacre of Armenians in Maraş, on 21 January 1920. Yet, in his own notes written in 1919-1920 and published by himself together with his recollections, it appears that he was in Beirut on that day, and there is absolutely nothing on any “massacre” of Armenians in his contemporary diary. However, there are, in these notes,

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pp. 30-48. Yet, Normand cannot be called an adversary of the Armenians: Robert Normand, « La Cilicie », *Annales de géographie*, XXIX/162, 1920, pp. 447-451; « France et Arménie », *Aiguillon*, 15 février 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>868</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mésopotamie (1919-1933)*, Paris : Karthala, 2004, p. 129. It is even more unscholarly as Mr. Tachjian has neglected to cite the exact document he actually uses: likely Télégramme chiffré du général Dufieux au colonel Normand, 3 février 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

<sup>869</sup> Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920, p. 25, CADN, 1SL/1V/166. On the devastating effects of the snow and the absence of solidarity among most the Armenian refugees, even when they belong to the same family, see François Gagnard, « L’effort de nos troupes en Cilicie pendant l’année 1920 », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 29 janvier 1921, pp. 523-526.

<sup>870</sup> Note de l’État-major des armées, 3<sup>e</sup> bureau, 17 avril 1920, SHD, 6 N 197.

<sup>871</sup> Maxime Bergès, *La Colonne de Marach et autres récits de l’armée du Levant*, Paris : La Renaissance du livre, 1924, p. 86.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 81 and 142-143.

clear descriptions of rapes and arsons perpetrated by Armenian legionnaires in the presence of Boudière.<sup>873</sup>

The only clear allegation of “massacre” in a contemporary French source on the field is one paragraph from the book of Lieutenant-Colonel C. Thibault. He claims he heard “hearsay” of massacre (about 2,000 victims) which later were “confirmed.”<sup>874</sup> Yet, Thibault does not explain who confirmed this “hearsay” and still less why Dufieux, embittered by the humiliation of Maraş, and who initially believed in the allegation of killings, has eventually not taken this accusation seriously in his last report. Even more importantly, no contemporary report from Thibault containing such an accusation has been found during this research, and even Vahé Tachjian does not claim to have found such a document.

As one of the main sources for accusations of “massacre” is the book published in 1973 by Stanley Kerr (1894-1976), an American teacher working in Maraş during the uprising, it is preferable to say some words about Kerr’s intellectual honesty. Beside the fact that he interviewed only Armenians, but never Turks, during the preparation of his book (1969-1970), in addition to serious lacks in the bibliography (the testimonies of Maxime Bergès, Paul Bernard and Raoul Desjardins, for example, are never cited), and without insisting on the laconism of Kerr about the war crimes perpetrated by Armenian nationalists, it is noteworthy that this author uses the misleading book of Kurdish nationalist leader Mevlanzade Rifat<sup>875</sup> in knowing perfectly that the book is misleading.<sup>876</sup> Indeed, if the informants of Kerr did not provide him accurate data on Rifat, at least they said the truth on the most relevant aspect of his life: During the First World War, Rifat was not able to know anything on the decisions of the CUP. Yet, Kerr uses Rifat, who does not provide any source for the “meeting” when the “extermination” of the Armenians was allegedly decided. Then, Kerr speculates on the possibility that Rifat could have heard that in 1912. Yet, Rifat affirms

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<sup>873</sup> Georges Boudière, « Notes sur la campagne de Syrie-Cilicie : l’affaire de Maraş (janvier-février 1920) », *Turcica*, IX/2, pp. 158, 165-166 and 168-169. Also see Georges Boudière, *Itinéraires en Orient et au Levant, 1918-1920*, Paris: La pensée universelle, 1978, p. 131.

<sup>874</sup> C. Thibault, *Historique du 412<sup>e</sup> régiment d’infanterie*, Paris-Limoges-Nancy : Charles-Lavauzelle & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1923, p. 242.

<sup>875</sup> Gwynne Dyer, “Correspondence,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, IX-3, October 1973, pp. 379-382. On Rifat, also see Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Mougin, chef de la liaison française près le gouvernement ottoman, sur l’occupation militaire de Constantinople par les Anglais, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1920, SHD, 7 N 3210, dossier 2, sous-dossier 2.

<sup>876</sup> Stanley Kerr, *The Lions of Marash*, Albany, NY: SUNY, 1973, pp. 8, 14, 25 and 277-278.

that the “meeting” took place on February 15, 1915.<sup>877</sup> Similarly, and against all evidence,<sup>878</sup> Kerr tries to present as self-defense the rebellions of Armenian nationalists at Zeytun and Van in 1915. As a result, the account written by Kerr on the Turkish uprising in Maras, where events “seem to be tangled in monumental confusion,”<sup>879</sup> cannot be taken at face value.

Even more strikingly, the book of Pastor Abraham Hartunian (1872-1939), written at the end of 1930s and posthumously published in 1968 “lapses into utter absurdity”<sup>880</sup> in describing (in 17 pages out of 200) the insurrection of Maraş: “I believe the French army came to Turkey to camouflage the annihilation of the Armenians by the Turk.”<sup>881</sup> The defense of Captain Pierre André by himself is hardly more credible. He claims that the only massacre of Armenians takes place “after the French evacuation.”<sup>882</sup> In fact, the evacuation is quickly (albeit not immediately) followed by the end of the violence.<sup>883</sup> This is logical: at the end of 1919 and in 1920, the Kemalists try to gain the support of Armenians in Çukurova and its vicinity.<sup>884</sup> Even the Turkish irregulars, in general, “do not molest the peasants who rally them, even if Christians,” and the difference in treatment being given is based on political stances, not religion or ethnicity—with the “avowed aim to associate Christians and Muslims in a common effort to expel the aliens [the French troops].”<sup>885</sup> André’s book contains other

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<sup>877</sup> Mevlanzade Rifat, *Türkiye inkılabının içyüzü*, Aleppo: El Vakit, 1929, p. 83, translated in Haigaz Kazarian, *Minutes of Secret Meetings Organizing the Turkish Genocide of the Armenians*, Boston, 1965, p. 6.

<sup>878</sup> See the previous chapter.

<sup>879</sup> Roderic H. Davison, “Book review,” *Middle East Journal*, XXVIII-3, Summer 1974, p. 339.

<sup>880</sup> Gwynne Dyer, “Turkish ‘Falsifiers’ and Armenian ‘Deceivers’: Historiography and the Armenian Massacres,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XII-1, January 1976, p. 103.

<sup>881</sup> Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1976 (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1968), p. 140. Interestingly, even Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, never cites Hartunian’s book.

<sup>882</sup> Pierre Redan (Pierre André), *La Cilicie et le Problème ottoman*, Paris : Gauthier-Villars, 1921, p. 94.

<sup>883</sup> Telegram of Dr. Lambert, February 26, 1920, LC, Bristol papers, container 76; Renseignements recueillis auprès du Révérend Lyman, de l’A.N.E.C., lors de son passage à Islahié le 18 mars, 21 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166. Even Hartunian confirms: Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh...*, p. 149.

<sup>884</sup> Rapport hebdomadaire, 9-15 mars 1920, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 1 ; Id., 29 juin 1920, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2 ; Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920, p. 31, CADN, 1SL/1V/166 ; Maurice Abadie, *Opérations au Levant...*, p. 35 ; Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 197-198.

<sup>885</sup> Rapport hebdomadaire, 16-22 mars 1920, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 1. Also see Note de renseignements, 25 février 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/144.

utterly false affirmations. For example, he claims that the behavior of the Armenian legionnaires “was perfect in Maraş” (sic), that there is nothing wrong in the work of the arbitration commissions or that the Turks are “a small minority” in Çukurova in 1919-1920.<sup>886</sup> To be fair, the whole book is not as misleading and as anti-Turkish as these parts are, but these examples suffice for not accepting this testimony at face value, at least not on the sensitive and political topics, and still less for events he never saw himself (André left Maraş before the revolt).

The last polemic on the Maraş affair is about the cause of the evacuation. Until today, it is commonly presented as a mystery, including by Vahé Tachjian, in spite of his research in the French archives.<sup>887</sup> In fact, the explanation can be found in one of the boxes used by Mr. Tachjian himself. Indeed, in his instructions to the rescue unit, Dufieux orders to reach Maraş “at any price” but leaves to the officer in charge the choice to remain or to evacuate, as the general situation makes impossible a “total sacrifice for Maraş alone.”<sup>888</sup> Retrospectively, Dufieux approves the decision to leave the city, considering the lack of food and the virtual impossibility to obtain additional supplying.<sup>889</sup> Indeed, the revolt of Maraş serves as catalyst for the Turkish nationalists in the region.<sup>890</sup> As early as March 1920, General Dufieux writes: “This game is exhausting and cannot be prolonged.”<sup>891</sup> The same month, and more abruptly,

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<sup>886</sup> Pierre Redan (Pierre André), *La Cilicie et...*, pp. 36, 39 and 43.

<sup>887</sup> Édouard Brémond, *La Cilicie en...*, p. 40 ; Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, pp. 129-130 ; Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne...*, p. 90 ; Paul du Véou (Paul de Rémusat), *La Passion de la Cilicie*, Paris : Paul Geuthner, 1954, pp. 133-136.

<sup>888</sup> Général Dufieux, Instructions pour le colonel Normand, 30 janvier 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166. Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, III, p. 42 claims: “sources close to General Dufieux maintained that there had been no intention to evacuate Marash and that the commanding officer had been genuinely amazed to learn of the withdrawal” but cites no such sources and ignores the relevant archives entirely.

<sup>889</sup> Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920, pp. 23-26, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

<sup>890</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 29 janvier 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 235 ; Colonel Normand, Journal de marche de la mission de Diarbeckir [1920], CADN, 1SL/1V/166 ; Rapport du capitaine Derain sur son voyage en Syrie et en Cilicie, du 23 février au 28 mars 1920, SHD, 6 N 197 ; Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général...*, p. 859.

<sup>891</sup> Télégramme chiffré du général Dufieux à l’armée du Levant, 10 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166.

second lieutenant Boudière records in his notebook that “it would be madness to think about overcoming the Kemalists, the country is too vast.”<sup>892</sup>

#### 4.1.3. The consequences of the Maraş rebellion

In spite of the accusations by Armenian nationalists of France,<sup>893</sup> the events of Maraş are not misrepresented in the French press, as it has been seen. On the contrary, from the end of December 1919 to February 1920, takes place the first massive wave of articles defending the Turks, mostly regarding the issue of İstanbul, as the London conference of December considers to expel them from their capital city. The less biting comments call it unjustified.<sup>894</sup> From the center right to the far right, it is commonly considered dangerous.<sup>895</sup> Saint-Brice, most of the left-wing press, as well as Pierre Loti and Henri Mylès, are purely and simply hostile.<sup>896</sup> Arsène Henry (1848-1931), former ambassador in Bucharest and Stockholm, ex-director of the commercial affairs at the MFA (namely an unofficial voice of the Quai d’Orsay), defends the rights of Turkey to keep both İstanbul and eastern Thrace, emphasizing the

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<sup>892</sup> Georges Boudière, *Itinéraires en Orient...*, p. 156. Also see Lettre de Paul Cambon à Albert DeFrance, 16 mars 1920, AMAE, 56 PA-PA 4.

<sup>893</sup> « Les événements de Cilicie », *Bulletin arménien*, 29 février 1920 ; Aram Turabian, « La France que nous aimons », *Aiguillon*, 15 mars 1920, p. 1.

<sup>894</sup> « Rien de décidé pour Constantinople », *L’Homme libre*, 2 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Henri Lorin, « Le sort de Constantinople », *La Petite Gironde*, 6 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; « Le problème turc », *La Croix*, 8 janvier 1920, p. 1.

<sup>895</sup> « La question turque et l’opinion anglaise », *L’Écho de Paris*, 27 décembre 1919, p. 3 ; Pertinax (André Géraud), « Les Turcs hors de Constantinople ? », *L’Écho de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1920, p. 3 ; Pierre Bernus, « Constantinople et la paix de l’Europe », *Journal des débats*, 2-3 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « La France “dans un coin” », *L’Action française*, 3 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Humbert de Gallier, « Constantinople et les Détroits », *Le Figaro*, 5 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; René d’Aral, « Le vrai péril en Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 5 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; André Chaumeix, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 janvier 1920, pp. 479-480 ; « L’opinion de M. Charles Le Boucq, député, président du Comité France-Orient », *L’Information*, 17 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Louis Dumont-Wilden, « La question de Constantinople », *Revue bleue*, 13 mars 1920, pp. 151-154.

<sup>896</sup> « La paix du Levant », *La Lanterne*, 27 décembre 1919, p. 1 ; Saint-Brice, « La conférence de Londres », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 décembre 1919, pp. 438-439 ; Paul Louis, « Constantinople ! », *Le Populaire*, 2 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; « Constantinople ! », *La Lanterne*, 2 janvier 1920 ; « La France en Turquie », *Le Rappel*, 3 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Marcel Cachin, « En Orient », *L’Humanité*, 4 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Pour les Turcs — L’héritage du sultan », *L’Œuvre*, 5 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Paul Louis, « Le problème turc », *L’Humanité*, 6 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Pierre Loti, « Lettre ouverte à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères », *L’Œuvre*, 23 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Henri Mylès, « La question turque », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 24 janvier 1920, pp. 112-113.



Turkish majority in these territories.<sup>897</sup> Meanwhile, Berthe George-Gaulis warns against the understandable exasperation in Anatolia, a fair peace having been waited here for too long.<sup>898</sup> Then, having obtained an early retirement from the Navy, Claude Farrère begins to campaign in favor of the Turks, arguing that they must keep Edirne, İstanbul, İzmir, as well as Adana.<sup>899</sup> He begins to intervene precisely at the moment when Dr. Nihat Reşat (Belger) comes back to Paris after one year (1919) in İstanbul, and establishes an organization (*Bureau d'information islamique*) and a bi-weekly (*Écho de l'Islam*) to oppose Greek and Armenian nationalisms. Reşat is helped by Senator Anatole de Monzie (1876-1947)<sup>900</sup> and Farrère (a personal friend of de Monzie<sup>901</sup>) contributes from the beginning. The third issue contains an article of Alexandre Bérard (1859-1923), vice-president of the Senate, defending the rights of the Turks to keep İstanbul and deploring that the Russian ambitions toward this city has provoked the entry of the Ottoman Empire on the German side.<sup>902</sup> Farrère also works with Kemalist activist Reşit Safvet Atabinen, who has taken refuge in Paris at the beginning of 1920.<sup>903</sup>

In these conditions, it is not a surprise if the reinforcement of the occupation of İstanbul, decided by the Lloyd George cabinet after the events of Maraş, and imposed to France and Italy by the threat to act alone,<sup>904</sup> provokes hostile reactions in the French press, from the

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<sup>897</sup> « Faut-il chasser les Turcs de Constantinople ? », *L'Information*, 12 janvier 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>898</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « L'armistice en Turquie », *L'Information*, 6 janvier 1920, p. 2.

<sup>899</sup> Claude Farrère, « La Turquie et la paix », *L'Intransigeant*, 24 février 1920, p. 1. These articles are noticed by the Kemalist movement: S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1836, 2 mars 1920, AMAE, P 17784; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2234, 2 juillet 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>900</sup> Nermin Çelik and Öztan Öncel, "Hekim, Siyasetçi ve Diplomat Olarak Dr. Nihat Reşat Belger," *Türkiye Klinikleri*, XVI, 2008, p. 161. I express my thanks to Celâl Bayar Jr. for having sent me this article.

<sup>901</sup> Claude Farrère, *Souvenirs...*, pp. 84 and 120.

<sup>902</sup> Claude Farrère, « L'Asie mineure et la paix », *Écho de l'Islam*, 20 février 1920, p. 3 ; Alexandre Bérard, « Sur le Bosphore », *Écho de l'Islam*, 20 mars 1920, p. 1.

<sup>903</sup> Reşit Safvet Atabinen, *Pierre Loti, héroïque...*, p. 19.

<sup>904</sup> Télégramme de Paul Cambon au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 5 mars 1920, AMAE, P 1441.

Marxists to the far right.<sup>905</sup> The anti-Turkish articles, including as far as the Çukurova issue is concerned, still exist, but they clearly are in minority now.<sup>906</sup>

This crystallisation of a large majority of the French opinion during winter 1919-1920 is congruent with the change at the top of the state. In January 1920, Georges Clemenceau is defeated at the presidential election (the president of the Republic being, at that time, elected by the Parliament): The Socialist left has not forgiven his heavy-handed methods during the strikes of 1906-1907, then during the First World War; Aristide Briand is warned that Clemenceau would never name him as President of the Ministers' council and, as a result, acts to obtain his defeat; the conservatives are concerned by the hostility of Clemenceau to any restoration of the diplomatic relations with the Vatican, as well as by his project to increase the tax income and to implement more strictly the tax on the war benefits. As a result, Clemenceau resigns from his position at the head of the cabinet, and leaves the political life.<sup>907</sup> As President of the Ministers' council, he is replaced by Alexandre Millerand. Having gradually moved from the left to the right by nationalism, Millerand relieves the right-wing of the majority by his staunch patriotism, without concerning the centrist component

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<sup>905</sup> Paul Louis, « La prise de Constantinople », *Le Populaire*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Paul Louis, « Le partage de la Turquie », *L'Humanité*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « Ferons-nous la paix ou la guerre avec la Turquie ? », *Le Journal*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « La folle croisade — Au nom de la morale, les Anglais veulent assassiner l'homme malade », *L'Œuvre*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « M. Lloyd George brouille les cartes à la conférence de Londres — Visées britanniques sur la Turquie », *Le Rappel*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Raymond Recouly, « La question turque », *Le Figaro*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « Que se prépare-t-il en Turquie ? », *Le Gaulois*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « L'occupation de Constantinople — Ayons en Orient une politique de sagesse », *La Liberté*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « Constantinople est, en fait, occupée par les troupes alliées », *Le Petit Parisien*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « L'intervention en Turquie », *L'Écho de Paris*, 8 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Pertinax, « Pour corriger l'œuvre du Conseil suprême », *L'Écho de Paris*, 9 mars 1920, p. 3 ; Jacques Bainville, « Notre rôle en Orient », *L'Action française*, 9 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « On semble ignorer à Londres que nous avons des troupes à Constantinople », *L'Information*, 11 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « Qu'allons-nous faire dans cette felouque ? », *L'Intransigeant*, 13 mars 1920, p. 1 ; « L'Angleterre règne à Constantinople », *La Libre Parole*, 2 avril 1920, p. 1 ; Paul Louis, « Une nouvelle guerre en Orient ? », *Le Populaire*, 27 avril 1920, p. 1.

<sup>906</sup> François Jean-Desthieux, « Le nouveau statut de Constantinople », *L'Homme libre*, 20 février 1920, p. 1 ; René Pinon, « La question de Cilicie », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 29 février 1920, pp. 145-148 ; Denys Cochin, « Conciliation turque », *Le Figaro*, 7 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Auguste Gauvain, « Le vote de confiance », *Journal des débats*, 29 mars 1920, p. 1.

<sup>907</sup> Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Clemenceau*, Paris: Fayard, 1988, pp. 850-858 ; Henri Guillemin, *Nationalistes et nationaux. La droite française de 1870 à 1940*, Paris : Gallimard, 1974, pp. 177-178.

(Millerand's favorite one), thanks to his fight for the secular Republic during his youth (1880s) and even more to the composition of his cabinet.<sup>908</sup>

The main priority of Millerand is to implement the Versailles treaty (this is the main concern of his compatriots) and he is very concerned by the anti-Bolshevik fight,<sup>909</sup> but he does not neglect the Turkish issue. On the contrary, Millerand affirms: "If somebody loves the Turks more than Loti does, this is myself!"<sup>910</sup> Aware of the remaining tensions, mostly about Çukurova, Millerand orders the representatives in Turkey to explain to the Istanbul cabinet and to Ankara that the offensives against the French forces only make more difficult the position of Paris to defend "the legitimate national aspirations of Turkey" in the forthcoming conference,<sup>911</sup> and actually, in March, he asks for a modification of the draft treaty, to leave İzmir to the Turks.<sup>912</sup> He also appoints as general secretary of the MFA his friend Maurice Paléologue—the same Paléologue who, as director of political affairs, had successfully opposed the Russian demand for a joint action against the recapture of Edirne by the Ottomans, in 1913, and who, as ambassador in St-Petersburg, had recommended a separate peace with them in mid-1917.

Another consequence of Clemenceau's resignation is that General (soon Marshall) Hubert Lyautey, general resident of Morocco, now is listened in Paris by Millerand, linked to him. Clemenceau dislikes Lyautey and hardly trusts him. His successors are unprejudiced toward him. Yet, Lyautey is a convinced (and conservative) Islamophile as well as pragmatist, who sees the issues of Morocco in a global context.<sup>913</sup> He has excellent relations with the

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<sup>908</sup> Marjorie Milbank Farrar, *Principled Pragmatist. The Political Career of Alexandre Millerand*, New York-Oxford: Berg, 1991, pp. 1-201; Jean-Louis Rizzo, *Alexandre Millerand*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 2013, pp. 1-319.

<sup>909</sup> François Goguel, *La Politique des partis sous la III<sup>e</sup> République*, Paris : Le Seuil, 1958, pp. 168-191.

<sup>910</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne de la France. Un témoin, Pierre Loti (1870-1923)*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 1992, p. 177. Also see Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, pp. 218-221. Jean Naslian, second man of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate until 1925, keeps no positive recollections from Millerand: *Les Mémoires de Mgr Jean Naslian, évêque de Trébizonde, sur les événements politico-religieux en Proche-Orient, de 1914 à 1928*, Vienna : Imprimerie Méchithariste, 1955, volume II, p. 545.

<sup>911</sup> Télégramme chiffré, 21 février 1920, AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>912</sup> Lettre d'Alexandre Millerand au général Gouraud, 16 mars 1920, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 2.

<sup>913</sup> Lettre d'Hubert Lyautey à Berthe Georges-Gaulis, 10 avril 1916, AN, 475 AP 282 ; Patrick Heidsieck, « Lyautey et les rapports franco-musulmans », *Études*, octobre 1954, pp. 62-65 ; Daniel Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du protectorat français au Maroc, 1912-1925*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 1996, volume I, pp. 147-257, volume II, pp. 121-287 ; Charles de Saint-Aulaire, *Confession d'un vieux diplomate*, Paris : Flammarion, 1953, pp. 243-297 and 536.

Turkophile Claude Farrère, even before 1914, Farrère is a personal friend of several of his collaborators and defends Lyautey's work in the press during the year 1920.<sup>914</sup> From 1919 to 1922, Lyautey insists for a fair peace with the Turks, for sentimental, strategic and local reasons: strategic in the sense that Lyautey has quickly lost his trust in the British alliance and favors an alliance with the Muslim world, through the Ottoman caliphate; and local because he knows his own weaknesses in men and material as well as the necessity to give no pretext for revolts of tribes.<sup>915</sup> Yet, in April 1920, the suppression of the main domestic revolt against Ankara, namely the one led by Ahmet Anzavur,<sup>916</sup> can only reinforces Lyautey's thesis.

Meanwhile, namely during the first months of 1920, Captain Boiseaux, an intelligence officer sent in Ankara, provides data to the Turkish national movement, recently moved to this city.<sup>917</sup> It is not clear, in the documents used for this study, if Boiseaux's action is due to the appointment of the Millerand cabinet or if it is the continuation of the actions by generals such as Franchet d'Espèrey by 1919. What is clear, however, is the deterioration of the relations with the Armenian committees, and not only because of the Maraş affair. Certainly, the evacuation provokes a wave of Francophobic allegations in İstanbul, among "Gregorian and Protestant" Armenians "who have studied in English and American schools." These ones pretend that the French officers have "intentionally" provoked the "massacres" of Armenians to "remain the masters of the region." "The hardest against" the French is Dr. Avedis Nakashian (1868-1943),<sup>918</sup> a graduate of the American University of Beirut, once upon time

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<sup>914</sup> Claude Farrère, *Souvenirs*, Paris : Fayard, 1953, pp. 174-176, 228-231 and 247-248 ; Claude Farrère, « Lyautey l'Africain », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 3 juillet 1920, pp. 3-16 ; Claude Farrère, « Promenades au Maroc », *Le Gaulois*, 2 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — La ville champignon », *L'Information*, 3 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — Casablanca la neuve », *L'Information*, 4 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — Les grands vassaux de la République », *L'Information*, 21 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>915</sup> Rapport d'ensemble sur la situation du corps d'occupation, 21 février 1920, AN, 475 AP 84 ; À M. Wladimir d'Ormesson, 6 janvier 1919 ; À M. Clemenceau, président du Conseil, 15 juin 1919 ; À M. Georges Leygues, président du Conseil, 21 décembre 1920 ; À M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 juin 1921 ; À M. Poincaré, 22 janvier 1922 ; Id., 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1922, in Pierre Lyautey (ed.), *Lyautey l'Africain. Textes et lettres du maréchal Lyautey*, Paris : Plon, volume IV, 1919-1925, 1957, pp. 3-18, 102-112 and 114-120 ; Fuat Pekin, *Atatürk et le maréchal Lyautey*, Nancy : Publications de la Fondation Lyautey, 1961 ; Daniel Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution...*, volume III, pp. 163-277.

<sup>916</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, pp. 737-741.

<sup>917</sup> Telegram of Kemal (Atatürk) to Rauf Bey, 11 March 1920, in Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, président de la République de Turquie*, Ankara : Centre de recherches Atatürk, 2013, p. 364.

<sup>918</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1877, 20 mars 1920, p. 16, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 235.

incarcerated in Ayaş by the Ottoman authorities. Nakashian's Memoirs are clearly Francophobic, Turkophobic and pro-American (he actually dies in the U.S.) but curiously, the allegation of "massacre" in Maraş in 1920 is not, this time, used.<sup>919</sup> At the same moment, Armenians and Americans from Cyprus organize an anti-French campaign in British and American newspapers, focusing on the military defeats.<sup>920</sup>

Regardless, Maraş as such is not the only subject of dispute. The project to send Antranik Ozanian in Çukurova fails, being opposed even by Antoine Poidebard, who is rather pro-Armenian but considers Antranik "unable of any discipline." "His departure to Cilicia must be prevented at any price."<sup>921</sup> On 25 January 1920, the meeting of Avetis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar with Philippe Berthelot (director of political affairs at the MFA) in Paris "seem[s] very cordial" but Berthelot warns he "cannot tell what part of Turkey will be ceded" to Armenia. Erzurum is granted, but "the question of an exit to the Black Sea is still problematical." One month later, in London, the same Berthelot is exasperated. When Aharonian insists to have "an access to the Black Sea," he answers: "Switzerland lives without a sea." Aharonian writes in his diary: "We came out of there sorely depressed. As we stepped out of the door, Boghos [Nubar] Pasha turned to me, and contrary to his custom, exploded: 'Bad! Bad! Bad!'"<sup>922</sup>

Then, Aharonian and Nubar discuss with Lord Robert Cecil, including about "the attitude of certain large organs of the French press—the Turcophile wind was blowing very strongly those days in French official circles." As a result, the two delegations "fear" that David Lloyd George could "sacrifice" them to the alliance with Paris. "Contrary to my view," explains Aharonian, Nubar insists on Çukurova and claims he received promises; but when Cecil asks

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<sup>919</sup> Avedis Nakashian, *A Man Who Found a Country*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell C°, 1940, pp. 211-222, 256-258 and 268. P. 258, Naskashian claims he left Adana for Istanbul after the Ankara agreement of October 1921, but the report cited in the previous note proves he actually did so almost two years earlier.

<sup>920</sup> Télégramme de L. Guermonpez au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 9 mars 1920, AMAE, P 17784 ; L. Guermonpez, vice-consul de France à Lacarna, à M. le colonel Brémond, administrateur en chef des territoires ennemis occupés, 29 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/148.

<sup>921</sup> Antoine Poidebard, Note sur le général Antranik, 20 février 1920, SHD, 7 N 3210, dossier 2, sous-dossier 4. Anahide Ter Minassian, « Antoine Poidebard et l'Arménie (1904-1920) », in Walid Harbid and alii (ed.), *Méditerranée, Moyen-Orient : deux siècles de relations internationales. Recherches en hommage à Jacques Thobie*, İstanbul-Paris : Institut français d'études anatoliennes/L'Harmattan, 2003, pp. 443-478 never refers to this document. Yet, it is highly unlikely that the author could have missed it. On Antranik's crimes, see Le district de Zangueour, region contestée entre Arméniens et musulmans tatars, juin 1919, AMAE, P 16672.

<sup>922</sup> Avetis Aharonian, "From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary — Part III," *Armenian Review*, XV-1, Spring 1963, pp. 56-57.

if he received a written promise, Nubar has to answer: “No.” Regardless, the Parliamentary Council on Foreign Affairs votes a resolution for “a non-Turkish state between the Taurus and the Amanos.”<sup>923</sup> The reluctance of Aharonian should not be interpreted as a Ramkavar/ARF shift in this regard but as a difference between him and most of the other Armenian nationalist leaders. Indeed, the same month (February 1920), the Dashnak ACIA starts a “nationwide campaign against France and England, who have already told the Armenians they will cut up Armenia,”<sup>924</sup> “a monstrous travesty of justice.”<sup>925</sup>

Restrospectively, even James Gidney, an American historian who makes no secret of his sympathies for the “Armenian cause,” calls the ACIA’s campaign “one of the most disheartening of the many outbreaks of political lunacy that disfigured the postwar period.”<sup>926</sup> Yet, the campaign is not limited to the ACIA<sup>927</sup> and continues in spring, with a particular insistence against France: “A certain power is ready to sell its soul to the devil and the Turk to get possession of the richest province, not only of Armenia, but of the entire world [sic],” and “wars will certainly happen if Armenia is left a prey to Turkish persecution and allied rapacity,” affirms the ACIA in an telegraphic statement. The Committee also repeats the allegation of “massacres in Cilicia” to justify its point.<sup>928</sup>

Regardless, as we shall see, the failure of the American mandate in the U.S. Congress makes this campaign fruitless, at least as far as the French policy is concerned. Anyway, even before the final failure of the mandate project, the Quai d’Orsay explains that the U.S. have no right

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<sup>923</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-58. Also see Boghos Nubar, “Armenia: Its Future and its Possibilities,” *The Friend of Armenia*, July 1920, pp. 13-14.

<sup>924</sup> Summary of a memorandum submitted by the ACIA to President Wilson, February 9, 1920, LC, W. Wilson papers, reel 337. At the same time, Patriarch Zaven, a member of the ARF, appeals to Wilson. Even Jean Naslian finds it hardly wise: *Les Mémoires de...*, volume II, p. 550.

<sup>925</sup> James Gerard, *England and France in Armenia*, [New York: American Committee for the Independence of Armenia], 1920, p. 1. Also see Preamble and resolutions passed unanimously at a meeting held in Berkeley, March 21, 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>926</sup> James Gidney, *A Mandate for...*, p. 209.

<sup>927</sup> Letter of the Armenian National Union of America to President Wilson, January 31, 1920, LC, W. Wilson Papers, reel 337; Angelo Hall, “Let Us Help Armenia for Freedom,” *The New Armenia*, February 1920, pp. 17-18; “Lese-Humanity,” *The New Armenia*, March 1920, pp. 35-36.

<sup>928</sup> “Demands Full Rights for New Armenia,” *The New York Times*, 26 May 1920, p. 2. Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1955, p. 225, blames the Ramkavar for its repeated claims on Çukurova and “massacres on both sides” but is silent on the action of the ACIA.

to dictate their wishes to the peace conference, still less regarding Turkey.<sup>929</sup> The only efficient action is toward the Lloyd George cabinet. Certainly, the Foreign Office is quite skeptical, calling the allegations of the British supporters of the Armenian cause, regarding the alleged massacres in the French zone of occupation, “the most alarmist rumors” and “particularly one [which] is probably meant to influence Paris.”<sup>930</sup> However, Lloyd George does not listen to the Foreign Office and uses the Maraş affair as a pretext to impose the return of Damat Ferit Paşa in power in İstanbul, then he blackmails the Millerand cabinet, regarding the sales of coal, to harshen the draft of treaty.<sup>931</sup> Indeed, in January 1920, even before the resignation of Clemenceau, Berthelot, on behalf of the French cabinet, advocates an extension of the Armenian Republic in Anatolia limited to Van, Bitlis, Muş and “the eastern portion of the province of Erzurum.” Trabzon, Rize, Bayburt and Erzincan would remain Turkish. At the London conference of February of the same year, the scheme is accepted, except a dead-born Lazistan.<sup>932</sup> Regardless, after the blackmail of Lloyd George, the San Remo conference decides, in April, to include these provinces in the arbitration by U.S. President Wilson,<sup>933</sup> knowing the kind of arbitration he would make.

That having been said, the decision is due to the policy of Lloyd George, of his irrational hostility toward the Turks and his ambitions toward the Straits, but not the effect of the Armenian nationalist lobbying in the UK. Indeed, if they they get a promise (without concrete guarantee) regarding north-eastern Anatolia, they obtain exactly nothing on Çukurova. “The President of the United States has consistently pleaded the cause of a larger Armenia [...] [But] the prospect of creating an Armenia which should include Cilicia and extend to the

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<sup>929</sup> British Secretary’s Notes of an Allied Conference, 17 February 1920, in Rohan Butler and J. P.-T. Bury (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, 1<sup>st</sup> series, volume VII, London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Service, 1958, p. 96.

<sup>930</sup> Salâhi R. Sonyel, “How Armenian Propaganda Nurtured a Gullible Christian World In Connection With the Deportation and ‘Massacres’,” *Belleten*, XLI/161, January 1977, p. 167.

<sup>931</sup> Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, Ankara : TTK, 2005, pp. 228-232.

<sup>932</sup> Berthelot’s proposal regarding the treaty of peace with Turkey, 11 January 1920, in Tolga Başak (ed.), *British Documents on the Armenian Question (1912-1923)*, Ankara: AVİM, 2018, p. 286; British Secretary’s Notes of a Conference of Foreign Secretaries and Ambassadors, 27 February 1920, in Rohan Butler and J. P.-T. Bury (ed.), *Documents on British...*, volume VII, pp. 280-281; Télégramme de Paul Cambon, de la part de Philippe Berthelot, 28 février 1920, AMAE, P 1393.

<sup>933</sup> British Secretary’s Notes of a Meeting of the Supreme Council, 25 April 1920, in Rohan Butler and J. P.-T. Bury (ed.), *Documents on British...*, 1<sup>st</sup> series, volume VIII, pp. 177-178.

Mediterranean has for long been abandoned as impracticable.”<sup>934</sup> The change between London and San Remo is even less due to the activity of the Armenian nationalists themselves as, if they agree on the Çukurova issue and against France, the ARF—particularly Garegin Pasdermadjian, representative of the Republic of Armenia in Washington—and the Ramkavar have an argument, during the first months of 1920, after newspapers of İstanbul reveal the agreement signed by Boghos Nubar and Şerif Paşa at the end of 1919, for sharing eastern Anatolia between Armenians and Kurds, who “belong to the same Aryan race,” in the words of the agreement.<sup>935</sup>

## **4.2. The committees confront the French authorities and lose (March 1920-January 1921)**

### *4.2.1. The rise of the conflict (March-June 1920)*

The French defeat of Maraş is followed by a defeat and a tragedy at Urfa. The revolt of the Muslim population of this city, by February 1920, eventually defeats the occupation forces, who have no artillery, and the majority of the French prisoners are killed by Kurds in an ambush. The Armenian side, however, remains neutral and, as a result, unmolested.<sup>936</sup> At the same time, the hostilities erupt in Antep, and the Turks are not defeated until February 1921.<sup>937</sup> Blaise Diagne (1872-1934), the Black deputy of Dakar, complains about the sending of Senegalese soldiers in southern Turkey. The general staff answers him that the Algerian soldiers already are too numerous here, as they are targeted by the pan-Islamist propaganda

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<sup>934</sup> The Ambassador in Italy (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, 27 April 1920, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. 1920*, volume III, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936, p. 780.

<sup>935</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1783, 20 février 1920 ; id., n° 1898, 23 mars 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 235. Many Kurds also disagree with Şerif: S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1542, 9 janvier 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 235.

<sup>936</sup> Rapport du sous-lieutenant Deloire, 22 juin 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/166 ; Mary Caroline Holmes, *Between the Lines in Asia Minor*, New York-Chicago-London-Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923, pp. 78-124; Ali Saib (Ursavaş), *Les Atrocités en Cilicie et la lutte pour la délivrance à Ourfa*, 1920, AN, 594 AP 5. The Turkish gendarmes were not paid by absence of money and were the first to revolt: Raoul Desjardins, *Avec les Sénégalais par-delà l’Euphrate*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1925, pp. 34-35.

<sup>937</sup> Maurice Abadie, *Les Quatre sièges...*, pp. 47-118 ; Édouard Andréa, *La Vie militaire au Levant*, Paris-Limoges-Nancy : Charles Lavauzelle, 1923.



of the Kemalists.<sup>938</sup> An undated (March or April 1920) note of the High Commission in Beirut deplores the draft of the Sèvres treaty and advocates reconciliation with the Turks, including the Kemalist movement.<sup>939</sup> General Gouraud explains to the MFA that there is no solution but a discussion with Kemalist leaders.<sup>940</sup> Actually, Robert de Caix comes to Ankara to sign an armistice, without any apparent concern.<sup>941</sup> The negotiations are more difficult and laborious than he expected, but the armistice is eventually signed, for twenty days.<sup>942</sup>

As a result, the Armenian nationalists try to impose a *fait accompli*, even more after the hostilities re-start after the end of the armistice, in the context of the near signature of the Sèvres treaty, where Adana and Mersin are left to Turkey. But violence already has proved to be counter-productive and the Anglo-Saxon interventions already failed. Regardless, the facts hardly stop the ARF, Hunchak and Ramkavar.

On 13 March 1920, around 9:15 am, in the house rented to the municipality of Adana by ex-Archbishop and general administrator of the Armenian National Union Mouchehgh Séropian (who is, at that time, in Egypt) and his brother Vramchabouh (who had been sentenced to 15 years in jail before the First World War), the said brother commits a fatal error in manipulating a bomb. The accidental explosions kills him, as well as the Armenian baker who, at the same moment, is in the stair to deliver him bread. The French authorities find in the house several military rifles, two hunt rifles (including one modified to fire military ammunitions), bayonets, bombs and grenades.<sup>943</sup> A probe is open and, Mouchehgh Séropian being not back in Adana, he is sentenced in absentia on 23 April of the same year, to ten year years of hard labor and twenty years of ban of residence (*interdiction de séjour*), for conspiracy (*association de malfaiteurs*), fabrication of bombs, storing of war weapons and war ammunitions and complicity in manslaughter.<sup>944</sup> The fact that the only verdict

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<sup>938</sup> Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général...*, p. 885.

<sup>939</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/138.

<sup>940</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud du ministre des Affaires étrangères, 5 mai 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>941</sup> Lettre de Robert de Caix à sa femme, 16 mai 1920, AMAE, P 11202.

<sup>942</sup> Capitaine Mazen, Les négociations d'Angora (21-23 mai 1920), SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2a.

<sup>943</sup> Rapport du gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d'Adana [Tommy Martin], 14 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/182. The affair is not concealed: « Lettre de Cilicie », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 30 mai 1920, p. 712.

<sup>944</sup> Conseil de guerre permanent de la 1<sup>re</sup> division A.F.L., séant à Adana, Jugement par contumace, 23 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/182 (also in 1SL/1V/154) ; Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la

reproduced in his fat book by Paul de Rémusat (aka Paul du Véou), arguably the most Turkophobe of the French officers in Çukurova, is the verdict sentencing Séropian,<sup>945</sup> shows that even du Véou/de Résumat sees the former archbishop as a terrorist primarily, if not only.

It shows the scope of the conflict around this case. Indeed, not unlike after his condemnation to death in absentia, in 1909, Séropian reacts in May 1920 by a vehement booklet, where the bad faith is perceptible in each sentence. Refusing any self-criticism, he puts all the blame on the “Turkophile, or Armenophobic” (sic) policy of Colonel Brémond, denies any involvement in the terrorist activities of his brother but right after, he justifies such activities as “legitimate personal defense.” Séropian also invokes the testimony of the President of the Armenian National Union, who pretends, during his interrogation by the investigators, that the bombs and war rifles must have been brought in the house when Mouchehgh Séropian was not here<sup>946</sup>—a self-explanatory solidarity and a clumsy defense. Regardless, this kind of defense is not limited to the Armenian nationalists in Çukurova.

Indeed, the organ of the Reformed Hunchak in America<sup>947</sup> publishes an article which is an essential and regardless completely forgotten source on the links between Turkophobia and Francophobia in Armenian nationalism: “Armenians were preparing ammunitions and bombs for self-defense against the Turks. [...] During the Adana massacres of 1909, the Turkish government passed a similar sentence on Archbishop Seropian for his activities in encouraging the Armenians to defend themselves.”<sup>948</sup> Without assimilating the Frenchmen

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République française en Syrie et en Cilicie, commandant en chef des armées françaises au Levant, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>945</sup> Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, p. 99.

<sup>946</sup> Mouchehgh Séropian, *Ma Protestation à Monsieur Paul Deschanel*, np [Egypt], 1920, pp. 1-8. I found no copy at the National Library. The text is in AMAE, P 16679, with a manuscript dedicace by Séropian, dated 20 May 1920. Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne...*, p. 96, calls “idiots” the Armenians who slander Brémond, but he avoids to cite the name of Séropian.

<sup>947</sup> Simon Payaslian, “Imagining Armenia,” in Allon Gal, Athena Leoussi and Antony Smith (ed.), *The Call of the Homeland*, Leiden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2010, pp. 116-119.

<sup>948</sup> “The Armenian Situation,” *The New Armenia*, July 1920, p. 108. *Arevelian Mamoul*, the Armenian newspaper of İzmir, vehemently supports Séropian, but concentrates his attacks on Brémond and his staff: R. Dromard, *Renseignements* n° 423, 14 décembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

to the Turks, Boghos Nubar himself insists to defend Séropian.<sup>949</sup> Regrettably, the Séropian affair is ignored or belittled in the existing scholarly literature. Robert Zeidner, Yücel Güçlü and Garebet Krikor Moumdjian do not mention the court case<sup>950</sup> and Vahé Tachjian barely devotes one sentence to it—a sentence where even the exact reasons of the verdict are not provided, in spite of the fact that the verdict is given as source.<sup>951</sup> These publications also ignore that the Séropian affair and the flow of refugees, from Maraş in particular, give the leadership of Armenian nationalism in Adana to the Hunchak, at the expenses of the Ramkavar.<sup>952</sup>

Yet, the Séropian case is an example among others of key events neglected in the existing studies. Indeed, a synthesis note written in January 1921 (in Beirut of Adana, it is not clear) observes that by the end of March 1920, “the Armenian provocations do not stop anymore” and gives, among other evidence for this accusation, a letter from Colonel Brémond to Ramkavar leader Mihran Damadian, on 8 April 1920: The Armenian volunteers “have terrorized the Muslim population by violence and plunder.” Referring to another report, the note accuses the criminal elements of the Armenians of Haçin to act “directly by order of the Armenian committee of Adana” without obeying the French officers.<sup>953</sup> There are ample confirmations of this remark. In April 1920, General Henri Gouraud rebuts the allegations of the Armenian nationalist leaders in Paris and complains not only about “the arson of Turkish villages” but also about the “assassination[s] committed” by Armenians against Turks in Antep (Gaziantep), “with American uniform theft.”<sup>954</sup> At the same time, the officers in charge in Sis (Kozan) complain even more: “The Armenians have only one idea: Killing Turks without

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<sup>949</sup> Lettre de Boghos Nubar à Maurice Paléologue, 26 mai 1920, AMAE, P 16674. They advocate the same territorial claims : Boghos Nubar, *Population de la Cilicie avant la guerre*, Paris : Imprimerie H. Turabian [1920].

<sup>950</sup> Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...* (the only references to Séropian are about 1909: pp. 40 and 43).

<sup>951</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, p. 103.

<sup>952</sup> Renseignements du 10 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/134 ; Rapport trimestriel sur le fonctionnement du Service des rapatriements et de l'assistance aux déportés, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier-31 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/137 ; Tommy Martin, Renseignement n° 291, 16 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>953</sup> SHD, 1 K 247/37. The letter is not cited or used in Édouard Brémond, *La Cilicie en...* Brémond's letter to the same Damadian (10 January 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/145) on the assassination of 12 Turks by Armenians in Haçin, is also omitted.

<sup>954</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud, 23 avril 1920, AMAE, P 17784. Stanley Kerr, *The Lions of...*, p. 219 describes the clashes at Antep without mentioning these killings of Turks. On the crimes of Armenian legionnaires near Antep: Report of Commander Ahmet Cevdet, 1920, in Yusuf Sarıay (ed.), *Ermeniler Tarafından Katliam...*, volume II, p. 762.

fighting.” On 17 April, Armenians kill seven Turks, “randomly chosen in the street” and “each time the Armenians exited, they have, in spite of the given orders, burned the villages without reason.”<sup>955</sup> In other cases, they plunder and rape.<sup>956</sup>

Further west, between Adana and Ceyhan, Armenian volunteers leave their camp contrariwise to the orders of the French command and burn three Turkish villages, in the night from 6 to 7 April.<sup>957</sup> At the same moment, most of the volunteers of Bahçe are disarmed and recalled because of their chronicle “indiscipline.” The murderers and the worst plunderers are sent to the military tribunal of Adana, and Brémont warns Damadian that such crimes “completely attenuate the trust of the French authorities toward” the Armenian parties.<sup>958</sup> Similarly, the Armenian gendarmes of Tarsus are fired—in April, too—by Commander Coustillière, governor of the sancak, as they are “cowards. Very arrogant and brutal with the population when there is nothing to fear, they are below all at the slightest alert.”<sup>959</sup> Captain André himself, hardly the most perspicacious officer of the region, now is in open conflict with the Ramkavar and even more the ARF, denouncing them as trouble-makers who want to kill Turks.<sup>960</sup>

The same month, middle-rank officers of the Armenian Legion advocate the pure and simple suppression of “this troop of desertors and thieves that dirties the French uniform.”<sup>961</sup> For example, in a report to his superior, Captain Josse, commanding the 7<sup>th</sup> Company of the Armenian Legion, explains (20 April 1920): “I must not dissimulate from you that this troop no longer inspires confidence in me.” Indeed, argues Josse, all his effort to secure a mutual

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<sup>955</sup> Capitaine Chauvin, Renseignements de Sis, le 18 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/134. Also see Plainte du Circassien Nouri Tchaouche, de Kars, 19 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/146.

<sup>956</sup> Rapport du capitaine Béguery, commandant le 8<sup>e</sup> escadron du 4<sup>e</sup> spahis, 24 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/173.

<sup>957</sup> Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et en Cilicie, commandant en chef des armées françaises au Levant, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>958</sup> Le colonel Brémont à M. Damadian, représentant de la Délégation de l’Arménie intégrale, 7 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/148. Also see Compte-rendu du sous-lieutenant Ravel de Siesville, sur sa tournée d’inspection à Bachtché, 2 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/154.

<sup>959</sup> Le gouverneur de Tarsous à M. le colonel Brémont, 2 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/148.

<sup>960</sup> Le capitaine André, gouverneur du sandjak de Djébel-Méreké, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif, 21 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/148.

<sup>961</sup> Le lieutenant Arrighi à M. le général Quérette, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> brigade à Djihan, 25 avril 1920, 1SL/1V/173.

trust have been in vain, as they ignore gratitude. To make the situation only worse, they lack of courage. In two different reports (12 and 17 April), C. Beaujard, the commander of the Armenian Legion, finds “urgent” the necessity to fire this unit as a whole. Major General Julien Dufieux, commanding the French troops in occupied Turkey, makes a summary of these grievances on 27 April and demands too the complete dissolution of the Armenian Legion, arguing it would be unwise to keep close to Muslim soldiers “this Armenian troop who now has only one strong feeling: the hatred of the Muslim” (*sic*). These warnings are listened. Indeed, a memo of the General Staff, dated 11 May 1920, explains: “The more and more deplorable spirit that prevails in the Armenian Legion, and the multiplying desertions made necessary the firing of this body [...]”<sup>962</sup>

That “more and more deplorable spirit” is exposed by an officer as follows. “When we [Frenchmen] are threatened without them [the Armenian legionnaires] being, they abandon us totally and do not even being bothering about providing news.” The Armenian nationalists, he continues, are a danger for everybody: French, Turks, and even ordinary Armenians. They have “no real patriotism,” but merely a desire to commit “murder, plunder” against the Turks—who are in majority everywhere.<sup>963</sup> The causes are, as usual, political, as proves the insistence of the Armenian nationalists and their Anglo-Saxon friends to obtain an “Armenian Cilicia,”<sup>964</sup> in spite of the renunciation of David Lloyd George himself and against all the demographic realities—realities that can be changed by paroxysmal violence only. On 20 May 1920, Minister of War André Lefèvre (1869-1929) writes to Alexandre Millerand, asking his opinion about the pure and simple firing of the Armenian, a desirable measure because of the prevalent of “evil spirit.” On 18 June, the answer of Millerand is: “I fully share your view.”

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<sup>962</sup> All these documents are in SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6. Anti-Black racism is common among the civilian Armenians of Dörtyol, too: Capitaine Pierre André, Rapport sur les incidents du caza de Deurtyol, du 13 au 17 avril 1920, 20 avril 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/148. Guévork Gotikian, « La Légion d’Orient et le mandat français en Cilicie (1916-1921) », *Revue d’histoire arménienne contemporaine*, III, 1999 has worked in the box 4 H 42 but never uses the file 6 and dares to affirm, without any archival document in the related footnote, that the Armenian Legion “has been the subject of no complaint.”

<sup>963</sup> Raoul Desjardins, *Avec les Sénégalais...*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>964</sup> Letter of the Cilician Catholicos to the British Foreign Office, May 26, 1920; Letter of the British Armenia Committee to Lord Curzon, 15 July 1920, FO 371/5210/E 5483 and E 8507; Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne...*, pp. 99-110; Aram Turabian, « MM. les médecins sont en consultation », *Aiguillon*, 15 avril 1920, p. 2 ; Aram Turabian, « Autour du gâteau turc », *Aiguillon*, 15 mai 1920, p. 2 ; “Critical Times for Armenia,” *The New Armenia*, June 1920, pp. 93-95; Translation of *Guiliguia’s* editorial, 9 June 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/152; Mark Malkasian, “The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984, p. 354.

On 12 July, the Minister of War writes once again to the Quai d'Orsay, this time to announce the suppression of the trouble-making unit.<sup>965</sup>

Remarkably, when these decisions are taken (April-May 1920) the Ramkavars of America propose to provide between 5,000 and 10,000 new volunteers. Nubar and Aharonian forward the demand with approval, and request that, until these volunteers can arrive, the French authorities to arm all the valid male Armenians.<sup>966</sup> Then, Miran Sevasly (1863-1935), the main American Ramkavar leader (who has presented to the U.S. Congress a demand for an Armenia from the Karabakh to Adana in 1919<sup>967</sup>), insists and even asks the French government to pay the costs of the transportation—a plan bordering unintentional humor. Without any surprise, General Gouraud opposes the proposal in vivid terms and Paris declines it.<sup>968</sup> Similarly, after the (Ramkavar) Armenian National Delegation asks the cabinet for the arrival of Antranik Ozanian and the recruitment of “an army of volunteers” by him, the Quai d'Orsay explains to its minister that “it seems difficult to know how far the project of the Armenian delegation could contribute to pacify Cilicia”<sup>969</sup> —a masterpiece of diplomatic language to explain that Antranik is dangerous. Another attempt, by the Armenian nationalists in Adana, fails in June, Gouraud vetoing once again.<sup>970</sup>

However, a part of the civilians imitates, if not bypasses, the homicidal violence of the Armenian legionnaires, in spite of the repression of those who try to obtain weapons and ammunitions illegally.<sup>971</sup> On June 18, 1920, Paul Bernard, in charge of the financial affairs in the administration of Adana, writes in his diary: “We are in the mess. We are alerted each time. We are no longer masters of Christians; everyday, isolated murders are committed in

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<sup>965</sup> AMAE, P 1426.

<sup>966</sup> La Délégation de l'Arménie intégrale à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 24 avril 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>967</sup> Garegin Pasdermadjian and Miran Sevasly, *Armenia and her Claims to Freedom and National Independence*, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919.

<sup>968</sup> Télégramme de l'ambassadeur de France à Washington au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 avril 1920, AMAE, P 17784 ; Le ministre de la Guerre à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 mai 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>969</sup> Note pour le ministre, 11 avril 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>970</sup> Le général Gouraud à M. le général commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division, 11 juin 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/173.

<sup>971</sup> Jugement, 18 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/183 ; Jugement n° 61/177, 19 mars 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/182.

the city [Adana];” then he mentions the massacre of Turks in the village of Djamili (Camili), perpetrated “with an odious refinement of cruelty.”<sup>972</sup> Indeed, on 12 June, 45 Turks, mostly women and children, are massacred in that village by a gang of Armenians and Assyrians. Some victims are “horribly mutilated.”<sup>973</sup> One of the main leaders of the criminal group, an Assyrian, is executed without trial on June 23 by Lieutenant Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil.<sup>974</sup> Then, in August, the other perpetrators are sentenced by the French military tribunal of Adana: Five receive capital punishment, four are sentenced to life-terms of hard labor, three to twenty years of hard labor and twenty years of a ban of residence (*interdiction de séjour*), seven to ten years of hard labor and ten years of ban of residence, two to five years of hard labor and five years of a ban of residence, four to five years in jail and five years of a ban of residence, one to two years in jail and a fine and one to five years in a workhouse.<sup>975</sup>

Another massacre, perpetrated by Armenians only (without uniform, but almost all wearing a kaki police hat), makes 100 victims in June 1920, too. For unknown reasons, the investigation is this time left to the Ottoman justice.<sup>976</sup>

#### 4.2.2. “Armenians do what they can to compromise us” (July-September 1920)

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<sup>972</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, p. 49. On the murders in Adana city in June 1920, also see S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, p. 2, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>973</sup> Capitaine Dromard, *Compte-rendu au sujet des affaires de Djamili*, 16 juin 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151.

<sup>974</sup> This is explained in a report written by Lemaigre Dubreuil the same day: CADN, 1SVL/1V/151.

<sup>975</sup> Jugement n° 175/290, 14 août 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202. Four perpetrators are considered political prisoners and released as a result of the amnesty included in the Ankara agreement. The other sentences are reduced in 1921, 1922 and 1923 by presidential pardons.

<sup>976</sup> Rapport du juge d’instruction et du procureur impérial d’Adana sur l’affaire de Kehia Oghlou, 14 juin 1920 ; Tommy Martin, *Renseignements*, 12 juin 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151. Benny Morris and Dror Ze’evi, *The Thirty-Years Genocide*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)-London: Harvard University Press, 2019, pp. 329-330 briefly mention the kaç-kaç (see below) but ignore these two massacres and deny, without any source, the very existence of the crimes perpetrated by Armenian legionnaires in and around Maraş.

On 4 July financial Counsellor Paul Bernard observes that the Turks are fleeing Adana, because they are “threatened everyday by plunder and slaughter” by “the Armenians.”<sup>977</sup> The same day, General Dufieux declares the state of siege<sup>978</sup> and twelve days later, thirty-three Armenians are sentenced for plunder to punishments coming from two years in jail to ten years of hard labor.<sup>979</sup> The disorder is so terrible that the deputy director of the Adana police, Krikor Tcholakian, asks for the use of the gallows to suppress this violence.<sup>980</sup> On 7 July, Brémond accepts the suggestion and signs the first order of hanging *without trial*; the next day, the first Armenian plunderer is hanged and the body remains exposed all morning.<sup>981</sup>

However, as notices Paul Bernard, “the warning does not appear to have been understood.” On 10 July, in the morning, two Arabs are assassinated by Armenians, and twenty other Arabs are robbed. In the afternoon, a riot begins in Adana: Hundreds of gunshots are fired simultaneously by Armenians. “It is extraordinary,” notices Bernard, that “only” six persons—“all Muslims”—are killed during this afternoon. During the following weeks, Armenian arsonists destroy a large part of Adana, murders are committed (for example the one of a Turkish woman, “horribly mutilated”) and the plunder attain its climax. Bernard expresses his ire in his diary: “The Armenians do what they can to compromise us: That is the truth.”<sup>982</sup> For Tommy Martin, the events of 10 July prove the necessity to dissolve the units of Armenian volunteers and to confiscate the weapons of the Armenian civilians. 14 Armenians are, anyway, arrested this day and one rifle is seized in the house of Francophobic agitator Avedis

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<sup>977</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 59-60. Confirmation in S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, p. 12, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>978</sup> Tommy Martin, compte-rendu à Monsieur le gouverneur du sandjak et de la ville d’Adana, 4 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/139 ; Kâmuran Gürün, *Le Dossier arménien...*, pp. 336-337.

<sup>979</sup> Jugement n° 148/263, 16 juillet 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202.

<sup>980</sup> Note du colonel Brémond, 2 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/139.

<sup>981</sup> Rapport du capitaine [Henry] Chevillard au sujet de l’exécution d’Artine Hapoudjian, 8 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/139 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, p. 63.

<sup>982</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 63-85 ; Le Capitaine [Henry] Chevillard, à M. le gouverneur de la ville et du sandjak, 10 juillet 1920 ; Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif, 10 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174 ; Le colonel Brémond à M. le président de l’Union nationale arménienne, 18 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135. S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, p. 17, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236 gives the figure of 15 victims. For a Turkish point of view: Abdülğani Girici, *1920 Adana Ermeni Mezalimi Hâtıraları*, Ankara, TTK, 2011, pp. 3-6.



Nakashian (already mentioned), who is absent<sup>983</sup> and a second lieutenant of the Armenian Legion is arrested the next day, by order of Brémond.<sup>984</sup>

On 10 July, too, “a group of Armenian notabilities” submits a note to General Dufieux, claiming that the Turks “prefer to face 200 French soldiers with all their destructive engines instead of facing 100 Armenians with hunt rifles.” This is not, the note continues that the Armenian fighters are more courageous than the French soldiers, “far from that, unfortunately,” but because an irregular gang can do what regular soldiers cannot.<sup>985</sup> On 1 August, Armenian plunderers attack the synagogue of Adana,<sup>986</sup> showing that the “Integral Armenia” they dream would be without Jews as well as without Muslims. Indeed, by 10 July, the Muslim flee Adana en masse.<sup>987</sup>

Brémond’s patience is completely exhausted: On 10 July, he orders the systematic hanging of plunderers, whatever the value of the stolen goods and without accepting any kind of excuse. If necessary “it will continue until the thieves are tired of being hanged” (sic). By the same order, Brémond decides to expel out of Cilicia all the plunderers who have committed looting before 10 July.<sup>988</sup> On 11 July, Brémond suppresses one of the Armenian volunteers unit (the police one), orders to confiscate the weapons of “those who cannot keep their cold-blood,” as “it is incontrovertible that the Muslims are unarmed and, on the contrary, that the Armenians have weapons and abuse them.” He also orders to give back to the Turks and other Muslims the houses unduly appropriated during the previous weeks.<sup>989</sup>

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<sup>983</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif, 10 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174. The Armenian found by Martin with the rifle is sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of 50 francs: Jugement n° 62/277, 6 août 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202.

<sup>984</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin à M. le sous-lieutenant Azadian, 11 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174.

<sup>985</sup> Quoted in an undated (January 1921?) synthesis note, pp. 15-16, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>986</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135.

<sup>987</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, 11 juillet 1920 ; Id., 21 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, p. 69.

<sup>988</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/139.

<sup>989</sup> Le colonel Brémond, chef du contrôle administratif, à M. Damadian, représentant de la Délégation de l’Arménie intégrale, 11 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174.

Right after the first arson by Armenians in Adana, he orders to “treat any individual transporting oil in night time like an arsonist.”<sup>990</sup> However, Mirhan Damadian (Ramkavar) and Second Lieutenant Shishmanian (Reformed Hunchak) show a very bad will to contribute to fight the arsonists and the fires continue to ravage the city for at least a week.<sup>991</sup> Shishmanian has to admit that “many” Turks are killed by Armenians in Adana in July 1920, trying to justify it, as usual, as mere acts of revenge, particularly by “women” who had lost “their littler daughters,” supposedly killed by Turks.<sup>992</sup> Yet, Shishmanian is completely silent about the massacres of Turks in June and the argument of “revenge” by mothers is not corroborated by any French document used for this study, or even by the booklet of Colonel Brémond. Shishmanian also claims in the same letter that Adana becomes quiet after most of the Turks leave the city on 10-11 July, but avoids any mention of the incendiarism in the city during the following weeks and contradicts himself in admitting a part of the looting.

In spite of the lack of manpower, five Armenians and one Assyrian are hanged in July and August 1920, and a sixth Armenian is shot to death when he tries to flee.<sup>993</sup> At the same time, the Turkish offensives against Mersin, Adana, Tarsus and, to a lesser extent, Cihan, are

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<sup>990</sup> Le colonel Brémond, chef du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, à M. le gouverneur de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 17 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174.

<sup>991</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, 21 juillet 1920 ; Id., 23 juillet 1920 ; Tommy Martin, Renseignements n° 297, 22 juillet 1920 ; Le lieutenant Lemaigre-Dubreuil à M. le commandant Tommy Martin, 25 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>992</sup> Letter of John A. Shishmanian to Boghos Nubar, December 15, 1920, p. 7, Hoover Institution, Shishmanian papers.

<sup>993</sup> Capitaine Coutet, Procès-verbal d’exécution, 21 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151 ; Note du contrôleur général de police d’Adana au colonel Brémond, 22 juillet 1920 ; Notes du commandant Tommy Martin au colonel Brémond, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1920 ; Note de service du colonel Brémond, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/139 ; Édouard Brémond, *La Cilicie en...*, p. 62 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 63, 71-72 and 85.

blocked, not without considerable difficulties.<sup>994</sup> At Antep, it is even worse for the French command: The city is lost in August and reconquered in February 1921 only.<sup>995</sup>

In his previously cited letter, Shishmanian calls “innocent” the hanged Armenians (plunderer considered guilty even by Paul de Rémusat/Paul du Véou<sup>996</sup>) and accuses the French authorities to have executed them on the basis of Turkish testimony, an allegation in formal contradiction with all the (already cited) French documents concerning these executions: They are actually executed after being arrested by French soldiers with goods in their hands. Shishmanian is correspondingly silent on the two Armenians (most likely volunteers) sentenced to 30 months in jail and a fine of 500 francs for illegal requisition<sup>997</sup> and he tries to justify the failure of the Armenian committees to provide volunteers to rescue Haçin, at the end of July (the very last demand of this kind). Yet, even Mihran Damadian (Ramkavar) and Archbishop Kevork Arslanian (Hunchak) write a joint statement to call this failure an unforgivable “infamy.”<sup>998</sup>

After the military situation in Adana improves, 80 Armenians are also expelled in September for theft, plunder or attempt of looting, four for illegal possession or use of guns and six for “insurrectional movement.” Except for one, none is born in the city.<sup>999</sup> Incidentally, it must be underlined that the return of Muslims in Adana begins on 19 August, so before the recalling of Brémond to France.<sup>1000</sup>

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<sup>994</sup> Rapport hebdomadaire, 29 juin 1920 ; Id., 27 juillet 1920 ; Id., 4 août 1920 ; Id., 11 août 1920 ; Id., 24 août 1920 ; Général Gouraud, Ordre général n° 26, 2 août 1920, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2 ; Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère de la Guerre, 19 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 17784. The intelligence service of the land army particularly complains about the Italian weapons delivered to the Kemalists through Antalya: Rapport hebdomadaire, 31 août 1920, p. 4; Id., 9 septembre, p. 10, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2 ; Lettre du général Gouraud à Robert de Caix, 2 juin 1920, AMAE, P 11203.

<sup>995</sup> Maurice Abadie, *Les Quatre sièges...*, pp. 79-118 ; Édouard Andréa, *Siège d’Aintab, 1920-1921* ; Édouard Andréa, *Compte-rendu*, 8-9 février 1921, SHD, 1 K 208.

<sup>996</sup> Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, p. 239.

<sup>997</sup> Jugement, n° 171/286, 14 août 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202.

<sup>998</sup> Aux organisations nationales du peuple arménien, 26 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135.

<sup>999</sup> The list (undated but written in August or September 1920) is in CADN, 1SL/1V/182. Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, pp. 115-116 intentionally omits to say anything about the events of March-August 1920 in Çukurova.

<sup>1000</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 99-100.

Paul Bernard sees the riot of July 10 and the events of the following weeks as the result of a plan of Armenian nationalists.<sup>1001</sup> This is partially corroborated by the verdict of the French military tribunal of Adana sentencing three Armenians to life-terms of hard labor for “Attack aimed to incite civil war by arming citizens or inciting to arm themselves against each other.”<sup>1002</sup> Two of them are members of an Armenian volunteers unit, including one at the personal service of Second Lieutenant Shishmanian.<sup>1003</sup> An even more relevant confirmation of Bernard’s analysis is the detailed report of Tommy Martin, the military governor of Adana. Martin concludes that, after the decline of the Ramkavar in April 1920, the Hunchaks became the dominant party in Cilicia, and planned the riots of July. He points the role of two second lieutenants of the Armenian Legion, including at least one member of the Hunchak.<sup>1004</sup>

Regardless, the best evidence are documents written before 10 July. Indeed, on 7 June, the same Tommy Martin reports that the Hunchak of Adana has decided to “create troubles, to resort to revolution and to proclaim the annexation of Cilicia to independent Armenia.”<sup>1005</sup> This is proved by a letter of the Hunchak chapter of Adana to the Paris chapter, on 16 May 1920, seized and translated by the French administration of Adana.<sup>1006</sup> The letter blames Brémond and his men for restricting the activities of the Armenian volunteers units, for punishing perpetrators of arsons and for encouraging the local attempts of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation. It continues in affirming that “Armenization” (the usual understatement for ethnic cleansing) is “the only way” to obtain the unification of “Cilicia” with Armenia—a goal

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<sup>1001</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>1002</sup> Jugement n° 365/280, 6 août 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202. In the same box, also see Jugement n° 163/278, 6 août 1920, sentencing in absentia an Armenian legionnaire to ten years in jail for theft of weapons belonging to the state.

<sup>1003</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin à M. le chef du contrôle administratif, 11 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174; Appendix to the letter of Shishmanian to Senator Victor Bérard, pp. 5-6, 10 December 1920, Hoover Institution, Shishmanian papers. The version presented by Shishmanian to defend the innocence of these volunteers is completely unlikely, and totally ignores the very existence of the third culprit.

<sup>1004</sup> Tommy Martin, Renseignements, n° 282, 12 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151 ; Tommy Martin, Renseignements, n° 398, 13 octobre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/222 ; [Tommy Martin ?], Renseignement n° 291, 16 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1005</sup> Tommy Martin, Renseignements n° 178, 7 juin 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/222 (also in 1SL/1V/152). Another warning: Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 23 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1006</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/151. The ethnic cleansing intent is also clear in Kourken Tahmazian, « Hommage à la République arménienne », *L’Orient illustré*, mars-avril 1920, p. 5. Yet, Tahmazian is a Hunchak leader.

to be reached “at any price.” Then, at the beginning of July 1920, Zabel Essayan, a representative of the Delegation of Integral Armenia (the combination of the Dashnak and Ramkavar delegations), visits Albert Defrance, the High Commissioner in Istanbul. She states very frankly that “the Armenians must provoke troubles and incidents with the Muslims, to force the French to remain or to intervene.” In addition, Defrance learns that “the Armenian notabilities of Smyrna contributed 100,000 liras to support or create fighting organizations, with the goal to provoke troubles and to force the French to intervene.”<sup>1007</sup> Meanwhile, the Armenian nationalists of Paris spread the rumor of the proclamation of an Armenian Republic in Adana (several days before the riots of 10 July and one month before the first proclamation of that kind).<sup>1008</sup> A rare public admittance finishes to prove the intent of ethnic cleansing: *The New Armenia* praises “Garabed Geokderelian, fighting, as a volunteer, to drive the Turks from Cilicia.”<sup>1009</sup>

Remarkably, during the riots, the catholicos of Cilicia finds nothing better to do than to meet General Gouraud and to ask for a revision of the peace treaty separating Adana and Mersin from Turkey. Gouraud answers that this is not something the Entente governments can do, and that, in any case, Armenians and Turks shall continue to live side by side. Gouraud, as a result, requests the catholicos “to join his efforts to those of the French authorities to oppose all the excesses of the races’ war that leave eternal grudges.”<sup>1010</sup>

The events of summer 1920 rarely receive the precise description they deserve in the current scholarship. Robert Zeidner fails to give details. Vahé Tachjian very briefly mentions the hangings of July-August 1920; but he is absolutely silent on the verdicts announced by the military tribunal of Adana during the same months and never cites, even to criticize this source, the published diary of Paul Bernard. Correspondingly, his use of the Tommy Martin’s reports is, to say the least, selective for a doctoral dissertation. Yücel Güçlü describes the riots without saying anything on the French repression and even alleges, relying solely on one

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<sup>1007</sup> Télégramme d’Albert Defrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 4 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1008</sup> Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères au général Gouraud, 5 juillet 1920 ; Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 8 juillet 1920 ; Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères aux ambassadeurs français à Washington, Londres et Rome, 13 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1009</sup> *The New Armenia*, August 1920, p. 126.

<sup>1010</sup> Lettre du général Gouraud au général Dufieux, 22 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/173.

Turkish published source, “a French complicity” for some of the murders and plunders.<sup>1011</sup> The interactions between Ramkavars, Hunchaks and the French administration are largely neglected. That having been said, Donald Bloxham deserves a special mention. Having worked in the French military archives, he dares to conclude, regardless: “The level of violence thus encouraged or permitted by the legionnaires, if not directly perpetrated by them [sic], can only be a matter of speculation [...]”<sup>1012</sup> Thanks to him, we learn that the findings of convergent and various sources, including court verdicts of a democratic country (here, France) “can only be a matter of speculation”—if the victims are Turkish, of course.

The attempts to impose an Armenian (or Christian) state on Çukurova are similarly not sufficiently analyzed. In July 1920, the rumor of the proclamation of an Armenian Republic in Adana is spread, a program for the actual establishment of such a Republic is prepared by Catholic Patriarch Pierre Terzian during the Spa conference<sup>1013</sup> and clumsy attempts are made to eliminate some of the few Muslims still working for the French administration of Adana, then the vali himself.<sup>1014</sup> After that, on 2 August, Minas Vêradzine, the local leader of the ARF, editor of *Guiliguia* and secretary of the Armenian National Union of Adana, proclaims an independent “Armenian Mesopotamia.”<sup>1015</sup> Brémont reacts by a letter to Mihran Damadian, calling this initiative “an act of pure madness that falls under the alienist doctors” (sic) and explains that if Vêradzine does not leave Cilicia by himself, he will be expelled.<sup>1016</sup>

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<sup>1011</sup> Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*; Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...*, pp. 123-124 ; Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, p. 151 and passim.

<sup>1012</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 152.

<sup>1013</sup> Télégramme de Maurice Paléologue aux ambassadeurs à Londres, Washington et Rome, 13 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674 ; « Levant », *L'Asie française*, septembre-octobre 1920, p. 324.

<sup>1014</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin à M. le président de l'Union nationale arménienne, 30 juillet 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, p. 43, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1015</sup> Le commandant Tommy Martin à M. le chef du contrôle administratif, 2 août 1920 ; Id., 3 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174 ; Colonel Brémont, Note de renseignements, 3 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135.

<sup>1016</sup> Le colonel Brémont à M. Damadian, représentant de la Délégation de l'Arménie intégrale, 3 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135. This document, always ignored, proves that the recently mirrored allegation of Damadian in his Memoirs about an encouragement of Brémont for his declaration of independence the next day (Susan Paul Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2018, p. 193), is absurd. Similar claim in “New Aspects,” *The New Armenia*, August 1920, p. 128.

Regardless, on 4 and 5 August 1920, the same Mihran Damadian—the accredited representative in Cilicia of the Delegation of Integral Armenia—, the four Armenian parties present in this region, as well as the chiefs of the three Armenian religious communities, supported by three Greek representatives, the chiefs of the Chaldean and Assyrian churches, proclaim an “Armenian Republic of Cilicia”—trying to carry out a decision taken during the previous days. On 5 August, in less than one hour, Colonel Brémont stops by force what he calls in his booklet a “ridicule comedy” and a “lamentable manifestation,” orchestrated by “delinquents”—the attempt to take power at the governorate of Adana and to arrest all the Turkish civil servants here.<sup>1017</sup> Indeed, in spite of the repeated warnings made by the chief administrator on 4 August, the proclamation is confirmed in the konak the next day. After Damadian and his men are dispersed by force, Brémont writes to him a note saying that he stops “any relation” with him.<sup>1018</sup> The proclamation is even more badly seen by the French authorities as “The last days, rifles lacked for the column [of Armenian volunteers supposed to go to] Mersin; there were plenty of them to perform this pantomime.”<sup>1019</sup> General Dufieux calls the members of the self-proclaimed cabinet “miserable,” “who don’t even have the courage help the supplying of Adana and who know only how to plunder.”<sup>1020</sup>

In a joint letter, dated 7 August, the Maronite, Assyrian and Chaldean leaders present their regrets to Brémont for having initially supported Damadian and “condemn” the insistence

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<sup>1017</sup> Proclamation de l’indépendance de la Cilicie, 4 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2350, 25 septembre 1920, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 87-89 ; Édouard Brémont, *La Cilicie en...*, pp. 66-67 ; Louis Jalabert, « Allons-nous évacuer la Cilicie ? Un problème angoissant », *Études*, 20 octobre 1920, pp. 174-175. It is not clear if the revolt of six Armenian legionnaires on 2 August is linked to the preparation of the coup or not: Jugement n° 194/309, 6 août 1920, SHD, 11 J 3202.

<sup>1018</sup> Le colonel Brémont à M. le général commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division du Levant, 4 août 1920 ; Le colonel Brémont à M. Damadian, 5 août 1920 ; Note, 6 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/174. Aram Turabian, *L’Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne : l’Arménie*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1929, p. 78 observes that “an other” than Brémont would have killed Damadian without betraying his duty. Even Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne...*, p. 117 retrospectively admits that the coup was “doomed to fail.” Regardless, Damadian is without regrets in his Memoirs: *Bir Ermeni Komitecinin Itiraflari*, İstanbul: Timaş, 2009.

<sup>1019</sup> Musset, Compte-rendu à M. le gouverneur, 4 août 1920 CADN, 1SL/1V/174. Also see Rapport hebdomadaire, 24 août 1920, p. 3, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, pp. 39 and 43, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236 ; Adrien Léger, « Turquie. La question de Cilicie », *Mercure de France*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1922, pp. 269-270 ; 15 juin 1922, pp. 844-845.

<sup>1020</sup> Général Julien Dufieux, Proclamation, 5 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/135 (also in 1SL/1V/151). Reproducing the text, Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, p. 91 comments: “It is harsh, but deserved!”

of Armenian nationalists.<sup>1021</sup> The Delegation of the Armenian Republic (Dashnak) in Paris dismisses its representative for having participated to the failed coup.<sup>1022</sup> Hunchak leader Kourken Tahmazian, arrived in Beirut right after the attempt of August to reinforce his party, comes back to France “immediately.” The archives of the Hunchak being not available, it is difficult to know exactly why, but according to the intelligence note describing this departure in a hurry, he seems concerned by this failure.<sup>1023</sup> On the contrary, Boghos Nubar writes to the League of Nation on 14 August, as if the proclamation had been endorsed by France and its allies, and three days later, he sends a personal letter to Robert de Caix (namely the official of Beirut the most hostile to Armenian nationalism), to express his satisfaction about the declaration of 5 August and to ask for the arrival of Antranik Ozanian in Adana<sup>1024</sup> (already vetoed by Gouraud in April, as we saw). The reactions of the MFA are not preserved in the archives, but they can be only antagonistic. Locally, the relations of Brémond with the committees worsen even more when he announces to the Armenian National Union that, as they have been unable to stop two groups of Armenian volunteers, the looting continues, so “military measures” shall be taken.<sup>1025</sup>

#### 4.2.3 *The new repression (September 1920-January 1921)*

The major change in September 1920 is of course the removal of Colonel Brémond. The causes of this recall have never been explained accurately in the existing scholarly publications. Robert Zeidner alleges that “it was not until September 1920 that the dangers of the colonel’s pro-Armenian positions became so obvious to the general [Gouraud] that he

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<sup>1021</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/135.

<sup>1022</sup> Note de la Délégation de la République arménienne, 8 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1023</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Pierre Capitrel, M. Archag Tchobanian et M. Kourken Tahmazian, 16 octobre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/159 ; Tommy Martin, Renseignement n° 319, 12 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1024</sup> AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1025</sup> Le colonel Brémond, chef du contrôle administratif, à M. le président de l’Union nationale arménienne, 14 août 1920, 1SL/1V/135. The demand of Archbishop Kevork Arslanian for a volunteers unit in charge of rescuing Haçin is similarly rejected by General Dufieux, as it “could only worsen the existing disorder”: Le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division du Levant, à M. le colonel chef du contrôle administratif, 9 août 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151.



relieved him.”<sup>1026</sup> Vahé Tachjian is, in this specific case, closer to the truth: As early as March-April 1920, the tensions between Gouraud and Brémond crystallize on the issue of governor (vali) Celâl Bey, Gouraud wanting to use him as a go-between with the Kemalists, Brémond asking for his removal; the tensions are close to provoke the resignation of the second in May. Brémond is only saved, temporarily, by Dufieux, who again obtains a delay in June<sup>1027</sup> — namely in the middle of final major conflict between Gouraud and Feysal, conflict ended in July by the defeat and expulsion of the emir.<sup>1028</sup>

However, Mr. Tachjian excessively abbreviates the most sensitive part of the affair. On 14 August, Brémond gets sick and appoints Commander François Hassler to replace him temporarily. At that moment, the general secretary of the administration, Charles Escande, decides to act. As we have seen, Escande has first tried to convince Brémond to change his policy completely, then began to give data to journalists and parliamentarians. However, he remained with the hope to replace his direct superior, being in good terms with Gouraud. Escande leaves Adana for Beirut with documents, including the evidence that Brémond spreads in Morocco (where both Gouraud and Brémond have served) a note criticizing the policy of the Beirut High Commission bitterly and even asking for the removal of General Gouraud, a note suspected to have been used in the Parisian press to destabilize the High Commission of Beirut.<sup>1029</sup>

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<sup>1026</sup> Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, p. 118.

<sup>1027</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, pp. 161-166 ; Télégramme du général Gouraud au général Dufieux, 30 août 1920, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191.

<sup>1028</sup> Julie d’Andurain, « Négociateur en Syrie en 1920 : Gouraud et Fayçal avant la bataille de Damas », in Emmanuel Vivet (ed.), *Négociations d’hier, leçons pour aujourd’hui*, Bruxelles : Larcier, 2014, pp. 225-238 ; Dan Eldar, “France in Syria: The Abolition of the Sharifian Government, April-July 1920,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXIII-3, July 1993, pp. 487-504; Philippe Gouraud, *Le Général Henri Gouraud au Liban et en Syrie. 1919-1923*, Paris: L’Harmattan, 1993, pp. 57-65.

<sup>1029</sup> M. Charles Escande, secrétaire général du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, à M. le général, haut-commissaire, 27 août 1920 ; Charles Escande, Comment essayer de ramener le calme en Cilicie, 31 août 1920 ; Le général Gouraud à M. Millerand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 septembre 1920 ; Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie et en Cilicie, à M. le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division, 20 septembre 1920 ; Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie et en Cilicie, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 8 novembre 1920, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191 ; Le colonel Brémond, Note, mi-juin 1920 ; Le colonel Brémond à M. le général Gouraud, 6 octobre 1920, AN, 594 AP 4.

On 29 August, General Gouraud, who now has the needed argument, decides to remove Colonel Brémond, and the decision is notified to him by General Dufieux on 4 September.<sup>1030</sup> One of the best appraisals comes curiously from an American missionary, William Nesbitt Chambers (1853-1934): “He is a man of considerable ability and large experience. [...] But he failed absolutely to gain the confidence of anybody in any community. [...] In the course of the conversation, he remarked: ‘I hope that after my departure the city will be more tranquil.’”<sup>1031</sup> Regardless, Brémond, fearing for the rest of his career, tries to justify himself with more than questionable arguments, at the Directorate of the political affairs of the Quai d’Orsay.

All the explanations of Colonel Brémond concerning his Armenophile policy seem unconvincing. It actually seems that in favoring the Armenians [...] we indispose the few Turks who were not Kemalist at the beginning; they were pushed into the arms of the Soviets, and so has been created the current situation, which is so difficult to get out of.<sup>1032</sup>

The career of Brémond is indeed blocked until the end of 1923. Then, to end his protests and those of Dufieux, he is promoted as Brigadier General but sent to Toulouse, far away from all what interests him, and stays here until his retirement (1928), in spite of his new demands and those of Dufieux.<sup>1033</sup>

Brémond is replaced in Adana by Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Capitrel (1869-1943). “Very clever, very military, an elite officer by every aspect,”<sup>1034</sup> Capitrel has followed a career of staff intelligence officer as well as fighter on the frontline, particularly during the Verdun battle (1916), before serving in the military mission in Romania. Remarkably, in spite of their bitter disputes, both General Dufieux and General Gouraud ask the Ministry of War, by 1920,

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<sup>1030</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au général Dufieux, 29 août 1920, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 191 ; Le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division du Levant, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif en Cilicie, 4 septembre 1920, AN, 594 AP 2. Meanwhile, Gouraud rejects a new proposal of the Armenian National Union of Adana to create volunteers units: Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie, commandant en chef de l’armée du Levant, à M. le général commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/173.

<sup>1031</sup> Letter of William Nesbitt Chambers to James L. Barton, 15 September 1920, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 1.

<sup>1032</sup> Jules Laroche, Conversation avec le colonel Brémond, 28 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1033</sup> Édouard Brémond, Résumé des états de service, p. 5, AN, 594 AP 1 ; Lettre du général Dufieux au colonel Brémond, 18 août 1921 ; Id., 14 février 1926 ; Id., 2 octobre 1927 ; Id., 14 octobre 1927, AN, 594 AP 2.

<sup>1034</sup> Rapport du colonel Leleu, 2 novembre 1904, SHD, 6 YE 25377.

to make him a colonel (it is accepted in 1925). Knight of the *Légion d'honneur* since 1914, he is promoted officer in 1922. The same year, he is appointed as chief of the Intelligence Service of the land army in the Near East—two other indications that his hierarchy is satisfied.<sup>1035</sup> The instructions given to him by Gouraud are clear: If the Kemalists remain the enemies for now, it could change soon, and in any case, the supporters of Kemal in Adana should not be “persecuted;” the “trust” of the Turks in general has to be gained; the Armenians have to understand no other “blackmail,” no other attempt to impose a “*fait accompli*” can be tolerated; Capitrel is an “administrative delegate,” the change of the title meaning the change of policy toward the administration.<sup>1036</sup> The context of the Polish victory against the invading Red Army (August-October) eases the situation of the French in the Near East, particularly the supporters of General Gouraud and Robert de Caix.<sup>1037</sup> In a bit more than two months, from the end of September to the beginning of December 1920, Capitrel liquidates the administrative services, restituting, in particular, the tax administration and the civil justice to the Turks.<sup>1038</sup>

More personal is his project of a “French Relief” in the province of Adana. Centered on the development of medical assistance and the existing schools, this plan of soft power is prepared explicitly to replace the preference for Armenians by relief on equal terms and to ease the ethnic tensions in giving the habits to all communities to be cured at the same places.<sup>1039</sup> This is not the place to discuss why this plan was not implemented, at least not

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<sup>1035</sup> Mémoire de proposition pour le grade de colonel, 1919 ; Citations, 1928 ; Fiche récapitulaire, 1933, SHD, 6 YE 25377.

<sup>1036</sup> Général Gouraud, Directives politiques n° 4, données le 8 septembre 1920 au lieutenant-colonel Capitrel, délégué administratif du haut-commissaire en Cilicie, CADN, 1SL/1V/144 (also in AN, 594 AP 4).

<sup>1037</sup> Thomas Fiddick, *Russia's Retreat from Poland, 1920 From Permanent Revolution to Peaceful Coexistence*, London : Palgrave MacMillan, 1990 ; Testis [Commandant Michel Canonge], « L'œuvre de la France en Syrie », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 mars 1921, pp. 130-131.

<sup>1038</sup> Le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division du Levant, à M. le haut-commissaire en Syrie-Cilicie, 16 décembre 1920 ; Le conseiller financier du haut-commissariat à Adana, à M. le haut-commissaire, 13 décembre 1920 ; Lieutenant-colonel Pierre Capitrel, Liquidation administrative, 14 décembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/153.

<sup>1039</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Pierre Capitrel, Proposition d'organisation en Cilicie d'une assistance française, 15 octobre 1920 ; Organisation des œuvres de scolarité en Cilicie, 23 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/153 ; Lieutenant-colonel Pierre Capitrel, Rapport sur l'organisation médicale du Secours français en Cilicie, 17 novembre 1920 ; Organisation d'une assistance française en Cilicie, 23 novembre 1920 ; Additif à l'organisation d'une assistance française en Cilicie, 30 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/144.

fully, but it is safe to affirm that, had the policy radically changed one year earlier, its chances would have been significantly stronger; and in any case, it is an indication of Capitrel's will to be impartial. Indeed, a policy of "rapprochement" with the Turks is carried out. As early as November 1920, and even more in January 1921, the French authorities notice a significant amelioration.<sup>1040</sup> It cannot be dismissed as an attempt of self-justification. Indeed, past Grand Vizir Sait Halim Paşa (1865-1921) reports in his Memoirs that, after the departure of Brémond, the situation improves significantly and quickly.<sup>1041</sup> Moreover, Capitrel has not a high opinion of the Catholicos of Cilicia. He describes him as narrow-minded, "above all dominated by his personal interest," never able to present clear accounts for the money he receives and not popular among the Armenians.<sup>1042</sup>

Quite logically, the replacement of Brémond by Capitrel is not appreciated by the Armenian committees.<sup>1043</sup> Perhaps to test his capacity of resistance, and in any case without knowing it well, a new attempt of coup takes place on 22 September, when a Christian Republic of Cilicia is one more time proclaimed by the revolutionary parties. The "army" (around 400 men) of this "republic" is encircled by the French troops and immediately surrounds.<sup>1044</sup> The repression is immediate because the French command knows in advance what shall happen and decides accordingly. Indeed, the day before, General Dufieux decides to arrest all the leaders of the Armenian National Union and to dissolve the last group of Armenian volunteers remaining in Çukurova. To prevent dangerous reactions, the Dashnak daily *Guiliguia* and the Hunchak daily *Davros* are suspended for one week at the eve of 22 September and their presses confiscated until 29 September (evening). The details of the operations are decided by Lieutenant-Colonel Capitrel and Commander Martin.<sup>1045</sup>

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<sup>1040</sup> Commandant Hassler, Rapport hebdomadaire du 6 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/153 ; Télégramme de Robert de Caix au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 6 janvier 1921 ; Réponse de Georges Leygues à Robert de Caix, 12 janvier 1921, AMAE, P 17785 ; Testis [Commandant Michel Canonge], « L'œuvre de la France en Syrie », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1921, pp. 837-838.

<sup>1041</sup> Sait Halim Paşa, *L'Empire ottoman et la guerre mondiale*, Istanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2000 (1921), pp. 68-69.

<sup>1042</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Capitrel, Note au sujet du Catholicos de Cilicie, 16 octobre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/156.

<sup>1043</sup> « La situation en Cilicie », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 31 octobre 1920, p. 1599.

<sup>1044</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 107-108. The very existence of this third attempt is ignored in Garabet Krikor Moumdjian, "Cilicia under the..."

<sup>1045</sup> Le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division, à M. le lieutenant-colonel Capitrel, délégué administratif du haut-commissariat en Cilicie, 21 septembre 1920 ; Général Dufieux, Instruction

Second Lieutenant Shishmanian, who served in the Armenian Legion until June 1920 and organized a so-called “self-defense” at the request of Brémond until the end of summer, is fired on 19 September, pressured by Tommy Martin to give names of Armenian leaders (to be deported out of Cilicia) and eventually arrested and expelled on 22 September 1920—the day of the third proclamation—, with eleven leaders of the National Armenian Union, involved in the failed coups of August and September, and 300 volunteers.<sup>1046</sup> Indeed, even Vahé Tachjian admits that Shishmanian “was perfectly aware of the organization of this coup d’État and actively took part in its realization.”<sup>1047</sup> Later, on 31 December 1920, the Hunchak organ *Davros* is banned, officially for having published a part of an article forbidden by the French military censorship.<sup>1048</sup> The policy of Capitrel, fully backed by Dufieux, leads to the dislocation of the Hunchak party, which loses its leadership at the benefit of the ARF.<sup>1049</sup>

In addition to the deportation of leaders and volunteers, the French military practices—more than previously—a preventive repression against the ordinary militants, arresting and sentencing them for illegal possession of weapons before they could use them.<sup>1050</sup> In at least one case, the investigators find a personal arsenal dating back July 1920, and provided by the Armenian National Union.<sup>1051</sup>

Not surprisingly, this firm policy provokes a new wave of anti-French propaganda. In particular, the bishop of the Armenians of Haçin, who has taken refuge in Adana, sends a

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*personnelle et secrète* pour le commandant des Orçons, 21 septembre 1920 ; Général Dufieux, Confirmation de message téléphonique, 22 septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1046</sup> Letter of Shishmanian to General Dufieux, September 19, 1920; Letter of Shishmanian to Victor Bérard, December 10, 1920, Hoover Institution, Shishmanian papers; Tommy Martin, Renseignements n° 383, 24 septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151.

<sup>1047</sup> Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, p. 153. In his letter to Bérard cited in the previous footnote, Shishmanian never mentions the main reason for his arrest, namely the failed coup d’État on September 22. This is another, striking example showing how careful must be a researcher working in the Shishmanian papers.

<sup>1048</sup> Général Julien Dufieux, Arrêté n° 251, 31 décembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/154.

<sup>1049</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Capitrel, délégué administratif du haut-commissariat en Cilicie, à M. le général, haut-commissaire en Syrie, [1920], CADN, 1SL/1V/153.

<sup>1050</sup> Conseil de guerre d’Adana, Jugement n° 244/359, 13 novembre 1920 ; Jugement n° 251/359, 25 novembre 1920 ; Jugement n° 408, 15 janvier 1921 ; Jugement n° 422, 4 février 1921, SHD, 11 J 3202 ; Magistrat militaire, Jugement, 30 janvier 1921 ; Id., 10 février 1921 ; Id., 5 mars 1921 ; Id., 16 mars 1921 ; Id., 21 mars, CADN, 1SL/1V/188.

<sup>1051</sup> Magistrat militaire, Jugement, 24 mars 1921 ; Déposition reçue le 24 mars 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/188.

telegram to Boghos Nubar, on 2 October 1920, against an “unbearable situation” provoked by the expulsion of the Armenian National Union’s leaders. The bishop dares to estimate the number of Armenian refugees expelled from Çukurova to be 50,000. The same day, the vicar of the Armenian archbishop of İzmir asks Nubar to campaign for a “permanent occupation” of Çukurova. The telegrams are submitted to the Foreign Office by Rev. Noel Buxton (a leader of the British Armenia Committee), with the support of Lord Bryce. The Foreign Office is reluctant to act,<sup>1052</sup> and the effect of these verbal attacks can be measured with the response of General Gouraud to the British authorities:

Previously arms had been indeed distributed to the Armenians, either to defend their villages or so that they could form auxiliary units attached to the French columns operating in Cilicia. In each instance, the Armenians have taken advantage of this retreat to treat the Turks exactly as the Armenians complained they had themselves been treated, looting and burning villages and massacring unarmed Muslims.<sup>1053</sup>

Correspondingly, the Quai d’Orsay instructs the embassy in London to “deny categorically that [the French government] proceeds to evacuations of Armenians or other civilians” in Çukurova: In fact, it only moved to Syria “some thousands of refugees” who “cluttered Adana and the coastal cities.” This is actually congruent with the telegram of General Gouraud sent *before* the campaigning in the UK begins.<sup>1054</sup> Then, the MFA emphasizes the financial expenses (several hundreds of millions francs) in Çukurova, the loss of thousands of soldiers here, to observe that “most of the time, the complaints echoed by the Foreign Office are tendentious and their goal is less to improve the fate of the populations of Cilicia than to implement a political program the signatories of the Sèvres treaty cannot support.” The Foreign Office reacts in denying any intent to intervene: Its question was due to the necessity to answer the “Armenian milieu” of Britain, especially in the Parliament.<sup>1055</sup> It is true, indeed, that the Armenians arriving from Mersin to İzmir are “full of bitterness toward the French.”<sup>1056</sup>

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<sup>1052</sup> FO 371/5210/E 12547.

<sup>1053</sup> Général Gouraud, Réponse à la note 9153/A du général de La Panouse, au sujet des Arméniens, 25 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1054</sup> Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères au chargé d’affaires français à Londres, 14 octobre 1920 ; Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1055</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à l’ambassadeur français à Londres, 5 novembre 1920 ; Télégramme de l’ambassadeur français à Londres, 6 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1056</sup> S.R. Marine Turquie, n° 2373, 15 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

In the U.S., the Reformed Hunchak organ, *The New Armenia*, already used a virulent wording before the recalling of Brémond to Paris: “The French are prostituting their diplomacy to gain the Turkish friendship. Poor France endeavors to become a strong Moslem power in competition with Britain. God save her from the fate of the fabled frog!”<sup>1057</sup> After the change of leadership in Adana, the same monthly publishes an article of Henry Winans Jessup (1864-1934), a leader of Cardashian’s ACIA, accusing France, Britain, and, to a lesser extent, Italy, to “administer the finishing touches” of “Armenia’s martyrdom” as they ask U.S. President Woodrow Wilson to not include Çukurova in the borders of Armenia he is supposed to define. The next article of the same issue, written by Walter George Smith (1854-1924), president of the Armenia-America Society and executive member of the Near East Relief,<sup>1058</sup> comes further:

The latest available despatches describe the situation in Cilicia as extremely critical. It is said that deportation of the refugees has been ordered by the French authorities; that Armenian newspapers have been suspended; that Armenian troops giving relief to Sis and Hadjin have been disarmed and arrested; that General Gouraud has established a Turkish Government [sic].

The issue continues in quoting a Francophobic article of the *Christian Science Monitor* and a statement of the ACIA hostile to the French policy in Adana.<sup>1059</sup>

Then, *The New Armenia* obtains the publication in *The New York Times* of a response to an editorial of this daily. The reply explains: “The lack of love on the part of the Armenians toward France is not due to the fact that France leaves the Armenians to shift for themselves, but to the fact that she does not.” The point is, indeed, the disbanding of the Armenian Legion and other units. The Reformed Hunchak organ continues in quoting a “report” sent by Mouchegh Séropian to the ACIA, and accusing Brémond, Capitrel and their collaborators to have “resolved to deport the 100,000 Armenian population of Cilicia, and to disarm the

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<sup>1057</sup> “Notes from Constantinople,” *The New Armenia*, July 1920, p. 112. Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris...* curiously never refers to any issue of *The New Armenia* published after 1918. Yet, it is a book focusing on the American perspective.

<sup>1058</sup> Thomas Bryson, “The Armenian-American Society: A Factor in American-Turkish Relations,” *Armenian Review*, XXIX-1, Spring 1976, p. 55.

<sup>1059</sup> Henry Winans Jessup, “They Parted my Gargments among Them,” Walter George Smith, “The Armenian Boundaries,” and “Wronged Armenia,” *The New Armenia*, October 1920, pp. 145, 147 and 158-159. The “Turkish government” could be the origin of the “Turkish governor” supposed to replace Brémond in the fictional book of Sarkis Torossian, *From Dardanelles to Palestine*, Boston: Meador Publishing C°, 1947, p. 206. On Torossian: Hakan Erdem, *Gerçek ile Kurmaca Arasında Torosyan’ın Acayip Hikayesi*, İstanbul: Doğan, 2012; Maxime Gauin, “A True of False Story by Torossian,” *Daily Sabah*, 2 October 2015.

Armenian soldiers.” Séropian even manages to describe the arrest and expulsion of the Armenian National Union leaders on 22 September without mentioning their failed coup.<sup>1060</sup> The Near East Relief similarly receives a dispatch claiming that “Captain [sic] John Shishmanian” has been “hanged” by the French authorities.<sup>1061</sup> Then, the Ramkavar of Egypt directly addresses to the U.S., British, French and Italian government, as well as to the League of Nations, a memorandum blaming the policy of balance tried by Dufieux and denying any crime of the Armenian Legion and other volunteers’ units.<sup>1062</sup> Even more vehemently, the ACIA sends a telegram to President of Ministers’ Council Georges Leygues (who has replaced Alexandre Millerand, elected as President of the Republic) to accuse France for “principal responsibility in Kemalist aggression against Armenian Republic and full responsibility for slaughter and persecution of Armenians in Cilicia.”<sup>1063</sup>

Yet, after the failure of the Versailles at the U.S. Senate the Senate, the voices from America are not so listened anymore in France, and the end of 1920 is also the end of the Wilson years. Democrat candidate James Cox (1870-1957), a member of the ACIA, is largely defeated, at the presidential election in November, by Warren Harding (1865-1923), who has always been opposed to an American mandate on Armenia. To make the situation of the Armenian nationalists in America and their local friends even more problematic, ACIA leader Vahan Cardashian, and the ARF in general, are in conflict with the new director of the Armenia-America Society, George Montgomery—and Montgomery is found too soft by *The New Armenia*.<sup>1064</sup> Not surprisingly, General Gouraud makes to Admiral Bristol a response similar that delivered to the British authorities: The Armenian Legion has been suppressed because of its crimes.<sup>1065</sup>

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<sup>1060</sup> “The Urgent Question of Armenia,” *The New Armenia*, November-December 1920, pp. 180-181.

<sup>1061</sup> “Reports American Hanged,” *The New York Times*, 13 November 1920, p. 24.

<sup>1062</sup> Mémorandum présenté par l’Union nationale arménienne d’Égypte, 30 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1063</sup> Telegram of James Gerard, no date, received on 13 November 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1064</sup> Letter of Vahan Cardashian to George Montgomery, 29 January 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 2; Mark Malkasian, “The Disintegration of...”, p. 355. These tensions are ignored in Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris...* The issue of Çukurova in 1918-1922 is also barely touched (p. 368). This is representative of this book: Norman Stone, “A Bungled Case for the Prosecution,” *The Spectator*, 27 April 2004, pp. 43-44.

<sup>1065</sup> Mark Lambert Bristol, War Diary, 14 August 1922, p. 7 (summarizing an earlier conversation, likely at the end of 1920), LC, Bristol papers, container 4.



Even more counter-productive, however, is the last initiative of Shishmanian. In December 1920, he writes a letter to Victor Bérard (1864-1931), elected as senator almost one year before. Shishmanian crudely denies any wrongdoing by Armenian nationalists, and presents himself as a victim.<sup>1066</sup> Remembering the apparent support of Bérard for the Armenian cause in 1897, during the First World War and earlier during the year 1920,<sup>1067</sup> Shishmanian surely thinks that Bérard shall support the Armenian nationalist claims for an Armenian autonomy in Adana under foreign occupation. Instead, Bérard uses Shishmanian as a pretext to ask for the withdrawal of the French troops from Çukurova and Syria in a speech delivered on 4 January and printed three weeks later.<sup>1068</sup> Far from positively impressing the French authorities, the published speech of Bérard causes a durable hostility of de Caix toward him.<sup>1069</sup> The reason why Bérard does the opposite of what Shishmanian expected is explained by his intervention at the Senate in July 1920 and at its Foreign Affairs committee in December of the same year: Bérard's actual project is to concentrate the French efforts on the reconstruction of Anatolia, İstanbul and Lebanon, instead of wasting men and money in Syria.<sup>1070</sup> One more time, the Armenian issue is an instrument for his views and hardly anything else.

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<sup>1066</sup> Letter of Shishmanian to Victor Bérard, December 10, 1920, Hoover Institution, Shishmanian papers.

<sup>1067</sup> Victor Bérard, « Pour l'Arménie », *Les Cahiers des droits de l'homme*, 5 mai 1920, pp. 14-21 (it has to be emphasized that, on p. 20, Bérard mentions the human losses of the Turks during the world war and repeats one more time that "this venerable people" is the best for the French interests in the Near East).

<sup>1068</sup> Victor Bérard, « Le gaspillage des forces françaises en Syrie et en Cilicie », *Les Cahiers des droits de l'homme*, 25 janvier 1921, pp. 27-30 ; 25 février, pp. 84-88 (reference to Shishmanian p. 87). Emmanuel Naquet, « Quelques défenseurs des droits de l'Homme face à la cause arménienne (fin XIX<sup>e</sup> - début XX<sup>e</sup> siècles) », *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, 2013/2, pp. 43-61 wittingly omits this text of Bérard. Hélène Strapélias, « Index des personnalités du mouvement arménophile », in Claire Mouradian (ed.), *Arménie, une passion française. 1878-1923*, Paris : Magellan & Cie, 2007, p. 149 presents Bérard as a constant supporter of the Armenian cause, which is at best a major error.

<sup>1069</sup> Robert de Caix, L'organisation donnée à la Syrie et au Liban de 1920 à 1923 et la crise actuelle, octobre 1926, in Gérard Khoury (ed.), *Une tutelle coloniale...*, p. 453.

<sup>1070</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 29 juillet 1920, p. 1526 ; Commission des Affaires étrangères, séance du lundi 27 décembre 1920, pp. 32-35 and 45-46, Archives du Sénat, 69 S 268. On the background of his ideas, see Victor Bérard, *La France et le monde de demain*, Rouen : Imprimerie E. Cagniard, 1912, p. 9.

Beside these counter-productive attempts to confront the authorities of the French Republic, and the ire of Aram Turabian, that falls back into the void,<sup>1071</sup> Kricor Tellalian, representative of the Catholics at the Armenian National Union of Adana, and the Catholicos of Cilicia meet Aristide Briand, in October 1920, then—together with Boghos Nubar—President of Ministers' Council Georges Leygues. Eventually, Nubar and the Catholicos meet past President of the Republic Raymond Poincaré, who later sees Tellalian in a separate meeting. Yet, they never obtain anything concrete.<sup>1072</sup> Then, on 7 November 1920, Nubar writes to President of Ministers' Council Georges Leygues to claim he has received a telegram on the “massacre” of Armenians in Haçin, after the capture of this city by the Turkish forces.<sup>1073</sup> Yet, Kricor Tellalian previously had shown to Captain Taillardat a letter of the Armenian National Union of Adana “to Paris” (almost certainly Nubar) affirming that only “the main notables” and “some fighters” have been executed.<sup>1074</sup> Meanwhile, Archag Tchobanian, acting at the request of the (Ramkavar) Armenian National Delegation but without any coordination with the Republic of Yerevan and its own delegation in Paris,<sup>1075</sup> is allowed to come to Lebanon and Adana, “at the condition to advocate the policy of appeasement preparing the implementation of the Sèvres treaty,” namely the evacuation of most of Çukurova.<sup>1076</sup> Yet, contrary to his promises made to General Gouraud, Tchobanian speaks with General Dufieux about the claims for an Armenian autonomy in Cilicia and of new Armenian units, under the leadership of Antranik Ozanian, supposed to land in Mersin. Robert de Caix vividly reacts in a letter to General Dufieux:

You would make our situation impossible if you left the slightest hope to the Armenians for any solution of this kind. They seem to me bypassing the other

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<sup>1071</sup> Aram Turabian, « Devant le tribunal du peuple français — La sinistre comédie doit cesser en Cilicie », *Aiguillon*, 30 novembre 1920, pp. 1-2. There is no indication, in the consulted records of the MFA, military and Parliament, that the recriminations of Turabian in November 1920 are discussed.

<sup>1072</sup> Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne...*, pp. 110-114 ; Lettre de Boghos Nubar à Georges Leygues, 28 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1073</sup> AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1074</sup> Capitaine Taillardat, Protection des minorités chrétiennes de Cilicie, 11 décembre 1920, pp. 5-6, CADN, 1SL/1V/144.

<sup>1075</sup> Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime...*, p. 80. Serge d'Herminy (Mélik-Serge David-Beg), *Notice biographique et bibliographique sur Archag Tchobanian*, Paris : Comité d'organisation, 1925, and Edmond Khayadian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CNDP, 1986, pp. 284-285 indeed mention no such coordination.

<sup>1076</sup> Télégramme de Robert de Caix au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 24 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

Orientalists in the art to distort, conveniently for them, the sense of the words told to them. So far, I never had, for my part, a conversation with an Armenian, including men living in Europe such as TCHOBANIAN or NUBAR Pasha, without having seen them distort, with a bad faith so perfect that I wonder if it is not ingenuous, the meaning of my words.<sup>1077</sup>

The next day, de Caix insists in a telegram to Dufieux (forwarded to the Quai d'Orsay): "As you told Mr. Tchobanian, it is not only impossible to admit that forces be organized at the call of General Antranik, but also to admit that any Armenian force be created under the command of French officers." De Caix also warns Dufieux about "the necessity to discourage completely any idea to transport Armenians in our zone of influence," as it would be a new burden "without any compensation of any kind."<sup>1078</sup> The warning is listened without difficulties.<sup>1079</sup> Indeed, no matter how Dufieux is embittered against the Kemalists, he has no love for the Armenian nationalists, who have organized "press campaigns" against him in Egypt and the U.S.<sup>1080</sup> Similarly, there is no indication that the MFA or the military objects anything to the stance of de Caix. On the contrary, the Consul General in Izmir observes that Antranik has not visited him during his time in the city, as Antranik knew he had nothing to expect from him. The Consul adds that Antranik is accompanied by Mouchegh Séropian, "a Francophobe," and that "the events of Cilicia did not contribute to attract us the sympathy of a naturally ungrateful nation." Our "sacrifices in men and money" have only led to "bitterness" which would provoke "hateful press campaigns" without the censorship.<sup>1081</sup> Actually, Gouraud reiterates his refusal to see Antranik in the region, as he would be "a chief for the Armenian revolution and all the Armenian claims," precisely at the moment when the policy of the High Commission begins to obtain results.<sup>1082</sup>

Indeed, Gouraud and de Caix have turned the page of any cooperation with Armenian nationalism. Their concerns are elsewhere. In his previously quoted letter to Dufieux, de Caix expresses the following fear: "If the war with the [Turkish] nationalists continues

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<sup>1077</sup> Lettre de Robert de Caix au général Dufieux, 25 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/137.

<sup>1078</sup> Robert de Caix, Télégramme chiffré au général Dufieux, 26 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1079</sup> Télégramme chiffré du général Gouraud à Robert de Caix, 2 décembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>1080</sup> Lettre du général Dufieux au colonel Brémond, 29 décembre 1920, pp. 6-7, AN, 594 AP 2.

<sup>1081</sup> Le consul général de France à Smyrne à M. le général Gouraud, 31 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

<sup>1082</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 23 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784.

indefinitely,” the Parliament could vote for the withdrawal of all the forces in the Near East, including Syria. This fear is substantiated by the vigorous criticism from deputies Édouard Daladier (see below about him), Adrien Artaud (1859-1935), Louis de Chappedelaine (1876-1939), Charles Dumont (1867-1939; rapporteur of the budget at the Chamber of deputies), Jean Hennessy (1874-1944), Édouard Herriot, Paul Laffont (1885-1944; rapporteur of the colonies’ budget, he denounces the massacres of Turks by Armenians during the French occupation), Ernest Lafont (1879-1946),<sup>1083</sup> Senators Paul d’Estournelles de Constant (1852-1924; Nobel Prize of peace, 1909), Gaston Doumergue (past President of the Ministers’ Council),<sup>1084</sup> and, as it has been seen, Victor Bérard. The continuation of the conflict with the Kemalists is supported, in the Parliament by a few second- and third-rank parliamentarians, mostly Deputy Charles Bellet (1880-1964), elected in 1919 and defeated in 1924, and Senator Dominique Delahaye (1848-1932), a marginal character of the far right.<sup>1085</sup>

In this context, General Gouraud comes to Paris and states to the Foreign Affairs and Finances committees of the Chamber of deputies that the problems of public order in Syria are fixed and that the situation in “Cilicia” is improving, because of the military successes against the Kemalists since August but also because the wrong “Armenian policy” has been abandoned.

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<sup>1083</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 25 juin 1920, pp. 2390 and 2404-2406 ; 26 juin 1920, pp. 2430-2431 ; 7 décembre 1920, p. 3495 ; 24 décembre 1920, pp. 3934-3937 ; 25 décembre 1920, pp. 3990-3993 ; « La politique française en Syrie et en Cilicie — Le gouvernement demande des crédits pour notre intervention en Orient », *La Lanterne*, 21 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « Syrie et Cilicie », *Le Rappel*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Édouard Daladier, « Questions d’Orient », *Le Rappel*, 14 décembre 1920, p. 1. Also see Jacques Bainville, « Que faisons-nous à Ourfa ? », *L’Action française*, 28 avril 1920, p. 1 ; Philippe Millet, « Notre erreur dans le Levant », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 4 juillet 1920, pp. 907-908 ; Paul Louis, « Évacuez la Syrie », *L’Humanité*, 20 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1084</sup> Gustave Roanet, « Au Sénat — Que font nos armées en Cilicie ? », *L’Humanité*, 26 mai 1920, p. 2 ; Gaston Doumergue, « Les élections allemandes — Les leçons à en tirer », *Le Petit Méridional*, 13 juin 1920, p. 1 ; Paul d’Estournelles de Constant, « Contre les expéditions en Syrie et en Cilicie. Séance du Sénat du 28 juillet 1920 », *Conciliation internationale. Bulletin semestriel*, n° 1, 1920, pp. 131-148. Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over...*, p. 226 confuses this speech with a conference on a different subject, published in the same bulletin.

<sup>1085</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 28 mars 1920, pp. 757-761 ; *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 30 décembre 1920, pp. 2051-2053 ; Charles Bellet, *La question de Cilicie : discours prononcé le 24 décembre 1920 à la Chambre des députés. Extrait du Journal officiel annoté et suivi d’une Notice sur la Cilicie par M. S. David Beg*, Paris : Imprimerie H. Turabian, 1921. Mélik Serge David-Beg has translated in 1920 the book of Aram Andonian and Hagop Turabian has published it. Both David-Beg and Turabian are Hunchaks and have the same address, boulevard Raspail: Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 13 avril 1915, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13070.

The statements are largely shared in the press.<sup>1086</sup> During the hearing, Aristide Briand presents the wish that the Sèvres treaty be changed. The reactions, including those of President of Ministers' Council Georges Leygues, prove it is "the unanimous feeling" of the audience.<sup>1087</sup>

Perhaps encouraged by this intervention and the reactions, Gouraud is more explicit in his wish to find a deal with Kemal (Atatürk) when he speaks in front of senators, in December. He argues that "the only way to diminish" the number of French soldiers in the Near East (what the Parliament wishes) is to "make with Turkey a peace it could accept, a peace that would not crazily clash the national feeling." A first step has been to stop the "Armenian policy," because "the Armenians are a clever people" but "extremely stirring" and "very fond of secret societies." The President of the Foreign Affairs committee, Justin de Selves (1848-1934), comments in affirming that the committee he chairs is "unanimous to wish" the peace General Gouraud wants. President of Ministers' Council Leygues confirms: The Sèvres treaty has to be "modified," at least in giving back İzmir to the Turks.<sup>1088</sup> Once again, these statements are widely spread in the press,<sup>1089</sup> and on the other side, Frédéric Macler (1869-1938), professor of Armenian studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies and one of the few remaining French supporters of Armenian nationalism has to be published by a Francophone

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<sup>1086</sup> « La situation et le rôle de la France en Syrie », *Le Matin*, 21 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Notre situation dans le Levant — L'impressionnant exposé du général Gouraud », *Le Petit Parisien*, 21 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Il faut réviser le traité imposé à la Turquie et maintenir nos forces en Syrie », *L'Œuvre*, 21 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; « La France en Orient — Un exposé du général Gouraud », *Journal des débats*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Louis Bresse, « L'action française en Orient », *Le Rappel*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Bernard Guinaudeau, « Le problème oriental », *Le Radical*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1. I cite here only the newspapers mentioning the Armenian issue.

<sup>1087</sup> « Une bonne paix avec les Turcs », *L'Intransigeant*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1088</sup> Commission des Finances et des Affaires étrangères réunies, 8 décembre 1920, pp. 21, 33, 36 and 45, Archives du Sénat, 69 S 268.

<sup>1089</sup> « M. Georges Leygues et le général Gouraud entendus par les commissions sénatoriales des Affaires étrangères et des Finances sur notre action en Syrie et en Cilicie », *Le Petit Parisien*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Devant les commissions sénatoriales — la France en Orient », *Le Matin*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Au Sénat — M. Leygues et le général Gouraud entendus au sujet des crédits pour la Syrie et la Cilicie », *L'Œuvre*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Notre politique extérieure — Que fait la France en Orient ? », *La Lanterne*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « M. Leygues et le général Gouraud entendus par les commissions du Sénat », *Le Rappel*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Notre politique en Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « À la commission des Affaires étrangères — Le général Gouraud a préconisé l'entente avec Mustafa Kémal et la Turquie », *L'Action française*, 9 décembre 1920, p. 3 ; « Le Sénat — La France en Orient », *Le Temps*, 10 décembre 1920, p. 2 ; « La question d'Orient », *L'Information*, 11 décembre 1920, p. 2. Also see « Les dangers militaires de la question d'Orient », *La Liberté*, 28 décembre 1920, p. 1.

magazine of Athens to defend an Armenian Cilicia, finding nothing in Paris.<sup>1090</sup> Less officially, but not less remarkably, by December 1920, the French military of the Ottoman capital city begins to provide ammunitions to the Kemalists.<sup>1091</sup>

As a result of all that, the most lucid proponents of the Armenian cause in Çukurora start a change of side. In particular, the leaders of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of Adana begins, in autumn 1920, a rapprochement with the Turks. The officer who alerts his hierarchy on this fact concludes that this change has nothing to do with the missionary work: "It merely dissimulates their will to supplant, in Cilicia, the French influence."<sup>1092</sup>

Correspondingly, Archbishop Kevork Arslanian, "the soul of the Hunchak party" until now, reaches the conclusion that it is time to give up: The Armenian nationalists did all what they could to create an Armenian Cilicia, but all what they obtained was the suppression of the Armenian Legion, summary hangings, martial-court sentences and deportations of leaders. For the most extremist elements of the Hunchak, and for the ARF as well, this conclusion is a betrayal and a group of Dashnaks and of the most extremist Hunchaks (around 30 men) try to kill Arslanian with the key of his own church, on October 24. The French intervene, alarmed by the cries and by witnesses. Suspects are arrested, witnesses recognize them but, fearing reprisals, Arslanian is tempted to leave Cilicia and to go to Istanbul instead of waiting for a trial. Glad to see the departure of a former troublemaker they could not expel until now because of his high religious position, the French administration offers him all the facilities to leave, successfully pushes him to do so and even misleads the High Commission in Istanbul, presenting him as a friend of the French cause.<sup>1093</sup>

The attempt to assassinate Arslanian is not isolated. Indeed, an "Armenian organization" specialized in assassinations of Turks denouncing the crimes of the Armenian Legion and

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<sup>1090</sup> Frédéric Macler, « La Cilicie, porte maritime de l'Arménie », *L'Acropole*, novembre 1920, pp. 226-234.

<sup>1091</sup> Robert Zeider, *The Tricolor over...*, p. 268.

<sup>1092</sup> Capitaine Garcin, Renseignements, 27 novembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/156. The missionary leadership is not yet on this line: See the letter of James Barton to George Montgomery, 9 November 1920, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 1.

<sup>1093</sup> Tommy Martin, Renseignements, n° 398, 13 octobre 1920 ; Rapport du contrôleur général de la police, 24 octobre 1920 ; Lettre du contrôleur général de la police au commandant Romieu, 5 novembre 1920 ; Lettre du général Dufieux au haut-commissaire à Istanbul, 19 février 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/222 ; Note pour M. le capitaine chargé du contrôle de la ville d'Adana, 13 janvier 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

Armenian gendarmes, has been established as early as February 1920.<sup>1094</sup> In autumn of the same year, a “black Armenian gang” decides to assassinate General Dufieux and General Gouraud; then, in January 1921, they add Commander Hassler on their list.<sup>1095</sup> The unpublished documents found on this affair are not clear on the political affiliation of this “black gang” but in his diary, Paul Bernard affirms that this is the same group, namely a joint initiative of the ARF and of the most extremist members of the Hunchaks, which is behind the attempt to kill Arslanian.<sup>1096</sup> Yet, the year 1920 is also the beginning of the assassinations by Nemesis, the terrorist group established by the ARF in 1919, to murder loyal Armenians, former Ottoman ministers and former Azerbaijani ministers.<sup>1097</sup> Coincidence or not, in December 1919, Aram Turabian threatens to death the “international financiers” supposed to be behind the pro-Turkish press articles in France.<sup>1098</sup> Regardless, even the most detailed existing studies on this terrorist campaign never mention the attempt to kill Arslanian or the plot to assassinate Generals Dufieux and Gouraud.<sup>1099</sup> Even more inexcusably, Vahé Tachjian, who has not worked at the MFA’s archives in La Courneuve but who can hardly have missed the letter of Dufieux to Brémond in the late’s personal archives, avoids any reference to this project of assassinations.

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<sup>1094</sup> Le lieutenant Arrighi de Casanova, adjoint au gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 25 février 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/151.

<sup>1095</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, communiqué au ministère de la Guerre, 9 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 17784 ; Lettre du général Dufieux au colonel Brémond, 16 janvier 1921, p. 9, AN, 594 AP 2.

<sup>1096</sup> Paul Bernard, *Six mois en...*, pp. 109-110.

<sup>1097</sup> Eyal Ginio, “Debating the Nation in Court: The Torlakian Trial”, *Armenian Review*, LV/1-2, Fall-Winter 2015, pp. 1-16; Heath Lowry, “Armenian Terrorism: Threads of Continuity,” in *International Terrorism and the Drug Connection*, Ankara: Ankara University Press, 1984, pp. 71-78; Arshavir Shiragian, *The Legacy. Memoirs of an Armenian Patriot*, Boston: Hairenik Press, 1976.

<sup>1098</sup> Aram Turabian, « La justice et le crime aux prises », *Aiguillon*, 15 décembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>1099</sup> Jacques Derogy, *Opération Némésis*, Paris: Hachette, 2015; Eric Bogosian, *Operation Nemesis*, New York: Little, Brown & C°, 2015; Christopher Gunn, “Getting Away With Murder. Soghomon Tehlirian, ASALA and the Justice Commandos, 1921-1984,” in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016, pp. 896-917; Marian Nesrobian MacCurdy, *Sacred Justice: The Voices and Legacy of the Armenian Operation Nemesis*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2015. Shiragian’s Memoirs are Francophobic (p. 133) but silent, too.

### 4.3. France and the collapse of the Republic of Armenia

#### 4.3.1. *An increasing distrust (spring-summer 1920)*

This is not until January 1920 that the Republic of Armenia is recognized by the Entente, one week after Georgia and Azerbaijan. This is largely due to the incapacity of the Dashnak government to choose an alliance and to keep it (support for Soviet Russia in 1918-1919, for Denikin in 1919, interest for an American mandate, but only as a second choice after Denikin) described in the previous chapter, but also to the incapacity of Boghos Nubar and Avetis Aharonian to present a credible case during the year 1919.<sup>1100</sup>

Unlike the Armenian nationalists' ambitions against Turkey, the arrival of Alexandre Millerand in power is an opportunity for the Republic of Armenia—but an opportunity missed for the reasons that now shall be seen. Indeed, Millerand immediately ends the policy of Clemenceau toward the “one and indivisible Russia” wished by Denikin and, on the contrary, shows his interest for the Republics of the Caucasus. Damien de Martel (1878-1940), previously High Commissioner in Vladivostok (1918-1920) is sent in Tbilissi as High Commissioner for the Caucasus, in February 1920, with the aim to reinforce the French presence, until that limited to a small military mission—a situation deplored by the French big business.<sup>1101</sup> The instructions received by de Martel are clear: To promote the French economic interests, particularly as far as oil and manganese are concerned; and politically, to favor all what could be bring the Republics of the Caucasus together, a “confederation” being preferred.<sup>1102</sup> His line is simple: All the Caucasian separatists have to be helped against Soviet Russia: Georgians, Azerbaijanis, Muslims of North Caucasus—and Armenians as well, at the condition to be efficient.<sup>1103</sup> Yet, both de Martel and his hierarchy in Paris are more and more convinced, month after month, that the Dashnak government is not efficient.

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<sup>1100</sup> Jean-Pierre Alem, *L'Arménie*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1959, p. 69.

<sup>1101</sup> Note pour le ministre, 29 janvier 1920 ; Rapport de M. Max Lesourd, fondé de pouvoirs de la Société anonyme de Lille, Bonnières et Colombes, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1919 ; Extrait d'un rapport d'un correspondant de l'Office français pour la Russie, 15 décembre 1919, CADN, 3AE/1.

<sup>1102</sup> Alexandre Millerand, Instructions pour M. de Martel, commissaire de la République au Caucase, 12 février 1920, CADN, 3AE/1.

<sup>1103</sup> Télégramme de Damien de Martel au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 28 avril 1920 ; Id., 11 juillet 1920 ; M. Damien de Martel, haut-commissaire français au Caucase, à M. Millerand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 16 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.



On 6 April 1920, Aharonian and Nubar explain to the director of political affairs of the MFA, Philippe Berthelot,<sup>1104</sup> that the budget of Armenia currently represents £ 670,000 for the expenses, and between 170,000 and 200,000 for the revenues. They also present a project of budget with £ 2,040,000 for the expenses (without counting the payment of the debts) and £ 900,000 for the revenues; the public debt after eight years is estimated to be £ 10,237,402. To justify such extreme demands for a landlocked and poor country, Aharonian and Nubar give the examples of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. It seems that they do not realize that Greece, as a result of a financial policy<sup>1105</sup> without parallel, except precisely the short-lived Republic of Armenia, has went bankrupt three times since the declaration of independence of 1822 (1826, 1843 and 1893) and betrayed France and the UK in 1854 (during the Crimean war), that Bulgaria has joined the Triple-Alliance in 1915 and is, as a result, unpopular in France, and that Serbia has been crushed by the Triple-Alliance at the end of 1915. Five days earlier, a memorandum of the League of Nations had been sent to Paris, concluding that, during the first years, “the former Russian provinces” (the existing Republic of Armenia) will produce little, and the Anatolian provinces supposed to be annexed to Armenia will produce nothing. But the author does not bother himself about the source of money requested by such a situation.<sup>1106</sup> Quite logically, the repeated demands for a loan introduced at the Paris stock exchange are rejected.<sup>1107</sup>

The absence of financial credibility of the Armenian Republic is in itself enough to explain these refusals, but it may be added that in December 1919, the Supreme Council has rejected the appeal of the Armenian and Greek Patriarchates to advance funds for their communities.<sup>1108</sup> This is an additional proof that the repeated demands of loan are due to an absence of state tradition and even of elementary lucidity. Indeed, as Hovannes

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<sup>1104</sup> Avétis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar, *Projet d'évaluation des recettes et dépenses du futur État arménien*, 6 avril 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1105</sup> Edmond About, *La Grèce contemporaine*, Paris: Hachette, 1863, pp. 257-290.

<sup>1106</sup> *Protection de l'État arménien (Mémoire présenté par le secrétaire général)*, 29 mars 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1107</sup> Le ministre des Finances à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 13 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674 ; Note pour M. le président du Conseil, 5 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1108</sup> Robert Graves, *Storm Centres in the Near East. Personal Memories, 1879-1929*, London: Hutchinson & C°, 1933, p. 328.

Katchaznoui observes, “the A.R.F. is a people’s mass strong in instinct but weak in comprehension.”<sup>1109</sup>

Meanwhile, the Millerand cabinet shows his interest for Azerbaijan, in a context of difficult negotiations with the British regarding Mossul (the new cabinet tries to repair the error committed by Clemenceau in December 1918). The cabinet concludes (endorsing the report of Captain Pivier, in mission in the Caucasus, on 25 September 1919) that an independent Azerbaijan protected by France would be a choice “of the highest importance,” because of its own resources but also because it could open the way to Central Asia and its oil fields, not exploited until now.<sup>1110</sup> The country is ruled by “men having the sense of realities.”<sup>1111</sup> But it is invaded too quickly to leave the necessary time to the new cabinet to do anything sufficient. After the fall of Azerbaijan in April 1920, it is clear that the Soviet Russia has the intent to invade the rest of the south Caucasus, as proves the (failed) attempt of Communist insurrection in Yerevan in May of the same year.<sup>1112</sup>

Yet, the main reason why Azerbaijan is invaded so rapidly, aside the importance of this country for Soviet Russia (oil and manganese<sup>1113</sup>), is the fact that Armenia has constantly refused any unified Caucasian front against Soviet Russia and, on the contrary, has given the priority to the fight against Azerbaijan (regarding Karabakh and Nahçivan in particular) as well as to the claims against Turkey, and the Quai d’Orsay knows it.<sup>1114</sup> An article of the unofficial daily *Le Temps* may be a consequence of this knowledge. Indeed, the evening’s

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<sup>1109</sup> Hovannes Katchaznoui, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation Has Nothing to Do Anymore*, New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955, p. 5.

<sup>1110</sup> Le sous-secrétaire d’État des Mines et des Forces hydrauliques à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 2 avril 1920, AMAE, Russie-Caucase 639.

<sup>1111</sup> Télégramme du commandant de Nonancourt au ministère de la Guerre, 23 mars 1920, AMAE, Russie-Caucase 638.

<sup>1112</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L’Arménie, l’Azerbaïdjan et...*, pp. 105-113.

<sup>1113</sup> Ibid., pp. 75-76 ; Vincent Monteil, *Les Musulmans soviétiques*, Paris: Le Seuil, 1982, p. 39 ; Société minerais & métaux, Note pour M. le haut-commissaire de la République française au Caucase, 21 octobre 1920, AMAE, 327 PA-AP 10.

<sup>1114</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L’Arménie, l’Azerbaïdjan et...*, pp. 85-86; Audrey Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks. Power and Identity under Russian Rule*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1992, pp. 96-105; Tadeusz Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920. The Shaping of National Identity in a Muslim Community*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 153; Copie d’un télégramme de Bakou au commandant de Nonancourt, chef de la mission militaire française, 30 mars 1920, AMAE, Russie-Caucase, 638; Le gérant du vice-consulat de France à Tauris, à Son Excellence M. Millerand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 29 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

newspaper reports about the assassination of Fatali Khan Khoyski (former Prime minister of Azerbaijan) and Hasan Agayev (former vice-president of the Parliament of Azerbaijan) by the ARF, in Georgia, and explicitly says that the assassins, arrested by the Georgian police, belong to the party in power in Armenia. The article concludes that these crimes only help the Bolsheviks of Baku, in contributing to “the suppression of those who fight the bolshevization of the Caucasus.”<sup>1115</sup>

Another counter-productive action of the Dashnak government of Yerevan is the practice of ethnic cleansing. The first to react are the British. After a a bitter exchange of letters with Aharonian in March 1920,<sup>1116</sup> Lord George Curzon (1859-1925), Foreign Secretary, states to him, during a meeting in April 1920, without being challenged on the merits:

Your three chiefs, Dro, Harnazasp and Kulkhandanian are the ringleaders of the bands which have destroyed Tartar [namely Azeri] villages and have staged massacres in Zangezour, Surrnalu, Etchmiadzin, and Zangibasar. This is intolerable. Look—and here he pointed to a file of official documents on the table—look at this, here in December [1919] are the reports of the last few months concerning ruined Tartar villages which my representative Wardrop has sent me.

Lord Curzon concludes:

Your interests demand that you be peaceful otherwise we cannot help you, we cannot supply you arms and ammunition because you will be using them against the Tartars [Azerbaijanis].<sup>1117</sup>

The French reactions follow three months later. Indeed, in summer 1920, the Armenian government ask for weapons and military support to occupy eastern Anatolia. Requested to suggest an answer, Damien de Martel does not say yes or no by his letter dated 20 July 1920, but presents a very critical appreciation of the Dashnak cabinet, especially regarding the ethnic cleansing against the Azeris. De Martel explicitly refers to the physical elimination of 40,000 “Tatars” in the south of Erevan in June 1920, including 4,000 killed (without sparing women and children) and 36,000 expelled “by cannon shots” to Turkey. The high commissioner finishes by these self-explanatory words: “these are not always ‘the same ones

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<sup>1115</sup> « Les Républiques du Caucase — Les assassinats politiques à Tiflis », *Le Temps*, 18 septembre 1920, p. 2.

<sup>1116</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey's Struggle for...*, p. 107.

<sup>1117</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary,” *Armenian Review*, XVI-3, Autumn 1963, pp. 52-53.

who are massacred.”<sup>1118</sup> De Martel’s case has a supporter with Colonel Bertren, acting chief of the French military mission in the Caucasus during winter 1919-1920, who remembers having seen “the Armenians at work in Baku, when, allied to the Bolsheviks, they massacred the Muslims” in March 1918 and considers that “they are able of the same atrocities” than the Turkics of the Caucasus but “are less forgivable, because they are more educated.” Colonel Bertren also deplores that “the Armenians [...] imagine that all of Europe is at their service” and that “there is no patriotism among them.”<sup>1119</sup>

Unimpressed by the bad image these crimes gives in Paris and London, or by the protest of the Social-Revolutionary Party of Armenia (opposition)<sup>1120</sup> Armenian Minister of Interior Ruben Ter-Minassian implements what he calls himself “a ferocious plan” to accelerate the physical elimination of the Azeris.<sup>1121</sup> Minister of War Drastamat “Dro” Kanayan is another key actor of this physical elimination.<sup>1122</sup> As a result, Lieutenant-Colonel Corbel reports about the “massacre, plunder and arson” perpetrated by the Armenian forces in Charour and Nahçivan, for “a systematic cleansing” of the “Tatar [Azeri] element” who is until now “preponderant.”<sup>1123</sup> De Martel confirms, particularly about the expulsion of “all the Tatar [Azeri] population” of Charour.<sup>1124</sup> Even more remarkably, *Le Temps* publishes an information from Tbilissi (almost certainly from the high commission) about the expulsions and

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<sup>1118</sup> M. de Martel, haut-commissaire français au Caucase, à M. Millerand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 20 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1119</sup> Le colonel Bertren, chef par intérim de la Mission française à Batoum, à M. le haut-commissaire de France à Constantinople — Compte-rendu des évènements politiques du Caucase, 12 décembre 1919, CADN, 36 PO/1/3.

<sup>1120</sup> Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile. The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995, p. 216.

<sup>1121</sup> Anahide Ter-Minassian, *La République d'Arménie : 1918-1920*, Bruxelles : Complexe, 2006, pp. 216-217.

<sup>1122</sup> Robert Steed Dunn, *World Alive. A Personal Story*, New York: Crown Publishers, 1956, pp. 347-362. On Dunn and his treatment in the Armenian nationalist historiography: Heath Lowy, “Richard G. Hovannisian on Lieutenant Robert Steed Dunn,” *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, V, 1985, pp. 209-252.

<sup>1123</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Corbel, Télégramme chiffré, 2 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1124</sup> Télégramme de Damien de Martel au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2 août 1920; Id., 12 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

massacres, estimating the number of killed Azeris to represent “several dozens of thousands.”<sup>1125</sup>

In mid-1920, too, Armenia invades the Turkish district of Olty, as a beginning of conquest of the territories supposed to be acquired as a result of the Wilson arbitration.<sup>1126</sup> This is a part of a “triple movement of strangulation” against Kemalist Turkey, as observes the intelligence service of the Navy (the two other parts being the Armenian attacks in Çukurova and the Greek offensives in Western Anatolia).<sup>1127</sup> It is true that past Prime Minister Alexandre Khatissian tries to negotiate with a representative of the Kemalist movement in July 1920<sup>1128</sup> but the insistence of the Yerevan cabinet and of the delegations in Paris to obtain a boundary that is unacceptable for Ankara makes the conflict inevitable.<sup>1129</sup> The previous negotiations, during the first semester, had failed for the same reasons.<sup>1130</sup> On the contrary, the desire to fight Soviet Russia is weak in Armenia, as reports Damiel de Martel in a letter to the director of political of Affairs of the MFA, on 7 June 1920.<sup>1131</sup> It is true that the rapprochement with the Greek nationalists of the Black Sea region, during the first months of that year, is claimed to be against the Bolsheviks, but the French officers, particularly of the Navy, see it as an attack against the French interests, and at the benefit of British imperialism.<sup>1132</sup>

This combination of massacres, expulsions, political assassinations in Georgia and refusal to give the priority to the fight against Soviet Russia (leading to the fear that weapons could

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<sup>1125</sup> « Les musulmans en Arménie », *Le Temps*, 25 juillet 1920, p. 4. This article, published on 24 July in the afternoon is reproduced the next day: « Les musulmans persécutés en Arménie », *Le Radical*, 25 juillet 1920, p. 3.

<sup>1126</sup> Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi...*, p. 429 ; Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman...*, p. 153.

<sup>1127</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 4 juillet 1920, SHD, 7 N 3211. Also see Stéphane Yerasimos, « La question du Pont-Euxin (1912-1923) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 153, janvier 1989, pp. 28-29.

<sup>1128</sup> Télégramme de Paul Lépissier au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 27 juillet 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1129</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement de la République arménienne*, Athènes : Publications de la F.R.A. Dachnaksoutioun, 1989, pp. 229-241.

<sup>1130</sup> Moustafa Tchokay Oghly, « Entre Arméniens et musulmans », *Orient et Occident*, 15 janvier 1923, pp. 62-71.

<sup>1131</sup> CADN, 3AE/1.

<sup>1132</sup> Télégramme de Constantinople à l'état-major général, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1920 ; Copie d'un télégramme reçu par le ministre de la Marine — Commandant en chef à Marine Paris, 3 avril 1920, SHD, 7 N 3119, dossier 8.

eventually arrive in the hands of the Bolsheviks), added to inability to pay in time,<sup>1133</sup> causes a late delivery of British weapons (in August only) and the failure of the projects to sale French weapons.<sup>1134</sup> Instead of correcting what should be corrected to obtain a concrete support, Yerevan, without coordination with Paris and London, negotiates in July<sup>1135</sup> and signs on 10 August (the day of the Sèvres treaty) an agreement with Moscow. Without surprise, Damien de Martel, considers this agreement to be a “defection”<sup>1136</sup> and warns the Dashnak government that “any betrayal from the Armenian government toward the Allied governments would mean the fall of the country, and we would not tolerate that the Armenian question would be settled by the Bolsheviks only.”<sup>1137</sup> The British representative in Tbilisi is equally “furious.”<sup>1138</sup> Yet, the Armenian nationalists know, at least since the rejection of the mandate scheme by the American Senate and the absence of reply from the Supreme Council to the demand for an intervention of behalf of Armenia, in spring<sup>1139</sup> that they have no military intervention to expect. They receive a confirmation in August, when the French government explains that Yerevan must nurture “no hope” for an occupation of the Erzurum-Trabzon line.<sup>1140</sup>

In short, Yerevan is unable to understand that “the signing of the treaty of Sèvres caused an immense revulsion of feeling in Turkey against the regime that had accepted it,”<sup>1141</sup> to see

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<sup>1133</sup> Télégramme de la part du président de la Délégation arménienne, Avétis Aharonian, pour le président du Conseil, Ohandjanian, 9 août 1920 ; Le lieutenant-colonel Corbel, chef de la Mission militaire française au Caucase, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 18 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1134</sup> Levon Marashlian, “The London and San Remo Conferences and the Armenian Settlement: the Belated Decisions February-April, 1920. Part II,” *Armenian Review*, XXX-4, Winter 1977, pp. 406 and 411. In this well-documented article, Mr. Marashlian deliberately omits the issue of the massacres and expulsions of Azeris.

<sup>1135</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 18 juillet 1920, n° 2279, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1136</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, volume IV, pp. 95-97 (quote p. 97).

<sup>1137</sup> Télégramme de Damien de Martel au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 12 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1138</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-2, p. 1477.

<sup>1139</sup> Gabiel Korganoff (Gorganian), “From Brest-Litovsk to Lausanne: The Memoirs of General Gorganian,” *Armenian Review*, XIX-2/114, summer 1976, p. 121.

<sup>1140</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au haut-commissaire français à Tiflis, 11 août 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1141</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 252. Similar view in Commandant Roger Labonne, Situation politique en Asie mineure, 25 juin 1920,

that the signators “really represented only the unfortunate Sultan and an infinite minority of his nominal subjects,” a cabinet who “had neither the wish nor the power to give lasting effect.”<sup>1142</sup> Avetis Aharonian does not understand better: He writes in his diary, on 10 August 1920, that “This is the happiest day of my life. My struggle, my protest, my sufferings and hopes of thirty years were crowned with a glorious success.”<sup>1143</sup> One more time, the absence of state traditions, the irrational belief in a Western intervention and, above all, the racism toward the Turkics act against the interest of the Armenian Republic itself. That having been said, the International Phil-Armenian League (*Ligue internationale philarménienne*), formally established in Geneva in September 1920, is not more lucid than those she pretends to defend. As the main powers have refused a mandate, the League is working for an intervention of the League of Nations. The idea that the absence of any agreement with Ankara shall lead to a war with Kemalist Turkey and a complete defeat of Armenian does not seem to touch their mind.<sup>1144</sup> Even more strikingly, in July 1920, David Lloyd George, who has not the extenuating circumstance to be not experienced, exults: “Turkey is no more.”<sup>1145</sup>

#### 4.3.2. A predicted defeat (Autumn 1920-July 1921)

Arguing that the ultimatum of July 1920 has been left unanswered and that, on the contrary, the ethnic cleansing against the Muslims in Armenia as well as the territorial claims against Turkey continues, including by a military offensive, the Kemalist army attacks the Republic of

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pp. 3-4, SHD, 7 N 3210, dossier 2, sous-dossier 1 ; and Harold Armstrong, *Turkey in Travail: The Birth of a New Nation*, London: John Lane, 1925, pp. 118-119.

<sup>1142</sup> Robert Graves, *Storm Centres in...*, p. 331.

<sup>1143</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary. Part VI,” *Armenian Review*, XVI-1, Spring 1964, p. 64.

<sup>1144</sup> Le consul gérant le consulat général de France à Genève à Son Excellence M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 21 septembre 1920, AMAE, P 16674 ; « Pour la République arménienne », *Journal de Genève*, 14 septembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1145</sup> David Fromkin, *A Peace to end All Peace*, New York: Owl Books, 2001, p. 431. With the safety of a man writing sixteen years after the collapse of his dreams, Lloyd George affirms in his Memoirs: “The independent Armenian State was a hopeless project from the moment America refused to undertake the responsibility of protecting it.” (*The Truth about the Peace Treaties*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1938, volume II, p. 1342). Also see Ghalib Kemaly Bey (Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu), *Assassinat d'un peuple*, Roma: Imprimerie Riccardo Garroni, 1921, p. 19.

Armenia on 24 September.<sup>1146</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian calls the Armenian offensive of 24 September “small” but admits the existence of previous, local attacks against Turkey, in August and early September, and emphasizes that the Armenian intelligence as well as the Armenian general staff completely underestimate the strength of the Turkish army, at least in the east.<sup>1147</sup> According to the French Navy’s Intelligence Service, the Turkish offensive seems to be a reaction of the Greeco-Armenian policy, namely to the attempt to strangulate Turkey, to sabotage the policy of General Gouraud in Çukurova and the action of the French and Italian governments at the conferences taking place in Western Europe.<sup>1148</sup> The charge of massacres of Azeris by Armenians, the service continues, is substantiated, as they have been “seen by reliable Europeans.”<sup>1149</sup> The appreciation of Hovannes Katchaznoui is not contradictory with the previously cited sources:

“Despite these hypotheses there remains an irrefutable fact. That we had not done all that was necessary for us to have done to evade war. We ought to have used peaceful language with the Turks whether we succeeded or not, and we did not do it. [...] With the carelessness of inexperienced and ignorant men we did not know what forces Turkey had mustered on our frontiers. When the skirmishes had started the Turks proposed that we meet and confer. We did not do so and defied them.”<sup>1150</sup>

Right after the first major Turkish operations, the Navy’s Intelligence Service firmly recommends to refuse any help to Armenia, a country doomed to fail because of the ineptness of its leaders and because of its more than exaggerated territorial claims. The right way, the service argues, is to exploit the old Turkish-Russian rivalry, only Kemalist Turkey being a credible wall against an expansion of Communism in the Middle East and eastern

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<sup>1146</sup> Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi...*, pp. 429-430 ; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-2, pp. 1487-1488.

<sup>1147</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, pp. 184-192.

<sup>1148</sup> S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, 10 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1149</sup> Henri Rollin, *La situation en Orient au 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1920*, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236. On this charge: Ali Rıza to the Command of the 12<sup>th</sup> Division, 23 October 1920, in Yücel Aktar (ed.), *Documents*, volume III, Ankara, 1986, pp. 237-242; Kazım Karabekir, *Ermeni Mezalimi. 1917-20 Arasında Erzincan’dan Erivan’a*, Ankara: Emre Yayınları, 2000.

<sup>1150</sup> Hovannes Katchaznoui, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, pp. 9-10. Also see Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey’s Struggle for...*, p. 152.



Mediterranea<sup>1151</sup>—and actually, the last revolt of Yozgat is suppressed, like the mutiny of Demirci Mehmet Efe, is December 1920, too, confirming the Kemalist hegemony in Anatolia.<sup>1152</sup>

In this context, Louis Nettement, consul general in Tbilissi, sends, with the firm approval of High Commissioner Damiel de Martel, a report to the Quai d'Orsay, about his observations during his trip in Armenia. The Dashnak government, argues Nettement, is totally incompetent. The minister of Finances “willingly recognizes that he has no special experience in financial or commercial issues.” Worse, the minister of War, Drastamat “Dro” Kanayan (1883-1956), has been appointed mainly because he has committed “a political crime on the Russian governor of Baku,” a common practice for the ARF, “responsible for numerous attacks” in the Russia and Ottoman Empires. The other members of the cabinet, explains Nettement, are “simple people” and their intellectual level borders the one of villages’ municipal counselors in France. As a result, the railroad hardly functions. Most of the villagers, in other words the majority of the population, lives “in half underground shelters.”

In Yerevan, “all is ruin and misery” because in 1918 the “Tartar districts [have been] destroyed by the Armenians,” and the “Armenian quarters” have been “burned by the Tartars or by the Turks” the same year. Yet, two years later, “Nothing seems to have been attempted to repair the damage. Debris piles up in the streets, obstructing the roadway, the pavement is not maintained and the filth around the houses fills the atmosphere.” The comment is self-explanatory: “I think I have never seen such apparent distress in the many Asian countries I have visited.” Actually, “finance, army, industry, commerce are nonexistent.”<sup>1153</sup>

This document shows that the French government has no illusion on the future fate of Armenia. Its conclusions cannot be, at any degree, be attributed to prejudice. In particular, the report is corroborated by the Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: “The Armenian Republic was hardly even a shadow of a government,” as

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<sup>1151</sup> Henri Rollin, La situation en Orient au 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236, citing S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2352, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1920 (not found).

<sup>1152</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, p. 736.

<sup>1153</sup> Louis Nettement, L'Arménie. Notes de voyage, 6 septembre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

“The so-called ministers had never had an atom of administrative experience. They were either incompetent or corrupt and moved by a variety of politics that produced a new cabinet every few weeks. They were all, including the President, simply stunned and helpless in the face of their problems. If anyone wants material for a treatise on human woe, intrigue, war, massacre, incompetence and dishonesty, he can find ample source material in the mass of reports from our American officers.”<sup>1154</sup>

Similarly, the special envoy of *Le Gaulois* in Turkey argues that, in Armenia, there is “no industry, an arrierated agriculture and no element of administration,” as except one or two, the leaders are “school teachers” barely able to rule a big village. He justifies his affirmations as follows: “These informations have been given to me by Armenians, and this is more than symptomatic: The clever Armenians do not believe in Armenia.” The journalist also confirm, having interviewed American witnesses, that the Turkish invasion has been provoked by massacres and arsons in Muslim villages by Armenians.<sup>1155</sup> Such sources prove that the chauvinist interpretation of the Armenian Republic (1918-1920) as evidence of the capacity of the ARF to rule a country is the opposite of the truth.<sup>1156</sup> They also prove that the Armenian nationalist historiography, which admits a series of errors but nothing catastrophic until October 1920, underestimates the seriousness of the situation at the eve of the Turkish-Armenian war, as well as the causes of the said situation.<sup>1157</sup>

Actually, after only one month, and in spite of the British weapons arrived in August, the Armenian army suffers a crushing defeat and Kars is captured without fight by the men of Kazım Karabekir. A myth, persisting until today is the “massacre” of Armenians in Kars (when

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<sup>1154</sup> Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover*, volume I, *Years of Adventure, 1874-1920*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951, p. 387.

<sup>1155</sup> Georges Labourel, « Impressions de Turquie — Le vrai péril », *Le Gaulois*, 20 décembre 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1156</sup> Délégation de la République arménienne à la conférence de la paix, *La République arménienne*, Paris : Imprimerie de Veradzenount, 1920 ; Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L'Heure de l'Arménie*, Geneva : Société générale d'imprimerie, 1922, p. 23 ; Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de...*, volume II, p. 479 ; Simon Vratzian, *Armenia and the Armenian Question*, Boston: Hairenik, 1943, pp. 51-52.

<sup>1157</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, volume IV, cites *Nettement* pp. 98-99, 206 and 267, but not his report on the situation in Armenia. Volume II, pp. 49-50, he rightfully cites Hoover's *Memoirs* (the page cited here) but only for Hoover's denunciation of the corruption in the Near East Relief. Claire Mouradian, *L'Arménie*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009, pp. 62-63 avoids any reference to a source like *Nettement* and Hoover but, considering her scope of research, surely knows better.

a figure is given, it is 20,000).<sup>1158</sup> In fact, NER official Edward Fox tells a French representative on “the perfect order, the organization and the conduct of the Turks” in Kars and Alexandropol (Gümrü in Turkish, Gyumri in Armenian) and even Alexandre Khatissian expresses his satisfaction about the “disciplined” Turkish army.<sup>1159</sup> The U.S. archives prove that Fox both in written reports and in conversations with Admiral Mark Bristol, confirms the absence of massacre (except a handful of executed war criminals and 50 villagers, after Turkish soldiers had been attacked). Other American relief workers such as George White, report the same.<sup>1160</sup> The French Navy’s Intelligence Service, for its part, notes that “the Armenian runaways themselves admit the Turkish troops did not commit atrocities this time” and that “our information, from good French source, confirm on this point those of the Americans present on place, in Kars in particular.”<sup>1161</sup> Similarly, the military attaché in London receives from the War Office data confirming the informations of Antoine Poidebard about “the excellent attitude of the Kemalist troops” in Kars and Gümrü/Gyumri.<sup>1162</sup> In sum, the French government, not unlike the U.S. one, is well-informed about the actual behavior of the Turkish forces in Kars.

Another myth is the explanation of the Armenia’s defeat by the Turkish-Bolshevik alliance.<sup>1163</sup> In reality, the relations between Ankara and Moscow become uneasy during the weeks

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<sup>1158</sup> Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris...*, p. 329; Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to Caucasus*, Providence: Berghahn Books, 2004, p. 372, n. 10; Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de...*, volume II, p. 482; Yves Ternon, « Rapport sur le génocide des Arméniens de l’Empire ottoman », in *Le Crime de silence*, Paris: Flammarion, 1984, p. 193 (the paper does not contain a single source: this is Mr. Ternon’s conception of history); Christopher Walker, *Armenia. The Survival of a Nation*, London-New York: Routledge, 1990, pp. 309-312. To be fair, it has to be noted that neither Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of...*, volume IV, nor Claire Mouradian, *L’Arménie...*, p. 64 mention any “massacre” in Kars.

<sup>1159</sup> Antoine Poidebard, *Défaite de l’armée arménienne [1921 ?]* ; Résumé de la conversation entre Khatissian et le colonel Corbel, documents transmis au secrétaire général du ministère des Affaires étrangères le 6 janvier 1921 par Paul Lépissier, délégué à Trabzon du haut-commissaire français à İstanbul, AMAE, P 16675 (also in CADN, 36PO/1/111). For a British source: Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey’s Struggle for...*, p. 168.

<sup>1160</sup> Heath Lowry, “American Observers in Anatolia ca. 1920: The Bristol Papers,” in *Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey (1912-1926)*, Ankara: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1992, pp. 50-70. Interestingly, George White is Turkish-speaking: Admiral Mark Bristol, War Diary, 3 May 1921, LC, Bristol papers, container 2.

<sup>1161</sup> Henri Rollin, La situation en Orient au 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1162</sup> Télégramme chiffré de l’attaché militaire à Londres, 13 décembre 1920, SHD, 7 N 3119, dossier 8.

<sup>1163</sup> Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community...*, pp. 240-243 ; Délégation de la République arménienne, *L’Arménie et la question arménienne. Avant, pendant et depuis la guerre*, Paris: Imprimerie H. Turabian, 1922, pp. 36-38 ; Gaïdz Minassian, « Génocide des Arméniens : le travail

preceding the Turkish offensive against Armenia—in spite of the delivery of gold and weapons by the Bolsheviks—, because of the infiltration of Communist agents in Turkey and even more because of the insistence of Moscow to leave to Armenia a part of eastern Anatolia. Precisely, the Turkish offensive, far from having been coordinated with Moscow, is a way to force both the Dashnaks and the Soviets to accept the Turkish-Armenian boundary wished by the Turkish national movement, namely the line of 1876. The Bolsheviks, ruling a country exhausted by the civil war, having not defeated yet, in September 1920, neither the White forces General Wrangel in Crimea nor the Muslim insurgents in Daghestan (the revolt is suppressed in March 1921 only), and still battling with the Polish army, are less than happy by the Kemalist offensive and do not chose immediately to reply by an invasion of Armenia, preferring, as a first step, to be mediators.<sup>1164</sup>

The French officers of the time, of course, have no access to the Turkish and Soviet documents now available, but they know that the tactical alliance of Moscow and Ankara is no friendship and in particular, that the initial aim of the Kemalist is to establish an Armenia under Turkish protectorate as a buffer state between them and Communism. They report, at least by November 1920, about the tensions between the two partners of this uneasy alliance, regarding the Caucasian boundaries, and particularly the Kemalists' ambition to retake Kars.<sup>1165</sup> Consul Louis Nettement reports about the intent to create a buffer state, after a conversation with Alexandre Khatissian.<sup>1166</sup> Henri Rollin, for the Navy's Intelligence Service, concludes that the Bolsheviks did not dare to intervene in South Caucasus until the

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salutaire des historiens », *Le Monde*, 3 avril 2015 ; Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de...*, pp. 481 and 492 ; Ronald Grigor Suny, *"They Can Live..."*, p. 341 ; Simon Vratzian, *Armenia and the...*, p. 54.

<sup>1164</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan et...*, pp. 125-140 ; W. E. D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields. A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Borders*, London-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1953, pp. 512-527; Paul Dumont, « L'axe Moscou-Ankara. Les relations turco-soviétique de 1919 à 1922 », *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XVIII-3, juillet-septembre 1977, pp. 173-176 ; Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923*, London-Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 225-226 ; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-2, pp. 1478-1487 and 1499-1502 ; Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy, 1918-1923*, London-Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975, pp. 49-54.

<sup>1165</sup> Télégramme du colonel Corbel au ministère de la Guerre, 14 novembre 1920 ; Id., 18 novembre 1920 ; Copie d'un télégramme reçu par le ministre de la Marine, 3 décembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2381, 21 novembre 1920, pp. 15-16 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2405, 31 décembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236 ; Télégramme de l'attaché militaire à Londres, 24 novembre 1920 ; Id., 8 décembre 1920, SHD, 7 N 3119, dossier 8 ; Compte-rendu du renseignements spéciaux n° 77, 14 novembre 1920, SHD, 7 N 3210, dossier 2.

<sup>1166</sup> Télégramme de Louis Nettement au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 29 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675.

conference of San Remo pushed the Kemalists in their arms, and that Ankara now is the only credible challenger of Soviet Russia. He insists on the (not respected) ultimatum of Moscow to the Turkish forces to leave Armenia. Correspondingly, he considers that the electoral victory of King Constantine's supporters in Greece (this King who is the brother-in-law of ex-German emperor Guillaume II and a great friend of Germany) proves how unreliable is this country. Only the "moderate" wing of the Kemalists, he argues, deserves trust and support, at least to restore order and peace, and in the best hypothesis to create difficulties to the Soviets.<sup>1167</sup>

In November, René Viviani, past President of the Ministers' Council (1914-1915) and representative at the League of Nations, makes a compassionate speech regarding the defeat of Armenia and suggests a mediation by Switzerland or the Netherlands, between Ankara and Yerevan, above all because the large majority of the League's assembly supports the entry of Armenia, which means military guarantees, something neither Paris nor himself want. In fact, during the same speech, he opposes Lord Balfour: The British representative tries to prevent any negotiation with Kemal, who would ask for a revision of the Sèvres treaty, and calls him "a bandit;" Viviani refuses this word and insists on the necessity to negotiate with him or his representatives. Then, the British, French and Italian governments oppose, during a conference in London, on 3 December, the entrance, because the Sèvres treaty is not ratified and because the Wilson arbitration (already known, albeit not officially delivered) exceeds what can be guaranteed. They propose a mediation by Spain and Brazil. Indeed, the Swiss government has refused any concrete intervention, and even more any mandate; the U.S. President needs the approval of the Congress, yet it is in holidays. The reason why the Netherlands are not part of the scheme is not provided. Viviani eventually informs Paris, on 6 December that, in spite of the counter-productive form chosen for the joint statement London, he has obtained that the entrance of Armenia be adjourned.<sup>1168</sup> Meanwhile, the

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<sup>1167</sup> Henri Rollin, La situation en Orient au 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1168</sup> Lettre de Maurice Escoffier, secrétaire général de la Délégation française à la Société des nations, 24 novembre 1920 ; Télégramme du ministre de France à Berne, 30 novembre 1920 ; Télégramme du président du Conseil, 2 décembre 1920 ; Télégramme de M. Berhelot, pour M. Gout, 3 décembre 1920 ; Télégramme, de la part de M. Viviani, pour M. Leygues, 4 décembre 1920 ; Télégramme de M. Gout, pour le président du Conseil, 4 décembre 1920 ; Télégramme du président du Conseil à M. Viviani, 5 décembre 1920 ; Télégramme, de la part de M. Viviani, pour M. Leygues, 6 décembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675.

Quai d'Orsay accepts Nihat Reşat, "very francophile," as a go-between to negotiate with Ankara.<sup>1169</sup>

Such a cold-blood program and action has nothing to do with the standard Dashnak accusation of "betrayal"<sup>1170</sup> directed against France, Italy and the UK: Italy, as we saw, has stopped any support to Armenian nationalism by June 1919, so Yerevan cannot claim to be surprised, in 1920; as it has been demonstrated, the reversal of the French policy is largely due to the choice of the ARF, Ramkavar, Reformed Hunchak and (with a different chronology according to the chapters) Hunchak to attack the French interests and to try to impose territorial claims refused by Paris; the British government sends weapons in August 1920, in spite of the ethnic cleansing against Azeris. Such an allegation is nothing but an attempt to distract the attention from the real responsibilities for the collapse of the Armenian Republic. In this regard, it is remarkable that the number of Armenian volunteers having left İzmir for Armenia from the armistice of Moudros to October 1920 is insignificant and that nobody leaves the city as a volunteer after the news of the desperate situation reaches the Aegean city. Even in terms of money, the support from İzmir to the Republic of Armenia (unlike for the Armenian nationalists of Adana at the same time) is negligible.<sup>1171</sup>

The chimerical nature of the Wilson arbitration is even more proved (if any evidence is still needed) by its chronology: The treaty of Sèvres is signed on 10 August, but this is not until mid-October that Wilson officially asks to receive the mission to arbitrate (and obtains it, in a context when the European powers know the arbitration will not be implemented) and the arbitration is officially notified on 6 December, in other words more than three days after the treaty of Gümrü, depriving him to arbitrate anything. Similarly, the reaction of the International Phil-Armenian League is to state that the "only" solution is "to immediately send military and naval forces to repulse the invasion of the Armenian territory and to implement the peace treaty with Turkey,"<sup>1172</sup> proving nothing but that the authors of this

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<sup>1169</sup> Visite de M. Max Choublier et A. Réchid Bey, 30 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 1395. In the third chapter, we saw Choublier, former consul in Salonika, campaigning for reconciliation between France and Turkey.

<sup>1170</sup> James G. Mandalian, *What do the Armenians Want?*, [Boston], Armenian National Committee, 1946, p. 11. Less vituperative, but still wrong: Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement...*, pp. 186 and 198.

<sup>1171</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 16 décembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1172</sup> Édouard Naville et A. de Morsier, Appel de la Ligue philarménienne aux gouvernements alliés, 11 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675. Published: « Pour sauver l'Arménie », *Journal de Genève*, 13

text have no connection with the reality. Actually, the MFA answers only 15 days later, by a laconic notification of delivery.<sup>1173</sup> This is not enough to make this easy observation: “Lloyd George’s and President Wilson’s Armenia vanished into thin air.”<sup>1174</sup> Such an Armenia was doomed to fail. All what could have been saved was independence, in its ethnic boundaries.

In fact, the ARF itself implicitly admits its responsibilities in November 1920 and at the beginning of 1921. Indeed, when it becomes clear, even for the ARF cabinet, that the war is lost, Prime minister Ohanjanian resigns and is succeeded by Simon Vratzian, namely the only ARF leader who has argued in 1920 (even if it is not visible in his 1943 booklet) that a small but independent Armenia is better than a Soviet and anyway small one, and that, in the context of the second semester 1920, only an agreement with the Turks can save the independence of the country. However, it is too late to implement the program of Vratzian and to prevent the Bolshevik invasion.<sup>1175</sup> Then, the Communists use in Armenia same methods than in Azerbaijan, namely a systematic plunder and a reign of terror.<sup>1176</sup>

The exasperation is so strong that the Dashnaks, very unpopular at the beginning of December 1920, find the needed popular support to expel the Soviets from Yerevan in February 1921, and Vratzian is again at the head of the insurrectional cabinet. He obtains from the Kemalists the promise of weapons and ammunitions, and, if the Soviet grievances are accurate, the promise is implemented. It is quite clear that the fate of Armenia, and the policy of France, would have been different if Yerevan had abandoned the dream of the Wilson arbitration and had formed instead an anti-Bolshevik alliance with Kemalist Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, in January 1920. Yet, it is now too late, and if it is quite possible that the Turkish army gives just enough weapons and ammunition to Vratzian to create problems to the Soviets: Ankara cannot sacrifice the Soviet alliance, no matter how uneasy it is, for the small, landlocked Armenia. Georgia is more interesting for Turkey and has more supporters

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novembre 1920, p. 1. Also see Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *Et l’Arménie ? Discours prononcé à Genève, le 19 décembre 1920*, Geneva: Imprimerie Gent, 1921.

<sup>1173</sup> The typed text is not kept, but the manuscript, dated 26 November 1920, is in AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1174</sup> Stephen Bonsal, *Suitors and Suppliants. The Little Nations at Versailles*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946, p. 198.

<sup>1175</sup> Serge Afanasyan, *L’Arménie, l’Azerbaïdjan et...*, pp. 144-145.

<sup>1176</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-158 ; M. Abel Chevalley, haut-commissaire de la République au Caucase, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 décembre 1920, AMAE, 327 PA-AP 10 ; Roger Labonne, « Les pays turcs et les Soviets », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 août 1922, pp. 747-748.

in France. Abel Chevalley (1868-1933), the new French high commissioner in Tbilissi, tries to find a solution keeping the independence of Georgia with the support of the Turks and actually, a project of military intervention is prepared by the Turkish officers but it is eventually abandoned, as the British government continues to support Greece. Only a local clash in Batum happens, in March 1921.<sup>1177</sup>

If the French cabinet cannot convince the British one to reverse the alliance in a joint and prompt decision, the French public opinion is hardly concerned by the collapse of the Dashnak Republic. Among the Parisian dailies, only the *Journal des débats* protests<sup>1178</sup> and Frédéric Macler manages to publish an article in the *Correspondance d'Orient*, but this publication does not change the line of the bulletin as such. On the contrary, in the same issue, the editorial of Saint-Brice affirms that the Sèvres treaty is now “a dead body” and actually “never lived.” Both as far as Greek and Armenian ambitions are concerned, Saint-Brice argues, it was plainly wrong and he criticizes Georges Leygues for having not obtained, in London, an immediate agreement on its revision.<sup>1179</sup> Without regrets, except purely formal ones, *L'Asie française* notes, even before the treaty of 2 December 1920, that the parts of the Sèvres treaty concerning Armenia and “Kurdistan” are already outdated. “As serious, if not even more serious,” *L'Asie française* continues, is the electoral defeat of Venizelos. The “megalomaniac” ambitions of his Panhellenism already were of dubious value before his defeat. Disbarrased from the Armenian threat, Kemal can concentrate his forces against the Greeks and could defeat them, argues the organ of the East-focused colonialists. The treaty could be in ruins, purely and simply.<sup>1180</sup>

More bitinglly, Berthe Georges-Gaulis argues in the elites' weekly *L'Opinion* that the Greek army is mined by the political conflicts, exhausted by the wars and, as a result, unable to enforce the Sèvres treaty. Concerning Armenia, she insists that the territorial claims against

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<sup>1177</sup> Copie d'un télégramme : le commandant en chef au ministère de la Marine, 22 mars 1921, SHD, 7 N 3119, dossier 8 ; Serge Afanasyan, *L'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan et...*, pp. 182-183 ; Paul Dumont, « L'axe Moscou-Ankara... », p. 179 ; Georges Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes...*, pp. 22-23 ; Stéphane Yerasimos, « Caucase : la grande... », pp. 187-191.

<sup>1178</sup> Yves Le Lannou, « La fin de l'Empire ottoman vue par la presse française (1918-1923) », *Turcica*, IX/2-X, 1978, p. 184.

<sup>1179</sup> Saint-Brice, « Allons-nous perdre l'occasion grecque ? » ; Frédéric Marcler, « La situation actuelle de l'Arménie (20 novembre 1920) », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 15 décembre 1920, pp. 377-353.

<sup>1180</sup> Henri Froideveaux, « Les crevasses du traité de Sèvres », *L'Asie française*, novembre 1920, pp. 344-346 (quotation p. 345).



Turkey are not realistic and are dangerous for the Armenians themselves. The best is to leave the solution to bilateral negotiations.<sup>1181</sup> *Le Temps* publishes an editorial calling Sèvres “an illusory peace in Armenia like elsewhere” (barely implicit reference to İzmir and Edirne). In renouncing the treaty, the UK would help France to “dissociate” the “red flag and the green banner,” the mouthpiece of the Quai d’Orsay being aware that the Soviet-Kemalist alliance is uneasy.<sup>1182</sup> Similarly, in *L’Europe nouvelle*, Henri Mylès observes that “all the nationalities” have been taken into account by the Sèvres treaty, “except the Turkish one.” The “objections of those who knew the east” have been neglected. Now, Mylès argues, it is necessary to “show our strength” and to make “legitimate concessions” to Ankara. Not unlike *Le Temps*, he advocates a change of policy in London. Philippe Millet, the editor of the weekly, defends a very similar thesis in the same issue.<sup>1183</sup>

In two op-eds for the mainstream daily *Le Matin*, Henry Franklin-Bouillon, former (1910-1919) and future (1924-1936) deputy of the Parisian suburb, asks for the “immediate” revision of the Sèvres treaty, “to defend our interests in Turkey” and, if it is still possible, to save Georgia and retake the rest of the Caucasus, by an alliance with Ankara.<sup>1184</sup> He defends the same ideas to the President of the Republic Alexandre Millerand, the Foreign Affairs committee of the Chamber of deputies and the Foreign Affairs committee of the Senate: It is necessary to treat with Kemal and the İstanbul government of İzzet Paşa, simultaneously, to discuss the revision of the treaty; the Turkish-Bolshevik alliance is the result of the errors committed by Britain and France; the British cabinet may disagree if France acts as he (Franklin-Bouillon) suggests, but soon or late London will accept the revision; the Italian policy is an example to follow. His views are, to a large extent, supported by Senators Victor

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<sup>1181</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La situation orientale », *L’Opinion*, 4 décembre 1920, pp. 627-628.

<sup>1182</sup> « Le rouge et le vert », *Le Temps*, 2 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1183</sup> Philippe Millet, « Pour l’accord franco-anglais » ; Henri Mylès, « La situation en Asie mineure », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 5 décembre 1920, pp. 1787-1788 and 1796-1797. Full version: Henri Mylès, « Ce qu’il faut faire avec les kémalistes », *L’Information*, 4 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1184</sup> Henry Franklin-Bouillon, « L’intérêt commun des alliés exige une politique nouvelle en Orient », *Le Matin*, 28 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Henry Franklin-Bouillon, « Le Caucase, clef de voûte de l’Orient », *Le Matin*, 18 décembre 1920, p. 1. Similar views in « Lettre de Constantinople », *L’Information*, 18 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Rober-Raynaud, « La France en Orient », *L’Information*, 11 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Commandant Olivier d’Etchegoyen, « Observés de Constantinople, le traité de Sèvres apparaît de plus en plus fragile, et Mustapha Kémal de plus en plus fort », *Le Matin*, 20 décembre 1920, pp. 1-2 ; Henri Froideveaux, « Vers la révision du traité de Sèvres », *L’Asie française*, décembre 1920, pp. 392-394.

Bérard, Maurice Bompard (former ambassador in İstanbul, who calls Sèvres “the opposite of what had to be done”), Paul d’Estournelles de Constant and Lazare Weiler.<sup>1185</sup>

Also at the crossroad of the public opinion and of the state apparatus, *Le Petit Journal*, mainstream daily of conservative nationalism, publishes an interview with “one of our civil servants, who occupies in Turkey a considerable situation.” The name is not given, but considering the risk to be identified by his hierarchy, it is quite likely that he has obtained the permission. Anyway, the civil servant advocates an agreement with Mustafa Kemal, including an Armenia without the Anatolian provinces who have a Turkish majority; a Turkey with İzmir and İstanbul; an internationalized Thrace (which means: Eastern and Western Thrace together). That is the method to save the exceptional position of France in the east, after two years of errors.<sup>1186</sup> Particularier about Armenia, another anonymous civil servant writes an article explaining the crushing defeat of this country by its exaggerated territorial ambitions: Without the Sèvres treaty, the Republic of Armenia had a population made of roughly a half of Muslims, and yet Yerevan still claimed territories mostly inhabited by Turks and other Muslims: “An Armenian Republic” with a Muslim majority was a project doomed to fail.<sup>1187</sup>

Eventually, to understand the importance of the fall of Venizelos, it is necessary to know that, from the Marxists to the Far Right, King Constantin is distrusted and disliked,<sup>1188</sup> even more as during the days and weeks following his electoral defeat, testimonies and documents are published, proving the personal responsibility of King Constantin and his German wife in the murderous ambush that killed French soldiers in Athens on 1 December 1916.<sup>1189</sup> Yet, the

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<sup>1185</sup> Commission des Affaires étrangères, séance du lundi 27 décembre 1920, Archives du Sénat, 69 S 268.

<sup>1186</sup> « La France va-t-elle reprendre sa place en Orient ? », *Le Petit Journal*, 20 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1187</sup> P. C., « La débâcle arménienne et ses causes », *L’Opinion*, 27 novembre 1920, pp. 599-600. The initials are those of Colonel Pierre Chardigny and the text is similar to his reports, but this is not sufficient to affirm that he is the author. That remains, for the moment, a hypothesis.

<sup>1188</sup> Léon Bailby, « Le choix est encore possible », *L’Intransigeant*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Paul Louis, « La crise grecque et l’Orient », *Floréal*, 4 décembre 1920 ; « Diadoque des morts », *Le Gaulois*, 5 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Constantin et la Turquie », *L’Action française*, 14 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Roujon, « Les Alliés et Athènes », *Le Figaro*, 23 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Jean Longnon, « Constantin de Grèce et sa légende », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 25 décembre 1920, pp. 405-416. Even Auguste Gauvain, firmly pro-Greek, writes that Constantin cannot be trusted: Auguste Gauvain, « La défaite de M. Venizelos », *Journal des débats*, 17 novembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1189</sup> Édouard Helsey and Henri Massis, « La trahison de Constantin », *La Revue universelle*, 15 novembre 1920, pp. 399-423 ; 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1920, pp. 562-592 (echoed in Jacques Roujon, « Les Élections grecques — M. Vénizélos est battu », *Le Figaro*, 16 novembre 1920, p. 1 and reprinted as a book as early as 1920) ; « Constantin et la Grèce », *Le Matin*, 19 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; « Le

Greek army is the only guarantee for the Sèvres treaty. In short, the return of the King is “a unique, unexpected occasion” to change the policy (and the treaty) with Turkey radically.<sup>1190</sup> As a center-right deputy of Paris writes in the mainstream daily *Le Journal*, “the betrayal of Greece should bring us closer to Turkey.”<sup>1191</sup> General Edmond Buat, chief of the general staff, writes in his diary that there would be “no big inconvenient” in the annulation of the Sèvres treaty, “as we always had interest in not giving offense to the Turks.”<sup>1192</sup> Actually, in November 1920, the Italian high commission in İstanbul is said to encourage the Sultan to refuse to ratify the Sèvres treaty, arguing it will be rejected by the Italian and French Parliaments.<sup>1193</sup> Regardless, it would be wrong to believe that the public opinion has changed in November 1920 only, or that the articles asking for maintain of the Turks in İstanbul and those opposing the occupation of Çukurova represent specific critiques only. From February to September 1920, when the Sèvres treaty is prepared, written and signed, most of the press opposes it, with the support of a least a significant part of the MFA.

#### 4.4. The public opinion’s view: A sacred union against the Sèvres treaty

##### 4.4.1. A “dead-born treaty”

A question often raised by a research on the Sèvres treaty is: Did the signatories, particularly the French and Italians, actually wanted the implementation of this agreement? An editorial

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gouvernement grec invite Constantin à revenir à Athènes », *Le Matin*, 10 décembre 1920, pp. 1-2 ; Ernest Daudet, « Quelques scènes du drame hellénique (juin-décembre 1916). III —Autour des journées de décembre 1916 », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1921, pp. 148-175. The chronology of the publications of leaked documents on three different platforms suggests a coordination, likely in the Navy’s general staff. Also see Note sur la situation en Grèce, 30 avril 1917, SHD, 6 N 172.

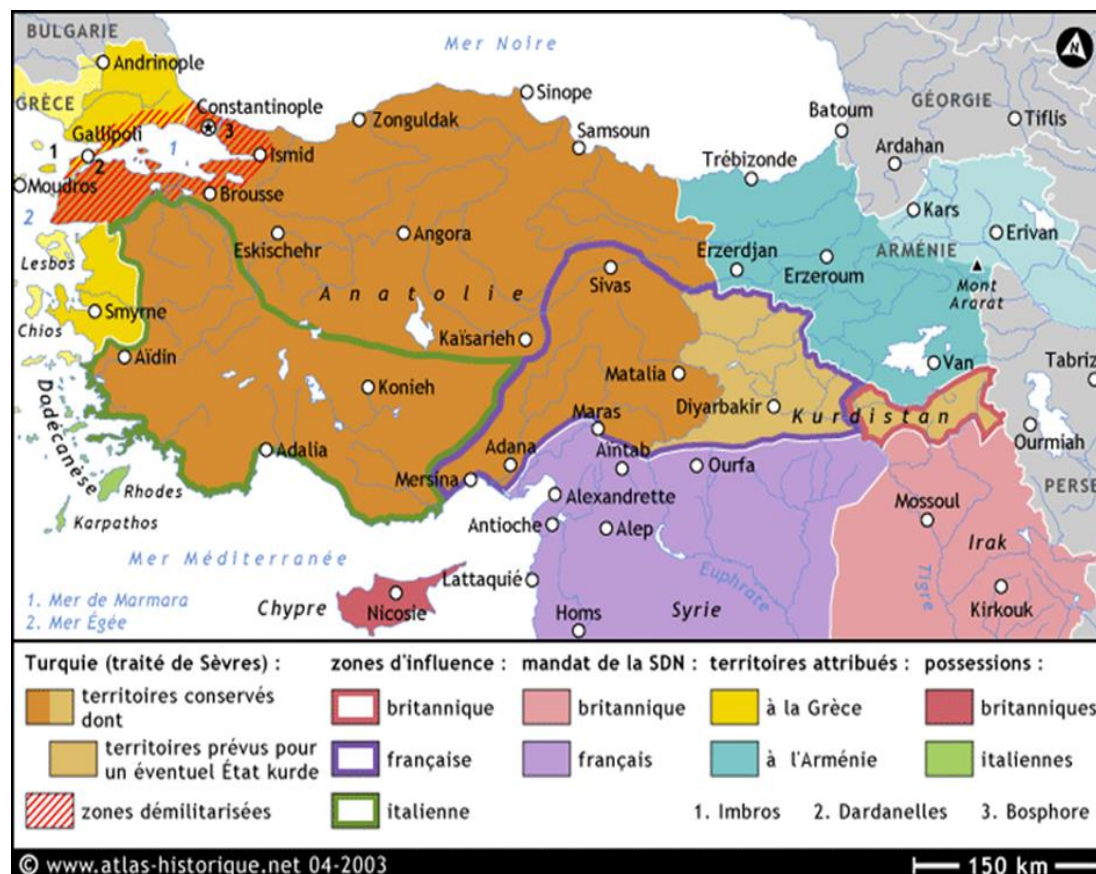
<sup>1190</sup> René d’Aral, « L’Entente et la Grèce — Trop d’hésitations », *Le Gaulois*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1. Similar thesis in « L’aventure grecque », *La Croix*, 18 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Si Constantin revient en Grèce — Il va falloir réviser le traité de Sèvres », *L’Œuvre*, 19 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Rober-Raynaud, « L’échec de M. Vénizélos », *L’Information*, 19 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Gaston Doumergue, « Une occasion à saisir », *Le Rappel*, 23 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; R. Le Cholleur, « La question d’Orient », *La Croix*, 11 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; « À quand la paix de l’Orient ? », *Le Temps*, 13 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1191</sup> Louis Rollin, « La trahison de la Grèce devrait nous rapprocher de la Turquie », *Le Journal*, 3 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1192</sup> Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général...*, p. 945.

<sup>1193</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2381, 21 novembre 1920, p. 2, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

of the unofficial daily *Le Temps* may introduce the response. Indeed, in contrast with the firm line advocated by *Le Temps* just before the treaties with Austria and Hungary,<sup>1194</sup> this daily expresses, in July, its disappointment toward the one that shall be signed at Sèvres: The text is unrealistic and too favorable to British ambitions.<sup>1195</sup> The tone in one article of Berthe Georges-Gaulis (who, as it has been seen, served during the war at the office of French propaganda) also deserves to be noted: Not only she criticizes the draft of treaty adopted in San Remo but calls it “dead-born” and considers it “will not be implemented.”<sup>1196</sup>



Map 5 The Sèvres treaty

Correspondingly, the Quai d’Orsay’s archives contain direct evidence for a hostility to the treaty within the Ministry. In a personal letter to Albert Defrance, the high commissioner in İstanbul, written on 16 March 1920—namely before the San Remo conference and the

<sup>1194</sup> « La paix avec l’Autriche », *Le Temps*, 3 juin 1919, p. 1 ; « Les Alliés et la Hongrie », *Le Temps*, 15 février 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1195</sup> « La réponse des alliés à la Turquie », *Le Temps*, 19 juillet 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1196</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Pourquoi le traité turc ne sera pas appliqué », *L’Opinion*, 22 mai 1920, pp. 561-562. Similar view in Bernard Ginaudeau, « Questions et choses d’Islam — La guerre nouvelle », *Le Radical*, 24 mai 1920, p. 1.

harshening of the draft— Paul Cambon, ambassador in London since 1898 after having served in İstanbul, considers that only those who know nothing about Turkey can believe that such a treaty has any chance to be implemented.<sup>1197</sup> The same month, the same high commissioner officially writes to the Quai d’Orsay that the unanimous opinion of the Entente’s representatives is against the project of treaty, including the attribution of Erzurum to Armenia. The text is too “harsh” to be implemented without considerable difficulties and troubles.<sup>1198</sup> This view is shared by Osmin Laporte, representative of the high commission in İzmir, who wishes a “Turkish Anatolia,” including this city.<sup>1199</sup> Perhaps even more importantly, in a letter to Robert de Caix dated 2 June 1920, general Gouraud concludes that the treaty has to be revised, as “we have the greatest interest to make with Turkey a peace that would not make sinking our legendary friendship.” Gouraud continues his letter in affirming that this friendship can be restored “if we make the necessary sacrifices” (these words are underlined by de Caix). Two days later, in another letter to de Caix, Gouraud insists: The draft of the Sèvres treaty blocks the hope of peace with the Kemalists in Çukurova.<sup>1200</sup> Actually, the Turkey’s Grand National Assembly, opened in Ankara in April, is united only by the Turkish National Pact (a sovereign Turkey in Anatolia, İstanbul and at least eastern Thrace).<sup>1201</sup>

Beside the considerations of realism, traditions and balance of power in and around the MFA, the role of the Parliament, particularly during the weeks preceding the signature, has to be emphasized: Commenting the debates of 26 June about the Turkish treaty, particularly the “much applauded” critiques of Aristide Briand, *La Croix* concludes that there is no majority at the Chamber of deputies to accept the text as it is now.<sup>1202</sup> Indeed, without mentioning the treaty itself, Briand deplores the concessions to Britain, on Mosul and Jerusalem, that

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<sup>1197</sup> AMAE, 56 PA-AP 4. In a letter to his son, written on 26 June 1920, namely after San Remo, Cambon considers that the “stupidity” of the final text “bypasses the allowed limits”: Paul Cambon, *Correspondance*, Paris: Grasset, volume III, 1946, pp. 384-385.

<sup>1198</sup> Télégramme d’Albert Defrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 9 mars 1920, AMAE, P 1441.

<sup>1199</sup> Lettre d’Osmin Laporte à Albert Defrance, 24 février 1920, AMAE, 56 PA-AP 4.

<sup>1200</sup> AMAE, P 11203. Also see Saint-Brice, « L’aventure grecque », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 juillet 1920, p. 7.

<sup>1201</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy, 1918-1923*, London-Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975, pp. 35-39.

<sup>1202</sup> « La journée », *La Croix*, 27 juin 1920, p. 1.

were accepted without any compensation and concludes that it is time to put an end to this weakness. Concerning the Turks, Briand says he has “no antipathy. The Turkish people [...] is sympathetic to France. (*Applause*),” as it is proved by the behavior of their army during the Çanakkale battle—a remark welcomed by “loud applause”. More particularly about the Kemalists, Briand calls them “patriots”. Concerning the Armenians, he asks for guarantees of safety, not for territories. During the same hearing, another MP, Édouard Daladier (see below about him) “observe[s] that nobody speaks anymore about the great Armenia, or about an Armenian state, in the press or at the Parliament.”<sup>1203</sup>

#### 4.4.2. France cannot “guard the boundaries of two or three Armenias”

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the comments in the press, regarding the Sèvres treaty, are critical or hostile, even before the signature, and such a majority can only help the opponents to this agreement inside the government and at the Parliament. One of the very few exceptions is the *Journal des Débats*. By decision of its editor Auguste Gauvain, this newspaper changes its traditional line, which has been in favor of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, a stance still visible during the second semester 1919. The old centrist, republican daily supports the Sèvres treaty, with a reasoning that deserves to be quoted: The treaty has shortcomings, but “Turkey is the only one which cannot complain,” and “the worst enemies of the Turks would be those who would incite them to intransigence.”<sup>1204</sup> The validity of this reasoning does not appear immediately, not only in considering the ulterior events, but also in considering the proofs of resistance of the Kemalist movement—exposed as early as 1919 in the same daily—, the difficulties of the French troops in Çukurova and the weakness of the Armenian Republic. Regardless, the *Journal des débats* is almost alone<sup>1205</sup> in defending the treaty in the French. As a whole, “the treaty is rejected by the French

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<sup>1203</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française*, 26 juin 1920, pp. 2430 and 2433-2436 and (quotes pp. 2430 and 2436). Also see André Fribourg, « Une nouvelle phase de l'éclipse française en Orient », *Le Matin*, 7 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; and « Une lettre du colonel Lamouche », *Écho de l'Islam*, 15 septembre 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1204</sup> Pierre Bernus, « La paix avec la Turquie », *Journal des débats*, 20 juillet 1920, p. 1. Bernus actually does not believe what he writes here, as he argued for the exact opposite in the *Journal de Genève*: Pierre Bernus, « Les affaires de Cilicie et la question d'Orient », *Journal de Genève*, 11 juin 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1205</sup> Yahya Akyüz, *La Guerre d'indépendance turque (1919-1922) et l'opinion publique française*, thèse de doctorat, université de Nancy, 1967, p. 189.

opinion.”<sup>1206</sup> Even Théodore Ruysen (1868-1967), chairman of the League of Human Rights, hardly a nostalgic of the Ottoman Empire, finds the attribution of eastern Thrace and İzmir to Greece unacceptable, observes that signing with the Damat Ferit Paşa cabinet, ignoring Kemal is not realistic and that Armenia, as it is planned, does not seem quite viable.<sup>1207</sup> Correspondingly, *Le Petit Marseillais*, not friendly until 1920 to the Turks, considers the treaty to be excessively severe for them, and, *L’Éclair*, often favorable to the Greek point of view, finds the text “very harsh for the Turks” and detrimental to the French interests.<sup>1208</sup>

*L’Écho de Paris* reaches roughly the same conclusion: “The treaty with Turkey does not give us the satisfactions we could expect.” And the nationalist-conservative daily continues in criticizing a text hardly able to stabilize the East, considering the “revolt” of “Turkish nationalism” (which could ally Soviet Russia against the UK) the absence of mandatory for Armenia, the absence of definitive decision regarding the “Kurdistan”, and so on. The newspaper also wonders: “Is it too late to react?”<sup>1209</sup> The other mainstream daily of the nationalist-conservative right, *Le Petit Journal*, expresses almost exactly the same ideas with a softer wording: The Sèvres treaty is disappointing from the point of view of our interests, and it does not fix the eastern question; the journalist finishes his comment in politely recommending to the French cabinet, to improve the situation.<sup>1210</sup> The stance of Raymond Poincaré, three weeks after the text is signed, is similar. He regrets in the *Revue des deux mondes* that it hurts so much French schools and investments, and thinks that the Sèvres treaty may be already “broken”—a reference to the porcelain of Sèvres.<sup>1211</sup>

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<sup>1206</sup> Alfred Fabre-Luce, *La Crise des alliances. Essai sur les relations franco-britanniques, 1919-1922*, Paris : Grasset, 1922, pp. 83-85. Similar conclusion in Bénédict, « Le problème du traité de Sèvres », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 12 février 1921, pp. 205-206 ; and Yves Le Lannou, « La fin de l’Empire... », p. 183.

<sup>1207</sup> Théodore Ruysen, « La paix avec la Turquie », *Les Cahiers des droits de l’homme*, 30 août 1920, pp. 3-7.

<sup>1208</sup> *Le Petit Marseillais*, 3 août 1920, p. 1 ; *L’Éclair*, 12 mai 1920, p. 2, quoted in Yahya Akyüz, *La Guerre d’indépendance...*, pp. 190 and 196.

<sup>1209</sup> « Le traité avec la Turquie — Le règlement oriental est-il définitif ? », *L’Écho de Paris*, 12 mai 1920, p. 3 ; « Les problèmes de l’Orient — Les Bolcheviques veulent s’unir avec les nationalistes musulmans », *L’Écho de Paris*, 20 mai 1920, p. 3 ; Pertinax (André Géraud), « Notre politique en Orient — Quand et comment avons-nous abandonné Mossoul ? », *L’Écho de Paris*, 12 juin 1920, p. 3.

<sup>1210</sup> Étienne Fournol, « Le traité turc a été signé à Sèvres », *Le Petit Journal*, 11 août 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1211</sup> Raymond Poincaré, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1920, pp. 213-216.

In *Le Journal*, Saint-Brice is less soft. He criticizes the attribution of Eastern Thrace to Greece, which makes İstanbul, the city of caliphate, an island, at the mercy of its neighbor. Regarding Armenia, Saint-Brice finds the expansion of the country difficult to achieve, as the Turkish national movement is precisely settled in eastern Anatolia, and even if this aim is eventually achieved, the country will be a client of Britain. A “revision” is “necessary.”<sup>1212</sup> He later concludes that, as “the violent way” has been proved inefficient and dangerous in Cilicia, the “conquest of Armenia” (north-eastern Anatolia) has to be avoided.<sup>1213</sup> In fact, trying to implement the Sèvres treaty would be against the safety of the Armenians themselves.<sup>1214</sup> More laconic, but equally strong, is the criticism of *L’Intransigeant*: “There is a Turkish treaty, but there are Turks, too,” yet they are not ready to accept the said treaty: “The warning is clear.”<sup>1215</sup> The final text adopted at Sèvres is unreadable and most likely inapplicable, argues *L’Intransigeant*.<sup>1216</sup> For *Le Gaulois*, the project of treaty “has only achieved the uprising of the Muslim word against the allies [Entente].”<sup>1217</sup>

Remarkably, but not surprisingly, none of these criticisms mainly based on considerations of national interest and realism perceives the Armenians as a possible instrument for French influence and investments in the post-Ottoman space—*Le Journal* even seeing the future Armenia as a British protégé. Aside the one of Saint-Brice, the most elaborated reasoning of this kind is the one of Jacques Bainville, the specialist of foreign policy at *L’Action française*. First of all, for Bainville, the old Ottoman Empire, like the Russian one, was an element of stability, a transition between the East and the West. Destroying him is a factor of unbalance

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<sup>1212</sup> Saint-Brice, « Les clauses essentielles du traité turc », *Le Journal*, 10 mai 1920, p. 1 (full version: « Le projet de San Remo sur la liquidation orientale », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 mai 1920, pp. 385-396). Also see Saint-Brice, « La conférence de Londres et la paix de l’Orient », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 mars 1920, pp. 241-247 ; Saint-Brice, « Vers la liquidation orientale », *La Revue universelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1920, pp. 78-82 ; Saint-Brice, « Le règlement oriental », *Le Journal*, 26 avril 1920, p. 1. Similar view in Maurice Honoré, « Les droits et les intérêts de la France Orient », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 juin 1920, pp. 289-303.

<sup>1213</sup> Saint-Brice, « La révision de la liquidation orientale », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 juin 1920, p. 531.

<sup>1214</sup> Saint-Brice, « L’aventure grecque », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 juillet 1920, p. 5.

<sup>1215</sup> « Il y a un traité turc... Mais il y a aussi des Turcs », *L’Intransigeant*, 26 mai 1920, p. 1. Similar view in « En Thrace — Les Grecs ont à combattre Turcs et Bulgares », *L’Ouest-Éclair*, 23 juillet 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1216</sup> Étienne Rey, « Il y a diplomates et diplomates », *L’Intransigeant*, 12 août 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1217</sup> René d’Aral, « Notre politique en Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 27 juin 1920, p. 1. Similar view in Jacques Bardoux, « L’action inter-alliée en Allemagne et en Turquie », *L’Opinion*, 27 mars 1920, p. 345.



in international relations.<sup>1218</sup> Then, “For France, Turkey represents a moral and material capital” and the French army’s victories in the Balkans were decisive in the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Yet, the occupation of eastern Thrace is already expensive, and the decisions of San Remo (the draft of the Sèvres treaty) would need 300,000 soldiers, something that France cannot provide, in the context of the German danger: “We don’t have the soldiers and the available credits to guard the boundaries of two or three Armenias,”<sup>1219</sup> an implicit reference to the claims toward Cilicia. Weakening the Turks in the West (Eastern Thrace and İzmir under Greek occupation, İstanbul that “belongs to nobody”) and the east (with an Armenia without mandatory) is not only detrimental to the French interests (something more than regrettable for an *integral nationalist* like Bainville) but it creates “emptiness,” and emptiness calls for “new conquerors”<sup>1220</sup> (likely the Soviets). On the contrary, a viable Turkey, reconciled with France and the UK, can be a wall against the Communist Russia.<sup>1221</sup>

Bainville’s analysis is strikingly similar to the one of Jean Lescure, professor of political economy at the University of Bordeaux (1913-1923) and later at the one of Paris (from 1924 to his death, in 1947). For Lescure, the old Turkish domination seems, after all, the most able to maintain order and spare the money of the French (but also British and Italian) taxpayers.<sup>1222</sup>

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<sup>1218</sup> Jacques Bainville, « Le péril asiatique », *L’Action française*, 5 janvier 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, *Les Conséquences politiques de la paix*, Paris : Nouvelle librairie nationale, 1920, pp. 175-176.

<sup>1219</sup> Jacques Bainville, « La Turquie à San Remo », *L’Action française*, 20 avril 1920, p. 1. See also his article « Les résultats de San Remo », *L’Action française*, 27 avril 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1220</sup> Jacques Bainville, « L’ordre des questions examinées à San Remo », *Excelsior*, 21 avril 1920, p. 2 ; Jacques Bainville, « L’Asie contre l’Europe », *L’Action française*, 11 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, *Les Conséquences politiques...*, pp. 172-176 (quote p. 176).

<sup>1221</sup> Jacques Bainville, « Conférence de la paix — Le casse-cou oriental », *Excelsior*, 23 février 1920, p. 2. Similar reasoning in Camille Vergniol, « La France en Orient et les affaires de Turquie », *Le Monde illustré*, 21 août 1920, pp. 120-121.

<sup>1222</sup> Jean Lescure, « Faut-il détruire la Turquie ? », *Revue politique et parlementaire*, avril 1920, pp. 42-48.

#### 4.4.3. From Marxists to the big business, “the whole France condemns the treaty”

Regardless, this kind of criticism looks somewhat prudent by comparison with the militant hostility that comes—aside what Turks publish themselves in Paris<sup>1223</sup>—from four different tendencies: The most active friends of Turkey; the Liberal and Marxist left; the colonial lobbies; and the conservative Catholic activism. Without surprise, Pierre Loti writes an op-ed in *L'Œuvre* to denounce the Sèvres treaty as “the actual culmination of our silly oriental policy.”<sup>1224</sup> Loti denounces once again the crimes of Armenian nationalists (this time, in Armenia itself) and the imperialist appetites toward Turkey, particularly the British ones.

One more time, Loti finds supporters from various sides. His article is quoted with approval by journalist Gaston Gaillard in his own book on the Turkish issue.<sup>1225</sup> *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient* is recommended by the centrist *Revue des deux mondes*, which considers his knowledge of Turkey “perfect” and the testimonies he presents “impressive.”<sup>1226</sup> A few months after its publication, *L'Information* calls it “a beautiful book” that “has preserved us from a senseless policy.”<sup>1227</sup> The reviews in the *Revue de Paris* and the left-wing daily *La Lanterne* are barely less positive.<sup>1228</sup> The book is also praised by the far rightist daily *L'Action française*: “Perhaps the only book that contains the truth on Turkish affair,” as only the Turks “still keep a real sympathy for us,” unlike “the Greeks and the Armenians [who] nurture a deep hatred against France” and who “do know how to massacre, as much as the Turks do.”<sup>1229</sup> Even more remarkably, Paul Souday, the literary columnist of the unofficial daily *Le Temps* devotes a full article to largely praise Loti’s defense of the Turks—including as far as

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<sup>1223</sup> [Nihat Reşat Belger], « La paix injuste », *Écho de l'Islam*, 15 août 1920, p. 1 ; Ahmet Rıza, *Échos de Turquie*, Paris : Imprimerie Billard & Baillard, 1920.

<sup>1224</sup> Pierre Loti, « Un traité qui dignement couronne la série d'âneries de notre politique orientale », *L'Œuvre*, 20 août 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1225</sup> Gaston Gaillard, *Les Turcs et l'Europe*, Paris : Chapelot, 1920, p. 261.

<sup>1226</sup> « Bulletin bibliographique », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1920 (no page number).

<sup>1227</sup> Abel Hermant, « Lettres ouvertes — À Pierre Loti », *L'Information*, 24 novembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1228</sup> « Livres nouveaux », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1920 (no page number) ; « Coin des lettres et des arts », *La Lanterne*, 4 octobre 1920, p. 3.

<sup>1229</sup> Charles Maurras, « Les millions de la reconstitution nationale », *L'Action française*, 14 décembre 1920, p. 1. The quotes are not from Maurras, but from a letter he received from a reader residing in İzmir. The letter is entirely reproduced, with full approval.

the Armenian issue is concerned: Souday's main critique is about the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the World War.<sup>1230</sup>

Not unlike Loti, Claude Farrère denounces the Sèvres treaty,<sup>1231</sup> and for Berthe Georges-Gaulis this treaty does not change anything "either in Anatolia either in Constantinople," as Damat Ferit is "totally disqualified" by his action as "servant of the English." Sèvres is simply one more step in a policy of Western errors, a policy dominated by Lloyd George's foolish views, dangerous for France but also for regional stability and the British interests themselves, as a result of the Soviet and German ambitions, which take profit of the instability<sup>1232</sup>—"the crazy war in the east."<sup>1233</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis' analysis offers obvious similarities with the one of Bainville—except a harsher tone and more insistence—, but it is based on her work on the field. Indeed, this is only in January 1921 that she is really "charmed" by the "cleverness" of Bainville.<sup>1234</sup>

Beside the three staunchest supporters of the Kemalist side during the war of independence, the liberal daily *L'Œuvre* persistently fights the Sèvres treaty. This newspaper not only publishes the op-ed of Loti, but explicitly sides with him. His first critique, in June, is similar to the one of the mainstream conservative-nationalist dailies, *L'Écho de Paris* and *Le Petit Journal*, criticizing the concessions to Britain, particularly about Mosul.<sup>1235</sup> However, one month later, *L'Œuvre* publishes not only another op-ed of Loti<sup>1236</sup> announcing the publication of his book *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient* but also an interview of Mohamed Ali, on behalf of the Muslims and Hindus of India, warning against reactions in the colonies in general and in the ones with a Muslim majority in particular.<sup>1237</sup> The next day, an unsigned article criticizes Mehmet VI and the Damat Ferit cabinet for being ready to sign. The article

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<sup>1230</sup> Paul Souday, « Les livres », *Le Temps*, 30 septembre 1920, p. 3.

<sup>1231</sup> Claude Farrère, « Pétrole et Turquie », *Le Courrier de Monsieur Pic*, 5 juillet 1920, pp. 89-92.

<sup>1232</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La paix orientale I », *L'Opinion*, 25 septembre 1920, pp. 345-347 ; « La paix orientale II », *L'Opinion*, 9 octobre 1920, pp. 399-401.

<sup>1233</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La folle guerre en Orient », *L'Opinion*, 3 juillet 1920, pp. 3-5.

<sup>1234</sup> Lettre de Berthe Georges-Gaulis au maréchal Lyautey, 15 janvier 1921, AN, 475 AP 282.

<sup>1235</sup> « Ce que nous avons perdu en Orient », *L'Œuvre*, 15 juin 1920, p. 1. Congruent criticism in Gaston Doumergue, « La question du pétrole », *Le Petit Méridional*, 27 juin 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1236</sup> Pierre Loti, « La mort de notre chère France en Orient », *L'Œuvre*, 22 juillet 1920, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1237</sup> « Le traité turc est un défi à l'islam », *L'Œuvre*, 22 juillet 1920, pp. 1-2.

finishes in asking rhetorical questions: “Do the small court of the sultan and the ministers domesticated by the Englishmen really represent the Ottoman people? And will Mustafa Kemal Pasha, in Angora, endorse the decisions taken in Constantinople?”<sup>1238</sup> Even stronger is the op-ed published on 3 August, by Leland Buxton, after translation from English: “Why abolishing the Turkish administration if it is to replace it by the one of the Greeks, who always exterminated their subjects of alien race and religion?”<sup>1239</sup> Correspondingly, the day after the treaty is actually signed, *L'Œuvre* warns: “It will not be accepted sincerely by the Turks, by the Arabs or by the Armenians. It leaves Bulgaria without access to the [Aegean] sea. It pushes the Turkish nationalists in the arms of the Bolsheviks, these Bolsheviks they openly hated until now.”<sup>1240</sup> And the warning is repeated in September: This treaty dictated by Britain may lead to an unnatural alliance between Turks and Bolsheviks.<sup>1241</sup>

In its uncompromising hostility toward Sèvres, *L'Œuvre* is representative of the liberal press supporting the Radical Party. Édouard Herriot, now the president of the party, who has defended the Ottomans at the end of 1912, calls the treaty “a fault.” He advocates fairness toward the “Turkish patriots” and their “legitimate exigencies.”<sup>1242</sup> In his fight against the treaty, Herriot is assisted by the editor of *Le Rappel*<sup>1243</sup> and by Georges Scelle (1878-1961), professor of law, one of the most prominent liberal jurists of his time.<sup>1244</sup> In a series of articles, Scelle criticizes a “deplorable,” unrealistic, non-democratic and unfair treaty, as it deprives the Turks of territories where they are in majority and threatens the balance of

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<sup>1238</sup> « La Turquie signera-t-elle ? — Le grand vizir et les sultanes inclinent à la soumission », *L'Œuvre*, 23 juillet 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1239</sup> Leland Buxton, « La destruction de la Turquie », *L'Œuvre*, 3 août 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1240</sup> « Le traité avec la Turquie a été enfin signé hier », *L'Œuvre*, 11 août 1920, p. 2.

<sup>1241</sup> Robert de Jouvenel, « L'Orient contre l'Entente — Les Soviets et la Turquie se rapprochent », *L'Œuvre*, 8 septembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1242</sup> Édouard Herriot, « Ne recommençons pas les croisades », *Le Rappel*, 11 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « La crise de la démocratie », *Le Rappel*, 14 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « Syrie et Cilicie », *Le Rappel*, 22 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « Paix à la Turquie ! », *Le Rappel*, 5 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1243</sup> « Encore une paix qui ne paie pas — La paix de Sèvres », *Le Rappel*, 27 juillet 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1244</sup> On Scelle: Jean-Michel Guieu, « Les juristes français, la Société des nations et l'Europe », in Jacques Bariéty (ed.), *Aristide Briand, la Société des nations et l'Europe. 1919-1932*, Strasbourg : Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007, pp. 188-197 ; Carlos Miguel Herrera, « Un juriste aux prises du social : sur le projet de Georges Scelle », *Revue française d'histoire des idées politiques*, n° 21, 2005, pp. 113-137.

power, regionally in giving too much territories to Greece, globally in giving a new advantage to Britain, with a de facto control of the Straits.<sup>1245</sup>

Herriot is also helped by a rising star of the Radical Party, Édouard Daladier (1884-1970), deputy of the Vaucluse (south-east). Daladier's opposition is even stronger and his wording even harsher. As early as March 1920, he publishes an editorial of vehement irony, denouncing the dismembering of Turkey by the limitless pretensions of British imperialism and emphasizing the importance of French investments in the country: "There could not be a more unjust and hurtful policy than associating ourselves to this covetousness, to these various imperialisms which threaten independence of Turkey. The useful and legitimate economic expansion of our country cannot become synonymous of plunder and dismembering."<sup>1246</sup> The next month, Daladier criticizes once again the British policy, both for its lack of support against Pan-Germanists and for the draft of the Turkish treaty. The "Great Armenia" is this time explicitly mentioned—and criticized—as one of the projects of British imperialists to connect their possessions in east Africa and India.<sup>1247</sup> After the conclusion of the San Remo conference, Daladier calls the representatives of Damat Ferit Pasa "Englishmen with a fez" and the project of treaty a major risk of war.<sup>1248</sup> Correspondingly, he calls the Kemalists of Çukurova "patriots who wanted to defend their country."<sup>1249</sup>

This hostility expressed by Herriot, Scelle and Daladier can be found, with similar arguments, in the rest of the press supporting the Radical Party, very clearly and repeatedly in *La*

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<sup>1245</sup> Georges Scelle, « De Moscou à Constantinople », *L'Information*, 7 mars 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Le quatrième Gibraltar », *L'Information*, 21 avril 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Le traité turc et l'opinion française », *L'Information*, 19 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Le régime des Détroits », *L'Information*, 23 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « La dynamique du traité turc », *Le Rappel*, 5 juin 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Pour une politique cohérente », *L'Information*, 24 novembre 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Diplomatie contre-révolutionnaire », *Le Rappel*, 3 décembre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1246</sup> Édouard Daladier, « À la curée de la Turquie », *Le Rappel*, 10 mars 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1247</sup> Édouard Daladier, « À San Remo », *Le Rappel*, 21 avril 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1248</sup> Édouard Daladier, « La guerre prochaine », *Le Rappel*, 10 mai 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1249</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française*, 26 juin 1920, p. 2430.

*Lanterne*<sup>1250</sup> and *Le Radical*<sup>1251</sup>, to a lesser extent in *La Dépêche de Toulouse*.<sup>1252</sup> Intellectually close to the Radical Party, but politically independent, the elite's weekly *L'Europe nouvelle* also opposes the Sèvres treaty, before and after its signature. The editor Philippe Millet (son of Ambassador René Millet and ex-columnist for the unofficial daily *Le Temps*) devotes a full editorial to denounce the draft adopted in San Remo as an absurd compromise between the British thesis and the French one, a nonsense that, instead of stopping the fire, will generalize it.<sup>1253</sup> In short "this diplomatic work" is likely to have "the fragility of porcelain."<sup>1254</sup>

The hostility of the Socialist left is about the same than the one of the liberals—and, as a result, promising a similarly strong opposition in the Parliament. Jean Longuet, the former deputy editor of *Pro Armenia* until 1908, organizes a meeting against the "the dismembering of Turkey, its actual destruction, this new crime of Capitalism and Imperialism against the rights of the peoples." After having received a letter of a pro-Armenian writer (Paul Poulgy), Longuet answers that the roles have been inverted: "The oppressed" now is the "Turkish peasant" and not the Armenian anymore; "We do not intend to sacrifice the first to the second more than we have wanted to tolerate the opposite."<sup>1255</sup> In *Le Populaire* a journalist of Greek heritage fustigates a treaty which means "the complete enslavement" of the Turkish nation—supposed to accept the loss of vast territories with a Turkish majority and "Greek, Armenian, etc. minorities"—and mocks the "naïveté" of the Entente's representatives, unable to see that their treaty is "built on sand."<sup>1256</sup> Correspondingly, *L'Humanité* slams a triumph of British imperialism, which cynically uses Greek and Armenian ambitions against

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<sup>1250</sup> Antoine Peretti, « Le traité turc est-il acceptable ? Non ! », *La Lanterne*, 15 mai 1920, pp. 1-2 ; « Les Alliés en Turquie — Pas dupe à ce point », *La Lanterne*, 20 mai 1920, p. 1 ; « Que vaudra ce traité ? », *La Lanterne*, 25 juillet 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1251</sup> Paul Allain, « Un "bandit" », *Le Radical*, 26 juin 1920, p. 1 ; « L'Europe en danger », *Le Radical*, 25 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; Bernard Guinaudeau, « La paix turque », *Le Radical*, 4 octobre 1920, p. 1 ; Bernard Guinaudeau, « La France à Constantinople », *Le Radical*, 18 octobre 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1252</sup> A. Jacque-Ollivier (Jacques Kayser), « L'Inde bouge — Funestes conséquences du traité turc », *La Dépêche de Toulouse*, 30 juillet 1920, p. 3.

<sup>1253</sup> Philippe Millet, « Le traité avec la Turquie », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 24 avril 1920, pp. 507-508. Also see Comte Henri Begouën, « Si nous voulons la paix dans les Balkans », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1920, pp. 1071-1073.

<sup>1254</sup> « La valise entr'ouverte », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 22 août 1920, p. 1189.

<sup>1255</sup> Jean Longuet, « L'Islam et le Socialisme », *Le Populaire*, 29 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Jean Longuet, « Turcs et Arméniens », *Le Populaire*, 1<sup>er</sup> juin 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1256</sup> Démètre Pournaras, « Le traité avec la Turquie », *Le Populaire*, 7 août 1920, p. 2.

the Turks—and against the French interests as well. Regardless, the daily does not expect a strong reaction from Paris, thinking that French capitalists have lost in front of the English ones.<sup>1257</sup>

*L'Humanité* is wrong in this last assumption. Indeed, Paul Bourdarie (1864-1950), the chief lobbyist of the cotton industry, is on the frontline of the battle against the Sèvres treaty. He backs the efforts of the Indian Muslim representatives, particularly the meeting organized at the *salle Wagram* in Paris. The meeting is chaired by Senator Anatole de Monzie (the friend of Nihat Reşat and Claude Farrère), in front of 1,500 persons—including Muslim Indians and Egyptians—, and Bourdarie is one of the speakers. He loudly emphasizes the respect due to Islam in general and to the Turks in particular, criticizes Greece, “the assassin of our sailors” (in 1916) which “has not a single great man” and is the pawn of British imperialism—or more exactly of David Lloyd George, who listens to himself only. Regarding the issue of the Armenian massacres, Bourdarie answers that they were reciprocal, and that they are now misused for reasons which are not sentimental at all.<sup>1258</sup> Beside the fact that nothing allows to doubt of Bourdarie’s sincerity, it must be underlined, to understand his activity fully, that he is not only a man of the big business, but the one at the origin (1915) of the project to establish a Muslim Institute in Paris, which eventually becomes the Grand Mosque of Paris and is unveiled in 1926.<sup>1259</sup> It must also be noted that the textile industrialists of Lyon, in 1920, now see without considerable regret the perspective of an evacuation of Çukurova—where only hopes ever exist and where, after all, they may invest even if the region remains Turkish—to keep Syria and Lebanon—where they have actual interests since 1860s.<sup>1260</sup>

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<sup>1257</sup> « Les dessous du traité turc », *L'Humanité*, 26 mai 1920, p. 3. Also see Paul Louis, « La révolution russe et l'impérialisme occidental », *L'Humanité*, 27 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; and Paul Louis, « Le démembrement de la Turquie », *Floréal*, 28 août 1920, pp. 695-696.

<sup>1258</sup> Paul Bourdarie, « Pour la Turquie », *Revue indigène*, avril-juin 1920, pp. 67-79.

<sup>1259</sup> Robert Cornevin, « Paul Bourdarie (1864-1950) », in Robert Cornevin (ed.), *Hommes et destins (Dictionnaire biographique d'outre-mer)*, Paris : Académie des sciences d'outre-mer, volume I, 1975, pp. 101-102 ; Michel Renard, « Gratitude, contrôle, accompagnement : le traitement du religieux islamique en Métropole (1914-1950) », *Bulletin de l'Institut d'histoire du temps présent*, n° 83, juin 2004, pp. 54-69.

<sup>1260</sup> Dominique Chevallier, « Lyon et la Syrie en 1919. Les bases d'une intervention », *Revue historique*, CCXXIV-2, avril-juin 1960, p. 318. Also see the demand of General Gouraud for a subvention to the culture of cotton in Syria: Bige Yavuz (Sükan), *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri: Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından 1919-1922*, Ankara: TTK, 1994, appendix XIa.

A similar action is deployed by the Comité Dupleix, which represents the conservative-nationalist wing of the French colonialists, is connected to the parliamentary right,<sup>1261</sup> and is financially supported by the chambers of commerce of Lyon, Saint-Étienne, Reims and Le Havre.<sup>1262</sup> Indeed, the committee spreads a manifesto and organizes a series of meetings against the treaty even before it is signed.<sup>1263</sup> The manifesto says: “The right way to re-establish peace in the east is to assess the Turkish claims and to support those who are fair. [...] In the East, the Turks must be our friends and the Christians our clients.”<sup>1264</sup> Correspondingly, for *L’Asie française*, hostile to the terms of the treaty from the beginning,<sup>1265</sup> Sèvres does not fix any problem, it is a treaty likely to be modified in the future. The territorial gains of Greece are excessive, and Armenia “as it is conceived by the treaty, really seems unable to have its own life.”<sup>1266</sup> And according to the *Correspondance d’Orient*, it looks like a dead-born treaty; so it would be more rational to negotiate a new agreement, with Kemal (Atatürk) this time. The Italian policy toward the Turks should be an example for France.<sup>1267</sup>

This overview largely justifies the affirmation of René Johannet (1884-1972), a leading writer of the Catholic right, in *La Croix*: “The whole France condemns the [Sèvres] treaty. [...] To find a similar unanimity, it is almost necessary to go back to the issue of Alsace-Lorraine and to our will, in the past, to recover it.” Johannet’s own critique is similar to the ones analyzed below: The treaty is excessively severe for the Turks and highly hurtful for the French

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<sup>1261</sup> Gilles Le Béguec and Jacques Prévotat, « L’éveil à la modernité politique (1898-1919) », in Jean-François Sirinelli (ed.), *Histoire des droites*, Paris : Gallimard, 2014, volume I, p. 230. Also see, Arthur Mailliet, *Notre œuvre. Son passé et son avenir*, Paris : Augustin Challamel/Comité Dupleix, 1898.

<sup>1262</sup> Claude Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, Caen : Presses universitaires de Caen, 2006, p. 442.

<sup>1263</sup> « La France en Orient », *Le Figaro*, 24 mai 1920, p. 1 ; « Les droits de la France en Orient », *La Croix*, 17 juin 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1264</sup> AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467. « Une manifestation en faveur de la Turquie », *Écho de l’Islam*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1921, p. 2 and Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique*, Beyrouth: Imprimerie catholique, 1945, p. 41 affirm that “thousands” of copies are placarded in the streets of Paris. Also see Comité Dupleix, Note, 27 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 1395.

<sup>1265</sup> Henri Froidevaux, « Le projet de traité avec la Turquie et la France », *L’Asie française*, mai 1920, pp. 142-146 ; Henri Froidevaux, « Les intérêts économiques français dans le Levant », *L’Asie française*, juin 1920, pp. 172-175.

<sup>1266</sup> Henri Froidevaux, « Au lendemain de la signature du traité de Sèvres », *L’Asie française*, juillet-août 1920, pp. 212-214. Also see « Genèse de l’État arménien », *L’Asie française*, juin 1920, pp. 178-181.

<sup>1267</sup> Édouard Bernier, « La paix turque », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 octobre 1920, pp. 241-245.



interests; giving Thrace and İzmir to Greece is against all the principles of justice. It is even “crazy,” considering the “tyrannical” methods of the Greek occupiers, as proved by the 1919 investigation on İzmir. These territorial plans, argues the redactor of *La Croix*, are a brutal offensive of the British imperialism, as well as of the Protestant American missionaries. Concerning Armenia, Johannet’s appreciation is hardly more positive: Armenia as designed in Sèvres would be “an immense zone of political depression, from which the most devastating cyclones can emerge.” His conclusion is clear: “The treaty has to be revised,” at any price, even the breaking of alliance with London—but Johannet does not think that such a breaking is likely, anyway.<sup>1268</sup>

A bit less vehemently, but firmly, these arguments are exposed in the Parliament by Hyacinthe de Gailhard-Bancel (1849-1936), center-right Catholic deputy of the Ardèche.<sup>1269</sup>

This quasi-consensus proves the weakening of the Armenian (and Greek) nationalists’ theses among the French opinion-makers during the year 1920. It also proves that if Turkophiles are logically on the frontline against the Sèvres treaty, not only they are more numerous than it is commonly remembered today, but their main theses are also considerably reinforced by considerations of national interest, pragmatism and feelings of elementary justice: Giving vast territories with an overwhelming majority of Turks appear to be a dangerous absurdity to most of the commentators and actors, no matter if they are staunch secularists or militant Catholics, Marxists or representatives of the big business. It also shows that focusing on one (Pierre Loti) or a few (Loti, Claude Farrère, Berthe Georges-Gaulis) writers and ignoring all the

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<sup>1268</sup> René Johannet, « Il faut réviser le traité turc — Constantinople », *La Croix*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1920, p. 1 ; René Johannet, « Il faut réviser le traité turc — Smyrne », *La Croix*, 15 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; René Johannet, « Il faut réviser le traité turc — Conclusion », *La Croix*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1920, p. 3. See also « La journée », *La Croix*, 27-28 juin 1920, p. 1 ; and René Johannet, « La politique musulmane de la France », *La Revue universelle*, 15 août 1920, pp. 473-476. Concerning Armenia, it is a reversal of stance of the Catholic daily (see, for instance, Jean Guiraud, « Encore l’Arménie », *La Croix*, 19 mai 1920, p. 1), perhaps due to the intervention of the pope Benedict XV: Note of the British ambassador to the Vatican, enclosing a demand from the pope, regarding Turks interned in Malta, 25 February 1920, FO 371/5089/E1114; « Une statue du pape à Constantinople », *Revue indigène*, janvier-mars 1920, p. 63 ; « Mohamed Ali reçu par le pape — Benoît XV contre le traité imposé à la Turquie », *Le Populaire*, 6 août 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1269</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française*, 27 juin 1920, pp. 2464-2465. For another Catholic critique of the treaty: Louis Jalabert, « À la veille de la paix turque », *Études*, 20 avril 1920, pp. 151-172.

others is a serious error of analysis, an error paradoxically shared in Turkish<sup>1270</sup> and Armenian historiographies,<sup>1271</sup> in the first case by admiration, in the second by dislike for him or them.

President of the ministers' Council Georges Leygues summarizes the situation as follows on 7 December 1920 in a letter to the representative at the League of Nations: "The French public opinion is unanimous to ask for the revision" of the Sèvres treaty<sup>1272</sup>—a treaty signed by the cabinet of Damat Ferit Paşa, who has to resign in October, at the request of the European High Commissioner themselves.<sup>1273</sup> However, Leygues does not have the strength and diplomatic experience to impose what the public opinion (and President Millerand) want. President Millerand had precisely chosen him to continue to rule from the Presidential Palace,<sup>1274</sup> but this solution does not fit the traditions of the Third Republic. After the Chamber of deputies forces Leygues to resign he is replaced by the one who possesses all the capacities to do so: Aristide Briand.

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<sup>1270</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, « La campagne de Pierre Loti en faveur de la Turquie pendant la guerre d'indépendance », in Paul Dumont and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *La Turquie et la France à l'époque d'Atatürk*, Paris : ADET, 1981, p. 69.

<sup>1271</sup> Edmond Khayadian, *Archag Tchobanian et...*, pp. 243-265 ; Hélène Strapélias, « Index des personnalités... », pp. 156-157 ; Philippe Videlier, "French Society and the Armenian Genocide," in Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide. Cultural and Ethical Legacies*, New Brunswick-London, 2007, p. 327. One half-exception: Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique...*, pp. 41-43.

<sup>1272</sup> AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1273</sup> Télégramme d'Albert DeFrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 11 octobre 1920 ; Id., 18 octobre 1920, AMAE, P 1394.

<sup>1274</sup> Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d'Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré. 1913-1926*, Paris : Hachette, 1957, p. 133 ; Jean-Louis Rizzo, *Alexandre Millerand...*, pp. 319 and 380-381.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE ARMENIAN COMMITTEES AGAINST THE INEVITABLE EVACUATION OF CILICIA (JANUARY 1921-JANUARY 1922)

*"[This terror] is organized."  
Aristide Briand, 29 December 1921.<sup>1275</sup>*

The return in power of Aristide Briand, in January 1921, is arguably the most important event, not that much for the inflexion of the position of Paris than for the capacity of the French cabinet to actually carry out what the large majority of the Parliament and most of the press ask for. His adversaries have mocked Briand's evolution from the revolutionary left to the centrist policies of 1910s and 1920s, but there is more than one factor of unity in his life, and first of all the heritage of his trade union's years—the culture of dialogue and compromise to end the conflicts.<sup>1276</sup> A favorable biographer calls him "the firm conciliator." Actually, his greatest achievement internally has been to finish, in 1905, the work of secularization started by Jules Ferry during the 1880s: Briand has prepared and made adopted a law separating the churches and the state without accepting the demands of the most radical wing of his own majority, demands Briand called "the suppression of the churches by the state." Indeed, the law has been quickly followed by appeasement.<sup>1277</sup> "What was new in Briand was that he

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<sup>1275</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 30 décembre 1921, p. 2416.

<sup>1276</sup> Christophe Bellon, *Aristide Briand. Parler pour agir*, Paris : CNRS, 2016, p. 9 ; Georges Bonnamour, *L'Apaisement*, Paris : Grasset, 1913, pp. 111-113.

<sup>1277</sup> Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand, le ferme conciliateur*, Paris : Fayard, 2005, pp. 157-173 (quotation p. 165). Also see Georges Bonnamour, *L'Apaisement...*, pp. 31-92.

always remained faithful to an ideal of peace,<sup>1278</sup> an ideal that fits his nature of tolerance and skepticism.<sup>1279</sup> In fact, Ahmet Rıza writes a letter to Briand, as early as 19 January 1921, to express his conviction that, with him, “the last misunderstandings” will disappear.<sup>1280</sup>

It is true that Briand was the chief of the government in 1916, when the Sykes-Picot agreement has been signed but his speech of June 1920 (quoted in the previous chapter) not only shows that he considered the text an ad hoc agreement in a specific context but also that, months before coming back to power, he understands that the peace has to be done with Ankara. Claude Farrère (not exactly a political friend of Briand) cites four men who have contributed to the evolution of Briand: Himself, Pierre Loti, Marshal Hubert Lyautey and General Maxime Weygand (already mentioned). Actually, Briand is a reader of Loti and Farrère.<sup>1281</sup> He is also a statesman constantly looking for the necessary adaptations leading to the solution to the concrete problems of the current time.<sup>1282</sup> Even more neglected than the return of Briand, however, are his choices of collaborators. He designates Raymond Escholier (1882-1971) as his deputy chief of staff, yet Escholier is a self-described Turkophile.<sup>1283</sup> For the Ministry of War, his choice is Louis Barthou, a personal friend of Pierre Loti, who supports Loti’s campaign since 1919. As far as the Caucasus is concerned, the government knows that Russia is weakened.<sup>1284</sup> The high commissioner in Tbilissi, Abel Chevalley is (not unlike Briand) for buffer states,<sup>1285</sup> but Briand arrives too late and can only provide a symbolic support for Georgia when the country is invaded. As a result, what

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<sup>1278</sup> Carlo Sforza, *Makers of Modern Europe*, London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot, 1930, p. 221. Also see Valentine Thomson, *Briand, man of peace*, New York: Covici Friede, 1930.

<sup>1279</sup> Jacques Julliard, *Les Gauches françaises, 1762-2012. Histoire, politique et imaginaire*, Paris : Flammarion, 2012, pp. 512 and 516-518.

<sup>1280</sup> AMAE, P 1441.

<sup>1281</sup> Claude Farrère, *Loti*, Paris : Flammarion, 1930, pp. 140-141 ; Raymond Escholier, *Souvenirs parlés de Briand*, Paris : Hachette, 1932, p. 168.

<sup>1282</sup> Jean Méliá, « Comment travaille M. Briand », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 juin 1910, pp. 479-482.

<sup>1283</sup> Raymond Escholier, « En feuilletant les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 27 décembre 1921, p. 4 ; Raymond Escholier, « Les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 14 juin 1923, p. 4.

<sup>1284</sup> Henri Rollin, *Aperçu sur la situation de la Russie bolchevique*, 14 avril 1921, SHD, 20 N 1080.

<sup>1285</sup> M. Chevalley, haut-commissaire de la République au Caucase, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 février 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

remains as a wall against Bolshevism is Turkey<sup>1286</sup>—even more as Turkish Communist leader Mustafa Suphi is found dead on 28 January 1921.<sup>1287</sup> Coincidence of the calendar, Georges Leygues decides, in December 1920, to replace Albert Defrance by General Maurice Pellé. Pellé is officially nominated on 11 January 1921, right before the appointment of the Briand cabinet.<sup>1288</sup> Pellé knows little, initially, to the Turkish affairs, but he is hardworking, has a considerable military prestige, as a result of the First World War and even more of his position of chief of the Czechoslovakian army, in 1919-1920.<sup>1289</sup> He is also helped by the fact that his father had fought during the Crimean war.<sup>1290</sup>

## 5.1. Toward the Ankara agreement (January-October 1921)

### 5.1.1. *The London conference and the separate agreement*

The Paris conference of January 1921 accepts the principle of the revision of the Sèvres treaty and decides that the issue will be discussed the next month, during the London conference.<sup>1291</sup> This is a success for the French and Italian diplomacies, as the British position was still, at the eve of the Paris conference, to force the ratification of Sèvres, then to accept some changes.<sup>1292</sup> Such a revision is asked, one more time by the public opinion. For instance, Édouard Herriot insists not only for the end of the occupation of Çukurova but also for the return of İzmir to the Turks. He makes clear that the issue is not with France but with Britain

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<sup>1286</sup> Georges Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes des Caucasiens entre URSS et puissances occidentales : le cas de la Géorgie (1921-1945)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2009, p. 26 ; Bernard Oudin, *Aristide Briand*, Paris : Perrin, 2016, pp. 630-631. Also see M. Chevalley, haut-commissaire de la République au Caucase, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 décembre 1920 ; Id., 7 janvier 1921, AMAE, 327 PA-AP 10.

<sup>1287</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy, 1918-1923*, London-Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975, p. 58.

<sup>1288</sup> Le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. le général Pellé, 16 décembre 1920 ; Alexandre Millerand, Décret, 11 janvier 1921, AMAE, 393 QO 1176.

<sup>1289</sup> Ronald Mattatia, « Le général Maurice Pellé », *Bulletin de la SABIX*, 43, 2009, pp. 28-36.

<sup>1290</sup> Charles de Chambrun, *Traditions et souvenirs*, Paris : Flammarion, 1952, p. 82.

<sup>1291</sup> « Les événements amènent la Conférence à envisager la révision du traité de Sèvres », *L'Information*, 27 janvier 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1292</sup> Note pour la conférence de Paris du 24 janvier 1921. 22 janvier 1921, AMAE, P 1441.

and Greece and he mentions the collapse of Armenia without any comment.<sup>1293</sup> *L'Europe nouvelle* defends a similar position and *Le Petit Parisien* argues that the territorial concessions to Greece have to be changed; the Armenian issue is not even discussed.<sup>1294</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis emphasizes that the Turks in Çukurova and Western Anatolia is the only way to fight Bolshevism and to ease the tensions in the Muslim world.<sup>1295</sup> Henri Mylès intervenes not only by another op-ed,<sup>1296</sup> but also by a book which is an elegantly written description of İstanbul as seen in 1913-1914, when he was consul here, and in 1920, when he went back as a visitor. Mylès ingeniously places in the description his call for a large revision of the Sèvres treaty.<sup>1297</sup> The book is welcomed in the press.<sup>1298</sup> Beside the authors who were already involved in the defense of the Turks before 1921, new writers intervene during the two first months of this year. In particular, Maurice Prax (1881-1962), one of the most famous reporters of the time, publishes an interview with Mustafa Kemal conducted in November 1918 (he had kept it until now) and updates the text with negative comments toward the “faults” of the Entente during the last two years and with a refutation of the allegations of Bolshevism concerning Kemal. Now, nothing can be done, he concludes, “without the Turks.”<sup>1299</sup>

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<sup>1293</sup> Édouard Herriot, « La semaine extérieure — La Turquie et l’Autriche devant la conférence », *L’Information*, 28 janvier 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1294</sup> « Le traité de Sèvres sera révisé, l’Autriche sera secourue », *Le Petit Parisien*, 26 janvier 1921, p. 1 ; Philippe Millet, « Deux écoles en Orient », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 12 février 1921, pp. 203-204. Also see Louis Dumont-Wilden, « La politique anglaise en Orient », *Revue bleue*, 5 février 1921, pp. 89-91.

<sup>1295</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « La situation orientale », *L’Opinion*, 22 janvier 1921, pp. 88-89.

<sup>1296</sup> Henri Mylès, « Ce que l’on attend de la conférence de Londres — La révision du traité de Sèvres », *L’Information*, 8 février 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1297</sup> Henri Mylès, *La Fin de Stamboul*, Paris : R. Chiberre, 1921, pp. 187, 198-211 and passim.

<sup>1298</sup> « Courrier littéraire », *Le Temps*, 12 avril 1921, p. 3 ; « Nos échos », *L’Intransigeant*, 26 avril 1921, p. 2 ; « Échos », *Journal des débats*, 22 mai 1921, p. 2 ; « Le carnet des lettres et des arts », *Comœdia*, 27 mai 1921, p. 2 ; Antoine Scheikevitch, « Les livres — “La Fin de Stamboul” », *Le Radical*, 14 juin 1921, p. 4 ; Jacques Patin, « Chez le libraire », *Le Figaro. Supplément littéraire*, 27 août 1921, p. 2 ; « Comptes-rendus critiques », *Revue des sciences politiques*, XLIV, 1921, pp. 302-303 ; « Les livres qu’il faut avoir lus — Proche et lointain Orient », *Le Matin*, 14 juin 1922, p. 4 ; Charles Merki, « Revue de la quinzaine », *Mercure de France*, 15 juin 1922, p. 828. Excerpts are published in *Revue des sciences politiques*, janvier-mars 1921, pp. 126-130 ; *La Revue de Paris*, 15 mars 1921, pp. 402-408 ; *Journal des débats*, 23 mars 1921, p. 2 ; *L’Europe nouvelle*, 26 mars 1921, pp. 399-400 ; *Le Gaulois du dimanche*, 2 avril 1921, p. 2 ; *Correspondance d’Orient*, 30 novembre 1921, pp. 830-832.

<sup>1299</sup> Maurice Prax, « Mustapha Kémal, la Turquie et nous », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 15 janvier 1921, pp. 262-269.

The same month, the book of Léon Rouillon, *For Turkey. Documents* is published.<sup>1300</sup> The core of the reasoning is familiar: The Turks are our traditional allies, we have considerable interests in the post-Ottoman space; the Greeks are unreliable, traitors, Francophobic, the Armenians are able of the same crimes than those they suffered. What is more remarkable is that the author is a simple ex-soldier of the occupation corps in İstanbul, 22-years old, who is published by one of the main publishing houses of Paris and who uses internal documents of the army and gives in two cases the name of the captain (Aurélien de Coursions, 1858-1923) who has provided them to him. The only explanation is that at least a part of the military has helped and encouraged Rouillon. Well sponsored, the book begins to obtain positive reviews the month it arrives in the bookshops.<sup>1301</sup> Then, a historian who is also a former secretary of Georges Clemenceau publishes an article which is an indictment against the Sèvres treaty (unfair, impossible to implement, and solely designed for the British imperialism) as well as a justification of the Kemalist movement.<sup>1302</sup>

This is not to pretend that resentment toward the Turks has completely disappeared, but it is more and more marginalized,<sup>1303</sup> and there is no organized movement to defend Armenian nationalism, nothing comparable to the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, the Armenia-America Society or the British-Armenia Committee. The France-Armenia Committee established in 1916<sup>1304</sup> and led by centrist MP Charles Guernier (1870-1943) has, during the World War, published one booklet only<sup>1305</sup> and its last mention found for this study dates from 1919.<sup>1306</sup> Similarly, the International Phil-Armenian League, established in Geneva in 1920, has no chapter in France and its only known member in Paris

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<sup>1300</sup> Léon Rouillon, *Pour la Turquie. Documents*, Paris : Grasset, 1921.

<sup>1301</sup> Jacques Patin, « Chez le libraire », *Le Figaro. Supplément littéraire*, 23 janvier 1921, p. 2 ; « Les livres », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 30 janvier 1921, p. 161 ; « Les livres », *La Revue critique des idées et des livres*, 25 mars 1921, p. 760 ; « Ce qu'on lit », *L'Opinion*, 26 mars 1921, p. 358 ; Claude Barjac, « À travers tout l'imprimé », *La Grande Revue*, mai 1921, p. 520 ; Louis Jalabert, « Revue des livres », *Études*, 20 juin 1922, pp. 759-760.

<sup>1302</sup> Léon Abensour, « Faut-il réviser le traité de Sèvres ? », *La Grande Revue*, février 1921, pp. 644-672. Also see J. Simon-Terquem, « La France est-elle morte en Orient ? », *La Grande Revue*, janvier 1921, pp. 453-472. On Abensour : Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Clemenceau*, Paris : Fayard, 1988, pp. 372 and 555.

<sup>1303</sup> Auguste Gauvain, « La Rhénanie et Constantinople », *Journal des débats*, 11 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1304</sup> Lettre de Boghos Nubar à Joseph Reinach, 27 avril 1916, BNF, NAF 13531.

<sup>1305</sup> Anna Yervant Azarian, *L'Arménie*, Paris: Durville Imprimeurs, 1917.

<sup>1306</sup> « Manifestations pro-Armenia », *Bulletin arménien*, 15 août 1919, p. 4.

is Victor Bérard, yet we have seen in the previous chapter what the real designs of Bérard are. The only beginning of organization is in Marseille, as a result of the activities of Aram Turabian and of the local chapter of the Hunchak; but beside speeches in in this city, nothing happens.<sup>1307</sup> In fact, in a letter of W. H. Buckler (BAC) to George Montgomery, director of the AAS, France is described as a target, but he hardly sees anybody on place to promote the Armenian cause.<sup>1308</sup> In these conditions, the tactic tried (in vain) in 1919 and 1920, namely using London and Washington against Paris is used, one more time, before, during and after the London conference.

Yet, there is no coordination and hardly more enthusiasm among the pro-Armenian groups of the Anglo-Saxon countries. Indeed, when he writes to George Montgomery, Aneurin Williams (chairman of the BAC) has whims only. He offers no specific program, and he knows that Britain will not send a single other soldier out of its territory. Similarly, Lord Bryce admits that he does not like Vahan Cardashian, the real force of the ACIA, and does not know well James Gerard, the ACIA's nominal leader. For the rest, Bryce does not see what to do.<sup>1309</sup> Charles Leonard Leese (BAC) vituperates the friends of Turkey, and first of all "the cosmopolitan finance" (sic) but offers no concrete ideas of action.<sup>1310</sup> Indeed, with the publication of his vehement booklet charging President Woodrow Wilson and U.S. missionaries for the fate of Armenia (as well as France),<sup>1311</sup> Cardashian only exacerbates the shift of his organization with the AAS, the missionary establishment and the BAC.<sup>1312</sup> The contradiction explodes publicly when *The New York Times* prints at the same page a letter of

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<sup>1307</sup> « La grande conférence de M. Émile Pignot », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1921, pp. 2-4.

<sup>1308</sup> Letter of W. H. Buckler to George Montgomery, 15 March 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 2.

<sup>1309</sup> Letter of Aneurin Williams to George Montgomery, 5 February 1921; Letter of Lord Bryce to George Montgomery, LC, Montgomery Papers, container 21, folder 2.

<sup>1310</sup> Charles Leonard Leese, "The Allies and Armenia," *The New Armenia*, January-February 1921, pp. 1-3.

<sup>1311</sup> Vahan Cardashian, *Wilson — Wrecker of Armenia*, New York, [American Committee for the Independence of Armenia], 1921 (pp. 6-7 about France, pp. 8-10 about the missionaries, pp. 11-13 about Wilson).

<sup>1312</sup> "We all regret" the publication of Cardashian's booklet (letter of George Montgomery to Boghos Nubar, 30 March 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 2). Also see "Armenians Rally to Defend Missionaries," *The Orient*, 13 April 1921, pp. 146-147. In his apologetic description of Vahan Cardashian, Michael Bobelian, *Children of Armenia*, New York-London: Simon & Schuster, 2009, pp. 41-45, 49-51 and 67-77 omits any description of these tensions. Even the name of George Montgomery is not mentioned.



Montgomery supporting the project of Kemal (Atatürk) to transfer the Turkish capital city to Ankara and a letter of Cardashian attacking the French and the Turks violently and threatening of an Armenian-Soviet alliance to obtain an Armenian from Karabakh to Mersin and İskenderun<sup>1313</sup>—an empty threat, Moscow having no desire for such an alliance, in 1921, and that can only impress the American opinion negatively, in the context of the Red Fear.<sup>1314</sup>

It is dubious, anyway, that a joint front of the AAS, the BAC and the ACIA could achieve anything. Indeed, as the BAC confesses to Montgomery, “Nobody believes that the proposal [made by the BAC itself] to allow the French deficit in Cilicia to be credited against their debt to the U.S. would alter the French determination to evacuate Cilicia, even if the U.S. were to assent to such a financial arrangement.”<sup>1315</sup> Actually, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson himself gives up, in January 1921, any pretention to act in favor of the Armenian nationalists’ territorial claims.<sup>1316</sup> Regardless, if the BAC is rather lucid in private, it seems that Montgomery still believes, in January-February 1921, in the possibility to proclaim an Armenian government in Paris or İstanbul, a joint mandate of several powers on north-eastern Anatolia to achieve, eventually, Sèvres, and an autonomous administration in Adana.<sup>1317</sup> This is what he actually asks to the French cabinet.<sup>1318</sup> The International Phil-Armenian League presents similar claims.<sup>1319</sup> Meanwhile, Avetis Aharonian asks, too, for “an administrative autonomy” of most of “Cilicia,” if a complete separation (“the ideal solution”) is not feasible.<sup>1320</sup> To understand Aharonian’s claim fully, it is necessary to know that, about

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<sup>1313</sup> “A Revised Turkish Treaty,” *The New York Times*, 13 February 1921, p. 5.

<sup>1314</sup> Todd J. Pfannestiel, *Rethinking the Red Fear. The Lusk Committee and New York’s Crusade against Radicalism, 1919–1923*, London-New York: Routledge, 2003.

<sup>1315</sup> Letter of W. H. Buckler to George Montgomery, 16 February 1921, LC, Montgomery Papers, container 21, folder 2.

<sup>1316</sup> Communication from President Wilson to Mr. Hymans on the subject of Armenia, dated January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1317</sup> Statement by Dr. George Montgomery, Director of the Armenia-America Society, January 1921; Letter of George Montgomery to Boghos Nubar, 21 January 1921; Letter of George Montgomery to Lord Curzon, 21 February 1921, LC, Montgomery Papers, container 21, folder 2.

<sup>1318</sup> Letter of George Montgomery to Aristide Briand, 11 February 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1319</sup> Letter of the International Phil-Armenian League to the President of the Council of the League of Nations, 18 February 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1320</sup> Avetis Aharonian, *Le Problème de Cilicie et l’avenir de la France au Levant*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1921, p. 29.

four months earlier, he was considered “a traitor” by the Armenian “committees” of London and New York (likely the Ramkavars of both cities, and Vahan Cardashian), for not insisting on Çukurova.<sup>1321</sup>

Yet, if the Armenian side and his Anglo-Saxon supporters present no unity on the aims, and still less on the methods, Paris knows what he wants: A withdrawal from Çukurova as soon as possible, in exchange of safety for the Turkish-Syrian boundary and economic advantages; and if possible, a general revision of the Sèvres treaty that would be accepted by its signatories, the most problematic in this regard being Britain.<sup>1322</sup> Regarding Armenia, the Quai d’Orsay knows that the Ankara government has no intention to allow to that Sovietized Republic a part of eastern Anatolia. As a result, “Turkey should keep the integrality of the ‘eastern vilayets.’”<sup>1323</sup> Any attempt to use Catholic Armenians would be in vain: Indeed, the Catholic Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia, Pierre Terzian, is despised at the Quai d’Orsay. When the chargé d’affaires in the Vatican reports how he has spoken with Terzian about the anti-French attitude of the Armenian priest of Alexandria, the diplomat reading the dispatch writes in the margin: “*Terzian ne vaut pas grand-chose.*”<sup>1324</sup> Similarly, the MFA is accurately informed of the defeat of the Greek armies in January 1921.<sup>1325</sup>

Relations with Turks in exile and with the Italian government confirm this clarity of views. As early as January, a group of former CUP leaders, headed by Ahmet Rıza and Cavit Bey, prepares in Rome, with one representative of Kemal (Atatürk), Cami Bey, who is later part of the delegation in London, what may be called the draft of the Franco-Turkish agreement of March: Evacuation of the Çukurova region, including Antep; a “mixed” (Muslims and Christians) gendarmerie with “French officers”; contracts for French companies, particularly

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<sup>1321</sup> Note pour le secrétariat de la présidence, 6 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1322</sup> Note pour la conférence de Paris du 24 janvier 1921. 22 janvier 1921, AMAE, P 1441. Meanwhile, Gouraud tries in Syria the conciliatory method used in Morocco: Edmund Burke, “A Comparative View of French Native Policy in Morocco and Syria, 1912-1925,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, IX-2, May 1973, pp. 175-186.

<sup>1323</sup> Note sur l’Arménie, 16 février 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1324</sup> M. Doucet, chargé d’affaires de France près le Saint-Siège, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 janvier 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1325</sup> Les opérations grecques en Asie mineure, 22 janvier 1921, AMAE, P 1441.

in Mersin.<sup>1326</sup> The Quai d'Orsay does not hide to largely find inspiration from this text.<sup>1327</sup> A personal letter of Ahmet Rıza to Aristide Briand, on 14 January 1921, indicates that the conference of Rome has been organized with the agreement of Briand's predecessor, Georges Leygues, and that Rıza considers the situation to be even better for the Turks with the return of Briand in power.<sup>1328</sup> More officially, Robert de Caix writes to the Quai d'Orsay that the head of the Ankara's delegation, Bekir Sami (Kunduh) "is well known in Beirut where he has left the recollection of a remarkable vali [...] and suspect of sympathies for France."<sup>1329</sup> Correspondingly, before the conference, Carlo Sforza proposes a preliminary agreement for a mutual support of the French and Italian delegations, a proposal accepted in Paris, as the positions of these two delegations are similar.<sup>1330</sup> Yet, Paris knows from the beginning how difficult it will be: After the new ambassador in London, Charles de Saint-Aulaire (1866-1954), asks for the release of the Turks interned in Malta, Lord Curzon answers that they have been arrested for "atrocities." He promises to check if they are "political" prisoners among them, but even for them, he would prefer to release them if the Turks "show themselves reasonable at the conference."<sup>1331</sup> (Actually, the British authorities have to release all the 144 arrested officials in two waves, in 1921, having failed to find any evidence against them, concerning the massacres of Armenians or the treatment of war prisoners.<sup>1332</sup>) That could be a reason why the generally well-named daily *L'Information*, assumes that, considering the British and Greek opposition to significant changes to the Sèvres treaty, "the best that can be expected

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<sup>1326</sup> Télégramme d'Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca aux ambassadeurs français à Londres, Constantinople et Beyrouth, 14 janvier 1921 ; Délégation d'Angora à la conférence de Londres, 18 février 1921, AMAE, P 1441.

<sup>1327</sup> « Le traité de Sèvres et la conférence de Londres — Les thèses nationales en présence », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 19 février 1921, p. 239.

<sup>1328</sup> AMAE, P 1441.

<sup>1329</sup> Télégramme de Robert de Caix au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 17 février 1921, AMAE, P 1441. Also see Note, 14 janvier 1920, AMAE, P 1574.

<sup>1330</sup> AMAE, P 1441. On Sforza's intentions, also see Charles à Court Repington, *After the War. A Diary*, London-Bombay-Sydney: Constable & C°, 1922, pp. 56-57 (entry 7 February 1921).

<sup>1331</sup> Télégramme de Charles de Saint-Aulaire au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 février 1921, AMAE, P 1441.

<sup>1332</sup> Letter of R. C. Lindsay to Sir Horace Rumbold, 16 February 1921, FO 371/6499/E 1801; Letter of R. W. Woods to the Foreign Office, 29 July 1921, FO 371/6504/E 8745; Memorandum of the War Office, 9 August 1921, FO 371/6504/E 9112; Letter of Judge Lindsay Smith to Sir Horace Rumbold, 24 August 1921, FO 371/6504/E10023; Bilâl N. Şimşir, "The Deportees of Malta and the Armenian Question," *Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey (1912-1926)*, Ankara: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1992, pp. 26-41.

from the London conference is to somewhat improve the situation, leaving the events to decide the difficulties that are today unresolvable” and to stop any material support to Greece. The Armenian issue is not discussed in that article.<sup>1333</sup> Actually, the very presence of a delegation from Ankara is obtained in spite of the vehement opposition of the Greek government, at the request of Paris and after an intervention of Carlo Sforza to Lloyd George.<sup>1334</sup>

This is in these conditions that the London conference begins. The United Armenian Delegations (Avetis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar) initially claim that the “clauses of the Sèvres treaty regarding Armenia” must be maintained “intact” and their implementation obtained by the action of the Entente, as its troops occupy İstanbul and “other parts” of Turkey. Nowhere the fact that the French and Italian governments prepare the evacuation of their zones of occupation is considered and no argument is presented to explain how an independent Armenia, built against the will of the Turkish majority in eastern Anatolia, could survive between Turkey and the Soviet Republics.<sup>1335</sup> To only increase the confusion, when the issue of the “Armenian National Home” (a vaguely autonomous territory supposed to become independent later), Boghos Nubar and Avetis Aharonian claim that “no new fact” can justify a modification of the articles of the Sèvres treaty regarding Armenia, but then Nubar pretends that the Wilson arbitration gave to Armenia more than what he ever asked, particularly in attributing the province of Trabzon to this Caucasian Republic. He then asks for a special statue in “Cilicia.”<sup>1336</sup> Yet, as we saw, Nubar had claimed Trabzon in 1919, and in his joint letter with Aharonian written right before the Armenian issue be discussed in London, there is no reference to any territory attributed by Wilson in excess. And actually, in

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<sup>1333</sup> « M. Vénizélos et les Turcs à la conférence de Londres », *L'Information*, 21 février 1921, p. 1. Also see Pierre-Abdon Boisson, « Nos enquêtes — Le dualisme turc », *France-Orient*, 5 février 1921, pp. 3-4 ; A. de Gobart, « Pour la paix de l’Orient », *L’Intransigeant*, 19 février 1921, p. 1. David Lloyd George maintains his intransigence against his own War Office and against the King himself: Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923*, London-Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 228-230.

<sup>1334</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic. The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923*, Ankara: TTK, 2000, volume III-1, pp. 1201-1218.

<sup>1335</sup> Les Délégations arméniennes réunies à M. le président du Conseil suprême, 25 février 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1336</sup> British Secretary Notes of an Allied Conference held in Lord Curzon’s Room at the Foreign Office, 26 February 1921, in Rohan Butler and J. P.-T. Bury (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Service, 1<sup>st</sup> series, volume XV, 1967, pp. 207-213; Télégramme de Philippe Berthelot au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 26 février 1921, AMAE, P 16675. Jean Pichon, *Le Partage du Proche-Orient*, Paris : J. Peyronnet & Cie, 1938, p. 230 inaccurately presents Nubar and Aharonian as reasonable during the London conference of February-March 1921.

an interview with Carlo Sforza on 5 March 1921, he calls the end of his claims toward Trabzon a “concession” to the Turks.<sup>1337</sup> George Montgomery comes to London to support the project of “Home” in north-eastern Anatolia and of mandate on Çukurova, including in speaking with Philippe Berthelot, now general secretary of the Quai d’Orsay.<sup>1338</sup>

Because of the insistence of Lord Curzon, a reference to an Armenian “national home on the frontiers of Turkey is Asia” is included in the conclusions of the conference,<sup>1339</sup> but it must be emphasized that no government believes in it. The French position (no change on the eastern boundary of Turkey is even thinkable) has already been seen and the Italian position is no different. The Turkish position does not need an explanation. The issue is, as a result, what the British cabinet actually thinks. Yet, beside the fact that Curzon and Lloyd George know that the British public opinion will not allow any military intervention in eastern Anatolia, on behalf of the Foreign Office, D. G. Osborne explains (in vain) to Avetis Aharonian that “The wealthy Armenians of Manchester, London and Paris have nothing to gain by returning to the fatherland” and, even more importantly, “Transcaucasian Armenia is Bolshevik now. By annexing the Turkish territories to them, we shall be strengthening the Russians.” Osborne insists (almost certainly to embarrass Paris) that Aharonian should ask for an Armenian national home in Çukurova, and to abandon any project in eastern Anatolia.<sup>1340</sup>

The London conference anyway ends by a failure, chiefly because the Greek side refuses the compromises on İzmir (a special statute for five years, with a Christian governor and a mixed gendarmerie).<sup>1341</sup> Regardless, in conformity with Briand’s announced intent to settle the issue of Adana as soon as possible, a separate, bilateral agreement is signed. It proclaims the end of hostilities and includes an exchange of prisoners. The French troops are supposed to leave in a month the territories the Sèvres treaty guaranteed to Turkey; the regions of Antep, Urfa, Killis and Mardin, given back to Turkey, have to be evacuated “progressively” at conditions decided by a joint commission. “Police forces” made of the existing gendarmerie

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<sup>1337</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary. Part VII,” *Armenian Review*, XVII-2, summer 1964, p. 61.

<sup>1338</sup> Notes of George Montgomery, 20-28 February 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 2.

<sup>1339</sup> Draft proposals for modification of the treaty of Sèvres, *Documents on British...*, p. 381.

<sup>1340</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to...”, p. 54 (entry 22 February 1921).

<sup>1341</sup> British Secretary’s Notes of an Allied Conference, held in St-James’ Palace, on Saturday, March 12, 1921, *British Documents on...*, p. 406.

have to be created, and to include French officers (the general command being Turkish); the “ethnic minorities” have to be represented in the gendarmerie and the municipalities. The French schools, hospitals and relief institution will be maintained (the reference to the last one seems to be a consequence of the Capitrel plan described at the previous chapter). France obtains economic concessions and Turkey a special administrative regime for İskenderun (today’s Hatay).<sup>1342</sup> The Turkish negotiator, Bekir Sami, is not only a Francophile, but also, as early as 1920, among the most suspicious Turkish leaders, toward the real intentions of Soviet Russia regarding Turkey in general and eastern Anatolia in particular<sup>1343</sup>—which largely explains his concessions. The treaty, in the words of Briand, was “required both by the French opinion and the Parliament, interpreters of the financial necessities imposed to our country, and by the general guidelines of our policy in the East” for “the restoration and reinforcement of the previous relations of friendship and the preponderant influence of France.”<sup>1344</sup>

Briand has indeed nothing to fear in the Parliament: Even Senator Étienne Flandin (1853-1922), relatively pro-Armenian, delivers a speech to explain that Sèvres was funest for the French interest and that the agreement of March solely has to be implemented in its integrality, particularly regarding the guarantees for the Armenian population.<sup>1345</sup> There is virtually no opposition in the press. Even Auguste Gauvain, the generally anti-Turkish editor of the *Journal des débats* calls the agreement “necessary” and only asks for the implementation of all the “precautions” regarding the safety of the Christians that are in the text. The special envoy in London of the same daily considers the text “favorable to our interests.”<sup>1346</sup> Raymond Poincaré in the *Revue des deux mondes* similarly argues that this is the national interest to evacuate Çukurova, to give back the region to the Turkish “sovereignty” and to conclude economic agreements with Ankara. Greece deserves no

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<sup>1342</sup> « L'accord franco-turc », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 26 mars 1921, pp. 407-408.

<sup>1343</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy...*, pp. 44-46.

<sup>1344</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au haut-commissaire Beyrouth, 29 mars 1921, AMAE, P 17785.

<sup>1345</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 6 avril 1921, pp. 568-571.

<sup>1346</sup> Auguste Gauvain, « L'accord franco-turc », *Journal des débats*, 13 mars 1921, p. 1 ; Pierre de Lacretelle, « La conférence de Londres », *Journal des débats*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

support.<sup>1347</sup> The *Mercure de France* presents the same arguments<sup>1348</sup> and *L'Écho de Paris* argues that the main regret to have regarding the agreement with the representatives of Kemal (Atatürk) is that it was not signed earlier.<sup>1349</sup> *Le Petit Parisien*, the most distributed daily, emphasizes the necessity to sign peace with the Turks and makes an interview with Bekir Sami.<sup>1350</sup>

For *L'Intransigeant* (independent right-wing), the agreement is a new step of a multi-secular tradition preserving the French interests in the Levant.<sup>1351</sup> The mainstream weekly *L'Illustration* also insists on the fact that this is a return to the traditions and in conformity with the national interest, adding the Moroccan dimension of the issue (the displeasure caused by the Sèvres treaty in that country and the action of Marshal Lyautey as a result).<sup>1352</sup> Jacques Bainville does not hide his relief and praises, without giving their names, the “writers” (Pierre Loti, Claude Farrère), the “journalists” (himself, certainly Berthe Georges-Gaulis and some others) and “soldiers” (surely Hubert Lyautey and Henri Gouraud, perhaps Henri Rollin) who have made possible the restoration of “a good tradition.”<sup>1353</sup> Similarly, the elites’ weekly *L'Opinion* sees the London conference and the bilateral agreement as “a success for French cleverness” against the absurd treaty signed at Sèvres and claims to have been part in this success.<sup>1354</sup> The popular daily *Le Matin* is equally satisfied: The provinces of

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<sup>1347</sup> Raymond Poincaré, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1921, p. 696.

<sup>1348</sup> Naoum, « Turquie », *Mercure de France*, 15 avril 1921, pp. 557-564.

<sup>1349</sup> Pertinax, « Un accord franco-turc a été signé hier », *L'Écho de Paris*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1350</sup> Philippe Millet, « La conférence de Londres entend les deux délégations turques », *Le Petit Parisien*, 24 février 1921, p. 1 ; Philippe Millet, « Le règlement de la question d'Orient », *Le Petit Parisien*, 26 février 1921, p. 1 ; « Avant de repartir pour Angora, Bekir Sami Bey nous parle des relations franco-turques », *Le Petit Parisien*, 24 mars 1921, p.1 ; « Après l'accord franco-turc — Le général Gouraud nous dit quelle sera désormais notre politique dans le Levant », *Le Petit Parisien*, 21 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1351</sup> Jean de Bonnefon, « Après l'accord franco-turc — Les privilèges de France », *L'Intransigeant*, 17 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1352</sup> « La visite de Bekir Sami Bey au maréchal Lyautey et au général Gouraud », *L'Illustration*, 26 mars 1921, p. 276.

<sup>1353</sup> Jacques Bainville, « La politique », *L'Action française*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1354</sup> Jacques Bardoux, « Les leçons de Londres », *L'Opinion*, 19 mars 1921, pp. 305-307.

Antep, Urfa and Mardin are inhabited by “a large majority of Turks” and the economic concessions obtained from Bekir Sami are significant.<sup>1355</sup>

*Le Figaro*, the daily of the center-right bourgeoisie, ranks the agreement among “the happy consequences of the negotiations in London” as it leaves to general Gouraud all the remaining forces to develop Syria and Lebanon.<sup>1356</sup> *Le Gaulois*, the daily of the nationalist-conservative bourgeoisie, reaches a similar conclusion.<sup>1357</sup> The popular daily of conservative nationalism, *Le Petit Journal*, chooses as subtitle “This is peace in Cilicia” and publishes an interview with Bekir Sami.<sup>1358</sup> On the right, too, *La Liberté* also chooses implicit approval.<sup>1359</sup> In continuity with its stance since the end of 1918, the mainstream daily *Le Journal* sees the agreement positively.<sup>1360</sup> For the mouthpiece of the colonial party, Asian wing, *L’Asie française*, the loss of Antep, Urfa and Mardin causes “some regret” but it is likely the price to pay to make peace with the Turks and to return to the traditional friendship. *L’Asie française* also finds justified the demand of the Ankara’s delegation to recover the eastern Thrace.<sup>1361</sup> In *La Petite Gironde* (Bordeaux), the most distributed daily out of Paris, Joseph Barthélémy (1874-1945), a center-right deputy, member of the Foreign Affairs committee at the Chamber of deputies, argues that Sèvres was neither fair nor realistic. Çukurova has to be evacuated: As France shall remain in Syria, we will be the neighbors of Turks, yet Turkey has changed since 1908.<sup>1362</sup>

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<sup>1355</sup> « L’accord franco-turc est signé », *Le Matin*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1356</sup> Jacques Roujon, « La France en Syrie », *Le Figaro*, 19 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1357</sup> « L’interpellation sur les accords de Londres — M. Briand les expose à la Chambre », *Le Gaulois*, 17 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1358</sup> Marcel Ray, « M. Briand rentre à Paris, pleinement satisfait des résultats obtenus — C’est la paix en Cilicie », *Le Petit Journal*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1359</sup> « La France a fait la paix avec les kémalistes — Les hostilités cessent immédiatement en Cilicie », *La Liberté* 13 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1360</sup> « L’accord franco-turc », *Le Journal*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1361</sup> Henri Froideveaux, « La conférence de Londres et les questions du Levant », *L’Asie française*, mars 1921, pp. 86-88.

<sup>1362</sup> Joseph Barthélémy, « La construction de la paix », *La Petite Gironde*, 11 mars 1921, p. 1. Also see Henri Lorin, « La France et le traité de Sèvres », *La Petite Gironde*, 26 février 1921, p. 1. Lorin, too, is a center-right member of the Chamber of deputies. By profession, he is a professor of colonial geography at the University of Bordeaux.



The left-wing and center-left press cannot do less. For Gaston Doumergue, signing an agreement for the evacuation of Çukurova is not merely necessary: It should have been done “ten or twelve months earlier.”<sup>1363</sup> *L'Œuvre* expresses its deep satisfaction that the government of Ankara has been recognized, exactly what this daily has asked for “more than a year.” The draft with Greece is “imperfect and even not comprehensive,” but it is a beginning. The agreements of Ankara’s representatives with France and Italy are, for *L'Œuvre*, fine.<sup>1364</sup> The Socialist daily *Le Populaire* firmly supports, too, the Kemalist point of view during the London conference<sup>1365</sup> and logically defends the agreement of March, praising “the giant of Anatolia” Bekir Sami for that victory against imperialism.<sup>1366</sup> *L'Humanité* (now Communist) expresses its joy that “the Kemalists have triumphed” against the Sèvres treaty.<sup>1367</sup> *Le Radical* is even more vigorous, not only justifying the text signed by the French and Turkish delegations, but strongly criticizing the proposals of the London conference for the rest, as dominated by British imperialism.<sup>1368</sup> *La Lanterne* blames the Greek point of view in London and sees the Franco-Turkish agreement as a hope for a future general peace in the Near East.<sup>1369</sup> *Le Rappel* supports the Turks during the conference of London—playing a kind of pingpong party with the far rightist columnist Jacques Bainville, who smiles in seeing republicans endorsing what “Francis I already knew”—then supports the peace settlement.<sup>1370</sup> Pierre Loti understands that the French public opinion now is sufficiently

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<sup>1363</sup> Gaston Doumergue, « Notre situation financière — Les millions à l'eau », *Le Petit Méridional*, 10 avril 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1364</sup> Charles Saglio, « La France a fait la paix avec la Turquie », *L'Œuvre*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1365</sup> André Pierre, « La conférence de Londres — Les questions d'Orient », *Le Populaire*, 25 février 1921, p. 1 ; André Pierre, « Diplomatie de Pénélope », *Le Populaire*, 26 février 1921, p. 1 ; André Pierre, « Le refus de la Grèce », *Le Populaire*, 2 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1366</sup> André Pierre, « Une victoire kémaliste — L'accord franco-turc », *Le Populaire*, 13 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1367</sup> Paul Louis, « La Cilicie sera évacuée... Mais quand donc évacuera-t-on la Syrie ? », *L'Humanité*, 12 mars 1921, p. 3.

<sup>1368</sup> Bernard Guinaudeau, « Le problème oriental à la conféréne de Londres », *Le Radical*, 14 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1369</sup> « Vers la révision du traité de Sèvres — MM. Briand et Lloyd George s'entremettent pour mettre d'accord Turcs et Grecs », *La Lanterne*, 11 mars 1921, p. 1 ; « Les entrevues de Londres — Un accord provisoire franco-turc suspend l'aventure de Cilicie », *La Lanterne*, 12 mars 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1370</sup> Edmond du Mesnil, « L'heure de la Turquie », *Le Rappel*, 26 février 1921, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « La politique », *L'Action française*, 27 février 1921, p. 1 ; « Revue de la presse », *Le Rappel*, 28 février 1921, p. 2.

enlightened. Seriously weakened by the illness that eventually kills him in 1923, he devotes his last article to “supplicate” Britain to change its attitude toward the Turks.<sup>1371</sup>

Significantly, on the exact opposite, Aram Turabian is reduced to powerless screams, attributing the stance of the French press to “financiers” (without giving one name, or providing a shred of evidence) and to the money of Ahmet Rıza.<sup>1372</sup> Yet, there is no proof that Rıza distributed any money to French newspapers, or even that his action is more important than the one of Nihat Reşat, for example.<sup>1373</sup> The choice to focus on Rıza seems due to the anti-Masonic obsession of many Armenian nationalists. A similar paranoia is showed by James Aratoon Malcolm, representative of Armenian National Delegation in London, who considers that “the subservience of the French to Turkish dictates needs no description.”<sup>1374</sup> Boghos Nubar calls the agreement of March 1921 “worse than all what we imagined,” because it orders the evacuation of Antep, Killis and Urfa, in addition to Mersin, Tarsus and Adana. Nubar sees the refusal of Ankara coming but, in a short moment of lucidity, he fears that such a refusal would only lead to more concessions of France to the Ankara government. As a result, “we put our hope” in the action of the AAS, to use Washington against Paris<sup>1375</sup> (after the complete failures of this method in 1919 and 1920). One more time, he expresses no hope in anybody in France. However, his trust into the capacities of Montgomery are misplaced.

Indeed, the director of the AAS considers Victor Bérard as a possible relay in Paris (an idea that only proves that Montgomery has understood nothing to the real intents of Bérard) and, as the spokesman of René Viviani has told him that the Vatican is at the center of the “pro-Turkish propaganda,” Montgomery thinks it could be used in the Socialist press.<sup>1376</sup> The support of Pope Benedict XV to the Turkish national movement in 1920-1921 is a fact, but it

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<sup>1371</sup> Pierre Loti, « Ultima verba — Suprême et déchirante adjuration de Pierre Loti », *L'Œuvre*, 21 avril 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1372</sup> Aram Turabian, « La France et la Cilicie arménienne » ; « Discours de M. Turabian », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1921, pp. 2-3 ; « La force prime le droit », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1921, p. 2.

<sup>1373</sup> AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467; F<sup>7</sup> 13786.

<sup>1374</sup> Letter of James Aratoon Malcolm to George Montgomery, 7 June 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 4.

<sup>1375</sup> Letter of Boghos Nubar to George Montgomery, 1 April 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 3.

<sup>1376</sup> Letter of George Montgomery to Boghos Nubar, 12 April 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 3.

is expressed publicly (“All our sympathies come to you,” states the pope in welcoming Hilmi Bey, representative of Kemal)<sup>1377</sup> and does not bother the French Socialists who support all or part of the Turkish national pact.<sup>1378</sup> Correspondingly, Montgomery finds wise to write a letter to Robert de Caix to ask for a separate French mandate on Adana, with the possibility of an American loan, and tries to justify such a claim in citing Pierre Redan (pen name of Pierre André). No answer has been found for this doctoral research, either in the Montgomery papers, either in the de Caix papers, either in any other place. The AAS shows the same blindness in its aims, asking, in spite of the results of the London conference, an Armenian autonomy in the parts of Anatolia attributed by Woodrow Wilson to Armenia, an autonomy for “Cilicia” and loans to fund these projects.<sup>1379</sup>

The eventual failure of the 9 March 1921 agreement has in fact nothing to do with the action of Anglo-Saxon friends of the Armenian nationalism. It fails because the Grand National Assembly of Ankara finds it too far from the National Pact (especially regarding the economic sovereignty) and also, if not even more, because France appears to have left the Greek forces to attack in April. A close reading of the records shows that, exceptionally, Briand is entrapped. Indeed, Count Sforza was forced, during the London conference, to deny the Italian supply in weapons and ammunitions to the Kemalist movement, and David Lloyd George reacted in stating that the Great powers should remain “neutral.” Briand intervened is suggesting to warn the Greeks that they would continue the war “at their own risks.” Later, Sforza argued again that “it would be profitable for the allies to inform both parties that they have made every effort to bring the parties together,” and, as a result, a continuation of the war would “at their own risk and their own expenses.” Briand “agreed.”<sup>1380</sup> Their goal clearly was to end the British support for the Greek army, at least to end its official character, in case of failure of the London conference to reach a general peace—the first formulation of Briand

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<sup>1377</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2449, 17 février 1921, p. 13, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 238.

<sup>1378</sup> « Mohamed Ali reçu par le pape — Benoît XV contre le traité imposé à la Turquie », *Le Populaire*, 6 août 1920, p. 1.

<sup>1379</sup> Resolution of the Armenia-America Society, 8 April 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 3. In a letter to Albert Kammerer (deputy director for Asia at the MFA), on 7 January 1921, de Caix writes that Lieutenant-Colonel Thibault is “rather brémondist, [but] not sufficiently to be unable to inform you.” (AMAE, P 11203). This is not difficult to guess what de Caix thinks about André, the closest associate of Brémond.

<sup>1380</sup> Notes of an Informal Conference held at the Head of Government at St James’ Palace on March 4, [1921]; British Secretary’s Notes of an Allied Conference held in Mr. Bonar Law’s room, House of Commons, on 10 March 1921, *Documents on British...*, pp. 283 and 391-392.

could even be a threat to provide weapons to the Turks. Yet, as a result of the Franco-Turkish agreement of 9 March 1921, Gounaris announces to David Lloyd George that the Greek army shall restart the fight. Lloyd George briefly tries to discourage him, but in vain.<sup>1381</sup>

### *5.1.2. New attempts regarding the evacuation until October 1921*

The failure of the bilateral agreement signed in London does not discourage Paris. The determination of Briand, the personality of his deputy chief of staff and of his minister of War are not the only reasons, even if they are essential. Indeed, the Navy's intelligence service reports that the problem with Kemalist Turkey is neither Bolshevism as an ideology in Anatolia (it is virtually non-existent here) nor Kemal and his closest associates, but the corrupted journalists who attack France and Italy because they receive Russian money (a money indispensable to the maintain of their newspapers). The service concludes that the solution consists in ending the isolation of Ankara and to send Western representatives, and, if possible, in obtaining from the British government the release of men such as Rahmi (Evrenoszade) Bey (former governor of İzmir), Fethi (Okyar) Bey (1880-1943), Reouf Bey and General Cevat (Çobanlı) Paşa (1870-1938).<sup>1382</sup> Henri Rollin also argues that "a serious Greek success does not seem to be expected" and that the defeats of the Greek army in January and April 1921 are largely due to their contempt for the Turks—a contempt that systematically leads them to underestimate the Kemalist forces. The probability of a future Hellenic victory is even weaker as the Greeks are divided between the supporters of King Constantine, of Venizelos, and of discontent who call themselves Bolsheviks more by disgust than by deep approval of Communism; and as the Greek command is reduced to forced enrolment of Greeks of Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. In these conditions, Rollin considers that Prime Minister Dimitrios Gounaris (1867-1922) himself is not in favor of the expedition but is not able to stop it and shall continue "until the final catastrophe." For Rollin, it is likely too late, in April 1921, to provoke a quick collapse of Soviet Russia, but, if only for the fight against Communism, the credibility of the word of the Entente in Ankara has to be secured.<sup>1383</sup>

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<sup>1381</sup> Note of a Meeting held at 10, Downing Street, on March 18, 1921, *ibid.*, pp. 448-449.

<sup>1382</sup> S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, n° 2003 [1921] ; S.R. Marine, *Turquie*, n° 2493, 13 avril 1921 ; Henri Rollin, *La situation en Orient au 15 avril 1921*, p. 8, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 238 (also in SHD, 20 N 1080).

<sup>1383</sup> Henri Rollin, *La situation en Orient au 15 avril 1921*, pp. 2-8 and 24-31 ; *Conclusion d'ensemble*, pp. 2-3, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 238. Concerning Communism, Berthe Georges-Gaulis defends roughly the same

General Antoine Gramat (1866-1924), chief of the military mission in Athens, confirms: "Mister Theotokis, minister of War ad interim" has made a statement, in April 1921, saying that "the Greek losses are considerable." By his own information, General Gramat concludes, at the end of April, that the Greek divisions are unable of decisive success; and in June, he affirms that "the Kemalists have the ascending" and observes that the visit of King Constantine does not improve the situation. Then, in July, he reports that the Greek losses at Kütahya are "much heavier than it was believed".<sup>1384</sup> In these conditions, this is not a surprise if Léon Rouillon, the fiercely pro-Turkish ex-soldier supported by the military, manages to publish an article, in July 1921, to defend the Turkish point of view against Greece in one of the main Parisian reviews.<sup>1385</sup>

Marshal Hubert Lyautey, general resident in Morocco, already cited for his interventions since 1919, encourages Briand to continue in the way opened by the unofficial visit of Franklin-Bouillon. Lyautey recalls the extremely positive effect of his meeting with the Kemalist delegates after the London conference and, on the contrary, the negative effects of the failure of the agreement, as the failure is used by the opponents to the French protectorate, especially Abd el-Malek, armed by Germany during the World War. Lyautey concludes that a success in this regard would have a considerable impact in the Muslim world in general and in Morocco in particular.<sup>1386</sup> To fully understand the letter of Lyautey, it is necessary to know the popularity of the Turkish national movement in the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) and, at least in the Moroccan case, that this popularity (materialized in Tangier by a fundraising event with 500 participants, in 1922) does not necessarily mean, in the context of 1920-1922, a desire to imitate it, as long as France does not side with Greece

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thesis: Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Le mouvement asiatique et l'Europe », *La Revue universelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1921, pp. 615-618.

<sup>1384</sup> Télégramme du général Gramat au ministère de la Guerre, 31 avril 1921 ; Id., 23 juin 1921 ; Id., 29 juin 1921 ; Id., 22 juillet 1921, SHD, 6 N 169. Also see Bulletin de renseignement du 8 avril 1921, SHD, 20 N 1082, dossier 2. On the military situation seen from Ankara: Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, président de la République de Turquie*, Ankara : Centre de recherches Atatürk, 2013, pp. 506-512 and 529.

<sup>1385</sup> Léon Rouillon, « Entre les Grecs et les Turcs », *La Grande Revue*, juillet 1921, pp. 76-86.

<sup>1386</sup> Hubert Lyautey, à M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 juin 1921, in Pierre Lyautey (ed.), *Lyautey l'Africain. Textes et lettres du maréchal Lyautey*, Paris : Plon, volume IV, 1919-1925, 1957, pp. 110-112.

and, on the contrary, supports Ankara.<sup>1387</sup> Meanwhile, inside the Ministry of War, Colonel Louis Mougin, who was in İstanbul in 1919-1920 and who now is working for the High Commission of Beirut, campaigns for the continuation of efforts to sign peace with Ankara.<sup>1388</sup>

On the margins of the state apparatus is Jean Herbette, in charge of the diplomacy in the unofficial daily *Le Temps*. We already saw Herbette opposing, in private and in his daily, the Armenian nationalists' ambitions toward Çukurova, by February 1919, and the various editorials (mostly written by Herbette, albeit they are never signed) of the newspaper advocating realism toward the Turks. However, in 1921, Herbette intervenes more directly. His networking has considerably progressed during the First World War (directly with Raymond Poincaré, Maurice Barrès, the Quai d'Orsay, General Franchet d'Espèrey etc.; through his brother with the big business) and he is in good terms with Henry Franklin-Bouillon and Colonel Mougin. Herbette develops his contacts with Turks by the end of 1920 (Ahmet Rıza then also Naby Bey, member of the Kemalist delegation in London) and continues his campaign after the London conference—attracting to himself the impotent ire of the partner Greece's agent Michel Paillarès (discussed in the last chapter).<sup>1389</sup> Meanwhile, Maurice Bompard, former ambassador in İstanbul, publishes his recollections, which contain a certain number of inaccuracies and which are certainly not the best source on Talat and Enver, but which conclude that “it is fair to pity” the Turkish people and that “it is wise to treat him with gentleness.” Bompard considers the action of Reşit Safvet Atabinen for the rapprochement with France to be an example to follow in Ankara.<sup>1390</sup>

Also on the margins of the state apparatus is the action of the *Comité France-Orient*. Less important than the Comité de l'Asie française, this group, established in June 1913 under the auspices of the MFA, is not negligible: Its co-chairs are Louis Marin (1871-1960), deputy from 1905 to 1940 then from 1946 to 1951, member of the Foreign Affairs committee, and Paul Messier (1878-1922), who is also a deputy; the board is made of businessmen, bankers,

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<sup>1387</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 30; Odile Moreau, “Echoes of national liberation: Turkey viewed from the Maghrib in the 1920s,” *The Journal of North African Studies*, VIII-1, 2003, pp. 59-63.

<sup>1388</sup> Yves Denéchère, *Jean Herbette (1878-1960). Journaliste et ambassadeur*, Berne-Paris : Peter Lang/Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2003, pp. 85-86.

<sup>1389</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-87.

<sup>1390</sup> Maurice Bompard, « L'entrée en guerre de la Turquie — II », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 juillet 1921, p. 288.

retired colonels and diplomats, these labels being not exclusive: Jean-Camille Blondel (1854-1935), vice-president, is a former ambassador in Romania, and in 1921 he is vice-president of the Franco-Romanian Bank as well as vice-president of a Romanian oil company. After the London conference, the committee publishes the book of Turkish journalist Alaeddine Haïdar, a vigorous defense of the Kemalist movement, with a forward written by the general secretary of the committee, Pierre-Abdon Boisson.<sup>1391</sup> Boisson and the other committee's leaders distribute the book, together with their own production (tracts, communiqués, letters received from Turkey) to the Quai d'Orsay and to politicians. It is not clear, in the consulted sources, if MP Édouard Daladier is formally a member of the committee, but it is clear that his action is seen by the group very positively.<sup>1392</sup> The personality of the general secretary, Boisson, is not the less remarkable aspect. During the 1890s, he was an attaché of the Ottoman embassy in Paris, wrote in 1895 under a penname a book on the Armenian events of 1894 then, in 1896, a booklet on the events of 1895.<sup>1393</sup> Notoriously close the Quai d'Orsay during the interwar,<sup>1394</sup> he receives the *Légion d'honneur* in 1929, at the request of that Ministry, for his "services rendered for more than 30 years to the French influence in the East,"<sup>1395</sup> a number showing that the "services" cover his pro-Turkish action of 1921 and even his years at the Ottoman embassy.

In this context, the French cabinet tries to convince the British cabinet, at the Paris conference of June 1921, to modify the Sèvres treaty more than it has been done in London. However, the evolution is not considerable: The British government accepts the end of the Greek occupation of İzmir, the choice of the governor by the Turkish government and does not claim quotas of Christians in the local administration; but the discussions end without solution regarding eastern Thrace. The question of the "Armenian national home" is not debated at all.<sup>1396</sup> Yet, if the personal relations of Briand with Lloyd George remain quite correct until Briand's resignation in January 1922, the French cabinet is decided to act even

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<sup>1391</sup> Alaeddine Haïdar, *À Angora auprès de Moustafa Kémal*, Paris : France-Orient, 1921. The book ends with a description of the committee by itself, used here to present the leadership of the organization.

<sup>1392</sup> Pierre-Abdon Boisson, « L'accord d'Angora », *France-Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1921.

<sup>1393</sup> « En Turquie », *La Dépêche* (Toulouse), 8 mai 1896, p. 2.

<sup>1394</sup> Pierre-Abdon Boisson, « Lettre de France », *Les Échos* (Damas), 24 octobre 1929, p. 1.

<sup>1395</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Lois et décrets*, 15 mars 1929, p. 3026.

<sup>1396</sup> *Négociations de paix avec la Turquie*, décembre 1921, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 61, ff. 122-134.

against the British one if necessary. In 1921, too, seeing that Lloyd George vetoes the attribution of High Silesia to France's Polish ally, Briand requests the arbitration of the League of Nations. Lloyd George accepts, ignoring that Briand already has secured a majority at the League in favor of most of the Polish claims. After the Franco-Polish thesis wins, on 13 October 1921 (one week before the Ankara agreement) the bitterness in London is obvious.<sup>1397</sup>

Briand takes an even bigger risk in sending Franklin-Bouillon for an unofficial visit in Anatolia. The negotiations, that take place in June, are not made difficult by the Armenian issue but by the insistence of the Ankara's government to obtain the economic sovereignty of Turkey on the basis of the National Pact. The discussion interrupts politely when Franklin-Bouillon declares he has no authority to continue so far but shall come back to Paris with the text of the National Pact.<sup>1398</sup> The fact that Franklin-Bouillon is welcomed from the beginning is perceived by the Navy's Intelligence service as an indication that Ankara is becoming more conciliatory.<sup>1399</sup> Franklin-Bouillon comes back in Paris with the conviction that "the Kemalism's leaders include the intellectual elite of Turkey," have "no German influence" and that "the strongest discipline reigns," even more easily as "the taxes enter remarkably."<sup>1400</sup>

Berthe Georges-Gaulis comes here, too, the month before the arrival of Franklin-Bouillon (May) and also just before her campaign to defend the Ankara government—and to attack the Near Eastern policy of Lloyd George—reaches its highpoint: The period from June to September, is the more dense and the most intense to achieve her triple aim, namely to support Kemalist Turkey, to defend France in the eyes of Ankara and to convince Paris to act quickly.<sup>1401</sup> Yet, Mustafa Kemal, explains *L'Europe nouvelle* (whose editor Louise Weiss is an

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<sup>1397</sup> Raymond Escholier, *Souvenirs parlés de...*, pp. 153-159 ; Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d'Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré. 1913-1926*, Paris: Hachette, 1957, pp. 129-144.

<sup>1398</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-2, pp. 1405-1406.

<sup>1399</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2505, 16 juin 1921, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 238.

<sup>1400</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 30 juin 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 7. Also see W. J. Childs, Notes of a conversation with M. Franklin-Bouillon, January 27, 1922, in Robin Bidwell (ed.), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, Part II, Series B, volume 29, Bethesda: University Publications of America, 1985, pp. 29-33; and Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi...*, pp. 540-543.

<sup>1401</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Comment j'ai vu Angora », *L'Intransigeant*, 2 juin 1921, pp. 1-2 ; « Une Française à Angora — Je vois juger l'homme qui voulait assassiner Kemal Pacha », *L'Intransigeant*, 4 juin 1921, p. 1 ; « Au front d'Ismet Pacha », *L'Opinion*, 4, 11, 18 juin 1921, pp. 631-633, 656-657, 684-685 ; « La situation orientale », *L'Opinion*, 9 juillet 1921, p. 33 ; « De Constantinople à Angora », *La Revue universelle*, 15 juillet 1921, pp. 212-216 ; « Eski-Cheir », *Paris-Midi*, 20 juillet 1921, p. 2 ;



excellent friend of Aristide Briand), “has magnificently welcomed the official and unofficial representatives of our country, because, when the French government was represented by Mr. Franklin-Bouillon, Ms. Gaulis represented the French nation.”<sup>1402</sup> She had played the same role just before the discussion of the armistice of May 1920.<sup>1403</sup> After her return, she is heard by a group of senators, together with Maurice Honoré (already cited for his approval of the agreement of 9 March 1921).<sup>1404</sup> In May, too, General Gouraud sends Captain Rollin to Ankara with a letter for Bekir Sami.<sup>1405</sup> Reciprocally, Kemal sends a negotiator to Paris, Celaledin Arif, in July 1921. After his discussions, especially with *Le Temps*' editorialist Jean Herbette and Aristide Briand, Arif is convinced that the peace is feasible. Nihat Reşat publicly expresses such a wish, and the evacuation, in June, of Zonguldak, occupied since 1920, is a sign.<sup>1406</sup> Actually, the day after the unofficial daily of Ankara publishes an editorial calling Paris to accept the end of the spheres of influence in exchange of friendship, *Le Temps* publishes a translation. At the same page, in the same column, the evening's daily reproduces the statements of General Pellé, high commissioner in İstanbul, for “the regeneration of the Turkish Empire” with the collaboration of the Powers, especially France.<sup>1407</sup> General Pellé can be even more listened in Ankara as he has knowingly left Kemalists of İstanbul to steal weapons and ammunitions, about two months earlier.<sup>1408</sup>

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« Allons-nous avoir une politique turque ? », *L'Opinion*, 23 juillet 1921, pp. 81-83 ; « Dix jours à Angora », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1921, pp. 474-491 ; « Eski-Cheir », *Le Figaro*, 2 août 1921, p. 5 ; « En Anatolie », *Le Figaro*, 5 août 1921, pp. 4-5 ; « La folle guerre en Orient », *L'Opinion*, 27 août 1921, p. 229 ; « L'Angleterre et l'Orient », *L'Opinion*, 10 septembre 1921, pp. 277-279. The article in the *Revue de Paris* is cited: Raymond Lécuyer, « Les lettres et les arts », *Le Gaulois*, 26 juillet 1921, p. 4 ; « Journaux et périodiques », *Le Figaro*, 3 août 1921, p. 4 ; « Les revues », *Le Temps*, 5 août 1921, p. 2 ; « La presse de Paris, de Province et de l'étranger », *Le Matin*, 7 août 1921, p. 3.

<sup>1402</sup> « La valise entr'ouverte », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 25 juin 1921, p. 812.

<sup>1403</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, p. 603, and III-1, p. 1387.

<sup>1404</sup> « Le Sénat », *Le Temps*, 3 juillet 1921, p. 4.

<sup>1405</sup> Le général Gouraud à Son Excellence Bekir Sami Bey, 15 mai 1921, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>1406</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...* pp. 1406-1410.

<sup>1407</sup> « Dans le Proche-Orient », *Le Temps*, 17 juillet 1921, p. 2. The article in Ottoman Turkish is dated 15 July but *Le Temps* is dated the day after it actually arrives in the newsstands of Paris and the other main cities.

<sup>1408</sup> Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923*, Leiden-Boston-Köln: E. J. Brill, 1999, pp. 124-125.

Briand himself, with his usual talent to be clear just as much as necessary, states, in front of the Chamber of deputies, that “if the Turkish nation relive, then she has to relive in full national independence (*Applause*)” and that the Kemalists have concerns, which are, for some of them, “perhaps excessive,” “but the others are respectable and must be respected because they come from a very just feeling of their patria’s national sovereignty.” Briand also answers the Socialist leader Léon Blum (1872-1950), who asks for an immediate withdrawal, that the adoption of his (Blum’s) motion has diminished the impact of the Franklin-Bouillon’s mission of June.<sup>1409</sup>

A harsher, unofficial, signal is given in a review of the General Staff: An anonymous article emphasizes the necessity to make peace with the Turks, to revise the Sèvres treaty, and mercilessly criticizes the British policy but also regrets that the armistice of May 1920 did not become a peace and that the agreement of March 1921 has failed; the author, visibly exasperated by the articles of Yunus Nadi (1879-1945) and some others, calls “excellent” the idea, for a Western power, to show Islamophilia and to look for the friendship of Muslim countries but advocates the necessity to show force, too. He admits the crimes of the Armenian Legion but argues, with less good faith, that the repression and the dissolution of that unit made the Turkish attacks of 1920 unjustified (yet, the Legion and the other Armenian units disappeared in summer 1920, and the Maraş rebellion started in January).<sup>1410</sup> In short, it seems that the period between the failure of the 9 March agreement in front of the Ankara’s National Assembly and the return of Franklin-Bouillon as a plenipotentiary negotiator, in October, is devoted to prepare the military, the big business and the Quai d’Orsay for solutions that relieve them regarding the moral and material interests (schools, hospitals and investments), and to persuade Ankara the French Parliament is not ready to peace “at any price”<sup>1411</sup>—the Armenian issue being only a source of potential troubles.

In these conditions, this is not a surprise if the Armenian nationalists’ attempts to change the French policy at their benefit fail one by one. A typical example is the attempt of Archag

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<sup>1409</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 12 juillet 1921, pp. 3395 and 3411-3413 (quotations p. 3395). Also see Léon Blum, « La politique de M. Briand », *Le Populaire*, 13 juillet 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1410</sup> \*\*\*, « La question d’Orient en 1921 et la politique islamique des puissances de l’Entente », *Revue militaire française*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1921, pp. 39-56 (quotation p. 47). Similar article: XXX, « Les Alliés et l’Orient », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1921, pp. 215-224.

<sup>1411</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 juin 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 7.

Tchobanian toward Robert de Caix. After his trip (already commented) in Beirut and Adana, Tchobanian submits, in mid-March, a note for de Caix and Paris. De Caix comments it as follows: “[...] there is in the way he has developed these considerations all the elements of a perfidious campaign which, considering the nationalism of the Armenians and their art to denature the facts, could be very dangerous.” De Caix continues in recalling “the attacks against the person or properties of the Turks” by “individuals or even whole groups of the Armenian Legion forced us to dissolve this unit.” It seems that de Caix forgets to attach the note of Tchobanian to his letter, and this is not until 1 June that he actually sends it to Paris. This is, indeed, a list of recriminations written in a barely polite style.<sup>1412</sup>

On 26 May, the British embassy in Paris forwards to the Quai d’Orsay a note submitted one month ago by the Armenian (Gregorian) Patriarchate, where it is written that “the Armenians turn their eyes to England” as a result of the future evacuation of Çukurova.<sup>1413</sup> However, after British MP Thomas Power O’Connor (1848-1929) writes to the Quai d’Orsay, regarding the Armenians of Çukurova, he only obtains a diplomatic response, reaffirming that the occupation’s expenses cannot continue,<sup>1414</sup> and the BAC itself nurtures no hope.<sup>1415</sup> The U.S. are obviously not forgotten: On 1 June, Boghos Nubar writes to the MFA to thank the French government, but also to inform him that Gabriel Noradounkian is going to Washington to find a financial agreement that could be accepted by France (namely the projet of George Montgomery to fund a French mandate in Adana with the money of the American taxpayer).<sup>1416</sup> One more time, the clumsiness and the obstination of the Ramkavar to try to use Washington against Paris, in spite of repeated failures since 1919 is striking. Not

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<sup>1412</sup> Le haut-commissaire de la République française à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 25 mars 1921 ; Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et au Liban, à Son Excellence M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 1<sup>er</sup> juin 1921, AMAE, P 16675. Both letters are written and even signed by de Caix, on behalf of Gouraud.

<sup>1413</sup> AMAE, P 16675. Also see Renseignements d’ordre politique, 6 septembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/163.

<sup>1414</sup> Lettre du ministère des Affaires étrangères à M. O’Connor, 17 juin 1921, AMAE, P 16675. Also see L’ambassadeur de France à Londres à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 10 mai 1921, AMAE, P 1486 (on an attempt by Aneurin Williams, chair of the BAC).

<sup>1415</sup> Letter of Charles Leonard Leese (BAC) to George Montgomery, 1 July 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 5.

<sup>1416</sup> AMAE, P 16675.

surprisingly, the Quai d'Orsay answers by an extremely short acknowledgement of receipt.<sup>1417</sup>

Such a reply pales in comparison of the reaction of General Julien Dufieux, the only official in charge, in 1921, who is still embittered against the Kemalists. This bitterness changes nothing to his contempt for Armenian nationalism and its Anglo-Saxon friends in general and for the Ramkavar and their American friends in particular. Annotating the French translation of a project submitted by George Montgomery to the U.S. government, Dufieux writes "It's novel!" (*C'est du roman !*) in the margin aside the paragraph claiming an American intervention for the safety of the Çukurova's Armenians, "Dead-born treaty" aside the reference to Sèvres and "this is the real reason" aside the sentence presenting the Armenians as the best relay of American trade. Dufieux's conclusion toward this text is: "France [is supposed to] bleed with the four veins for America making trade in Asia Minor. That is brutal and naïve." Annotating another memorandum of Montgomery, Dufieux writes: "Words! Words! An 'Armenian Home' cannot live more than the American Republic in the Turko-Russian noose. There is in this memorandum platonic and childish greetings only. That is anyway enough for the Armenians."<sup>1418</sup>

Montgomery is indeed reduced to "platonic and childish greetings" as the new, Republican administration listens to Admiral Mark Bristol, high commissioner in İstanbul and supporter of impartiality, more than the Wilson administration did and ignores the demands of Montgomery to change him as well as the AAS' claims for an Armenian National home and the ACIA's demands for the implementation of the Wilson arbitration.<sup>1419</sup> And if writing "*the Armenians*" is questionable, those who usually deal with Montgomery were glad after the London conference, which justifies the severity of Dufieux for them in particular.<sup>1420</sup>

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<sup>1417</sup> Lettre du sous-directeur d'Asie à M. Boghos Nubar, 7 juin 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1418</sup> AN, 594 AP 4. On the economic dimension, also see Lieutenant Eulachier, Note sur les agissements commerciaux du Near East Relief, 28 décembre 1920, CADN, 1/SL/1V/160; and "Annual Meeting, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1921," *The Friend of Armenia*, First quarter 1922, p. 3.

<sup>1419</sup> Ralph Elliott Cook, *The United States and the Armenian Question, 1894-1924*, PhD dissertation, The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, 1957, p 312; Joseph Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East. Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971, pp. 257-258. Also see the letter of Albert W. Jefferi (Republican representative of Nebraska) to Lone C. Duffy (Near East Relief), 4 June 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 4.

<sup>1420</sup> Letter of James Barton to George Montgomery, 24 March 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 2.

The Ramkavar-linked International Phil-Armenian League makes another attempt, through the League of Nation, asking for the implementation of the Sèvres treaty (without explaining how the evacuation of the eastern Anatolia by the Turkish army could be obtained, and how an independent Armenia between Turkey and Soviet Union could be maintained) and for “an indigeneous gendarmerie under the command of French officers,” namely something looking like a resurrection of the Armenian Legion, before the withdrawal of the French troops from Çukurova. The Quai d’Orsay instructs the French representatives at the League of Nations that the question of Armenia can be settled only after the signature of the general peace with Ankara and that the future agreement replacing the one signed on 9 March 1921 will include guarantees for minorities.<sup>1421</sup> In other words, the positions of Paris are maintained entirely. Gabriel Noradounkian is not more successful, when he insists on a written form, after an interview with Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, director of political affairs, complaining about the fall of insurged Zeytun and claiming that the Armenians are in majority in Çukurova. There is no trace of an answer, but the letter is annotated as follows: “We don’t have the least way of action in the Kemalist territories.”<sup>1422</sup>

Nubar himself shows that his trust toward Paris is minimal: Indeed, after the assassination of Talat by ARF terrorist S. Tehlirian, in March 1921, Nubar asks for the protection of the Parisian police, but only for his home. He does not want, at any moment, a policeman to follow him,<sup>1423</sup> a refusal that can be attributed only to the fear that such a protection would give more information to the French cabinet regarding the Ramkavar’s activities. Similarly, in May 1921, Nubar asks Tchobanian, who now is in Jerusalem, to go back to Beirut, but Tchobanian writes to an unidentified friend that he has no hope, still less as the “Greek victory” he expected did not happen.<sup>1424</sup> In these conditions, the best hypothesis for him is that Tchobanian does not believe a word of the note he sends to the Quai d’Orsay on 5 October

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<sup>1421</sup> Lettre de la Ligue internationale philarménienne à la Société des nations, 20 juin 1921 ; Note pour le Service français de la Société des nations, 18 juillet 1921, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1422</sup> Lettre de Gabriel Noradounkian à Aristide Briand, 9 août 1921, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1423</sup> Lettre de la Délégation nationale arménienne au préfet de police de Paris, 4 juin 1921 ; Préfecture de police de Paris, Service de protection à l’égard de M. Boghas [sic], 9 juin 1921, AMAE, P 16675. A note of 15 June 1921 indicates that the monitoring quickly ends, as the police finds no source of concern: AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13411.

<sup>1424</sup> Edmond Khayadian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CNDP, 1986, pp. 285-286.

1921, after his second stay in Beirut, and where he asks for an autonomous Cilicia protected by France, with “a Christian governor” and “a local milice under French command” (sic).<sup>1425</sup>

The Dashnak Delegation of the Armenian Republic does not insist on Çukurova but is not more realistic than the Ramkavar. Indeed, Avetis Aharonian claims the implementation of the Sèvres treaty, explicitly disregarding the treaty of Gümrü signed on 3 December 1920 and rejecting the principle of a National Home. He dares to ask France (and the other Entente’s power) to “to invite Turkey, by its own initiative, to evacuate” all or most of the territories attributed to Armenian by the Wilson arbitration. These territories would be temporarily administrated by the Powers themselves. This letter is, one more time, answered, more than two weeks later, by a laconic acknowledgment of receipt.<sup>1426</sup>

The Armenian nationalists are not more successful, during the intermediary period (April-September 1921), in their attempts to create a trend in their favor in the French public opinion. In May 1921, they obtain the publication of one virulent article (virulent against the Quai d’Orsay almost as much as against the Turks), written by a Swiss national, in a second-rank journal of French Protestantism<sup>1427</sup> (2,150 subscribers in 1921<sup>1428</sup>). The Catholic writer Denys Cochin, deputy of Paris from 1893 to 1919, who had defended the “Armenian cause” several times from 1896 to 1919, still writes against the Turks, but only to defend Greece, and to affirm the probability of its victory in Anatolia<sup>1429</sup> (an excellent way to be discredited in some weeks only). At the beginning of October of the same year, the Ramkavar establishes a “Cilician Union” to “make propaganda [...] in Cilicia, in France and other countries,” but the group mostly remains a subject of curiosity for the French officers, who do not want to see its representative in Çukurova.<sup>1430</sup> These initiatives are negligible by comparison with the

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<sup>1425</sup> AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1426</sup> Lettre d’Avétis Aharonian à Aristide Briand, 5 juillet 1921 ; Lettre du ministère des Affaires étrangères à Avétis Aharonian, 21 juillet 1921, AMAE, P 16676. Vahan Cardashian, *Wilson — Wrecker of...*, p. 9 also opposes the project of a National Home.

<sup>1427</sup> René Claparède, « L’égorgement de l’Arménie », *Le Christianisme social*, mai-juin 1921, pp. 371-377. Less vituperative, but based on wrong data (an alleged Christian majority in Çukurova in 1912 and 1921): Louis Jalabert, « Que va devenir la Cilicie ? », *Études*, 20 octobre 1921, pp. 157-184.

<sup>1428</sup> Jacques Martin, *Élie Gounelle*, Paris : L’Harmattan, 1999, p. 137.

<sup>1429</sup> Denys Cochin, « Anatolie », *Le Figaro*, 3 août 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1430</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 268, 9-12 octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 3 ; Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 22 octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 9 ; Note sur M. Garikian [1921], CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

insistence of the supporters of a quick peace with the Turks<sup>1431</sup>—Saint-Brice even calling, barely implicitly, for sending weapons to the Turks, through private persons.<sup>1432</sup> The posthumous recollections of Byzantinist Gustave Schlumberger (1844-1929), who had supported the Armenian nationalism during the First World War and right after, describe a meeting with Tchobanian, some weeks before the Ankara agreement. Schlumberger deplores the future evacuation but also observes that “We have neither the men nor the money” to stay in Adana. Making a longer quote, Edmond Khayadjian does not comment the reference to the shortage of men and money and does not explain why Tchobanian himself does not publish an article between this visit and October 1922 (that article being published in Switzerland and not in France).<sup>1433</sup> The reason is simple: Opposing so constantly the French interest, and having nothing to offer, except their hatred against the oldest allies of France, the Armenian nationalists cannot be heard in such a country in 1921.

Anyway, Henry Franklin-Bouillon comes back to İstanbul on 13 September, leaves for Anatolia two days later and arrives in Ankara on 22 September. The negotiations are not always easy, Franklin-Bouillon insisting for maintaining the article of 9 March agreement on French officers in the local gendarmerie and Kemalists insisting for obtaining İskenderun. Eventually, on 12 October, the two exigencies are suppressed, the agreement is signed on 20 October and all the Turkish political prisoners of Adana and Mersin are released the same

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<sup>1431</sup> Beside the already cited articles of Berthe Georges-Gaulis and Léon Rouillon: Bernard Guinaudeau, « Regardons-nous dans les yeux ! », *Le Radical*, 6 juin 1921, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Les deux points noirs — Haute-Silésie et Asie mineure », *La Liberté*, 11 juin 1921, p. 1 ; « L’affaire d’Orient ne les intéresse pas », *Le Populaire*, 18 juin 1921, p. 1 ; Jacques Bardoux, « L’Entente cordiale et l’Orient méditerranéen », *L’Opinion*, 18 juin 1921, pp. 675-677 ; Arnaud, « Notre politique en Cilicie », *L’Information*, 18 juin 1921 ; Gaston Doumergue, « Dans le Proche-Orient — La politique à suivre », *Le Petit Méridional*, 26 juin 1921, p. 1 ; Georges Barthélémy, « Deux ans après », *Le Rappel*, 28 juin 1921, p. 1 ; A. de Gobart, « Bekir Samy bey nous dit : “La Turquie est pacifique” », *L’Intransigeant*, 30 juin 1921, p. 1 ; Louis Bresse, « À la recherche d’un équilibre balkanique », *Le Rappel*, 30 juin 1921, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Le sort de Constantinople », *L’Action française*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1921, p. 1 ; « Nous causons avec Angora », *L’Écho de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1921, p. 3 ; Philippe Millet, « Où en est l’accord franco-turc », *Le Petit Parisien*, 6 juillet 1921, p. 1 ; « Séance plénière du 6 juillet 1921 », *Bulletin du Parti républicain radical et radical-socialiste*, 27 août 1921, p. 2 ; Henri Massis, « Un accord franco-turc est-il encore possible ? », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 9 juillet 1921, pp. 194-203 ; XXX, « Lettre de Constantinople — Comment les Grecs conçoivent la guerre », *Le Radical*, 4 août 1921, p. 1 ; Paul Bruzon, « Où en est le conflit gréco-turc ? », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 13 août 1921, pp. 1044-1045 ; Saint-Brice, « Le Conseil suprême et l’Orient », *La Revue universelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1921, pp. 596-601.

<sup>1432</sup> Saint-Brice, « La crise de l’Entente et l’Orient », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 août 1921, pp. 577-582.

<sup>1433</sup> Gustave Schlumberger, *Mes Souvenirs (1844-1928)*, Paris : Plon, 1934, volume II, pp. 338-339 ; Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et...*, pp. 286-287.

day. The Turkish prisoners of the eastern zone (Antep) are released the same day.<sup>1434</sup> Interestingly, the project of agreement taken with him by Franklin-Bouillon in September did not include the article on such officers.<sup>1435</sup> It proves that the MFA knew from the beginning it would not likely be accepted but planned to use it in exchange of something else. Yet, the main difficulties, according to a telegram sent by Franklin-Bouillon on 18 October are not with Kemal (Atatürk) but with the majority of the Parliament and only the joint intervention of Kemal and Fethi (Okyar) Bey (sent to Libya by friends of the Quai d'Orsay in 1911 and released from Malta at the request of France ten years later) force the ratification.<sup>1436</sup> Most likely these difficulties are due to the enthusiasm caused by the victory against the Greek forces, and perhaps to Soviet interventions toward Turkish deputies.

The text of the agreement changes almost nothing to the boundary decided on 9 March 1921 and, in conformity with the concern expressed by Briand in front of the deputies, the water supply of Aleppo is secured. In economic terms, it attributes the concession of the Bagdad railroad (Çukurova part) to a French company. The French schools, hospitals, etc., and the priority to the French capital for the exploitation of mines are mentioned in two unilateral declarations from the Turkish side annexed to the pact.<sup>1437</sup> In his previously cited telegram, Franklin-Bouillon justifies this solution in arguing that including such references in the text itself would allow Britain and the U.S. to ask for the same guarantees. The High Commission of Beirut also sees the declaration with relief for the French interests in Turkey.<sup>1438</sup>

A non-written part of the agreement permits to the Turks to receive 10,000 outfits with shoes, 10,000 Mauser rifles with their cartridges (one million), 2,000 horses, 10 planes, 10 spare engines, 10 tents and the radio material of Adana.<sup>1439</sup> Beside these deliveries, by mid-

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<sup>1434</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-1, pp. 1410-1411; Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy...*, pp. 136-137; Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 17 octobre 1921 ; Id., 21 octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 9.

<sup>1435</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 9.

<sup>1436</sup> AMAE, P 17785.

<sup>1437</sup> AMAE, 118 PA-AP 61, ff. 21-29.

<sup>1438</sup> [Pierre Lyautey ?], *Les œuvres et intérêts français en Orient et l'établissement du mandat sur la Syrie*, p. 33, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>1439</sup> M. Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à M. Barthou, ministre de la Guerre, 11 janvier 1922, in Christian Blaecher (ed.), *Documents diplomatiques français. 1922*, volume I, Berne : Peter Lang, 2007, pp. 70-72 ; Commission de l'armée, Séance du mercredi 1<sup>er</sup> février 1922, pp. 2-6, Archives du Sénat, Paris, 69 S 9 ; Note au sujet des cessions de matériel militaire faites aux



September 1921, a separate deal between Hamid Bey and General Maurice Pellé is implemented: The representatives of Kemal in France can buy here, from private companies, French, British and German weapons and ammunitions (100,000 rifles, 1.3 million bullets, one heavy cannon and 194,000 cannons shells, etc.) and to send it to central Anatolia through Antalya and Mersin.<sup>1440</sup> The coincidence between the second method and the suggestion of Saint-Brice in August of the same year is so striking that it necessarily leads to wonder if Saint-Brice has been informed, and/or if he acted as an informal advisor. This is a question for future researches.

### 5.1.3. *The Ankara agreement is endorsed by a consensus in France*

If the comments on the Ankara agreement are not unanimously favorable, unlike in March-April 1921, there is clearly a consensus. The context is indeed positive. Beside all the already cited articles calling for the end of hostilities with the Turks, and often for the restoration of the old alliance, Pierre Loti, helped by his son, makes a last contribution to the Turkish cause in publishing his pre-war diary written in İstanbul, together with published and unpublished texts written in 1920-1921 to defend the Kemalist movement, including as far as the Armenian issue is concerned.<sup>1441</sup> The book is welcomed, from the Marxists to the conservatives.<sup>1442</sup> *Le Radical* observes that Loti's *Suprêmes visions* arrive in the bookshops

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autorités turques, 5 mars 1922, SHD, 4 H 175, dossier 5. The U.S. High Commission at İstanbul knows about the project to give ammunitions even before the agreement is signed: Laurence Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-1924*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965, pp. 357-358.

<sup>1440</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, *The Turkish War...*, volume III-1, pp. 1434-1435. Roger de Gontaut-Biron and L. Le Révérend, *D'Angora à Lausanne, les étapes d'une déchéance*, Paris : Plon, 1924, pp. 98-99 mention these 100,000 rifles but falsely claims that they have been given for free and taken from the Syrian gendarmerie and the disarmament of Syrian bands.

<sup>1441</sup> Pierre Loti, *Suprêmes visions d'Orient*, Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1921.

<sup>1442</sup> Albéric Cahuet, « Suprêmes visions d'Orient », *L'illustration*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1921, p. 280 ; Victor Margueritte, « Suprêmes visions de Pierre Loti », *Le Peuple*, 4 octobre 1921, p. 2 ; José Vincent, « Les livres d'aujourd'hui », *La Croix*, 9-10 octobre 1921, p. 4 ; Jean de Pierrefeu, « La vie littéraire », *Journal des débats*, 12 octobre 1921, p. 3 ; Claude Farrère, « Pierre Loti », *Comœdia*, 17 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Henri de Régnier, « La vie littéraire », *Le Figaro*, 17 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Raymond Escholier, « En feuilletant les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 18 octobre 1921, p. 4 ; André Billy, « Les livres qu'on lit », *L'Œuvre*, 18 octobre 1921, p. 4 ; « Nos échos », *Le Petit Parisien*, 30 novembre 1921, p. 2.

when the events prove him right.<sup>1443</sup> Paul Souday, in *Le Temps*, recommends the work and concludes that the Turkish people “had been slandered” when “others, in the neighborhood, have been exalted too much and cruelly disappointed us.”<sup>1444</sup> In December, Claude Farrère publishes a historical novel on an Ottoman character, and adds a foreword where he justifies his defense of the Turks. Concerning Çukurova, Farrère writes that if France is right to have obtained a mandate on Lebanon and Syria as a compensation for the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks are right to claim the territories with a Turkish majority. The novel gets positive reviews, too, including for the foreword.<sup>1445</sup> Paul Souday writes in *Le Temps* that Farrère “on many points, pleads a case that is today won.”<sup>1446</sup>

In the press, Auguste Gauvain is almost alone to criticize the agreement, and justifies himself by the differences with the text of March 1921 he had accepted as a necessity (autonomy of İskenderun, attribution of the territorial control of the railway to Turkey); but he is virtually silent on the Armenians and does not even use their name.<sup>1447</sup>

For the rest, the differences between the comments are about the degree of support and the reasons invoked to accept the agreement. Three voices of the colonial parties defend the text with reservations. The editor of *L'Asie française* argues that the version of March 1921 was much better, but the changes are inevitable after the new Kemalist victories against Greeks and the friendly intents showed by Mustafa Kemal allow to hope for a bright future.<sup>1448</sup> In *Le Journal* and, more in detail, in the *Correspondance d'Orient*, Saint-Brice supports the thesis that the regrettable aspects of the text are due to the errors of the French cabinets since the end of 1918 (the Greek ambitions should have been opposed from the beginning, in particular). The result is not really bad, after all, for Saint-Brice, but it makes

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<sup>1443</sup> Paul Allain, *Le Radical*, 21 octobre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1444</sup> Paul Souday, « Les livres », *Le Temps*, 6 octobre 1921, p. 3.

<sup>1445</sup> « Nos échos », *L'Intransigeant*, 26 décembre 1921, p. 2 ; Raymond Escholier, « En feuilletant les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 27 décembre 1921, p. 4 ; « Arts et lettres », *La Liberté*, 17 janvier 1922, p. 4 ; Abel Hermant, « La vie littéraire », *Le Gaulois du dimanche*, 21 janvier 1922, p. 4 ; « Coin des lettres et des arts », *La Lanterne*, 21 janvier 1922, p. 3 ; Victor Margueritte, « Claude Farrère et les Turcs », *Le Peuple*, 24 janvier 1922, p. 2 ; « Chez le libraire », *Le Figaro. Supplément littéraire*, 29 janvier 1922, p. 2.

<sup>1446</sup> Paul Souday, « Les livres », *Le Temps*, 9 février 1922, p. 3.

<sup>1447</sup> Auguste Gauvain, « L'accord franco-turc », *Journal des débats*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1448</sup> Henri Froidevaux, « L'accord franco-turc d'Ankara », *L'Asie française*, novembre 1921, pp. 413-415.

necessary to firmly pursue a policy of alliance with Ankara, including in helping the Turks to defeat the Greek forces. No other choice is left, the government has to continue without hesitation<sup>1449</sup> (likely a reference to the delivery of weapons). Maurice Honoré (who previously criticized the Sèvres treaty) develops a similar analysis, but with a more revengeful tone against Britain, and a direct reference to the Turkish women and children burned alive by Greek soldiers in Western Anatolia—crimes that do not help the Christians of Adana, argues Honoré.<sup>1450</sup> Favorable to the agreement, *Le Petit Marseillais* publishes beside its own comments, the point of view of the colonial big business in Marseille: There is nothing wrong in the text signed in Ankara; there is even nothing wrong in helping the Turks against the Greek armed forces (another implicit reference to weapons); such decisions only have to be completed by a policy of investment in Çukurova, particularly in the production of cotton.<sup>1451</sup>

*L'Écho de Paris* has a more political analysis: “the agreement of 20 October is precious” as it ends an expensive conflict; the “re-establishment of the Franco-Ottoman friendship” made possible by that text is “indispensable” for financial reasons but also to preserve the safety of “the populations who have showed us their sympathy” (Armenians and Assyrians). This is a step, and everything, argues the nationalist-conservative daily, has to continue: The Ankara government must pursue reconciliation externally and internally; the effort for a general peace must but be maintained until the signature of such a treaty.<sup>1452</sup> René Pinon, a publicist who had contributed to the anti-Turkish propaganda during and right after the world war,

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<sup>1449</sup> Saint-Brice, « Les conditions de l'accord franco-turc », *Le Journal*, 29 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Saint-Brice, « L'accord franco-turc », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 15 novembre 1921, pp. 769-776.

<sup>1450</sup> Maurice Honoré, « La France en Orient. L'accord franco-turc », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 décembre 1921, pp. 323-330. A similar article, but with more embittered regrets: René Johannet, « Profits et pertes françaises en Orient », *La Revue universelle*, 15 novembre 1921, pp. 496-499.

<sup>1451</sup> « L'accord franco-kémaliste », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 23 octobre 1921, p. 2 ; Pierre Mille, « Une politique du coton », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 30 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; « L'accord franco-turc est communiqué aux commissions parlementaires », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 31 octobre 1921, p. 1. Pierre Mille (1864-1941) is a journalist and writer specialized in colonial issues: Alec G. Hargreaves, *The Colonial Experience in French Fiction. A Study in Pierre Loti, Ernest Psichari and Pierre Mille*, London: MacMillan, 1981, pp. 3-4 and 113-158.

<sup>1452</sup> « L'accord franco-turc d'Angora », *L'Écho de Paris*, 31 octobre 1921, p. 1.

when he was linked to Boghos Nubar,<sup>1453</sup> begins to return to his pre-war positions<sup>1454</sup> in publishing a ferocious rebuttal of the British grievances against the agreement with the Kemalists. Pinon is not very excited by the text, but denies to London any right to judge it.<sup>1455</sup>

The only reservations of Raymond Poincaré are formal: The Parliament will not ratify what is a treaty in practice; and Aristide Briand is coming to Washington instead of staying in Paris to fix several issues, including the critiques of the British government (poorly substantiated critiques, explains Poincaré, but they have to be answered at the highest level). Regarding the text itself, Poincaré argues that it is the only solution, considering the financial situation, and he very briefly mentions the Armenians only as a source of difficulties.<sup>1456</sup>

At the far right, Jacques Bainville has obviously no reservation regarding the rights of the Parliament: The agreement with Ankara shall spare the French blood and is a needed step to impose peace in the east; the next step must be to stop the “megalomania” of Athens and to convince the British government that its policy is fundamentally flawed.<sup>1457</sup> *L'Europe nouvelle* has quite a different stance on domestic policy, but not more reservation than Bainville on the peace with the Turks: The British critiques are not well-founded; “if we consider the protocol of Angora solely from the French point of view, nothing prevents use from rejoicing,” considering the “considerable advantages” obtained, in ending the burden in Çukurova, in facilitating the work the High Commission of Beirut, that will now focus in Syria and in improving the image of France in the Muslim world. *L'Europe nouvelle* sees without any displeasure the perspective of a Greek defeat, after the Turkish army will be

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<sup>1453</sup> René Pinon, *La Suppression des Arméniens. Méthode allemande, travail turc*, Paris, 1916 ; René Pinon, « La liquidation de l'Empire ottoman », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1919, pp. 128-160. Even Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 129-131 does not consider Pinon's book of 1916 to be conclusive.

<sup>1454</sup> René Pinon, *L'Europe et l'Empire ottoman. Les aspects actuels de la question d'Orient*, Paris : Perrin, 1911 (1st edition, 1908) ; René Pinon, *L'Europe et la Jeune Turquie. Les aspects nouveaux de la question d'Orient*, Paris : Perrin, 1913 (1st edition, 1911).

<sup>1455</sup> René Pinon, « Les Anglais et la convention d'Angora », *L'Ouest-Éclair*, 12 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1456</sup> Raymond Poincaré, « L'Entente cordiale », *La Dépêche*, 11 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Raymond Poincaré, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 novembre 1921, pp. 475-478 ; Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand, le ferme conciliateur*, Paris : Fayard, 2005, p. 450, n. a. “Respect for the Parliament and worship for the Constitution went with him [Poincaré] to a kind of idolatry.” (Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, « Briand et Poincaré (souvenirs) », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 décembre 1936, p. 779).

<sup>1457</sup> Jacques Bainville, « Les ministres de Constantin à Paris », *La Liberté*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « L'Angleterre s'oppose à l'accord franco-turc », *La Liberté*, 6 novembre 1921, p. 1.

concentrated on one front, and emphasizes the advantage the peace with the Turks gives to the West against Soviet Russia.<sup>1458</sup> From still another political perspective, Henri Massis, the rising star of the Catholic right, defends roughly the same thesis<sup>1459</sup>—but this is logical, as for Massis, the enemy of the West in general is not Islam but Communism and the national enemy of France in particular is Germany.<sup>1460</sup> *Le Figaro* has a somewhat more limited view, praising mostly Franklin-Bouillon for having “ended a war in Cilicia that was very expensive and could yield nothing” and rejecting the British position as “systematically” hostile to the French interest.<sup>1461</sup> Much less favorable to the Turks, *L’Homme libre* regardless supports the peace decided in Ankara, in the name of national interest.<sup>1462</sup>

In *L’Opinion* Berthe Georges-Gaulis shows a broader perspective. She first expresses her satisfaction: “The Franco-Turkish treaty is the first step toward appeasement.” Her concerns are not about the text, but about the context: The treaty should have been signed two years earlier, not that much because Berthe Georges-Gaulis would share the economic-rooted regrets of Saint-Brice, but because the reconciliation would have had more political and psychological impact; anyway, she concludes, the text signed in Ankara has to become “the true treaty of alliance from where the Eastern peace will emerge” and “we have to impose to our [British] allies” this conception.<sup>1463</sup> Then, *L’Opinion* publishes an article of Albert Thibaudet (1874-1936), a French professor at the University of Uppsala (later at the University of Geneva), very respected.<sup>1464</sup> He does not comment the Ankara agreement itself,

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<sup>1458</sup> Paul Bruzon, « La paix française dans le Proche-Orient », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 29 octobre 1921, pp. 1397-1398.

<sup>1459</sup> Henri Massis, « L’accord franco-turc du 20 octobre et la paix en Orient », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 29 octobre 1921, pp. 617-623 (echoed in *L’Information*, 30 octobre 1921, p. 2).

<sup>1460</sup> Paul Mazgaj, “Defending the West: The Cultural and Generational Politics of Henri Massis,” *Historical Reflections/Réflexions historiques*, XVII-2, spring 1991, pp. 103-123.

<sup>1461</sup> Jacques Roujon, « L’accord franco-turc — La France fait la paix avec Angora », *Le Figaro*, 31 octobre 1921, p. 1. Similar reasoning in Raoul de Thomasson, « La convention franco-turque », *La Libre Parole*, 27 octobre 1921, p. 1. We have seen Lieutenant-Colonel de Thomasson feeling “pity” for the Turks as early as the armistice of Moudros.

<sup>1462</sup> Eugène Lautier, « Vers une politique française — L’accord franco-turc », *L’Homme libre*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1463</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Rome – Constantinople – Angora », *L’Opinion*, 26 novembre 1921, pp. 585-586.

<sup>1464</sup> On Thibaudet: Michel Leymarie, *Albert Thibaudet. « L’outsider du dedans »*, Paris: CNRS éditions, 2018 (1st edition, 2006).

but explains that the Turks are the most honest people of the East, that they suffered, too, massacres (he refers to the Balkan wars), that the Armenian issue should not be used to target one people and that the Ottoman Empire's entrance into WWI was due to the understandable fear of Russian ambitions. As the context of 1921 is not the one of 1914, concludes Thibaudet, "we have the free field to return to the old relations."<sup>1465</sup>

*La Petite Gironde* (Bordeaux) similarly defends the agreement not only because of material interest but also in the name of peace and of the importance of a "durable friendship" with Turkey that could emerge.<sup>1466</sup> This is also the case of *Le Gaulois*<sup>1467</sup> and the same ideas are defended in *L'Information* by Georges Scelle (the professor de law who has campaigned against the Sèvres treaty in 1920), Édouard Herriot and—with a more biting tone toward Britain—the editorial staff. All are coherent with their previous interventions.<sup>1468</sup> This is also the stance of *Le Rappel* (including the biting tone about the British cabinet).<sup>1469</sup> *Le Radical* is more concerned about the alliance with London, but defends the agreement with the same kind of arguments.<sup>1470</sup> *La Lanterne* hesitates at the beginning (likely because of an intervention of the Greek payroll Michel Paillarès, who is discussed in the last chapter) but two days later returns to the stance adopted in 1919 and supports the terms of the peace with Ankara.<sup>1471</sup> Still in the liberal press, *L'Œuvre* expresses its joy to see "this gesture as

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<sup>1465</sup> Albert Thibaudet, « Turquie et turcophiles », *L'Opinion*, 24 décembre 1921, pp. 697-698. This is corroborated by Halidé Hedib (Halide Hedip), *The Turkish Ordeal*, London: John Murray, 1928, p. 395: "M. Franklin-Bouillon [...] symbolized [for the Turks] the large-minded and far-sighted policies of France in Turkey."

<sup>1466</sup> « Notes diplomatiques — L'accord franco-turc », *La Petite Gironde*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; « Notes diplomatiques — La France a ratifié l'accord franco-turc », *La Petite Gironde*, 30 octobre 1921, p. 1

<sup>1467</sup> René d'Aral, « Un accord franco-turc », *Le Gaulois*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « L'Angleterre et l'accord franco-turc », *Le Gaulois*, 7 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Le traité d'Angora — La réponse de Paris à Londres », *Le Gaulois*, 19 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1468</sup> Georges Scelle, « La semaine extérieure », *L'Information*, 25 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « La paix franco-turque », *L'Information*, 4 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « L'accord franco-turc et l'Angleterre », *L'Information. Édition du soir*, 6 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Édouard Herriot, « Pour l'unité de front diplomatique », *L'Information*, 11 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1469</sup> Raymond Lange, « Chicanes », *Le Rappel*, 7 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Edmond du Mesnil, « La France et l'Islam », *Le Rappel*, 16 février 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1470</sup> G. Brouville, « La question d'Orient — Avec sérénité », *Le Radical*, 9 novembre 1921 ; G. Brouville, « Sans mauvaise humeur », *Le Radical*, 10 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1471</sup> « Le budget et l'armée d'Orient — Devons-nous évacuer la Cilicie ? », *La Lanterne*, 29 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Félix Hautfort, « L'accord d'Angora », *La Lanterne*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Jean Mélia, «

beautiful as useful” that the daily has claimed for “three years”<sup>1472</sup> (and actually, as we saw, the first article of this kind has been published in November 1918).

Without surprise, *Le Temps* (almost certainly by the pen of Jean Herbette) defends the Ankara agreement in not less than ten editorials, as a necessity, a significant benefit for the two countries (the French schools and investments are guaranteed), and a return to a tradition wished by the public opinion (including the evening’s daily). *Le Temps* congratulates Aristide Briand and Henry Franklin-Bouillon and sees in the British critiques the consequence of the conflict between Ankara and London toward Mosul. Indeed, “the minorities” of Çukurova are as protected as those of Poland (treaty signed on 28 June 1919) and their interest is peace, not war. “The Armenians know what it costs to rely on adventurous programs.”<sup>1473</sup> *Le Petit Parisien* also justifies the guarantees given to the Armenians, with a somewhat different reasoning: Politically and economically, the text is at the advantage of Turks and French; as a result, it is the interest of the Turks to fulfil their promises, to continue the cooperation with the French.<sup>1474</sup> *Le Petit Journal* is even more enthusiastic in its support for the peace with Ankara, emphasizing, not unlike other newspapers, already cited, but with a warmer tone, the material benefits of peace, the restoration of the oldest France’s alliance and the “prestige” obtained in the East in ending the conflict with the Turks.<sup>1475</sup> *Le Matin* defends roughly the same conclusion, but is more explicitly hostile to the British policy.<sup>1476</sup>

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Le cœur de la Turquie est à Angora », *La Lanterne*, 26 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Jean Méliá, « La tristesse de M. Denys Cochin », *La Lanterne*, 16 décembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1472</sup> Charles Saglio, « La France fait la paix avec les Turcs », *L’Œuvre*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1473</sup> « Le partage de la Haute-Silésie — L’accord franco-turc », *Le Temps*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; « La Chambre et les problèmes extérieurs », *Le Temps*, 27 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; « L’accord franco-turc — Les bolchevistes et les dettes russes », *Le Temps*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Le voyage de la commission des réparations — La politique du pétrole en Orient », *Le Temps*, 7 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « L’Angleterre et l’accord franco-turc », *Le Temps*, 9 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Une note britannique à la presse française », *Le Temps*, 13 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « La protection des chrétiens en Turquie », *Le Temps*, 19 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Deux politiques d’Asie », *Le Temps*, 24 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Causer avec l’Angleterre », *Le Temps*, 28 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « Notes de Londres », *Le Temps*, 30 novembre 1921, p. 1. The quotation is from the article of 9 November.

<sup>1474</sup> « L’accord avec les kémalistes ratifié par le gouvernement français », *Le Petit Parisien*, 31 octobre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1475</sup> « L’accord franco-turc a une portée considérable en Orient », *Le Petit Journal*, 31 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; Étienne Fournol, « La paix avec les Turcs — Les bénéfiques présents et futurs de l’accord signé à Angora », *Le Petit Journal*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1476</sup> « La paix est faite avec les Turcs », *Le Matin*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1 ; « Comment M. Franklin-Bouillon et Mustapha Kémal ont su réconcilier la France et l’Islam », *Le Matin*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 1 ; « L’accord franco-turc », *Le Matin*, 9 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Constantinople

Quite logically with his stance since 1890s, Pierre-Abdon Boisson borders on jubilation in the bulletin of the France-Orient committee, warmly approving an agreement favorable to the political and economic interests of France.<sup>1477</sup> The centrist and Catholic *Revue bleue*, for its part, defends a more ethical perspective: “One more time, it is the French policy that showed itself the most generous and the most reasonable,” in protecting the minorities and maintaining the Turkish nationality. Dislocating Turkey was unrealistic as much as unfair, and the argument of the safety of the Armenians in Çukurova cannot be taken seriously, as nobody can pretend that France and France only has to maintain troops in Turkey for them.<sup>1478</sup>

Meanwhile, in November 1921, the *Échos de l’Islam*, new name of Nihat Reşat’s *Échos de l’Orient* adopt a new, bigger format, and the first issue printed in that format defends the peace signed in Ankara.<sup>1479</sup> At the end of 1921, too, the son of Marshal Deli Fuat Paşa, Esad Paşa, and the wife of Esad, an Egyptian princess, fund the project of journalist Gaston Gaillard (author in 1920 of a book defending the Turks), namely another review to be distributed to the French elites: *Orient et Occident*. The review is established by Gaillard with Ahmet Rüstem Bey (1862-1934),<sup>1480</sup> a former Ottoman ambassador in Washington who is, since 1920, in charge of writing articles in the Western press to defend the Kemalist movement.<sup>1481</sup> The first issue includes an article of Rüstem, praising the Ankara agreement.<sup>1482</sup> Both Rüstem and the *Échos de l’Orient* do so in the name of the shared interests, against London (against Soviet Russia, too, for the *Échos de l’Orient*).

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captive — Le terrorisme anglais règne encore dans la capitale turque », *Le Matin*, 15 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1477</sup> Pierre-Abdon Boisson, « L’accord d’Angora », *France-Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1921.

<sup>1478</sup> Louis Dumont-Wilden, « Les soucis du crépuscule », *Revue bleue*, 3 décembre 1921, pp. 742-743.

<sup>1479</sup> [Nihat Reşat Belger], « Contre l’accord franco-turc — Les ennemis de la paix et de l’Islam à l’œuvre » ; Alfred Jacque (Jacques Kayser), « France et Turquie », *Échos de l’Orient*, 15 novembre 1921, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>1480</sup> A/S affaires orientales, Lausanne, le 29 mars 1922, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467.

<sup>1481</sup> Syed Tanvir Wasti, “Ahmed Rüstem Bey and the End of an Era,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XLVIII-5, September 2012, pp. 781-796.

<sup>1482</sup> Ahmet Rüstem Bey, « La paix d’Orient et l’accord franco-turc », *Orient et Occident*, janvier 1922, pp. 55-79. Also see Gaston Gaillard, « L’Orient et l’avenir », *Orient et Occident*, janvier 1922, pp. 5-17.



In the Parliament, the situation is not quite difficult for the Briand cabinet. On 21 October, when announces to the deputies that an agreement has been obtained with the Kemalists, he is “unanimously applauded,”<sup>1483</sup> as observes Léon Blum, leader of the Socialist party and of its bloc at the Chamber of deputies. This unanimity is barely touched, four days later, by Pastor Édouard Soulier (1870-1938), deputy of Paris, who pronounces a few sentences against the agreement (without referring to the Armenians: It is all about territories) in a much more general speech against the diplomacy of the Briand cabinet.<sup>1484</sup> Then, in December, Louis de Chappedeleine, who had asked for the withdrawal from Çukurova, is coherent with himself and supports the agreement. Charles Bellet reiterates his opposition to the evacuation, but admits that “concessions” to the Turks were right (without explaining which ones).<sup>1485</sup> Eventually, on 5 April 1922, the committee of Foreign Affairs adopts a resolution approving the agreement of 20 October 1921.<sup>1486</sup>

At the Senate, Briand faces one time a vigorous opposition, but mostly limited to Étienne Flandin, Gustave de Lamarzelle (1852-1929) and Dominique Delahaye. We already saw Delahaye, a marginal of the far right, asking for the continuation of the conflict with the Kemalists in 1920. De Lamarzelle is an ultra-conservative opponent of the Briand cabinet, more articulate and more prudent than Delahaye. De Lamarzelle and Flandin explicitly avoid to attack Kemal himself or to argue against the evacuation as such—and actually, as we saw, Flandin was not against the agreement of 9 March 1921. Flandin is also the only one of the three to have a certain reputation regarding the actions oversea, representing the French settlements in India and being a former general resident in Tunisia. Briand firmly answers them, insisting on the military rationale (this is impossible to maintain 90,000 soldiers in and near the occupied part of Turkey; the Greeks could be defeated next year; the boundary of Sèvres or the one of March 1921 did not offer a better protection for Syria than the one decided in October), explaining that the exodus of the Armenians is due to external actions and that everything that is possible to do is done to welcome them in Syria and Lebanon. The physical presence of General Gouraud during the debate seems to be a considerable

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<sup>1483</sup> Léon Blum, « Les interpellations à la Chambre — Le discours de M. Briand », *Le Populaire*, 22 octobre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1484</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 26 octobre 1921, p. 3664.

<sup>1485</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 13 décembre 1921, pp. 4965-4966.

<sup>1486</sup> « Turquie — L'accord d'Angora », *Orient et Occident*, mai 1922, p. 137.

avantage: The part of his speech when he refers and designates Gouraud is welcomed by “loud applause,” “cheers on all the benches” and “prolonged applause.” The explicit support of Raymond Poincaré, now president of the Foreign Affairs committee of the Senate, and of Gaston Doumergue can only help, too.<sup>1487</sup> Without contesting the sincerity of Flandin, de Lamarzelle and Delahaye, it is inevitable to think about reasons of domestic policy to explain, at least for a part, their interventions, not only because they are opponents to the Briand cabinet, but also because they intervene on 29 December 1921, namely when the withdrawal is almost completed.

## **5.2. Maintaining the Christians on place: The joint French-Kemalist policy**

### *5.2.1. Legal and practical guarantees*

One may begin with a quote from Donald Bloxham which is exactly the opposite of truth: “Turkish nationalist forces were driving the French occupying force out of Cilicia, and were only too happy to see tens of thousands of Armenians depart with them.”<sup>1488</sup> The sentence is followed by no note. Showing us his conception of accuracy, Mr. Bloxham confuses the defeats of the French army in Maraş and some other cities which are no part of “Cilicia” itself and attributes to the Kemalists, without a shred of evidence, ideas actually opposed to their thinking. In fact, as reports the intelligence service of the French land army right after the end of the evacuation, “the Turks understood quite well that this mass emigration could become an economic disaster for Cilicia.” The same document indicates that the registered exiled Armenians are 49,854 (including 31,000 remaining in Mersin and İskenderun until “the beginning of December” and asked several times by the French and Turkish authorities to go back to their homes) and estimates the non registered refugees to be less than 10,000.<sup>1489</sup>

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<sup>1487</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 30 décembre 1921, pp. 2414-2419 and 2425-2427 (quotation p. 2426). Also see « La politique étrangère au Sénat — Un exposé général de M. Briand », *Le Gaulois*, 30 décembre 1921, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1488</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 5. The error, pointed in 2006 (Yücel Güçlü, “Mislabelling Genocide?”, *The Middle East Quarterly*, Spring 2006, pp. 67-68), is maintained in the reedition of 2009. Also see Serdar Palabıyk, “A Literature between Scientificity and Subjectivity: A Comparative Analysis of the Books Written on the Armenian Issue,” *Review of Armenian Studies*, n° 11-12, 2007.

<sup>1489</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 39, 5 décembre 1921-5 janvier 1922, pp. 2-4, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1. In a brief discussion with me in Zurich, in October 2015, Mr. Bloxham admitted that he had spent “four

Such figures are in themselves enough to assess the Ramkavar claims on “130,000” or “150,000” supposed to be in Cilicia before the French evacuation,<sup>1490</sup> but these about 60,000 persons (without counting the Greeks) still represent a mass exodus.

As retrospectively observes Lieutenant-Colonel Auguste Sarrou, negotiator of the Ankara agreement, “Not a single gunshot has been shoot against [Christians] during the two months of the evacuation.”<sup>1491</sup> Correspondingly, the commission of evacuation observes that “this substitution of the French troops by the Turkish troops was nowhere marked by any incident.” On the contrary, on 13 December 1921, after Henry Franklin-Bouillon has complained about the governor of Adana, he is replaced by Hamit Bey, general secretary of the Ministry of Interior and special representative of the Ankara government for the evacuation—a decision which “incontrovertibly proved the will of the Ankara government to not tolerate any misconduct by its civil servants.”<sup>1492</sup> On 20 November 1921, a new Catholic church is unveiled in Adana by the apostolic nuncio, and a representative of General Gouraud, Rear Admiral Gaston Grandclément (1866-1942), attends the ceremony.<sup>1493</sup> The account published in the internal bulletin of the Near East Relief neither mentions any incident and uses the word “deserted” about the emigration of the Armenian personal of the NER of Adana—a verb suggesting that the American organization does not consider their departure justified.<sup>1494</sup> Yet, the evacuation, in accordance with the text of the Ankara agreement, takes place until 4 January, and Adana, the city with the biggest concentration of Armenians and other Christians, is the last to be left by the French army. In other words, they have time to notice that no incident takes place in the rest of Çukurova, that “what has been

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days” in the French archives. Actually, barely three boxes from Vincennes are used in his book, including one only (cited one time) for the 1918-1922 period and nothing from the diplomatic archives (La Courneuve and Nantes).

<sup>1490</sup> Boghos Nubar, *Population de la Cilicie avant la guerre*, Paris: Imprimerie H. Turabian, [1920], p. 8 ; Letter of Gabriel Noradounkian to George Montgomery, 8 November 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

<sup>1491</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Auguste Sarrou, « Impressions d’Anatolie », *Revue économique française*, XLIV-2, mars-avril 1922, p. 95. Also see Bulletin spécial de renseignements du 2 décembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/163.

<sup>1492</sup> Rapport d’ensemble sur les opérations de la commission, 14 janvier 1922, pp. 3-4, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1493</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 37, 5-20 novembre 1921, pp. 4-5, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

<sup>1494</sup> Nan O. Lowe, “Adana Unit Carrying on Midst Cilician Evacuation,” *Near East Relief*, 14 January 1922, p. 1.

promised is integrally executed.”<sup>1495</sup> General Dufieux, requested by the NER about its employees, answers that he cannot speak on behalf of the Kemalists but that his “personal impression” is that these employees have nothing to fear until further notice.<sup>1496</sup>

Even the Catholicos of Cilicia acknowledges that there is no Kemalist attempts to expel Armenians, quite the contrary:

The Kemalists hardly expected this big movement of emigration. Immediately, they did their best to stop it. They wrote from Pozanti, and by their agents, they expressed their desire to have a meeting with the leaders of the Christian communities.<sup>1497</sup>

Indeed, as explains General Gouraud to the Christian population, it is the interest of Ankara to maintain peace, as the agreement of 20 October 1921 “is only the half” of the general peace.<sup>1498</sup> Knowing that the conflicts (1915-1920) necessarily produce fear, the Kemalists have agreed with the French for an amnesty (article V of the pact). It is relief for Armenian perpetrators and accessories, but also for those who could apprehend to be unjustly accused and blackmailed with threats of denunciations. A more general guarantee is provided by the article VI, securing the “rights of the minorities,” “at the same basis than those guaranteed by the convention concluded by this subject between the Entente Powers, their adversaries and some of their allies” (reference to Poland).

It is also crucial to know that that the Christians “fear even more [than reprisals] the military duty.”<sup>1499</sup> Yet, they are exempted for “at least three months” after the last day of evacuation (4 January 1922), and at that time, peace seems possible to be attained before April 1922.<sup>1500</sup> Actually, the Paris conference to revise the Sèvres treaty takes place in March and a French intelligence bulletin of October 1921 notes that “the Armenians of Maraş were not deported, but had to pay heavy taxes of [military duty’s] exemption,”<sup>1501</sup> which means that they have

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<sup>1495</sup> Capitaine Peulvey, *Compte-rendu en fin de mission*, 16 janvier 1922, p. 7, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1496</sup> Le général Dufieux, commandant la Ire division, à Miss Lore, directrice du NER, 16 novembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1497</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les Alliés*, Paris-Istanbul, éditions du *Bosphore*, 1922, p. 381.

<sup>1498</sup> Proclamation du général Gouraud, adressée aux habitants de la Cilicie, d’Aïntab et de Killis, 9 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787 (also in P 17785).

<sup>1499</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 36, 20 octobre-5 novembre 1921, p. 6, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

<sup>1500</sup> Henry Franklin-Bouillon, Hamit (Kapancızade) Bey, Muhittin (Akyüz) Paşa, Proclamation, 28 novembre 1921, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>1501</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 271, 18-19 octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 3.

not been sent to a labor battalion, and the risk of the tax of exemption does not exist, at least for five months, for the Armenians and other Christians of Çukurova. In fact, as observes Pierre Lyautey (chief of staff of General Gouraud in Beirut) in a book completed in June 1923 and printed the same year, “thanks to the courteous and firm intervention of our eminent representative in Adana, Mr. Osmin Laporte, the measures concerning the conscription of the Christians, the exception tribunals and the seizure of the emigrants’ properties never were implemented” in Çukurova, Killis and Antep.<sup>1502</sup> The exemption is even more significant in considering a conversation between General Maurice Pellé, high commissioner in İstanbul, with Jean Naslian (1875-1957), vicar of the Catholic Armenian Patriarchate, speaking on behalf of the three religious communities (Gregorian, Protestant and Catholic). Naslian asks to the Turks for the exemption of military duty, the promise that no Armenian will be relocated, and the full liberty to leave and to go back; to the French the material ways to expatriate; and to both an “Armenian delegation” made of men the Kemalists can trust. Actually, four of these demands are fully implemented, and if there is no Armenian delegation, by the end of November, there are joint commissions (see below).<sup>1503</sup> Regardless, in his Memoirs, and more precisely in a part written as early as 1923, Naslian neglects to mention the conversation and calls “illusory” the guarantees he had himself asked for, at most two years earlier.<sup>1504</sup>

The rationale of the past mutual violence is even more inconclusive as the Armenians of the region know well how the quality of the local authorities determines their safety. Indeed, during the clashes provoked by the Hunchak party in 1895, almost nothing serious happened between Mersin and Adana, mostly because of the governors and their collaborators. In particular, the kaimakan of Tarsus blocked a threatening crowd, “even broke a cane on the head of the most recalcitrant and the rest dispersed.”<sup>1505</sup> We also have seen that no massacre

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<sup>1502</sup> Pierre Lyautey, *Le Drame oriental et le rôle de la France*, Paris : Société d’éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1923, p. 190.

<sup>1503</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 8 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1504</sup> Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de Mgr Jean Naslian, évêque de Trébizonde, sur les événements politico-religieux en Proche-Orient, de 1914 à 1928*, Vienna : Imprimerie Méchithariste, 1955, volume II, pp. 483 and 804-805 (quotation p. 483).

<sup>1505</sup> M. Summaripa, consul, chargé du vice-consulat de France à Mersine, à M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de la République française à Constantinople, 14 décembre 1895, in *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires arméniennes (1895-1896). Supplément*, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1897, p. 98.

took place in Çukurova during the First World War. Yet, even the Catholicos of Cilicia, in a letter justifying the evacuation, admits that the new governor of Adana is “a loyal a good man” he knew when Hamit was governor of Diyarbakır (1914-1915). As long as Hamit was in charge here, “there were neither deportations nor massacres” in the province.<sup>1506</sup> Archag Tchobanian, too, in spite of his racism against the Turks,<sup>1507</sup> considers Hamit “a honest man.”<sup>1508</sup> The argument of the Catholicos (all hopes cannot be placed in one man, and a civil servant can always be displaced) does not explain, at any level, the massive character of the emigration even before the evacuation is completed. Indeed, the flow of settlers and Sefaradic Jews before and after the independence of Algeria (1962-1963), flow mostly caused by a campaign of kidnappings, assassinations, rapes, etc., organized by the radical wing of the Algerian independentists, and which has not even the shadow of a counterpart in Çukurova in 1921, is not concentrated in such a short time and is preceded by a strategy (for those who have enough money) to prepare a possible exil without leaving immediately.<sup>1509</sup>

The Catholicos is also wrong in alleging that only Hamit deserves to be trusted. Indeed, the chief of the Adana’s gendarmerie and the commander of the artillery are “judged energetic and Francophile” from the beginning by Henry Franklin-Bouillon<sup>1510</sup> and his judgment is confirmed by the High Commission’s intelligence service, which attributes the absence of incident during the evacuation to the joint action with the new authorities, particularly the military commander, Muhittin (Akyüz) Paşa (1870-1940).<sup>1511</sup> For U.S. journalist Clair Price, Muhittin Paşa “is a representative of the finest type of old Ottoman Army officer” and “had nothing to do with the Armenian deportations of 1915 or with the Enver Government which ordered them; under the Hamidian regime, he had been exiled four times and twice condemned to death.”<sup>1512</sup> According to the chief intelligence officer of Adana, Muthittin is

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<sup>1506</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, p. 385.

<sup>1507</sup> Archag Tchobanian, *L’Arménie sous le joug turc*, Paris : Plon-Nourrit, 1915.

<sup>1508</sup> Le général Gouraud, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et au Liban, à Son Excellence M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 1<sup>er</sup> juin 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1509</sup> Jean-Jacques Jordi, *Un silence d’État. Les disparus civils européens de la guerre d’Algérie*, Paris : SOTECA, 2011.

<sup>1510</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 22 octobre 1921, SHD, 4 H 43, dossier 9.

<sup>1511</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 38, 20 novembre-5 décembre 1921, p. 3, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

<sup>1512</sup> Clair Price, *The Rebirth of Turkey*, New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1923, p. 191. More generally on the Kemalists and Armenians in 1921: Clarence K. Streit, *The Unknown Turks. Mustafa Kemal Paşa*,

quite able “to understand the necessity to treat the Christians very well. At Constantinople, he had a lot of relations with the Europeans, particularly the Christians of Pera.”<sup>1513</sup> Beside the top civil servants, Osmin Laporte, member of the evacuation committee then consul general in Adana (previously in İzmir), observes, in March 1922, the positive impact of Hamit, “this honest man, fundamentally democrat” on the Muslim population, who yearns for peace and who begins to assimilate democratic principles.<sup>1514</sup>

An apparently stronger argument is the suppression of the reference to French officers in the local gendarmerie. The argument is presented by General Gouraud, who cannot be suspected of hostile prejudice toward Turks.<sup>1515</sup> General Dufieux, too, regrets what he calls the absence of “effective guarantees” (almost certainly a reference to the gendarmerie) and considers that this is the reason, not of the emigration, but of its scope. Several reports of Dufieux are tainted by the humiliation inflicted to his men by the Kemalists on the battlefield and by his excessive trust toward Brémond, but this is not the case here (except some unverified rumors on “clumsiness” of Turks). Indeed, he calls the fear of the majority of the Armenians “irrational” and attributes the desire to leave showed the others (the nationalists) to their “hatred” against the Turks; he finishes his text in expressing the hope that at least a part of the Armenians and Greeks comes back, considering that the new Turkish administration could relieve them.<sup>1516</sup> Regardless, attributing the scope of the exodus to the absence of such officers is fundamentally erroneous, for at least three reasons—the first and the second being important but not decisive and the third being decisive.

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*nationalist Ankara & daily life in Anatolia, January-March 1921*, İstanbul: Bahçeşehir University Press, 2011, pp. 83-84.

<sup>1513</sup> Capitaine Carbillet, Bulletin spécial de renseignements, 10 novembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>1514</sup> Le consul général chargé de la mission à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1922, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1515</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 9 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17785.

<sup>1516</sup> Le général Dufieux, commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division du Levant, à M. le haut-commissaire en Syrie et au Liban, commandant de l’armée du Levant, 21 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787. Paraphrasing the document, Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire. Les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l’entre-deux-guerres*, Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004, p. 87 omits the hope expressed by Dufieux.

The first is that a unilateral declaration annexed to the Ankara agreement invites Paris to send French professors for the schools of gendarmerie.<sup>1517</sup> As a result, it is merely inaccurate to claim that the text does not refer to any French officer. The second is that the gendarmerie of Adana city passes under the Turkish control on 2 December 1921, namely more than one month before the departure of the French troops. Yet, at this moment, the 536 Christian gendarmes (out of a total of 1,206) resign by their own initiative, without having been forced, either by the Turks, either by the French. The situation is the same for the police: The control is given back to the Turks on 1 December (the new director being a graduate from Saint-Joseph University at Beirut, who shows “the most perfect courtesy” with the French officials), and all the Christian policemen resign the same day.<sup>1518</sup>

However, the decisive reason is that neither the text of 9 March 1921 nor even the Sèvres treaty had prevented serious threats of mass exodus. As early as March 1921, the Catholicos of Cilicia requests the French government to prepare the necessary ways for the emigration of the Armenians from Çukurova and Antep in case of evacuation.<sup>1519</sup> It proves that his request for “real guarantees” in November 1921<sup>1520</sup> is hypocritical. Similarly, on 5 April 1921, the representatives of the Protestant, Catholic and Gregorian Armenian churches (curiously, the Protestant, who is not the first in the alphabetic order and still less the chief of the biggest community, signs first) write a joint letter to the League of Nation: “We protest most strongly against the decisions which once more expose us to a regime which has for centuries been characterized solely by riots, atrocities and massacres [...]” In consequence, the letter requests “measures for evacuating the whole Christian population.”<sup>1521</sup> Similarly, in a letter to the Quai d’Orsay on 30 April 1921, the (Ramkavar) Armenian National Delegation affirms that “the Armenians ask to emigrate en masse”<sup>1522</sup> (the same delegation complaining in November 1921 about the absence of French officers in the command of the

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<sup>1517</sup> AMAE, 118 PA-AP 61, f. 27.

<sup>1518</sup> Gendarmerie [1921] ; Police [1921], AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1519</sup> Lettre de Sahag II à Aristide Briand, 19 mars 1921, AMAE, P 1486.

<sup>1520</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, p. 383.

<sup>1521</sup> AMAE, P 1486.

<sup>1522</sup> AMAE, P 16675.



gendarmerie<sup>1523</sup>). In these conditions, for Robert de Caix, “it seems almost impossible” to prevent an expensive exodus of the Armenians, in *March* 1921.<sup>1524</sup>

According to the article 170 of the Sèvres treaty, Turkey was supposed to accept “officers or civil servants” from the Entente’s powers and neutral county in its police and the article 1 of the Tripartite pact signed by the UK, France and Italy the same day than the Sèvres treaty said that

In the event of the Turkish Government [...] being desirous of obtaining external assistance in the local administration or police of the areas in which the special interests of France and Italy are respectively recognized, the contracting Powers under take not to dispute the preferential claim of the Power whose special interests in such areas are recognized to supply such assistance. This assistance shall be specially directed towards enhancing the protection afforded to racial, religious or linguistic minorities in the said areas.

Yet, as it has already been seen, at the beginning of July 1920, namely when the text of the treaty is known but not yet signed, a representative of the United Armenian delegations, Zabel Essayan, threatens of “trouble” in case of a French withdrawal. Then, on 11 October 1920, the French gendarmes of Adana report about the fear, among the Christians of Adana, of “traditional massacres” (sic) in case of an evacuation in implementation of the Sèvres treaty.<sup>1525</sup>

That having been said, the fact remains that the reduction of the French presence in the local gendarmerie to professors gives a pretext to the Armenian nationalists and their supporters. A unilateral declaration leaving such officers in the gendarmerie itself for one year (the solution suggested by Gouraud, but too late) and/or the renting of a military facility in Mersin for the same time would have deprived them from such a pretext.

However, regarding the concrete situation of Christians in Kemalist-controlled Anatolia, no pretext could be invoked. Commander Roger Labonne, chief of the land army’s Intelligence service for Anatolia, observes in a report of June 1920, namely at the paroxysmal moment of

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<sup>1523</sup> Letter of Gabriel Noradounkian to George Montgomery, 8 November 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

<sup>1524</sup> Télégramme de Robert de Caix au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 27 mars 1921, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1525</sup> Yves Le Lannou, « Gendarmes français en Cilicie (1918-1922) », *Cahiers d'études sur la Méditerranée orientale et le monde turco-iranien*, n° 28, juin-décembre 1999, p. 196. Same alarmism in Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *Et l'Arménie ? Discours prononcé à Genève, le 19 décembre 1920*, Geneva : Imprimerie Gent, 1921, pp. 3-4. Also see Lettre de Robert de Caix au général Dufieux, 16 septembre 1920, CADN, 1SL/1V/173.

the conflict in Çukurova, that “Nowhere [in the Kemalist-dominated regions] is the Christian population threatened.”<sup>1526</sup> Regarding the conduct of the war in this particular region, even the irregulars, in general, “do not molest the peasants who rally them, even if Christians,” and the difference in treatment being given was based on political stances, not religion or ethnicity—with the “avowed aim to associate Christians and Muslims in a common effort to expel the aliens [the French troops].”<sup>1527</sup> We have seen that the allegations of “massacre” in Kars and Haçin in 1920, are baseless, so there is no need to insist. The situation is unchanged in 1921. Indeed, Lieutenant-Colonel Sarrou (a former instructor of the Ottoman gendarmerie, as it has been seen in the introduction) spends “six months” in Anatolia during the year 1921 and makes “thousands of kilometers.” He comes back with the conclusion that “the new regime” is based on “social, administrative, economic and military discipline.” The gendarmerie is “convenient” and “the general safety is complete.” Indeed, for six months, he does not see, or even “hear” about any trouble to public order and can travel “almost always without escort,” a fact indeed impossible to conciliate with any serious problem of public safety.<sup>1528</sup> Similarly, Berthe Georges-Gaulis sees “everywhere order” in May 1921.<sup>1529</sup> Those who would criticize these sources as pro-Turkish can cross-check with the NER report for the year 1921. The document includes a (partial) list of 12,362 Armenian orphans cared by the U.S. institution in seven cities of the Kemalist-controlled Anatolia (Ankara, Kayseri, Elazığ, Konya, Samsun, Sivas and Merzifon), without complaining about violence or threats.<sup>1530</sup>

There is certainly one exception and this exception is the Pontus. The reference made by Dzovinar Kévonian to this region in 1921 (solely with echoes of the Anglo-Greek

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<sup>1526</sup> Commandant Roger Labonne, Situation politique en Asie mineure, 25 juin 1920, p. 2, SHD, 7 N 3210, dossier 2, sous-dossier 1 (also in AMAE, P 1575).

<sup>1527</sup> Rapport hebdomadaire, 16-22 mars 1920 ; Id., 15-21 juin 1920 SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 1. Dr. Bloxham has worked in this box and more particularly in this file, but for reasons he is the only one to know, he never cites these documents.

<sup>1528</sup> Lieutenant-colonel Auguste Sarrou, « Impressions d’Anatolie... », p. 90. Also see « La paix en Orient — Entretien avec M. Lenail sur l’accord franco-turc conclu à Angora », *Excelsior*, 28 novembre 1921, p. 2.

<sup>1529</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Le Nationalisme turc*, Paris : Plon, 1921, p. 137.

<sup>1530</sup> James Barton and alii, *Report of the Near East Relief for the Year Ending December 31, 1921*, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922, p. 9. For a detailed confirmation: “The Interior City, Marsovan,” *Near East Relief*, 24 June 1922, p. 3.

propaganda)<sup>1531</sup> is the only case of Christians in Kemalist-dominated Anatolia which has an appearance of value as an objection. Regardless, a closer look proves that this cannot justify, at any level, the emigration of the large majority of the Armenians and Greeks from Çukurova in November-December 1921. Indeed, after a series of insurrections around Samsun starting in 1914 but intensifying in 1916, the Ottoman cabinet imposed a forced relocation in 1916-1917, carried out without massacres, and sparing the province of Trabzon, because the Greek archbishop of the city prevented uprising. By 1919, separatist gangs are created again in the province of Samsun (not in Trabzon) and attack Turkish villages (1,817 casualties are counted, mostly from 1919 to 1921). Starting during winter 1920-1921, the repression is initially imposed by independence's tribunals and regular troops but in June 1921, the irregulars of Topal Osman (1884-1923) intervene, with more success but also with much more violent methods, including some massacres. The killings stop after an order from Ankara on 25 June—which means that they are concentrated in a period of less than one month.<sup>1532</sup>

Yet, the reoccupation of Çukurova is made by regular troops only, Topal Osman has nothing to do with the forces in the region, the Armenians of Mersin, Tarsus or Adana, after the French action of disarmament in 1920-1921 cannot even think about an insurrection similar to the Greek uprisings near Samsun and the Greeks of Çukurova are not armed. Regarding the frequency of homicidal violence, Mary Caroline Holmes, repeating what her colleagues of the Near East Relief at Elazığ told her, explains that no massacre has taken place near this city during the forced relocation of Greeks and Armenians from the littoral of Samsun in 1921, that the Kemalist authorities have requested the NER to provide food and that a complaint from a NER official was enough to punish an “immoral” gendarme. All the losses of the 1921 relocation passing by Elazığ are, according to the NER's observations repeated by

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<sup>1531</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire*, Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004, p. 99.

<sup>1532</sup> Télégramme de Paul Lépissier au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 31 mars 1919 ; Id., 7 mai 1919, AMAE, P 1524 ; Id., 13 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 723, 21 mai 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232 ; Ciphered messages from the office of the mutasarrif of Samsun, 6 and 30 January 1921, in Abidin Ünal (ed.), *Romaic Activities in the Archive Documents. 1918-1922*, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 2009, pp. 229-230 and 241-242 ; Maurice Honoré, « Vers la fin du conflit oriental ? », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 juillet 1922, p. 115 ; Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L'aube de la Turquie nouvelle*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1922, pp. 149-171; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume II, pp. 582-596 ; Stéphane Yerasimos, « La question du Pont-Euxin (1912-1923) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 153, janvier 1989, pp. 9-34.

Holmes, due to natural causes, without criminal intent.<sup>1533</sup> Holmes' letter is largely confirmed by the account published in the internal bulletin of the NER by the director of the Elaziğ branch himself,<sup>1534</sup> and concerning the relocation road from Samsun to Konya, NER official R. K. van Velsor finds one convoy victim of homicidal violence—all the others being left safe.<sup>1535</sup>

### 5.2.2. Reinforcing the safety by new measures

After having failed to convince the majority of the Christian population to stay and even tried to block the flow, as a flow of refugees "cannot be admitted by the French authorities,"<sup>1536</sup> the French and Turkish sides create joint commissions to incite the immigrants to come back after a few weeks or months in Syria:

A commission for the properties of emigrants was established in Adana on 28 November [1921]. The head of this commission is the mayor and includes two French officers or civil servants, representing the joint commission of evacuation, the mudir of the police, [and] a Christian notability of every community [Gregorian Armenian, Catholic Armenian, Protestant Armenian, Greek, Assyrian], named by the chief of the community. The mission of this commission is the following:

- a) Identify the abandoned quarters, deny access to them, to ensure the conservation of the buildings;
- b) Safeguard the properties of the emigrants in the partially abandoned quarters;
- c) Concentrate the Christians in the central quarters of the city;
- d) Determinate by quarter and by community the present Christian population. Police, gendarmerie, and, if the president of the commission asks for this, the military, helps the execution of the commission's mission.

Analogous commissions are organized for the protection of the emigrants' properties by the administrative controllers and counselors in their cities. The conservation of

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<sup>1533</sup> Letter of Mary Caroline Holmes to Admiral Mark Bristol, 29 May 1922, forwarded with approval by Allan Dulles, National Archive and Records Administration, College Park, RG 59, M 353, roll 45 (867.4016/708).

<sup>1534</sup> Walter E. Curt, "Work in the Harpoot Region," *Near East Relief*, 24 December 1921, pp. 2-4. Also see Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L'aube de...*, pp. 183-193; and Larry Rue, "Near East Finds Kurd Atrocities a Myth," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 May 1922, p. 4.

<sup>1535</sup> Mark Bristol, War Diary, 16 November 1921, LC, Bristol papers, container 3.

<sup>1536</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 274, 3-5 novembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 3. Annotating the letter of the Armenian National Delegation dated 30 April 1921, a diplomat similarly writes: "[...] we exclude the hypothesis of population movements to our area [Syria and Lebanon]. Enough of uprooted." (AMAE, P 16675).

the emigrants' properties has a capital importance, since it can decide to return to Cilicia a part of the Christians who, by fear, left or want to leave.<sup>1537</sup>

The creation is announced to the population.<sup>1538</sup> Similar commissions are established in Killis and Antep, at the beginning of December (6 December in Antep, with three Armenians: one Gregorian, one Catholic and one Protestant), and here, the only serious problem is "the extreme nonchalance" of the "Armenian notables" chosen to be members of these commissions: On the contrary, the Turkish civil servants are as active as the French one to defeat this "nonchalance." Eventually, a "detailed list" of the properties is established, with the name, the address at Antep and the new address (in Syria or Lebanon). The Turkish police collaborates both to the establishment to the list and the protection of the properties.<sup>1539</sup> In June 1922, after an energetic intervention of the French diplomacy (consul in Adana, high commissioner in İstanbul, representative in Ankara), the implementation of the law of April 1922 on abandoned properties in liberated zones is adjourned in the former French zone of occupation and the commissions remain.<sup>1540</sup>

In spring 1922, when the NER decides to concentrate the orphanages of Mardin, Urfa, Maraş—but also Aleppo—in Beirut, its internal bulletin does not cite any security concerns, but a rationalization of the ways and expenses.<sup>1541</sup> Even more remarkably, in his report for 1922, Father Claudius Chanteur, now rector of the Saint-Joseph University, does not see any rational reason for the exodus of Armenians and other Christians. He expresses the wish that refugees soon or late return and find a *modus vivendi* with the Turkish majority.<sup>1542</sup> At the

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<sup>1537</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 285, 11-13 décembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 3. The regulation is: Colonel Pettelat, Note de service n° 21/2, 27 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1538</sup> Henry Franklin-Bouillon, Hamit (Kapancızade) Bey, Muhittin (Akyüz) Paşa, Avis au public [1921], AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1539</sup> Capitaine Peulvey, Compte-rendu en fin de mission, 16 janvier 1922, pp. 4-5 ; Rapport du capitaine Bourgon, délégué de la sous-commission d'évacuation sur l'organisation de la commission des biens des émigrés ; Capitaine Bourgon, Compte-rendu de la séance du 17 décembre 1921 de la commission des biens des émigrés ; Procès-verbal de la réunion de la commission de protection des biens des émigrés de Killis, le 26 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1540</sup> Le consul général chargé de la mission à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 juin 1922 ; Télégramme du colonel Mougin au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 4 juillet 1922 ; Id., 19 juillet 1922 ; Note sur la loi du gouvernement d'Angora sur les biens abandonnés, 4 septembre 1922, AMAE, 17787.

<sup>1541</sup> "Concentration of Beirut Area Orphans," *Near East Relief*, 7 May 1922, pp. 1-2; "Hiking from Ourfa to Aleppo with Two Hundred Orphan Girls," *Near East Relief*, 3 June 1922, p. 3.

<sup>1542</sup> Claudius Chanteur, « Syrie, Cilicie, Palestine », *Les Missions catholiques*, 10 février 1922, p. 70.

end of January 1922, “a caravan, composed in majority by Armenians, coming from Maraş to Gaziantep, has been attacked en route by about sixty bandits, who robbed the travelers and took their weapons to two gendarmes of the escort”<sup>1543</sup> — which means that the authorities provided an escort. About two weeks later, the chief of the gang is arrested, sentenced to death, and hanged.<sup>1544</sup> Even for less serious affairs, the Turkish justice is without indulgence: In January 1922, “two Turks who had assaulted an Armenian have been sentenced to three months in jail.”<sup>1545</sup> In February of the same year, Julian Gillespie, the U.S. assistant trade commissioner in İstanbul, finds “the situation in the province of Adana very quiet.”<sup>1546</sup>

The comparison between Cilicia proper on one side, the region of Gaziantep on the other side is especially illuminating. The mutessarif of Gaziantep

seems to have produced an excellent impression on the Christian population. He met on December 6 [1921] the religious leaders and the notabilities of the city, and assured them that he was ready to take strong measures against the Muslims who would try to threaten or commit reprisals against Christians. These affirmations apparently relieved the Armenians, who remain quiet and do not abandon their work.<sup>1547</sup>

In Antep (now Gaziantep), there is no mass emigration, no general movement, but individual and familial emigration, mostly of Armenians who served the French; in January 1922, around 5,000 Armenians still remain in this city (and 1,000 in Killis).<sup>1548</sup> They “rely a lot on the [French] Consul [at Antep] who they see as a stable protector and the Turks will be well, at least externally, in front of this ‘controler’.”<sup>1549</sup> The governor of Killis appointed in January 1922 is called “extremely weighted” by the land army’s intelligence service, which adds that, after the departure of the French troops, the Christians of Gaziantep and Killis “are

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<sup>1543</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 300, 23-25 janvier 1922, p. 3, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1.

<sup>1544</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 304, 4-6 février 1922, p. 3, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1.

<sup>1545</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 295, 11-12 janvier 1922, p. 2, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1.

<sup>1546</sup> Quoted in Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...*, p. 153.

<sup>1547</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 284, 8-10 décembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 3.

<sup>1548</sup> Capitaine Peulvey, *Compte-rendu en fin de mission*, 16 janvier 1922, p. 5, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1549</sup> *Journal de marche de la sous-commission d'évacuation Aıntab-Killis*, décembre 1921-janvier 1922, p. 2, AMAE, P 17787.

unmolested.” Sheikh Senoussi “preaches every Friday in the mosque the tolerance vis-à-vis the Christians and the obedience to the laws.”<sup>1550</sup>

The disdain for such documents is generalized in the literature supporting Armenian nationalism. In a hateful paragraph that is not backed by one source, even of the most tendentious kind, Christopher Walker proves his ignorance of the archives in claiming: “about 50,000 Armenians were forced out of a land which has been theirs for a thousand years, to become refugees, mostly in Lebanon and Syria. There were other factors, too, besides French treachery, which forced them out: above all ruthless Turkish racialism.”<sup>1551</sup> With a barely less Francophobic tone, an Armenian nationalist, assistant professor in mathematics by profession, presents the same claims, without citing a single archival document.<sup>1552</sup> Ignorance of the archives is a charge that cannot be made against Karen Nakache, but, without explanation, he neglects or under-uses the documents on the Kemalist and French efforts to keep the Christian population on place, and defends, as a result, a more than dubious conclusion, presenting the exodus as the inevitable result of a supposed lack of guarantees and describing the Ramkavar actions as benevolent.<sup>1553</sup> Even in Dzovinar Kévonian’s published dissertation, which cannot be assimilated to these three publications, the issue of the commission for the refugees’ properties is mentioned in one sentence, without footnote.<sup>1554</sup>

As the main French contemporary source denying the good faith of the Kemalists is the book of Paul de Rémusat, aka Paul du Véou (deceased in 1963),<sup>1555</sup> an officer during the occupation of Adana, it is necessary to provide some explanations (in addition to what has already been exposed) about the trust his claims deserve. The core of the thesis of the book is to affirm that the French difficulties and withdrawal by masonic intrigues (pp. 219, 287-289, 303) and to describe the Kemalist movement as fundamentally masonic (pp. 32, 286), even as led by

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<sup>1550</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 298, 17-19 janvier 1922, p. 4, SHD, 4 H 61, dossier 1.

<sup>1551</sup> Christopher Walker, *Armenia. The Survival of a Nation*, London-New York: Routledge, 1990, p. 302 (the diatribe continues on p. 303).

<sup>1552</sup> Claude Mutafian, « La Cilicie turquifiée par la France », *Historiens et Géographes*, n° 336, mai-juin 1992, pp. 151-160.

<sup>1553</sup> Karen Nakache, « Un cas de migration forcée : les Arméniens de Cilicie en 1921 », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, n° 56, 1998, pp. 109-130

<sup>1554</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie...*, p. 100.

<sup>1555</sup> Paul du Véou (Paul de Rémusat), *La Passion de la Cilicie*, Paris : Paul Geuthner, 1954.

Jewish Mason, Kemal Atatürk (pp. 107-108). It is barely necessary to say that Atatürk is not Jewish, not anymore a Mason in 1919 (if he ever was), and that these claims merely are a repetition of the anti-Semitic and anti-Masonic conspiracy theories spread by Armenians, Greeks and officials of the British embassy by 1909, against the CUP.<sup>1556</sup> Concerning the French Free Masonry, it is divided between supporters of Greeks and Armenians on one side, of Turks on the other side, and the second become a majority only gradually.<sup>1557</sup> It is true that Camille Maclair, another supporter of the Armenian cause, is even more anti-Semitic than de Rémusat/du Véou<sup>1558</sup> and that James Aratoon Macolm, the representative of the Ramkavar Armenian National Delegation in London, considers that “Italian policy in the East is shaped only by Salonika Crypto Jews.”<sup>1559</sup>

For obvious reasons, the edition of 1954 contains less *explicit* references to the anti-Masonic obsessions of the author than the one of 1937 (let’s compare the pages 100 and 102-103 of the 1954 edition with the pages 62-63 and 66-67 of the 1937 edition). Yet, de Rémusat/du Véou claims, p. 12 of the 1954 edition that he has changed nothing to the original text, except in adding a long foreword. The anti-Masonic *idée fixe*<sup>1560</sup> and implicit anti-Semitism are not the only angles of attack against the Kemalist movement: de Rémusat/du Véou seems to think that readers shall believe him when he writes (p. 217) that the project of Kemal Atatürk, during the war of independence, is “to replace Turkey under the vassality of Prussia” (sic), that the Kemalist movement is created in Berlin (p. 32) and that Kemal makes “a deal” in 1919 with... the British (p. 110).

Written with an extremely anti-Muslim style, the author regardless expresses his sympathy for the Kurds and more particularly for Kurdish separatism (pp. 13, 16, 20, 29, 115, 342), in spite of the fact that Kurds are over-represented among the perpetrators of massacres and

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<sup>1556</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Semites and anti-Semites*, New York-London: W. W. Norton & C°, 1987, p. 138; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 211-212, n. 4.

<sup>1557</sup> Paul Dumont, “French Free Masonry and the Turkish Struggle for Independence (1919-1923),” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, III-2, winter 1985-1986, pp. 1-16.

<sup>1558</sup> Romy Golan, “From Fin-de-Siècle to Vichy: The Cultural Hygienics of Camille (Faust) Maclair,” in Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb (ed.), *The Jew in the Text. Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1995, pp. 156-173.

<sup>1559</sup> Letter of James Aratoon Macolm to George Montgomery, 14 May 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 3.

<sup>1560</sup> Reiterated in Paul du Véou, *Chrétiens en péril au Moussa Dagh*, Paris : Baudinière, 1939, p. 183.



other crimes against Armenians in 1915-1916.<sup>1561</sup> He claims (pp. 29-30) that “150,000” Armenians died under the Russian uniform, on the battlefield, from 1914 to 1917, confusing the losses with the estimate of Boghos Nubar and Avetis Aharonian for the number of regular soldiers of Armenian ethnicity in the Russian army, during the First World War. Also on the Armenian issue during this conflict, he quotes (p. 13) one of the fake “telegrams” published by Aram Andonian in 1920 and he spuriously claims that he was not aware of the existence of these “documents” in 1937.<sup>1562</sup> P. 54, he uses a statement of January 1920, in a İstanbul martial court, falsely attributed to Kemal Atatürk,<sup>1563</sup> and he knows it is attributed falsely as Atatürk is not in İstanbul but in Anatolia in 1920. P. 285, he pretends that the rejection of the Armenian candidacy to the League of Nations, in December 1920, is due to Italian intrigues, ignoring (genuinely or hypocritically) the decisive role of the French delegate, René Viviani (explained in the previous chapter of this dissertation). P. 285, too, du Véou even affirms that the Bolshevik invasion of Armenia takes place after 18 December 1920, which makes even more difficult the question to know if he writes by mere ignorance or by a mix of will to mislead and excessive self-confidence. However, about the Soviet help, there is no doubt that the author does not believe what he writes on p. 110 (the Soviet financial help is supposed to arrive as early as 1919) because on p. 254, he admits that it actually arrives in 1920 only. It makes a considerable difference, because the first successes of the Turkish national movement, until mid-1920, are materially helped by democratic Italy only.

Concerning the occupation and the evacuation of Çukurova, the less serious critique that must be made is the practice of double standard. Indeed, he describes as length the murderous ambush of Urfa, which is in itself understandable, but (pp. 32 and 336), he speaks about “our Greek friends,” betting that the readers do not know the murderous ambush against French soldiers by Greeks in Athens, in December 1916. P. 115, by negligence or will to dupe, he presents Ali Said, a Kurdish officer fighting the French in 1920, as a former judge

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<sup>1561</sup> Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005, pp. 221-224; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route des Indes, un siècle après Bonaparte*, Paris : Société d'éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1932, p. 213.

<sup>1562</sup> On these forged “documents”: Ömer Engin Lütem and Yiğit Alpogan, “Review Essay: ‘Killing Orders: Talat Pasha’s Telegrams and the Armenian genocide’”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, no. 37, 2018, pp. 45-82; Şinasi Orel and Sürreya Yuca, *The Talât Pasha ‘Telegrams’: Historical fact or Armenian fiction?*, Nicosia-Oxford: K. Rüstem & Brothers/Oxford University Press, 1986.

<sup>1563</sup> About this false attribution: James Tashjian, “On a ‘Statement’ Condemning the Armenian genocide of 1918 Attributed in Error to Mustafa Kemal, Later ‘The Ataturk,’” *Armenian Review*, XXXV/3-139, pp. 227-244.

in the repression of the Şey Sait rebellion, that actually takes place five years later. P. 32, he claims that the capitulations are abolished by the Ankara agreement, and that maintaining them would have been “a guarantee” for the Armenians (there is nothing on the Capitulations in the text and the issue is not exposed during the evacuation<sup>1564</sup>). P. 305, he attributes to Turkish minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Kemal (Tengirsenk), without any reference, a quote on Franklin-Bouillon as “ready to sign ‘without taking his glasses’”, an assertion in absolute contradiction with the existing record, as we saw. Regardless, this lie is nothing in comparison with the one present on p. 314, when de Rémusat/du Véou affirms that Franklin-Bouillon is arrested by order of Gouraud in November 1921!

As a result, it is not a surprise to see this author claiming, p. 319, that “the last Christian” leaves Adana in December 1921. Actually, 3,828 remain in Çukurova itself (from Mersin to Adana) in January 1922 according the land army intelligence service, 3,761 according to the commission of evacuation,<sup>1565</sup> something the author cannot ignore, considering the access he has had to the high commission’ archives. And this is even less a surprise if, feigning to ignore the very existence of the joint commissions in charge of the Christian property, de Rémusat/du Véou finds nothing better than racism to justify the emigration, affirming, p. 308, that “the Turkish word” has no value. Never short of a lie, he claims at the same page that the letter of Yusuf Kemal to Henri Franklin-Bouillon “was not published.” In fact, it can be found in *L’Asie française*, *L’Europe nouvelle* and *Le Temps* of the time as well as in books, including the one of *Le Petit Parisien’s* correspondent in Turkey, Jean Schlicklin.<sup>1566</sup> This is a lie and not an error, because the author cites in his bibliography (p. 433) the book published in 1922 by Michel Paillarès, yet the letter is reprinted in this book, too, and, accurate in this quite precise point, Paillarès writes that the text had been previously published.<sup>1567</sup>

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<sup>1564</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud pour M. Franklin-Bouillon, 18 novembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 175, dossier 5.

<sup>1565</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 39, 5 décembre 1921-5 janvier 1922, p. 4, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1 ; Bulletin de renseignements, n° 292, 3-5 janvier 1922, p. 2, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1 ; Bilan des chrétiens ayant émigré des territoires rétrocédés aux Turcs entre le 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921 et le 4 janvier 1922, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1566</sup> « Dans le Proche-Orient — L’accord franco-turc », *Le Temps*, 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921, p. 2 ; « La lettre de Youssouf Kémal à M. Franklin-Bouillon », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 5 novembre 1921, p. 1438 ; *L’Asie française*, novembre 1921, p. 418 ; Edgar Pech, *Les Alliés et la Turquie*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1925, pp. 218-219 ; Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L’aube de la Turquie moderne*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1922, pp. 338-339. A summary is in « L’accord d’Angora », *L’Illustration*, 19 novembre 1921, p. 470.

<sup>1567</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, pp. 362-363.

To finish with de Rémusat/du Véou, his aims and reception are as interesting as his manipulations. Indeed, the 1937 edition is part of the campaign against the restitution of Hatay to the Turks and against the anti-totalitarian French-Turkish-British alliance, at the end of 1930s, a campaign that seems (this officer realizing it or not, that is another question) inspired by Fascist propaganda agents and anyway based on fake news, such as the construction of a submarine facility in Payas that does not exist and the project grotesquely attributed to İnönü to restore Arabic alphabet and to cancel the emancipation of Turkish women.<sup>1568</sup> The 1954 edition is explicitly an attempt to link his nostalgia of the occupation of Adana with the fight of officers against the independence of North African countries (pp. 11-12 and 38-42). Yet, among the “French Algeria” officers, both the left-wing and one the most prominent figures of the right-wing claim Atatürk as an inspiration.<sup>1569</sup> However, de Rémusat/du Véou finds favorable readers among the anti-Semitic authors published in Beirut during the 1950s and 1970s<sup>1570</sup> and until today among the Armenian nationalist authors and their Western friends.<sup>1571</sup>

Concerning the second category, there is at least one reason for this popularity that is clear: Repeating the allegations, even of an author like de Rémusat, avoids to expose the truth on the reason why the majority of the Armenians leave Çukurova at the end of 1921.

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<sup>1568</sup> René Massigli, *La Turquie devant la guerre*, Paris : Plon, 1964, pp. 42, 54 and 128-129.

<sup>1569</sup> « Survivre à de Gaulle : un document de “Patrie et progrès” », *Le Monde*, 22 avril 1959 ; « Patrie et progrès : dépasser le nationalisme algérien par une révolution politique », *Le Monde*, 10 mars 1960 ; Antoine Argoud, *La Décadence, l’imposture et la tragédie*, Paris : Fayard, 1974, p. 127. A prominent “French Algeria” civilian, Jacques Soustelle (1912-1990), is also a supporter of Turkey: Jacques Soustelle, « La Turquie, bastion solide à l’est de l’Europe », *Revue des deux mondes*, novembre 1985, pp. 282-288.

<sup>1570</sup> Lucien Cavro-Demars, *La Honte sioniste*, Beirut, 1972, pp. 18, 35, 37, 77 and passim ; Pierre Hépe, *Le Dernier bal du grand soir ou la République universelle*, Beirut, 1957, pp. 86, 88, 123, 125 and 598.

<sup>1571</sup> Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique*, Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1945, p. 57 ; Arthur Beylerian, « L’échec d’une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, p. 370 ; Kévork K. Baghdjian, *The confiscation of Armenian properties by the Turkish government said to be abandoned*, Antelias : Printing House of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2010, pp. 320-321 ; Aurore Bruna, « La France, les Français face à la Turquie. Autour de l’accord d’Angora du 20 octobre 1921 », *Bulletin de l’Institut Pierre-Renouvin*, 2008/1, pp. 27-41 ; Vincent Duclert, *La France face au génocide des Arméniens*, Paris : Fayard, 2015 (who calls du Véou “lucid”) ; Stanley Kerr, *The Lions of Marash*, Albany, NY: SUNY, 1973, pp. 145, 215-216 and 219 (who calls du Véou a “historian”) ; Jean Mécérian, *Le Génocide du peuple arménien*, Beirut : Imprimerie catholique, 1965, p. 81 ; Claude Mutafian, « La Cilicie turquifiée... », pp. 153 and 159 ; Vahé Tachjian, *La France en...*, pp. 68, 116, 155 ; Anahide Ter-Minassian, *1918-1920, la République d’Arménie*, Bruxelles : Complexe, 2006, p. 256 ; Ümit Uğur Üngör, “Organizing Oblivion in the Aftermath of Mass Violence,” *The Armenian Weekly*, 26 April 2008, p. 24; Christopher Walker, *Armenia. The Survival...*, p. 333.

### 5.3. How the Armenian committees and Greece provoke the flow of Christian civilians

#### 5.3.1. Propaganda, threats and Greek ships

First of all, it has to be emphasized that most of the officers in charge consider that Armenians leave “obeying an order of the committees,”<sup>1572</sup> an analysis shared by Father Claudius Chanteur, rector of the St-Joseph University, and by Mgr Giannini, the apostolic nuncio, then accepted by the general staff in Paris.<sup>1573</sup> Indeed, they give concrete proofs. To begin with the most indirect:

[...] it is evident that we face a pre-planned scheme, likely organized by the Armenian committees of Cairo [reference to the Ramkavar] and Constantinople [probably a reference to both the Ramkavar and the ARF]. The mass obeys an order and the chiefs cannot, or do not want, to act. If by chance an argument seems to have impressed one chief, we find the next day the same leader closed to our appeal and determined to do nothing on the people on whose he exerts an authority.<sup>1574</sup>

Such a sudden change is indeed difficult to attribute to chance, but clearer data are provided by another report, annexed to the one of the commission of evacuation. The author (an officer of the commission) that “very few departures” take place during the “two or three days” following the announcement of the agreement by General Dufieux. The situation radically changes after the “meeting of the Armenian notabilities” in Adana on 6 November: “the general exodus is decided” at this moment. “As soon as the next day, 1,000 laissez-passer are delivered, 3,000 the day after.” The officer continues in arguing that “the order, the method and the perfect calm with which this exodus of 45,000 persons was executed demonstrates without doubt, that it was organized and decided by an order.” It seems to him more likely that the “order” comes from the Armenian nationalist leadership abroad, “especially when one has been, like me, witness of the attitude observed at the same date

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<sup>1572</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 39, 5 décembre 1921-5 janvier 1922, p. 2, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

<sup>1573</sup> Télégramme du général Gouraud au colonel Pettelat, 24 novembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 175, dossier 5 ; État-major de l’armée, section d’Afrique et d’Orient, Analyse du rapport d’ensemble de la commission d’évacuation de la Cilicie, 6 mars 1922, AMAE, P 17787. This is also the conclusion of the vali of Adana, Hamit Bey: Clair Price, “Present Turkish Rule in Cilicia,” *Current History*, XVI-2, May 1922, p. 220.

<sup>1574</sup> Bulletin périodique n° 37, 5-20 novembre 1921, p. 5, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

of 6 November [1921] by the delegates of the Armenian delegation.” The report also points the responsibility of the Gregorian church: During the weeks preceding the signature (namely when Franklin-Bouillon is discussing it in Ankara), the Catholicos of Cilicia tries to enter in contact with the Patriarch of İstanbul secretly and to make a census of the Armenians, to prepare the emigration. The document criticizes the Greek government, too, for sending ships.<sup>1575</sup>

The author does not elaborate about “the attitude of the Armenian delegation” on 6 November 1921 but other sources make it clear. On this day, the Ramkavar Armenian National Delegation, on behalf of the Ramkavar Armenian General Benevolent Union, asks for the resettlement to Beirut of the 1,200 Armenian orphans of the AGBULL’s orphanages, as well as of the 1,100 orphans of the French-supported orphanages.<sup>1576</sup> To fully understand the meaning of the Ramkavar’s claims, it must be known that the Assyrians do not ask for the removal of their orphanage.<sup>1577</sup> The comparison can even go further: The evacuation commission estimates the number of remaining Christians, in January 1922, in Çukurova itself (not counting Gaziantep, Killis, etc.) to be 3,761, including 637 Armenians (which means an emigration rate of almost 99%), 518 Greeks and 2,606 “Syrians” (Maronites, Assyrians, etc.), to be compared with the estimate of 3,200 “Syrians” having left, which means a departure rate of about 55%.<sup>1578</sup> Yet, as we saw, *all* the Christian religious leaders have supported the Armenian nationalism, at least until the failed coup of 5 August 1920, and Assyrians were represented about the butchers of Turks in 1920. This is arithmetic evidence that fear of

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<sup>1575</sup> Rapport sur l’émigration des chrétiens en Cilicie, 30 novembre 1921, pp. 2 and 4-5, AMAE, P 17787. Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie...*, p. 77 notes the sudden change after 6 November does not try to explain it and does not mention the meeting. Yet, she has read the report of the commission of evacuation and its appendixes (the document cited here being one of them). « L’exode des chrétiens de Cilicie », *L’Illustration*, 24 décembre 1921, p. 611 partly corroborates this report.

<sup>1576</sup> AMAE, P 16676. This action is supported by the International Phil-Armenian League: Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L’Heure de l’Arménie*, Geneva: Société générale d’imprimerie, 1922, pp. 39-40.

<sup>1577</sup> Le consul général de France à New York à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 27 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787 (about a check of \$400 for the Assyrian orphanage of Adana).

<sup>1578</sup> Rapport sur l’émigration des chrétiens en Cilicie, 30 novembre 1921, p. 1 ; Bilan des chrétiens ayant émigré des territoires rétrocédés aux Turcs entre le 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1921 et le 4 janvier 1922, AMAE, P 17787. It proves false the claim of Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, p. 365 that “all Christians” leave. In a much more balanced article, Louis Jalabert repeats by error the same claim: « L’impasse turque », *Études*, 20 mars 1922, pp. 694-695.

retaliation, even added to Turkophobia of the religious leadership, cannot explain the emigration rate of the Armenians in Çukurova properly speaking.

The attempt of the Catholicos to communicate with the Patriarch secretly and to make (by order of Gabriel Noradounkian) a census is reported in September 1921, so before the Ankara agreement is signed and the intelligence officer mentions, in the same documents, the sudden arrival of Armenians who had not been in the province of Adana for ten years or who are not even born here. They are considered future agitators, because they have no job here and are readers of the Armenian newspapers from America. The office of political affairs and intelligence advocates the pure and simple expulsion of those who arrived “without permission.”<sup>1579</sup>

Even more relevantly, the Hunchak organ of İstanbul *Jogovourt* (also transliterated *Joghovurt*) announces (without proof) persecution and massacres at the end of October 1921, then, one month later, argues that the Armenians are right to be in fear, and the burden of the proof belong to the Turks.<sup>1580</sup> Yet, *Jogovourt* also denies to express any original opinion: “We merely bowed in front of the [opinion] of the National Council of Cilicia [successor of the Armenian National Union, the joint structure of the ARF, Hunchak, Ramkavar and churches], which unanimously decided emigration. It was in a better place than us to decide, to weigh the pros and cons.”<sup>1581</sup>

The accusations toward Greece are corroborated by other sources, too. *Le Temps* remarks that immediately after the alarmist appeal of the Armenian archbishop of Izmir, L. Tourian (1879-1933), the Greek government sends three ships, without making any difference between the Greek citizens and the Ottoman citizens. The daily suspects the Greek comments to be motivated by the goal to create problems between Paris and London.<sup>1582</sup> Not only the commission of evacuation shares this conclusion, but points the creation of a Greeko-Armenian committee in Athens in spring 1921, with Tseropis Sarandiadis, member of

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<sup>1579</sup> Renseignements politiques, 15 septembre 1921 ; Le chef du bureau politique à M. le général commandant la Ire division au Levant, 16 septembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160 ; Rapport hebdomadaire n° 51 du 19 septembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>1580</sup> Revue de la presse du 27 octobre 1921 ; Revue de la presse du 23 novembre 1921, SHD, 7 N 3215.

<sup>1581</sup> Extrait du compte-rendu du Service de renseignements de Constantinople, n° 16, 23 décembre 1921, p. 4, AMAE, P 17787. For a confirmation: Kasım Ener, *Çukurova Kurtuluş Savaşında Adana Cephesi*, Ankara: Türkiye Kuvayı Milliye Mücahit ve Gazileri Cemiyeti, 1970, p. 284.

<sup>1582</sup> « La question des chrétiens de Cilicie », *Le Temps*, 18 novembre 1921, p. 2.

the Greek Parliament, Onnik Papazian, another member of the Greek Parliament, as well as with the chief of the Armenian community of Athens. The committee, explain the French officers, sends his agitators before the Ankara agreement and Adana's nationalist Armenians publish articles in the Athens' press calling laughable the guarantees of the text signed on 20 October. This action is helped by the Armenian Patriarchate, which spreads a text made of fake quotes of French officers, suggesting emigration.<sup>1583</sup> Yet, since February 1919, the French Navy considers that the Gregorian Patriarch of İstanbul, Zaven, has been "bought [sic] by the British"<sup>1584</sup> and, anyway, he is a member of the ARF.<sup>1585</sup>

The reports of the French legation in Athens prove, with length, translated quotes that the Greek press is particularly hostile to France at the end of 1921, including regarding the issue of Çukurova, about which the Athens' newspapers actually publish alarming articles (one of them affirming that the Christians have to leave in execution of the agreement), as well as an interview with the Armenian archbishop of İzmir, L. Tourian, who calls "inhuman" (sic) the evacuation and justifies exodus, interview followed by a detailed account of the meeting taking place at İzmir and where Ramkavar leader Miran Sevasly, coming especially from the U.S., compares France to "Brutus" and claims that no country wounded the Armenians more than France does right now. Sevasly calls the Turks "Barbarians" and affirms that for him the Ankara agreement is "nonexistent and illegitimate."<sup>1586</sup> This is not merely an archetypal example of hubris but a crystal clear call for mass emigration.

Additional evidence can be deduced from the statements of the Armenian nationalist leadership. On 9 December 1921, Aristide Briand has a meeting with Gabriel Noradounkian and Avetis Aharonian. Briand explains:

Gentlemen, I must tell you that, after our last conversation, I ordered an examination and I regret to tell you that, according to my information, the exodus of Armenian population from Cilicia is the result largely of the zealous propaganda which

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<sup>1583</sup> Extrait du compte-rendu du Service de renseignements de Constantinople, n° 16, 23 décembre 1921, pp. 2-3, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1584</sup> Note, 3 décembre 1918 ; Le président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, au général commandant en chef des armées alliées d'Orient, 23 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

<sup>1585</sup> Bulletin de renseignements, 5 décembre 1920, AMAE, P 16675.

<sup>1586</sup> M. R[obert] de Billy, ministre de France en Grèce, à Son Excellence M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 9 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17785 ; Légation de France en Grèce — L'attaché militaire, capitaine J. de Colombel, Bulletin d'informations, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1921, pp. 49-92 and 100-103 (quotations pp. 101-103) ; Id., 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1922, pp. 39-65, SHD, 6 N 167. Sevasly is from İzmir: "Miran Sevasly Dead: An Armenian Patriot," *The New York Times*, 22 June 1935.

unknown individuals and Gomidehs [committees] have made on the spot. For what earthly reason I do not know, but this propaganda is doubly embarrassing for France. On the one hand, the Armenians are fleeing from Cilicia, a fact which discredits France for having failed to give refugee Armenians the needed protection, and on the other hand, the refugees have found no other protector outside of France and once again we have been forced to give them asylum and to care for their needs. Now I ask you, how long shall this abnormal situation continue to last?

Briand—who of course used the word “unknown” by courtesy, as two leaders of the two main “committees” in question are right in front of him—continues in asking: “The Turks have not harmed them, they have kept their promise. What was the need of this wholesale exodus?” At this moment, Aharonian makes what can be safely called a half-confession:

You have asked point blank about the provocations which have taken place in Cilicia, and your question demand an equally clearcut answer. In answer, I would say that I am not in the least surprised if any intelligent individual, intellectual or leader or Gomideh may have advised the Armenian population to flee with your retiring soldiers.<sup>1587</sup>

Another kind of half-confession comes from the Memoirs of Alexandre Khatissian. Khatissian repeats the traditional nationalist Armenian allegation that no Turkish guarantee is credible<sup>1588</sup> (the same Khatissian who stated to the French, at the end of 1920, that he was struck by the discipline of the Turkish army) then he admits the attempt by the ARF and the Ramkavar, in a joint initiative, to obtain the postponing of the evacuation. They come to the Senate and to the Chamber of deputies (Khatissian does not claim to have obtained any intervention for the postponing of the evacuation) and also to the bureau of the Socialist Party. Khatissian mentions Léon Blum, Paul Faure, Pierre Renaudel and Marius Moutet. One more time, he does not mention any concrete result against the withdrawal of the French army.<sup>1589</sup> However, even if not successful, this is a clear attempt to sabotage the implementation of the Ankara agreement, as the withdrawal has to take place in two months.

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<sup>1587</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary — Part IX,” *Armenian Review*, XVIII-1, Spring 1965, pp. 60-61.

<sup>1588</sup> The same allegation, also about the evacuation of Çukurova, can be found in “From Brest-Litovsk to Lausanne: The Memoirs of General Gorganian,” *Armenian Review*, XIX-2/114, summer 1976, p. 151.

<sup>1589</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement de la République arménienne*, Athènes : Publications de la F.R.A. Dachnaksoutioun, 1989, pp. 312-313. With the Dashnak habit to transform the defeats in victories, Khatissian attributes to the interventions of the ARF and Ramkavar the close monitoring, by the French authorities, of the evacuation and the eventual welcoming of Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon. These claims are in formal contradiction with the existing record. On the similar attempts by the AAS in the U.S.: Thomas A. Bryson, “The Armenian-American Society: A Factor in American-Turkish Relations,” *Armenian Review*, XXIX-1, Spring 1976, pp. 64-65.



The aim of the ARF and Ramkavar is indeed not the exodus for itself. The attempts to sabotage the evacuation are, for a part, due to the calculation that the occupation of a rich region is guarantee that could eventually force the Turks to accept all or part of the Wilson arbitration. Indeed, during a discussion with Lord Curzon, on 19 November 1921, Gabriel Noradounkian affirms:

This unilateral arrangement of the Cilician question is disastrous for the Armenian people from all standpoints. WE INSIST, AND SHALL INSIST ON THE TREATY OF SEVRES [typographical scream in the original]. That must not become a scrap of paper.

Why Noradounkian connects the Sèvres treaty (leaving Adana to the Turks) and the occupation of the same province is enlightened by a statement of Avetis Aharonian to Aristide Briand on 7 December:

Even as you said that it was on the basis of the Sevres Treaty that France surrendered Cilicia to Turkey, so, on t-he same basis, we expect that France shall endeavor to return to us by peaceful means our territories which have been seized by Turkey.<sup>1590</sup>

In his Memoirs, Bishop Jean Naslian correspondingly regrets the evacuation as the occupation was, according to him, a guarantee that could have been possibly exchanged with north-eastern Anatolia<sup>1591</sup> (failing to understand that the policy of Paris is not decided in function of the interests of Armenian nationalism) and on 7 Januay 1922, three days after the end of the withdrawal, the ARF claims for “the integral implementation of the Sèvres treaty,” nothing less.<sup>1592</sup> It may be difficult to understand how the ARF and Ramkavar can still believe in the possibility to implement the Sèvres treaty after the collapse of the Wrangel army, the collapse of Dashnak regime in Armenia, the fall of Venizelos, the conquest of Georgia, the suppression of the ARF revolt in Yerevan and of the main groups of Azerbaijani insurgents, the crushing of the last White Russian army in June 1921 and the repeated defeats of the Greek forces in Anatolia, but as late as December 1921, the Dashnak

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<sup>1590</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary — Part VIII,” *Armenian Review*, XVII-4, Winter 1964, pp. 49-50 and 55. Also see the letter of Gabriel Noradounkian to George Montgomery, 21 October 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

<sup>1591</sup> Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de...*, volume II, p. 483.

<sup>1592</sup> Délégation de la République arménienne à la conférence de la paix, Aide-mémoire sur la question arménienne, décembre 1921, p. 37 AMAE, P 16676 (the text is submitted by Alexandre Khatissian on 7 January 1922).

newspaper of İstanbul, *Djagadamard*, affirms that the Soviet Republics are very instable, that everything can happen and that it is necessary to be ready for anything.<sup>1593</sup>

Yet, this kind of strategy is in fact the less radical. When the Armenia-America Society finally understands that the withdrawal will take place, Montgomery asks for “some sort of protectorate” on Çukurova, *in addition* to “a mandate for Armenia [...] by some European power” (that could be “Belgium, Holland, Denmark [or] Norway”). In a letter to Montgomery dated 28 October 1921, Noradounkian expresses his full support for this double project.<sup>1594</sup> However, James Aratoon Malcolm, the representative of the Armenian National Delegation in London, expresses a relatively different point of view, preferring “a home in Cilicia instead of the eastern confines of Turkish Armenian [eastern Anatolia], where, surrounded by enemies on all sides, it will be absolutely impossible, without the direct help of strong arms, to develop anything in the form of a national existence.”<sup>1595</sup>

Malcolm’s wish leads us to the most sensitive aspect of the question, namely the indirect role of the British government and the direct role of the British Armenia Committee. A strong (and precise) indictment in this regard is contained in an intelligence report reproduced as an appendix to the already cited report presented by the French evacuation commission. According to this document, the BAC encourages, as early as February-March 1921, the creation in Çukurova of a special committee for propaganda and gives 8,000 Turkish Liras for this organization. This organization, the committee of Çukurova and the one of Athens (already described) have a meeting in Cyprus in June of the same year and decide—allegedly with the approval of the British government—to send weapons to Dörtyol, to provoke an armed opposition to the Turkish recovery of these territories. The goal of these committees is to obtain an British intervention, and in the most optimistic hypothesis a reoccupation of

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<sup>1593</sup> Revue de la presse du 24 décembre 1921, SHD, 7 N 3215. Similar illusion in Vahan Cardashian, *Wilson —Wrecker of Armenia*, New York, [The American Committee for the Independence of Armenia] 1921, p. 13.

<sup>1594</sup> Letter of George Montgomery to Charles E. Hughes, 19 October 1921; *Director’s Annual Report*, 26 October 1921, p. 4, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6 (the letter of Noradounkian is in the same folder). Remarkably, even the Near East Relief does not believe in Montgomery’s projects anymore: See the letter of Paxton Hibben (NER) to Montgomery, 4 November 1921, in the same folder, too.

<sup>1595</sup> Letter of James Aratoon Malcolm to George Montgomery, 4 November 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

the region by the British army, the campaign in the British press and the provoked exodus having to justify such a radical measure.<sup>1596</sup>

There are partial but substantial confirmations of this indictment. Indeed, an intercepted telegram proves that the Lord Mayor's Fund encourages and pays the sending of dubious Armenians in Çukurova in September 1921, yet at least two leaders of the BAC (its chair Aneurin Williams and Harold Buxton) are part of the Lord Mayor's Fund.<sup>1597</sup> It is also proved by the records of the BAC itself, that a "safety zone" in Çukurova is discussed in February 1921 with Boghos Nubar, Avetis Aharonian and the Foreign Office—but according to the proceeding of the discussions, the Foreign Office does not seem quite supportive. In spite of this apparent skepticism, the BAC passes at the end of 1921 a resolution asking the British cabinet "to send warships in Mersina."<sup>1598</sup> Even more aggressively, Thomas Power O'Connor, a member of the BAC and of the Chamber of Communes, endorses a false rumor in his speech at the British Parliament (the Ankara agreement is supposed to include an article for the expulsion of Christians) and asks, as a result, for an intervention of his government against the implementation of the pact.<sup>1599</sup> Correspondingly, the ACIA calls, on 1 December 1921, for "British reoccupation of Cilicia," the BAC approves<sup>1600</sup> and, less explicitly, Archbishop Bedros Sarajian appeals "to Britain, as the personification of justice [...] to permit the Armenians to find a home under a Christian flag where they might exist in peace."<sup>1601</sup>

As a result, though the British cabinet's endorsement is not proved in the current stage of our knowledge, the charge of the French commission against the BAC is far from being contradicted by this committee's records. It may be even argued that the attitude of the

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<sup>1596</sup> Extrait du compte-rendu du Service de renseignements de Constantinople, n° 16, 23 décembre 1921, pp. 1-3, AMAE, P 17787. Also see Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 14 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17785.

<sup>1597</sup> Le chef du bureau politique à M. le général commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division au Levant, 16 septembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160; Peter Gatrell and Jo Laycock, "Armenia: The 'Nationalization', Internationalization and Representation of the Refugees Crisis," in Nick Baron and Peter Gatrell, *Homelands. War, Populations and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia. 1918-1924*, London: Anthem Press, 2004, p. 188.

<sup>1598</sup> Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the...*, pp. 241-242.

<sup>1599</sup> « L'accord d'Angora aux Communes », *Le Temps*, 12 novembre 1921, p. 2.

<sup>1600</sup> "Current Notes," *The New Armenia*, November-December 1921, pp. 92-93; Letter of Charles Leonard Leese to George Montgomery, 23 December 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

<sup>1601</sup> Quoted in Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the...*, p. 143.

London government is ambiguous. Indeed, as we saw, the Foreign Office encourages the Armenian nationalists to claim Çukurova for the “national home.” Then, addressing Noradounkian, Lord Curzon says, referring to the Armenians of the region: “If they are cowards they will flee. It would be better if they were brave and sat tight. *Can you* [my emphasis] wire them to this effect?”<sup>1602</sup> These two statements may be interpreted as a kind of encouragement, with the will to not appear. The first one does not need comment; the second has to be understood in the context of the weapons smuggling by the committees of London, Athens and Çukurova, smuggling that eventually provokes the aborted project to oppose the Turkish recovery of Dörtyol (see below).

The ambiguity is not clarified by the fluctuations of the Protestant community. In March 1921, it is the only one of Çukurova to remain “quiet,” following the recommendations of Bristol, through William Chambers,<sup>1603</sup> but in autumn 1921, Zenope Bezdjian, head of the Protestant community of the Ottoman Empire, who had admitted that the claims of massacres in Maraş in 1920 were “greatly exaggerated,”<sup>1604</sup> now attacks the Ankara agreement in alleging that Armenians would be killed<sup>1605</sup> if they remained and in a discussion with General Pellé, during which the guarantees asked by Jean Naslian are, for a large part, given, Pellé is very surprised to find a radical change of tone toward aggressive nationalism and to see Bezdjian playing “an unusual directive role that the [numerical] importance of the elements he represents do not justify at all.” Yet, Bezdjian and the Gregorian Patriarch “are in constant relations with the English general staff.”<sup>1606</sup> What is not ambiguous, anyway, is the virulence of the protests made by the Lloyd George cabinet, including Lloyd George himself, who makes Briand wake up at 1:00 a.m. with a letter claiming, of course without proof, that “100,000 Armenians” (sic) have been massacred and the fact that the unofficial newspapers of London and more generally those supporting Lloyd George are the first to criticize the Ankara agreement. This opposition is not only due to the Turkophobia of Lloyd George of the core of his supporters, but also to the failure, in July 1921, of the treaty of quasi protectorate signed in 1919 with Iran, to the defeat of the Greek forces in September and

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<sup>1602</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to...”, Part VIII, p. 50.

<sup>1603</sup> Renseignement, 30 mars 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1604</sup> Mark Bristol, War diary, 13 March 1920, p. 1, LC, Bristol papers, container 1.

<sup>1605</sup> Letter of Zenope Bezdjian to George Montgomery, 11 November 1921, LC, Montgomery papers, container 21, folder 6.

<sup>1606</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, AMAE, P 17785.

even more to the return to Turkey of the Argos bay (a part of the Iskenderun gulf), the very place wished by London to settle the arrival of the pipe-line from Mossul.<sup>1607</sup> For all these reasons, it is reasonable to conclude that the Armenian nationalists believe, rightly or wrongly, in the possibility of a British intervention in Mersin.

It is a kind of undeclared war against France, but it is coherent with the rest of their speech. Indeed, if independent nationalists such as Aram Turabian and, in the U.S., John Moskoffian, as well as, to a lesser extent, the ACIA, try to make a difference between their hatred toward the policy of Briand and their feelings for the French people,<sup>1608</sup> *The New Armenia* (now a Ramkavar organ after the merging of the Reformed Hunchak and Nubar's party) expresses what can be called a racism against Frenchmen and Turks, on equal terms:

This [agreement] comes as a climax to the French policy of perfidy in Cilicia. During the French occupation the Armenians were disarmed by French soldiers, and in consequence Zeitun, the Armenian stronghold, was betrayed to the Turks, and in Marash about twenty thousand Armenians were massacred. All this after Armenian volunteers in the armies of the Allies had laid down their lives for France. [...]

The Turkish Empire should cease to exist in theory as well as in fact. [...] One of the leading characteristics of the French is love of money. Frenchmen have invested money in Turkey, and they want to preserve the Turkish Empire in order to save the money invested. [...] When million Armenians were destroyed in 1915, that, says the Frenchman, with a shrug of his shoulders, was the fault of Germany. He is willing to forget that from the beginning of the Crimean War until 1914 England and France upheld Turkey and made all the massacres of Armenians possible.

Besides, one recalls the bloody days of the French Revolution, when the fanatics of France like the fanatics of Turkey took a fiendish delight in shedding human blood.

Perhaps there is a bond of sympathy between Frenchman and Turk.<sup>1609</sup>

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<sup>1607</sup> Lord Curzon à M. de Saint-Aulaire (traduction), 5 novembre 1921 ; Lettre de Lord Curzon à M. de Montille, chargé d'affaires à Londres, 25 novembre 1921, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 61, ff. 41-52 and 77-86 ; Télégramme du chargé d'affaires français à Londres, 7 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17785 ; Jacques Bardoux, *Lloyd George et la France*, Paris : Félix Alcan, 1923, pp. 248-249 and 254-256 ; Raymond Escholier, *Souvenirs parlés de...*, pp. 195-198 (quotation p. 197) ; Charles de Saint-Aulaire, *Confession d'un vieux diplomate*, Paris : Flammarion, 1953, pp. 565-566 ; Henry Whoodhouse, "The Anglo-French Conflict over Turkey," *Current History*, XVI-1, April 1922, pp. 57-72.

<sup>1608</sup> Aram Turabian, « L'accord franco-arménien et la Cilicie », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1922, p. 2 ; John G. Moskoffian, "French Policy in the Near East," *Current History*, XVI-1, April 1922, p. 45 ; "Current notes," *The New Armenia*, November-December 1921, p. 92. Moskoffian is also the author of a vehement booklet: *Independence for Armenia*, USA [sic], 1919 (with a preface by C. J. Thomson, representative of Ohio at the Congress).

<sup>1609</sup> Angelo Hall, "The Turkish Policy of France," *The New Armenia*, November-December 1921, pp. 81-82.

*The New Armenia* continues and even increases his racist attacks in 1922, for example in attacking “the French people, collectively” and asserting: “France has become the Ichabod among the civilized nations” (sic).<sup>1610</sup> Those who develop such ideas cannot accept coexistence and can consider the supporters of coexistence only as traitors.

Actually, Franklin-Bouillon reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he had “through the statements of the chiefs of the [Christian] communities, the evidence of the constant pressure and threats exerted by the agents of the [Armenian] committees.”<sup>1611</sup> The report of the evacuation commission makes it clear: “The Christians who were ready to stay were forced to flee” by death threats.<sup>1612</sup> This is corroborated by the correspondent of *Le Temps* in İskenderun who notes, at the end of December 1921, that

Systematic propaganda continues to be exerted to maintain concerns, to obstruct the work of appeasement by the authorities, and to incite emigration. This action goes to prevent the Armenians, by the most serious threats, from joining the commissions established by the French authorities for the safeguarding of the properties owned by absent persons.<sup>1613</sup>

The use of death threats is not something new for Armenian nationalists and, in spite of the repression of 1920-1921, these threats are serious. To take only examples from the year 1921, on 11 January, Armenians of Dörtyol try to assassinate the kaimakan, Nikolakis Efendi (ethnically Greek, but working with the French administration for peace and reconciliation), other Armenians of Dörtyol kill two Circassians two days later,<sup>1614</sup> then on 28 June, still in Dörtyol, an Armenian opens fire on gendarmes to kill them. He fails, is arrested and sentenced on 27 October to life-term hard labor.<sup>1615</sup> In spite of this sentence, Sétrak

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<sup>1610</sup> “Current Notes,” *The New Armenia*, September-October 1922, p. 75. Never signed, this rubric is almost certainly written by Arshag Madeshian, the editor of *The New Armenia* and its only permanent redactor.

<sup>1611</sup> Télégramme du consul général Laporte au ministère des Affaires étrangères, « De la part de M. Franklin-Bouillon, pour M. Briand », 6 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17786.

<sup>1612</sup> Rapport d'ensemble sur les opérations de la commission, 14 janvier 1922, p. 6, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1613</sup> « L'émigration des Arméniens », *Le Temps*, 30 décembre 1921, p. 2.

<sup>1614</sup> Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Clément, conseiller administratif du Djébel Bereket, sur le groupement arménien de Deurtyol, 17 janvier 1921, p. 2, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1615</sup> Conseil de guerre du territoire de Cilicie et de la 1<sup>re</sup> division, Jugement n° 549, 27 octobre 1921, SHD, 11 J 3202.

Temikian, a second lieutenant of the gendarmerie at Dörtyol, is assassinated by Armenian nationalists on 20 November 1921.<sup>1616</sup>

The main error of Dufieux is to underestimate the capacity of the Armenian nationalists, particularly the ARF, because their threats to kill him and Gouraud are not implemented, unlike the attempt of Arab nationalists to assassinate Gouraud on 23 June 1921, when the high commissioner escapes only thanks “to the cold blood of his driver” and loses “one of his best collaborators, Lieutenant Branet, translator.”<sup>1617</sup> Dufieux has too much judged the Armenian nationalists in observing leaders such as Tchobanian, often violent in words, but unable to kill anybody personally, Moucheg Séropian, terrorist but clumsy, the dislocation of the Hunchak at the end of 1920 and in 1921,<sup>1618</sup> as a result of the repression led by Dufieux himself, and the most boastful Dashnaks—likely because the ARF of Adana experiences a crisis, as a result of internal dissensions, during winter 1920-1921<sup>1619</sup> —, too little in considering the assassinations of Armenians and Turks in Çukurova itself—and elsewhere by Nemesis, the ARF terrorist network at that time. Indeed, the majority of the assassinations perpetrated by Nemesis (Talat Paşa, Behbud Han Cevançir, Sait Halim Paşa, Cemal Azmi, Bahattin Şakir, and Cemal Paşa) takes place in 1921 and 1922, namely after the collapse of the ARF-ruled Republic of Armenia: An internal crisis does not necessarily means an end of the terrorist capacities. Similarly, commenting a hateful article published in December 1920 by the organ of the Hunchak in the U.S., and written by a Hunchak leader expelled in 1920, Dufieux affirms that contempt is the only response.<sup>1620</sup> Dufieux also has over-relied on the preventive legal actions for illegal possession of weapons and ammunition, and the repression of plunder, that continue until September 1921,<sup>1621</sup> but not a rhythm depriving

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<sup>1616</sup> Chef d’escadron Dumont, Rapport sur l’assassinat du s/ lieutenant Sétrak Temikian, du bataillon de gendarmerie de Deurtyol, 21 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1617</sup> [Pierre Lyautey], Le général Gouraud [1923], p. 12, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>1618</sup> Capitaine Garcin, Renseignements, 19 janvier 1921 ; [Renseignements], 21 février 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1619</sup> Renseignements, 21 janvier 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1620</sup> Général Dufieux, L’ingratitude d’un peuple, 28 janvier 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/159.

<sup>1621</sup> Note de service, 22 mars 1921 ; Magistrat militaire, jugement, 4 avril 1921 ; Le contrôleur de la police à M. le contrôleur administratif de la ville d’Adana, 23 mars 1921 ; Magistrat militaire, Jugement, 7 avril 1921 ; Le capitaine Hayri, commandant du bataillon de gendarmerie d’Adana, à M. le contrôleur administratif de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 15 août 1921 ; Magistrat militaire, Jugement, 15 septembre 1921 ; Le capitaine Hayri, commandant du bataillon de gendarmerie d’Adana, à M. le contrôleur administratif de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 15 août 1921 ; Magistrat militaire, Jugement [1921], CADN, 1SL/1V/188 ; Le lieutenant Vertier, contrôleur administratif du sandjak d’Adana, à M.

the ARF from any way of threat. In particular, the rhythm of expulsions of convicted felons is insufficient.<sup>1622</sup>

In fact, the warning of the anti-nationalist of the Armenian bourgeoisie is not sufficiently listened. In April 1921, Krikor Tcholakian, deputy director of the Adana police, who had successfully suggested Brémond to use summary executions to curb the plunder and assassinations in July 1920, asks Captain Garcin, head of the political and intelligence department of the occupation force, to be more severe with the Armenian nationalists, who are mostly not born in Adana and who shall leave with the French army. Speaking on behalf of the Armenians native of the city, Tcholakian see them as the obstacle against the necessary reconciliation.<sup>1623</sup>

A possible objection would be about the actual capacity of the Armenian nationalists to be obeyed without rebellion by the mass, but several French sources confirm the impression of apathy of many ordinary Armenians from Çukurova, in 1921-1922. The report on Dörtyol points “the passivity in the obedience to the religious and political chiefs” as one of the reasons for the general exodus.<sup>1624</sup> Robert de Caix reports in April 1922 that “many [of them] are looking [for work] without ardor.”<sup>1625</sup> Those who would oppose to this document that his author never was an Armenophile should read a book of Émile Wetterlé (1861-1931). A priest of Alsace, Wetterlé makes a donation for the Ottoman Armenians in 1896 then pronounces a hard speech against the Ottoman Empire (and even more against Germany) in 1916.<sup>1626</sup> Elected as a member of the Parliament in 1919, Wetterlé joins the Foreign affairs committee and, as such, visits Turkey and Syria in 1922, a trip that almost completely reverts his preferences. Wetterlé considers the exodus unjustified and observes that the Armenian refugees of Lataquieh have “stubbornly refused” the “excellent agricultural fields” and the

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le général commandant la 1<sup>re</sup> division de l’armée du Levant, 14 avril 1921 ; Le général Dufieux, commandant la Ire division, à M. le général haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie et au Liban, 30 juin 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160 ; Général Dufieux, Arrêté n° 273 — Expulsion du nommé Sétrak Baltayan, 22 avril 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/185.

<sup>1622</sup> Le contrôleur de la police à M. le capitaine contrôleur administratif de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, 22 juillet 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/185.

<sup>1623</sup> Capitaine Garcin, Résumé d’une conversation que j’ai eue hier avec M. Tcholakian, 19 avril 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/160.

<sup>1624</sup> Rapport sur l’évacuation des Arméniens de Deurtyol [1921], p. 1, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1625</sup> Télégramme de Robert de Caix au général Gouraud, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1922, AMAE, P 17788.

<sup>1626</sup> *Hommage à l’Arménie*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1919, pp. 37-38.



“cash advance” proposed by General Billotte to build permanent homes. Wetterlé adds that General Gouraud is “overwrought by the mendacity of these people who could, with a little good will, be self-sufficient” instead of costing millions to the French taxpayers.<sup>1627</sup> In other words, without orders from the religious and political leadership, passivity remains the rule. It is true that the French authorities try to use force, to block the flow purely and simply, but experience proves this method counter-productive, as it only increases the pre-planned panic.<sup>1628</sup>

### 5.3.2. Attempts to create troubles

The most aggressive part of the Armenian nationalits’ plan is mainly, albeit not only, about Dörtyol, their only remaining stronghold after the repression of 1920-1921. Robert de Caix observes in December 1921 that “stocks of weapons and ammunitions having been discovered at Deurtyol, with the aim to organize, at the arrival of the Turkish authorities, a resistance that would force us to go back, the arrestation of the two Armenian leaders has been ordered by Colonel Pettelat.”<sup>1629</sup> De Caix later confirms, after the end of the evacuation: Colonel Pettelat “prevented, by his strong and quick decisions, the Armenians of Dörtyol from committing violence, prepared in advance, with goal to prevent the withdrawal of our troops and to provoke new hostilities between us and the Turks.”<sup>1630</sup> The correspondent of *Le Temps* in Hatay correspondingly explains that “the extremist elements wish that the conflict obligates the French troops to again occupy the region, and to lead to the rupture of the Ankara agreement.”<sup>1631</sup>

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<sup>1627</sup> Émile Wetterlé, *En Syrie avec le général Gouraud*, Paris : Flammarion, 1924, pp. 189-191.

<sup>1628</sup> Le contrôleur administratif de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana à M. le général, commandant la Ire division du Levant, 14 novembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/1V/163 ; Rapport sur l’émigration des chrétiens en Cilicie, 30 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1629</sup> Télégramme de Robert de Caix au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 28 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17786.

<sup>1630</sup> Le haut-commissaire p[ar] i[n]térim] de la République française en Syrie et au Liban, à Son Excellence M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 5 mars 1922, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1631</sup> « L’émigration des Arméniens », *Le Temps*, 30 décembre 1921, p. 2.

Indeed, “since a long, the idea of an armed resistance to the Turks at Deurtyol had been considered by the political Armenian leaders,” even more easily as refugees from Maraş, Haçin and Zeytun settled there. The decision seems to have been taken right after the agreement of 9 March 1921 and weapons arrive as early as April: A torpedo is sent to block the ship convoying the weapons, but the landing takes place at night and the torpedo arrives too late. The project is reactivated as soon as the Ankara agreement is known and the Catholicos sends a chief, Father Panem, to lead the revolt. Remarkably, Panem presents himself to the French authorities as in touch with the British government, for the evacuation of the Armenians who want to leave. As early as 23 November 1921, another representative of the Catholicos, Dr. Kouyoumdjian, is arrested with an important sum of money on him. All this preparation takes place in coordination with the British Armenia Committee, the Greek government and, according to Commander de Boisse, the British government itself.<sup>1632</sup> I leave to this officer the responsibility of his very last accusation, until British documents on this affair are found, but it is safe to observe, for the rest, that Ioannis Hassiotis, hardly a Turkophile historian, admits the sending of weapons from Greece to Dörtyol Armenians in June and autumn 1921, by the joint Greek-Armenian committee of Athens<sup>1633</sup> and that “Lord Bryce and the ‘Friends of Armenia’ were appealing for funds to clothe and equip the Armenian Volunteers [of the Russian army] on April 2<sup>nd</sup>,” 1915.<sup>1634</sup> It may be even argued, especially in considering the attempt of the British intelligence service to assassinate Atatürk, in spring 1921,<sup>1635</sup> that the BAC, the Greek government and the Armenian nationalists can sincerely believe to be backed by the cabinet of David Lloyd George.

Facing this risk of revolt, Colonel Pettelat obtains from General Marty (who has replaced General Dufieux) the sending of reinforcement and he gives to Commander de Boisse the order to suppress, by all the necessary aims, the project of insurrection. De Boisse warns the Armenian religious leaders that “France will not tolerate any act of revolt, any trouble.” The

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<sup>1632</sup> Rapport sur l'évacuation des Arméniens de Deurtyol [1921], pp. 5-6 ; Rapport du commandant de Boisse, 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1633</sup> Ioannis Hassiotis, “Shared Illusions: Greek-Armenian Cooperation in Asia Minor and the Caucasus,” in *Greece and Great Britain During World War I*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1985, pp. 173-174. Prof. Hassiotis affirms (p. 174) that the quantities are too “limited” to oppose a serious resistance to the Kemalists. It is possible, but as we saw, the main goal is to provoke a British intervention.

<sup>1634</sup> Cuthbert Francis Dixon-Johnson, *The Armenians*, Northgate: Toulmin & Sons, 1916, p. 47.

<sup>1635</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Angora, Constantinople, Londres. Moustafa Kémal et la politique anglaise en Orient*, Paris : Armand Colin, 1922, pp. 242-248.

clergyman denies the very existence of the plot, but the Greek kaimakan, on the contrary, confirms the information received by the French military. Lieutenant Dikran, the main accomplice of Father Panem, is arrested. Panem saves himself in proposing the surrendering of the future insurgents in exchange of their pardon and exile to Syria. The demand is accepted, except for the two murderers of Sétrak Temekian, a second lieutenant of the gendarmerie, loyal to the French, and assassinated on 20 November 1921, as it has already been explained. Panem leaves Dörtyol on 29 December, after having told Commander de Boisse that he regrets that the French authorities have not allowed the inhabitants of Dörtyol to resist. The seized weapons are: one machine-gun; 2,000 rifles, including 1750 Martini; 650,000 cartridges for Martini; three bags of French cartridges; three cases of cartridge-clip for machine-gun; 200 grenades; 200 baionets.<sup>1636</sup> The affair being fixed, the Turkish troops enter Dörtyol on 1 January 1922 “without incidents.”<sup>1637</sup> In an appendix to his report, Commander de Boisse presents a list of Armenians to be expelled from Syria (the list includes Father Panem and a Protestant Armenian Pastor), another for expulsion from İskenderun to Syria and another for surveillance, and he recalls the names of the murderers of Sétrak Temikian, to be put on trial.<sup>1638</sup> Remarkably, the Turkish authorities themselves suggest—what is accept by the French ones—to postpone the date of their entry in Dörtyol until the evacuation of the rebels is completed, precisely because they want no clash.<sup>1639</sup>

Less serious, but not negligible, events take place elsewhere: On the night of 18 December, Armenians of Gaziantep open fire on a French patrol; at least two other Armenians, in the same city and during the same evening, hurl empty bottles at soldiers of the colonial infantry, even after the soldiers have identified themselves, then they are arrested by Turkish gendarmes.<sup>1640</sup> The very fact that they arrest them instead of killing or wounding them is

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<sup>1636</sup> Rapport sur l'évacuation des Arméniens de Deurtyol [1921], pp. 7-11; Général Marty Note de service, 4 décembre 1921, SHD, 4 H 229, dossier 4 ; Bulletin de renseignements, n° 291, 31 décembre 1921-3 janvier 1922, p. 1, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1 ; Commandement supérieur, Levant — Journal des marches et des opérations, 1921, 23 décembre, p. 483, 26 décembre, p. 485, 29 décembre, p. 486, SHD, 4 H 47, dossier 1.

<sup>1637</sup> Rapport sur l'évacuation des Arméniens de Deurtyol [1921], p. 15, AMAE, P 17787 ; Bulletin de renseignements, n° 292, 3-5 janvier 1922, p. 1, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 1.

<sup>1638</sup> AMAE, P 17787.

<sup>1639</sup> Télégramme d'Aristide Briand à Henry Franklin-Bouillon, 17 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17786.

<sup>1640</sup> Commandement supérieur, Levant — Journal des marches et des opérations, 1921, 18 décembre, SHD, 4 H 47, dossier 1.

another proof that there is no desire to use a pretext to scare the Armenian population. Five days later, another Armenian shoots a French soldier, who is “seriously wounded.” One more time, there is no indication that the Turkish gendarmes use it as a pretext for any disproportionate use of force. On the contrary, when the Turkish land army enters Antep, two more days later, the city is “very quite.”<sup>1641</sup>

This is in this context that the *Comité belge philarménien*, established in mid-1920 at the initiative of Boghos Nubar’s daughter—married to the King’s chief of staff—as a part of the Ramkavar-linked International Phil-Armenian League, intervenes. The committee convinces—in spite of the large indifference for the Armenian issue in the local Parliament and in the population—the Belgian government to reiterate its demand for the inscription of the Christian minorities issue on the agenda of the League of Nations, including the maintaining of French troops in Cilicia, “wished by the Armenians.” The French reaction is: “We have the right to be surprised,” since the Belgian ambassador previously received a negative response to such a demand. Facing such a firm refusal, the Belgian minister of Foreign Affairs claims, some days later, that his demand for an intervention of the League of Nation was “in humanitarian terms” and that some newspapers have exaggerated the sense of his statements. The ambassador in Brussels is skeptical about this explanation.<sup>1642</sup> It shows an all-azimut, albeit completely ineffective, strategy against the evacuation.

As this strategy is denied in the Armenian historiography, it is not unnecessary to study the most detailed attempt to contest it, namely the one of Dzovinar Kévonian. Dr. Kévonian asserts that the allegations against the Armenian organizations start “with the arrival of Franklin-Bouillon in Adana on November 23, and after the departure, the next day, of General Dufieux” as a self-justification, but she also quotes a military intelligence report dated November 5-20, 1921. So her own material proves this affirmation wrong.<sup>1643</sup> It may be added that Franklin-Bouillon does not lose hope to convince the majority of the Çukurova’s

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<sup>1641</sup> Ibid., 23 décembre 1921, p. 484 ; 25 décembre, p. 485.

<sup>1642</sup> M. Pierre de Margerie, ambassadeur de France près S. M. le roi des Belges, à M. Aristide Briand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 11 décembre 1921 ; Id., 13 décembre 1921 ; Id., 16 décembre 1921 ; Id., 17 décembre 1921 ; Télégramme de Pierre de Margerie au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 décembre 1921 ; Télégramme du ministère des Affaires étrangères à Pierre de Margerie, 11 décembre 1921 ; Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 15 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17786.

<sup>1643</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie...*, pp. 89-91.

Armenians to go back from the Mersin port to their home until 8 December 1921.<sup>1644</sup> By every aspect, this chronology is in contradiction with the reality.

Dr. Kévonian presents an apparently stronger argument in quoting a letter sent by the Ramkavar-dominated Armenian National Delegation (DNA) to its representative in Beirut. Indeed, there is no direct call for mass emigration in this letter. Dr. Kévonian concludes that the document refutes the accusations of Franklin-Bouillon, but there are at least three serious problems with this way of reasoning.

At first, Dr. Kévonian assumes, without any evidence, that Franklin-Bouillon charges only the DNA for incitation to flee Cilicia. Quite the contrary, the plural form in his telegram of December 1921 (“the committees”) and the complete absence of direct or indirect references to the DNA as such show that Franklin-Bouillon do not specifically accuse this organization (the same remarks must be made for Briand’s own statement). In other words, she leaves completely aside the responsibilities of the Hunchak, of the U.S. and Adana Ramkavar, of the ARF and of churchmen, the last three categories being not incompatible, as Gregorian Patriarch Zaven is a Dashnak and other leaders of the Gregorian church being in excellent terms with the Ramkavar. The issue of the threats toward Armenians wanting to stay, for example, is entirely omitted.

Then, this is a courier sent from Paris to Beirut. As explained in the second chapter, letters “preaching rebellion” have been sent by Ramkavars as early as the first half of 1919. The “ridicule comedy” of August 5, 1920, led by Ramkavar representative Mihran Damadian did not improve the image of the Armenian organization in the eyes of the French administration. The attempt of the Catholicos of Cilicia to communicate with the Patriarchate of İstanbul is immediately known by the French authorities, as well as the order of Noradounkian to make a census; the year before, the letter of the Hunchak chapter of Adana to the Paris chapter, advocating “Armenization” of Çukurova, was seized: Such facts prove how serious is the surveillance. As a result, to send an explicit letter preaching mass exodus, from Paris to Beirut, would have been the final suicide for the Ramkavars, who would have risked being simply expelled from France, Lebanon and Syria, in addition to Adana. Even in 1919, the letters “preaching rebellion” were sent from Cairo and Boston, not Paris.

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<sup>1644</sup> Commandement supérieur, Levant — Journal des marches et des opérations, 1921, 8 décembre, p. 477, SHD, 4 H 47, dossier 1.

Dr. Kévonian herself writes that the DNA wants, at the end of 1921, to concentrate Armenian immigrants around today's Hatay, "on both sides of the boundary, in the perspective of the constitution of a national home."<sup>1645</sup> Since the Turkish side do not want an Armenian home in the Turkish territory, how is it possible without preventing the full implementation of the Ankara agreement? And how preventing it without provoking an unnecessary emigration and troubles? Dr. Kévonian continues in writing that this idea of the DNA for a national home could explain the "agitation" (a considerable understatement) in Dörtyol. Such an explanation is perfectly congruent with the reports accusing the BAC and the Armenian nationalists for having smuggled weapons to Dörtyol, with the aim to sabotage the Ankara agreement, but not with the alleged innocence of the Armenian National Delegation, still less as this delegation is in close touch with the BAC.

Ironically, in a somewhat desperate attempt to answer the arguments of Prof. Guenter Lewy, Nicolas Tavitian, a Ramkavar official, affirms, at the end of 2005: "But, Istanbul aside, there are no Armenians in Turkey. What happened, if not genocide?"<sup>1646</sup> Not only it is false (there are still Armenians in Hatay today and the Turkish Armenians of Ankara are a tiny group only since 1970s, roughly when the last ones of Tokat went to İstanbul) but in the case of Adana, Tarsus and Mersin, Mr. Tavitian's party is one of the main responsables for the disappearance of the Armenian populations.

Anyway, the failed attempt of Dörtyol marks the last step of the Armenian nationalist insurrections in Çukurova and vicinity, after the failure of Zeytun in mid-1921, closing a series having started six decades earlier. France had refused to help the insurgents of Zeytun in 1862; in 1921, the same country prevents the rebellion at Dörtyol. A rich region of Anatolia is recovered by the Turks, the troops facing until now the French army can be redeployed on the Western front. Now all what remains for the Armenian nationalists, still determined to fight the Turks, is being suppletive forces of Greeks (defeated in January, March-April and September 1921) and trying on the diplomatic field.

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<sup>1645</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie...*, p. 92.

<sup>1646</sup> Nicolas Tavitian, "Correspondence," *The Middle East Quarterly*, XIII-1, Winter 2006.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONFIRMING THE RUPTURE (1922-1923)

*“Like madmen, we rushed here and there [in September 1922], saying to each other ‘That base, murderous, Moslem Turk dealt with us better than these European Christians. If only we had known this before, and dealt instead with the Turk!’”*  
Pastor Abraham Hartunian<sup>1647</sup>

On 12 January 1922, the day after having ordered on a written form the delivery for free of weapons and ammunitions from the ex-occupation forces to the Turks, Aristide Briand resigns. There is no connection between the two events. Briand still has a majority at the Chamber of the deputies and even more at the Senate, but this man now in his sixties, after one tiresome year at the head of the cabinet, faces the opposition of the President of the Republic, of the chair of the Senate’s Foreign Affairs committee Raymond Poincaré and of his own minister of Finances Paul Doumer (1857-1932) on the method to obtain the payment of German reparations and on the relationship with the UK. Indeed, Briand estimates that after having showed firmness regarding High Silesia and Turkey, it is time to sign a pact of guarantee securing the alliance with London, even more as these tensions had not prevented a joint occupation of three German cities in reprisal for the refusal to pay the reparations on time. Millerand, Poincaré, Doumer and others think otherwise.<sup>1648</sup> Aristide Briand had been able to maintain correct personal relations with David Lloyd George. This is not the case of Poincaré, who, to political disagreements adds a complete opposition of personalities. The first consequences are the failure the Franco-British pact, the divergences on the wished

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<sup>1647</sup> Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep. A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1976, p. 190.

<sup>1648</sup> Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d’Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré. 1913-1926*, Paris : Hachette, 1957, pp. 146-155 ; J. Néré, *The Foreign Policy of France, from 1914 to 1945*, London-New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 36-38; Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand, le ferme conciliateur*, Paris : Fayard, 2005, pp. 455-463.

content becoming imbarable, and the deliberate sabotage of the Genova conference by Poincaré.<sup>1649</sup> Carlo Sforza portrays Poincaré as follows:

He comes from those serious and dull French upper middle classes, than which nothing could be duller or more respectable in the world, except what remains of the Victorian type of British middle classes. [...]

He is a great lawyer, a Lorraine lawyer, Lorraine being a frontier province; he has had from his very nursery days constant thoughts of Germany. [...] He knows well that Germany is there, and that some real peace ought to be found.<sup>1650</sup>

In his recollections, Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca (1870-1958; director of political affairs at the MFA from 1920 to 1924) describes Poincaré as wanting to be informed of every affair, reading and annotating all the reports and telegrams submitted by him (de Peretti). On Poincaré's policy in 1922-1924, de Peretti explains that "the issue of the [German] reparations seemed to him dominating all the others," and concerning the East, his main desire, during the first months of 1922, is "to prevent a resume of the hostilities between Turks and Greeks and to be able to exert our mandate on Syria without difficulties."<sup>1651</sup> The Armenian issue is not mentioned. In spring 1922, an Albanian prince who has put his pen at the service of the Turks since 1919<sup>1652</sup> warmly thanks Pierre Loti, Claude Farrère, Aristide Briand, Louis Barthou, Generals Maurice Pellé and Henri Gouraud, Henry Franklin-Bouillon and Jean Gout, then affirms that thanks to their work, "the incomparable authority of Mr. Poincaré will secure the Oriental peace at the inter-allied conference."<sup>1653</sup> On the contrary, Léon Maccas (1892-1972), one of the members of the Greek delegation at the Paris peace conference, considers, in a letter written around 1960 to historian Dimitri Kitsikis that Poincaré "hardly liked us" (the Greeks).<sup>1654</sup>

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<sup>1649</sup> Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d'Orsay...*, pp. 155-157 ; Peter J. Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace. The League of Nations in British Policy, 1914-1925*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 217-219.

<sup>1650</sup> Carlo Sforza, *Makers of Modern Europe*, London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot, 1930, p. 200.

<sup>1651</sup> Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, « Briand et Poincaré (souvenirs) », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 décembre 1936, pp. 786-787.

<sup>1652</sup> Alain Quella-Villéger, *Le Cas Farrère. Du Goncourt à la disgrâce*, Paris : Presses de la Renaissance, 1989, pp. 230-231.

<sup>1653</sup> Basri Bey de Dukagjin, « La Turquie et sa défense nationale », *La Revue de Genève*, avril 1922, pp. 522-523.

<sup>1654</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pression en politique internationale. La Grèce et ses revendications à la conférence de la paix (1919-1920)*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1963, p. 368.



Actually, the delivery of weapons ordered by Briand just before resigning is carried out under the Poincaré cabinet. All the clothes and a part of the weapons are delivered “from extreme urgency.”<sup>1655</sup> The planes (officially given for the cadaster, but nobody is duped), the half of the Mausers and a small part of the ammunitions are delivered in March 1922, the rest in April. The difference is (largely, if not only) due to the temporary disagreement between Beirut and Ankara regarding the tax customs.<sup>1656</sup>

## 6.1. The “Armeno-Greek brotherhood” v. the French support for Kemalist Turkey

### 6.1.1. Background (1918-1922)

Even before the Greek landing in İzmir, the French representatives in Anatolia warn against the Greek nationalist ambitions. In his dispatches of 23 and 29 March, 13 and 22 April 1919, the French Consul in İzmir, Osmin Laporte (the one who is appointed as consul general in Adana in 1921), warns that the actual risk of a bloodbath and other kinds of trouble, including as far as the French interest is concerned, is a possible Greek landing.<sup>1657</sup> Navy Captain J. Docteur argues that attributing İzmir to Greece would be “a big error,” as Greece is not even able to govern herself properly.<sup>1658</sup> Regardless, David Lloyd George’s opinion, led by the propaganda spread by Eleutherios Venizelos and his supporters, as early as 1918, on an alleged threat for the safety of the local Greeks,<sup>1659</sup> prevail. Actually, from the day of the

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<sup>1655</sup> Armée du Levant — État-major — 4<sup>e</sup> bureau, Note de service, 18 janvier 1922, SHD, 4 H 175, dossier 5.

<sup>1656</sup> Le général de Lamothe, commandant par intérim de l’Armée du Levant, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 20 mars 1922, SHD, 4 H 175, dossier 5. Paul de Rémusat (Paul du Véou) reproduces the order of 27 April 1922 on the last deliveries, which is in itself perfectly justified, but attributes it to a hesitation to Poincaré without providing any source and alleges, one more time without evidence, that the Radical Party (the party of Édouard Herriot) has “ordered” these deliveries: Paul du Véou, *La Passion de la Cilicie*, Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1954, p. 325. Imagining Poincaré accepting to receive an order in 1922 is absurd, to say the very least.

<sup>1657</sup> AMAE, P 1524.

<sup>1658</sup> Le capitaine de vaisseau J. Docteur, commandant du cuirassé *Démocratie*, à M. le vice-amiral, haut-commissaire, 21 mars 1919, AMAE, P 1524.

<sup>1659</sup> « La situation en Turquie — Il faut en finir avec la diplomatie orientale ! », *Bulletin hellénique*, 19 décembre 1918, p. 1 ; Le comité dirigeant des irrédimés à M. Billy, ministre de France à Athènes, 30 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 1524. This propaganda does not even hide the irredentist aims: « La tâche de l’hellénisme », *Supplément au « Bulletin hellénique »*, 19 décembre 1918, p. 1 ; C. S. Spanoudi, « La

Hellenic army's arrival, 15 May 1919, to the withdrawal of September-October 1922, the Greek occupation of Western Anatolia and, to a lesser extent, of eastern Thrace is marked by massacres and other crimes.<sup>1660</sup> From the beginning, the French diplomatic and even more military representatives in Turkey report these crimes in detail and rather quickly obtain protests from the government and the French public opinion.

On 16 May 1919, High Commissioner Albert Defrance gives the figure of three hundreds Turks killed.<sup>1661</sup> Six days later, Consul Laporte supplicates Paris to obtain the replacement of the Greek forces by Western forces and "to saveguard as much as possible of the Ottoman Empire," otherwise there will be "a reaction of an incalculable violence and time."<sup>1662</sup> However, the most precise data comes from the Navy's intelligence service. Captain Henri Rollin reports, using the data of the officer in İzmir: "The attitude of the Greek population has been despicable. Armed with their weapons or those taken from the Turks, Greek civilians murder many Muslims. [...] The Greek populace plunder." The number of Turks killed during the very first day is estimated between 250 and 300.<sup>1663</sup> The service finds some days later that if the conduct of the Greek soldiers was "correct" where Western witnesses were present, their behavior was by no means better than the one of the criminal civilians in the other places. It also appears that the movement had quickly reached the countryside, where "20 Turkish villages have been plundered and burned, their inhabitants expelled or even massacred" by "Greek peasants" armed by the Hellenic army. Rapes have been committed, too.<sup>1664</sup>

The intelligence agency insists to obtain veto of Paris to a Greek mandate, which would never be accepted by the Turks, and emphasizes the desirability of a return in power, locally, of the

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question des Hellènes irrédimés », *La Méditerranée orientale*, 7 décembre 1918, p. 4. The Turkish response is: Kara Schemsi (Reşit Safvet Atabinen), *Les Turcs et le Panhellénisme*, Geneva: Imprimerie P. Richter, 1918.

<sup>1660</sup> Cuthbert Francis Dixon-Johnson, *The Greeks in Asia Minor*, London: Cole & C°, 1919; Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile. The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995, pp. 255-332; Jeremy Salt, *The Unmaking of the Middle East*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2008, pp. 75-78.

<sup>1661</sup> Télégramme d'Albert Defrance au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 16 mai 1919, AMAE, P 1524.

<sup>1662</sup> Télégramme d'Osmin Laporte au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 22 mai 1919, AMAE, P 1524.

<sup>1663</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 717, 20 mai 1919 (quotations pp. 3-4), SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232.

<sup>1664</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 740, 24 mai 1919, pp. 3-6 (quotations p. 3), SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232. For confirmation with British sources: Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile...*, pp. 262-265.

İzmir branch of the CUP, the party having been “very moderate” in this province.<sup>1665</sup> The Navy officers also explain that, after “a violent clash” in June 1919 to retake Bergama, the Turkish forces have committed no violence, except sentencing to death and executing a handful of Turks who had accepted to sign a text saying that the Turkish population is happy of the Greek occupation.<sup>1666</sup> “With rare exceptions, they [the Greeks] detest us deeply.”<sup>1667</sup> In the Western Anatolia dreamed by Greek nationalists, there would be no Turk, a result to be obtained “by extermination” and no Catholic, particularly no French missionary, an aim to achieve by “exodus.”<sup>1668</sup>

As we saw, Nihat Reşat (Belger) comes back to Paris in January 1920, to defend the Turkish point of view. His first spectacular action is to publish the report of the Entente’s investigative commission on the Greek landing in İzmir, report concluding that the Turks are in majority in the province and even in the city, that no security concerns justified the intervention, and that this “crusade” has been marked by a series of crimes. Reşat publishes the report in Paris, together with Ottoman official documents and several testimonies, including the letter of a British officer and of a French officer, the last one addressed to Pierre Loti, who forwards it to Nihat Reşat.<sup>1669</sup> Yet, this is another French officer who gives the report of the Entente’s commission to Nihat Reşat, just before he leaves İstanbul for Paris. The main monograph on his political activities gives this important precision that thousands of copies are printed, the book being widely distributed to members of the French and British Parliament, but does not provide the name.<sup>1670</sup> However, it can be observed that the letter sent to Loti must have been written by an officer of the Navy’s intelligence service, as a report of Henri Rollin is quoted

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<sup>1665</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 842, 27 juin 1919, pp. 3-6, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232.

<sup>1666</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 837, 25 juin 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232 (quotation p. 1).

<sup>1667</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 835, 25 juin 1919, p. 5, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232. Also see, in the same box, S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 809, 13 juin 1919.

<sup>1668</sup> Henri Rollin, Note sur la région d’Ayasoulouk, Sola-Nova, Sokia, 24 juin 1919, p. 6, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232.

<sup>1669</sup> Nihat Reşat (Belger), *Les Grecs à Smyrne. Nouveaux témoignages sur leurs atrocités. Un document officiel probant*, Paris : Imprimerie Kossuth, 1920. On the commission: Peter Buzanski, “The Inter-Allied Investigation of the Greek Invasion of Smyrna, 1919,” *The Historian*, XXV-3, May 1963, pp. 327-343. The report is reproduced some months later in Ahmet Rıza, *Échos de Turquie*, Paris: Imprimerie Billard & Baillard, 1920, pp. 18-22. On the World War events in Western Anatolia: Ahmet Efiloğlu, “Fuat Dündar and the Deportation of the Greeks,” *Middle East Critique*, XXIII-1, 2014, pp. 89-106.

<sup>1670</sup> Nermin Çelik and Öztan Öncel, “Hekim, Siyasetçi ve Diplomat Olarak Dr. Nihat Reşat Belger,” *Türkiye Klinikleri*, XVI, 2008, p. 162.

here.<sup>1671</sup> This fact, added to the letter sent by Rollin to Loti in 1919, and printed by Loti with his permission the same year, makes the head of Navy's intelligence service for Turkey and Southern Russia a serious hypothesis, in the current state of our knowledge. The other main possibility is Captain J. Docteur, commander of the ship *Démocratie*, a joint initiative of these two officers being, of course, plausible.

Whatever could be the exact source of Nihat Reşat, the Quai d'Orsay leaks, without even trying to hide that he is responsible for the leak, some information about the content of the report as early as November 1919, and explains that the dispute between Venizelos and General Bunoust, the French member of the commission, defending its report, has been "long."<sup>1672</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis also benefits, for her first book on Turkey, of three leaked documents, one military report regarding the massacre of Turks at Menemen, the estimate of the land arm's intelligence service of the population in Western Anatolia in mid-1919 (concluding to a Turkish majority) and the diary of a female missionary on the battle of Aydın and the Greek forces' crimes during this clash.<sup>1673</sup> The year this book is published (1921), *Le Radical* prints a letter from İstanbul, in response to a defense of Greece by Denys Cochin, a letter having all the external aspects of a text written by an officer of the occupation corps of the Ottoman capital city. The author reminds the murderous ambushes of French soldiers by Greeks in December 1916 and June 1917, then continues with the massacre of Turks in Yalova and İzmit. He refers to the intelligence officer at İzmit as a proof, and gives his name.<sup>1674</sup> In 1921, too, *Le Monde illustré* publishes an article which has, too, all the external aspects of a text written by an officer (the knowledge of the number of soldiers and the material of both armies, for instance). The article argues that the Greek army cannot win and instead of wining, "massacres," proceeds to "the systematic destruction of the Turkish element and property." The article is illustrated by photos of destructions and massacres to justify its

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<sup>1671</sup> Compare Nihat Reşat, *Les Grecs à...*, pp. 17-20 with S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 717, 20 mai 1919, p. 3, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232. The same service observes that the arrival of the commission does not stop the Greek army's "cruelties": S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 1110, 4 septembre 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233.

<sup>1672</sup> Charles Saglio, « Qu'ont fait les Grecs à Smyrne ? — La question turque sur le tapis vert », *L'Œuvre*, 9 novembre 1919, p. 1 ; Louis Bresse, « À l'étranger », *Le Rappel*, 10 novembre 1919, p. 1.

<sup>1673</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Le Nationalisme turc*, Paris : Plon, 1921, pp. 46-50. The report is also in S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 891, 8 juillet 1919, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 233. For an American confirmation on Aydın, see the telegram of Admiral Bristol to the U.S. delegation in Paris, 17 July 1919, LC, Bristol papers, container 74.

<sup>1674</sup> XXX, « Lettre de Constantinople — Comment les Grecs conçoivent la guerre », *Le Radical*, 4 août 1921, p. 1.

accusations.<sup>1675</sup> The same year, “a [French] Navy officer,” solicited his female Turkish friends to write letters on the situation in Turkey, including the crimes of the Greek forces, then obtains the publication of these testimonies in the *Revue de Paris*, with a favorable introduction by the editorial staff.<sup>1676</sup> The first letter informs us that the officer in question is on leave in June 1921, at the same time than Rollin, but that remains an indication only. What it is quite clear, anyway, it is that this series of leaked documents and unofficial articles cannot be conceived without the approval of the ministries of War and Navy.

Similarly, in 1922, Maurice Pernot, a journalist who has worked with General Maurice Pellé, the high commissioner in İstanbul, describes the misery of the refugees having fled the massacres of the Greek forces. He also argues that the sole way to fight the German and Bolshevik influences in Anatolia is to offer to the Turks a peace they can accept, that Kemal (Atatürk), İsmet (İnönü) and Kazım (Karabekir) a reasonable men and that if Armenians horribly suffered in 1915, the evacuation of Çukurova was a must.<sup>1677</sup>

The hostility toward the action of Constantin and his ministers is far from being limited to the military and Turkophiles. Louis Jalabert, former professor at St-Joseph University and editor of the Jesuit review *Études* expresses his deep disappointment in June 1921, not only because of the misdeeds of Constantin in 1916 but also because of Athens’ insistence to keep the Sèvres treaty, against all realities, and for trying military offensives that can have not result but postponing the needed peace, at the expense of Greece itself. The military and diplomatic capacities of Ankara have been underestimated and this is a great error, explains Jalabert.<sup>1678</sup>

This increasing opposition to Greek expansionism is in formal contradiction with the Armenian nationalist support for these very same ambitions. If the tensions in Trabzon are real until 1920, in Western Anatolia, there is no kind of dispute, quite the contrary. The Armenian nationalists accept until the final Greek debacle to be used, whatever could be the

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<sup>1675</sup> I. D., « Les Grecs en Asie mineure », *Le Monde illustré*, 26 février 1921, pp. 160-161.

<sup>1676</sup> « Ce que sont devenues les désenchantées », *La Revue de Paris*, 15 décembre 1921, pp. 837-856.

<sup>1677</sup> Maurice Pernot, « La question turque », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 janvier 1922, pp. 290-292 ; 1<sup>er</sup> février 1922, pp. 549-579. On Pernot and Pellé: Louis-F. Aubert, « Maurice Pernot », *Politique étrangère*, décembre 1948, p. 392.

<sup>1678</sup> Louis Jalabert, « Six mois d’histoire grecque. Une déception de l’Europe », *Études*, 5 juin 1921, pp. 577-596. Much less favorable than Berthe Georges-Gaulis to the Turkish national movement, Jalabert regardless recommends her book *Le Nationalisme turc* because she was one of the first to prove this movement is serious: Louis Jalabert, « Revue des livres », *Études*, 22 avril 1922, p. 246.

price. Some examples will suffice. As early as the first day, a part of the İzmir's Armenians join Greeks in their crimes against the Turkish population. It is proved by the repression the Greek command is forced, by the repeated pressure of the Entente's consuls, to decide for the murders, plunder and rapes perpetrated in İzmir city from 15 to 17 May 1919: 12 Armenians are sentenced, together with 48 Greeks, which means a ratio of 1 for 4.<sup>1679</sup> Yet, according to the Ottoman census, the ratio of populations in 1914 is 1 for 6.6<sup>1680</sup> and regarding the criminals, it should be even more in favor of Greeks, as there are no Armenian volunteers' units in the Greek army during the first days of the occupation of İzmir. In the absence of any document proving an overrepresentation of the Armenians among the criminals of May 1919, the only remaining explanation is that the Greek military justice chooses to punish its coreligionists less often than the Armenians.

For the rest of the war, there are no hypotheses in this regard but clear facts. In 1920, the Navy's intelligence service reports that "from Greek source," the Armenian gang of a certain Donik, who had committed "the worst excesses against the most peaceful Muslim population, plundered, raped women," has been exterminated by a band of Turkish "insurgents." Yet, a Greek unit, being at twenty minutes by walk, hears shots and, instead of intervening, asks the British command for orders. The answer is to do nothing as long as Donik does not ask for help (something hardly likely to happen, as him and his men are caught in their sleep, drunk).<sup>1681</sup> The same year, a dozen of Armenian volunteers are sentenced to death and executed by the Greek military justice and several hundreds others are fired.<sup>1682</sup> There is no indication that they are not actually criminals, but neither there is any indication that the Greek command acts the same way with Greek soldiers, or even Greek irregulars.<sup>1683</sup>

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<sup>1679</sup> Arnold Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, London-Bombay-Sydney: Constable & C°, 1922, p. 401.

<sup>1680</sup> Meir Zamir, "Population statistics of the Ottoman empire in 1914 and 1919," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVII-1, January 1981, p. 90.

<sup>1681</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, 10 août 1920, SHD, 7 N 3211.

<sup>1682</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2373, 15 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1683</sup> Even in the defense of Greece by herself (*La Grèce en Asie mineure*, Athens: Bureau de la presse du ministère des Affaires étrangères, 1921, SHD, 6 N 172), there is no claim of a repression of criminal Greek soldiers or volunteers in 1921. Similar silence in Prince Nicolas de Grèce, « La campagne d'Asie mineure », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1927, pp. 498-522. Ioannis Hassiotis, "Shared Illusions: Greek-Armenian Cooperation in Asia Minor and the Caucasus," in *Greece and Great Britain during World War I*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1985, p. 174 writes as if the Armenian volunteers were the only perpetrators of war crimes, among the Greek forces, during the year 1920.

The case of Yalova is even clearer. Beside the letter published by *Le Radical* and already mentioned here, there is a first-choice source, the report of the International Red Cross' commission. The commission explains:

The investigation was conducted in an impartial manner. All the testimonies that were proposed, Greek and Armenian as well Turkish, were heard.

The mission came to the conclusion that elements of the Greek occupation army had been carrying out the extermination of the Muslim population of the peninsula for two months. The findings made — burned villages, massacres, the terror of the inhabitants, coincidences of places and dates — leave no room for doubt in this respect. [...] No cases have come to our knowledge in which these misdeeds have been prevented or punished by the military command.<sup>1684</sup>

A commission of the Entente confirms:

In the part of the kazas of Yalova and Guemlek occupied by the Greek army, there is a systematic plan of destruction of Turkish villages and extinction of the Moslem population.

This plan is being carried out by Greek and Armenian bands, which appear to operate under Greek instructions and sometimes even with the assistance of detachments of regular troops.<sup>1685</sup>

Arnold Toynbee, too, confirms, by his investigation on place.<sup>1686</sup> Yet, the Armenian volunteers (and only them) are abandoned by the Greek command: At least a part of them are arrested and put on trial in front of the Ottoman justice in İstanbul.<sup>1687</sup> Of course, other Armenian gangs perpetrate crimes with impunity, such as the one who commits rape and “numerous murders” around Adapazar in spring 1921, the arsonists near İzmit roughly at the same time or those who burn villages around Bursa in July of the same year and kill at least

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<sup>1684</sup> Maurice Gehri, « Mission d'enquête en Anatolie », *Revue internationale de la Croix-rouge*, 15 juillet 1921, p. 723.

<sup>1685</sup> Arnold Toynbee, *The Western Question...*, p. 284.

<sup>1686</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 287-288.

<sup>1687</sup> Corps d'occupation de Constantinople — Bulletin de renseignement des 8 et 9 mai 1921, p. 1, SHD 20 N 1082.

dozens of inhabitants.<sup>1688</sup> Not unlike during the Balkan wars, the goal of the Greek authorities is to change the demographic balance, particularly in case of a plebiscite.<sup>1689</sup>

Nothing allows to consider these Armenian volunteers individuals representing themselves only. Indeed, as early as 11 December 1918, Ramkavar leader Archag Tchobanian organizes a conference with J. S. Svoronos, professor at the university of Athens, and Denys Cochin, supporter of Armenian and Greek nationalisms. Tchobanian celebrates “our Greek friends,” calls for “an organized and permanent union” with them, recalls the “Armenian volunteers” during the Greco-Ottoman war of 1897 and warns the Entente’s power about the “serious injustice” that would be, according to him, the non-implementation of the Armenian and Greek territorial claims. The booklet made of the speeches is sold at the benefit of the National Armenian Relief.<sup>1690</sup> One month later, on 16 January 1919, the Ramkavar organizes another conference, with Archag Tchobanian, Boghos Nubar and Eleutherios Venizelos, entitled “The Armeno-Greek brotherhood.” Greek Ministers of Foreign Affairs N. Politis and of Agriculture Michalacopoulos attend the event, as well as the representatives of Greek nationalism in Anatolia and Prof. Svoronos, speaker at the previous joint conference. Tchobanian declares that Greek and Armenians “form a same family,” that “this union becomes now indissoluble forever (*Applause*)” then comes further: “Has not the common and formidable martyr, so to speak, merged the two peoples into an indivisible bloc in order to obtain common reparation and common liberation? (*Loud applause.*)” The booklet made of the texts of the speeches is sold at the benefit of a Greek relief organization.<sup>1691</sup>

More concretely, in October 1919, Boghos Nubar writes to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, at the request of Venizelos, to affirm that the Greeks, not the Bulgarians, are the most numerous in Thrace. However, this is in London, not in Paris, that a Greco-Armenian

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<sup>1688</sup> Traduction d’un télégramme daté du 2 mai 1921 adressé au commandant général de la gendarmerie ottomane par le capitaine Youssouf, commandant du détachement de poursuite de Chilé, SHD, 20 N 1102 ; Rapport du capitaine Renaudineau, inspecteur durégiment de Brousse, n° 35, 18 juillet 1921 ; Id., n° 37, 18 juillet 1921 ; Id., n° 38, 19 juillet 1921, SHD, 20 N 1101 ; Corps d’occupation de Constantinople — Bulletin de renseignement des 1<sup>er</sup> et 2 mai 1921, p. 1, SHD, 20 N 1082, dossier 3.

<sup>1689</sup> Rapport du lieutenant Dirand, inspecteur de la gendarmerie ottomane, sur les mesures relatives à l’inspection prise par les autorités helléniques, 19 août 1921, SHD, 20 N 1101. Also see Maurice Gehri, « Mission d’enquête en... », p. 724.

<sup>1690</sup> *La Renaissance de l’Orient*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1919 (quotations pp. 13-15).

<sup>1691</sup> *La Fraternité arméno-grecque*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1919 (quotations pp. 10, 20 and 21). On a similar event: Télégramme du consul général de France à New York, 10 février 1919, AMAE, P 16671.



committee is established, in February of the same year.<sup>1692</sup> The day after the Sèvres treaty is signed, Avetis Aharonian exchanges with Venizelos the abandon of Yerevan's claims on Trabzon for the public promise that "As long as the Turks do not evacuate Armenia and will not withdraw from the areas defined by Wilson the Greek army will hold all those territories which we have occupied outside of the provisions of the treaty."<sup>1693</sup> For his part, Aram Turabian only regrets that the "race affinities" between Armenians and Greeks are not sufficiently (according to him) used by the Armenian National Delegation. By 1921, he affirms that the alliance with Greeks has to be "substituted" to the defunct alliance with France.<sup>1694</sup>

Far from being limited to political organizations, this attempt of union has a religious dimension. Indeed, on 24 February 1919, the Greek and the (Gregorian) Armenian patriarchs present a joint memorandum to present the Turks as "invaders," "monstruous parasites" (sic) and congenital barbarians, to claim that the Turkish and Muslim majorities are only due to "massacres" and other crimes, the main aim of the joint memorandum being to justify the maximalist territorial claims of the two nationalisms, without saying a word about the bitter dispute between them regarding Trabzon, in 1919.<sup>1695</sup> It is obvious that this de-humanization, not that much different from the Nazi vocabulary, can only incite the Greek forces and their Armenian volunteers to commit crimes, from 1919 to 1922. The joint statement is even more relevant as, in spring of the same year, "the fusion between the Greek and Gregorian Armenian patriarchates" is discussed by the prelates.<sup>1696</sup>

Such an alliance is another proof that the Armenian nationalists' hatred against Turks is rooted in racism: The use of Armenian volunteers as instruments to be abandoned as soon as the Greek interest commands it and the conflict about Trabzon never are problems for a cooperation against the Turks. One of the very rare critiques made by Jean Naslian toward the Armenian nationalist leadership and, in this precise case, more particularly toward the Ramkavar, is to have supported the Greece's claims in Western Anatolia unconditionally,

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<sup>1692</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions...*, pp. 341-343.

<sup>1693</sup> Avetis Aharonian, "From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary. Part VI," *Armenian Review*, XVII-1, spring 1962, p. 65.

<sup>1694</sup> Aram Turabian, « L'alliance gréco-arménienne », *Aiguillon*, 15 novembre 1919, p. 1 ; Aram Turabian, « La France et la Cilcie arménienne », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1921, p. 2 ; [Aram Turabian], « La guerre gréco-turque », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1921, p. 3.

<sup>1695</sup> AMAE, P 1524.

<sup>1696</sup> Télégramme de Paul Lépassier au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1919, AMAE, P 1524.

provoking the immediate hostility of Italy and a bit later of France.<sup>1697</sup> Exceptionally, Naslian's conclusions are supported by the facts; but these remarks are not the most used of his book.

Beside these issues, it has to be noted that the relations between ordinary Greeks and Armenians are not always friendly, far from that, in Western Anatolia. After the battles for Aydın, in 1919, "the Armenians and the Jews say they suffered more of the Greeks than of the Turks."<sup>1698</sup> At Ödemiş, "one thousand Armenian families were able to prosper, even during the war, because *they were unmolested*" (underlined in the original), but "the Greeks do not see the Armenians and Jews favorably" because they are concurrents, and, instead of accepting a place in the sun for everybody, "the Greeks want the sun for them alone," as they are "fanatical." "The Armenian dislikes the Turk and the Greek but gets along well with the last to ruin the first."<sup>1699</sup>

The cooperation between Armenian and Greek nationalists is also visible in the field of propaganda. The two main examples in France are René Puaux (1878-1937) and Michel Paillarès (born in 1871, deceased at an unknown date). Puaux is, during the first months of 1919, the correspondent of *Le Temps* in Greece and he participates to the propaganda on an alleged unsafety of the Christians in Western Anatolia,<sup>1700</sup> propaganda made to justify the landing of 15 May. This propaganda is debunked by the Entente's commission.<sup>1701</sup> Consequence or not of the report, by the second half of 1919, Puaux stops writing about Greece and Turkey in *Le Temps*, shifting to Germany and literature. In 1922, for unclear reasons, he begins to write in the *Revue bleue*, where his anti-Turkish articles contrast with the conciliation advocated by the foreign policy columnist of the same review. The quality of his texts does not improve: For example, he describes the whole top CUP leadership as of

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<sup>1697</sup> Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de...*, pp. 488-489.

<sup>1698</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 835, 25 juin 1919, p. 1, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232.

<sup>1699</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 833, 14 juin 1919, pp. 1-5, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 232.

<sup>1700</sup> René Puaux, « Le péril de l'Asie mineure », *Le Temps*, 15 février 1919, p. 2. In « La Grèce et la question d'Orient », *Revue bleue*, 4 février 1922, p. 80, Puaux dares to refer to his article of February 1919, without saying a word about the report of the Entente's investigative commission.

<sup>1701</sup> « Leur sécurité n'était pas menacée. » Nihat Reşat, *Les Grecs à...*, p. 11.

Jewish ascent and quotes some of the fake documents published by Andonian to demonize the Turks.<sup>1702</sup>

Paillarès has an older story with Greece. As early as 1899, he is funded by the Greek government to write a book on the Macedonian issue. The book is not published until 1907 and Athos Romanos (1858-1940), who had ordered Paillarès to make this work, actually “never” reads it.<sup>1703</sup> It does not seem that Paillarès is prudent in hiding his funding as one of the reviewers calls him “in the pay” of Greece, without receiving a right of response or being sued for defamation.<sup>1704</sup> Mobilized in 1914, Paillarès escapes to the battlefield in being appointed as director of a foundry owned by a Greek businessmen. His management of the foundry provokes several complaints for fraud and he cannot go to Greece until May 1919, when the probes end.<sup>1705</sup> In October 1919, he buys in İstanbul a newspaper, *Le Bosphore*, considered by the French Navy’s intelligence service to be “an organ of Greek propaganda” which does not hesitate to campaign for the reinforcement of the power and autonomy of the Greek patriarchate of İstanbul, “the biggest adversary,” explains the service, of “our religious interests in the East.”<sup>1706</sup> The reason of this editorial line is simple: The newspaper is funded by Greek money.<sup>1707</sup> The level of funding seems excellent, as in 1921, Paillarès moves to one of the most beautiful streets of Paris, the *rue de Rivoli* (without stopping to be editor of *Le Bosphore*, which means regular trips to İstanbul by the Orient-Express), has a wife and daughter (born in 1894) who do not work, as well as a mistress.<sup>1708</sup>

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<sup>1702</sup> René Puaux, « La Grèce et la question d’Orient », *Revue bleue*, 4 février 1922, p. 80 ; René Puaux, « La question d’Orient — Le devoir de la France », *Revue bleue*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1922, pp. 421-422.

<sup>1703</sup> Note de M. de Perretti, 31 octobre 1922, AMAE, P 3958.

<sup>1704</sup> Marius Riquier, « Bibliographie », *Les Temps nouveaux*, 2 mai 1908, p. 7. The next issues of *Les Temps nouveaux* contain no trace of any reaction from Paillarès to this merciless review.

<sup>1705</sup> Sûreté générale, PAILLARÈS, Michel, Joseph, 13 mars 1923, AMAE, P 3958.

<sup>1706</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2322, 16 août 1920, p. 1, SHD, 1 BB<sup>7</sup> 236.

<sup>1707</sup> Le commissaire spécial, chef du Service de sûreté, 30 novembre 1922, SHD, 20 N 1103 ; François Georgeon, « La presse de langue française entre les deux guerres mondiales », in G. Groc and İ. Çağlar (ed.), *La Presse française de Turquie, de 1795 à nos jours*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 1985, p. 33, n. 18. İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878–1908*, Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2014, p. 35, n. 60, dares to write: “Michel Paillarès was rumored to be in the pay of the Greek government.” This has nothing to do with any “rumor” and everything to do with documents, yet Ms. Yosmaoğlu has worked at the Quai d’Orsay’s central archives and should know, as a result, better.

<sup>1708</sup> Sûreté générale, PAILLARÈS, Michel, Joseph, 13 mars 1923, AMAE, P 3958.

In May 1922, the Greek government offers to pay (in several times) 250,000 francs to Paillarès to buy shares of *L'Éclair*, one of the two last Parisian dailies which continue to publish articles in favor of Greece (in exchange of money). The political dimension appears even more clearly in knowing that *L'Éclair* is in deficit and that buying shares could have no financial interest. Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikolaos Politis consider these future shares to be the property of the Greek government, a self-explanatory conclusion. Informed of the operation in October 1922, when the Greek legation in Paris has already paid 120,000 francs, the Poincaré cabinet immediately vetoes the pursuit of the transaction and finds no resistance, as a result of the revolution in Greece, following the debacle of September. The minister in Paris Athos Romanos (the same one who had paid Paillarès in 1899 but never read his 1907 book) finds a deal with the Quai d'Orsay: The payments continue, at the condition that Paillarès give for free the shares to Romanos' main collaborator, who himself will cede them (if possible for money, otherwise for free) to a Frenchman Raymond Poincaré will consider trustworthy (it seems that the chosen person is the editor of *L'Éclair*). Paillarès tries to obtain a financial advantage by threatening the new Greek cabinet of a "documented" press campaign but the Hellenic legation is not impressed, considering that Paillarès actually has "no document."<sup>1709</sup>

Paillarès' book<sup>1710</sup> is what could be expected from this character. P. 89, he explains he "would never accept" money from the Quai d'Orsay (a highly unlikely hypothesis, anyway). Pp. 49-50, he repeats the lies of Puaux regarding the alleged persecution of Greeks in Western Anatolia in February 1919. P. 255 he denies, without the beginning of an argument, the crimes of the Greek forces during and after the landing of Izmir and nowhere he refers, even to contest it, the report of the Entente's investigative commission. Quoting (without giving her name) the testimony of Berthe Georges-Gaulis in *Le Matin* on the massacres of Turks and arsons by the Greek forces in Western Anatolia,<sup>1711</sup> he denies any validity to her article in affirming that there is no precise indication of place for the crimes (p. 179). Yet, beside the fact that Berthe Georges-Gaulis previously gave very precise indications in her already cited

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<sup>1709</sup> Note de M. de Perretti, 31 octobre 1922 ; Lettre d'Athos Romanos à Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, 7 novembre 1922 ; Note, 15 novembre 1922 ; Visite du ministre de Grèce à M. de Peretti, 24 novembre 1922 ; Id., 7 décembre 1922 ; Id., 6 janvier 1923 ; Id., 13 janvier 1923 ; Le chef de cabinet, Note pour M. de Peretti, 26 février 1923, AMAE, P 3958.

<sup>1710</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les Alliés*, İstanbul-Paris : éditions du *Bosphore*, 1922.

<sup>1711</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Les Grecs cherchent à détruire la Turquie, disent les kémalistes », *Le Matin*, 21 janvier 1922, p. 1.

book published in autumn 1921, she also gave such precisions the same daily, two month earlier.<sup>1712</sup> Paillarès also affirms (p. 180) that the Muslims in Greece “always lived quiet” (sic), as if the extermination of the Muslims (and Jews) from the Peloponnese during the 1820s, the eradication of the Muslims of Crete during the 1890s and 1900s and the campaign of assassinations and harassment of 1914, after the end of the Balkan wars,<sup>1713</sup> never existed. Concerning the battlefield, he claims that “the Greeks are good soldiers” (p. 234), that the Greek army did not suffer real defeats in September 1921 (p. 233) and will likely succeed (p. 245). As no comment could be crueler than the facts, I will not comment these pages.

Concerning the occupation of Çukurova, the mouthpiece of the Greek high commission claims (p. 346) that France had “accepted” a “mandate” (the truth is the opposite) and that General Gouraud had ordered the evacuation in September 1920 (p. 188), an order that never existed elsewhere than in Paillarès’ fertile imagination. He also devotes several pages to glorify the Armenian Legion and other volunteers’ units without saying a word on their indiscipline, crimes and chronicle Francophobia (pp. 323-330), facts publicized in France since the end of 1919.<sup>1714</sup> He also claims (p. 103) that Kemal had concentrated most of his forces against the French at the end of 1919, neglecting the Western front against the Greeks (another allegation in absolute contradiction with the historical reality). His appreciation of the Kemalist movement is not closer to even the appearances of the truth, for instance when he pretends that if this movement wins, in ten years, “Turkey will be a vast desert” (p. 72) or when he writes (pp. 184-185) that the main aim of Kemal is to remain in power, even if İzmir and other territories remain occupied, but later accuses the leadership of Ankara to plan to invade Syria after the recovery of Adana (pp. 473-474).

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<sup>1712</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Le terrorisme anglais règne à Constantinople », *Le Matin*, 15 novembre 1921, p. 1.

<sup>1713</sup> Comité de la défense nationale ottomane, *Les Atrocités des Grecs en Macédoine*, İstanbul: Ahmed Ihsan & Cie, 1914 ; Alfred Lemaître, *Musulmans et chrétiens. Notes sur la guerre d'indépendance grecque*, Paris : Librairie G. Martin, 1895 ; Salâhi Sonyel, “How the Turks of the Peloponnese were exterminated during the Greek Rebellion,” *Bellesten*, LXIII/233, April 1998, pp. 121-135; Norman Stone, *Turkey. A Short History*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2007, pp. 126-127.

<sup>1714</sup> Édouard Bernier, « La question turque — Dans l’attente de la solution », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 28 février 1920, p. 342 ; Paul Bruzon, « L’accord d’Angora et les divergences franco-anglaises — 2° Le point de vue français », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 26 novembre 1921, p. 1524 ; Gustave Gautherot, « L’occupation française de la Syrie et de la Cilicie », *Le Monde illustré*, 13 décembre 1919, p. 935 ; Gustave Gautherot, *La France en Syrie et en Cilicie*, Courbevoie : Librairie indépendante, 1920, pp. 141-142 and 146-166 ; Roger Lambelin, « Les livres de la guerre », *L’Action française*, 6 août 1920, p. 4 ; Testis [Commandant Michel Canonge], « L’œuvre de la France en Syrie », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1921, pp. 836-838.

After having left a long suspense, Paillarès eventually names the mysterious force explaining, according to him, the turn of the French government in favor of the Turks (in addition to Pierre Loti, Claude Farrère and a part of the military): the Freemasonry (p. 472). Before Paul de Rémusat/Paul du Véou, he alleges that Kemal (Atatürk) is “a Jew” (p. 50). The praise from a Nazi advocate of the Armenian cause for Paillarès is, as a result, quite understandable.<sup>1715</sup> The biography of the man and the content of his book should order the greatest precautions toward his analyses, yet it remains, across the decades and not unlike Paul du Véou, a standard reference in the books supporting the Armenian nationalist point of view.<sup>1716</sup> Only these authors could explain their reasons to cite Paillarès as a reliable source. It can merely be observed that the explicitly anti-Masonic and implicitly anti-Semitic conspiracy theory of du Véou and Paillarès is repeated in the Memoirs of Jean Naslian,<sup>1717</sup> another standard reference in the Armenian nationalist publications.<sup>1718</sup> The thesis of a CUP controlled by “Turkish Jews of Salonika” and ordering in 1915 to kill Armenians by “Jewish love of gain” is also spread by the ARF during the interwar.<sup>1719</sup> The conspiracy theory of a Jewish plot

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<sup>1715</sup> Pierre Hépe, *Le Dernier bal du grand soir ou la République universelle*, Beirut, 1957, pp. 82-85, 517, 548.

<sup>1716</sup> Kévork K. Baghdjian, *The confiscation of Armenian properties by the Turkish government said to be abandoned*, Antelias : Printing House of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2010, pp. 320-321 ; Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, p. 370 ; Yves Ternon, *L'Empire ottoman. La chute, le déclin, l'effacement*, Paris : éditions du Félin, 2002, p. 518 ; Aurore Bruna, « La France, les Français face à la Turquie. Autour de l'accord d'Angora du 20 octobre 1921 », *Bulletin de l'Institut Pierre-Renouvin*, 2008/1, pp. 27-41 ; Christopher Walker, *Armenia. The Survival of a Nation*, London-New York: Routledge, 1990, p. 332, n. 88. Better inspired in other publications, Garabet Krikor Moumdjian even mirrors the defamation of Paillarès against Halide Edip and other female Kemalists to have been part of a policy of “harem” for Western observers: Garabet Krikor Moumdjian, “Cilicia under French Administration,” in Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Armenian Cilicia*, Mazda Publishing, 2008.

<sup>1717</sup> Jean Naslian, *Les Mémoires de Mgr Jean Naslian, évêque de Trébizonde, sur les événements politico-religieux en Proche-Orient, de 1914 à 1928*, Vienna : Imprimerie Méchithariste, 1955, volume II, pp. 17-18 (using the first edition of *La Passion de la Cilicie* without citing it systematically) and 596 (quoting Paillarès with the reference). Also see pp. 773-774, where he accuses Jewish Freemasons to be instrumental in the institution of divorce among the Catholic Armenians in Republican Turkey, in 1925-1926.

<sup>1718</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, “Children as Victims of Genocide: The Armenian Case,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, V-3, September 2003, p. 437, n. 31; Burçin Gerçek and Taner Akçam, *Turkish Rescuers*, 2015, pp. 18, 45, 50 and 66; Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011, pp. 895 (with an error on the date of the publication) and 896 (p. 247, he cites Mevlanzade Rifat); Jean Mécérian, *Le Génocide du peuple arménien*, Beirut : Imprimerie catholique, 1965, pp. 19-20, 34, 40, 76 and 81; Aram Sisakian, “Questione Armenia? Per Puntualizzare la situazione attuale: schizzo di una sintesi storica”, *Oriente Moderno*, Gennaio-Dicembre 1981, p. 29, n. 17.

<sup>1719</sup> *Hairenik Weekly*, 9 August 1935, quoted in [Arthur Derounian], “John T. Flynn and the Dashnags,” *The Propaganda Battlefield*, 31 May 1944, p. 3. The myth of a CUP controlled by Dönmes (wrongly

supposed to have supported Abdülhamit II, then controlled the CUP, later the Kemalist movement, the Bolshevik revolution and even the French opponents to the liberticidal bills regarding the issue of 1915 can be found as late as 2015 under the pen of a past president of the Ramkavar France.<sup>1720</sup>

### 6.1.2. *Armenian nationalists, France and the “Greek reign of terror” (1922)*

In May 1922, the British government and a minority of the Near East Relief’s workers (or ex-workers) begin a campaign on alleged atrocities suffered by the Greeks forcibly relocated in 1921. The Ramkavar organ in America, publishes a text by F. D. Yowell, the main NER official accusing the Kemalists (after his contract with the U.S. organization has been terminated).<sup>1721</sup> U.S. Protestant institutions and the Hellenic Orthodox Community of Massachusetts relay this campaign by a wave of mails.<sup>1722</sup> These are precisely the allegations denied in the strongest terms by Mary Caroline Holmes for the Samsun-Elazığ road and reduced to their just proportions for the Samsun-Konya road by R. K. van Velsor, both being NER officials.

The ripost of the French government is quick. The unofficial daily *Le Temps* publishes an editorial (very probably written by Jean Herbette) quoting the rebuttal from Florence Billings, head of the NER in Ankara, and arguing, as a result, that the allegations should not be taken at face value, without checking. But the editorial does not stop here. The author summarizes the telegrams sent, before the current campaign, by Paris to London, about crimes of the Greek army. On 20 April 1922, the British cabinet was informed that the Greek forces had burned a Turkish village, Umör. Seven days later, the Quai d’Orsay had informed the Foreign Office that Greek soldiers had burned three mosques in Karatepe, with inhabitants inside. Yet, explains *Le Temps*, “England proposed no investigation in Asia minor.” The evening daily concludes that two, not one, investigations have to be carried out, and with impartiality. He

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called hidden Jews) can also be found in an article of Crawford Price in *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 February 1923, reprinted with approval in *The New Armenia*, March-April 1923, p. 29.

<sup>1720</sup> Jan Varoujan Sirapian, « Le génocide arménien et le plafond de verre », *Europe et Orient*, n° 20, janvier-juin 2015, pp. 37-40.

<sup>1721</sup> F. D. Yowell, “Turkish Atrocities,” *The New Armenia*, May-June 1922, pp. 39-41.

<sup>1722</sup> L’ambassadeur de la République française aux États-Unis à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 27 juillet 1922, AMAE, P 1380 ; Edward Alexander Powell, *The Struggle for Power in Moslem Asia*, New York-London: The Century C°, 1923, pp. 139-140.

also emphasizes that the two previous investigations on the Entente (about İzmir in 1919 and about north-western Anatolia in 1921) had led to “no sanction” that, anyway, “to end the sufferings of Christian and Muslim populations, the best way does not consist in making investigations but in making peace.”<sup>1723</sup>

As the British government insists, and as the U.S. government accepts to take part to the investigation, at the condition that the zone occupied by Greece be investigated, too, *Le Temps* congratulates Washington, argues that impartiality means looking for the causes of the sufferings, and as a result that the accusations of Ankara on the revolt in the Pontus have to be checked, because if they are true, Athens is as guilty as Berlin was for the repression of the Irish revolt in 1916, a rebellion funded and encouraged by the German government. *Le Temps* finishes his editorial in quoting the report of October 1919 on the Greek landing at İzmir, particularly the recommendation to end the Greek occupation. Yet, as observes the mouthpiece of the Quai d’Orsay, not only the occupation did not end, but in has been expanded in 1920 and 1921, at the price of “systematic ravages.”<sup>1724</sup>

At an unknown moment of the first semester 1922 (the request is made orally or the documents are lost), but quite possibly just after the accusations are spread by the Lloyd George cabinet, Paul Bargeton (1882-1963), in charge of Turkish affairs at the sub-directorate Asia-Oceania of the Quai d’Orsay (Bargeton is later a member of the delegation at the Lausanne conference; his career culminates when he is director of political affairs, from 1933 to 1937 then ambassador in Brussels from 1937 to 1940, the year when he is put aside by the Vichy regime) asks, on behalf of the Ministry, a report on the Greek atrocities to Elzéar Guiffroy (1878-1930), the elected chief of the French community in İzmir, who is a businessman by profession, and more precisely, in 1922, administrator of the *Société des quais de Smyrne*. Guiffroy submits his text on 27 July 1922.<sup>1725</sup> He confirms the articles of *Le Temps* and gives this precision that the 250 Turks burned at Karatepe are “mostly children.” However, explains the businessman, what has been published in *Le Temps* and the rest of the Western European press only represents “a small part of the crimes perpetrated until now.”

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<sup>1723</sup> « À quand la paix de l’Orient », *Le Temps*, 22 mai 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1724</sup> « Le discours de Verdun — L’enquête d’Asie mineure », *Le Temps*, 6 juin 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1725</sup> Elzéar Guiffroy, Rapport sur la situation récente en Asie mineure, 27 juillet 1922, AMAE, P 1380. Arnold Toynbee confirms the burning of civilians in Karatepe in *The Times* (London), 6 April 1922: Edward Alexander Powell, *The Struggle for...*, p. 155.



He estimates that the totality of Turkish civilians directly killed by the Greek forces “without exaggeration, is in excess of 150,000,” the number of expelled being around 300,000. Considering that the total losses of the Turks and other Muslims (military casualties, direct victims of the Greek forces, indirect victims, casualties during the First World War due to the lack of food) are, for the province of İzmir, in excess of 330,000, in excess of 160,000 for the province of Bursa, near to 25,000 for Biga and about 12,000 for the province of İzmit,<sup>1726</sup> and considering that the reports of the Entente on the Greek forces’ crimes of 1919 and 1921 as well as the considerable amount of documents and testimonies published the Turks,<sup>1727</sup> Guiffroy’s figures are very credible. They are even more credible as he gives concrete examples, such as the villages of the district of Ödemiş, “entirely or partially destroyed by fire, and most of their inhabitants died as a result of the mistreatments they suffered.” He also emphasizes the series of crimes perpetrated from 25 May to 6 June 1922 by “gangs made of Greeks and Armenians,” namely “massacres” and plunder. “Since when, one finds constantly a bit everywhere dead bodies of Muslims.” In short, this is “a policy of extermination toward the Turkish element” that also targets the elites: 5,000 “Muslim intellectuals and notables” have been arrested without valuable reasons, yet “many of them do not resist the tortures they suffer or the lack of food, that kill them slowly.”

The editorials of *Le Temps* and the report asked to Guiffroy are not only valuable sources on the Greco-Armenian war crimes but also evidence that, under the leadership of Raymond Poincaré, the Quai d’Orsay is more involved in the investigation and the denunciation of these misdeeds. It seems that the information circulates. Indeed, Maurice Honoré, a mouthpiece of the French interests in the post-Ottoman space, accuses: “For the realization of this extravagant dream [the conquest of Western Anatolia by Greece], the Greek army was put at the service of the British policy it has not only provided weapons, but facilitated violations of neutrality, tolerated countless atrocities, stupres [understand: rapes and looting]. If one dare to deny, we will specify.” Actually, he gives one concrete example: The

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<sup>1726</sup> Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities. The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire*, New York-London: New York University Press, 1983, p. 134.

<sup>1727</sup> Bureau permanent du congrès turc de Lausanne, *Atrocités grecques dans le vilayet de Smyrne (mai-juin 1919)*, Lausanne : A. Bovard-Giddey, 1919 ; Bureau permanent du congrès turc de Lausanne, *Le Régime d’occupation hellénique en Turquie*, Lausanne : A. Bovard-Giddey, 1921 ; Ministère de l’Intérieur, *Atrocités grecques en Turquie. Second Livre*, İstanbul, Ahmed Ihsan & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1921.

arsons in the region of Bodrum in April 1922,<sup>1728</sup> and there is indeed no trace of a denial in the collection of the review which has published this article.

In these conditions, this is not a surprising that Poincaré's France sends a ship of weapons to the Turks in June 1922 (10,000 bren-guns, 7 planes and 150 tons of sanitary material), and maintains the *Cassard* ship in front of Mersin, which dissuades the Greek Navy to bomb the port, as it is done at the same moment in Samsun.<sup>1729</sup> He also appoints as representative in Ankara Colonel Louis Mougin, who has been liaison officer at İstanbul (1919-1920), former member of the French delegation at the London conference (March 1921) and collaborator of Henri Franklin-Bouillon during the evacuation of Çukurova. Trusted by all the leaders in Ankara, including Kemal (Atatürk) and İsmet İnönü, Colonel Mougin advocates a peace in conformity with the National Pact.<sup>1730</sup> On 30 May of the same year, Claude Farrère comes to Turkey, at the request of General Maurice Pellé, high commissioner in İstanbul, to know Kemal (Atatürk) and his army better.<sup>1731</sup> He first stays in İstanbul, where he is received by Crown Prince Abdülmecit, then comes to Ankara, where he remains until 19 June. Farrère gives an interview to *Le Figaro* after his return, expressing his joy that France has recovered the prestige lost as a result of "many errors" in the past. "The Turks, a brave and peaceful people, do not want war. They defend themselves against aggression," under the leadership of Kemal, "a great chief."<sup>1732</sup> The next month, General Pellé requests him to write an article for *Le Gaulois*, what Farrère does quickly. Farrère insists one more time on the defensive nature of the Turkish national movement, on his preference for negotiated peace (if it is a fair peace), describes the massacres and arsons by Greeks in İzmit and in neighboring villages

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<sup>1728</sup> Maurice Honoré, « Vers la fin du conflit oriental ? », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 15 juillet 1922, pp. 111 and 117. Ioannis Hassiotis, "Shared Illusions: Greek-Armenian...", pp. 175-176 is completely silent on the war crimes of the Greek army, even of its units of Armenian and Greek volunteers, during the year 1922.

<sup>1729</sup> Bulletin de renseignements n° 346, 27-29 juin 1922, pp. 3-4, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 3 ; Bulletin de renseignements n° 348, 4-7 juillet 1922, p. 1, SHD, 4 H 62, dossier 4 ; Roger de Gontaut-Biron and L. Le Révérend, *D'Angora à Lausanne, les étapes d'une déchéance*, Paris : Plon, 1924, p. 100.

<sup>1730</sup> Paul Dumont, « À l'aube du rapprochement franco-turc : le colonel Louis Mougin, premier représentant de la France auprès du gouvernement d'Ankara (1922-1925) », in Paul Dumont and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *La Turquie et la France à l'époque d'Atatürk*, Paris : ADET, 1981, pp. 76-82.

<sup>1731</sup> Claude Farrère, *Souvenirs*, Paris: Fayard, 1953, pp. 210-212.

<sup>1732</sup> Gilbert Charles, « Retour de Constantinople — Un entretien avec M. Claude Farrère », *Le Figaro*, 29 juin 1922, pp. 1-2. Also see « La situation en Orient — Mustapha Kémal Pacha et M. Claude Farrère », *Excelsior*, 27 juin 1922, p. 2.

and reproduces the answer of Kemal (Atatürk) to the demands for an investigation—in short, the neutrals and the friends of Turkey are welcome to check whatever they want, but the enemies (the British) cannot come.<sup>1733</sup> After the Greek debacle, Farrère publishes the integral text of his notes taken during his trip.<sup>1734</sup>

On the opposite side, the public relations are not efficient. René Puaux, the voice of the Greek claims, commits the clumsiness in *L'Éclair* to ask France to leave eastern Mediterranean purely and simply and to focus on Western Mediterranean. He provokes a merciless answer of “a great traveler, particularly well informed on the eastern questions” (likely an officer or a businessman working in the west part of Turkey). The author emphasizes the considerable legacy of France in the region, which makes that “we ask only in the East for freedom of trade and open door for all nations. England wants an Empire here, a field of monopoly. She wants the ruin of Turkey [...]”.<sup>1735</sup> Linking so explicitly the Greco-Armenian cause to Lloyd George’s unsophisticated imperialism against the French interest is a major error of communication.

This is the context chosen by Aram Turabian and his few remaining friends for attacking the French government, denying the Greek war crimes (without a shred of argument, only by repeating the traditional racist attacks against the Turks), insulting Henry Franklin-Bouillon, slandering Berthe Georges-Gaulis without having the courage to name her (probably by fear of a defamation case),<sup>1736</sup> and preaching, one more time “the Greco-Armenian alliance” against “the Turk, the common enemy.” “General” Torcom (Arshak Torkomian, chief of the Dashnak Armenia’s military mission in London from 1918 to 1920, who also represented his country in front of the U.S. Congress at the end of 1919) is congratulated for organizing “Armenian volunteers.”<sup>1737</sup> Indeed, after having started a cooperation with Greece on the

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<sup>1733</sup> Claude Farrère, « Le grand inconnu », *Le Gaulois*, 18 juillet 1922, p. 1 ; Alain Quella-Villéger, *Le Cas Farrère...*, p. 240. Also see Claude Farrère, « Sultan Abd-UI-Medjid II », *Le Gaulois*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1734</sup> Claude Farrère, « La Turquie ressuscitée — Choses vues », *Les Œuvres libres*, décembre 1922, pp. 5-92. For another first-hand account: Jean Schlicklin, « Au cœur du mouvement nationaliste turc : images d’Anatolie », *La Revue universelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1922, pp. 352-359.

<sup>1735</sup> « La France en Orient — Ce qu’il ne faut pas abandonner », *L’Action française*, 22 juin 1922, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1736</sup> Aram Turabian, « Les assassins triomphent » ; [Aram Turabian], « Promenade à travers la presse » ; Auguste Bénard, « Gens de mauvaise foi », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1922, pp. 2-3.

<sup>1737</sup> Aram Turabian, « L’alliance gréco-arménienne », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1922, p. 2. On Torcom: “General Torcom, the Armenian Soldier of Fortune,” *Asia. The American Magazine on the Orient*,

field of propaganda, by mid-1921,<sup>1738</sup> Torcom goes one step further in creating an Armenian volunteers' unit, in spring 1922,<sup>1739</sup> in addition to those already existing. According to Torcom, this new "Armenian Legion" of the Greek army, directly subordinated to the Hellenic command, initially counts 1,000 men, then 2,500 in August 1922.<sup>1740</sup> Yet, even before joining the Greek effort, Torcom is considered "very suspect" and persona non grata at the Quai d'Orsay.<sup>1741</sup> As soon as General Gouraud learns, by a seized letter and by a dispatch of the administrative counselor of İskenderun, about the efforts of Torcom and his supporters to recruit in Syria and Cyprus, especially among the former soldiers of the Armenian legion and the former volunteers of the units having existed in 1920, the costs being paid by the Greek army, he decides to block this movement, by "a very tight surveillance" of the Armenian organization (acting under the cover of relief for the refugees) and by "severe control of the travelers coming from or to Greece."<sup>1742</sup>

The ambitions of David Lloyd George, King Constantine and their Armenian nationalist supporters are eventually crushed. On 4 August 1922, Lloyd George declares that his government cancels his promise of March 1922 on Turkish sovereignty on the whole Anatolia. Constantin tries to occupy İstanbul. The result is a Turkish offensive which wipes out the Greek forces from Anatolia in less than two weeks.<sup>1743</sup> The defeat was announced by the French military mission in Athens since March,<sup>1744</sup> but to understand the errors of Lloyd George fully, it is necessary to know what is revealed by Ambassador Charles de Saint-Aulaire

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December 1919, p. 1186; W. E. D. Allen, "The Armenians. Their Past and Future," *The Quarterly Review*, January 1920, p. 242.

<sup>1738</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions en politique internationale. La Grèce et ses revendications à la conférence de la paix (1919-1920)*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1963, pp. 344-346.

<sup>1739</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire*, Ankara: TTK, 1993, p. 381.

<sup>1740</sup> « Général » Torcom, « La Légion arménienne du général Torcom », in Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne : l'Arménie*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1929, pp. 146-148.

<sup>1741</sup> Note de Maurice Paléologue à Jules Laroche, 22 juillet 1920, AMAE 16675.

<sup>1742</sup> Le haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et au Liban à M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 29 juillet 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1743</sup> Légation de France en Grèce — L'attaché militaire, capitaine J. de Colombel, Bulletin d'informations, 15 août 1922 ; Id., 10 septembre 1922, SHD, 6 N 167 ; George W. Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk*, London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013, pp. 190-206; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume IV, pp. 1687-1697; Charles de Saint-Aulaire, *La Confession d'un vieux...*, pp. 627-628 ; Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L'aube de la Turquie nouvelle*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1922, pp. 63-68 and 247-255.

<sup>1744</sup> Télégramme du général Gramat au ministère de la Guerre, 31 mars 1922, SHD, 6 N 169.

in his Memoirs, one year before his death—what he had dissimulated even in his diplomatic correspondence: The Francophile group of the British Conservative Party, led by Lord Derby (1865-1948), former ambassador in Paris (1918-1920), by Alan Percy, duke of Northumberland (1880-1930) and by Leopold Maxse (1864-1932), editor of the *National Review*, pays in 1922 the Anatolian informants of the Military Intelligence Service, to provide falsified reports on the battlefield's situation and to push Lloyd George to his collapse.<sup>1745</sup>

The months of September and October are marked by the climax of diplomatic support of France for Turkey. Learning that the British army is sending reinforcements in Çanakkale, Poincaré orders to withdraw the French troops. Far from being impressed by the stridence of the British reactions, Poincaré insists again and again, at the Paris conference, in September, for a communiqué promising the eastern Thrace to the Turks. Lord Curzon, very angry, makes a malaise and even cries in the room where he has been transported, on 22 September, but eventually accepts. This acceptance of the last territorial aspect of the Turkish national pact which is not already achieved deprives Lord Curzon of the strongest guarantee he wished to pressure Ankara, regarding the Armenian issue and anything else, including the main British target, namely the control of the Straits.<sup>1746</sup>

This fierce and successful opposition of Poincaré to the projects of London is in conformity with the wishes of virtually all the French public opinion, from the Communists to the far right. For Communist leader Marcel Cachin (1869-1958), Kemal is right to claim İstanbul (“obviously Turkish”) and eastern Thrace. There is no reason to fight him, at the benefit of British imperialism.<sup>1747</sup> The Socialist organ *Le Populaire* supports, too, the territorial program of Ankara, and only asks the Turkish national movement to not listen to the Soviets.<sup>1748</sup> On

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<sup>1745</sup> Charles de Saint-Aulaire, *Confession d'un vieux...*, p. 633. Also see K. M. Wilson, “A Venture in ‘the caverns of intrigue’: the Conspiracy against Lord Curzon and his Foreign Policy, 1922–3,” *Historical Research*, LXX-173, October 1997, pp. 312-336.

<sup>1746</sup> Notes du secrétaire français prises au cours d'une réunion tenue au Quai d'Orsay, le mercredi 20 septembre, à 11h pp. 10-15 and 25-29 ; Id., à 13h 30, pp. 26 and 32 ; Id., le vendredi 22 septembre, à 14h ; Id., le samedi 23 septembre, à 17h, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 64 ; Note de Raymond Poincaré à Alexandre Millerand, 17 septembre 1922, AN, 470 AP 116 ; J. G. Darwin, “The Chanak Crisis and the British Cabinet,” *History*, LXV-213, February 1980, pp. 32-48 ; Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d'Orsay avec...*, pp. 159-162 ; Arthur Nicolson, *Curzon : The Last Phace, 1919-1925*, London : Constable & C°, 1934, pp. 272-274 ; Charles de Saint-Aulaire, *La Confession d'un...*, pp. 630-631.

<sup>1747</sup> Marcel Cachin, « Va-t-on se battre contre les Turcs ? », *L'Humanité*, 18 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1748</sup> Salomon Grumbach, « La guerre en Asie mineure — Défaite grecque », *Le Populaire*, 5 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Salomon Grumbach, « Le problème du Proche-Orient — Conséquences de la victoire

the liberal left, *Le Rappel* says “Not a French soldier against Turkey!” and on the far right, *L’Action française* defends the same thesis, even adding that the Turks teach a lesson of efficiency.<sup>1749</sup> *Le Figaro* exposes the lies of Athens to minimize the scope of the debacle and calls the withdrawal of the French soldiers from Çanakkale “very wise.”<sup>1750</sup> In continuity with its stance since 1918-1919, *L’Œuvre* exults in front of the Turkish victory, expresses its support for the National Pact and opposes the ideas of David Lloyd George and Lord Curzon in the strongest terms.<sup>1751</sup> *L’Écho de Paris* warns that the UK cannot defeat Kemal decisively and that continuing the war is against the interests of everybody; then, the nationalist-conservative daily expresses its satisfaction after Lord Curzon accepts to promise eastern Thrace to Turkey.<sup>1752</sup> For Saint-Brice, there “is nothing unreasonable” in the demands of Ankara, but the policy of London is “dangerous.”<sup>1753</sup> *Le Gaulois* praises Kemal and Poincaré.<sup>1754</sup> Even the *Journal des débats* admits there is no dispute to search with Ankara regarding territories, then publishes a series of articles by Henri Mylès, explaining and

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turque », *Le Populaire*, 11 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Pour la paix en Orient ! — Les pourparlers au Quai d’Orsay continuent », *Le Populaire*, 23 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1749</sup> Edmond du Mesnil, « Pas un soldat français contre la Turquie ! », *Le Rappel*, 19 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Maurras, « La politique » ; Jacques Bainville, « Que faire avec les Turcs ? », *L’Action française*, 10 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « Le retour de M. Venizelos », *L’Action française*, 27 septembre 1922, p. 1. Also see « Un entretien avec Fehrid Bey, représentant d’Angora à Paris », *La Liberté*, 13 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1750</sup> Henry Bidou, « Smyrne, la Thrace et les Détroits », *Le Figaro*, 20 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Henry Bidou, « L’Angleterre et l’Islam », *Le Figaro*, 22 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1751</sup> G. de Lafouchardière, « Les Turcs ont passé là », *L’Œuvre*, 7 septembre 1922, p. 2 ; Robert de Jouvenel, « Les Turcs sont entrés à Smyrne — La guerre gréco-turque va-t-elle devenir une guerre anglo-turque ? », *L’Œuvre*, 10 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Soyons justes envers les Turcs », *L’Œuvre*, 12 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Gustave Théry, « La Turquie aux Turcs ! », *L’Œuvre*, 15 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « La bataille des Détroits — La suprême folie des Anglais en Orient », *L’Œuvre*, 18 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Robert de Jouvenel, « Nos troupes sont rappelées de Tchanak et de Scutari — La France refuse de s’associer en Orient à la politique militaire des Anglais », *L’Œuvre*, 19 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Voici à quelles conditions les Turcs offrent la paix », *L’Œuvre*, 22 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « 15 cuirassés anglais veulent dicter la paix aux Turcs », *L’Œuvre*, 27 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1752</sup> « Entre l’Angleterre et la Turquie, c’est une question de prestige », *L’Écho de Paris*, 18 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Une note collective des alliés à la Turquie — Les Turcs auront Andrinople et la Thrace », *L’Écho de Paris*, 24 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1753</sup> Saint-Brice, « La vraie question d’Orient, c’est la question des Détroits », *Le Journal*, 17 septembre 1922, p. 1. Also see Saint-Brice, « Tout craque », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 septembre 1922, pp. 513-520 ; and Saint-Brice, « La lutte pour Constantinople », *La Revue universelle*, 15 octobre 1922, pp. 226-232.

<sup>1754</sup> René d’Aral, « La détente », *Le Gaulois*, 2 octobre 1922, p. 1.

justifying the armistice of Moudania. If the series is not immune of inaccuracies (actually, it is not written for Turkophiles), it presents Kemal (Atatürk) positively and describes without understatement the crimes of the Greek forces.<sup>1755</sup> Mylès is of course not alone to discuss these arsons and massacres clearly.<sup>1756</sup>

The government knows even better and reacts accordingly. Right after having received the protest of the Ottoman delegate in Paris and requesting an intervention toward Athens to stop the destructions, Raymond Poincaré asks the British and Italian cabinet for a joint action, a demand that Lord Curzon himself accepts.<sup>1757</sup> Meanwhile (and this is essential for the reliability of the French official sources), Poincaré states to the Kemalist representative in Paris that the bad example showed by the Greek should never be followed by Turks; General Pellé, confirming the accuracy of the Turkish accusations, adds that he has made a similar declaration to the Kemalist delegate in İstanbul, against any temptation of indiscriminate reprisals.<sup>1758</sup> Yet, after some days, General Pellé is relieved about the behavior of the Turkish army but has to repeat the same observations about the Greek one:

Since a long time, no news about a Kemalist massacre arrived here from Smyrna, or from any other place of Anatolia, neither from the English and French intelligence services, nor from the ecumenical patriarchate, always waiting for such facts. Contrariwise, the reality of the systematic devastations perpetrated by the Greek troops is established by European witnesses.

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<sup>1755</sup> Pierre Bernus, « Les conséquences de la défaite grecque », *Journal des débats*, 5 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Henri Mylès, « L'énigme de Moudania », *Journal des débats*, 20 octobre 1922, pp. 1-2 ; 21 octobre 1922, p. 1 ; 23 octobre 1922, pp. 1-2 ; 25 octobre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1756</sup> « Le désastre grec en Asie mineure », *Le Temps*, 9 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « La Grèce a perdu l'Asie mineure — Que vont faire Athènes et Londres ? », *L'Œuvre*, 9 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Une protestation des Turcs », *Le Figaro*, 13 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Après la victoire turque — L'Italie et l'Angleterre désirent hâter la discussion du problème du Proche-Orient », *La Petite Gironde*, 14 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Edmond du Mesnil, « Le loup-garou turc », *Le Rappel*, 15 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Les dernières heures de Smyrne sous le régime grec », *Le Journal*, 15 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « La victoire turque », *L'illustration*, 16 septembre 1922, p. 237 ; « Les troupes grecques en retraite ont commis les pires violences », *La Croix*, 19 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; C. L., « L'impartialité de M. Lloyd George », *L'Œuvre*, 25 septembre 1922, pp. 1-2 ; Maurice Honoré, « En Orient — Le désastre anglo-grec », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1922, p. 196.

<sup>1757</sup> Télégramme d'Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca aux ambassadeurs français à Rome, Londres et Washington, 4 septembre 1922 ; Télégramme du chargé d'affaires à Londres au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1758</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 5 septembre 1922 ; Télégramme de Raymond Poincaré aux ambassadeurs français à Rome, Londres et Washington, 7 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

Pellé continues in giving the example of the destruction of Eskişehir, described by the head of the French Catholic mission, a missionary who concludes that “the Greeks have lost forever the right to speak about the Turks’ barbarity.”<sup>1759</sup> Similarly, Michel Graillet (1875-1929), Consul general in İzmir, reports: “The Greek troops withdraw in plundering, raping and burning everything on their way” but does not cite a single example of crime committed by Turkish soldiers during their victorious offensive.<sup>1760</sup> Camille Toureille, an engineer residing at İzmir in 1922 and being in touch with Raymond Poincaré personally, gives these important precisions that “Everything was ransacked, no matter who the owner was (Greek, Turk or other) then burned” and: “In the Turkish houses, the inhabitants were, as far as the flying soldiers could, burned alive, mercilessly: men, women, children.”<sup>1761</sup>

Regardless, the case of Eskişehir is the most relevant for the policy of Greece toward its Armenian volunteers and the ultimate consequence of this use, namely the fire of İzmir. Indeed, furious to learn about the destruction of this city and more particularly about the French buildings here, Poincaré orders General Pellé to obtain a detailed report from “our missionaries.”<sup>1762</sup> Poincaré orders the representative in Athens to protest and to state that the French government keeps “the right to claim the reparations and take the legitimate sanctions for these acts of systematic destruction that none military goal justifies.”<sup>1763</sup> The final report (7 pages) of Father Ludovic Marseille, head of the Catholic mission in Eskişehir, confirms his first declaration. The Greek army told horrible, false, atrocity stories to the Christians and so forced them to leave the city—despite the attempts of the French to convince them to remain. Then, the Greek soldiers, obeying the order of their officers, burned the city, including the French buildings—unlike the Turkish army, who had left

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<sup>1759</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 8 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1760</sup> Télégramme de Michel Graillet au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 5 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1761</sup> Camille Toureille, *Prise de Smyrne par Mustapha Kémal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens*, 3 novembre 1922, p. 1, AMAE, P 1380. Examples of burned villages in Report of the sub-governor of Ödemiş, 13 October 1922 and Report of the governor of İzmir, 18 October 1922, translated in *Documents d’histoire militaire*, No. 93, janvier 1992, pp. 183 and 185.

<sup>1762</sup> Télégramme de Raymond Poincaré au général Pellé, 8 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1763</sup> Télégramme du ministère des Affaires étrangères au ministre français à Athènes, 8 septembre 1922 ; Télégramme du ministère des Affaires étrangères à l’ambassadeur français à Washington, 9 septembre 1922 AMAE, P 1380.



Eskişehir in July 1921 without killing or destroying.<sup>1764</sup> When the Greek government eventually answers, he puts the blame on Armenians.<sup>1765</sup> It is true that “Armenian gangs”, “previously armed by the Greek army” committed arsons in the vicinity of Izmir, according to a French residing in this city, an accusation corroborated by the Italian Consul’s account.<sup>1766</sup> The U.S. Vice-Consul in İzmir accuses the men of “General” Torcom more particularly.<sup>1767</sup> It is also true that the day before the arrival of the Turkish army in the city, “a gang made of Greeks, Armenians and of scum without well identified nationality, but of Levantine origin” plunder near İzmir and is only stopped when the Turkish police shoots its two chiefs, “both being Armenians.”<sup>1768</sup> However, nothing, except the denial of the Greek government, affirms that the Armenian volunteers are in majority among the arsonists, in Eskişehir or anywhere else, during the retreat of the Greek forces. As a result, this clumsy attempt is a repetition of the strategy used in 1920-1921, and likely as early as 1919, namely to use Armenians as reinforcements then to attribute them all the responsibilities for the destructions.

The case of Eskişehir is also a well-documented example of the forced exile imposed by the Greek army to both Greeks and Armenians of Western Anatolia as a whole during the retreat.<sup>1769</sup> This decision does not seem to be taken at the last minute, and not taken by Greeks only. Indeed, in his book published in February or March 1922, the Greek payroll Michel Paillarès warns: “Our schools of Cilicia already had to close down as a result of the

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<sup>1764</sup> Père Ludovic Marseille, Rapport sur les événements qui se sont passés à Eski Chéhir du 27 août au 2 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380. The absence of Kemalist misdeeds in July 1921 is confirmed by

Rapport du capitaine Renaudineau, inspecteur de la gendarmerie ottomane, sur la prise de Kütahya et Eski-Chéhir par les troupes hellènes, 23 juillet 1921, SHD, 20 N 1101. Also see Christian Babot, *La Mission des Augustins de l'Assomption à Eski-Chéhir. 1891-1924*, İstanbul-Strasbourg : Les éditions Isis/Université des lettres et sciences humaines de Strasbourg, 1996, pp. 92-93.

<sup>1765</sup> Note verbale, 23 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1766</sup> Extraits de lettres reçues de Smyrne [1922], AMAE, P 1380 (letter dated of 8 September 1922) ; Mevlüt Çelebi (ed.), *Greek Massacre in Anatolia on Italian Archive Documents*, Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2010, pp. 106-108.

<sup>1767</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkey's Struggle for Liberation and the Armenians*, Ankara: SAM, 2001, p. 206.

<sup>1768</sup> Camille Toureille, *Prise de Smyrne par Moustafa Kemal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens*, pp. 1-2, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1769</sup> On this general exile: Télégramme du général Pellé à Raymond Poincaré, 17 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380 ; Rapport de mission du capitaine de frégate Joubert au contre-amiral Dumesnil, 6 septembre 1922, pp. 3-4, SHD, 20 N 1095; Mark L. Bristol, Report of operations for week ending 10 September, 1922, part four; Mark L. Bristol, War diary, 19 September 1922; USS Litchfield to Bristol, September 7, 1922 Corrected copy, LC, Bristol papers, containers 4 and 76, File Smyrna, Navy Messages Received 1922.

exodus of the Armenians. If tomorrow an order went from the Patriarchates, it would be the end of the expansion of the French language in Turkey.”<sup>1770</sup> A few months later, an anonymous contributor of the Ramkavar organ *The New Armenia* links the issue of Western Anatolia to Çukurova:

If the Greek army were to retire without adequate guaranties for the protection of minorities, then all those Ottoman subjects [...] who welcomed the Greek advance and fought in the Greek army, will feel compelled to evacuate Ionia, *as happened in Cilicia* [my emphasis], and any who are foolhardy enough to remain, or so unfortunate as to be unable to emigrate, will be made to feel the full force of Turkish displeasure [...].<sup>1771</sup>

In considering that the number of Armenian refugees in Greece in 1923 may be estimated to be 85,000, that the large majority comes from Western Anatolia,<sup>1772</sup> and the other refugees from this region reach Bulgaria, France, etc. directly, the movement is not negligible, even for the smallest of the two populations forcibly displaced by the Greek forces—a fact completely neglected by those who claim that the demographic losses of the Anatolian Armenians are entirely due to the CUP and the Kemalist government. Poincaré protests, as “nothing seems to justify the fear of these populations regarding the attitude and the discipline of the Turkish army.”<sup>1773</sup> He also orders the ambassadors in Rome, London, Washington and Athens to denounce the “reign of terror (*régime de terreur*)” imposed by the Greek army to the Turkish majority during its retreat. Ankara’s minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Kemal (Tengirsenk) thanks him for his action.<sup>1774</sup> Yusuf Kemal can thank him even more as the French intervention is not about words only. Indeed, General Soumila, the Greek officer commanding the forces in Bursa openly wants to organize the burning of this city, but the French consular agent, himself an officer also, Captain Kocher, forces him to cancel the decision, by the threat of a military response; in addition, General Pellé sends 200 men to

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<sup>1770</sup> Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant...*, p. 486.

<sup>1771</sup> An occasional correspondent, “Pro-Turks at Work,” *The New Armenia*, May-June 1922, p. 36. Also see Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L’Heure de l’Arménie*, Geneva : Société générale d’imprimerie, 1922, p. 28.

<sup>1772</sup> Ionnanis Hassiotis, « La communauté arménienne de Thessalonique. Organisation, idéologie, intégration », *Hommes et Migrations*, n° 1265, janvier-février 2007, p. 72. Prof. Hassiotis does not discuss the reason why these refugees “followed the Greeks.”

<sup>1773</sup> Télégramme de Raymond Poincaré aux ambassadeurs français à Rome, Londres et Washington, 9 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1774</sup> Télégramme de Raymond Poincaré aux ambassadeurs à Rome, Londres et Washington, 2 octobre 1922 ; Télégramme du colonel Mougin au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 14 octobre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

protect the French-owned Moudania railroad company, to stop the beginning of fire as well as the “violence against the Muslims.”<sup>1775</sup>

In spite of all the difficulties, explains Lynn A. Scipio, professor at the Robert College from 1912 to 1943, the Greek forces “did take time to set fire to the many Turkish villages and grain fields—and anything else that would burn.”<sup>1776</sup> The director of the Jewish school of Tireh writes: “Everywhere the Greeks passed, they robbed the inhabitants, raped the women, massacred without pity women, men and children.” He mentions the practice of burning alive Turks in mosques and gives a partial list of destroyed cities: Afyon, Uşak, Alaşehir, Salihli, Turgutlu, Manisa and Aydın. According to him, the Jews do not suffer homicidal violence but, like everybody, their properties are burned, so they are in misery now.<sup>1777</sup> These observations are rigorously corroborated those of Berthe Georges-Gaulis, Arnold Toynbee, U.S. Vice-Consul James Loder Park, U.S. Lieutenants Barry and Perry (both being intelligence officers),<sup>1778</sup> as well as by the employees of the British and French railroad companies.<sup>1779</sup> The number of burned houses is estimated by the Turks to be 280,000.<sup>1780</sup> However, the best confirmation is perhaps the report of the International Red Cross. Indeed, in mid-1922, the British government accepts to leave the investigation on the Greek and Turkish accusations to the International Red Cross (IRC).<sup>1781</sup> The IRC publishes its report in

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<sup>1775</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 8 septembre 1922 ; Id., 17 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380 ; Telegram of Sir Horace Rumbold to Lord Curzon, 9 September 1922, FO 424/254, p. 173.

<sup>1776</sup> Lynn A. Scipio, *My Thirty Years in Turkey*, Rindge: Richard R. Smith Publisher, 1955, p. 179.

<sup>1777</sup> Henri Nahum (ed.), *La Grande Guerre et la guerre gréco-turque vue par les instituteurs de l'Alliance israélite universelle d'Izmir*, İstanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2003, p. 70.

<sup>1778</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « En Anatolie », *Orient et Occident*, 15 janvier 1923, pp. 29-46 (p. 46 on the forced exile imposed to the Christians by the Greek army); Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile...*, p. 281; Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Dénouement in the Near East,” *Contemporary Review*, October 1922, p. 414; Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Truth About Near East Atrocities,” *Current History*, XVIII-4, July 1923, pp. 545-546; Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to...*, pp. 1710-1716.

<sup>1779</sup> « Grave réquisitoire d'un lord anglais contre l'armée grecque », *Le Petit Parisien*, 27 septembre, 1922, p. 3 ; Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L'aube de...*, pp. 331-334. On Manisa in particular: Grace Ellison, *An Englishwoman in Angora*, London: Hutchinson & C°, 1923, p. 74.

<sup>1780</sup> Colonel Rachid Galib, “Smyrna during the Greek occupation,” *Current History*, May 1923, p. 318. Also see Halidé Edib (Halide Hedip), *The Turkish Ordeal*, London: John Murray, 1928, pp. 376-377 and 393.

<sup>1781</sup> Lettre du ministère des Affaires étrangères au chargé d'affaires britannique à Paris, 7 août 1922, AMAE, P 1380. Supreme irony of history, the Greeco-Armenian attempt to convince the Union of associations for the League of Nations to investigate only the accusations against Ankara is rejected largely as a result of the intervention of arch-Turkophobe William Gladstone's daughter-in-law,

January 1923, confirming the systematic devastation of Western Anatolia by the Greek forces: “Both of us witnessed a lot of calamities since 1918, but we never had a more painful mission than this pilgrimage among the ruins.”<sup>1782</sup> For the ultimate step of the ruining of Western Anatolia, the Greek command leaves most of the job to the Armenian nationalists.

### 6.1.3. *The İzmir fire*

A minimum of chronology is indispensable to begin with. On 8 September 1922, İzmir is evacuated by the Greek army, leaving the city crowded by refugees and without security forces. On 9 September 1922, in the morning the Turkish irregulars then the Turkish army enter, and during the first hours, no serious incident happens. Then, Armenians begin to hurl bombs on Turkish soldiers. From 10 to 12 September, a first battle opposes the Armenian volunteers of “General” Torcom to Turkish soldiers and the general safety worsens (to which extent, it is difficult to say, because the testimonies do not converge; perhaps it depends on the quarters). On 12, the Catholic archbishop of the city obtains an amnesty for them in exchange of their departure. General Nurettin accepts the deal, but the next day, the battle restarts and the city begins to burn. In his self-justification, Torcom confirms the clashes of 10-12 September but avoids to say anything about this resumption of the hostilities.<sup>1783</sup> During the fire, the Turkish army helps the wounded irrespective of their ethnicity, even Greek and

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Viscountess Dorothy Mary Paget Gladstone (1876-1953), in favor of impartiality: Ahmed Ihsan, *Union internationale des associations pour la Société des nations. Sixième conférence. Prague, 4-7 juin 1922*, Vienne: Imprimerie Mantz, 1922, pp. 3-10.

<sup>1782</sup> Dépêche de l’ambassadeur français à Washington, 2 janvier 1923, AMAE, P 1380 ; Rodolphe Haccius and Henri Guénod, « Un document sur les dévastations grecques », *Échos de l’Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1923, pp. 493-497 (quotation p. 497).

<sup>1783</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 19 septembre 1922 ; Visite de M. Armand Dorville, 22 septembre 1922 ; Camille Toureille, *Prise de Smyrne par Mustapha Kémal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens*, 3 novembre 1922, pp. 3-14, AMAE, P 1380 ; « Les réfugiés de Smyrne en France », *Le Temps*, 22 septembre, 1922, p. 2 ; Laurence Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-1924*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965, p. 372 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Nouvelle Turquie*, Paris : Armand Colin, 1924, pp. 6-7 ; « Général » Torcom, « La Légion arménienne du général Torcom », in Aram Turabian, *L’Éternelle victime de...*, pp. 152-154 ; Edward Alexander Powell, *The Struggle for...*, pp. 158-161. The deal proves the hypothesis of a personal responsibility of Nurettin in the fire (Norman Stone, *Turkey. A Short History*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2007, p. 151) erroneous.

Armenian wounded people are rescued.<sup>1784</sup> Before examining the French and other sources on the causes of the fire, a comparison has to enlighten the rest of the analysis: When the Turkish army arrives in Bursa, the other city left (as a whole) intact by the Greek army (left thanks to the Entente's intervention), there is no attack against the Turkish soldiers and, as a result, no incident, in spite of the practice of arsons, rape and massacres perpetrated by the Greek forces in the countryside.<sup>1785</sup> The Greek soldiers and irregulars are indeed no better than in İzmir. The difference is that the Armenian nationalist network is not reconstituted in Bursa in 1919-1922, unlike in İzmir.

Raymond Poincaré orders the chargé d'affaires in Washington to use "all means" against the "inaccurate and tendentious" allegations coming from Athens and London: For the moment, nothing justifies to accuse the Turks; the causes are not known with certitude; but Kemal's accusation against Armenians and Greeks "seems likely," in considering what happened, especially at Eskişehir.<sup>1786</sup> Then, the French representative in Athens explains that French refugees here accuse the Turks.<sup>1787</sup> It must be known that their compatriots having found refuge at Marseille directly "avoid to accuse. In some quarters, they believe however that the fire was lit by the Greeks."<sup>1788</sup> And among those arrived in the Italian-controlled island of Rhodos, "nobody attributes [the fire] to the Turks. You do not burn your own house." It is attributed "to the Greek military authorities, which had organized an armed troop of arsonist soldiers."<sup>1789</sup> Whatever could be the reasons for this Hellenic exception, Poincaré orders General Pellé and Consul Graillet to check again.<sup>1790</sup>

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<sup>1784</sup> "Relief Man Tells Tragedy," *The New York Times*, 18 September 1922, p. 1; "Hasten Evacuation of Smyrna Hordes," *The New York Times*, 27 September 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1785</sup> Report on the Turkish Nationalist Offensive in Anatolia by Major H. G. Howell, 15 September 1922, FO 424/255, pp. 22-24. On the recurrence of rapes, also see Dispatch of Mark O. Prentiss to Admiral Bristol, no date (mid-September 1922), LC, Bristol papers, Container 74, File Smyrna, general situation, 1919-1922.

<sup>1786</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au chargé d'affaires français à Washington, 18 septembre 1922 ; Id., 19 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1787</sup> Télégramme d'Henri de Marcilly au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 20 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1788</sup> « Les réfugiés de Smyrne à Marseille — Émouvants récits de l'incendie », *Le Petit Parisien*, 21 septembre 1922, p. 3.

<sup>1789</sup> Undated report of the vice-consul in Rhodos (1922), AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1790</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au général Pellé, 21 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

General Pellé reiterates his previous conclusions. The testimonies of those who fled the city in panic, argues the high commissioner, cannot be taken at face value. He gives the example of the hallucination of two witnesses debunked by Admiral Dumesnil (see below the explanations of the Navy officer). General Pellé continues in explaining that the “impression” of Dumesnil is also the one of the firemen and of the general secretary of the Ottoman Debt, who has taken part in the fight against the arsons and that the attacks against Turkish soldiers by Armenians, who killed or wounded “numerous Turkish soldiers and officers” prove “the state of surexcitation of the spirits.” Yet, “the multiplicity of the fires” in one afternoon proves the deliberate nature of the disaster, “shots were fired at our sailors, bombs were hurled on firemen. There are presumption that the perpetrators are Armenian and Greek.”<sup>1791</sup> Consul Graillet, for his part, firmly affirms: “The conviction of Admiral Dumesnil, Admiral Levavasseur and mine is that the arson of the city is not the fault of the Turks.” Concerning the “witnesses,” he writes: “Lies and fantasy can do nothing against the reality of the facts, and the imagination is even more vivid as these are people who promptly fled Smyrna.”<sup>1792</sup> He later insists: If a participation of Turkish civilians after the first beginning of fires is a possibility, “it is certain that the Kemalist army is not responsible. On the contrary, it fought the disaster to the extent of its weak means.” The perpetrators are “Armenians and Greeks.”<sup>1793</sup> Convinced, Poincaré informs the chargé d’affaires in Washington that “the Turks are not responsible” for the fire, that it is a criminal act, perpetrated by elements coming from “the Armenian and Greek populations,” in continuity with what has been done at Eskişehir, Afyon, Uşak, Alaşehir and Manisa, then tried in Bursa.<sup>1794</sup>

Dumesnil’s final analysis on the İzmir fire<sup>1795</sup> is an exemplary, Cartesian, reasoning. Regarding the Turkish regular army, Dumesnil argues that this force had an exceptional leadership, who had imposed satisfactory discipline. Moreover, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and İsmet (İnönü)

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<sup>1791</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 21 septembre 1922 ; Id., 23 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1792</sup> Télégramme de Michel Graillet au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 22 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1793</sup> M. Graillet, consul, chargé du consulat général de France à Smyrne, à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1794</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères au chargé d’affaires français à Washington, 26 septembre 1922, AMAE, p 1380.

<sup>1795</sup> Contre-amiral Dumesnil, Incendie de la ville de Smyrne, 22 septembre 1922 ; Qui sont les auteurs de l’incendie ?, 28 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

settled close to the French Consulate the day before the great fire; they had to leave quickly. To refute the possibility that the arson could have been perpetrated by Turkish irregulars, Dumesnil observes that they certainly committed crimes, mostly in İzmir, but it was about plunder; nobody complained about arsons. In addition, the Turkish regular soldiers and officers fought this practice of plunder, including by summary executions. After the beginning of the fire, which was put in several places during the same afternoon (a fact proving “an organization that can’t be attributed to Turkish plunderers”), the Turkish army also fought the fire. Arguing for an Armeno-Greek responsibility, Dumesnil pointed to the “permanent propaganda,” for months, advocating the destruction of the city in case of a Turkish capture, and, more concretely, the presence “in the Greek and above all in the Armenian quarter” of numerous “ammunition depots” as well as “flammable or incendiary materials.” This propaganda and this preparation are confirmed by Toureille, who points the creation of a joint Greeco-Armenian Committee to prepare the burning of İzmir as early as June 1922; the only difference is that Toureille sees a main Greek responsibility and an Armenian participation, not vice-versa, unlike Dumesnil.<sup>1796</sup> Correspondingly, a French inhabitant of İzmir writes on 7 September, six days before the fire, that “most of the Greek soldiers” arriving here “state that they are well determined to put fire to Smyrna, when they will leave for good, as they did at Afion, Ouchak, Alachéir and Magnésie.”<sup>1797</sup>

The admiral also slams the “hearsays,” giving the example of testimonies provided by apparently irreproachable people (French monks), who regardless were totally refuted by his immediate, direct checking. Indeed, after these monks come to him, claiming they have seen Turkish soldiers hurling inflammable liquid on buildings, Dumesnil finds nobody in the said street and checks in placing firebrands in the puddles if this is actually inflammable liquid: This is not. Dumesnil also presents “a suspicion that our Consul General [Michel Graillet] is not far from sharing:”

On September 12, the Consul General of the United States, who remained very quiet, and kept in close contact with his colleagues, ordered suddenly the departure *of all the American citizens* [underlined by Dumesnil].

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<sup>1796</sup> Camille Toureille, *Prise de Smyrne par Mustapha Kémal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens*, 3 novembre 1922, pp. 14-15, AMAE, P 1380. This committee does exist and is more radical than the Greek government himself: Georges Bourdon, « Les chrétiens d’Asie mineure demandent l’autonomie », *Le Figaro*, 28 juillet 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1797</sup> Extraits de lettres reçues de Smyrne, AMAE, P 1380.

The admiral expresses the same suspicion for the British consul, and points that these two diplomats had Armenian and Greek informants.

An officer of the French land army in İzmir not only confirms the good conduct of the Turkish regular army and the isolated nature of the irregulars' misdeeds the day the city is taken by the Kemalist forces, but gives this crucial precision: During the night from 8 to 9 September, 300 Greek soldiers threaten to "burn and destroy" İzmir and are prevented to do so by the guard of the railroad company. He, too, refers to the sudden evacuation of the British subjects, before the fire, and curiously at a moment when the clashes between Armenians and Turkish soldiers temporarily diminish.<sup>1798</sup>

Four special envoys sent by French newspapers confirm the conclusions of Admiral Dumesnil and Consul Graillet. The journalist of *Le Petit Parisien*, Dr. Georges Vitoux (1862-1933), endorses their analyse, after having conducted a series of interviews: Considering the destructions by Armenians and Greeks before the capture of the city, considering also the existence of crimes perpetrated by them in the city itself (Vitoux gives the example of a Turkish woman hanged by her breast, example provided by a French female missionary) and, finally, considering that this is not the interest of the Turks to destroy such a crucial city, "it is more reasonable" to conclude that the fire has been put by Armenians and Greeks than by Turks.<sup>1799</sup>

Louis Daussat (1879-1968), the special envoy of *Le Petit Marseillais*, recalls that the Greek army has committed "plunder, massacre, rape and arson" during its retreat and also blames Greek newspapers for having alleged that "Frenchmen join the Turks in looting and massacre" in İzmir city. Regardless, the "reprisals" of the Turkish army are clearly inferior to what could have been expected to any army in such conditions. Concluding on the origins of the fire, Daussat calls the accusation against the Turks an "aberration" and emphasizes that the thesis of an Armenian responsibility "not only has for itself the strength of the reasoning," (the Turks would be crazy to destroy İzmir; putting fire to the city is, on the contrary, only logical for their Armenian enemies) but also "material evidence," namely "weapons, ammunitions and incendiary propaganda" in the Armenian quarter, "that is why the French

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<sup>1798</sup> X..., « La déroute grecque », *Le Figaro*, 20 septembre 1922, p. 2 ; X..., « Après l'incendie de Smyrne », *Le Figaro*, 24 septembre 1922, p. 2.

<sup>1799</sup> Georges Vitoux, « Une journée dans les ruines de Smyrne », *Le Petit Parisien*, 28 septembre 1922, p. 3.



milieu have adopted it.”<sup>1800</sup> More laconic, the special envoy of *L’Illustration* affirms: “These are the Armenians who, determined to die instead of suffering the Turkish occupation, have burned to their houses and engaged the clash with the Turkish soldiers.”<sup>1801</sup>

The special envoy of *Le Matin* defends his conclusions more strongly:

My personal investigation absolutely confirms that the arson was on by the Armenians in their quarter before leaving it. The plunder that followed was the work of the Kurds who follow the Turkish army and of the scum of Smyrna, without distinction of nationality or race.

The journalist continues in affirming that Kemal (Atatürk) “seems to have kept a perfect control of his men of the regular army,” in spite of the provocations of the extremist Armenians and that “the Frenchmen were respected by the Turks,” who gave “all facilities” to the French Navy for relief activities.<sup>1802</sup>

E. Amiel, the director of the Jewish school of Tire writes on September 29, 1922:

To make matters worse, Smyrna did not escape to the catastrophe: More than the half of the city was burned by the Armenians, another factor aggravating the misfortune of Jewish and other refugees.<sup>1803</sup>

This is also the conclusion reached by a prominent U.S. missionary, Alexander MacLachlan, president of the International College. Having made a personal investigation he puts the blame on “Armenian terrorists” who “were attempting to bring Western intervention.”<sup>1804</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Giordano, Italian liaison officer in İzmir, defends a conclusion a bit different: The arson “was caused by Greeks and Armenians.” French engineer Camille Toureille, also argues that the responsible for the fire are “the Greeks and the Armenians.” He explains that since June 1922, “it was a known fact” that a Greco-Armenian committee

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<sup>1800</sup> Louis Daussat, « Dans Smyrne fumante — Visions d’horreur ! », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 28 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1801</sup> G. Ercole, « Devant Smyrne en flammes », *L’Illustration*, 30 septembre 1922, p. 279.

<sup>1802</sup> « Dans les décombres de Smyrne — Ce sont les Arméniens qui allumèrent l’incendie en abandonnant leur quartier », *Le Matin*, 22 septembre 1922, p. 1. Reproduced, with full approval in: « La ville de Smyrne a bien été incendiée par les Arméniens et par les Grecs », *Le Rappel*, 23 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1803</sup> Henri Nahum (ed.), *La Grande Guerre...*, p. 71.

<sup>1804</sup> Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary influence on American policy, 1810–1927*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971, p. 263.

was ready to burn Izmir and that on 11 and 12 September, a Greek gang burns three villages near İzmir, including Buca, and “some shops of Bayraklı,” a quarter of İzmir city.<sup>1805</sup>

Regardless, the most significant confirmation comes from Paul Grescovich, chief of the insurance companies’ fire brigade.<sup>1806</sup> Grescovich starts in observing that the Greek soldiers said before the arrival of the Turkish army: “If we are forced to leave Smyrna, we will burn everything, we will destroy everything.” Confirming and even aggravating the accusation of Dumesnil and Graillet, Grescovich explains that the British community has been evacuated before the fire, and after that British soldiers stated to him (Grescovich): “They will put fire to the Turkish hospital.” Who “they” are is explained by a series of facts observed by the fire brigade and noted by their chief. Grescovich’s men see Armenians communicating by codes, on 11 and 12 September. Meanwhile, between the Armenian quarter and the Tefecik quarter, there are more beginnings of fire, from 10 to 12 September 1922 than from August 1892 to August 1922. The most serious of these beginnings of fire takes place during the night from 11 to 12 and, according to *Greek* inhabitants fleeing the flames, the perpetrators are Armenian. Similarly, the famous fire of the Armenian church actually does not start in the church itself but in the garden, after fire has been to to “about 200 bales of merchandise and old rags” on which “200 rifles” had been placed. The criminal nature of the fire and the identity of the perpetrators is also proved, explains Grescovich, by the existence of not less than 25 places of fire in the Armenian quarter only, in addition to several other beginnings of fire in other quarters, the same day. Yet, if the Turkish army gives to Grescovich 30 firemen and one sergeant to command them, the squad of Grescovich is systematically the target of shoots in the Armenian quarter.

The Turkish forces arrest, at the same time, 27 Armenians near the church, for having put fire to the bales and for having stored the weapons.<sup>1807</sup> Beside the results of this investigation, the necessary complement of the Grescovich report is the Prentiss report. Mark Prentiss indeed explains that Grescovich:

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<sup>1805</sup> Camille Toureille, *Prise de Smyrne par Moustafa Kemal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens*, AMAE P 1380. Confirmation in Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Nouvelle Turquie...*, pp. 26-27. The fires by Greeks around İzmir are also presented as an argument in « La moitié de Smyrne est en cendres », *L'Œuvre*, 16 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1806</sup> « Rapport de M. Grescowitch », *Échos de l'Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1923, pp. 540-541.

<sup>1807</sup> « La guerre d'Orient — La destruction de Smyrne voue 100 000 personnes à la famine », *Le Petit Méridional*, 17 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Un désastre après l'autre — La ville de Smyrne est réduite en cendres, sauf le vieux quartier turc », *Le Rappel*, 17 septembre 1922, p. 1.

had seen two Armenian priests escorting several thousand men, women and children from the Armenian schools and Dominican Churches where they had taken refuge down to the quays. When he presently went into these institutions, he found petroleum-soaked refuse ready for the torch. [...] His own firemen, as well as Turkish guards, had shot down many Armenian young men disguised either as woman or as Turkish irregular soldiers, who were caught setting fires during Tuesday night [September 12] and Wednesday [September 13] morning. [...]

At 11:20 Wednesday morning, at least half a dozen fires were reported almost simultaneously around the freight terminal warehouses and the passenger station of the Aydine [Aydın] railroad.

It is noteworthy that these fires broke out in buildings which it was greatly to the advantage of the Turks to preserve and equally to the advantage of the enemies to destroy.<sup>1808</sup>

A geographical precision now must be given on the identity of the main perpetrators. Arnold Toynbee concludes to the responsibility of “a secret Armenian organization (promoted not by the local Armenian community but by embittered exiles from Cilicia).”<sup>1809</sup> This charge is corroborated by the fact that as early as 1920, such “embittered exiles” land in İzmir and try to provoke a new wave of repression from the Greek authorities against the Turkish population.<sup>1810</sup> The next year, the French consul in Cyprus concludes that Athens transports Armenians for free to recruit former legionnaires in the Greek army<sup>1811</sup> (and we saw the practice of arsons by such legionnaires in 1919-1920). Similarly, an Armenian from İzmir, very hostile to the Turks, regardless gives this interesting indication that his coreligionists killed by Turks in the city were “from Cilicia.”<sup>1812</sup> This shows, one more time, the link between the Greco-Armenian scorched earth policy in Çukurova in 1921 and in Western Anatolia in 1922. Concerning the number of victims, the American and French sources corroborate and complete each other remarkably. Indeed, Admiral Bristol writes in his diary:

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<sup>1808</sup> The document is entirely reproduced in Heath Lowry, “Turkish History: On Whose Sources Will it Be Based? A Case Study on the Burning of Izmir,” *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, IX, 1989, pp. 20-27 (quotation p. 25). I read the original, too: LC, Bristol papers, container 38. It also was published as an article: Marc O. Prentiss, “Armenians, Not Turks, Set Smyrna Ablaze Relief Worker Declares”, *The San Antonio Express*, 22 January 1923.

<sup>1809</sup> Arnold Toynbee, “The Truth About...”, p. 544.

<sup>1810</sup> S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2373, 15 novembre 1920, AMAE, P 16674.

<sup>1811</sup> Le consul de France à Lanarca à Son Excellence M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 14 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17786.

<sup>1812</sup> « Les réfugiés de Smyrne à Marseille — Émouvants récits de l'incendie », *Le Petit Parisien*, 21 septembre 1922, p. 3.

I told him [Major C. C. Davis, special Red Cross worker attached to the İstanbul chapter of the American Red Cross] that our officers from their continual patrol of the city before and after the fire came to the conclusion that the number of deaths probably didn't exceed 2,000. These officers had counted the dead in the street as they made the rounds and they made the rounds very frequently night and day. I pointed out to him that on one road particularly the same bodies laid there for several days, and was the same person, the number of the dead counted would multiply and yet would be the same bodies.<sup>1813</sup>

Out of these 2,000 deaths, 500 are civilians of all origins who were accidentally drowned as a result of the movement of panic during the fire, and 500 others are Armenians and Greeks killed with weapons in hands, according to Admiral Dumesnil.<sup>1814</sup> It leaves about 1,000 other deaths. Yet, an American journalist, Richard Eaton, who is surely not the most favorable to the Turkish national movement, gives the figure of 700 Armenians and Greeks victims of reprisals.<sup>1815</sup> Considering that Turkish soldiers are killed during clashes and, as explains the special of envoy of *Le Petit Parisien*, Turkish civilians are assassinated by Armenians and Greeks, too, it is congruent with the figure obtained by the U.S. Navy. The only explanation conciliating the majority of accusations toward Armenian nationalists only, or primarily and the minority accusing Greeks above all, as well as the elements of context, is to conclude that after having prepared the burning of İzmir, the Greek high command, facing the impossibility to do in this city what has been done in Eskişehir, Uşak, etc. (Bursa has already been a partial failure), decides to leave the execution to the Armenian committees (particularly, if not mostly, the experienced arsonists from Çukurova) knowing that, if necessary, they will find Greek accomplices. As early as 1922, U.S. Navy officer A. J. Hepburn allows for such an explanation (the only difference with my thesis is that he does not discuss the geographical origin of the Armenian arsonists).<sup>1816</sup> The preparation by the Greek command, is also proved by the fact that, on 13 September, the Turkish command finds "all the rubber pipes of the fire brigade completely cut to pieces, obviously by intention."<sup>1817</sup> Not only it shows a military-minded preparation of the fire, but at Aydın, the Greek army had started to prepare the

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<sup>1813</sup> Amiral Mark Bristol, War Diary, September 25, 1922, LC, Bristol papers, container 4.

<sup>1814</sup> Émile Wetterlé, *En Syrie avec le général Gouraud*, Paris: Flammarion, 1924, pp. 59-61.

<sup>1815</sup> Richard Eaton, « Mustapha Kémal à Smyrne », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 14 octobre 1922, p. 210.

<sup>1816</sup> See the last two pages of the Hepburn report, reproduced in appendix to Heath Lowry, "Turkish History. On...", pp. 28-29.

<sup>1817</sup> Halidé Edib (Halide Edip), *The Turkish Ordeal...*, p. 386.

burning of the city in cutting the water pipes.<sup>1818</sup> In sum, it is the sense of a short statement made by a Greek officer to his Italian concierge, at the end of August 1922: “It is possible that we would be forced to leave Smyrna; but the gas cans will remain.”<sup>1819</sup>

Marjorie Housepian alleges that US Vice-Consul Barnes “had seen Turkish soldiers pouring gasoline liberally along the street in front of the consulate, was meanwhile working feverishly to save the consular records.”

The compilation of American reports by Hepburn actually indicates:

The fire continued to burn throughout the night though considerably diminished. Several separate fires were observed to start in locations distant from the general conflagration, plainly indicating incendiaryism. The Passport office, located upon the North pier of the inner harbor, burned after midnight with many heavy explosions, probably caused by gasoline, as a number of drums had been observed in and near this building a day or two previously. This building was only a few hundred yards from the “Litchfields” anchorage, and the actions of the person that fired it were plainly.

And Barnes himself is the author of the following dispatch:

American press accounts of the Smyrna irregularities arriving here contain gross exaggerations and untruths. Impossible to say definitely number of Greeks and Armenians killed—perhaps 2,000. Atrocities committed in the interior by Greeks and Armenians outstrip those committed by the Turks in Smyrna in savagery and wanton destruction. Majority of the Americans here believe Smyrna fired by Armenians.<sup>1820</sup>

Correspondingly, the late Housepian alleges that Kemal (Atatürk) said to Dumesnil, after the fire, that the destruction of the city was “disagreeable” but “of secondary importance” Yet, the French accounts say the reverse. Dumesnil wrote to the Quai d’Orsay that Kemal was “morally and materially” struck by the arson. Neither “secondary importance” nor any expression of this kind appears in his reports, dealing with Kemal’s position, and there is nothing like “of secondary importance” in the Turkish account of the same conversation.<sup>1821</sup>

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<sup>1818</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « En Anatolie », *Orient et Occident*, 15 janvier 1923, p. 34.

<sup>1819</sup> Noëlle Roger, *En Asie mineure. La Turquie du Ghazi*, Paris : Fasquelle, 1930, p. 216.

<sup>1820</sup> Heath Lowry, “Turkish History. On...”, p. 14.

<sup>1821</sup> Télégramme de l’amiral Dumesnil au ministère de la Marine, 28 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380 ; İsmet Görgülü (ed.), *Atatürk’ten Ermeni Konusu*, Ankara-İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2006, pp. 325-326 (also see the telegram of Kemal [Atatürk], 17 September 1922, *ibid.*, pp. 327-328).

Consul Michel Graillet, who also met Kemal, reports, about the Turks: “Their regret to see this wealth escape is obvious.”<sup>1822</sup>

No better is the description of the fire by another Armenian nationalist, Hervé Georgelin.<sup>1823</sup> He claims that Consul Michel Graillet has accused the Turks and that nothing proves that he later changed his thesis—which is pure and simple falsification of Graillet’s words, and it can be added that nowhere in the personal correspondence of Graillet, the consul pretends to have been forced to report something he does not believe.<sup>1824</sup> Mr. Georgelin invents a “racism” of Admiral Dumesnil toward the Armenians but the Aryanist racism of two of his main references for the causes of the fire, namely U.S. Consul George Horton (1850-1942)<sup>1825</sup> and the Ramkavar, toward the Turks (and, at least for the Ramkavar, toward the French) does not seem to be a problem for him. Paul Grescovich, Mark Prentiss, Alexander MacLachlan, Camille Toureille, E. Amiel, A. J. Hepburn, Barnes, Lieutenant-Colonel Giordano, etc., are not cited. The suspicion of Dumesnil and Graillet toward Horton is ignored. This is not history.

In what could be called *the unbearable lightness of cherry picking*, Benny Morris and Dror Ze’evi<sup>1826</sup> mention Grescovich (but only through a much abbreviated paraphrase of Prentiss, not his own report), Admiral Bristol and Vice-Consul Hepburn (albeit not the most forceful arguments of Hepburn) and add: “British Army headquarters in Constantinople largely agreed with Bristol and Hepburn.” Then they oppose “overwhelming number of eyewitnesses,” which is in fact made of some Armenian nationalists and of hardcore anti-Turkish Protestant Missionaries, in particular Wilfred Post, who does not hide his hostility toward the Turks. The investigations of Admirals Dumesnil and Levassieur, Consul Graillet, Prof. MachLaclan, of the four journalists already cited are ignored, not unlike the testimony of the director of the Jewish school of Tire. The massive presence of inflammable materials,

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<sup>1822</sup> Télégramme de Michel Graillet au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 23 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1823</sup> Hervé Georgelin, *La Fin de Smyrne*, Paris : CNRS éditions, 2005, pp. 202-224.

<sup>1824</sup> AMAE, P 6943.

<sup>1825</sup> “The Turk [...] is the lowest of Mohammedans intellectually, with none, or at best few, of the graces and accomplishments of civilization, with no cultural history. [...] He destroys but can not construct.” (George Horton, *The Blight of Asia*, Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill C°, 1926, p. 209) “The East is tired of being civilized by superior peoples.” (Ibid., p. 211) “Aryan civilization” (ibid., p. 268). And so on. The trust Horton deserves can also be estimated on p. 75, where he claims that the number of Turks killed in İzmir city by Greeks in May 1919 is 26. We already saw it is 300.

<sup>1826</sup> Benny Morris and Dror Ze’evi, *The Thirty-Years Genocide*, Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2019, pp. 445-447.

weapons and ammunitions in the Greek and even more in the Armenian quarters is not even discussed.

If arguments are still needed after the already cited sources, in particular the remarks of Graillet on “lies and fantasy,” two more references will suffice. Colonel Haskell, former high commissioner in Armenia makes a public statement at the end of 1922: “The stories of Turk atrocities circulated among American churches are a mess of lies. I believe that the Greeks and not the Turks are barbarians.”<sup>1827</sup> In a complementary explanation about İzmir, Prentiss explains: “I think I must have investigated a hundred such stories [accusing the Turks], without finding one of them true. A nurse, declaring she had seen the horrible wound, took me to help a woman whose breast was said to have been cut off. I found she had a gash in one arm — nothing more.” At the same page, Prentiss gives the example of man who claimed to have seen Turkish soldiers “massacring” at a precise place, where “Not a soul had been hurt or even threatened. Neither was there the least sign that a struggle had taken place” and later pretended to have been the witness of the rape of Armenian women, but “when we went to the place he named we found nothing of the sort, — and we went instantly.”<sup>1828</sup>

As the misconceptions have been cleared now, it is necessary to finish in analyzing the exact reasons of the fire. For the Greek army, the fire is the logical consequence of a scorched earth policy started as early as 1921, and the campaign defaming the Turks is both a way to exonerate itself for the destruction of Anatolia in general and to distract the attention from the more punctual but significant destructions and assassinations in Eastern Thrace, in September and October 1922, as well as the systematic exile imposed by the Hellenic army to the Greeks and Armenians of this region.<sup>1829</sup> For the Armenian nationalists, this is their main contribution to this destruction of Western Anatolia as much as the achievement of the plot of 1905, with the same anti-Western (particularly anti-French) hatred. The campaign of defamation is an argument to obtain what most of their diplomatic efforts try to reach in

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<sup>1827</sup> Arthur Moss and Florence Gilliam, “The Turkish Myth,” *The Nation*, 13 June 1923.

<sup>1828</sup> John Bakeless, “Actualities at Smyrna — Mark O. Prentiss, American Eyewitness, Speaks,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, January 1924, p. 133.

<sup>1829</sup> Rapport de quinzaine du 15 au 31 octobre 1922, SHD, 20 N 1101 ; Édouard Helsey, « Des milliers de chrétiens évacuent la Thrace dans le désarroi la misère », *Le Journal*, 23 octobre 1922, p. 1 ; Paul Erio, « “Le Journal” en Turquie — Ce qu’on voit en survolant la Thrace », *Le Journal*, 29 octobre 1922, p. 1.

1922: A national home. It is quite visible in a telegram of Avetis Aharonian (23 September 1922), accusing the Turks for the fire and concluding that a Home is a must.<sup>1830</sup>

## 6.2. The failure of the “national home”

### 6.2.1. France tries to elude the question (January-October 1922)

The first contacts of the Armenian nationalists with official and unofficial persons in charge, after the appointment of the Poincaré cabinet, are what could be expected. Director of Political Affairs Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca pronounces vague words in front of Avetis Aharonian, on 21 January 1922. Three days later, Aharonian and Alexandre Khatissian meet Jean Herbette, foreign policy editor of *Le Temps*. They express “apprehension that, without the sincere and resolute support of France, the Turks [a]re likely to reduce the Armenian question to a matter of minority guarantees which means an abandonment of the Armenian question or the Armenian case.” Herbette persistently repeats that Aharonian and Khatissian are asking for what is impossible, and the ARF leaders “leave heavily depressed.”<sup>1831</sup>

On 26 January, in spite of these less than promising attempts, the Ramkavar intervenes: Three members of the Armenian National Delegation, Archag Tchobanian, Grégoire Sinapian and Mikaël Papadjanian, meet Jules Laroche. Not claiming anymore the double Armenia (Çukurova and north-Eastern Anatolia), they now demand a Home, “either in Cilicia, either in the Black Sea region,” made “of a series of villages,” justifying their demands in affirming that “the Armenians do not want to live with the Turks, as shown by the mass emigration from Cilicia.” In considering that the Quai d’Orsay knows the role of the Ramkavar and its friends of the British-Armenia Committee in this mass emigration, such an argument only proves the total absence of diplomatic sense from those who use it. Whatever could be the personal ideas of Laroche at this moment, he gives a diplomatic answer that means “no” in ordinary language: The implementation of this idea would be difficult (and he suggests nothing to ease these difficulties).<sup>1832</sup> More daring than the Ramkavar, the BAC asks the Quai d’Orsay, on 30

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<sup>1830</sup> AMAE, P 1380.

<sup>1831</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary. Part X,” *Armenian Review*, XVIII-3, Autumn 1965, pp. 64-66.

<sup>1832</sup> Jules Laroche, Note, 26 janvier 1922, AMAE, P 16676. This microfilm contains the draft and the final version. The draft uses a somewhat less diplomatic answer from Laroche. In the absence of a diary of this diplomat, or of any other participant of the discussion, it is impossible to say more on this



January, for “a National Home for the Armenians, entirely independent of the Turkish rule [...] in north-eastern Asia minor” and “some form of local administration in Çukurova,” justifying this second demand in pretending that the Christians have been in majority here until 1921 (a claim the Quai d’Orsay knows false). The MFA orders the French embassy to answer with the form they will find the most appropriate, but in emphasizing “the sacrifices of all kinds France made for the Armenians” and “the support [this country] is still ready to provide to the proposals that could be implemented in practice,” a diplomatic method to explain that the BAC does not present realistic claims.<sup>1833</sup> Perhaps because the Quai d’Orsay considers this group negligible and/or because this Ministry (rightfully) thinks that the BAC communicates with this organization, there is no trace, in the archives, of any reply to the *Comité belge philarménien*, which asks for Armenian National Home the day after its British counterpart (but without saying where and how).<sup>1834</sup>

In France, Senator Étienne Flandin writes to the MFA right after the return of Poincaré in power, to ask for an “Armenian National Home,” but the laconic answers he obtains, almost one month later, only informs him that the question “will be examined” during the next conference and that the French government will continue to be inspired by the traditional feelings toward the Armenians (a way to avoid a concrete promise).<sup>1835</sup> One more time, without denying the sincerity of Flandin, it is remarkable he never establishes anything similar to the BAC or the *Comité belge philarménien* and never reactivates the phantomatic *Comité France-Arménie*. His initiatives are not even coordinated with the one of Senator Jean Philip (1868-1952), a former Protestant Pastor.<sup>1836</sup>

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difference. Laroche’s Memoirs are silent on this point (and on the Armenian issue in general): Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d’Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré. 1913-1926*, Paris : Hachette, 1957.

<sup>1833</sup> AMAE, P 16676. Also see Aneurin Williams, “Armenia, British Pledges and the Near East,” *Contemporary Review*, April 1922, pp. 423-424 (on the BAC’s double claim); and Jacobus Dashian, *La Population arménienne de la région comprise entre la mer Noire et Karin (Erzérourm)*, Vienne: Imprimerie des Mékhitaristes, 1922 (claiming that the Armenians converted to Islam in 18<sup>th</sup> century were forced and that their descendants are actually Armenians, “race” being the true identity).

<sup>1834</sup> Lettre du Comité belge philarménien à Raymond Poincaré, 31 janvier 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1835</sup> Étienne Flandin à M. le président du Conseil, 16 janvier 1922 ; Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. Flandin, 13 février 1922, AMAE, P 16676. Also see, in the same microfilm, the similar response of Poincaré (16 February 1922) to a similar letter of Charles Bellet and eight other deputies.

<sup>1836</sup> See the resolutions of Protestant groups led by Senator Philip, on 1 February and 5 March 1922, AMAE, P 16676. The fact that these texts are handwritten shows that they are amateurish, if not last minute, initiatives.

This will of the MFA to elude the question regardless pales in the comparison with the kind of clash that happens between Raymond Poincaré and the two Armenian delegations in February. Avetis Aharonian, it is true, does not prepare the interview with a minimal understanding of his own interests. Indeed, in the note he sends in prevision of the meeting, he repeats that “promises” have been made to the Armenian representatives (yet, as we saw, France never promised anything concrete to them). Not stopping here, he requests “that the government of the Republic will take the necessary measures to secure to the Christian populations of Cilicia a return of the Armenian refugees to Çukurova real and efficient guarantees to make possible their return in their abandoned homes” (meaning that the Ankara agreement does not provide such guarantees, an unsophisticated attack against the achievements of the Quai d’Orsay and Henry Franklin-Bouillon). Then, to substantiate his territorial claims against Turkey, he affirms that “the suppression of the Turkish domination would surely lead to a marked rapprochement between Kurds and Armenians, *both of Aryan origin* [my emphasis] and would make possible life together and the tight cooperation of the two peoples in an independent Armenian state.”<sup>1837</sup> It shows the shift between the ARF delegation, which is still asking for a “Wilsonian Armenia,” and the Ramkavar delegation, recently converted to the “National Home.” It also shows that the ARF finds no better argument than what is the core of its doctrine, namely Aryanist racism, pseudo-biological determinism (the Turks are criminal for racial reasons, the “Aryans” are the superior race). A minimal lucidity would have convinced Aharonian that such an argument is counter-productive, at the very least. Poincaré is typically a man of his time, his main ideological reference is the Declaration of Human Rights of 1789 and the only superiority he defends is the superiority of the universal principles enacted by this declaration.<sup>1838</sup>

After this unwise note, Aharonian and Gabriel Noradounkian have a meeting with Poincaré. Not unlike Aharonian in his note, Noradounkian finds nothing more relevant than racism to justify his claims: “The safety of the Armenians in Turkey cannot be insured by the system of guarantees for minority rights” because the Turks “are massacrers, untrustworthy and incorrigible” (it must be recalled here that this “massacrers” had made him a minister of Commerce in 1908, a senator in 1909 then eventually a minister of Foreign Affairs in 1912) and because a “large part” of the Ankara government members “have committed crimes against the Armenians” (of course, he provides no name). According to the account of

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<sup>1837</sup> Lettre d’Avétis Aharonian à Raymond Poincaré, 9 février 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1838</sup> François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré*, Paris : Fayard, 2000, pp. 91-97.

Aharonian himself (there is no proceedings kept at the MFA's archives), Poincaré is "listening with manifest displeasure" these attacks against the Turks as a whole, and against Ankara in particular. He "angrily clamp[s] his hand on the table and exclaim[s]: 'Leave the past alone, I beg of you. I cannot waste my time. Let us talk on the realities.'" Poincaré's anger is so obvious that Aharonian is "forced to modify" what he planned to say. He thanks the President of Ministers' Council for having announced that the "National Home" issue will be discussed at the next conference, but Poincaré warns: "You must not exaggerate your hopes. You must realize that there are great difficulties." If Aharonian manages to maintain the tone rather cool, Noradounkian commits a second error in asking for a "special regime in Cilicia," only achieving to irritate Poincaré again. The 35-minutes meeting ends without any precise conclusion.<sup>1839</sup>

However, the (Dashnak) Delegation of the Armenian Republic soon ruins the relatively positive effect of Aharonian's oral intervention, more wise than his written note. Indeed, in a letter to Paul Bargeton (in charge of Turkish affairs at the MFA) Alexandre Khatissian asks again, at the eve of the Paris conference, for a National Home, as mentioned at the London conference of February-March 1921, to eventually achieve a Wilsonian Armenia or something close. To justify these claims, Khatissian avoids racism, but pretends that both Turkish leaders of İstanbul and Ankara declared "many times" their readiness to cede to Armenia the most eastern parts of their oriental province, possibly until the region of the lake of Van. After he is asked by Bargeton to provide evidence, Khatissian only gives two references, one statement of Damat Ferit Paşa in 1919 and one from Ahmet İzzet (Furğaç) Paşa (1864-1937) in 1920, when they were Grand vizir.<sup>1840</sup> Even more damaging for the credibility of the Delegation is the meeting of Aharonian with Director of Political Affairs Emmanuel Peretti de La Rocca. Not only Aharonian complains about the decision of the conference regarding the Armenian National Home (that will be discussed in a moment) and against Poincaré personally, not only he threatens of a resignation of his delegation as a whole, but he adds: "This is a death struggle that will continue between the Turkish people and the Armenian people." The manuscript annotation (by Poincaré or by an official of the MFA) on the account of the conversation begins by these words: "*Il faut conseiller à M. Aharonian de se modérer.*"<sup>1841</sup> On the contrary, the mission of Ankara's minister of Foreign

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<sup>1839</sup> Avetis Aharonian, "From Sardarapat to...", pp. 66-68.

<sup>1840</sup> Lettre d'Alexandre Khatissian à Paul Bargeton, 18 mars 1922 ; Id., 22 mars 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1841</sup> Visite de M. Aharonian à M. de Peretti, 28 mars 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

Affairs Yusuf Kemal (Tengirsenk) in France, is welcomed by Henry Franklin-Bouillon in Marseille then by Raymond Poincaré in Paris, in March 1922, paving the way to another delivery of weapons in June (see below).<sup>1842</sup>

Meanwhile, the meeting of the French, British and Italian ministers of Foreign Affairs takes place in Paris. The Armenia-America Society asks the U.S. government to participate, but in vain.<sup>1843</sup> During this meeting, devoted to propose conditions of armistice, with the aim to later discuss, at İstanbul, the preliminary conditions of peace, and eventually, peace itself,<sup>1844</sup> Poincaré persistently opposes Lord Curzon, arguing that the conditions of armistice and peace must be acceptable for the Turks, that “any control” reminiscent of “the pre-war habits,” any “appearance of dismembering” (such as the idea of the Lord Curzon to impose for the vilayet of İzmir a statute similar to Lebanon until 1915), every “ultimatum” will prevent peace.<sup>1845</sup> Concerning the minorities, the right way for Poincaré is to request to the Turks only what exists in treaties with Greece and countries of Central Europe. His considerations are not only due to the desire to secure peace quickly and to avoid Bolshevik infiltration in the Muslim world: “The Turks are not the only ones who have massacred; there are the Greeks, too. [...] The same measures have to be taken regarding the ones and the others.” Concerning Sèvres, Poincaré explains that “this is not even a treaty” but “a project of treaty,” which would be unanimously rejected by the French Parliament if introduced now. Poincaré does not know who prepared Sèvres “and does not want to know.”<sup>1846</sup>

Concerning the Armenian issue more particularly, Lord Curzon advocates a National Home in Mersin, Tarsus, Adana and Maraş, because it is impossible in north-eastern Anatolia. Poincaré opposes the proposal fiercely and is skeptical on the possibilities in north-eastern Anatolia; as a result, he considers that the Home must be Soviet Armenia and that the Turkish

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<sup>1842</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy, 1918-1923*, London-Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975, pp. 139-140 and 148.

<sup>1843</sup> Mark Malkasian, “The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984, p. 357.

<sup>1844</sup> Réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de Grande-Bretagne, d’Italie et de France, à Paris, pour traiter de la question d’Orient — 1<sup>re</sup> séance, mercredi 22 mars 1922, 13h 30, p. 9, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 62.

<sup>1845</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 14, 17 and 23-25.

<sup>1846</sup> Réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de Grande-Bretagne, d’Italie et de France, à Paris, pour traiter de la question d’Orient — 2<sup>e</sup> séance, jeudi 23 mars 1922, pp. 2, 5-8, 12-17 and 20, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 62.

Armenians must have guarantees similar to the minorities in Greece and Central Europe. The Italian minister Schanzer is skeptical about Çukurova, but considers that a Home “on a sandjak, or a few cazas” should be tried. To answer the objections of Poincaré on the impossibility to impose a Home to the Turks, Lord Curzon explains that if a military intervention is impossible, a blackmail to the membership of the League of Nations is easy. Poincaré riposts with an argumentative judo take, in answering that in that case, the League must decide of the place of the Home.<sup>1847</sup>

The result of these difficult negotiations is a series of “proposals” securing the “full” sovereignty of Turkey on the whole Anatolia in exchange of the armistice. After this very concrete affirmation, the text continues as follows:

The situation of the Armenians has received special consideration, as much on account of the obligation contracted by the Allied Powers during the war as on account of the cruel suffering endured by that people. Consequently the aid of the League of Nations is sought, in addition to the provisions made for the protection of minorities, with a view to satisfying the traditional aspirations of the Armenian people and the establishment of a national home for them.

In other words, if Poincaré is not quite successful on the Thrace issue (he asks in vain for a recovery of this territory by the Turks, or a partition between Turkey and an autonomous buffer state, Lord Curzon accepting only to displace the boundary of Sèvres by some dozens of kilometers), the concession he obtains regarding Anatolia and the Armenian issue makes impossible an Armenian territorial autonomy in Turkey.<sup>1848</sup>

André Géraud (1882-1974), the main foreign policy journalist of republican conservatism, who signs *Pertinax*, observes, without any appearance of regret, that the choice of the League of Nation to decide proves the intent of the three powers to bury the issue.<sup>1849</sup> In *Le Petit Parisien*, Philippe Millet is even more direct: Lord Curzon has abandoned in practice the

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<sup>1847</sup> Réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de Grande-Bretagne, d'Italie et de France, à Paris, pour traiter de la question d'Orient — 3<sup>e</sup> séance, jeudi 23 mars 1922, 15h, pp. 11-20, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 62. At the same moment, the International Phil-Armenian League asks for a Home in north-eastern Anatolia: Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L'Heure de l'Arménie*, Geneva: Société générale d'imprimerie, 1922, p. 39.

<sup>1848</sup> Procès-verbal n° 9, 26 mars 1922 (quotations pp. 4-5), AMAE, 118 PA-AP 63. The text is published: « La conférence de l'Orient », *Journal des débats*, 28 mars 1922, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1849</sup> *Pertinax* (André Géraud), « La conférence d'Orient — Le règle de la question des Détroits », *L'Écho de Paris*, 26 mars 1922, p. 3.

principle of administrative autonomy for the Home (and Millet sees no problem in that).<sup>1850</sup> Ahmet Rüstem Bey, in a severe comment of the proposals, considers that the very fact that the Powers leave the issue to the League of Nations proves that they consider the National Home a defunct project. “This is the only point on which the Entente seems ready to render justice fully to Turkey, without having, however, the courage to tell it explicitly.”<sup>1851</sup> With the hateful tone that characterises his articles of the time, Aram Turabian, too, explains that he understands that the reference to a Home is purely rhetorical, and that no intention to implement the project exists anymore.<sup>1852</sup> With a different style, Katchaznoui retrospectively observes: “The agony of the Armenian Cause began in 1922. [...] Only a doubtful ‘Home’ in someone else’s home. This was the blow dealt us in March.”<sup>1853</sup> And on the moment, when Noradounkian, apparently less excited than during his discussion with Poincaré, explains his project to convince Soviet Russia to evacuate the Soviet Republic of Armenia and by “direct negotiation with Ankara” to obtain territorial concessions, his interlocutor, de Peretti, answers: “On these two points, a satisfactory result seems to me quite difficult.”<sup>1854</sup> In these conditions, it is difficult to understand why, even in some scholarly books, the project of “National Home” at the Paris conference is not presented as it actually is, namely eviscerated of its substance.<sup>1855</sup>

What is not, however, difficult to understand is the stance of the majority of the opinion. Before the conference, Saint-Brice explains the necessity of a real peace treaty with Turkey, namely a text giving back eastern Thrace and offering to the Christian minorities the old French protectorate but nothing else,<sup>1856</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis exposes the Kemalist point

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<sup>1850</sup> Philippe Millet, « Les Alliés ont réglé hier le sort de l’Asie mineure », *Le Petit Parisien*, 24 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1851</sup> Ahmet Rüstem Bey, « Est-ce la paix dans le Proche-Orient ? », *Orient et Occident*, mai 1922, pp. 21-39 (quotaton p. 31).

<sup>1852</sup> Aram Turabian, « Les assassins triomphent », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1922, p. 2.

<sup>1853</sup> Hovannes Katchaznoui, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutiun) has nothing to do Anymore*, New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955, p. 13.

<sup>1854</sup> Visite de M. Noradounghian à M. de Peretti, 3 avril 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1855</sup> Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire. Les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l’entre-deux-guerres*, Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004, p. 130 ; Jean Pichon, *Le Partage du Proche-Orient*, Paris : J. Peyronnet & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1938, p. 239.

<sup>1856</sup> Saint-Brice, « Les conditions de la paix », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 février 1922, pp. 97-104.

of view at length in *Le Figaro* then in *L'Opinion*<sup>1857</sup> and the Catholic daily *La Croix* warns: "The Turks are not savages."<sup>1858</sup> The *Comité France-Orient* continues to advocate "reconciliation" with them.<sup>1859</sup> Louis Jalabert, former professor at St-Joseph University (Beirut) describes Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) rather positively, repeats that using Greece against his movement was foolish by every aspect and deplores that the solution was not found at the London conference. He briefly refers to a liberation of "Armenia," but pretends to lack of space to develop (yet, his article is 19 pages-long) and when he comes to his concrete proposals, he actually suggests Christian governors and mixed gendarmerie for the Anatolian provinces with the biggest Christian minorities, does not use the expression "Armenian National Home" or anything similar and does not refer to any initiative, even the one by Catholic Belgians, to obtain this Home.<sup>1860</sup>

During and after the conference, most of the commentators affirm that the concessions to the Turks are insufficient and the interest for the Armenian cause is more than limited. The Communist Party's organ *L'Humanité* observes that the proposals change the Sèvres treaty considerably (and nothing is said against these changes, including the end of the Wilsonian Armenia) but is vehemently critical of British imperialism, which does not want to give back the Çanakkale and the eastern Thrace to Turkey and, as a result, "only prepares the future war," as İstanbul under "the British cannons" is not something the Turks, and more generally the Muslim world, can accept.<sup>1861</sup> At the opposite extreme of the political spectrum, Jacques Bainville supports almost exactly the same conclusion: Because of David Lloyd George and Lord Curzon, the proposals are insufficient, and this is dangerous for peace. The main difference is that Bainville is much more sympathetic of the efforts of the Poincaré's cabinet to obtain a peace acceptable by the Turks.<sup>1862</sup> In the middle, *La Petite Gironde* roughly

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<sup>1857</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Le nationalisme turc — Tchan-Kaya », *Le Figaro*, 26 janvier 1922, p. 4 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Conversation avec Mustapha Kémal pacha », *L'Opinion*, 4 mars 1922, pp. 230-231.

<sup>1858</sup> R. Le Cholleux, « La question d'Orient sur le tapis », *La Croix*, 2 février 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1859</sup> « Compte-rendu de la séance mensuelle du 4 janvier 1922 », *France-Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1922, p. 22.

<sup>1860</sup> Louis Jalabert, « L'impasse turque », *Études*, 20 mars 1922, pp. 670-698.

<sup>1861</sup> Paul Louis, « Après la conférence d'Orient — Une paix qui prépare la guerre », *L'Humanité*, 29 mars 1922, p. 3.

<sup>1862</sup> Jacques Bainville, « Va-t-on pacifier l'Orient ? », *L'Action française*, 25 mars 1922, p. 1.

defends the same thesis.<sup>1863</sup> For *L'Intransigeant*, it is impossible to “sacrifice” the British alliance to the rapprochement with Turkey, but Paris must convince London that a peace acceptable by the Turks is necessary. This is commanded by the national interest of France, “a great Muslim power.”<sup>1864</sup> *Le Figaro* chooses a more diplomatic tone to present about the same ideas, but *L'Opinion* prefers a relatively harsh style.<sup>1865</sup>

In *Le Gaulois*, René d'Aral supports the Kemalist demand for a full sovereignty on the whole Anatolia and understands the claim on eastern Thrace; but he suggests Ankara to accept the proposal just as an armistice, and to obtain eastern Thrace in exchange of the neutralization of the Straits.<sup>1866</sup> *Le Matin*, *Le Petit Journal* and *Le Petit Parisien* emphasize that the Paris conference has merely presented non-binding proposals—implicitly meaning: If the Turks ask more, this is not a problem for us.<sup>1867</sup> What is implicit becomes explicit in *Le Temps*: The Quai d'Orsay's mouthpiece advocates a peace in two parts, namely the evacuation of Western Anatolia by Greece and the formal affirmation of the Turkish sovereignty from İzmir to Van; then a new discussion on eastern Thrace, as neither Ankara nor Sofia can be satisfied by the proposals of March 1922, as far as eastern Thrace is concerned.<sup>1868</sup> *La Lanterne* and *L'Œuvre* fiercely support the Kemalist point of view and blame the Lloyd George cabinet.<sup>1869</sup> *Le Rappel*

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<sup>1863</sup> « Après la conférence orientale — Le programme Curzon pour la paix de l'Orient », *La Petite Gironde*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1

<sup>1864</sup> Léon Bailby, « La Turquie et nous », *L'Intransigeant*, 22 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1865</sup> Henry Bidou, « La conférence orientale », *Le Figaro*, 21 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Jacques Bardoux, « Sortirons-nous des ornières allemande et orientale ? », *L'Opinion*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1922, pp. 342-343.

<sup>1866</sup> René d'Aral, « L'armistice offert aux Turcs et aux Grecs », *Le Gaulois*, 23 mars 1922, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « Le problème de l'Orient — L'élaboration de la paix », *Le Gaulois*, 24 mars 1922, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « Le débat sur l'Orient — Le point capital », *Le Gaulois*, 26 mars 1922, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « La paix d'Orient — Les décisions de la conférence », *Le Gaulois*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « La paix d'Orient — La valeur du traité », *Le Gaulois*, 22 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1867</sup> « Les ministres des Affaires étrangères de France, de Grande-Bretagne et d'Italie ont révisé le traité de Sèvres », *Le Matin*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1 ; « Le résultat de la conférence d'Orient est une offre de médiation aux Grecs et aux Turcs », *Le Petit Journal*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1 ; « L'accord d'ensemble des conclu entre les Alliés sur les affaires d'Orient », *Le Petit Parisien*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1. Also see Jean Schlicklin, « La France a en Turquie une situation morale exceptionnelle », *Le Petit Parisien*, 26 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1868</sup> « Pour la paix de l'Orient », *Le Temps*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1869</sup> Félix Hautfort, « Lloyd George contre l'Islam », *La Lanterne*, 11 mars 1922, p. 1 ; « Pour la paix turco-grecque — Les Alliés ont décidé de modifier le traité de Sèvres », *La Lanterne*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Une nouvelle conférence — La paix de l'Orient sera discutée aujourd'hui au Quai d'Orsay », *L'Œuvre*, 22 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Lord Curzon réduit à démissionner — La politique musulmane de l'Angleterre a fait faillite », *L'Œuvre*, 16 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Ce qu'ont décidé M. Poincaré, Lord Curzon et M. Schanzer », *L'Œuvre*, 23 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio,



is barely less strong in its support.<sup>1870</sup> For the first time, *L'Univers israélite* clearly expresses its position— and this for the Turks. The stance is defended in the name of French and Jewish interests together, as “the Turks are preferable to the Greeks” for the Jews as much as for France. The Jewish weekly recommends the book of Gaston Gaillard, published in 1920, for more information.<sup>1871</sup> Only the *Journal des débats* tells the Turks to accept the proposals of the Paris conference and nothing more, arguing that it is roughly the maximum they can expect, in continuity with the blindness showed by this daily, since 1920, toward the capacities of the Turkish army. Clearly hypocritical, however, is the support for the “Armenian National Home,” as the same *Journal des débats* had shown no interest for the project one year before and as its editor knows that the project now is quite difficult to achieve.<sup>1872</sup>

The long tirades of Turkophobia find space at most in a second-rank Protestant review,<sup>1873</sup> already mentioned in the previous chapter, *Le Christianisme social* (2,150 subscribers at that time, as it has been seen). Except this platform, Frédéric Macler has to publish a booklet at his expenses, by a printer of Alsace (perhaps because it is Protestant-owned and, as a result, less expensive than in Paris) to present the Turks as congenital barbarians, who have no right in any part of Anatolia.<sup>1874</sup> Macler’s words fall back into the void, one more time. The context is indeed less than favorable to his explicit racism toward the Turks. In March 1922, Pierre Benoît (1886-1962), a writer who has obtained considerable success since 1919 with his novel

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« Autour du tapis vert — La mutilation de la Thrace », *L'Œuvre*, 26 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « Les conclusions des trois ministres — Ce que les Alliés proposent aux Turcs et aux Grecs », *L'Œuvre*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Charles Saglio, « La paix de l’Orient — Les Alliés n’offrent aux Turcs qu’un marché », *L'Œuvre*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1870</sup> Alfred Jacque (Jacques Kayser), « Le voyage de Youssouf Kémal », *Le Rappel*, 9 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Edmond du Mesnil, « La paix orientale », *Le Rappel*, 25 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Edmond du Mesnil, « Le Pactole et la Tamise », *Le Rappel*, 26 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Alfred Jacque (Jacques Kayser), « Vers la seconde révision du traité de Sèvres », *Le Rappel*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1871</sup> « Le problème turc et la question palestinienne », *L'Univers israélite*, 31 mars 1922, pp. 5-6. During the World War, the newspaper denied the allegations of persecution of Ottoman Jews, spread by British propaganda: « Nouvelles de l’étranger », *L'Univers israélite*, 29 juin 1917, p. 379.

<sup>1872</sup> Auguste Gauvain, « Les négociations orientales — Les Détroits et l’Arménie », *Journal des débats*, 27 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Auguste Gauvain, « La médiation des Alliés en Orient », *Journal des débats*, 28 mars 1922, p. 1 ; Auguste Gauvain, « Les propositions de paix des Alliés », *Journal des débats*, 29 mars 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1873</sup> X..., « Simples notes histotiques » ; Antony Krafft-Bonard, « L’heure de l’Arménie » ; Frédéric Macler, « L’Arménie et son droit » ; Élie Gounelle, « Quelques conclusions », *Le Christianisme social*, mars-avril 1922, pp. 261-321.

<sup>1874</sup> Frédéric Macler, *L’Arménie, simple mémorandum*, Montbéliard : Société anonyme d’imprimerie montbéliardaise, 1922.

*L'Atlantide*, publishes in feuilleton another one, where the massacres of Turks by nationalist Armenians are mentioned. The work is reprinted as a volume later during the year 1922.<sup>1875</sup> Remarkably, the climate in Belgium is much less favorable to the Turks and somewhat more supportive toward Armenian and Greek nationalisms, as show the hostile reactions to Claude Farrère's lectures here, in March 1922, and the facility of Archag Tchobanian to answer him in a mainstream daily, *Le Soir*.<sup>1876</sup>

Not helped by the dominant opinion in France, the Armenian nationalists are neither helped by themselves. In July 1922, Alexandre Khatissian tells Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca that he opposes a "National Home" in "Cilicia" (the idea of the Ramkavar) and prefers in the province of Van. De Peretti answers in asking him about the Soviet Republic of Armenia, "if this is not here that the Armenians should think about establishing their home" (exactly the position defended by İsmet [İnönü] during the Lausanne conference). Khatissian answers that the ARF does not ask better than to organize an uprising and asks if Paris could support the establishment of a "Grand Republic of Caucasus." De Peretti responds that this is something wished by the French government, but the practical means to implement such a project lack.<sup>1877</sup> The part of the discussion concerning the possibility to expel the Bolsheviks from the Caucasus is rather realistic: This is actually something wished by both Paris and the ARF, and likely Ankara itself would not be sad to be separated from Soviet Russia by a buffer state. The reaction of de Peretti suggesting Yerevan for a National Home is also the only remaining possibility; but the idea of Khatissian to locate a home in Van, if geometrically well founded (the Turkish-Iranian boundary is neither fixed by the Kars treaty nor by the Ankara agreement), practically it ignores the most basic realities, namely the mutual massacres of 1915 (see chapter II) and the killings of Muslims by Armenians in 1918, including in burning them alive.<sup>1878</sup>

With the unsophisticated duplicity that characterizes often the ARF across its history, Avetis Aharonian, Mikael Varandian and A. Gulkhndian try, in May of the same year, a conciliation

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<sup>1875</sup> Pierre Benoît, *L'Oublié*, Paris : Albin Michel, 1922, pp. 16-19.

<sup>1876</sup> A.S. Affaires orientales, 7 mars 1922 ; A.S. de Kurtdjian B., Arménien, 27 juillet 1922, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467 ; M. Pierre de Margerie, ambassadeur de France près S. M. le roi des Belges, à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 16 mars 1922, AMAE, P 16676. For another, later incident: « En Belgique », *Journal des débats*, 11 décembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1877</sup> Visite de M. Khatissian à M. de Peretti, 31 juillet 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1878</sup> Yusuf Sarıncay (ed.), *Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri*, Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2001, volume II, pp. 1039-1041.

with Soviet Russia, but obtain nothing, except the affirmation that if the Armenian Delegations obtain, by their own efforts only and without Soviet explicit support, a Home in Kars, Moscow will be “glad.” They leave “extremely disillusioned.”<sup>1879</sup> Archag Tchobanian, for his part, still tries to justify a home but is unable to define where it should be placed and leaves the delimitation of its territory to the League of Nations.<sup>1880</sup> In sum, the Armenian nationalists have, at the eve of the Kemalist crushing victory on the Greek forces, no coordination, no plan, no political support, but a best words. On the contrary, the Turkish national movement has an army and clear, specific aims: The quick departure of the Greek forces from Anatolia and eastern Thrace; the sovereignty from Edirne to Kars, which means the suppression of the capitulations.<sup>1881</sup>

The other remaining subject of concern of Paris, as far as the Armenian issue is concerned, is the operation Nemesis (assassination of former Ottoman and Azerbaijani leaders) and the project of friends of the late Talat Paşa to assassinate Armenian nationalist leaders such as Avetis Aharonian, Boghos Nubar, Gabriel Noradounkian and, if the information received in Paris are accurate, a British colonel by the name of Thomson<sup>1882</sup> (the only explanation I can find for his presence is that this Thomson is an intelligence officer having helped Nemesis to locate Talat, but until a checking is made in the British archives, it remains a mere hypothesis). Yet, none of the targets is assassinated in France, either by Turks either by Armenians. The *préfet des Alpes-Maritimes* (governor of Nice) is informed about the risk for the life of Cavit Bey, who lives in this county.<sup>1883</sup> When Cemal Paşa, a key target of Nemesis, comes to Paris for a rapprochement between Afghanistan and France (he now is largely reconciled with this second country),<sup>1884</sup> he is not assassinated. Curiously, this is in Bolshevik Georgia that the ARF terrorists achieves to kill him. If the reason must be in the Russian archives, a part of the explanation for the absence of assassination by Nemesis or the Turkish

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<sup>1879</sup> Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to...”, pp. 68-69.

<sup>1880</sup> Archag Tchobanian, « Nécessité d’un foyer arménien », *La Revue de Genève*, octobre 1922, pp. 479-494.

<sup>1881</sup> Jean Schlicklin, « Une interview de Mustapha Kémal », *Le Petit Parisien*, 28 mai 1922, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1882</sup> Le ministère de l’Intérieur (Direction de la Sûreté générale) à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 23 mai 1922 ; Renseignement, 29 mai 1922, AMAE, P 16676.

<sup>1883</sup> Le ministre de l’Intérieur (Direction de la Sûreté générale) à M. le préfet des Alpes-maritimes, 17 mars 1922, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467.

<sup>1884</sup> A.S. affaires orientales, 29 mars 1922, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13467.

counter-Nemesis in France can be found in the recollections of Aristide Briand's chief of staff. When in 1921, he learns that members of the Sinn Fein (Irish nationalists) plan to assassinate David Lloyd George in the French capital city, he comes to the chief of staff of the *préfet de police de Paris* and obtains a clear answer: "But that's very simple, since they are armed. Since the Bonnot affair [1912], we have formal instructions: Whoever is armed must be, at the first suspect gesture, shoot like a dog." The next day, nobody attempts to kill Lloyd George.<sup>1885</sup>

The situation is clarified after the complete defeat of the Greek forces in Anatolia. Aharonian complains that the proposals of the Entente for an armistice, published on 23 September contain nothing about the Armenian Home.<sup>1886</sup> This is indeed the logical consequence of Poincaré's desire of peace, in complete contradiction with the antagonistic line of the ARF. This is also in conformity with the dominant opinion in France. In *Le Gaulois*, René d'Aral not only expresses his joy to have been right before the Greek defeat, but also mocks "the American clergymen, who sincerely believed in the necessity to exterminate the Turks" and answers their claims on the Armenian issue in writing that "the statistics of the Entente's agents had repeatedly shown that the slaughterers were on both sides equal."<sup>1887</sup> In *La Petite Gironde*, an anonymous Commander of the French army explains: "The Tatar district of Erivan was completely razed a short time ago; Allah alone could tell us what became of its inhabitants." And he concludes: "The Turk [...] will respect the minorities as long as these minorities will not risk undermining its very existence."<sup>1888</sup>

The tone of the Communist daily *L'Humanité* is not more favorable, slamming the "terrible legend" that wrongly "present the Ottomans as the periodical massacrers of the Armenians." "The Armenians experienced [in Çukurova] the joys and benefits of power. They gave the measure of their ignorance and their arrogance," referring to the violence of the Armenian Legion. On the contrary, "all those who frequented the Turk appreciated his sweetness and his spirit of tolerance. No excess, marked the return of the Ottoman authorities in Cilicia. Despite the rumors that circulated, the Armenian district of Adana remained intact." The

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<sup>1885</sup> Raymond Escholier, *Souvenirs parlés de Briand*, Paris : Flammarion, 1932, pp. 149-150.

<sup>1886</sup> Lettre d'Avétis Aharonian à Raymond Poincaré, 7 octobre 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1887</sup> René d'Aral, « Le spectacle de l'Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 12 septembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1888</sup> Commandant A..., « Les affaires d'Orient », *La Petite Gironde*, 8 septembre 1922, p. 1. By contrast, in Switzerland, the Turkish reply to Tchobanian is published but in a censored version: Ahmet Rüstem Bey, « Les victoires d'Angora », *La Revue de Genève*, décembre 1922, pp. 771-786.

redactor opposes to this attitude the crimes of the Armenian volunteers of the Greek army and attribute to them the destruction of İzmir.<sup>1889</sup> As a result, Claude Farrère is not isolated when he quotes a conversation with a professor in an American school of İstanbul: "They [the Turks] have not massacred. They have lynched. That is different. Those who are lynched are only those who deserve it."<sup>1890</sup> I do not refer to *L'Humanité* and this conversation to imply that they reflect the exact reality: Both confuse the Armenians in general with the Armenian nationalists in particular; both are sources on the effects, in 1922, of the recurrent pretention of the ARF, Hunchak and Ramkavar to represent their whole people.

On the other side, Berthe Georges-Gaulis publishes a new book and a new article for the *Revue hebdomadaire* defending the Turkish national movement, mostly on the basis of her direct observations.<sup>1891</sup> The work receives a series of positive reviews.<sup>1892</sup> Jacques Kayser (1900-1963), a young journalist supporting the Kemalist point of view since 1920, too, publishes a book, also welcomed,<sup>1893</sup> based on his readings. Exposing the traditional arguments of liberal Islamophilia and Turkophilia, Kayser does not avoid the Armenian issue, and argues that the killings of the First World War were reciprocal, and initially provoked by the Russian policy. He is also very critical of the past occupation of Çukurova. Jean Schlicklin, appointed in 1922 as correspondent of *Le Petit Journal*, publishes in October of that year the most achieved defense (at least in French) of the Kemalist movement, combining published

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<sup>1889</sup> Octave Dumoulin, « Syrie et Cilicie », *L'Humanité*, 5 octobre 1922, p. 4.

<sup>1890</sup> Claude Farrère, « La Turquie ressuscitée... », p. 85.

<sup>1891</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Angora, Constantinople, Londres. Moustafa Kémal et la politique anglaise en Orient*, Paris : Armand Colin, 1922 ; Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Ce qu'est le gouvernement d'Angora », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 21 octobre 1922, pp. 343-358.

<sup>1892</sup> « Bibliographie », *L'Alsace française*, 12 décembre 1922, p. 1 ; Jacques Bardoux, « Feuillet de la semaine », *L'Opinion*, 15 décembre 1922, p. 1393 ; « Les livres », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 16 décembre 1922, p. 1593 ; « Nos échos », *L'Intransigeant*, 30 janvier 1923, p. 2 ; Henri Mylès, « Comptes-rendus critiques », *Revue des sciences politiques*, XLVI, 1923, pp. 455-456 ; Raymond Escholier, « En feuilletant les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit journal*, 12 juin 1923, p. 4 ; « Bibliographie », *Revue militaire générale*, septembre 1923, p. 712. The book is recommended by the *Comité France-Amérique*, where sit Maurice Barrès and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabriel Hanotaux: « Dans les cercles », *Le Gaulois*, 8 février 1923, p. 2.

<sup>1893</sup> Jacques Kayser, *L'Europe et la Turquie nouvelle*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1922. « Pour paraître », *Le Rappel*, 28 novembre 1922, p. 3 ; « Vient de paraître », *La Lanterne*, 12 décembre 1922, p. 3 ; « Dernières publications », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 6 janvier 1923, p. 25 ; « Nouvelles littéraires », *La Liberté*, 8 janvier 1923, p. 2 ; « Livres à lire », *La Revue mondiale*, février 1923, p. 238 ; « Revue des livres », *Revue internationale de sociologie*, mars-avril 1923, p. 206 ; « Notice bibliographique », *Bulletin du Parti républicain radical et radical-socialiste*, 10 août 1923, p. 2.

references, previously unpublished documents and work on the field.<sup>1894</sup> The book is published by the military-controlled publisher Berger-Levrault and praised by a review published by the Ministry of Interior then by an editorial of the unofficial daily *Le Temps*, among others.<sup>1895</sup>

### 6.2.2. *The final failure in Lausanne (November 1922-February 1923)*

In spite of this favorable background, the bilateral problems between Paris and Ankara resume in November, but they become seriously concerning only when the conference of Lausanne is interrupted, namely, as it shall be seen in a moment, after the end of the attempts to impose an Armenian National Home in the peace treaty. There are two kind of causes for the tensions during the Lausanne discussions: The disagreements on the content of the future treaty; and the choice of the main French delegates—none of them having anything to do with the Armenian issue. A study primarily based on British and Turkish sources concludes: “Turkey’s most determined opponent at the conference was Britain” and “Britain was most concerned with the Straits and Mosul, France with the capitulations [...]”<sup>1896</sup> There is nothing to correct to this appraisal with the French sources used here, except in adding that the Ottoman debt is, with the capitulations, the other concern of the French government and delegation.

Indeed, the instructions of Raymond Poincaré for the delegates<sup>1897</sup> are coherent with his positions during the meetings of Paris in March and September 1922, which is not a surprise

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<sup>1894</sup> Jean Schlicklin, *Angora : l’aube de la Turquie nouvelle (1919-1922)*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1922.

<sup>1895</sup> Ch. Rabany, « Bibliographie », *Revue générale de l’administration*, novembre-décembre 1922, p. 567 ; « Arts et lettres », *La Liberté*, 2 décembre 1922, p. 2 ; « Les manquements de l’Allemagne — Les intérêts français à Lausanne », *Le Temps*, 28 décembre 1922, p. 1 ; « Dernières publications », *L’Europe nouvelle*, 6 janvier 1923, p. 25 ; « Les livres d’histoire », *Les Nouvelles littéraires*, 6 janvier 1923, p. 2 ; « Livres », *Revue du génie militaire*, février 1923, p. 180 ; Henri Mylès, « Comptes-rendus critiques », *Revue des sciences politiques*, XLVI, 1923, pp. 454-455.

<sup>1896</sup> Ömer Turan, “The Armenian Question at the Lausanne Peace Talks,” in Türkkaya Ataöv (ed.), *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, TTK/TBMM: 2002, pp. 209-210. Also see A. L. Macfie, “The Straits Question: The Conference of Lausanne (November 1922-July 1923),” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XV-2, May 1979, pp. 211-238; and Dorothy Boyd Rush, “Lord Curzon and Kemalism. The Old World and the New East,” *Social Science*, LV-2, spring 1980, pp. 77-88.

<sup>1897</sup> Le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à MM. Camille Barrère et Maurice Bompard, ambassadeurs de France, ministres plénipotentiaires de la République française à la conférence de Lausanne, 22 novembre 1922, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 65.

for a spirit made of logic and rationality: The Turks have to recover the eastern Thrace, as it has been decided in September 1922, and the islands promised by the London conference in March 1921; he adds this time that Turkey should also receive Karaağaç to defend Edirne, only ordering the delegates to present the return of this territory as “a concession” to be used as such during the negotiations; on “the protection of minorities” he proposes, not unlike in March 1922, reciprocity with Greece; regarding the boundary with Syria, he insists for its maintain, the question having been already settled by the Ankara agreement. (Similarly, an undated note of the Beirut High Commission, for one of the two main negotiators, Camille Barrère, likely written in November 1922, emphasizes the advantages of the agreement in Morocco, citing Marshal Lyautey, and Algeria, citing General Governor Théodore Steeg, and concluding that this useful text has to be maintained.<sup>1898</sup>) Concerning the Caucasian boundary, he is even stronger than before: The line has been defined by the Kars agreement and the Lausanne conference has nothing to do in this regard. Poincaré even takes into consideration that Ankara has no desire to join the League of Nations for the time being and, in these conditions, does not see the necessity to refer to the pact of the League in the future treaty. Such instructions are in formal contradictions with the demands of the Armenian delegations for a Home, either in Adana, either in north-eastern Anatolia.

Regardless, and with lucidity, Poincaré sees the questions where the disagreement is inevitable: Mosul (he instructs his delegates to support the British thesis), the capitulations and the Ottoman debt. He explains: “We cannot fool ourselves on the possibility of making the Turks to admit the survival of the capitulations. It is however indispensable to obtain from them special guarantees for the foreigners.” On the financial issues, he would like to obtain an agreement based on shared interests (the necessity of foreign investments for the reconstruction of Turkey) but understands that this is not the most likely scenario.

There is something tragic, in the Ancient Greek sense of the word, in the financial issue: Ravaged by the Greek forces in West, by the battles and the Armenian volunteers of the Russian army in the east, Turkey logically wants to pay the least possible; ravaged by the war in several of its most industrialized regions, weakened by the war in general and by the Soviet refusal to pay the Russian debts, France can only wish to obtain the most. Concerning the “special regime” wished by Paris, it must be emphasized, not to judge or to justify (this is not

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<sup>1898</sup> SHD, 1 K 247/37. Also see the unsigned letter of a member of the French delegation (perhaps Jules Laroche) to Paul Bargeton, dated 4 January 1923: “We have no interest in seeing an Armenian Home in Cilicia, where it would be a constant source of difficulties for us. But will it be even possible to obtain an Armenian Home? I highly doubt it.” (AMAE, P 16677).

the role of the historian) but to understand that if the Ankara government has shown himself able to maintain order, this is not until 1924 that the şeriat tribunals are suppressed and not until 1926 that the secularization of civil law is adopted. The very existence of a religious law and religious tribunals is anathema for Poincaré. Answering the Catholic MP of Paris Charles Benoist (1861-1936) on 5 March 1912, he had said: "Between you and me, there is the whole extent of the religious issue."<sup>1899</sup> Actually, during the conference, the Turkish side complains about "the intransigence" of the French delegation on the capitulations issue.<sup>1900</sup>

In these difficult conditions, it may be safely assumed that Franklin-Bouillon is the only able to be understood fully by Ankara and Paris at the same time. Yet, the action of the Francophile group inside the British conservative Party provokes the resignation of David Lloyd George, replaced by Conservative Bonar Law, rather favorable to France,<sup>1901</sup> but the group cannot obtain the departure of Lord Curzon until October 1923. That is why the British hostility prevents Franklin-Bouillon from being a negotiator in Lausanne. It is true that Poincaré also accepts, at the request of Turkey, to change one negotiator in Lausanne (Georges Leygues is replaced by Camille Barrère),<sup>1902</sup> but sending Ambassador Maurice Bompard to negotiate at this stage is the opposite of a wise idea, as one of the most disputed questions now to be discussed is the capitulations issue: Bompard's action was the culmination of the French "moral preeminence" through the capitulatory regime. Jacques Kayser ferociously writes that Bompard does not know the changes having happened in Turkey since 1914.<sup>1903</sup> This is exaggerated but he knows much less about these changes than Franklin-Bouillon does.<sup>1904</sup> Camille Barrère (1851-1940), ambassador in Rome from 1897 to

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<sup>1899</sup> François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré...*, p. 218. Similarly, Maurice Honoré, « Pour la paix de l'Orient », *La Nouvelle Revue*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1922, p. 27 ; « En Orient... », p. 201 advocates a gradual disappearance of the capitulations, the mixed tribunals to be suppressed in the end, after a reform of justice in Turkey. The Turkish point of view is in Ahmed Rüstem Bey, « La question des capitulations en Turquie », *Orient et Occident*, novembre 1922, pp. 309-335.

<sup>1900</sup> Télégramme du colonel Mougin au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 15 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1901</sup> Télégramme d'Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca à la délégation française à Lausanne, 13 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1470. The end of Lloyd George is applauded in France: Georges Bonnet, *Le Quai d'Orsay sous trois Républiques*, Paris: Fayard, 1961, p. 66.

<sup>1902</sup> Visite de Ferid Bey à M. de Peretti, 15 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1470.

<sup>1903</sup> Jacques Kayser, « L'alerte kémaliste », *Le Rappel*, 13 novembre 1922, p. 1.

<sup>1904</sup> Maurice Bompard, « L'entrée en guerre de la Turquie », *La Revue de Paris*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1921, pp. 61-85 ; 15 juillet 1921, pp. 261-288.



1924, is a very experienced and has been “in favour of a revision of the Sèvres treaty” since winter 1920-1921, if not earlier, among other reasons because the revision would end the unnatural alliance between Ankara and Moscow;<sup>1905</sup> but is getting old. Worse, the two ambassadors do not like each other and their disagreements diminish the effectiveness of the delegation. Jules Laroche (1872-1961), former collaborator of Barrère at the embassy of Rome and glad to work again with his ex-superior who is also his friend, does what he can in this unpleasant context.<sup>1906</sup>

Berthe Georges-Gaulis is for the last time a go-between, working for a rapprochement and speaking to both sides. Initially considered too close to the Turks by at least a part of the French delegation, she finally gains its trust, particularly General Weygand and Maurice Bompard. She works for a personal link between Bompard and İnönü, and when she comes back to Paris for the New Year, she is replaced in this function by Bompard’s wife,<sup>1907</sup> who, as we saw in the instruction, gained the gratitude of the Turks for her humanitarian action during the Balkan wars. Berthe Georges-Gaulis regrets the domination of Lord Curzon at the conference considers that the situation would be different if Poincaré had been present for two or three days.<sup>1908</sup> The explication is likely simple: He “hated the conferences.”<sup>1909</sup> Another factor of stability is the choice of René Massigli (1888-1988), an exceptionally valuable diplomat, future ambassador in Ankara (1939-1940) and London (1944-1954) then general secretary of the MFA (1955-1956), as general secretary of the conference.<sup>1910</sup> Four decades later, Massigli still remembers his “excellent relations with the Turkish representatives,” especially İsmet İnönü, “always calm, of a perfect courtesy,” using his surdity to “triumph of his adversaries by attrition.” More importantly, Massigli notes: “I never felt in him any hostility in principle against the West in general or against France in

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<sup>1905</sup> Charles à Court Repington, *After the War. A Diary*, London-Bombay-Sydney: Constable & C°, 1922, pp. 12-13 (entry 12 January 1921).

<sup>1906</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Nouvelle Turquie...*, p. 160 ; Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d’Orsay...*, pp. 167-169.

<sup>1907</sup> Lettre de Berthe Georges-Gaulis à Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, 31 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1908</sup> Lettre de Berthe Georges-Gaulis à Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca, 17 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1909</sup> Jules Laroche, *Au Quai d’Orsay...*, p. 169.

<sup>1910</sup> Raphaëlle Ulrich-Pier, *René Massigli (1888-1988). Une vie de diplomate*, Bruxelles-Berne : Peter Lang, 2006, volume I, pp. 121-124.

particular.”<sup>1911</sup> However, this personal, long-enduring relation is not enough. Jean Herbette, the foreign policy editor of *Le Temps*, and Henri Rollin, who has officially left the military in 1921 to become a redactor of the same daily, and who covers the Lausanne conference, are openly in conflict with Bompard and even more with Barrère, as they want to continue a policy of support for the Kemalist point of view on the Christians (they can and must become loyal Turkish citizens, the foreign interventions hurt them) and above all to focus on the sole national interest, including in fighting the pretensions of Lord Curzon on the “freedom of the Straits.”<sup>1912</sup> İnönü does not ignore the persistence of Herbette to defend the same line. On 1 January 1923, he sends him a warm telegram of congratulations and expresses the hope that the “identical” interests of France and Turkey eventually will prevail.<sup>1913</sup> Saint-Brice, for his part, deplores that France left the first place at the conference to Britain and tried to have a common position of the British negotiators, instead of exploiting the errors of Lord Curzon systematically.<sup>1914</sup> More brutal (and less fair on this point), Claude Farrère considers that only İsmet (İnönü) truly defends the French interest at Lausanne.<sup>1915</sup>

That having been said, it would be false to imagine Barrère as making all concessions to the British point of view and Bompard defending archaic interests only. For example, they successfully convince—together with Jules Laroche, Admiral Lacaze and General Weygand, and not without painful efforts—Lord Curzon to renounce his project to demand a limitation of Turkey’s military capacity in the treaty.<sup>1916</sup> Now regarding the Armenian National Home, it is used by Lord Curzon for tactical purposes: Having failed to destroy Turkey and then to impose a British domination on the Straits in using the Greek proxy, he wants to at least to

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<sup>1911</sup> René Massigli, *La Turquie devant la guerre. Mission à Ankara, 1939-1940*, Paris : Plon, 1964, pp. 39-40. Similar assessment in Le commissaire spécial d’Annemasse à M. le ministre de l’Intérieur, 16 juin 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 12943.

<sup>1912</sup> Télégramme de Camille Barrère au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 21 décembre 1922 ; Télégramme d’Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca à la délégation française à Lausanne, 22 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471 ; [Jean Herbette], « La querelle des Détroits », *Le Temps*, 21 décembre 1922, p. 1 ; [Jean Herbette], « Les manquements de l’Allemagne — Les intérêts français à Lausanne », *Le Temps*, 28 décembre 1922, p. 1. Also see Rapport du commissaire spécial d’Évian, 16 juillet 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 12943.

<sup>1913</sup> Yves Denéchère, *Jean Herbette (1878-1960). Journaliste et ambassadeur*, Berne-Paris : Peter Lang/Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2003, p. 88.

<sup>1914</sup> Saint-Brice, « La France à Lausanne », *Correspondance d’Orient*, 15 décembre 1922, pp. 697-705.

<sup>1915</sup> Claude Farrère, « La conférence de Lausanne », *Orient et Occident*, décembre 1922, p. 471.

<sup>1916</sup> Note de Jules Laroche, 14 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1470 ; Télégramme de Camille Barrère au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 18 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

obtain the demilitarization of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, the renunciation of Ankara to Mossul and the immediate entry of Turkey in the League of Nations, where the UK and its Dominions are particularly strong.<sup>1917</sup> The U.S. government, facing the last main campaign of the missionary establishment in favor of the “Armenian cause” instructs its representatives, sent here to observe the negotiations with the European powers and to sign a separate agreement, to do something, if they think it is possible, for the Curzon project of an Armenian home. Benito Mussolini himself, who has recently taken power and who affirms to fear a quick failure of the Lausanne conference, because “the Turks are absolutely intransigent,” (according to him) promises to support “the aims of the United States,” including as far as “the minorities” are concerned.<sup>1918</sup> The International Phil-Armenian League is naturally not inactive, intervening in front of the Entente government, in France and even, two days before the conference starts, in an interview with the Turkish delegation.<sup>1919</sup> In front of this, the Turkish delegates repeat at any occasion, official or not, that all the Ottoman Armenians who have left Anatolia and Eastern Thrace can come back, but solely as loyal Turkish citizens, not to establish any kind of autonomous territory.<sup>1920</sup>

In this context, the fear of the Quai d’Orsay is that this question be used by Lord Curzon to leave the conference and to ruin the hopes of a general peace with Turkey. Barrère does not think that the conference can fail on this pretext, but he limits his interventions, on 12 December to a deliberately vague speech where he avoids to refer to an autonomous Home and mentions the Armenians by names regarding “the fair treatment we are asking for all the minorities without distinction of race.” On 14 December, Barrère prudently limits himself to a praise of both İnönü and Lord Curzon. Similarly, the next day, Laroche, member of the sub-committee of the minorities, answers the Turkish delegate, Rıza Nur, in explaining that the program on the minorities in general is “a basis of discussion” and that the Armenian National

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<sup>1917</sup> Mim Kemal Öke, *The Armenian Question*, Ankara: TTK, 2001, pp. 206-207.

<sup>1918</sup> Nevzat Uyanık, *Dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Britain, American and the Armenian Question*, London-New York: Routledge, 2016, pp. 161-163; Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era. A Diplomatic Record for Forty Years, 1904-1945*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin C°, 1952, pp. 488 and 524-525 (quotation p. 488).

<sup>1919</sup> La Ligue internationale philarménienne à Son Excellence le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 2 décembre 1922 ; Le ministre de l’Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts à M. le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 14 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 16677 ; Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L’Arménie à la conférence de Lausanne*, Alençon : Imprimerie Coueslant, 1923, p. 3.

<sup>1920</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement...*, p. 380.

Home in particular is presented to know what the Turkish arguments are.<sup>1921</sup> The situation of the Turks, it has to be said, is not only favored by their military victory but by the fact that the proponents of an Armenian National Home have no real idea on the place: Antony Krafft-Bonnard (International Phil-Armenian League) says “somewhere,” George Montgomery presents a project of home in Gaziantep, Killis and Elazığ, but “not fooling himself on the welcoming the Turks will make to this proposal” he thinks about “territorial concession” on the Caucasian boundary. The Armenian Delegations themselves, if they unite for the conference, do not decide between a Home in north-eastern Anatolia, an extension of the Soviet Armenian Republic or a Home “on a part of Cilicia.”<sup>1922</sup>

During the discussion, in Paris, between Director of Political Affairs Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca and Ferit Bey, on 15 December, too, the Armenian question is never raised: The debated points are the financial and economic issues, the French citizens residing in Çukurova, and the gangs operating between Turkey and Syria.<sup>1923</sup> Barely more can be found in the note submitted by Dr. Georges Samné, a Syrian Greek Catholic settled in Paris and close to the Quai d’Orsay. In this 5 and a half pages long text, Samné devotes less than four lines to the “guarantees for the ethnic minorities” and affirms that “no serious difficulty” can emerge from this issue. The words “Armenian” and “home” are not used.<sup>1924</sup> Correspondingly, never, during the Lausanne conference, is this question initially raised by the French delegation.

Indeed, after Lord Curzon on 14 December, and as the united Dashnak and Ramkavar delegations insist,<sup>1925</sup> the last attempt is made on 6, 7 and 9 January by an Italian delegate,

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<sup>1921</sup> Télégramme de Camille Barrère au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 14 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471 ; Ministère des Affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Conférence de Lausanne*, volume I, Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1923, pp. 152-153 and 184 ; « La conférence de Lausanne », *Échos de l’Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1923, pp. 448-449. The Quai d’Orsay’s fear is not baseless: The Marquese Curzon of Keldeston (Lausanne) to Sir E. Crowe, 13 December 1922, in W. N. Medlicott and Douglas Dakin (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy. 1919-1939*, 1<sup>st</sup> series, volume XVIII, London: Her Majesty’s Strationery Office, 1972, p. 388.

<sup>1922</sup> Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L’Arménie à la...*, p. 3 ; Jules Laroche, Note — Projet américain de « Home » arménien, 14 novembre 1922 ; Les Délégations arméniennes réunies à Son Excellence M. Raymond Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 15 novembre 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1923</sup> Visite de Férid Bey à M. de Peretti, 15 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1924</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Georges Samné, Note sur l’aspect actuel du problème oriental, 31 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1925</sup> Délégations arméniennes réunies, Aide-mémoire pour la question du Foyer national arménien, 20 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

Giulio Cesare Montagna (1874-1953), marking the beginning of Fascist Armenophilia. On 6 January, Montagna presents in the subcommittee on the minorities a project of Home with a reduced autonomy, but Rıza Nur and the other Turkish delegates, considering that there is no other method to be understood after the refusals of December, leave the room after having explained that they do not want to hear more.<sup>1926</sup> Montagna persists in a report on 7 January and on a plenary discussion two days later, but this time, the Armenian Home would be a place to concentrate the return of Armenian refugees, without any administrative autonomy. By politeness for Lord Curzon and Montagna, Barrère asks on 9 January for “measures” taken “in full liberty” concerning the Armenians, Assyrians and Bulgarians, but without saying which ones. İnönü answers on the Bulgarians, the military duty and the amnesty, but says nothing on the Armenian Home, as if he had not heard. Lord Curzon understands and stops insisting.<sup>1927</sup> The same day, Barrère and Bompard send a joint telegram to the Quai d’Orsay, reporting that İnönü has refused “very courteously but very firmly.” Nowhere they express a particular regret or suggest that the Ministry had ordered anything in this regard.<sup>1928</sup> The next day, General Pellé, still high commissioner in İstanbul, confirms that the Turkish government will make no concession on the Armenian Home and makes no comment on this point itself.<sup>1929</sup> The impossibility of “these little new segregative areas, autonomous or otherwise” is actually known by the Italian, American and British delegation as much as by the French representatives.<sup>1930</sup>

The French government is even less interested as it has, unlike the British one, almost nothing to fear on the field of the public opinion. It is true that a petition is published on 16 December in the *Journal des débats* (and then reproduced in the *Journal de Genève*), asking for the establishment “without delay” (sic) of an “Armenian national home,”<sup>1931</sup> but correctly used,

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<sup>1926</sup> « La conférence de Lausanne au jour le jour », *Échos de l’Orient*, 15 janvier 1923, p. 472.

<sup>1927</sup> Discours prononcé par M. Montagna à la séance du 6 janvier 1923 de la sous-commission des minorités, AMAE, P 1471 ; Ministère des Affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Conférence...*, volume I, pp. 240-254 (quotation p. 241) ; The Marquess Curzon of Keldeston (Lausanne) to Sir E. Crowe, 9 January 1923, in W. N. Medlicott and Douglas Dakin (ed.), *Documents on British...*, 1<sup>st</sup> series, volume XVIII, pp. 435-436.

<sup>1928</sup> AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1929</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 10 janvier 1923, AMAE, P 1471.

<sup>1930</sup> Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era...*, p. 531.

<sup>1931</sup> « Un appel pour l’Arménie », *Journal des débats*, 17 décembre 1922, p. 2 ; « Pro Armenia — Appel à la conférence », *Journal de Genève*, 19 décembre 1922, p. 3.

it is in fact a source on the weakness of pro-Armenian activities in France in 1918-1923. First of all, Émile Doumergue (1844-1937) is absent of the list of signatories. An Evangelic theologian (the smallest of the three Protestant churches in France), Doumergue had worked for the French propaganda office during the First World War and, as such, had written against the Turks and against Germans regarding the Armenian issue; but in 1919, he almost stops doing so.<sup>1932</sup> Less easy to understand is the absence of the writer Camille Mauclair and of the archeologist Jacques de Morgan, arguably the most active from 1916 to 1919.<sup>1933</sup> It can only be observed that the posthumous Memoirs of de Morgan (unfinished, it is true) contain nothing on a support for Armenian nationalism or on a particular Turkophobia and that the recollections of Mauclair, published in 1922, devote only two lines to the Armenian issue.<sup>1934</sup> René Pinon appears among the signatories, but his sincerity is less than clear, as he says nothing to defend the project of an “Armenian national home” in his chronicles for the *Revue des deux mondes*, where he regardless discusses the negotiations of Lausanne in detail.<sup>1935</sup> Even more strikingly, Victor Bérard signs, too, yet we have seen that he fiercely fought maintaining of the French troops in Çukurova, in 1920-1921, precisely at the moment when the crushing defeat of the Armenian army ended any hope on the side of north-eastern Anatolia.

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<sup>1932</sup> Ministère de l’Intérieur, Renseignements, 1920, [http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/LH/LH144/PG/FRDAFAN84\\_O19800035v0478055.htm](http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/LH/LH144/PG/FRDAFAN84_O19800035v0478055.htm); Émile Doumergue, *L’Arménie. Les massacres et la question d’Orient*, Paris : Éditions de la revue *Foi et Vie*, 1916 ; Émile Doumergue, « Aux Arméniens », in *Les Alliés et l’Arménie*, Paris : Ernest Leroux, 1918, pp. 18-20. *Foi et Vie* is the review edited by Émile Doumergue’s brother: Jacques Martin, *Élie Gounelle*, Paris : L’Harmattan, 1999, p. 80. His necrology does not even use the word “Armenian”: Charles Bost, « Le doyen Émile Doumergue, historien », *Le Christianisme social*, mars 1937, pp. 240-244. Philippe Videlier, “French Society and the Armenian Genocide,” in Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide. Cultural and Ethical Legacies*, New Brunswick-London, 2007, p. 327 confuses Émile Doumergue with Gaston Doumergue. It is a relevant indication on the meaning of the word “ethical” for Mr. Videlier.

<sup>1933</sup> Camille Mauclair, *Pour l’Arménie libre. Pages écrites au cours de la grande guerre*, Paris : Imprimerie Flinikowski, 1919 ; Jacques de Morgan, *Contre les barbares de l’Orient*, Paris-Nancy : Berger-Levrault, 1918 ; Jacques de Morgan, « L’Arménie belligérante et autonome », *L’Information*, 30 octobre 1918 ; Jacques de Morgan, *Histoire du peuple arménien*, Paris-Nancy : Berger-Levrault, 1919.

<sup>1934</sup> Andrée Jaunay (ed.), *Mémoires de Jacques de Morgan*, Paris-Montréal : L’Harmattan, 2002 ; Camille Mauclair, *Servitude et grandeur littéraires*, Paris : Ollendorff, 1922, p. 41.

<sup>1935</sup> For instance : René Pinon, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 décembre 1922, pp. 947-958.

Armenologist Antoine Meillet is at the initiative—following a demand of Archag Tchobanian.<sup>1936</sup> Meillet had been relatively active in 1916-1919 but had reduced his interventions by 1920.<sup>1937</sup> The same must be said for Byzantinist Gustave Schlumberger and for the most prestigious of the signatories, Anatole France, who is at the climax of his reputation: He has received in 1921 the Nobel prize of literature and in March 1922, he has begun to distance himself from Communism, as a result of the repression of non-violent, left-wing opponents by Soviet Russia.<sup>1938</sup> Regardless, if the action of A. France during the second half of 1890s and to a lesser extent during the First World War causes the sending of official congratulations from the Catholicos in 1917,<sup>1939</sup> in 1919 his interventions diminish, then during the years 1920 and 1921 he is silent on the subject.<sup>1940</sup> In last analysis, it has to be remarked that the text is dated 8 December but not published until 16 December, in the afternoon, namely after the “Armenian home” issue is discussed in Lausanne, with the expected hostility from the Turkish delegation and the not less expected incapacity of the proponents of this project to impose anything to Turkey in this regard. Yet, Auguste Gauvain, editor of the *Journal des débats* is, too, among the signatories and could have published the text the day it has been finished if he really wanted to print it before the “Armenian Home” issue be discussed in Lausanne.

In sum, this petition is negligible, in absolute terms and even more in comparison with the five million signatures collected in the U.S. at the end of 1922 for such a Home.<sup>1941</sup> Similarly, in his Memoirs written around 1930 as well as in his notes taken during the Lausanne

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<sup>1936</sup> Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile*, Marseille : CRDP, 1986, p. 288.

<sup>1937</sup> Sébastien Moret, « Antoine Meillet et les massacres d’Arménie de 1915 », *History and Philosophy of the Language Sciences*, 30 novembre 2015, <https://hiphilangsci.net/2015/11/30/antoine-meillet-et-les-massacres-darmenie-de-1915> Significantly, Mr. Moret does not claim that the petition of December 1922 has any impact. Archag Tchobanian retrospectively admits it has “no result” (*Une cérémonie consacrée à la mémoire du professeur Antoine Meillet*, Paris : Imprimerie Arax, 1937, p. 25).

<sup>1938</sup> Nicole Racine-Furlaud, « Le parti socialiste (S.F.I.O.) devant le bolchevisme et la Russie soviétique, 1921-1924 », *Revue française de science politique*, 21<sup>e</sup> année, n° 2, 1971, p. 307.

<sup>1939</sup> Traduction de la bulle de Sa Sainteté Kévork V, Catholicos et patriarche suprême de tous les Arméniens, à M. Anatole France, 20 juin 1917, BNF, NAF 15436.

<sup>1940</sup> Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et...*, pp. 274 and sqq. Significantly, he is absent at the meeting of February 1920: *Pour l’Arménie indépendante*, Paris: Ligue des droits de l’homme, 1920. The last letter of Boghos Nubar to Anatole France which is kept in his archives is dated 6 December 1917 (BNF, NAF 15436).

<sup>1941</sup> On this figure: Ömer Turan, “The Armenian Question...”, p. 224.

conference, Alexandre Khatissian barely mentions the petition and if he thanks Lord Curzon, Montagna as well as British (Harold Buxton, Aneurin Williams), American (George Montgomery) and Swiss (Édouard Naville, Antony Krafft-Bonnard) friends of the Armenian cause for their physical presence in Lausanne, for their advise and their direct intervention toward the Turkish, he (briefly) cites only one French citizen: Michel Paillarès—and after what has been explained on this character, no further comment is needed. He also mentions a visit of ARF ideologue Mikael Varandian to Mussolini, on 30 November 1922, but nothing similar with any French leader, and concerning the French delegates, Khatissian cites a meeting of Bompard, on 10 December 1922 (namely before Lord Curzon raises the Home issue) with pro-Armenian activists such as George Montgomery and Antony Krafft-Bonnard. Bompard tells them that their project has no chance to be implemented. He recommends: “Stop your propaganda, it only irritates the Turks” and, as the Armenians accepted even Bolshevism, why should they not accept Kemalism? Eventually, understanding that his arguments are not quite welcomed, he tells his interlocutors to see the U.S. delegation.<sup>1942</sup>

In mid-January, even the International Phil-Armenian League begins to understand that there will be no Armenian Home in the Lausanne treaty, but still maintains that the refugees from Anatolia and Thrace should not go back as Turkish citizens and claim that the League will not, unlike the Western powers, “abandon” the Armenian people<sup>1943</sup>—but actually, their action is only detrimental to the refugees, depriving them of their ultimate chance to return *en masse*. The “abandon” is officially confirmed when the project of treaty is submitted by the Entente to the Turkish delegates: It contains nothing about any kind of Armenian Home.<sup>1944</sup> On 4 February 1923, İnönü accepts the territorial part but refuses the economic clauses and the regime supposed to replace the capitulations, proposing to sign the treaty in two parts (the territorial clauses and the peace itself, the rest later). A compromise cannot be reached. The conference is suspended, but Massigli maintains the general secretariat of the

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<sup>1942</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement...*, pp. 379- 422 (reference to Paillarès p. 388, to Bompard p. 389).

<sup>1943</sup> Lettre adressée par la Ligue internationale philarménienne aux représentants de la Grande-Bretagne, de la France et de l’Italie à la conférence de Lausanne, 19 janvier 1923, AMAE, P 16677 (also in Tolga Başak [ed.], *British Documents on the Armenian Question (1912-1923)*, Ankara: AVİM, 2018, pp. 417-419).

<sup>1944</sup> Ministère des Affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Conférence...*, volume I, pp. 347-425.



conference.<sup>1945</sup> In this regard, it must be noted that German sociologist Taner Akçam pretends, without providing any reference, that the Lausanne conference is interrupted because of the minorities issue.<sup>1946</sup> This assertion has nothing to do with the reality and this is only too representative of the way Mr. Akçam writes his books.<sup>1947</sup>

After the interruption of the Lausanne conference, Avetis Aharonian and Gabriel Noradounkian admit in front of Emmanuel de Peretti de La Rocca that it is necessary to renounce the project of Home, because the Turks do not want it and the Entente cannot impose it.<sup>1948</sup> When the dream of an Armenian autonomy in Anatolia disappears, Ankara reacts to the misunderstandings that had caused the emigration of Armenians and Greeks of the Black Sea region (the lift of the interdiction to move is confused with an order of expulsion<sup>1949</sup>). At the end of December 1922, the Kemalist representatives of İstanbul find a deal with Jean Naslian (who hides his nationalism and does not leave Turkey until 1925) which stops the plan of a mass departure of the Catholic Armenians.<sup>1950</sup> In January 1923, the Karabetian Society (the group of Turkish Armenians who had worked for the Turkish national movement during the Turkish war of independence), transformed into a Society for Turkish-Armenian friendship,<sup>1951</sup> organizes an event, then another in April of the same year.<sup>1952</sup> Berç

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<sup>1945</sup> M. Maurice Bompard, ambassadeur de France, délégué à la conférence de Lausanne, à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 février 1923, *ibid.*, volume II, pp. 126-129.

<sup>1946</sup> Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006, p. 367.

<sup>1947</sup> Maxime Gauin, "Review Essay — 'Proving' a 'Crime against Humanity'?" *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXXV-1, March 2015, pp. 141-157; Yücel Güçlü, "Kitap Tanıtma — A Shameful Act," *Bellesten*, n° LXXI/260, April 2007, pp. 223-239; "Yusuf Halaçoğlu Cevap Veriyor," *Taraf*, 23 June 2008; Erman Şahin, "Review Essay: A Scrutiny of Akçam's Version of History and the Armenian Genocide," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXVIII-2, August 2008, pp. 303-319; Jeremy Salt, *The Unmaking of the Middle East*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2008, pp. 369-370, n. 76; Kent Schull, "Book review," *The Journal of Modern History*, LXXXVI-4, December 2014, pp. 975-976.

<sup>1948</sup> Visite de la Délégation arménienne à M. de Peretti, 16 février 1923, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1949</sup> Ömer Turan, "The Armenian Question...", p. 223, n. 59.

<sup>1950</sup> Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 28 décembre 1922, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1951</sup> Message of Kemal (Atatürk) to the Karabetian Society, 20 December 1922, in İsmet Görgülü, *Atatürk'ten Ermeni Konusu...*, pp. 331-332; Mim Kemal Öke, "The Responses of Turkish Armenians to the 'Armenian Question'", in *Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey (1912-1926)*, Ankara: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1992, pp. 73-75.

<sup>1952</sup> Le haut-commissaire de la République française en Orient, à Son Excellence M. Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 avril 1923, AMAE, P 16677.

Keresteciyan (1870-1949), general manager of the Ottoman Bank and honorary chairman of the Society, and Artin Mosdiciyan, counsellor at the Appeal Court of İstanbul, convince Kevork Arslanian, former archbishop of Adana, to pass on the Kemalist side.<sup>1953</sup> The change is real: Now Patriarch ad interim, Arslanian states that “the Armenians living in Turkey have understood the truth. They are animated by the desire to live in brotherhood with the Turks. The Armenian nation has lost any interest in the Armenian home or any question of like nature.”<sup>1954</sup>



Map 6: The Lausanne treaty

<sup>1953</sup> Haut-commissariat de la République française en Syrie et au Liban — Service des renseignements, Renseignements arméniens, 27 janvier 1923, pp. 1-3, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 162.

<sup>1954</sup> Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia. 1914-1923*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, p. 183.

### 6.2.3. “England would have acted otherwise”: the bitter reaction of the Armenian nationalists (February-August 1923)

The interruption of the Lausanne conference and the harshness of the language on the Turkish side is badly perceived in a part of the French press, including René d’Aral, who had defended the Turks.<sup>1955</sup> Marshal Hubert Lyautey does not understand, in his conversations with Berthe Georges-Gaulis, what is happening, especially the abolition of the sultanate.<sup>1956</sup> General Henri Gouraud regrets “the attitude of our Turkish friends during the Lausanne negotiations, particularly the speech of Réouf Bey,” falsely accusing France for having established Armenian volunteers’ units (it is actually a confusion with the Armenian Legion and the other groups suppressed in 1920).<sup>1957</sup> The project of Admiral Colby Chester, for the exploitation of railroad, mines and oil by the American big business, raises serious concerns and protests in France by November 1922 but fails as early as 1923.<sup>1958</sup> Regardless, the French government prefers conciliation: A text written by Claude Farrère and Berthe Georges-Gaulis, and co-signed by a Pierre Loti close to his death, reminds the Turks that France did not deport anybody in Malta, was the first to sign a peace agreement with Ankara and blocked the Greek army in its advance to İstanbul in September 1922.<sup>1959</sup> *L’Asie française* expresses the wish that the negotiations be resumed soon and deplores that Barrère and Bompard did not oppose the demands for an “Armenian National Home” publicly. Such demands, the montly argues, are instruments of British imperialism and “nothing attaches [the Armenians]” to France and Syria, except the hospitality they are receiving.<sup>1960</sup> Jean

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<sup>1955</sup> René d’Aral, « Est-ce une conjuration ? », *Le Gaulois*, 8 février 1923, p. 1.

<sup>1956</sup> Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Question turque. Une page d’histoire turque et d’erreurs eurpéennes (1919-1931)*, Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1931, pp. 261-265 and 272-277.

<sup>1957</sup> Lettre du général Gouraud au colonel Mougin, 3 mai 1923, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 204. For a less virulent Turkish point of view: « Le saut dans l’inconnu », *Échos de l’Orient*, 15 février 1923, p. 515.

<sup>1958</sup> Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990, pp. 229-230; John A. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East. 1900-1939*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1968 (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1963), pp. 58-87 and 210-228; Bige Sükan Yavuz, “Fransız Arşiv Belgelerinin Işığında Chester Demiryolu Projesi,” *Atatürk Yolu Dergisi*, No. 24, November 1999, pp. 527-561.

<sup>1959</sup> « Un appel aux Turcs de Pierre Loti, Claude Farrère et Mme Gaulis », *Le Journal*, 27 avril 1923, p. 3. Also see Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *La Nouvelle Turquie...*, pp. 197-245 (on her unofficial mission in Turkey in 1923).

<sup>1960</sup> Henri Froideveaux, « Les négociations de Lausanne et leur suspension », *L’Asie française*, janvier-février 1923, pp. 8-9.

Schlicklin, for his part, argues that the Kemalists have their reasons and that the negotiations must resume.<sup>1961</sup> Less explicitly political is the trip of Pierre Benoît in Ankara. Benoît publishes a positive description of the city and expresses the wish that a French Institute, similar to those of Rome and Athens, be established here.<sup>1962</sup> Even René Pinon prefers to insist on the necessity of peace.<sup>1963</sup> The situation eases in June, especially when İsmet İnönü rejects the plan of the German government and big business for an economic cooperation against the French interests,<sup>1964</sup> and the treaty is signed in July.

Some days after the interruption of the Lausanne conference, Archag Tchobanian tries to obtain a rendez-vous of Gabriel Noradounkian with General Gouraud, who now is in Paris, with the avowed aim to provoke him against the Turks. General Gouraud does not answer himself, but his ordonnance writes a letter explaining that the High Commissioner (on leave) can see Noradounkian but only “a few instants.” In these conditions, “the best” would be to give General Gouraud a note during this very brief meeting. Vahan Portoukalian, also Ramkavar, and a former second lieutenant of the Armenian Legion, is even less successful: The assistant of Gouraud answers that he can have an appointment only with the General’s chief of staff, Pierre Lyautey.<sup>1965</sup> In February 1923, Turkophobe deputy Ernest Flandin (1868-1943; not to be confused with Senator Étienne Flandin, deceased in 1922) writes to Colonel Édouard Brémont that he “almost rejoiced the breaking at Lausanne” but offers no plan of action.<sup>1966</sup> The next month, ARF official Karabet Basmadjian delivers a lecture with two Protestant pastors in Paris. He claims that the Armenians were “the first Protestants” (sic; the persecution of Protestant Armenians by Gregorian Armenians during 19<sup>th</sup> century is of course not mentioned), emphasizes a “loyalty to the Christian cause” (something highly dubious for the Hunchak, openly pro-Soviet, and for a part of the ARF, unbeliever or Neo-

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<sup>1961</sup> Jean Schlicklin, « Opinions turques », *Orient et Occident*, 15 mai 1923, pp. 5-13 (written in March).

<sup>1962</sup> Pierre Benoît, « Angora sous la neige », *Le Journal*, 5 mars 1923, p. 1 ; « Pierre Benoît à Constantinople », *Échos de l’Orient*, 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1923, pp. 550-551.

<sup>1963</sup> René Pinon, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 mars 1923, p. 480 ; 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1923, p. 720.

<sup>1964</sup> Tractations turco-allemandes à Lausanne, 16 juin 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13482.

<sup>1965</sup> Lettre d’Archag Tchobanian au général Gouraud, 8 février 1923 ; Lettre du lieutenant Daru, officier d’ordonnance, à Archag Tchobanian ; Lettre du lieutenant Daru à Vahan Portoukalian, 31 mars 1923, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 204.

<sup>1966</sup> Lettre d’Ernest Flandin à Édouard Brémont, 10 février 1923, AN, 594 AP 2.

Paganist<sup>1967</sup>), claims that the committees provided “900” volunteers for the Foreign Legion of the French army and that only “80” survived (we already saw that the actual figure is 380, including 108 who died). Concerning the Turks, he pretends that they “produced for humanity massacrers and vandals only.”<sup>1968</sup> Yet, Basmadjian does not even believe what he says, as he is also the author of a book on the Ottoman literature, far from this crude racism, and published, not surprisingly, during the short-lived ARF-CUP alliance.<sup>1969</sup> However, the most important here is to notice that if Basmadjian claims that the Armenian people “want to live and will live,”<sup>1970</sup> he never says how. The same month, Aharonian presents his thanks to France, in the person of MFA’s director of political affairs de Peretti de La Rocca, for the welcoming of Armenian refugees. Aharonian puts it in contrast with the American proposal to accept 25,000 Armenian students, but only if they are placed in American schools, where they will be assimilated—a proposal Aharonian cannot discourage, having no alternative. However, when Aharonian asks de Peretti if “an allusion” to “the Armenian issue” could be made, “at least to leave the question open,” in the answer to the Turkish counter-proposals, in prevision of the re-opening of the Lausanne conference, de Peretti “leaves no hope to him on this subject.”<sup>1971</sup>

This kind of polite exchange with an ARF representative now is exceptional, and perhaps limited to Aharonian only. Indeed, “a conscientious [Armenian] informer” of the French intelligence service in İstanbul, “who seems very well placed” reads on 13 April 1923 in *Djagadamard*, the ARF newspaper of this city, an article particularly virulent against France, blaming the Ankara agreement and, on the contrary, praising the U.S. As a result, he decides to come to his “friend” who is an ARF official or something of this kind. His “friend” confirms that the article reflects the view of the ARF as such, and even of the Hunchak. This “friend” complains, as usual, that France has “abandoned” the Armenian cause in spite of the efforts for the Entente during the World War. At this moment, the informant asks if the Armenian

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<sup>1967</sup> [Arthur Derounian], “John T. Flynn and the Dashnags,” *The Propaganda Battlefield*, 31 May 1944, p. 4; Kapriel Serope Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted*, Boston : Baïkar Press, 1934, pp. 32-37.

<sup>1968</sup> Karabet J. Basmadjian, *La Nation arménienne*, Paris : J. Gamber, 1923, pp. 4, 12 and 13. On the role of Basmadjian at the ARF: Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 23 août 1908, APP, BA 2146.

<sup>1969</sup> Karabet J. Basmadjian, *Essai sur l’histoire de la littérature ottomane*, Paris-Istanbul : Librairie B. Balentz, 1910.

<sup>1970</sup> Karabet J. Basmadjian, *La Nation arménienne...*, p. 15.

<sup>1971</sup> Visite du délégué arménien à M. de Peretti, 20 mars 1923, AMAE, P 16677.

committees fought for the Entente in general and France in particular, or “for themselves,” his “friend” answers it was actually “for themselves.” He continues in affirming: “One is convinced, in the Armenian milieu, that England would have acted otherwise.” And this is even more badly perceived in this “milieu” that nobody renounced the “Great Armenia,” the men like Keresteciyan being nothing but enemies for them. Actually, according to his statements, the ARF is working with the British authorities for full reconciliation with “the Kurdish tribes” of Turkey, to create “if not an independent Kurdistan, at least a fireplace ready to burst at any moment.” Concerning “the Americans,” he sees a cooperation on the ground of the Chester concession. On the contrary, “one is decided to break up with France,” on which “we never counted that much, still less after the Ankara agreement” and anyway, “formerly, a French consul published a book defending the Turks and calling the Armenians provocateurs” (almost certainly a reference to S. Zarzecki’s article in 1914).<sup>1972</sup>

This report is partially confirmed by a “good informant,” who explains in February 1923 that the ARF is ready to create volunteers units for the British army, in case of a resumption of the war. In the Balkans, they would be commanded by “General” Torcom. The same informant adds that this party considers that “the Armenians supporting a rapprochement with the Turks” will be “to be boycotted in every way.”<sup>1973</sup> At the same moment, “General” Torcom indeed declares he is ready to provide 15,000 volunteers for Greece (still the client of the UK) if the peace negotiations fail,<sup>1974</sup> and even before the conference was interrupted, the secretary of Lord Curzon had stated: “If the war resumes, we will have two available allies: The Greeks and the Armenians.”<sup>1975</sup> It is true that in March 1923, Hovannes Khatchazouni, former Prime Minister of Armenia, concludes: “When I said the Dashnagtzoutune has nothing to do any more, I did not express myself correctly. It has one more final thing to do, a supreme duty to the Armenian Cause and toward its own past. It must, and by its own decision, with full cognizance, decisively end its existence.”<sup>1976</sup> But nobody in the party, or almost nobody, follows his recommendation.

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<sup>1972</sup> Note spéciale n° 1733, La mentalité des partis politiques arméniens, 23 avril 1923, CADN, 36 PO/1/111 (also in AMAE, P 16677).

<sup>1973</sup> Suite à la note spéciale du 19 février 1923 (6 mars 1923), CADN, 36 PO/1/111.

<sup>1974</sup> « Le général Torcom », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1923, p. 4.

<sup>1975</sup> Alexandre Khatissian, *Écllosion et développement...*, p. 428.

<sup>1976</sup> Hovannes Khatchazouni, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation has Nothing to Do Anymore*, New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955, p. 16.

These informations deserve some comments. The project to cooperate with Britain militarily and to provoke Kurdish revolts is congruent with the Curzon-styled imperialism and in continuity with the agreement signed by Boghos Nubar and Şerif Paşa in 1919. However, the persistence of the aim to cooperate with the U.S. is less obvious. Indeed, as it has been seen, the rejection of the mandate by the Senate in May 1920 and the defeat of Wilson's candidate in November of the same year have marked the end of the dream of an American direct intervention. All what has done the Harding administration for the territorial projects of the Armenian nationalists was words for the dead-born idea of a "Home," in December 1922.

The reference to the Chester concession seems even more paradoxical. Indeed, to defend the Turks (and his project), Colby Chester not only affirms that "The Turk has been and is the most misrepresented person in the world" (an appraisal quite defensible for an American writing in 1922) but also: "In due course of time the [Armenian] deportees, entirely unmassacred and fat and prosperous, returned (if they wished so to do), and an English prisoner of war who was in one of the vacated towns after it had been repopulated told me that he found it filled with these astonishing living ghosts,"<sup>1977</sup> which represents at best a minority part of the truth. Such an apologetic version of the forced relocation is never presented by the French Turkophiles (Pierre Loti, Claude Farrère, Berthe Georges-Gaulis, Gaston Gaillard, Jean Schlicklin, etc.).<sup>1978</sup> To make the situation only more problematic, in February 1923, James L. Barton makes a last statement regretting that "Allies abandoned the Armenians at Lausanne" but adds that the Americans have to deal with Kemal's Turkey as a reality<sup>1979</sup> (in July 1923, he even presents a mea culpa to Admiral Bristol for the alterations of the truth in the previous propaganda).<sup>1980</sup> It is possible that the ARF of İstanbul underestimates the change in the ABCFM but what is sure is that they accurately appreciate the social demand for Turkophobia in the U.S., in 1923. Neither Barton nor Chester can change this situation with a few articles or speeches and the fact that the separate agreement

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<sup>1977</sup> Colby Chester, "Turkey Reinterpreted," *Current History*, September 1922, pp. 943 and 945.

<sup>1978</sup> Gaston Gaillard, *The Turks and Europe*, London: Thomas Murby & C°, 1921, pp. 289-295; Pierre Loti, *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1920, pp. 37-55; Jean Schlicklin, *Angora. L'aube de...*, pp. 141-145.

<sup>1979</sup> "Recommends New Policy," *The New York Times*, 8 February 1923, p. 2.

<sup>1980</sup> Robert Daniel, "The Armenian Question and American-Turkish Relations, 1914-1927," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVI-2, September 1959, p. 259.

signed by the U.S. representatives in Lausanne fails as late as in 1927 (see below) is enough to prove it.

Regardless, these projects have no significant consequence. The very real hatred toward the Turks in the U.S. does not really prevent the improving of bilateral relations after 1923 and the UK signs peace like the rest of the Entente at Lausanne. Right after the signature of this treaty, Alexandre Khatissian proposes to the Foreign Office to take profit of the conflict he (Khatissian) predicts between Turkey and Russia, in supporting Turkey. Khatissian hopes an evacuation of the Armenian Republic and its extension in the context of this conflict. Lord Curzon comments without pity: “These people are incurable... The disease is mortal.”<sup>1981</sup> The rapprochement with the two totalitarian states is more promising for Armenian nationalism, but have no short-term consequence. Aram Turabian, extremely angry with both the Ramkavar and the ARF, as much as with the French government, sees “the only salute for Armenia” in the emergence of “the *Armenian Fascists*” (underlined in the original).<sup>1982</sup> In addition to being a source on what Turabian actually thinks about political liberalism, this shows a certain lucidity on the affinity between Italian Fascism and Armenian nationalism, but the alliance does not develop until 1928, namely when Mussolini begins to develop a truly Fascist foreign policy (see below).

For the Hunchak, the salute is in the tight cooperation with Soviet Russia. According to the French land army’s intelligence service, this party “recruits among the foolish people, without morality, ready to sell themselves to the highest and last bidder.” With the “gold” of Soviet agents, the Hunchak “is engaged”, as early as the first weeks of 1923, “in a Francophobic propaganda—devious but violent.”<sup>1983</sup> The Ramkavar, as far as evidence goes, is not “engaged in a Francophobic propaganda” but reaches an agreement with the Soviets in August 1923, for the settlement of 50,000 refugees in the Soviet Republic of Armenia, and finds wise to inform the French government without precaution,<sup>1984</sup> seeming to ignore the firm anti-Communism of Raymond Poincaré, who still refuses to recognize the USSR.

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<sup>1981</sup> Salâhi Sonyel, *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire*, Ankara: TTK, 1993, pp. 428-429.

<sup>1982</sup> Aram Turabian, « Le ciel et la terre en complot », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1923, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1983</sup> Haut-commissariat de la République française en Syrie et au Liban — Service des renseignements, Renseignements arméniens, 27 janvier 1923, p. 4, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 162.

<sup>1984</sup> Lettre de Gabriel Noradounkian à Raymond Poincaré, 24 août 1923, AMAE, P 16677.



Having the full support of the Hunchak and the connivance of the Ramkavar, the Soviets try a reconciliation with the ARF to control the transnational Armenian network completely. As early as the end of the first part of the Lausanne conference, the Soviets propose to the Dashnaks the amnesty of their members incarcerated in USSR and the establishment of a kind of Armenian Home in Ukraine, with the aim to fight the British influence among the Armenians and to have a way of pressure on Turkey,<sup>1985</sup> but it does not seem that the deal is accepted. On 27 April 1923, the widow of Garegin Pasdermadjian, the widow of Rostom (Stepan Zorian, ARF minister died of typhus in 1919), ARF leader Simon Vratzian (former minister of Agriculture, and, strangely, Prime minister of the insurrectional, anti-Soviet cabinet of February-March 1921<sup>1986</sup>), Avetis Nazarbekian (1866-1939), historical leader of the Hunchak, a Soviet agent named Ter Chanessian and several others meet. The meeting concludes that the demands in the West for a Home must continue, but without expecting results. All the hopes must be placed in USSR. Only France is named as a country deserving no trust. The International Phil-Armenian League will be asked to enter in discussion with Moscow for a Home in USSR and the two Armenian Delegations in Paris will be requested by Vratzian and Ter Chanessian to stop expecting anything from the West and to find an agreement with the Soviets.<sup>1987</sup> However, the ARF itself is not convinced, even if Drastamat "Dro" Kanayan remains in Moscow until 1925.<sup>1988</sup> Anyway, this is not until 1928 that the uneasy alliance between Moscow and Ankara experiences its first major crisis, caused by the Stalinist radicalization, and materialized by the Soviet-funded International Minority Front in Odessa (ARF, Kurdish nationalists, Turkish monarchists).<sup>1989</sup>

Probably because the party feels that there is nothing to hope, for the short-term, from Moscow or Rome, the ARF tries its favorite method: terrorism. Members of the party are sent in May 1923 to assassinate İsmet İnönü but the terrorists are arrested by the Swiss

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<sup>1985</sup> Le commissaire spécial d'Annemasse à M. le directeur de la Sûreté générale, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13482.

<sup>1986</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, "Simon Vratzian and Armenian Nationalism," *Middle Eastern Studies*, V-3, October 1969, p. 216, provides no explanation for this radical change.

<sup>1987</sup> Le commissaire spécial d'Annemasse à M. le directeur de la Sûreté générale, 3 mai 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13482.

<sup>1988</sup> Suite à la note spéciale du 19 février 1923 (6 mars 1923), CADN, 36 PO/1/111 ; Cyril Le Tallec, *La Communauté arménienne de France (1920-1950)*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 2001, pp. 113-114.

<sup>1989</sup> Gwynne Dyer, "Correspondence," *Middle Eastern Studies*, IX-3, October 1973, p. 382; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 284.

police<sup>1990</sup>—which is evidence that the capacity of the ARF to perpetrate spectacular assassinations at that time should not be exaggerated: None of the murders perpetrated by Nemesis, in 1920-1922, takes place in a stable and pacified country with an efficient state apparatus, such as Switzerland or France.

Two months after this failure, the peace treaty is finally signed in Lausanne. This is not anymore a bilateral agreement (Ankara 1921), an armistice (Mudania 1922) but the definitive peace between Turkey and the Great Powers, the de jure recognition of the country, from Edirne to Kars.<sup>1991</sup> The complete failure of the Armenian nationalist claims against Turkey is acted by international law. Ankara has won and the “joy [of the Turks] is perfectly justified.”<sup>1992</sup> The chief of staff, General Edmond Buat, makes a one-word comment in his diary: “Finally!”<sup>1993</sup> On the other side, the shock for the Armenian committees is considerable—not sufficient to incite them to give up their antagonism toward Turkey, but incontrovertible. Aram Turabian avoids his most insulting and racist vocabulary to deplore the terms of the peace and to blame, one more time, Henry Franklin-Bouillon.<sup>1994</sup> *The New Armenia* angrily understands the scope of the debacle Lausanne represents for its ideas.<sup>1995</sup> The Dashnak Delegation of the Armenian Republic protests for the form:

In these conditions, the delegation which signed the Semes Treaty for Armenia reserves and insists upon all the rights which the Powers, during and since the war, solemnly recognized, and which were duly embodied in the Sevres Treaty, and reincorporated and reaffirmed by the decisions of subsequent conferences. Whatever reception a solemn protest may have at this time, the Delegation, by virtue of the mandate which it holds from the Armenian people is impelled by a clear sense

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<sup>1990</sup> Paul Dumont, « İsmet İnönü et son temps dans les archives publiques françaises », in Hâmit Batu and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (ed.), *L'Empire ottoman, la République de Turquie et la France*, Paris-Istanbul: ADET/Les éditions Isis, 1986, p. 466 ; Bilâl Şimşir, *Şehit diplomatlarımız (1973-1994)*, Ankara-İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2000, volume I, pp. 60-61.

<sup>1991</sup> Lewis Thomas and Richard Frye, *The United States and Turkey and Iran*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952, p. 68.

<sup>1992</sup> Maurice Muret, « La paix de Lausanne », *Gazette de Lausanne*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1. The Turkish point of view can be found in Kemal Atatürk, *Discours du Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, président de la République de Turquie*, Ankara : Centre de recherches Atatürk, 2013, pp. 626-639 (systematically comparing Sèvres, London 1921, Paris 1922 and Lausanne).

<sup>1993</sup> Frédéric Guelton (ed.), *Journal du général Edmond Buat, 1914-1923*, Paris: Ministère de la Défense/Perrin, 2015, p. 1414.

<sup>1994</sup> Aram Turabian, « La politique orientale de la France », *Aiguillon*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1923, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1995</sup> Fullerton L. Waldo, “Armenia and America,” *The New Armenia*, July-August 1923, pp. 49-50.

of duty to denounce respectfully the act of Lausanne. It leaves the verdict to history.<sup>1996</sup>

These protests have not a great echo in the French press. *L'Œuvre* justifies all the concessions made to the Turks, not only the territorial concessions (“we prefer to see” İstanbul and the eastern Thrace “in the hands of the Turks” rather than in those of the Greeks or British) but also the abolition of the capitulations (“a progress”). The only regret of the liberal daily is that the treaty does not fix all the eastern issues (almost certainly a reference to Mossul, left to the arbitration of the League of Nations).<sup>1997</sup> *L'Humanité*, rather logically, is particularly concerned about the denunciation of the imperialist rivalries but sees “a great advantage” to the treaty: “it consecrates the existence of a free Turkey.”<sup>1998</sup> For *La Lanterne*, the most important is to have signed peace; if Lausanne is proved by the future to be more solid than Versailles, it will be fine.<sup>1999</sup> *La Petite Gironde* notes the complete victory of İsmet (İnönü), then concludes that the treaty will worth what it will be made of it, so a return to the traditional friendship with the Turks, in adapting it to the new realities, is the right way.<sup>2000</sup> For *Le Radical*, this is “the triumph” of İsmet (İnönü), even more than on the battlefield. The main regret of this liberal daily is that the UK keeps the biggest part of the former Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>2001</sup>

*Le Petit Parisien* and *Le Petit Journal* do not comment the treaty that much, but their articles are dominated by the satisfaction to reach peace.<sup>2002</sup> *Le Matin* seizes the occasion to publish documents proving the duplicity of Venizelos during the First World War and to deplore the support previously given to him. Concerning the treaty, the daily only regrets that it deprives France of way to defend its interests in Egypt directly. For the rest, the relief to achieve peace

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<sup>1996</sup> La Délégation de la République arménienne à Son Excellence M. Raymond Poincaré, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 août 1923, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>1997</sup> Camille Lemerrier, « La paix de Lausanne a été signée hier », *L'Œuvre*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>1998</sup> A. Delhay, « La paix de Lausanne a été signée hier », *L'Humanité*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 3.

<sup>1999</sup> « La paix — Un traité solennel a été signé hier », *La Lanterne*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2000</sup> Roger Lantenay, « La paix du Proche-Orient », *La Petite Gironde*, 24 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2001</sup> G. Brouville, « Une grande date dans l'histoire des conférences — Le traité de Lausanne a été signé hier », *Le Radical*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2002</sup> « La paix d'Orient est signée », *Le Petit Parisien*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1 ; « La paix d'Orient signée à Lausanne », *Le Petit Journal*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1.

dominates.<sup>2003</sup> According to *L'Action française*, this is the occasion to criticize one more time Lord Curzon's policy. For the rest, the far rightist daily writes: "finally" the treaty is signed.<sup>2004</sup> *Le Temps*, *Le Populaire*, *Le Rappel* and *L'Écho de Paris* describe the terms of the peace without expressing an opinion.<sup>2005</sup>

*L'Asie française*, *L'Europe nouvelle*, *L'Information*, *Le Gaulois*, *La Revue hebdomadaire*, Jesuit ex-missionary Louis Jalabert, René Pinon in the *Revue des deux mondes* comment the treaty without enthusiasm, but all conclude that the only reasonable attitude to be turned to the future, to improve by concrete actions in Turkey the situation created by the treaty (Jalabert, for instance, insisting on the technical cooperation).<sup>2006</sup> The *Journal des débats* publishes at the same page an editorial written with "morigenating"<sup>2007</sup> tone but accepting Lausanne as "a fact" and as the occasion to turn the page of the past; and an article of Maurice Pernot, special envoy in Turkey, genuinely trying to understand the Turkish point of view.<sup>2008</sup> In the *Revue universelle*, Henri Mylès, sometimes accurately, sometimes by rhetorical exaggeration, blames the errors of the French diplomacy since 1908 and concludes that Paris must act independently from London, the root of all the disappointments, regarding Germany and the post-Ottoman space.<sup>2009</sup> The most lucid among the disappointed commentators is, in

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<sup>2003</sup> « Le jeu de M. Venizelos contre la Grèce et contre la France », *Le Matin*, 24 juillet 1923, pp. 1-2 ; « La paix a été signée à Lausanne », *Le Matin*, 25 juillet 1923, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>2004</sup> G. D., « L'Empire britannique et l'Europe » ; « À Lausanne — La paix a été signée hier à trois heures », *L'Action française*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2005</sup> « En place pour le dernier acte — Le traité de paix est signé aujourd'hui à Lausanne », *Le Rappel*, 24 juillet 1923, p. 1 ; « La conférence de Lausanne », *Le Temps*, 25 juillet 1923, pp. 1-2 ; « Le traité de Lausanne a été signé hier », *L'Écho de Paris*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1 ; « La paix en Orient — Le traité de Lausanne est signé », *Le Populaire*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1 ; « Le traité de paix de Lausanne », *Le Temps*, 26 juillet 1923, p. 2.

<sup>2006</sup> « La paix sera signée à Lausanne le 24 juillet », *L'Information*, 19 juillet 1923, p. 2 ; « L'exemple de Lausanne », *L'Information*, 25 juillet 1923 ; René d'Aral, « À Lausanne — La paix est signée », *Le Gaulois*, 25 juillet 1923, p. 1 ; René Pinon, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> août 1923, pp. 709-714 ; Wladimir d'Ormesson, « La paix boiteuse de Lausanne et la capitulation des grandes puissances », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 4 août 1923, pp. 39-43 ; XXX, « Les leçons de Lausanne », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 4 août 1923, pp. 976-978 ; Henri Froidevaux, « Ce que la paix de Lausanne a fait de la Turquie et des intérêts français en Turquie », *L'Asie française*, août-septembre 1923, pp. 262-266 ; Louis Jalabert, « Une triste paix », *Études*, 5 septembre 1923, pp. 513-536.

<sup>2007</sup> Yves Le Lannou, « La fin de l'Empire ottoman vue par la presse française (1918-1923) », *Turcica*, IX/2-X, 1978, p. 192.

<sup>2008</sup> Pierre Bernus, « La paix orientale — Les conversations franco-belges » ; Maurice Pernot, « Lettre de Turquie — L'accueil fait à la paix », *Journal des débats*, 26 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2009</sup> Henri Mylès, « Le Rhin et l'Orient », *La Revue universelle*, 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1923, pp. 101-105.

continuity with most of his previous articles, Saint-Brice. He is sometimes sarcastic. At the beginning, he asks: “Was it necessary to take that much pain to register purely and simply most of the claims of the Turkish National Pact?” Then, he explains that it is very unfair toward the Western negotiators to expect a diplomatic victory after the complete defeat of Greece and, as a result, of UK on the battlefield. The climax of his lucidity is when he demonstrates that the losses of France are not due to the concessions to Turkey in 1921-1922 but to the fact that this policy was not continued after the armistice of Mudania—that the concessions obtained by İnönü after long negotiations were not unilaterally given by Paris in exchange of new advantages, advantages that would have been in conformity with the Turkish National Pact. To repair this error, frank and intense cooperation must prevail.<sup>2010</sup>

In sum, *La Croix* is isolated in regretting the end of the Armenian home, but as the Catholic daily had shown no interest for the issue in March 1922, the embittered tone chosen to accept the treaty as a reality<sup>2011</sup> is more likely due to the end of the capitulations.

### **6.3. Aftermath (1923-1933)**

#### *6.3.1. Ratifying Lausanne, ignoring the Armenian nationalists*

The decade following the signature of Lausanne treaty is marked by the liquidation of the issues remaining between Paris and Ankara. At the same time, the Armenian nationalists’ last attempts fail one after the other, the shock of the Lausanne treaty and the internal conflicts diminish their effectiveness. During these years, they become for the French Republic a public safety concern and a secondary, intermittent problem for the relations with Turkey rather than anything like a partner.

It is true that the signature of the peace treaty in 1923 leaves mixed impressions in France and is followed by a bilateral crisis, but it is short-lived. By August 1923, the Turkish government “multiplies the petty annoyances toward the French settlements—schools, religious missions, industrial and commercial companies” and “Poincaré retaliates in protracting the ratification of the Lausanne treaty,”<sup>2012</sup> in spite of repeated demands for such

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<sup>2010</sup> Saint-Brice, « La paix de Lausanne », *Correspondance d’Orient*, août 1923, pp. 449-456.

<sup>2011</sup> R. Le Cholleur, « Le bilan de la conférence de Lausanne », *La Croix*, 28 juillet 1923, p. 1.

<sup>2012</sup> Paul Dumont, « À l’aube du... », pp. 86-87. Also see Maurice Pernot, « La nouvelle Turquie. — II L’esprit et les tendances du nouveau régime », *Revue des deux mondes*, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1924, pp. 626-660

a vote coming from his own majority.<sup>2013</sup> Indeed, in Paris, the support provided in 1921-1922 and the concessions in the peace treaty are considered considerable and these annoyances are seen as examples of ingratitude. Yet, 1923 is the climax of the firm methods in French foreign policy, with the occupation of the Ruhr, decided by Poincaré—as a result of the German unwillingness to pay the reparations. The military intervention takes place with the support—and even the participation—of Belgium, but in spite of the British critiques.<sup>2014</sup> Colonel Mougin does his best to attenuate the negative impact of the political crisis on the French investments in Turkey, but he is recalled to Paris in March 1924, in spite of the intervention of Jean Schlicklin (correspondent of *Le Petit Parisien*) in his favor.<sup>2015</sup>

Regardless, the only official initiative, in France, toward the Armenian issue, is about welcoming refugees<sup>2016</sup>—and likely to filtrate them, as at least a part would “bring disturbance to our labor market,”<sup>2017</sup> in the words of the Quai d’Orsay; actually, only 30,000 are accepted from 1922 to 1927, in a country counting around 40.8 million inhabitants. In March 1924, when the Delegation of the Armenian Republic, trying to use the tension with Ankara, asks the French cabinet to make the establishment of an Armenian National Home in Turkey a precondition to the ratification of the Lausanne treaty, the MFA answers

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(honest attempt to understand the new Turkey and the difficulties, based on a work on the field, including an interview with Kemal).

<sup>2013</sup> For instance: Joseph Barthélémy, « Chronique de politique étrangère », *Revue politique et parlementaire*, 10 février 1924, p. 332 ; Joseph Barthélémy, « Chronique de politique étrangère », *Revue politique et parlementaire*, 10 mars 1924, pp. 532-538.

<sup>2014</sup> Stanislas Jeannesson, *Poincaré, la France et la Ruhr, 1922-1924. Histoire d'une occupation*, Strasbourg : Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 1998 ; J. F. V. Keiger, *Raymond Poincaré*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 294-311; François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré*, Paris : Fayard, 2000, pp. 415-464.

<sup>2015</sup> Paul Dumont, « À l’aube du... », p. 87.

<sup>2016</sup> The list of the leaders and members of the Comité national français pour le rapatriement des réfugiés arméniens is in AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>2017</sup> Télégramme du ministère des Affaires étrangères au Haut-Commissariat à Constantinople, 3 septembre 1923, AMAE, P 16677. The mayor of Marseille Siméon Flaissières uses a harsher wording against “these immigrants deprived of everything, refractory to our Western customs, rebellious to any measure of hygiene, immobilized in their resigned, passive, ancestral indolence” (« L’impossible hospitalité — Lettre de M. Flaissières au préfet », *Le Petit Provençal*, 21 octobre 1923, p. 3). On the special concerns for public hygiene, also see Le ministre de l’Intérieur à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 28 mai 1928, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 16074.

negatively.<sup>2018</sup> The support for the Armenian cause continues to collapse after 1923. In mid-1923, Frédéric Macler publishes a last, short book to present all the Turks as barbarians and all the Armenians—including the nationalist leadership—as innocent, and reprints it in 1924, after having sold one thousand copies,<sup>2019</sup> but after the ratification of the treaty the same year, he stops his political activities and focuses on the less polemical aspects of the Armenian studies.<sup>2020</sup> Never during the short period of tensions in 1923-24 does Paris use the Armenian card again, and, during the same period, the successor of General Gouraud as high commissioner in Beirut is General Maxime Weygand, one of the key persons who worked in the lobby, in 1920-21, for a turn of the French policy toward Turkey. Weygand's ideas remain unchanged.<sup>2021</sup> In particular, he refuses any support and any sympathy to the attempts to proclaim a Kurdistan in mid-1924.<sup>2022</sup> And whatever could have been the tensions for less than one year, the problems are quickly fixed by the victory of the *Cartel des gauches* at the legislative elections of May 1924.<sup>2023</sup>

Indeed, this left-wing coalition is led by Édouard Herriot, who has not forgotten his support for the Young Turks in 1912 and for the Kemalist movement during the war of independence. The proclamation of the Republic in October 1923 and the first measures of secularization at the beginning of 1924<sup>2024</sup> only increases Herriot's sympathy for the new Turkey. Right before his electoral victory, Herriot announces: "Should the Radical Party again be called to power it would at once do its best to strengthen the bonds which unite so many of its members with

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<sup>2018</sup> Lettre d'Alexandre Khatissian à Raymond Poincaré, 6 mars 1924 ; Lettre de Raymond Poincaré à Alexandre Khatissian, 24 mars 1924, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>2019</sup> Frédéric Macler, *La Nation arménienne, son passé, ses malheurs*, Paris : Fischbacher, 1924.

<sup>2020</sup> Frédéric Macler, *Trois conférences sur l'Arménie faites à l'université de Strasbourg*, Paris : Paul Geuthner, 1927.

<sup>2021</sup> All his comments on the Republic of Turkey in his Memoirs are positive, not to say admiring: Maxime Weygand, *Mémoires*, volume II, *Mirages et Réalité*, Paris: Flammarion, 1957, pp. 484-490.

<sup>2022</sup> Le général Weygand, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie et au Liban, à Son Excellence Monsieur le président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 26 juin 1924, AMAE, P 15506.

<sup>2023</sup> On this victory: Jacques Chastenet, *Raymond Poincaré*, Paris : Julliard, 1948, pp. 259-260 ; Jean-Marie Mayeur, *La Vie politique sous la Troisième République. 1870-1940*, Paris: Le Seuil, 2001, pp. 271-277.

<sup>2024</sup> On these measures, see, for instance, Stanford Jay Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. II, New York-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp. 384-385; and Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Turkey in my Time*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956, pp. 136-139.

the Young Turks of Angora.”<sup>2025</sup> He considers this emerging Republic to be “the spiritual daughter of ours” and adds that the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the First World War would have been, perhaps, avoided, if the CUP had received “a support that we now want to give, sincerely” to the Republic of Turkey.<sup>2026</sup> He obtains the ratification of Lausanne treaty by 410 votes against 171 at the Chamber of deputies, after a debate without strong passion. The rapporteur Albert Milhaud (1871-1955) defends a “duty of sympathy” toward the rising Turkish Republic and advocates pragmatism: To settle the issue of the French schools, it is necessary to ratify the treaty.<sup>2027</sup>

The nationalist-conservative MP Fernand Engerrand (1867-1938) politely raises concerns about the French missionaries and the concurrence of the Anglo-Saxon ones but considers the treaty to be a fact and, as a result, does not oppose its ratification.<sup>2028</sup> The Socialist MP Pierre Renaudel mentions the Armenians, quotes a letter from Avétis Aharonian and regrets the absence of a national home for them in the treaty, but he clearly states that it will not prevent him to vote the text.<sup>2029</sup> Similarly, the speech of Georges Leygues also insists on the fate of the Armenians, particularly their dispersion outside Anatolia, but continues in saying that “nothing is more fair and more respectable” than the desire of Turkey to be sovereign on its soil. On the Armenian issue, Herriot answers to Leygues’ speech that the cabinet has “heard his so touching and so eloquent call”<sup>2030</sup>—a kind wording to express a refusal to do anything. The speech of the Communist deputy André Berthon is harsher: He uses the Armenian issue as a pretext, his main grievances being the continuation of the French domination in Syria and, above all, the fact that the USSR did not sign the Lausanne treaty. When Berthon deplores that the vote shall put a stone on the grave of Armenia, Herriot

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<sup>2025</sup> Édouard Herriot, “The Program of Liberal France,” *Foreign Affairs*, 15 June 1924, p. 562.

<sup>2026</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 26 août 1924, p. 3119.

<sup>2027</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3116-3123 (quotation p. 3119). Also see Albert Milhaud, « La République turque », *France & Monde*, 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1924, p. 327.

<sup>2028</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés*, 26 août 1924, pp. 3114-3115.

<sup>2029</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3160-3161.

<sup>2030</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3164-3166.



replies that “there are at least two stones on this grave” (the other one having been put by the USSR).<sup>2031</sup>

Anyway, the Armenian issue is of secondary importance in the debates and does not prevent the ratification to be voted by more than 70% of the deputies. At the Senate, the majority is overwhelming: 270 against 20.<sup>2032</sup> During the debates, the rapporteur Jules Gasser (1865-1958; center left) states that “nobody, even among its adversaries denies [the Turkish people’s] qualities of gentleness, work, perseverance and above all its national qualities.”<sup>2033</sup> Senator Jean Philip (1886-1952), a former Protestant pastor, makes a short speech to explain that he will not vote the ratification, because of the fate of the Armenians; Victor Bérard supports his view, but very laconically,<sup>2034</sup> and it does not change anything to the fact that the treaty is approved by more than 93% of the senators.

Not unlike the votes in Parliament, the dominant opinion in the press accepts the ratification. The *Journal des débats*, the only French national daily that has maintained an anti-Turkish line from mid-1920 to mid-1922 (with an interruption during the London conference of 1921), confirms its change since September 1922 and publishes an editorial justifying the vote in the Chamber of deputies, arguing that there was no other solution.<sup>2035</sup> In continuity with his articles discussed in the previous chapters, the specialist of foreign policy Saint-Brice welcomes the ratification and only deplores the time wasted to obtain it.<sup>2036</sup> *Le Gaulois*, hardly a supporter of Édouard Herriot’s cabinet, regardless congratulates him for having ratified the treaty, in the name of realism.<sup>2037</sup> *Le Figaro* (also in opposition to the *Cartel des gauches*) observes that “cries and imprecations” against Lausanne will not change anything:

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<sup>2031</sup> Ibid., pp. 3142-3143 ; « Le groupe communiste défend les ouvriers et dénonce l’impérialisme français », *L’Humanité*, 26 août 1924, pp. 1-2. On the Soviet disappointment toward Lausanne: Le commissaire spécial d’Annemasse à M. le ministre de l’Intérieur, 2 juin 1923, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 12943.

<sup>2032</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 28 août 1924, p. 1344.

<sup>2033</sup> Ibid., p. 1335.

<sup>2034</sup> Ibid., p. 1338.

<sup>2035</sup> Pierre Bernus, « La ratification du traité de Lausanne », *Journal des débats*, 27 août 1924, p. 1. The daily continues to soften its tone after 1924: « Lettre de Turquie — Les réformes », *Journal des débats*, 20 septembre 1928, p. 2.

<sup>2036</sup> Saint-Brice, « La ratification du traité de Lausanne », *Correspondance d’Orient*, septembre 1924, pp. 513-520.

<sup>2037</sup> René Lara, « Notre politique en Turquie », *Le Gaulois*, 26 août 1924, p. 1.

Lausanne is a fact<sup>2038</sup>—a position similar to the one of René Pinon in the *Revue des deux mondes* and to the conclusion of *Le Journal*.<sup>2039</sup> Correspondingly, the nationalist-conservative daily *L'Écho de Paris* also advocates realism and even praises the rapporteur for the quality of his speech.<sup>2040</sup> *Le Petit Journal*, the other widely distributed daily of conservative nationalism, similarly calls the ratification a “necessity,”<sup>2041</sup> and not surprisingly, a certain satisfaction is perceptible in the left-wing press after the vote.<sup>2042</sup>

On 30 August, Herriot sends a long letter to Mougin to ask him to go back to Ankara as representative again, to resume “a loyal collaboration between France and Turkey, based on the integral implementation of the Lausanne treaty and on the conclusion of fair agreements on the points not fixed by the treaty.” Mougin accepts and, before going back to Turkey, is promoted as brigadier general.<sup>2043</sup> Welcomed in Turkey, Mougin fixes in two months (September-October) the issue of the Catholic schools closed down in April of the same year and saves what can be saved in terms of trade and investments, in spite of the incapacity of some representatives of the French big business to understand the changes in Turkey. Mougin finishes his mission by a trip on the Black Sea coast, where he meets a constant enthusiasm toward himself and his country.<sup>2044</sup> To replace Mougin, Herriot chooses in 1925 a prominent political personality, Albert Sarraut (undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior from 1906 to 1909, governor of Indochina from 1911 to 1914, minister of National Education from 1914 to 1915, then of Colonies from 1920 to 1924), to show to Ankara the importance

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<sup>2038</sup> Henry Vidal, « À la Chambre — Le traité de Lausanne », *Le Figaro*, 26 août 1924, p. 1-2.

<sup>2039</sup> René Pinon, « Chronique de la quinzaine », *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 octobre 1924, p. 957 ; « La Chambre discute le traité de Lausanne entre les Alliés et la Turquie », *Le Journal*, 26 août 1924, p. 1. Pinon later expresses his “interest and sympathy” for the Kemalist revolution: see his forward (page without number) to Ali Fuad, *La Question des Détroits*, Paris: Pierre Bossuet, 1928.

<sup>2040</sup> « La Chambre discute le traité de Lausanne », *L'Écho de Paris*, 26 août 1924, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>2041</sup> « La Chambre, par 410 voix contre 171, ratifie du le traité de Lausanne », *Le Petit Journal*, 26 août 1924, p. 1.

<sup>2042</sup> « Il aura fallu un an... — Le traité de Lausanne devant la Chambre », *Paris-Soir*, 26 août 1924, p. 1 ; « Le traité de Lausanne », *La Lanterne*, 26 août 1924, p. 1 ; Maurice Charny, « Pour la paix de l'Orient — La Chambre discute le traité de Lausanne », *Le Rappel*, 26 août 1924, p. 1 ; « La Chambre ratifie le traité de Lausanne », *L'Œuvre*, 26 août 1924, pp. 1-2 ; « Après un discours de M. Herriot sur le rôle de la France en Orient, la Chambre ratifie le traité de Lausanne », *L'Homme libre*, 26 août 1924, pp. 1 and 3 ; « Le traité de Lausanne est soumis à la ratification de la Chambre », *Le Petit Méridional*, 26 août 1924, p. 1.

<sup>2043</sup> Paul Dumont, « À l'aube du... ».pp. 89-90.

<sup>2044</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90-96 ; « Déclarations du général Mougin », *Le Gaulois*, 29 septembre 1924, p. 3.

of the bilateral relations for Paris. More concretely, France sends advisors for the reconstruction of the Turkish Navy and professors for the University of Istanbul, as well as for high schools of Bursa and Izmir;<sup>2045</sup> and Turkey chooses a French company for the two radio-telegraphic stations of Ankara and İstanbul, in spite of the fierce German concurrence.<sup>2046</sup>

The quick end of the crisis opened in 1923 shows once again a clear difference with Britain, which does not find a way for reconciliation with Turkey until 1926 (in spite of the death of Lord Bryce in 1922 and of British-Armenia Committee chair Aneurin Williams in 1924),<sup>2047</sup> and even more with the U.S. Indeed, if the Armenian groups and their few remaining friends are unable to prevent the ratification of the Lausanne treaty in France or the UK, four years of activism of the American Committee for Independence of Armenia manage the failure of the “other Lausanne” (normalization agreement) in front of the American Senate in 1927. 50 senators vote for, 34 against, i.e. less than the required majority. The re-establishment of regular diplomatic relations is, as a result, due to a presidential executive order only.<sup>2048</sup> It also bears noting that there is nothing in France like the movement acting in Switzerland, around 1926, to ask the League of Nations the resurrection of the “national home” project in exchange of the admission of Turkey.<sup>2049</sup>

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<sup>2045</sup> Jean Méliá, *Mustapha Kémal ou la rénovation de la Turquie*, Paris : Fasquelle, 1929, pp. 236-237. Also see Max Bonnafous, « Constantinople-Angora : tableaux de la Turquie nouvelle », *La Grande Revue*, avril 1929, pp. 224-235 ; and Berthe Georges-Gaulis, « Sept jours à Angora », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 14 mai 1927, pp. 197-226.

<sup>2046</sup> Gaston Jeanmougin, « Les relations franco-turques en 1925 — Une amitié à l'épreuve », *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, janvier-juin 1970, p. 128.

<sup>2047</sup> Nevin Coşar and Sevtap Demirci, “The Mosul Question and the Turkish Republic: Before and after the Frontier Treaty, 1926,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XLII-1, January 2006, pp. 123-132; Yuluğ Tekin Kurat, “Anglo-Turkish Relations during Kemal Atatürk’s Presidency of the Turkish Republic,” *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, IV, 1984, pp. 115-127.

<sup>2048</sup> Gregory Aftandilian, *Armenia, Vision of a Republic. The Independence Lobby in Armenia, 1919-1927*, Boston: Charles River Books, 1981, pp. 55-62; Robert Daniel, “The Armenian Question...”, pp. 270-275; Joseph Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and...*, pp. 280-284; Mark Malkasian, “The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984, pp. 359-361; Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America. The Creation of an Enduring Prejudice*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010, pp. 284-286.

<sup>2049</sup> Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *L'Exil arménien*, Geneva : Société générale d'imprimerie, 1926, pp. 14-27 and 33.

### 6.3.2. *The opposition of policies*

Beside the simple normalization of the relations, and before the departure of Mougin, the Quai d'Orsay not only implements the Ankara agreement of 1921 (allowing the Turkish troops to pass through Syria after having presented a demand) to facilitate the suppression of the Şey Sait insurrection, but exceptionally reduces the prior notice to two days.<sup>2050</sup> This help, but also the mere necessity to find money and a political support, is at the origin of articles in the Turkish press, inspired by its government, and advocating a rapprochement with Paris.<sup>2051</sup>

Yet, this choice is in formal opposition with the ARF policy, as the Dashnaks have proposed Şey Sait a material support for his rebellion—being more Islamist than Kurdish nationalist, Sait refused this proposal made by Christians, who ultimately claimed the same territories than him. The Quai d'Orsay's archives are silent on this ARF attempt, and the Dashnak archives are not open, so there is no available evidence on what both sides thought about this opposition, but it is safe to conclude that the Şey Sait insurrection only confirmed the shift of 1920-21. It also deserves to be noted that the military attaché in Turkey, Lieutenant-Colonel (later Army General) Georges Catroux considers the involvement of UK possible.<sup>2052</sup> Correspondingly, the same year, if Paris does not accept the suggestion of its ambassador in Ankara, Sarraut, namely supporting the Turkish claims on Mossul, the French government eases the tension between its British and Turkish allies,<sup>2053</sup> and the next year, Sarraut and the new high commissioner in Beirut, Henri Ponsot, obtain the signature of a friendship

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<sup>2050</sup> Télégramme du ministre des Affaires étrangères aux hauts-commissaires à Constantinople et Beyrouth, 27 mars 1925, AMAE, P 15506. On the revolt itself : Télégramme du général Mougin au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 27 février 1925 ; Le lieutenant-colonel Catroux à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 mars 1925, AMAE, P 15506.

<sup>2051</sup> Télégramme de Gaston Jessé-Curely au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 11 mars 1925, AMAE, P 15506.

<sup>2052</sup> Le lieutenant-colonel Catroux, attaché militaire en Turquie, à M. le ministre de la guerre, 24 février 1925, p. 3, AMAE, P 15506.

<sup>2053</sup> Gaston Jeanmougin, « Les relations franco-turques... », pp. 133-148.

convention, including measures against transboundary criminality, against epidemics and the establishment of a committee to fix the Turkish-Syrian boundary in detail.<sup>2054</sup>

It is true that in 1926, victim of the fierce hostility of the banks against his financial and social policy, as well as of his own errors, Herriot is censored by the Senate. Unable to conciliate anymore the Socialist wing and the centrist component of his majority at the Chamber of deputies, he has to replace it by a new one, made of the center left and the center right, under the leadership of Raymond Poincaré, who remains the President of the Ministers' Council until 1929, Herriot being minister of National Education.<sup>2055</sup> However, it does not change anything to the French policies toward Turkey,<sup>2056</sup> and Aristide Briand, back at the Quai d'Orsay as early as 1925, remains the minister of Foreign Affairs until January 1932, a few weeks before his death.<sup>2057</sup>

This framework is indispensable to understand why there is no representative of the French Republic at the funerals of Antranik, on 29 January 1928: His services "do not seem to justify the presence of an official representative of the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs] at his funerals," still less as such a presence to a ceremony "in honor of an Armenian who, well before the [First World] War, took part to the revolutionary movement against the Ottoman Empire would not fail to excite the susceptibility of the Turkish government."<sup>2058</sup> Actually, the Armenian committees, when they are still considered by the French state, now are a source of headaches for the French administration and nothing else. The political organizations are deeply divided between the ARF, the Communists, the Hunchaks and the Ramkavars,<sup>2059</sup> and,

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<sup>2054</sup> « Un accord d'amicalité neutralité entre la France et la Turquie a été signé hier à Ankara », *Le Journal*, 20 février 1926. The full text is in *L'Europe nouvelle*, 30 octobre 1926, pp. 1505-1509.

<sup>2055</sup> Jean-Noël Jeanneney, *Leçon d'histoire pour une gauche au pouvoir. La faillite du Cartel (1924-1926)*, Paris : Le Seuil, 2003 ; Jean-Marie Mayeur, *La Vie politique...*, pp. 282-290.

<sup>2056</sup> Jean Méliá, *Mustapha Kémal ou...*, p. 237.

<sup>2057</sup> Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand, le ferme conciliateur*, Paris : Fayard, 2005, pp. 484-592.

<sup>2058</sup> Note pour Monsieur le secrétaire général, 27 janvier 1928, AMAE, P 16678.

<sup>2059</sup> Astrig Atamian, « Les Arméniens communistes de France, une histoire oubliée », *Amnis*, n° 7, 2007, pp. 73-83 ; Jean-Luc Huard, « Les Églises arméniennes et les réfugiés en Rhône-Alpes dans l'entre-deux-guerres (1918-1940) », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, n° 78, 2009, pp. 141-157. The divisions are even more bitter in the U.S. at the same period, as shows the assassination of Archbishop Tourian by the ARF on 24 December 1933: Benjamin Alexander, "Contested Memories, Divided Diaspora: Armenian Americans, the Thousand-Day Republic, and the Polarized Response to an Archbishop's Murder," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, XXVII-1, Fall 2007, pp. 32-59.

as a result, weakened. In 1927, Aram Turabian tries to create a joint organization of the ARF, the Hunchak and the Ramkavar, but the Dashnaks of Marseille, initially supportive of his initiative, quickly turn against him, and least some of them even threaten to kill him, most probably because of his support to Soviet Armenia.<sup>2060</sup> The same year, the union of Armenian associations in Lyon and its region splits in two rival groups.<sup>2061</sup> Turabian stops the publication of his monthly in 1931, when tuberculosis forces him to reduce his activity. After this date, his political importance is virtually insignificant, and he finishes his life facing financial difficulties, helped by some wealthy friends.<sup>2062</sup>

The Ramkavar Party and its main branch, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) do not face such financial problems, but their relations with the French Republic continue to deteriorate after 1923, particularly because of their refusal to significantly contribute to the high cost of the settlement of Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon. A note of the Quai d'Orsay, dated 10 August 1929 explains that "when the French government was sought to give a subvention of three millions, it was argued that this gesture was necessary to provoke the donations the Armenian, American and English organizations were ready to make." Yet, continues the note, only the Lord Mayor's Fund actually provided a substantial contribution. "The Armenians who have collected funds use or keep them for mysterious aims of political character." In 1928, when he was firmly asked "by the English to say if the Armenian committees would accept to provide a contribution equal to the one of the Lord Mayor's Fund, Mr. Pashalian stated he was not entitled to answer,"<sup>2063</sup> which surely provoked the ire of London and Paris, as Levon Pashalian is one of the main Ramkavar leaders of the interwar.

Indeed, from 1921 to 1926 only, the costs of the Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon represent 9,334,000 francs for the French Public Treasure. For the Lebanese one, it is

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<sup>2060</sup> Aram Turabian, « Une lettre de menace », *Aiguillon*, 20 mai 1927, p. 2 ; Aram Turabian, « La Russie et l'Arménie », *Aiguillon*, 20 juin 1927, p. 2 ; Aram Turabian, *Trente ans en France. Ma vie*, Marseille: Imprimerie nouvelle, 1928, pp. 20-21.

<sup>2061</sup> Le commissaire spécial de Lyon à M. le préfet du Rhône, 10 novembre 1928, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

<sup>2062</sup> Le directeur des Renseignements généraux à Monsieur le préfet de police, 22 janvier 1935, APP, BA 2031, dossier Turabian (50435). This end is reminiscent of the one of Vahan Cardashian: Gregory Aftandilian, *Armenia, Vision of...*, p. 63.

<sup>2063</sup> AMAE, P 16677. Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire*, Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004, pp. 324-332 discusses the settlement in Lebanon and Syria without mentioning this dispute.

3,309,000 francs from 1919 to 1926, including three millions during the sole year 1926.<sup>2064</sup> From 1919 to 1921, the expenses represent 22,200,00.<sup>2065</sup> Yet, during the 1920s, the Ramkavar/AGBU pays 2,500,000 francs to create a village in Soviet Armenia and 1,417,000 francs for the Nubar library in Paris,<sup>2066</sup> but only 1,200 pounds (150,000 francs in 1928) for the Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon.<sup>2067</sup> Similarly, in 1926, the French government gives 80,000 francs to the Ramkavar Armenian National Union (UNA) of Marseille for the Armenian unemployed workers, but only 10,000 francs are actually used for them, and the UNA pronounces its self-dissolution.<sup>2068</sup> Such choices and methods hardly improve the image of the Ramkavar, and Nubar dies in 1930. He is not quickly replaced. On the contrary, Archag Tchobanian himself, who deceases in 1954, reduces his political activity between 1923 and 1945.<sup>2069</sup>

The Hunchak Party pronounces its self-dissolution in 1923, like the ARF of Armenia, but is reconstituted the next year.<sup>2070</sup> During the interwar, this organization is a serious subject of concern for the French authorities, particularly in Lebanon and Syria, because of its support to the Soviet Union, in the context of the political use of the Armenian refugees. It is true that the high commission in Beirut has tried its best to prevent the emigration of 1921-1922, and actually these refugees remain a burden for the French and Lebanese tax-payers for years. However, after 1922, the high commission stops seeing them as a source of expenses *only*. Both as Christians and as refugees, they can easily constitute a clientele for the

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<sup>2064</sup> Le haut-commissaire de la République française à Son Excellence le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 15 novembre 1928, AMAE, P 16677. Also see, in the same microfilm : Dr Duguet and Georges Burnier, Rapport présenté au sous-comité de la Société des nations pour l'établissement des réfugiés arméniens en Syrie et au Liban (session de septembre 1928) ; and Antoine Poidebard, « La Mission française des camps arméniens de Beyrouth », *Revue internationale de la Croix-rouge*, janvier 1926, pp. 16-22.

<sup>2065</sup> Direction des Finances, Dépenses à ce jour du Service de l'assistance aux Arméniens pour 1919, 1920 et 1921, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>2066</sup> « Boghos Nubar Pacha », *Le Foyer*, 1er juillet 1930, p. 1.

<sup>2067</sup> « L'établissement des réfugiés arméniens en Syrie », *Le Foyer*, 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1929, p. 1.

<sup>2068</sup> Georges Altman, « Mornes aspects de Marseille éclatante », *L'Humanité*, 25 mars 1927, p. 1 ; « La question des 80 000 francs », *Aiguillon*, 20 avril 1927, p. 3.

<sup>2069</sup> Rapport des renseignements généraux de la préfecture de police de Paris, 30 août 1938, APP, BA 2031, dossier Tchobanian ; Edmond Khayadjian, *Archag Tchobanian et le mouvement arménophile en France*, Marseille : CNDP, 1986, pp. 314-318 and 330.

<sup>2070</sup> Anahide Ter-Minassian, "The 'Self-Liquidation' of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Yerevan in 1923," *Armenian Review*, XLIV-2, Summer 1991, pp. 71-110.

mandatory authorities,<sup>2071</sup> in the context of the establishment of a Greater Lebanon, where the Muslims represent about the half of the population and where the balance of power between the communities has to be found with precautions.<sup>2072</sup> As early as 1920s, the Armenians of Lebanon have their networks of schools and churches.<sup>2073</sup>

Yet, in spite of the money spent by the French state and by the Lord Mayor's Fund, the material conditions of the majority of Armenians in Lebanon and Syria remain very precarious for years<sup>2074</sup> and in France, the language barrier and the absence of degrees delivered by French schools reduces the majority—not unlike in the U.S. and Argentina—to the condition of humble workers, mostly agglomerated in “Armenian villages” near industrial cities and in some streets of Paris and Lyon, where arranged marriages are the rule.<sup>2075</sup>

This combination of misery or poverty on one side, geographical concentration on the other side, makes them an interesting target for the Hunchak and its big brother, the USSR. That is probably the main reason why Communist Armenians play a special role in Lebanon and Syria: During the 1920s, in addition to the Lebanese Communist Party, there is an Armenian Community Party, “Spartag,” operating in Lebanon and Syria, and the headquarter is not located in any of these countries but in Yerevan. Spartag has “revolutionary, nay terrorist

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<sup>2071</sup> Le haut-commissaire par intérim à Son Excellence Monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 octobre 1926, pp. 6-7 ; Note sur l'établissement des réfugiés arméniens de Syrie, remise par M. Albert Thomas, 12 septembre 1927, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>2072</sup> Élisabeth Morlin, « Pourquoi un “Grand Liban” ? Le rôle des puissances et des diasporas libanaises », *Hérodote*, n° 53, avril-juin 1989, pp. 101-122 ; Nadine Picaudou, *La Décennie qui ébranla le Moyen-Orient*, Bruxelles : Complexe, 1992, pp. 127-128 ; Maxime Weygand, *Mirages et réalité...*, pp. 212, 225 and 232-234. The issue of the demographic balance is raised as early as 1921, but without reference to the Armenians yet: Notes sur le Grand Liban et le mandat français, novembre 1921, SHD, 1 K 247/37.

<sup>2073</sup> V. V., *Pour mieux connaître les Arméniens du Liban et de la Syrie*, Beirut : Imprimerie Angélil, 1931, pp. 35-37. This immigration is not necessarily appreciated by the Christian Arabs: « En marge des événements », *Les Échos* (Damas), 22 novembre 1928, p. 1 ; « À nos amis arméniens », *Les Échos*, 20 décembre 1928, p. 3.

<sup>2074</sup> Le haut-commissaire par intérim à Son Excellence Monsieur le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 12 octobre 1926, pp. 1-2, AMAE, P 16677.

<sup>2075</sup> Le directeur de la police d'État de Nice à Monsieur le ministre de l'Intérieur, 29 septembre 1925 ; Le commissaire spécial de Valence à Monsieur le secrétaire général du ministère de l'Intérieur, 10 mai 1926, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436 ; Le ministre du Travail à M. le ministre de l'Intérieur, direction de la Sûreté générale, 20 décembre 1925, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 16074 ; « À Alfortville, dans l'île Saint-Pierre, 4 000 Arméniens ont fondé un village », *Paris-Soir*, 18 décembre 1933, p. 3 ; Michel Garin, *Les Arméniens, les Grecs et les Juifs originaires de Grèce et de Turquie à Paris entre 1920 et 1936*, Istanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2010, pp. 32-33 and 35-36 ; Anahide Ter-Minassian, « La diaspora arménienne », *Hérodote*, n° 53, avril-juin 1989, pp. 135 and 137.



tendencies.”<sup>2076</sup> Correspondingly, at the beginning of 1930s, when a Syrian Communist Party emerges, the large majority of the members identified by the police are Armenians.<sup>2077</sup>

Regardless, the Relief Committee for Armenia (HOG or HOK) is the most important tool of Communist influence among the Armenians, both in the Near East and in France. Initially made of “capitalist and nationalist” elements who oppose the Soviets, the HOG is put under the control of the Ramkavar by 1921, which makes the Committee more conciliatory toward Moscow. However, in 1928, its president, Melkonian, resigns, as the USSR wants to transform the HOG into a pure and simple instrument. This time, it is the Hunchak Party which is used by the Soviets to impose this change, and eventually, by 1931—this time without crisis—, the HOG is controlled by a majority of Communists, the Hunchaks continuing to be represented at the bureau <sup>2078</sup> —perhaps even more easily as an official of the HOG, Kourken Tahmazian,<sup>2079</sup> had been the leader of the Hunchak in France before joining the French Communist Party around 1921.<sup>2080</sup> Another known figure of the HOG who is not a member of a Communist Party is Zabel Essayan—the same Essayan who had brazenly threatened high commissioner Albert Defrance to provoke troubles in Çukurova, in 1920. Essayan is also, at the end of 1920s, a redactor of the HOG’s organ in France *Erivan*, yet that newspaper gives a way to “an anti-French Communist propaganda.”<sup>2081</sup>

Indeed, the pro-Soviet choice of the Hunchak and Essayan is in formal contradiction with the French government’s policy. No matter if the cabinet wishes to improve the relation with

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<sup>2076</sup> Le directeur de la Sûreté générale à M. le haut-commissaire par intérim de la République française, 17 juin 1927 ; Commandant Terrier, Note au sujet du communisme au Levant, 4 mars 1931, pp. 3-4 and 8, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 14984 ; Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à Monsieur le ministre de l’Intérieur, 6 avril 1927, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13411. The use of Armenians for Communist activities is not new: Le chef de bataillon Dentz, officier de liaison de l’État-major général auprès du haut-commissaire, à M. le haut-commissaire, 19 octobre 1921, SHD, 20 N 1103. In fact, “these [radical] Armenians were at heart revolutionaries, always in revolt against any government, always obstinately intolerant of any rulers; and I was not surprised to hear that they had prospered with the Bolsheviks.” (Harold Armstrong, *Turkey and Syria Reborn*, London: John Lane, 1930, p. 106).

<sup>2077</sup> Syrie — Propagande communiste, 12 juillet 1930 ; Syrie-Liban : le communisme, 19 mars 1931, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 14984.

<sup>2078</sup> Note sur le Comité de secours pour l’Arménie, HOG, 5 mars 1932, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

<sup>2079</sup> Rapport du commissaire spécial de Marseille, 23 décembre 1925, n° 4065, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

<sup>2080</sup> Préfecture de police de Paris, A/S des Arméniens résidant dans la région parisienne, février 1930, APP, BA 2146 ; « Nécrologie », *L’Humanité*, 10 mars 1936, p. 6.

<sup>2081</sup> Le préfet de police à Monsieur le ministre de l’Intérieur, 19 avril 1928, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

Moscow (like the ones of the Cartel des gauches from 1924 to 1926) or not, the Communist activities are under the strict surveillance of the police, and the Armenian Communists (or fellow travelers) are expelled each time the authorities find a reason. For example, in 1925 five are deported, from Paris only.<sup>2082</sup> Similarly, in September 1927, Yegnia Tchubar, redactor of *Erivan* and vice-president of the HOG, is expelled.<sup>2083</sup> The support for Stalin's policies does not even achieve to secure the internal integrity of the Hunchak, whose French branch experiences a scission, mostly due to personal grievances, in December 1929,<sup>2084</sup> and which weakens the party until the beginning of the Cold War.<sup>2085</sup>

If the ARF tries six times to assassinate Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) from 1924 to 1927,<sup>2086</sup> its French branch keeps a relatively low profile until 1926—likely because of the shock of Lausanne, perhaps also because precisely, the French police's intelligence division continues to outright the Dashnaks, and has not forgotten its terrorist activities, such as the assassination of Talat in 1921.<sup>2087</sup> As late as January 1926, Aharonian asks (at least in a public speech delivered in Marseille) his followers to keep to “respect the hospitality” provided by the French Republic and above all to refrain “from mingling with political issues.” Yet, as early as this speech, Communists who attend the event and express their strong opposition are beaten by Dashnaks.<sup>2088</sup>

Then, on 2 May 1926, the arrival of Communists in a Dashnak meeting organized by the same Aharonian in Lyon provokes a fiercer clash, which continues in the street; one Communist is

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<sup>2082</sup> « Cinq Arméniens, agitateurs communistes, sont expulsés », *Le Petit Parisien*, 14 février 1925, p. 2.

<sup>2083</sup> Direction de la Sûreté générale, « Comité de secours pour l'Arménie », 6 juillet 1928, AMAE, 1 QO 98.

<sup>2084</sup> Rapport des Renseignements généraux de la préfecture de police de Paris, au sujet des Arméniens résidant dans la région parisienne, février 1930, APP, BA 2146.

<sup>2085</sup> Le commissaire spécial de Lyon à Monsieur le préfet du Rhône, 19 novembre 1930 ; Le commissaire spécial de Saint-Étienne à Monsieur le Directeur de la Sûreté générale, 15 septembre 1932, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436 ; Direction générale de la Sûreté nationale, La colonie arménienne de Paris, février 1948, APP, BA 1681, p. 12.

<sup>2086</sup> Bilâl Şimşir, *Şehit diplomatlarımız (1973-1994)...*, volume I, pp. 61-73.

<sup>2087</sup> Rapport du commissaire spécial d'Annemasse, 15 juillet 1924, AN F<sup>7</sup> 13468.

<sup>2088</sup> Rapport du commissaire spécial de Marseille, 25 janvier 1926, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436. On the vision of the ARF by the Communists at that time: Henri Barbusse, *Voici ce qu'on a fait de la Géorgie*, Paris: Flammarion, 1929, pp. 27-28, 39-41, 97-98, 118-119, 247 and 263.

killed,<sup>2089</sup> and of course, the party of the victim strongly protests after his death.<sup>2090</sup> Avetis Aharonian is sentenced to a fine of 25 francs, as early as 6 May of the same year, for his participation to the clash, and an administrative investigation is launched in 1927 to assess if a deportation measure is opportune or not.<sup>2091</sup> Because the investigation does not provide any negative information against Aharonian, and also because of his former diplomatic statute, the Parisian police does not propose to expel him,<sup>2092</sup> but Aharonian, informed of the verifications about him commits the error to complain to one of his friends, Marius Moutet, a member of the Parliament. Moutet writes to the minister of Interior, on 27 June 1927 to ask for an apology. The only result is to exasperate the authorities: “No! No apologies” writes the police officer in the margins of the copy of Moutet’s letter he receives.<sup>2093</sup>

Actually, far from obtaining apologies, Aharonian receives a notification of the Public Treasure, explaining that the tax exemption for the Armenian Delegation—which still calls itself Delegation of the Republic of Armenia—is over. Aharonian tries to obtain the cancelation of this decision, but in vain, and his ultimate attempt, in writing to the MFA in January 1928, fails.<sup>2094</sup> Yet, it does not seem that the ARF understands the danger of practicing homicidal violence and the uselessness of political interventions in case of an investigation. Indeed, on 17 January 1929, a Hunchak leader of Lebanon, Sarkis Kiderian, is assassinated by Dashnaks, in reprisal of the murder a Dashnak the year before. About fifteen ARF leaders and members are arrested, including Vahan Papazian and the Dashnak daily of Beirut, *Aztag*, is temporarily banned. From his jail, Papazian writes to the Delegation in Paris, and Aharonian contacts two parliamentarians, Pierre Renaudel and Justin Godart, who write

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<sup>2089</sup> Rapport du commissaire spécial de Lyon, 3 mai 1926, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

<sup>2090</sup> « La propagande antisoviétique chez les ouvriers étrangers », *L’Humanité*, 8 juin 1926, p. 2.

<sup>2091</sup> Rapport du cabinet du préfet de police, 1<sup>er</sup> bureau, 13 juillet 1927, APP, BA 1980, dossier Aharonian (29.084).

<sup>2092</sup> Le préfet de police à M. le préfet du Rhône, 22 juillet 1927, APP, BA 1980, dossier Aharonian (29.084).

<sup>2093</sup> APP, BA 1980, dossier Aharonian (29.084).

<sup>2094</sup> Lettre d’Avétis Aharonian, président de la Délégation de la République arménienne, au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 11 janvier 1928 ; Note pour la sous-direction des chancelleries, 7 mars 1928, AMAE, P 16678.

to the minister of Foreign Affairs, asking to avoid a collective punishment.<sup>2095</sup> After these letters are transmitted to Beirut, the high commission answers by a concise and incisive telegram: “The probe opened by the prosecutor of Beirut has revealed the purely political nature of this crime,” and Papazian is among the persons who are in jail because the investigators consider this incarceration necessary.<sup>2096</sup> Then, the Quai d’Orsay echoes this response, and ends the discussion.<sup>2097</sup>

Regardless, this affair is not the only subject of tensions between the French high commission in Beirut and the ARF. Indeed, in 1927, the Hoybun, the first significant Kurdish nationalist organization, is established, and signs an agreement with the Dashnaks the same year, in the name of “Aryan fraternity” and with the aim to establish an “Aryan confederation” made of Iran, a Kurdistan and an independent, enlarged Armenia, and backed by Fascist Italy. Vahan Papazian is a member of the central committee of both the ARF and Hoybun; in the Hoybun, he is particularly in charge of finances, and the months he spends in jail, in 1929, coincide with a collapse of the Hoybun activities.<sup>2098</sup> As we already saw, these ideas of “Aryan fraternity” and “Aryan federation” are hardly new for the ARF, which claimed a common “Aryan” origin of Kurds and Armenians to justify the persistence of its territorial claims toward eastern Anatolia in 1922. In 1928, the Hoybun chapter of Aleppo is banned by the French authorities. They expel several leaders from Syria and force the Matossian Company to fire another one.<sup>2099</sup> In 1930, the insurrection of the Hoybun around the Ağrı Mountain is suppressed by the Turkish army, and the next year Papazian moves to Paris. Yet, his activities

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<sup>2095</sup> Lettre de Vahan Papazian à Avétis Aharonian, 24 janvier 1929 ; Lettre de Pierre Renaudel au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 7 février 1929 ; Lettre de Justin Godart au ministre des Affaires étrangères, 10 février 1929, AMAE, P 16678 ; « Après le crime arménien », *Les Échos de Damas*, 24 janvier 1929, p. 2.

<sup>2096</sup> Télégramme du haut-commissariat de Beyrouth, 14 février 1929, AMAE, P 16678.

<sup>2097</sup> The draft of the letter from the MFA to Renaudel and Godart (19 February 1929) in AMAE, P 16678 is the very last document on the subject in the subseries Armenia 1918-1940.

<sup>2098</sup> Le commissaire spécial de Saint-Étienne à Monsieur le Directeur de la Sûreté générale, 2 décembre 1930, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436 ; Gwynner Dyer, “Correspondence...”, pp. 381-382; Jordi Tejel Gorgas, *Le Mouvement kurde de Turquie en exil. Continuités et discontinuités du nationalisme kurde sous le mandat français en Syrie et au Liban (1925-1946)*, Berne : Peter Lang, 2007, pp. 121, 138, 220 and 225-228 ; Yavuz Selim (ed.), *Taşnak Hoybun*, İstanbul : İleri, 2005 (1st edition, 1931). On the ARF and Fascist Italy, also see Dépêche de l’ambassadeur de France auprès du Saint-Siège, 10 février 1928, P 16678 ; and Pierre Terzian, « La question arménienne aujourd’hui », *Critique socialiste*, n° 44, 4<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1982, p. 59.

<sup>2099</sup> Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011, p. 114.

are not ignored by the high commission in Beirut, which expresses the wish that Papazian be not allowed anymore to go back to Syria or Lebanon. On 24 April 1931, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the Ministry of Interior that, as a result of the demand from Beirut, Papazian is banned from entering the states under French mandate, and that the police is requested to monitor him “discretely but rather closely.”<sup>2100</sup>

Five months after this ban, Alexandre Khatissian, vice-president of the Delegation of the Armenian Republic (now called “Central Committee for the Armenian Refugees”), asks the Quai d’Orsay for the permission to another ARF official, Archak Issahakian, to “study the needs and situation” of the Armenians in Syria,<sup>2101</sup> but this unsophisticated attempt to dupe the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fails. Asked by the Quai d’Orsay if he sees a problem with Issahakian’s wish, the general secretary of the high commission in Beirut answers that “considering the activities of the Dashnak party and the susceptibility of the Turkish government in this regard, I consider that the trip of Mr. Issahakian in Syria would be inopportune.”<sup>2102</sup> The subdirector for Near East and Africa fully endorses this view and asks the service of Control of aliens to reject the demand. It is actually rejected.<sup>2103</sup>

Beside these issues of terrorist and insurrectional activities, the very existence of the ARF’s main group, namely the “Delegation of the Armenian Republic,” is a recurrent subject of grievance for the French authorities. Indeed, the passports it delivers have no legal value<sup>2104</sup> but are an important source of funding for the Dashnaks. As a result, the representatives of the “Delegation” are repeatedly requested to stop delivering such passports—the one in Marseille even being threatened of deportation, in 1930, if he continues.<sup>2105</sup> In short, the ARF is, during the inter-war, a subject for criminal and police records.

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<sup>2100</sup> APP, BA 2329.

<sup>2101</sup> Lettre d’Alexandre Khatissian à M. Sicard, consul de France, sous-directeur des Affaires administratives et consulaires, 26 septembre 1931, AMAE, 1QO 98.

<sup>2102</sup> AMAE, 1 QO 98.

<sup>2103</sup> Note pour le service du contrôle des étrangers, 8 mars 1932 ; Le contrôle des étrangers à la Délégation de la République arménienne, 11 mars 1932, AMAE, 1 QO 98.

<sup>2104</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à Messieurs les agents diplomatiques et consulaires à l’étranger 25 avril 1925, AMAE, 1 QO 95.

<sup>2105</sup> Le commissaire spécial à Monsieur le préfet des Bouches-du-Rhône, 31 décembre 1929 ; Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à Monsieur le ministre de l’Intérieur, président du Conseil, 7 février 1930, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 16074.

### 6.3.3. 1933: Culmination of the reconciliation with Turkey... and of conflict with the ARF

Meanwhile, Charles de Chambrun, “one of the most brilliant” diplomats of his generation,<sup>2106</sup> who previously worked at the high commission of İstanbul in 1921-1922, and who even received, in 1913, a proposal of hiring from the *Ottoman* Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is chosen by Aristide Briand as the new ambassador in Ankara in 1928. Briand and the general secretary of the Ministry Philippe Berthelot give him the instruction to settle the issue of the Turkish-Syrian boundary’s line, to finish the restore the French-Turkish friendship and for that, to be in Ankara instead of İstanbul as much as possible.<sup>2107</sup> Charles de Chambrun is exceptionally accepted as ambassador even before presenting his credentials and quickly becomes an admirer of Kemal’s revolution. He liquidates the issue of the Syrian boundary in a few months, then obtains the signature of a friendship treaty in 1930, ratified by the French Parliament in 1933, after the question of the Ottoman debt is settled, too. Ambassador de Chambrun is also at the origin of the French Institute of Anatolia studies, in 1930.<sup>2108</sup> Similarly, in 1931, Turkey is accepted at the League of Nations’ commission for the European Union, the last grand project of Aristide Briand.<sup>2109</sup> The same year the ARF plot to assassinate İnönü is discovered by the Greek police<sup>2110</sup>—which shows, once again, how deep is the gap between the Dashnak policy and the French one.

Then, in 1932, Turkey, encouraged by Ambassador de Chambrun, joins the League of Nations, and, contrary to the hopes of what remains of the pro-Armenian movement in

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<sup>2106</sup> Jules-François Blondel, *Au Fil de la Carrière. Récit d’un diplomate, 1911-1938*, Paris : Hachette, 1961, p. 33. Also see Jean-Paul Garnier, *Excellences et Plumes blanches*, Paris : Fayard, 1961, pp. 13 and 19.

<sup>2107</sup> Charles de Chambrun, *Traditions et Souvenirs*, Paris : Flammarion, 1952, pp. 82, 113-118 and 123-124.

<sup>2108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127-145.

<sup>2109</sup> Antoine Fleury, « Le plan Briand d’Union fédérale européenne : les dimensions diplomatiques, 1929-1932 », in Jacques Bariéty (ed.), *Aristide Briand, la Société des nations et l’Europe. 1919-1932*, Strasbourg : Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007, pp. 339-354.

<sup>2110</sup> Renseignement, 3 octobre 1931, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

Switzerland<sup>2111</sup> the issue of a “national home” is not raised. More concretely, Turkey accepts in 1933 the French-inspired Balkan pact.<sup>2112</sup>

1933 may be considered the end of the period of elimination of the residual issues after Lausanne, and not only because the French-Turkish treaty of friendship is ratified this year. Indeed, the sole attempt to re-create a pro-Armenian movement in France, between 1922 and 1946, also takes place this year. The project is officially an economic organization, the French-Armenian Central Committee of Studies (*Comité central d'études franco-arménien*), but the Africa-Near East sub-directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs raises concerns about its impact on the relations with Ankara, even before the Committee is formally established.<sup>2113</sup> As a result, the minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Paul-Boncour (who, ironically, participated to some pro-Armenian events as a young student in 1896<sup>2114</sup> but was also the editor of a weekly, *Floréal*, defending the Turkish point of view, at the beginning of 1920s<sup>2115</sup>) writes to his counterpart for Commerce, to warn against “any initiative or participation of the administration having the goal or the effect to provide to the said organization the character or the appearance of an official institution.”<sup>2116</sup> The project of a patronage by the Ministry of Commerce is, as a result, canceled, and the name changed into Armenian Economic Center, but the Quai d'Orsay continues to warn against the risk of a political derive.<sup>2117</sup> The Ministry's concerns are particularly understandable, as the first

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<sup>2111</sup> Antony Krafft-Bonnard, *Arménie. Justice et réparations*, Genève : Société générale d'imprimerie, 1930, p. 26.

<sup>2112</sup> Dimitri Kitsikis, « Les projets d'entente balkanique. 1930-1934 », *Revue historique*, CCLVI-1, janvier-mars 1969, p. 134.

<sup>2113</sup> Note pour la sous-direction Afrique-Levant, 17 février 1933 ; Note pour la sous-direction des Relations commerciales, 23 février 1933, AMAE, P 16679.

<sup>2114</sup> Joseph Paul-Boncour, *Recollections of the Third Republic*, New York: Robert Speller & Sons, 1957, volume I, p. 73.

<sup>2115</sup> Joseph Paul-Boncour, « 14 juillet », *Floréal*, 17 juillet 1920, p. 523 ; Claude Marsey, « Pour la Turquie », *Floréal*, 23 avril 1921, pp. 401-402 ; André Pierre, « Trois conférences en une semaine », *Floréal*, 25 mars 1922, p. 248 ; Léon Abensour, « La Turquie nationaliste et Mustapha Kémal », *Floréal*, 11 novembre 1922, p. 1114 ; G. Coute, « Nos ambassadeurs à Lausanne », *Floréal*, 17 février 1923, p. 101.

<sup>2116</sup> Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie, 15 mars 1933, AMAE, P 16679.

<sup>2117</sup> Note pour le secrétaire général du Département, 17 mai 1933, AMAE, P 16679.

chairman of the Committee, Commander Zadig Khanzadian,<sup>2118</sup> is a former collaborator of the Dashnak Delegation of the Armenian Republic.<sup>2119</sup>

These concerns are also proved rather justified by the following events. Indeed, the speech of Senator Justin Godart (the same Godart who has written a letter for Vahan Papazian in 1929), a key sponsor of the Center, mentions “the cruelties and persecutions,” “the injustices inflicted to the Armenian nation” and particularly “its adjourned independence,” as well as “the solemn and unfulfilled promises.” If Godart refuses anything like a “political committee,” he calls the Armenian Economic Center an “external capital city.” More diplomatic, the speech of François Georges-Picot regardless contains a strange reference to the Eastern/Armenian Legion: Georges-Picot seems to have forgotten his own words against this unit. Perhaps even more problematically, Commander Khazandjian writes a misleading procès-verbal, stating that the meeting took place “under the presidency of Mr. Laurent Eynac, minister of Commerce.”<sup>2120</sup> In fact, Laurent Eynac did not even attend the event. The Quai d’Orsay strongly reacts,<sup>2121</sup> and the speeches of 1933 are the first but also the last of this kind. In 1935, the MFA supports the candidacy of a French industrialist, Louis Marlio, at the presidency of the Center, to avoid any further problem.<sup>2122</sup>

The effectiveness of the reaction is even more understandable as, in France only, the year 1933 is marked by other Armenian affairs. Indeed, in February, the minister of Foreign Affairs Paul-Boncour asks the minister of Interior, by a “very confidential, urgent” letter to monitor

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<sup>2118</sup> Première liste des négociants arméniens membres probables du Centre économique arménien, AMAE, P 16679.

<sup>2119</sup> Zadig Khanzadian, *Rapport sur l’unité géographique de l’Arménie*, Paris : Délégation de la République arménienne, 1920.

<sup>2120</sup> « Séance inaugurale du Centre économique arménien », *Bulletin de la Chambre de commerce de Paris*, 9 décembre 1933, pp. 1615-1616, 1619 and 1623. The diplomat commenting these pages has written “Oh!” in the margin after the inaccurate reference to Laurent Eynac (AMAE, P 16679). At the same time, the remaining supporters and leaders of the “Armenian cause” in the U.S. are more explicit in their territorial claims: “The Armenian Homeland,” *The New York Times*, 11 September 1931, p. 20; Vahan Kurkjian, “The Armenian Homeland,” *The New York Times*, 23 September 1931, p. 18.

<sup>2121</sup> Note, 6 février 1934, AMAE, P 16679.

<sup>2122</sup> Note pour la sous-direction d’Afrique-Levant, 7 juin 1935 ; Note pour M. le secrétaire général, 17 juin 1935, AMAE, P 16679.



the ARF daily *Haratch*, because of its attacks against Turkey,<sup>2123</sup> and the same month, a new brawl between Dashnaks and anti-Dashnaks takes place in Lyon (four wounded, two arrested).<sup>2124</sup> The next month, a worse clash erupts, this time in Grenoble, between Dashnak and Communist Armenians, and one of these Communists is killed with a knife.<sup>2125</sup> The French Communist Party expresses its ire, even more vehemently than after the murderous affray at Lyon in 1926<sup>2126</sup> and establishes an ad hoc committee to denounce the crimes of the ARF and to fight this party politically,<sup>2127</sup> adding a new subject of concerns for public order at the Ministry of Interior. The ARF itself is weakened by the scission of Shahan Natalie (1884-1983) and his supporters in 1929, joined by Western European leaders of the party in 1931-1932. They establish a newspaper in Paris in 1933, asking for more terrorism—with the support, at the beginning of S. Tehlirian, the assassin of Talat Paşa.<sup>2128</sup>

Regardless, nowhere is the rising conflict between the French Republic and the Armenian committees more acute than in Lebanon. Damien de Martel, the same diplomat who had been high commissioner in Tbilissi in 1920 and who had warned the Quai d'Orsay against the incompetence of the ARF as well as against the ethnic cleansing perpetrated by its cabinet, is appointed as high commissioner in Beirut in 1933. De Martel arrives at Beirut on 12

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<sup>2123</sup> Lettre du ministre des Affaires étrangères au ministre de l'Intérieur, 18 février 1933 ; Note pour Monsieur Blanchet, 6 mars 1933 ; Le directeur de la Sûreté générale à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 16 mai 1933, AMAE, 1QO 98.

<sup>2124</sup> Rapport du commissariat spécial de Lyon, 14 février 1933, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436 ; « Sanglante bagarre entre Arméniens à Lyon », *Le Petit Parisien*, 13 février 1933, p. 2.

<sup>2125</sup> Rapport du commissaire central de Grenoble, 4 mars 1933 ; Rapport de la préfecture de police de Paris, 6 mars 1933 ; Lettre du juge d'instruction au ministre de l'Intérieur, 17 juillet 1933 ; Rapport du procureur de Grenoble, 4 décembre 1933, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436.

<sup>2126</sup> « Des Arméniens réactionnaires provoquent une bagarre », *L'Humanité*, 28 février 1933, p. 3 ; « Une nouvelle provocation des fascistes arméniens à Grenoble », *L'Humanité*, 4 août 1933, p. 3 ; « Aux assises de Grenoble — Les "dachnaks" doivent répondre de leurs crimes », *L'Humanité*, 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1933, p. 3 ; « Les bandits dachnaks "socialistes" arméniens assassinent maintenant les évêques », *L'Humanité*, 28 décembre 1933, p. 3.

<sup>2127</sup> « Un meeting samedi contre la terreur des fascistes arméniens », *L'Humanité*, 13 octobre 1933, p. 3 ; « Les assassins dachnaks à l'œuvre — Un meeting de protestation à Marseille », *Rouge Midi*, 18 novembre 1933, p. 1 ; « Après le meeting contre les dachnaks — Réponse à Varandian », *Rouge Midi*, 25 novembre 1933, p. 3.

<sup>2128</sup> Le ministre de l'Intérieur à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 7 mai 1934, CADN, 36 PO/1/111 ; Armenian Revolutionary Federation, *La Fédération révolutionnaire arménienne*, Lyon : Comité Heratch Papazian, 1980, p. 28 ; Cyril Le Tallec, *La Communauté arménienne...*, pp. 115 and 123 ; Khachig Tölöyan, "Terrorism in modern Armenian political culture," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, IV-2, pp. 17-18. P. 19, Mr. Tölöyan erroneously claims that "From 1923 to 1945 there was no Armenian terrorism against Turkey."

October of the same year.<sup>2129</sup> Yet, with a remarkable absence of lucidity regarding its own interests, the ARF assassinates the next day Mihran Agazarian—the editor of the Hunchak newspaper of Lebanon and a member of the HOG’s central committee, who was previously sentenced as an accessory in the murder of an ARF leader.<sup>2130</sup> As a result of this assassination, and of the tensions provoked both among Armenians and Arabs, Damien de Martel imposes a temporary ban on the activities of all the Armenian groups in Lebanon and Syria.<sup>2131</sup>

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<sup>2129</sup> Denise Ammoun, *Histoire du Liban contemporain*, Paris : Fayard, 1997, volume I, 1860-1943, p. 357.

<sup>2130</sup> Kapriel Serope Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted*, Boston : Baikar Press, 1934, p. 70; Note sur le Comité de secours pour l’Arménie, HOG, 5 mars 1932, AN, F<sup>7</sup> 13436. Other members of the Hunchak had tried to assault Dashnaks in 1931 but were prevented to do so by the gendarmerie: « Entre les partis arméniens », *Les Échos de Damas*, 5 août 1931, p. 2.

<sup>2131</sup> L’ambassadeur de France, haut-commissaire de la République française en Syrie, à M. le ministre des Affaires étrangères, 22 décembre 1933, CADN, 36 PO/1/111. Also see: « Des Arméniens extrémistes manifestent à Beyrouth », *Le Petit Parisien*, 15 juin 1936, p. 2.

## CONCLUSION

*“The Armenian party Dashnaksoutioun claims to be a Socialist party affiliated to the II<sup>nd</sup> International. In reality this is a nationalist-terrorist party.”*

*Note forwarded by the French ambassador in Ankara, 6 March 1928.<sup>2132</sup>*

It has been rightfully argued that the events of 1915-16 have (and still are) too often presented by “historiography by committee and committed historians,” a situation creating a “narrative gap,”<sup>2133</sup> but the 1918-1923, too, present a narrative gap—exactly what I tried to fill partly here. The Armenian committees are, during the period 1918-1923, not unlike during previous and posterior periods, above all victims of themselves—of their absence of lucidity. They cause the quasi unanimous support for Kemalism among the Turks and other Muslims in Çukurova by the crimes of the Eastern/Armenian Legion, by 1918-1919. The ARF government refuses the conciliation with the Turks in 1920, provoking the invasion of Armenia and the loss of its independence. The repeated attempts to impose an Armenian or Christian state in Adana, during summer of the same year, only reinforce the rupture of the Armenian nationalists with the French government, the sole big power still having a significant occupation force in Anatolia. The choice of the forced exile, in cooperation with the Greek state, in Çukurova and Western Anatolia, reduces the Armenian demographic presence in Anatolia to a minority of some dozens of thousands persons (without counting those who have converted to Islam in 1915). The occasion to negotiate a return of the refugees and to obtain specific guarantees in the Lausanne treaty against the revengeful

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<sup>2132</sup> AMAE, P 16678.

<sup>2133</sup> Andrew Mango, “Historiography by Political Committee and Committed Historians: Review Article,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXV-4, October 1989, pp. 531-541; Jeremy Salt, “The Narrative Gap in Ottoman Armenian History,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, XXXIX-1, January 2003, pp. 19-36. More recently: Jeremy Salt, “History as Theology,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, XVII-1&2, Fall 2011, pp. 159-174; Yücel Güçlü, “Review Essay,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXXVIII-3, September 2018, pp. 441-450.

feeling showed by a part of the Turkish population (as a result of the crimes of Christian nationalists) is missed in November and December 1922.

In front of this reality, the Armenian nationalist historiography has persistently denied the responsibilities of the parties it defends. In particular, the standard Ramkavar interpretation affirms: "Against Soviet Russia, the Great Powers preferred to set up a homogenous and solid Turkey instead of a few small states."<sup>2134</sup> Such an allegation is entirely wrong. In the case of France, Henry Franklin-Bouillon is, quite the contrary, a supporter, in 1920, of a scheme in favor of Turkey *and* of the Republics of the Caucasus against Soviet Russia. Far from advocating a "homogenous Turkey," the same Franklin-Bouillon, when he implements the policy of Aristide Briand, does his best to prevent the unnecessary exodus of most of the Armenians and Greeks from Çukurova, in 1921. The next year, President of the Ministers' Council Raymond Poincaré orders French ambassadors to denounce the crimes of the Greek forces against the Turks as well as the forced exile imposed by these forces to the Christian population of Western Anatolia. If the Republic of Armenia is not really supported by France, in 1920, this is not because of its size but because of the absolute ineptness of its government, described by High Commissioner Damien de Martel (another supporter, initially, of help all the Caucasian adversaries of Soviet Russia) and Consul Louis Nettement. In the case of Italy, the support for the Kemalist begins as early as 1919, and the anti-Communist considerations emerge only later, mostly by 1920. In the UK, the policy of David Lloyd George remains fiercely anti-Turkish, no matter what the expansion of Communism is, until this hostility provokes the defiance of the Chamber of Communes, in October 1922; and even this resignation does not prevent Lord Curzon from trying to weaken Turkey one more time during the Lausanne conference.

Correspondingly, a standard Dashnak work asserts: "The Armenian [...] accepted too readily the glittering promises of the West without doubting their sincerity. The Armenian had the faith and innocence of a child."<sup>2135</sup> Beside the fact that an ethnic stereotype never helps to understand history, the ARF leadership, far from showing "the innocence of a child" chooses hostility toward France as early as the end of 1918, precisely because Paris refuses to

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<sup>2134</sup> Arthur Beylerian, « L'échec d'une percée internationale : le mouvement national arménien (1914-1923) », *Relations internationales*, n° 31, automne 1982, p. 371. Similar claim in Simon Payaslian, *The History of Armenia. From the Origins to the Present*, New York-London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005, p. 163.

<sup>2135</sup> Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1955, pp. 248-249.

“promise” anything, and the schoolteachers ruling Yerevan think wise to support White Russians, Communists, an American mandate and eventually to believe in a magic foreign intervention instead of making peace with Ankara, in 1920. The incapacity of Armenian nationalism to exit Aryanist racism and its corollary, the failure to develop a beginning of state culture—the very state culture assimilated by the part of the Armenian elites who establish the Society for the Turkish-Armenian friendship—are the first reasons for the failure of this political trend to build an independent Armenia after the First World War. The recurrent disputes between the ARF, the Hunchak and the Ramkavar only aggravate the situation of these parties, which weaken each other and give to the Entente representatives, particularly the French, the image of an Armenian people unable of national union. The elephant in the lobby never was, for the historiography, the Armenian issue itself,<sup>2136</sup> but the nature of the racism advocated by the Armenian nationalist leadership, a leadership marked by the gap between its guerilla capacities and its political, diplomatic incapacity.

In this regard, the absence of state traditions is particularly damaging for the Armenian nationalists in the context of intricated relations between the Great powers and more generally the actors in Europe, Caucasus and the Near East. Trying to use Washington and London against Paris, by 1919, in a context of rising rivalry between France and the Anglo-Saxon powers (regarding the peace conditions with Germany as well as in the post-Ottoman space and Iran) and then expecting the French government to accept the maintain of the Armenian Legion, or its replacement by a similar unit, in 1920, is a strategy (if one can even use this word) doomed to fail. Linking their fate, in 1921-1922, to the action of King Constantine, detested by virtually everybody in France, but backed by David Lloyd George (almost as unpopular as the Greek sovereign among the Frenchmen) is an even more obviously unwise choice. On the contrary, the Ankara government understands from the beginning the benefits to be taken from the division of the Entente and succeeds in doing so remarkably.

Certainly, the financial and economic interests, which are the legacy of the pre-WWI period, are essential to understand the French policy vis-à-vis the post-Ottoman space in general and the Armenian issue in particular. The Armenian nationalism never fails to insist of this aspect—forgetting that Anglo-Saxon supporters of this cause do not ignore the economic advantage they hope to obtain by a Great Armenia or later an Armenian Home. However, it

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<sup>2136</sup> Hikmet Özdemir, *Ermeni İddiaları Karşısında Türkiye'nin Birikimi*, Ankara: TBMM, 2008.

does not explain everything. First of all, simple realism is a reason as important as the previous one: The insisting demands for what Jean Herbette calls “the Armenian Empire,” from Karabakh to Mersin, then the double claims (Wilsonian Armenia and little Armenia in Çukurova) would mean a state with a Muslim majority, or the extermination of several hundred of thousands Muslims, as well as the deportation of even bigger numbers.

Regardless, the whole explanation is not yet reached. Indeed, the supporters of realism and even some Turkophiles-Islamophiles exist in the Colonial Office, India Office, etc. It is clear that the differences of personality and ideology between David Lloyd George or Lord Curzon on one side, Aristide Briand and Raymond Poincaré on the other side, are essential to understand why Marshal Hubert Lyautey and Captain Henri Rollin succeed where their British counterparts (such as Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India from 1917 to 1922) fail; but neither Lloyd George nor Lord Curzon emerge from nowhere. There is, in UK, during the four or five years following the armistices of 1918, a social demand for Turkophobia, Armenophilia and even more Hellenophilia. There is, too, a demand, at least in the elites, for the kind of pure imperialism advocated by Lord Curzon. There is nothing comparable by intensity and scope in France during the same period. That is why the Sèvres treaty is found impossible to ratify by the French Parliament even before it is formally signed, while the Chamber of Communes does not force Lloyd George to resign until October 1922.

If no French counterpart of the British-Armenia Committee, still less of the American Committee for Independence of Armenia, ever emerges, if the (modest) pro-Armenian activism is not coordinated and do not count many participants who are continuously active from 1918 to 1923, still less from the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century to the Turkish war of independence (unlike Lord Bryce in the UK, for example) this is not primarily a question of persons but a question of social basis. There is, however, a very various group of men (and, to a lesser extent, of women) determined to restore the traditional friendship with the Turks, even if this group is unable to remain united during the Lausanne conference, exploding on the issue of capitulations and economic interests. As much as a contribution of the history of international relations, this dissertation is a contribution to the political and even cultural history of the French Third Republic. Pierre Loti and Claude Farrère are listened not only because of their literary talent and because of their career in the Navy but also because they are not alone and, in sum, because the period largely is in their favor. Similarly, if the Georgian delegates win more sympathies than the Armenian ones, this is certainly due to their personal qualities and, by contrast, to the incompetence of Avetis Aharonian, Boghos

Nubar and their collaborators,<sup>2137</sup> but even more because the representatives of Georgia present reasonable claims, with a clear plan to defend the independence of South Caucasus against the Russian ambitions.

Ultimately, it can be argued, at the end of this dissertation, that the policy of a Great Power toward the Turkish-Armenian conflict depends on the top leadership, on the state apparatus (mostly the diplomacy and the armed forces), on the Parliament, on the opinion-makers and of the existence or not of a social demand for or against a side. The supporters of a fair peace with the Turks take or re-rake all these elements rather quickly in France. In the U.S., Woodrow Wilson and the other supporters of the Armenian cause never impose themselves to the whole state apparatus (Admiral Mark Bristol, for instance) and, more importantly, the social demand is never sufficiently strong and unified for more than public recriminations. Attacking an experienced army concentrated on high plateau with recriminations only can achieve nothing but a failure.

This is not a coincidence if the President of Ministers' council who gives back Hatay to Turkey in exchange of a military alliance and of the intensification of the economic and cultural ties,<sup>2138</sup> is Édouard Daladier, one of the most constant supporters of Kemalism during the Turkish War of independence, or if the ambassador in Ankara who makes this policy possible is René Massigli, former general secretary of the Lausanne conference.<sup>2139</sup> On the opposite side, it is also in the continuity with its stance of 1918-1923 that the ARF collaborates with Nazi Germany by 1933, and that Kricor Tellalian, former representative of the Catholic Armenians at the Armenian National Union of Adana, now in Paris, explains to the Nazis that the Armenians are Aryans and that they demand a Great Armenia.<sup>2140</sup> After Second World

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<sup>2137</sup> David Marshall Lang, *A Modern History of Georgia*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962, pp. 219-220.

<sup>2138</sup> *La Turquie*, supplément au *Figaro* du 30 juillet 1939.

<sup>2139</sup> René Massigli, *La Turquie devant la guerre*, Paris : Plon, 1964 ; Raphaëlle Ulrich-Pier, *René Massigli (1888-1988). Une vie de diplomate*, Bruxelles-Berne : Peter Lang, 2006, volume I, pp. 503-643.

<sup>2140</sup> [Arthur Derounian], "John T. Flynn and the Dashnags," *The Propaganda Battlefield*, 31 May 1944; Mehmet Perinçek, "Nazi-Dashnak Collaboration during World War II," in AVIM (ed.), *Turkish-Russian Academics. A Historical Study on the Caucasus*, Ankara: Terazi, 2016, pp. 199-231; Kricor Tellalian, *Histoire arméno-européenne*, Paris: Imprimerie Araxes, 1943, pp. 11, 123-126 and passim. Also see the apologia of Armenian nationalism by Paul Chack, sentenced to death in December 1944 and executed in January 1945 for his collaboration with the Nazis: Paul Chack, *Survivants prodigieux*, Paris: Les éditions de France, 1941, pp. 32-39; and Rouben Khérumian, *Les Arméniens. Race, origines ethnographiques*, Paris : Vigot Frères, 1941, pp. 12-16.

War, the legacy of the 1918-1923 years can be understood in comparing the two following returns of Armenian irredentism. In 1945-1948, Stalin uses “his Armenian pawn” against Turkey, asking for Kars, Ardahan and a military facility on the Straits. The Quai d’Orsay understands the strategy easily,<sup>2141</sup> even more as a new rapprochement of Armenian activism was noted as early as 1939.<sup>2142</sup> A warm enthusiasm for Stalin and his regime welcomes this initiative among the diasporic nationalists and the ARF chooses Simon Vratzian (who had tried in vain to reconcile his party with Moscow in 1923) as interlocutor with the Soviet delegates at the San Francisco conference in 1945.<sup>2143</sup> In France, the Committee for the defense of Turkish Armenia, which comes further and asks for the implementation of the Wilson “arbitration” is made in majority of Communists but uses Brigadier General Édouard Brémont, still embittered by his end of career, as a cover.<sup>2144</sup> The initiative not only fails in its main aim (enlarging the Soviet Republic of Armenia) but even in trying to create a durable pro-Armenian activism, outside the Communist circles. It can even less succeed as the ARF and non-Communist associations leave in 1947 the Armenian National Front, established in 1945 for a joint effort against Turkey and for USSR.<sup>2145</sup> Eventually, the organ of the Ramkavar is banned in May 1953, because of its support for Stalinist policies, and the demands for a reexamination are rejected.<sup>2146</sup> However, the retirement of René Massigli in 1956, the death

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<sup>2141</sup> M. Gaston Maugras, ambassadeur de France en Turquie, à Son Excellence M. Georges Bidault, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 18 décembre 1945 ; Lieutenant-colonel Taton, Les Arméniens de Turquie et les Soviétiques, 18 décembre 1945 ; M. Henri Bonnet, ambassadeur de France aux États-Unis, à Son Excellence M. Georges Bidault, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 30 avril 1946 ; M. Pierre Charpentier, chargé d’affaires de France en URSS, à Son Excellence M. Georges Bidault, président du gouvernement provisoire et ministre des Affaires étrangères, 6 septembre 1946 ; M. Jean Lescuyer, ambassadeur de France en Turquie, à Son Excellence M. Robert Schuman, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 18 décembre 1948, CADN, 36PO/1/111.

<sup>2142</sup> Télégramme de René Massigli au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 20 octobre 1939 ; Télégramme du ministère des Affaires étrangères à René Massigli, 27 octobre 1939, CADN, 36PO/1/111.

<sup>2143</sup> Vazkène Aykouni, *Arméniens, peuple tragique*, Beirut : Imprimerie catholique, 1945, pp. 86-97 ; Gaïdz Minassian, *Géopolitique de l’Arménie*, Paris : Ellipses, 2005, p. 22 ; Claire Mouradian, « L’immigration des Arméniens de la diaspora vers la RSS d’Arménie, 1946-1962 », *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XX-1, janvier-mars 1979, pp. 79-85.

<sup>2144</sup> Comité pour la défense de l’Arménie turque, Mémoire à M. Georges Bidault, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 4 juillet 1946, CADN, 36PO/1/111.

<sup>2145</sup> Direction générale de la Sûreté nationale, La colonie arménienne de Paris, février 1948, pp. 5-6 and 29, APP, BA 1681. The support is more significant in the U.S., at the same time: Christopher Gunn, *Secret Armies and Revolutionary Federations: The Rise and Fall of Armenian Political Violence, 1973-1993*, PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 2014, pp. 19 and 34-37.

<sup>2146</sup> Préfecture de police de Paris — Renseignements généraux, 20 mai 1954, APP, BA 2327.



of Édouard Herriot and Claude Farrère in 1957, of Daladier and Robert de Caix in 1970, of Pierre Lyautey in 1976 for the French side, of Nihat Reşat Belger in 1961 and of Reşit Safvet Atabinen in 1965 for the Turkish side leave a big gap.

The emergence of the “Armenian genocide” claims in mid-1960s, and even more after 1975, with the same racism against the Turks,<sup>2147</sup> the same hostility to France, the same anti-Semitism than before,<sup>2148</sup> and, on more time, terrorism,<sup>2149</sup> happens in quite a different context than the Turkish war of independence or the Stalinist campaign of 1945-1948. As long as Charles de Gaulle remains President, the expression of anti-Turkism remains limited. De Gaulle works to intensify all the links between Paris and Ankara in 1967-1968 and “committing an act that can likely hurt the foreign policy” of the government is not something considered by the Armenian leadership of that time,<sup>2150</sup> namely the last generation born in the Ottoman Empire, the last to have experienced the firmness of the French government during the interwar then in 1945-1953. His successor Georges Pompidou, elected in 1969, tries to follow the same policy, but with more difficulties by 1973, because the Armenian nationalist claims are increasingly supported by Communist parliamentarians at a national level, elected officials of Marseille from various tendencies locally. In reaction, Pierre Lyautey makes against the “genocide” accusation some of the last public interventions of his life.<sup>2151</sup>

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<sup>2147</sup> Michael Bobelian, *Children of Armenia*, New York-London: Simon & Schuster, 2009, p. 154; Yervant Khatanasian, “Genocide and the Armenian Case,” *Armenian Review*, XVII, no. 4-68, winter 1964, pp. 3-7; Jacques Nazarian, Robert Donikian and Vartkès Solakian, *Le Deuil national arménien*, Lyon : Centre des études arméniennes, 1965, pp. 75-76 ; Michel Marian, « Le terrorisme arménien après l’âge d’or », *Esprit*, n° 10-11, octobre-novembre 1984, p. 47. Nationalism is partially rehabilitated in Soviet Armenia by 1954: Mary Allerton Kilbourne Matossian, *The Impact of Soviet Policies in Armenia*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962, pp. 199-202.

<sup>2148</sup> *Hay Baykar*, n° 110 (1987) publishes on its front page an anti-Semitic painting of 1902, showing a caricatural Jewish banker next to Sultan Abdülhamit in the middle of dead corpses and adds this comment: “Europe, traditional ally of Turkey.”

<sup>2149</sup> Christopher Gunn, *Secret Armies and...*, pp. 77 and 83-326; Heath Lowry, “Armenian Terrorism: Threads of Continuity,” in *International Terrorism and the Drug Connection*, Ankara: Ankara University Press, 1984, pp. 71-78.

<sup>2150</sup> Préfecture de police de Paris — Renseignements généraux, L’état d’esprit de la colonie arménienne, 24 juin 1967, APP, BA 2327.

<sup>2151</sup> « M. Erim se félicite des relations “excellentes” entre Paris et Ankara », *Le Monde*, 21 janvier 1972 ; « Le communiqué fait état d’“une large concordance” des politiques des deux pays », *Le Monde*, 25 janvier 1972 ; « Après le rappel en consultation de l’ambassadeur de Turquie : Les milieux autorisés français soulignent que la cérémonie de Marseille à la mémoire des Arméniens avait un caractère “privé” », *Le Monde*, 15 février 1973 ; Paul-Jean Franceschini, « Une bien longue brouille », *Le Monde*, 20 avril 1973.

İsmail Erez, appointed as ambassador in 1974 obtains incontrovertible successes, but is assassinated by the Dashnak Justice Commandos for Armenian Genocide (JCAG) the next year.<sup>2152</sup> By 1970-1971, a new generation emerges, particularly at the youth branch of the ARF, a part remaining in the party and being at the frontline to support JCAG terrorism, the other leaving to establish the political branch of the Armenian Secret Army for Liberation of Armenia<sup>2153</sup> (the heirs of Shahan Natali's dissidents). The ideas and wished methods, however, are hardly new.

During the trial of a JCAG terrorist in January 1982 at Aix-en-Provence, not only the events of 1915-16 but the Turkish war of independence, including the accusation against the Turks to have burned İzmir, are used by the defense.<sup>2154</sup> At the end of the same year, the Parisian newspaper of the ASALA resurrects the myth of the "French betrayal" in Çukurova.<sup>2155</sup> The consequences do not wait for long. On 28 February 1983, a bomb of ASALA kills a French secretary in Paris. This is a miracle if the gas pipe does not explode, and, as result, does not kill everybody in the building.<sup>2156</sup> *Le Monde* calls the attack an "absurdity."<sup>2157</sup> This is obviously a criminal act, but this by no means an act emerging from nowhere. The editor surely ignores the anti-French racism of *The New Armenia* in 1922, the letters of Armenian legionnaires in 1919 claiming that the Frenchmen are worse than the Turks or even the sadism of Armenian volunteers of the Wehrmacht against the French population in 1944.<sup>2158</sup> On 15 July 1983, another bomb of the ASALA explodes at the Orly airport, killing eight persons.

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<sup>2152</sup> « M. Erez : un francophone francophile », *Le Monde*, 26-27 octobre 1975, p. 3 ; Gädz Minassian, *Guerre et terrorisme arméniens. 1972-1998*, Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 2002, p. 37.

<sup>2153</sup> Préfecture de police de Paris — Renseignements généraux, 25 avril 1970 ; Id., 25 avril 1971 ; Id., 26 avril 1971 ; Id., 15 mai 1972 ; Id., 25 avril 1975 ; Id., 9 avril 1977 ; Id., 30 avril 1977 ; Id., 25 avril 1979 ; La communauté arménienne [1974], APP, BA 2327.

<sup>2154</sup> Comité de soutien à Max Hraïr Kilndjian, *Les Arméniens en cour d'assises. Terroristes ou résistants ?*, Roquevaire : Parenthèses, 1983, p. 117. This is the testimony of Jean-Marie Carzou (Zouloumian). See p. 114 for the moment when Mr. Carzou affirms that Lord Bryce (deceased in January 1922) has made a statement during the Lausanne conference (opened in November of the same year).

<sup>2155</sup> « Cilicie : les coulisses de la trahison française », *Hay Baykar*, 24 novembre 1982, pp. 8-9.

<sup>2156</sup> J.-M. Durand-Souffland, « L'ASALA a revendiqué l'attentat contre une agence de voyages turque — La mort d'une jeune secrétaire française », *Le Monde*, 2 mars 1983, p. 15.

<sup>2157</sup> « Contre le terrorisme arménien », *Le Monde*, 2 mars 1983, p. 1.

<sup>2158</sup> Jacques Robichon, *Le Débarquement de Provence (15 août 1944)*, Paris : Robert Laffont, 1962, pp. 341-342.

The device actually was prepared to explode in the plane of the Turkish Airlines. Nothing could have been more easily expected and prevented, as were the projects to assassinate General Julien Dufieux in Adana, General Henri Gouraud in Beirut and Cavit Bey in France, in 1920-1922; but history had been forgotten.<sup>2159</sup>

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<sup>2159</sup> *Terrorist attack at Orly: statements and evidence presented at the trial February 19 - March 2 1985*, Ankara: Faculty of Political Science, 1985.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: MAIN CHARACTERS

**Avetis Aharonian (1866-1948).** Leader of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, chair of the Delegation of the Armenian Republic in Paris from 1919 to his death.

**Édouard Brémond (1868-1948).** Officer in Morocco before the First World War, then in Arabia, chief administrator of Cilicia from January 1919 to September 1920. Recalled in Paris as a result of his excessive trust in Armenian representatives.

**Aristide Briand (1862-1932).** President of the ministers' Council from 1915 to 1917, from 1921 to 1922, from 1925 to 1926 and in 1929. Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1925 to 1932. Briand accepts the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916 but criticizes the Sèvres treaty in 1920 and decides a rapprochement with Turkey by 1921 (Ankara agreement in October 1921). Then, he supports the ratification of the Lausanne treaty (1924) and works for a complete restoration of the friendship with Turkey (1925-1932).

**Robert de Caix (1869-1970).** Journalist and *éminence grise* of the Quai d'Orsay until 1919, general secretary of the high commission in Beirut from 1919 to 1923, Robert de Caix firmly opposes Armenian nationalism before and after the First World War.

**Georges Clemenceau (1841-1929).** President of the ministers' council from 1906 to 1909 and from 1917 to 1920. Involved in the support for Armenian agitation in 1897, he reduces his pro-Armenian activities and stops then during his first term as chief of the government. Particularly embittered by the German-Ottoman alliance, and focusing on the conflict with Germany, he regardless tries to find an agreement with Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) during the last months of his last term in power, and expresses his exasperation toward Armenian nationalism.

**Lord George Curzon (1859-1925).** British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1919 to 1924. Hostile to the Turks by imperialism rather than for religious reasons. Uses the Armenian nationalism as a card in this regard.

**Mihran Damadian (1863-1945).** Hunchak then Reformed Hunchak and eventually Ramkavar leader, representative of the Armenian National Delegation in Adana from 1919 to 1921.

**Gaston Doumergue (1863-1937).** President of ministers' council in 1913-1914, minister of Colonies from 1914 to 1917, President of the Republic from 1924 to 1931. Advocates an agreement with the Turkish national movement during the war of independence.

**Henri Gouraud (1867-1946).** Hubert Lyautey's second man in Morocco, he fights at the Dardanelles battle in 1915 and loses an arm. He later fights on the Western front, and finishes the war convinced that only Turks are "chivalrous enemies". High commissioner in Beirut from 1919 to 1923, he successfully asks for the departure of Colonel Édouard Brémond in 1920 and endorses the Ankara agreement the next year. Military governor of Paris after his return to France, General Gouraud visits Turkey again in 1930, for the commemorations of the Çanakkale battle.

**Pierre Loti (1850-1923).** Navy Captain until his retirement in 1913, writer and member of the French Academy (elected in 1891). Supporter of the Ottoman Empire during the Italian-Ottoman war (1911-1912) and Balkan wars (1912-1913), he tries to obtain a separate peace between the Entente and the Ottoman Empire in 1915, then advocates, both in the press and in the lobby, a fair peace with the Turks as early as 1918.

**Hubert Lyautey (1854-1934).** Resident general in Morocco from 1912 to 1925, key supporter, in the lobby, of a rapprochement with the Turkish national movement, from 1920 to 1922.

**Damien de Martel (1878-1940).** High commissioner in Tbilisi in 1920 and in Beirut from 1933 to 1938, he opposes the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in both of these positions.

**Alexandre Millerand (1859-1943).** President of the ministers' council in 1920, President of the Republic from 1920 to 1924, he initiates the first attempts of peace with the Kemalists. "If somebody does like the Turks more than Loti does, this is myself!"

**Gabriel Noradounkian (1852-1936).** Ottoman minister of Trade (1908-1909) then of Foreign Affairs (1912-1913), moves to Switzerland at the beginning of the First World War and turns to Boghos Nubar's Ramkavar party. Vice-chair of the Armenian National Delegation during the Turkish war of independence.

**Boghos Nubar (1851-1930).** Founder of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in 1907, chair of the Armenian National Delegation in Paris from 1912 to his death.

**Raymond Poincaré (1860-1934).** President of the ministers' council from 1912 to 1913, from 1922 to 1924 and from 1926 to 1929. President of the Republic from 1913 to 1920.

**Henri Rollin (1885-1955).** Intelligence officer. Prisoner of war in Turkey in 1917-1918. Head of the French Navy's intelligence service for Turkey and Soviet Russia from 1919 to 1921, then foreign policy redactor for *Le Temps*. Supporter of a peace acceptable by Ankara, adversary of the alliance with the Armenian nationalists.

**Moucheg Séropian.** Archbishop of Adana in 1908-1909, Hunchak then Ramkavar leader, and responsible for the inter-ethnic clashes of April 1909. Main Armenian nationalist leader in Çukurova in 1919-1920, sentenced in absentia by the French military tribunal of Adana for terrorist activities.



**APPENDIX B: VERDICT SENTENCING ARCHBISHOP MOUCHEG SÉROPIAN, 23 APRIL**

**1920**

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

CONSEIL DE GUERRE PERMANENT de la Ire division du Levant

Séant à Adana

JUGEMENT PAR CONTUMACE

Au nom du peuple français

Le Conseil de guerre permanent de la Ire D.A.F.L. a rendu le verdict suivant :

Aujourd'hui 23 avril mil neuf cent vingt, le Conseil de guerre permanent de la Ire Division armée française au Levant, ouï le commissaire du gouvernement dans ses réquisitions et conclusions, a déclaré le nommé :

MONSEIGNEUR MOUCHEG SÉROPIAN (absent et contumax) coupable de :

1° Par 4 voix contre une : d'association de malfaiteurs ;

2° Par 4 voix contre une : de fabrication et détention d'engins meurtriers agissant par explosion ;

3° À l'unanimité de détention d'armes et de munitions de guerre ;

4° [À] l'unanimité de complicité d'homicide par imprudence.

En conséquence, ledit Conseil condamne par contumace, par 4 voix contre 1 le susnommé à la peine de :

Dix ans de travaux forcés et vingt ans d'interdiction de séjour, par application des articles

63-202-267 du C[ode de] J[ustice] M[ilitaire], 59-265-266-319 [du] C[ode] P[énal], 3 et 4 de la loi du 24 mai 1834, 3 de la loi du 19 juin 1871.

Et vu les articles 139 du Code de justice militaire et 9 de la loi du 22 juillet 1867, le Conseil condamne ledit susnommé à rembourser sur ses biens présents et à venir, au profit du Trésor public, le montant des frais du procès.

Vu :

Le commissaire du gouvernement

S[igné] : De Vaux.

Pour extrait conforme, le greffier.

Signé : illisible<sup>2160</sup>.

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<sup>2160</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/154.

## APPENDIX C: INTELLIGENCE NOTE, 7 JUNE 1920

RENSEIGNEMENTS N° 178<sup>2161</sup>

Le parti arménien HENTCHAKISTE serait décidé de recourir à la révolution pour que la Cilicie devienne arménienne.

Une réunion a été tenue, le vendredi soir, 4 juin, dans la maison de M. Firouz Khanzadian, hintchakiste et membre de l'Union nationale arménienne. Tous les dirigeants du parti hintchakiste ont assisté à cette réunion.

Trois hypothèses y ont été envisagées :

- I. Venir à une entente avec les Français pour assurer la sécurité des Arméniens et créer un gouvernement arménien en Cilicie.
- II. Venir à une entente directement avec les Turcs pour assurer la sécurité des Arméniens.
- III. Créer des troubles, recourir à la révolution et proclamer l'annexion de la Cilicie à l'Arménie indépendante.

Les deux premières hypothèses ont été trouvées inexécutables et les dirigeants hintchakistes auraient décidé de recourir aux troubles.

Mgr Kévork Arslanian est l'âme du parti hintchakiste à Adana.

Adana, le 7 juin 1920

Tommy Martin

Copie au général [Dufieux]. Me faire venir Mgr K[évork] Arslanian] demain matin 8.

[Édouard Brémond]

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<sup>2161</sup> CADN, 1SL/1V/122.

## APPENDIX D: DAMIEN DE MARTEL TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 20

JULY 1920

Commissariat de la République française du Caucase<sup>2162</sup>

Tiflis, 20 juillet 1920

M. de Martel, commissaire français au Caucase, à Son Excellence M. Millerand, président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires étrangères.

Par mon télégramme n° 107 du 19 de ce mois, j'ai transmis au Département la proposition du gouvernement arménien de procéder dès maintenant à l'occupation d'une partie tout au moins de l'Arménie turque, notamment des régions de Baiszet et d'Alachkert.

Comme je l'ai indiqué, le but que poursuivent les autorités d'Erivan consiste à chercher avant la saison d'hiver à installer dans les territoires attribués à l'Arménie reconstituée les innombrables réfugiés qui ont afflué ces derniers temps sur le territoire de l'Arménie russe et qu'on peut évaluer à plus de 300 000 individus.

Pour réaliser cette opération, l'état-major arménien sollicité d'abord une assistance étendue des alliés en armes, en munitions et en équipements militaires. D'autre part, il propose de coordonner l'avance de ses troupes avec les opérations des alliés eux-mêmes et notamment l'occupation de la ligne Baiszet-Erzéroum-Trébizonde.

La liaison éventuelle de Kémal Pacha avec les Bolcheviques par l'Azerbaïdjan serait ainsi définitivement écartée, d'autre part les mouvements des bandes turques, kurdes et tatares opérant au nord de cette même ligne seraient désormais paralysés.

Il ne m'appartient pas d'examiner les possibilités d'exécution de ce plan et je dois me borner à le signaler à l'attention du Département.

---

<sup>2162</sup> AMAE, P 16674. The fac-similé follows the transcript.

Pour compléter les indications contenues dans mon télégramme précité, j'adresse sous ce pli à Votre Excellence copie de la lettre que m'a fait parvenir le représentant diplomatique d'Arménie à Tiflis.

D'autre part, c'est aussi à l'exécution de ce plan que se rattachent sans doute les opérations militaires tentées actuellement par les Arméniens au Zanguézour et au Charour, avec le Nakhitchévan comme mon objectif et dont mon télégramme n° 108 entretient Votre Excellence.

En ce qui concerne ces opérations, j'ai reçu de témoins récemment rentrés d'Arménie quelques renseignements qui précisent la façon dont elles sont exécutées : au sud d'Erivan, à la fin de juin dernier, les troupes arméniennes ont cerné 25 villages habités par plus de 40 000 musulmans ; cette population trop près de la capitale pour avoir des velléités d'indépendance avait toujours été calme et paisible ; elle fut chassée à coups de canon vers l'Arax et dut abandonner ses villages, qui furent immédiatement occupés par les réfugiés. Dans cette affaire, environ 4 000 personnes furent mises à mort, sans excepter les femmes et les enfants, que les soldats arméniens noyaient dans l'Arax.

Il ne m'a pas paru inutile de rapporter ces détails qui montrent que ce ne sont pas toujours « les mêmes qui sont massacrés. »

D. de Martel

COMMISSARIAT  
DE LA  
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE  
AU CAUCASE

Tiflis, le 20 Juillet 1920.

44

MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES  
11 JUILLET 1920  
CHAMBRE DU CABINET

DIRECTION POLITIQUE  
ET COMMERCIALE  
12 AOUT 1920  
Série E  
Dossier 311-1

Affaires Russes.

No 95.

M. de Martel Commissaire Français au  
Caucase à Son Excellence M. Millerand  
Président du Conseil Ministre des  
Affaires Etrangères.

*M. de Martel*

tion militaire des ar-  
méniens en liaison avec les  
forces alliées au Nord de  
l'Anatolie.

Par mon télégramme No 107 du 19  
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ment des régions de Baiazet et d'Alachkert.

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ler dans les territoires attribués à l'Armé-  
nie reconstituée les innombrables réfugiés  
qui ont afflué dans ces derniers temps sur le  
territoire de l'Arménie Russe. et qu'on peut

*(pas de p-j)*

évaluer à plus de 300.000 individus.

Pour réaliser cette opération l'Etat Major Arménien sollicite d'abord une assistance étendue des alliés en armes, en munitions et en équipement militaire. D'autre part il propose de coordonner l'avance de ses troupes avec les opérations des alliés eux mêmes et notamment l'occupation de la ligne Baiazet-Erzéroum - Trébizonde.

La liaison éventuelle de Kémal-Pacha avec les Bolchéviques par l'Azerbaïdjan serait ainsi définitivement écartée, d'autre part, les mouvements des bandes Turques, Kurdes et Tartares opérant au Nord de cette même ligne seraient désormais paralysés.

Il ne m'appartient pas d'examiner les possibilités d'exécution de ce plan et je dois me borner à le signaler à l'attention du Département.

Pour compléter les indications contenues dans mon télégramme précité j'adresse sous ce pli à Votre Excellence copie de la lettre que m'a fait parvenir à ce sujet le représentant diplomatique d'Arménie à Tiflis.

D'autre part c'est aussi à l'exécution de ce plan que se rattachent sans doute les opérations militaires tentées actuellement par les Arméniens au Zangué-zour et au Charour avec le Nakhitchévan comme objectif et dont mon télégramme No 108 entretient Votre Excellence.

En ce qui concerne ces opérations j'ai recueilli de témoins récemment rentrés d'Arménie, quelques renseignements qui précisent la façon dont elles sont exécutées; au Sud d'Erivan à la fin de Juin dernier, les troupes arméniennes ont cerné 25 villages tatares habités par plus de 40.000 musulmans; cette population trop près de la capitale pour avoir des velléités d'indépendance, avait toujours été calme et paisible; elle fut chassée à coups de canon vers l'Arax et dut abandonner ses villages qui furent immédiatement occupés par les réfugiés. Dans cette affaire, environ 4000 personnes furent mises à mort sans <sup>en</sup> excepter les femmes et les enfants, que les soldats arméniens noyaient dans l'Arax.

Il ne m'a pas paru inutile de rapporter ces détails qui montrent que ce ne sont pas toujours "les mêmes qui sont massacrés".

*Le de la carte*



**APPENDIX E: CONSUL MICHEL GRILLET TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
22 SEPTEMBER 1922**

SMYRNE, le 22 septembre 1922 à 12 h, reçu le 23 à 16h 55<sup>2163</sup>.

De l'*Edgar-Quinet*

Réponse à votre télégramme n° 68.

La conviction des amiraux Dumesnil, Levavasseur et la mienne, est que les Turcs ne sont pour rien dans [l']incendie de la ville.

Incendie allumé en divers points, favorisé par le vent, s'est développé si vite que les moyens militaires et locaux étaient forcément impuissants. Notre conviction est fondée sur certaines constatations et observations aussi bien que sur la raison ; les autorités turques prétendent avoir en outre des preuves nombreuses et elles continuent leur enquête. L'amiral Dumesnil leur a dit combien il pourrait être utile que cette enquête soit faite au grand jour et communiquée à lui et à tous les représentants étrangers. Il est certain que toutes les déclarations des réfugiés grecs et arméniens seront défavorables aux Turcs. Il est probable qu'un très grand nombre de Français les appuieront dans ce sens, mais le mensonge et l'imagination ne peuvent rien contre la réalité des faits et l'imagination est d'autant plus vive qu'il s'agit de personnes ayant fui Smyrne promptement.

(à suivre)

SMYRNE, le 22 septembre 1922 à 18h 16, reçu le 23 à 17h.

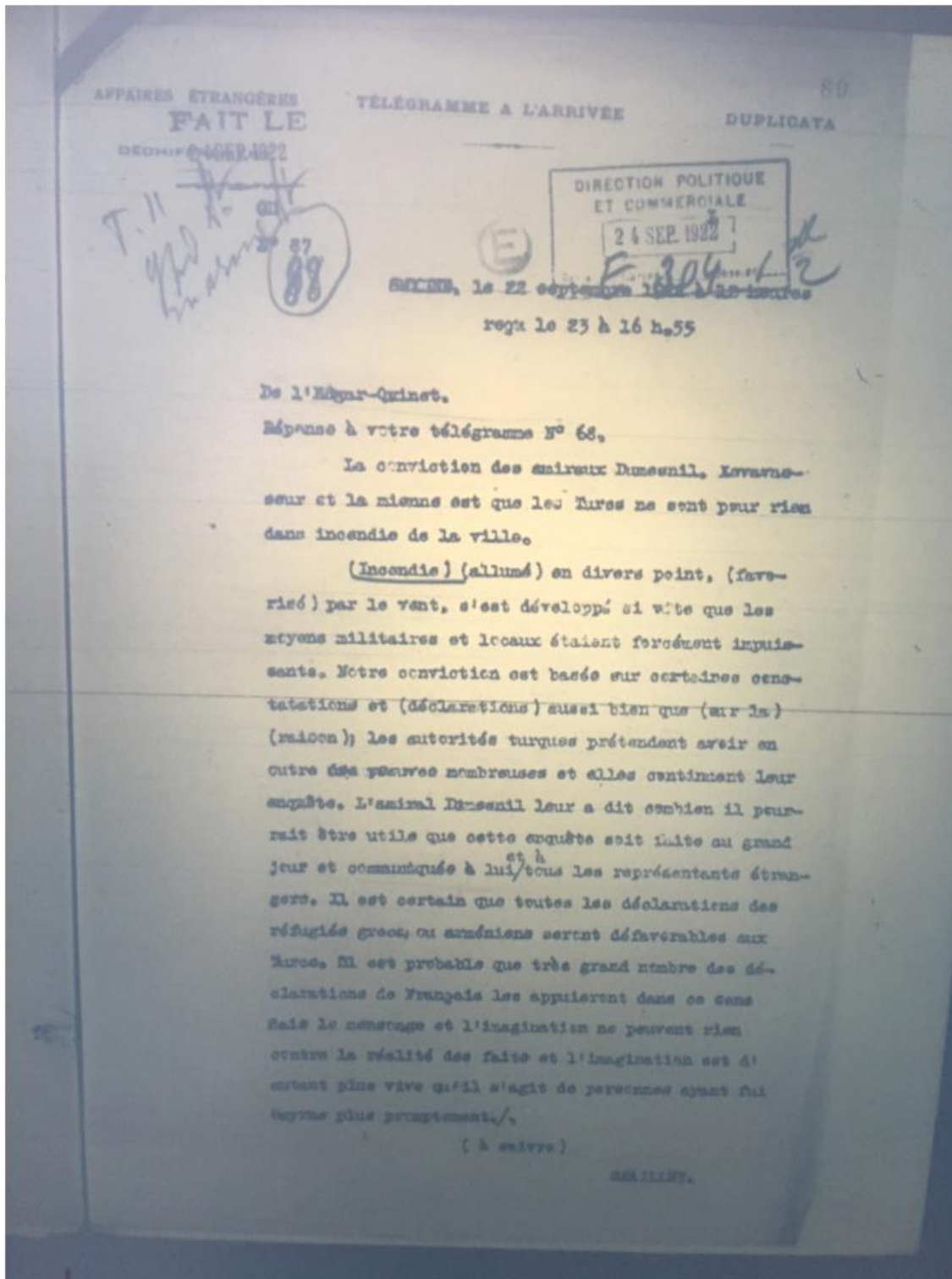
En résumé, il nous paraît certain que l'exaltation de la population arménienne et grecque entretenue par ses prêtres et ses dirigeants, a permis de trouver facilement tous les incendiaires voulus pour que le Turc vainqueur ne conserve de la ville grecque, arménienne et franque qu'un monceau de décombres. Les dirigeants du mouvement incendiaire ont eu leur rôle facilité par les mesures prises par les autorités militaires turques qui, procédant à l'arrestation des soldats grecs cachés dans la ville et à celle de tous les sujets raïas grecs et arméniens entre 18 et 45 ans, ont permis de faire croire que la destruction systématique de tous les chrétiens était commencée.

---

<sup>2163</sup> AMAE, P 1380. The fac-similé follows the transcripts.

La bonne volonté des autorités [turques] pour combattre l'incendie a été certaine, [même] si leurs moyens étaient limités. Leur regret de voir cette richesse leur échapper est évidente.

GRAILLET



DÉCHIFFREMENT

DIRECTION POLITIQUE  
ET COMMERCIALE

24 SEP. 1922

Dere... La... G...  
37

G.

N° 86

SUYRME, le 22 septembre 1922 à 18 h. 16

reçu le 23 à 17 h. 20

De l'Edgard-Quinet.

Suite à mon télégramme 87.

En résumé, il nous paraît certain que l'exaltation de la population arménienne et grecque, entretenue par ses prêtres et ses dirigeants, a permis de trouver facilement tous les incendiaires voulus (pour que) le Turc (vain) (que) Kur (ne) conserve de la ville grecque et arménienne et franque qu'un monceau (de) débris. Les dirigeants du mouvement (incendiaire) ont eu leur rôle favorisé (par les) mesures prises par les autorités militaires turques qui, précédant (à l') arrestation des soldats grecs cachés dans la (ville) et à celle de tous les (sujets) rafas grecs et arméniens entre 18 et 45 ans, ont permis de faire croire que la (destruction) systématique (de tous les) chrétiens était commandée.

La bonne volonté des autorités pour combattre l'incendie a été certaine si leurs moyens (étaient) limités. Leur regret (de) voir cette richesse leur échapper, est évident.

CHAILLE.

## APPENDIX F: CURRICULUM VITAE

### I) Personal

Name: Maxime Gauin

Date of birth: 09.04.1985

Place of birth: Agen, France

Nationality: French

Email: [gauin.maxime@wanadoo.fr](mailto:gauin.maxime@wanadoo.fr)

### II) Academic qualifications

2019 Ph.D, Department of History, Middle East Technical University. Thesis Title: *The Relations between the French Republic and the Armenian Committees, from 1918 to 1923.*

2010 MA (second half), Center of social history, Paris-I-Sorbonne University (with honors).

2006 MA (first half), Center of rural studies, Lyon-II-Lumière University and École normale supérieure de Lyon.

2005 BA, Department of History, Bordeaux-III-Michel-de-Montaigne University.

### III) Employment history

Researcher at the International Strategic Research Organization (USAK, Ankara): 2011-2013.

Scholar in residence at the Center for Eurasian Studies: since 2013.

### IV) Publications

A) *Chapter of book*

“Uneven Repression: The Ottoman State and its Armenians,” in Edward J. Erickson (ed.), *A Global History of Relocation in Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, London-New York: Bloomsbury Academics, 2019, pp. 115-140.

B) *Contributions to collective books*

“From Terrorism to Insurgencies: The Armenian Revolutionary Nationalists against the Ottoman State, 1912-1915” *XVIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi* (forthcoming).

« Arméniens et Iran », in Haydar Çakmak (ed.) *İran Dış Politikasında Orta Doğu Sempozyumu*, Ankara: Uluslararası İran Türkleri Düşünce Platformu, 2018, pp. 124-159.

“From Insurgency to Scorched Earth Policy: Armenian Nationalist Policy against the Ottoman Empire and Emerging Turkey; 1914-1923,” in Neslihan Karataş (ed.), *A Legal Review of the 1915 Events in 100th Anniversary on the Basis of Historical Findings*, Ankara: Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 2017, volume I, pp. 497-518. Turkish version: “İsyandan Yakıp Yıkma Politikasına: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Yeni Kurulan Türkiye’ye Karşı Ermeni Milliyetçi Politikası, 1914-1923,” in Neslihan Karataş (ed.), *Tarihsel Veriler Temelinde 100.Yılında 1915 Olaylarına Hukuki Bakış*, Ankara: Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, 2017, volume I, pp. 187-212. French version: « D’une stratégie insurrectionnelle à celle de la terre brûlée : la politique nationaliste arménienne contre l’Empire ottoman et la nouvelle Turquie, 1914-1923 », *Regard juridique sur les évènements de 1915 sur la base des données historiques*, Ankara: Université Yıldırım Beyazıt, 2017, volume I, pp. 505-530.

“Ottoman Empire,” in John Stone and alii (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism*, Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016, volume IV.

“Victims of their Nationalists: Armenians and Greeks in Western Anatolia, 1905-1922,” in Dinara Duisebayeva (ed.), *Ermeni Meselesi ve 1915 Olayları*, İstanbul: İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi, 2015, pp. 139-158.

“Stratejik Tehditler ve Tereddütler: Kilikya’da Karaya Çıkarma Operasyonları ve Projeleri ve Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1917)” / “Strategic threats and hesitations: The Operations And Projects of Landing In Cilicia And The Ottoman Armenians (1914-1917),” in *19.-20. Yüzyıllarda Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Sempozyumu*, İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi/Türk Ocakları, 2015, pp. 954-1004.

« Logiques d’une rupture : les relations entre la République française et les comités arméniens, de l’armistice de Moudros au traité de Lausanne », in Tolga Başak and Mevlüt

Yüksel (ed.), *First International Symposium on Turkish-Armenian Relations and Great Powers (2-4 May 2012)*, Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2014, pp. 767-782.

« Du gambettisme au Front Populaire : le syndicalisme agricole républicain sous la Troisième république », in Pierre Robin et Jean Vigreux (ed.), *Renaud Jean, La Voix rouge des paysans*, Nérac, France: Éditions d'Albret/Association des amis de Renaud Jean, 2012.

"Ending a Decade or Errors (2001-2011)? Past, Present and Prospects of the FrancoTurkish Relations," *USAK Yearbook of International Law and Politics*, Ankara: USAK, 2012, pp. 61-97.

### C) Peer-reviewed journal articles

"Revisiting the Fire of Izmir," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, XLI-1, fall 2017, pp. 31-53. Turkish version: "İzmir Yanginin Yeniden Değerlendirilmesi," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, No. 59, 2018, pp. 111-142.

"Stopping the Censors: The Final Defeat of Armenian Nationalism at the French Constitutional Council in January 2017," *Review of Armenian Studies*, pp. 75-112. Turkish version: "Sansürcülerin durdurulması : Ermeni milliyetçiliğinin Ocak 2017'de Fransız Anayasa Koseyi'ndeki nihai yenilgisi," in Hazel Çağan-Elbir (ed.), *Ermeni konferansları*, Ankara: AVİM, 2017, pp. 40-64.

"Understanding the Ideological Blockades in Armenia's Contemporary Politics," *Caucasus International*, VII-1, summer 2017, pp. 137-147.

"Meline Toumani and the Turkic-Armenian Conflict," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 34, 2016, pp. 95-124.

"On a Booklet Dealing with the 'Righteous Turks'", *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 32, 2015, pp. 225-251.

"The Armenian Forced Relocation: Putting an End to Misleading Simplifications," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 31, 2015, pp. 93-131.

"Review Essay — 'Proving' a 'Crime against Humanity'?", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXXV-1, March 2015, pp. 141-157.

"The Missed Occasion: Successes of the Hamidian Police Against the Armenian Revolutionaries, 1905-1908," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 30, 2014, pp. 113-131.

"Facing Liberty: the Victory of Rational Argumentation and its Consequences," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 29, 2014, pp. 127-147.

"State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility: The Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey and the Armenian Genocide: A Reply to Vahagn Avedian," *European Journal of International Law*, XXIII-3, August 2012, pp. 821-835.

"How to Create a Problem of Refugees: The Evacuation of Cilicia by France and the Flow of Armenian Civilians," *Review of Armenian Studies*, No. 25, 2012, pp. 67-102.

"The Convergent Analysis of Russian, British, French and American Officials Regarding the Armenian Volunteers (1914-1922)," *International Review of Turkish Studies*, I-4, winter 2011, pp. 8-43.

"Remembering the Orly Attack," *Review of International Law and Politics*, VII-27, September 2011, pp. 113-139.

#### D) Other articles

"The evolution of the French far-right's rhetoric on Islam," *Daily Sabah*, 15 March 2019.

"Pope Francis and the Ghost of Benedict XV," *Daily Sabah*, 28 September 2016.

"Düzmece ve düzmecenin kullanımı: 'Andonyan Belgeleri,'" *Parlamento*, Nisan 2016, pp. 60-61.

"The New Revenge of Law on Politics," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 26 October 2015.

"A True or False Story by Torossian," *Daily Sabah*, 2 October 2015.

"Why Be Bothered About the Facts?," *Daily Sabah*, 25 March 2015.

"The Case for the Turkish-Israeli Alliance," *The Jerusalem Post*, 19 January 2015 (with Serap Merve Doğan).

"The Sense of the Perinçek v. Switzerland Case," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22 November 2014.

"Baku to the Future: Azerbaijan, Not Armenia, Is Israel's True Ally," *Haaretz*, 29 October 2014 (with Alexander Murinson).

"İzmir'i kim yaktı?," *Cumhuriyet*, 2 Ekim 2012.

"Türkiye'nin Ermeni Meselesi: Aslında Ne Oldu?," *Analist*, Nisan 2012, pp. 18-25.

“The Revenge of Law on Politics,” *Hürriyet Daily News*, 4 March 2012.

“France-Turkey: What Went Wrong?,” *Hürriyet Daily News*, 14 January 2012.

**V) Conference presentations**

« Occupation de l’Azerbaïdjan occidental par l’Arménie : les origines et les dimensions idéologiques d’un conflit », conference at the French Senate, 19 February 2015.

“Between Trauma and Resilience: French Historiography of the First World War,” Middle East Technical University (conference on “The First World War in Eurasia”), 31 October 2014.

“Armenian Terrorism and Propaganda since 1972,” Conference at the London School of Economics and Political Science, chaired by Andrew Mango, April 2013.



## APPENDIX G TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

### Giriş

Anglo Sakson güçlerin, hatta veya Rusya'nın, aksine Fransa'nın Ermeni meselesine yönelik politikası arşiv çalışmasına dayanan detaylı araştırmalara konu olmamıştır. Esasen genel bir değerlendirme bulunmamakla birlikte Robert F. Zeidner'in Çukurova'nın işgaline ilişkin doktora tezi gibi bir kaç monograf bulunmaktadır. Bu tez önemli bir çalışma olmakla beraber askeri arşivlerden araştırma yoksunluğundan ve son döneme (Ocak 1921 – Ocak 1922) ilişkin özlü anlatım ve Lozan Konferansı'na ilişkin sessiz kalma gibi tartışmalı tercihlerden çekmektedir.

Fransa Cumhuriyeti, Kabine başta olmak üzere Dışişleri, Cumhurbaşkanlığı, Parlamento, ordu, polis ve adalet, bir başka deyişle, bir dizi kurum ve bunların uygulamaları, gelenekleri ve hepsinin üstünde insanları demektir. Ermeni Komiteleri, ilk olarak 19.yüzyılın sonlarında ve 20.yüzyılın başlarında kurulan milliyetçi partilerdir. Bu partiler: 1885'te kurulan Armenakan, 1887'de kurulan Hınçak, 1890'da kurulan Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu, 1896'da kurulan Reformcu Hınçak ve 1907'de kurulan Ramkavar'dır. Bahsi geçen son iki parti 1921 yılında yeni Ramkavar partisinin oluşturulması için Armenakan ile birleşmiştir. Bu partilerle beraber Ramkavar için oluşturulan Ermeni Genel Hayırseverler Grubu (EGHG) gibi çok çeşitli gruplar da bulunmaktadır. Bu son kategorinin sadece bir ögesi bulunmaktadır: Komite, partilerden bağımsız olarak ancak onlarla yakın temas halinde, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Yabancı Lejyon'a gönüllü toplama konusunda yetkilidir.

Belirli bir tarihi dönem (Mondros'tan Lozan'a kadar) tercih edilmiştir çünkü söz konusu dönem istisnai bir şekilde olayların yoğun olduğu ve ayrıca Fransızların Anadolu'da idareci ve işgalci oldukları tek dönemdir. Ek olarak Orta Çağ'da yıkılan Ermeni krallıklarından SSCB'nin dağılmasına kadar olan süreçte bağımsız Ermenistan'ın var olduğu tek dönemdir.

Tez savunmasının cevap verdiği temel soru şudur: Fransa Cumhuriyeti Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında ortaya çıkan Ermeni Komiteleri ile olan ittifakından neden ve nasıl bir kaç yıl içinde vazgeçerek Türkler ile ittifakın yeniden tesis edilmesine yönelmiştir?

### Bölüm I

19.yüzyılın ortalarından 1914'e kadar uzanan Fransızların Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda üstünlüğünün son dönemi, "maddi ve ahlaki çıkarlar" denilen, yatırımlara (örneğin neredeyse %47'si demiryolunda), kredilere (1880'den 1909'a Fransız yatırımcılar Osmanlı'nın borçlarındaki sermayenin %70'ini temsil ediyordu ve 1910-1914 dönemi için de %63) ve okullara dayanmaktadır. Bu denli bir üstünlük imparatorluğun toprak bütünlüğüne kastetmekte ve dâhilen de kuvvetli Türk ve Müslüman karşıtı bir hareketle karşılaşmamaktaydı (Sade ve basit ırkçılığa eklenen William Gladstone ve Lord Bryce gibi liderlerce temsil edilen Protestan köktenciliğin güçlü olduğu BK'nın aksine). Eğer Protestan Ermeniler Osmanlı'daki Protestanların en az yüzde 90'nını temsil ederse, Katolik iknasına maruz kalan toplam Osmanlılar'ın yaklaşık yüzde 10'u Katolik Ermeniler'dir. Ek olarak, Maruniler bir kenara, Yahudi ve Müslüman elitler Fransız okullarını tercih etmiştir: Bu öğrencilerin %85'i Edirne'deki Yahudiler, %58.7'si İstanbul'daki ve %58.1' Bağdat'takilerdi; daha az sayıda ise özellikle Müslüman elitlerin çocuklarıydı. BU Müslüman öğrenciler nitelikli itibariyle önemliydi zira gelecekte imparatorluğun yöneticileri olacaklardı.

Bu koşullar altında, 1860'lı yıllardan itibaren ve sonrasında 1880'den 1895'e kadar olan süreçte Fransa ile ve Fransa'da başlayan ilk Ermeni milliyetçi denemeleri bir dizi başarısızlıktan başka bir şey olmamıştır. 1862'da Zeytin İsyanları beyhude bir şekilde Katolikliğe dönmeyi önermekte ve Fransa'da gerçekleşen Ermeni yanlısı bir hareket oluşturma girişimi de 1885'ten 1895'e kadar Paris Ermeni Yurttaşlar Birliği'nin benzer faaliyetleri gibi başarılı olmamıştır. Bu tarz bir hareket esasen 1896'da Paris'te ortaya çıkmış, ancak geniş kapsamlı yerel politikalar (Jules Meline'nin merkezi kabinesine muhalif sağ ve sol kesimlerce üretilen) ve iç politikalar (Dreyfus olayı) nedeniyle henüz 1897'nin sonunda infilak etmiştir. Hareketin en önemli figürlerinden Jean Jaurès daha sonra Jön Türklerin ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun en sadık destekçilerinden olmuştur; Maurice Barrès de aşırı sağdan beşeri milliyetçiliğe geçiş yapmış, aynı zamanda da Ermeni davasında Türklerin savunmasına destek oluşturmuştur (1918 itibariyle Pierre Loti'ye yardım etmiştir).

1895-97 yıllarına gelindiğinde Fransız Hükümeti, hem II.Abdülhamid Osmanlısından hem de Ermeni milliyetçilerinden usanmıştır. Ancak Osmanlı hükümetinin sadece saldırgan unsurları cezalandırma ve masumları koruyabilme kapasitesi tekrar yerine geldiğinde İstanbul'daki Fransız hükümeti Osmanlı hükümetine daha olumlu yaklaşmaya başlamıştır. Bu özellikle de 1905'te ARF'nin İzmir'i yok etme planının sivil zaiyatsız bertaraf edilmesi (ki buna Fransız Bankası olan Credit Lyonnais'in yerel şubesi de dahil) ve 1908'de Taşnak Partisi'nin Van yapılanmasının keşfedilmesi ve silah ve patlayıcılarına el konulmasından sonra gerçekleşmiştir. Ayrıca, 1898'den 1909'a büyükelçi, ticaret odaklı ve Türkleri Balkanlar'daki

diğer tüm halklara tercih eden Ernest Constans olmuştur. Jön Türkler devriminden çok sonra da II. Abdülhamid ile yakınlığı devam etmiş ve daha sonra Constans'ın yerine CUP ile ilişkilerini geliştiren Maurice Bompard gelmiştir.

Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın arifesinde, başta Byükelçi Bompard olmak üzere Fransız diplomasisi Ermeni milliyetçiliğini bölge ve hatta küresel barış için tehdit olarak görmüştür. Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu aslında Van'da önceki muavin konsolos (Byükelçi Bompard'ın favorisi) ile muavin konsolosun Nisan 1914'te prestijli Revue de Paris'te makale olarak yayımlanan ve ARF liderliğine ve göçebe Kürt kabilelerini Van ve Bitlis bölgelerinde barışın sağlanmasındaki iki gerçek engel olarak değerlendirdiği byükelçilik ve bakanlığa hazırlanan raporundan sonra çatışmıştır. Buna karşılık Osmanlı yetkililerinin 1913 ve 1914'de kamu güvenliğini sağlamaya yönelik aynı bölgedeki çabaları takdir edilmiştir. 1913'in ortalarında Rus hükümeti Osmanlı'ya karşı Edirne'yi kesin bir şekilde fethetmek üzere tehdit etmiş ve sonra da bunun giderilmesi için üçlü Antant talep etmiştir. Ancak Fransız hükümeti bu talebi reddetmiş ve sonra Nisan 1914 itibariyle Fransa Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na silah satmıştır.

Sonuç itibariyle, 1914 öncesi dönemde Fransa ile ilişkiler kapsamında Ermeni milliyetçilerinin lehine hemen hemen hiçbir şey bulunmamaktadır.

## **Bölüm II**

Genel kanının aksine, Fransız hükümeti ne 1914'te ne de Mart 1915'te Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun bölünmesini kabul etmişti. Esasen Fransız Hükümeti bu yöndeki kararı ancak 1915'in yazının sonunda gerçekleştirmiştir. Bu gelişme Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ve Rus ve İngiliz mütteffiklerin fikirlerini değiştirmenin imkânsızlığının üzücü bir sonucuydu. Bu koşullarda Ermeni Komitelerle ittifakın oluşması yavaş ve karmaşık olmuştur. Başta ARF olmak üzere bu komiteler Van, Erzurum, Zeytun vb.'daki isyanları saymaksızın Rus ordusunu 45.000 fazla gönüllü ile donatmış ama Fransız ordusu için bu rakam sadece 380-400 kişi olmuştur ve bu anda ARF asker alımına katılmayı tenezül etmemiştir.

Diğer sebeplerin yanında BK ile olan rekabet (örneğin Birleşik Krallık donanması İskenderun'u istiyordu), Fransız ordusundakilerin çoğunun Lübnanlı Hristiyan Arapları (Fransızların geleneksel müşterisi olan) Çukurova'nın Ermenileri'ne (Londra'ya ve St. Petersburg'a bağlı olan fakat henüz Paris'e bağlı olmayan) tercih etmesi ve Ermeni liderliğinin (çıkarma bakış açısıyla 1914'te heyecanlanan ancak 1916'nın da çoğunluğunda çekingen olan) bir kısmı ile yaşanan anlaşmazlıklar nedeniyle Kıbrıs'tan kitlesel bir çıkarma söz konusu değildi. Rus

politikasının (Ermeni birliklerinin ve Van'da Ermeni özerkliğinin bastırılması) değişmesi bu tereddütleri desteklemiş ama Ermeni ve Arap gönüllülerden oluşan Doğu Lejyonu'nun kurulması (1916) ve gelişmesi (1917-1918) özellikle meşakatli olmuştur: Fransız yetkililer ve oryantalist gönüllüler birbirlerine güvenmiyordu, Ermeniler Mayıs 1918'da ayaklanma örgütlemiş, ABD'nin 1.Dünya Savaşı'na girmesi ile komitelerin ana asker kaynağından mahrum kalmıştı. Bu durum lejyonun Fransız ve İngiliz yetkilileri tatmin etmeye başladığı 1918'in yazının sonuna kadar gerçekleşmemişti, ki bu memnuniyet de sadece savaş alanındaki verimlilik açısından değil çünkü disiplin hiçbir zaman tatmin edici olmamıştı ve bu sıkıntı da çoğunlukla komiteler nedeniyle yaşanmaktaydı. Bu arada, İngiliz ve Fransızların Kafkaslar ve İran'dan sorumlu askeri ateşelerinin 1917-1918'de Karadeniz'den Urmiye/İran'a kadar olan "Hristiyan Cephesi" (Gürcüler, Ermeniler, Rumlar, Süryaniler) için projeleri de kanlı bir başarısızlık olmuştur. Fransız yetkililerce Urmiye'deki Ermeni ve Süryani gönüllüler en sadistik katliamlardaki en kötü yağmacılar olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Gönüllülerin kabahatlerinin tanımlaması bu bağlamda son derece açıktır.

Özetle, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın kendisi samimi ve kuvvetli bir ittifaka sebep olmamıştır. Aksine bu savaş süresince, Ermeni milliyetçiler boşu boşuna Karadeniz'den Akdeniz'e uzanan bir Ermenistan'a ilişkin somut sözler istemiştir. Gerçeği söylemek gerekirse, Fransız yetkililer Birinci Dünya Savaşı ve sonrasında hem konudan sıyrılmış hem de açıkça Adana ve Mersin'e ilişkin söz vermeyi reddetmiştir.

### **Bölüm III**

Paris ve Ermeni Komiteleri arasındaki ittifak, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun imzladığı mütareke sonrasında hızlı bir şekilde çelişkili bir hal almıştır. Bu bağlamda en sıkıntılı soru Çukurova ve komşu bölgelerin (Antep, Kilis) durumunun ne olacağıydı: Ermeni milliyetçileri Kafkaslardan Akdenize uzanan bir Ermenistan istimekte ve bu maksimalist iddialarını Aryanist ırkçılıkla (Ermeniler "Ari irka" ve Türkler de bayağı ve suçlu olan "Turan ırkı"na bağıymışcasına) açıklamaktaydılar. Fransa gerek çıkarları itibarıyla gerekse bu tarz bir "Ermeni İmparatorluğu"nun (bu ifade gayri resmi günlük Le Temps'ın dış editorü Jean Herbetin kullanımıdır) sürekli olarak çoğunluğunun Müslüman olacağından ya da milyonlarca insana karşı etnik temizlemeyi (MFA henüz Aralık 1918'de bunun kabul edilemeyeceğini belirtti) gerektireceğinden karşı çıkmıştır. Adana'da Şubat 1919'dan Eylül 1920'ye kadar baş idareci olan Colonel Edouard Bremond'un Ermeni destekçisi önyargıları (abartılmamaları gerekiyorsa da gerçek olan) Ermeni milliyetçiler tarafından sömürülmesi gerektiği kadar

sömürülmemiştir. Sonuç itibariyle, Ermeni lejyonerleri ve onları destekleyen bir kısım Ermeni siviller müslüman sivillere (Fransız yetkililerin henüz Kasım Aralık 1918'de dikkatini çekti) karşı bir dizi soygun, tecavüz, cinayet vb. gerçekleştirmiş ardından 16 Şubat 1919'da Fransız ordusundaki Cezayirli askerlerle mücadeleye girmiştir. Önce Ocak 1919'da ordudan kaçış ve kişisel suçlar çoğalıyor, ondan sonra da Şubat'ta, tahrik edilmemesine rağmen, Ermeni Lejyonunun 4. Taburu, bunlara dâhil olmak üzere Fransız ordusuna ait olan Cezayirli ve üslümanlara saldırıp, iki evi yakıyor, birkaç dükkânı talan ediyor, isyan ediyor ve en sonunda Fransız Deniz Ordusunun "topların ve mitralyözlerin" tehdidi altında zorla silahlarını bırakıyor. Tabur aynı ayın içinde feshediliyor: Yaklaşık elli kişi Askeri Mahkemelere, dört yüz kişi de Mısır'daki ceza taburlarına gönderilip, "şüpheli olmayan" başka dört yüz kişi ise çeşitli birliklere dağıtılıyor.

Doğu Lejyonu bir Ermeni ve bir de Suriyeli lejyon arasında bölünmüştür. Yüzlerce Ermeni lejyoner kovulmuş ve Mısır'a yollanmış, düzinelercesi mahkûm edilmiştir ama bu büyük oranda insan gücünün faillerin sistemli bir şekilde yakalanmalarında yeterli olmaması nedeniyle şiddeti bitirmek için yeterli olmamıştır: Birçoğu gıyaben mahkûm edilmiş ve hükümlerin icrası da kısmen seferberliğin bitmesi kısmen de İngiliz yetkililer nedeniyle yavaş olmuştur. 1918'den 1919'a Fransız Ordusu'nun Yakın Doğu'daki komutanı olan Tuğgeneral Hamelin tamamen kızdırılmış bir halde Savaş Bakanı'na "Ermenilerin güç kullanma açısından barbarlıkta Türkler ve Kürtlerden sonra gelmediğini (...) Ermenilerin sadece intikam arayan, iç rekabetlerden derince bölünmüş, Fransızların tükenmeyen kaynaklarına güvenen ve bunlara da hiç bir şekilde minnet etmeyen ve etmeyeceklerini" yazmıştır. Hamelin'in çileden çıkması daha anlaşılabilir bir hal almış, nitekim elde edilen belgelerin de kanıtladığı üzere Ermeni lejyonerlerin şiddet ve itaatsizlikleri Ramkavar'ın –başta Mısır şubesi sonra da Kahire'nin İngiliz yetkililerine yönelik Fransız protestoları- kışkırtmalarından ve daha az bir oranda ARF'nin faaliyetlerinden kaynaklanmıştır.

Misilleme olarak çok muhtemeldir ki; Ramkavar tarafından yönetilen ama yarı resmi Fransız yetkililer tarafından desteklenen günlük bülten *La Voix de L'Arménie*'nin 1919 Şubatı'nın başı itibariyle basılması durmuştur. Bu arada, Ermeni komiteler sıklıkla Birleşik Krallık'ı ve hatta ABD'yi Fransa'ya karşı kullanmaya çalışmıştır. Özellikle "Bölünmez Ermenistan" (Mersin, Adana, Kilis ve Antep'i içeren) üzerinde Amerikan mandası veya bu mümkün değilse aynı bölgede İngiliz mandasını istemişlerdir. Ancak 1919'un sonbaharında Tümgeneral James Harbord'un manda sistemine oldukça şüpheli baktığı raporu projenin sonunun başlangıcı olmuş ve Britanya hükümeti asla Ermenistan için ABD'nin yerini bir başka mandater güç olarak almayı düşünmemiştir. Oldukça Ermeni yanlısı ve Kafkasya'daki askeri Fransız

heyetinin üyesi olan Albay Chardigny böylelikle 30 Ekim 1919 tarihli mektubunda bu taleplerin ancak ve ancak “megaloman Ermenilerin” rüyası olabildiğini ve hemen reddedildiğini yazıyor.

Fransız basınının bir kısmı (çok çeşitli görüşlerden: Sosyalist, Liberal, merkezci, muhafazakâr, aşırı sağcı gazeteler) henüz 1919’da uzlaşma ve Türklere adil davranmayı Ermeni milliyetçilerine koşulsuz desteğe tercih etmeyi savunmaya başlamıştır. 1918’in sonunda görüşmede yardım edilmiş olarak Pierre Loti, Ocak 1919 itibariyle hatta Mayıs-Haziran’dan bu yana tezinin bir kısmının birçok gazette savunulduğu görmüştür. Türk milliyetçi hareketinin doğuşu gazetelerdeki bu eğilimleri onaylamış ve sahadaki istihbarat birimleri (Donanma için Henri Rollin ve ordu için Roger Labonne) bu milli akımın Bolşevik veya Hristiyan öldürme amacı güden dini fanatiklerden oluşmadığını üstlerine göstermişlerdir. Benzer şekilde hareket İstanbul Yüksek Komisyonu ve daha sonra (1922-1925) Ankara temsilcisi olacak Osmanlı hükümeti ile irtibat memuru olan Albay Louis Mougin tarafından olumlu karşılanmıştır. Buna rağmen Kafkaslar’daki İngiliz ve Fransız memurların Erivan’daki Ermeni hükümetine dair önemsenmeyen görüşleri 1919’da silah satımının reddedilmesine neden olmuştur. Aslında Ermenistan’ın ulusal birliğinin olmaması (ARF ve Ramkavar ortak hükümet kurmayı becerememiştir), 1918’da Gürcistan’a saldırı ve Azerbaycan ile olan daimi ihtilaf Ermeni Cumhuriyeti’ne olan güvensizliğin kanıtı olarak görülmüştür. Aynı yıl yazın İngiliz ordusu Güney Kafkasya’dan çekilmiş ve Fransa idaresinde Ermenistan’da müdahale etmeyi reddeden ABD çıkarlarının (misyoner ve yardım) tahakkümüne ek olarak bölgede düzen tesis etmek için tahmini 100.000 adama ihtiyaç duyulmuştur. Gayri resmi günlük bülten *Le Temps* önemli ölçüde Ekim 1919’da Edirne’den Van’a kadar olan bir Türkiye’yi savunmaya başlamıştır.

#### **Bölüm IV**

Georges Clemenceau’nun yakınlarına “Ermenilerden bıktık!” Eylül 1919’da Clemenceau’nun Beyrut Yüksek Komiseri ve Yakın Doğu’da Fransız Ordularının başı olarak Geneal Henri Gouraud’u ve Beyrut Yüksek Komisyonu Genel Sekreteri olarak Robert de Caix’i atama kararı önemli bir dönüm noktası olmuştur: Her ikisi de 16.yüzyılda Francis I tarafından kurulan Türklere olan ittifakın iyileştirilmesini istiyor ve ikisi de Ermeni milliyetçilerinden hoşlanmıyordu (de Caix hatta daha Gouraud’dan daha fazla hoşlanmıyordu). İzindeki Yüksek Komiser François Georges-Picot ve Berthe Georges-Gaulis (En azında 1914’ten bu yana MFA ve Fas’taki yerel yönetim ile bağlantılı) Kemalistlerle neler olabileceği konusunu

değerlendirmek üzere müzakereci olarak yollanmıştır (Georges Picot Aralık'ta Mustafa Kemal ile buluşmuştur). Georges-Picot ekonomik avantajlar karşılığında tahliyeyi ve bu da gerçekleşene kadar işgal edilen bölgelerde Türkler, Ermeniler ve diğerleri arasında "eşit bir dengeyi" savunmuştur. Berthe Georges-Gaulis, daha istekli bir şekilde, Ankara ile ittifak yapılması sonucuna varmış ve bu sonu yazdığı gazetede de savunmuştur. Ocak 1920'de kendini Türk yanlısı olarak tanımlayan Alexandre Millerand Bakanlar Konseyi Başkanı olmuş ve Clemenceau'nun yerini almıştır.

Bunar rağmen, "eşit denge" politikası Maraş meselesi ile başarısız olmuştur. İşin aslı, Ermeni Lejyonerlerin şiddeti (hem şehirde hem de kırsaldaki) ve başlangıçta görevde bulunan Yüzbaşı Pierre André'nin Türk nüfusun başkaldırmasına neden olan etmenlerin ne olduğunu anlayamadaki yetersizlik, sonrasında da son kurtarma birliğini komuta eden Albay Robert Normand'ın Türk isyanını müzakere ile son buldurmaya ilişkin çabalarının tercümanı tarafından sabote edildiğinden şüphelenmiştir. İsyana diğer Türk şehirlerine örnek olmuş ve Fransız ordusunun da hepsini bastırarak ne adamı ne de malzemesi bulunuyordu; Maraş boşaltılmış ve Fransız işgal alanı etkili bir şekilde savunulacak düzeye düşürülmüştür. Ne Paris'in ne de Vaşington'un "Bölünmez Ermenistan" düşünmediği anlaşıldığından Ermeni milliyetçileri Çukurova'daki demografik dengeyi zorbalıkla değiştirerek bölgeyi Türkiye'den ayırmak ve nihayetinde Erivan Cumhuriyeti birleştirmek için oldubitti uygulamaya çalışmıştır. Fransızların önlemleri bu denemeleri birbir sonlandırmıştır.

1920 Baharı'nda Fransız subaylarından gelen şikâyetler ve Ermeni Lejyonu'nu feshedilmesini isteyen talepleri çoğalıyor. O döneme dair Fransız Arşivlerinde nankörlük duygusu ve belirli bir umutsuzluk hükmediyor. Böylelikle, 20 Nisan tarihli mektubunda Ermeni Lejyonu'nun. Alayı'na komuta eden Yarbay Josse mafevkine şunları yazıyor: "Bu askerlerin artık hiçbir şekilde güvenilir görünmediğini örtbas etmem mümkün değil." Emirleri altında bulunan Ermenilerin nankörlüğünü ve bu durumu değiştirmeye yönelik boşa çıkan bütün çabalarını esefle karşılıyor Josse. Hacin'de (Güney Anadolu) Ermeniler ile Türkler arasındaki şiddetli çatışma, Ermeni milliyetçilerin Türk sivillere karşı saldırıları nedeniyle başlamıştır. Nihayetinde kazanan Türk tarafı, Ermeni Ulusal Birliğinin iddia ettiği şekilde toplu katliam yaparak değil, sadece "bazı milisleri" ve üst kademe liderliğini "katlederek" çatışmayı sonlandırmıştır. Nitekim 20 Mayıs 1920 tarihli ve Fransız Dışişleri Bakanı'na gönderilen mektupta Fransız Savaş Bakanı, 1918 sonundan itibaren defalarca kaydedilen "lejyonerlerin kötü zihniyeti yüzünden" Ermeni Lejyonu'nun feshedilme gereğinin altını çiziyor. Mektuplaşma da Ermeni Lejyonu'nun çok sayıda probleme sebep olduğunu bile gösteriyor.

18 Haziran 1920 tarihli mektubunda Dışişleri Bakanı şu cevabı veriyor: “Sizinle tamamen hemfikirim”.

Temmuz 1920 ayaklanması ve yağması tutuklamalar ve yargısız infazlarla son bulmuştur. Ermeni (veya Hristiyan) Cumhuriyeti'nin üç beyanı Ağustos ve Eylül 1920'de liderliğin ihraç edilmesiyle bastırılmıştır. Çukurova'daki işgalci güçlerin başı olan General Julien Dufieux dâhil sahadaki memurların talebi sonrasında hükümet Temmuz'da Ermenistan Lejyonu'nu feshetmeye karar vermiştir. Albay Brémond'un özel emriyle zora başvuruluyor ve resmen kendini taçlayan bu “hükümet” dağıtılıyor. Brémond kendi ifadesiyle “gülünç bir komedy”, “suçlular” ve “acınacak bir eylem”den bahsediyor. Karar Eylül'de uygulanmıştır. Türk işgallerine karşı geçici kuvvet olarak 1920'de yaratılan tüm diğer Ermeni gönüllü birlikleri aynı ay içerisinde bastırılmış ve Ermeni milliyetçilerine hiçbir şekilde sempati beslemeyen Yarbay Pierre Capitrel, Bremond'un yerini almıştır. Adana yakınlarında 45 Türk'ün öldüğü Camili katliamının Ermeni ve Süryani faileri Adana'daki Fransız Askeri Mahkemesi tarafından yargılanmış ve cezalandırılmıştır (sadece Süryani olan esas lider yargısız infaz edildi). Eylül sonunda Ermeni milliyetçileri bölgedeki her türlü askeri varlıklarını kaybetmiş, ayrıca siyasi durumları da zayıflamıştır. O zaman Kilikya'daki yeni yöneticiler tarafından Türklerle bir “yakınlaşma” politikası yürütülüyor ve 1921 Ocağı'ndan itibaren Fransız temsilcileri belirli bir “iyileşme” fark ediyorlar. Said Halim Paşa, Brémond'un geri çağırılmasının hızlı ve belirgin ilerlemelere yol açtığını teyit ediyor.

Bu sırada Kafkaslar'daki Fransız Yüksek Komisyonu Erivan Hükümeti'ne olan güvenini büyük ölçüde kaybetmiş ve gerek Yüksek Komiser Damien de Martel gerekse Tiflis Başkonsolosu Louis Nettement Erivan Hükümeti'ni güvenilmez, etkisiz ve suçlu olarak değerlendirmiştir. Şüphesiz ARF hükümeti Sovyet Rusya'yla mücadele yerine Müslüman azınlığa karşı etnik temizlemeye öncelik vermiştir. Örneğin, Fransız Yüksek Komiser Damien de Martel aralarında kadın ve çocukların da bulunduğu 4.000 Azerbaycan Türkü sivilin katledildiğini ve diğer 36.000'nin de Türkiye'ye gönderildiğini rapor etmiştir. Belki de daha belirgin bir şekilde Fransız Dışişleri Bakanlığı'na çok bağlı olan *Le Temps* günlük gazetesi, on binlerce ölüden bahsederek bu sürgünleri ve bu katliamları yansıtır.

Konsolos Nettement'a göre ise; Ermenistan'da “finans, ordu, sanayi, ticaret” yoktu ve ARF bu açıdan bir şeyler üretmekten acizdi. Sonuç olarak, hiçbir Fransız silahı teslim edilmemiş ve Ermenistan Cumhuriyeti'nin de yıkılması kaçınılmaz olmuştur. 10 Ağustos 1920'de yani Sevr Antlaşması'na nazaran neredeyse aynı anda imzalanan Ermeni-Sovyet Antlaşması savaş suçlarına ilave ediliyor. Şu da göze çarpıyor: Birkaç gün önce Erivan'a Fransa kaynaklı silahlar



teslim edilmişti. Damien de Martel antlaşmayı bir “terk ediş” gibi nitelendiriyor. Birtek Kemalist Türkiye komünizmin önünde durabilen bir duvar, zira 1920’nin sonunda Pyotr Vrangler’in beyaz ordusu bile ezilmiştir. Donanma İstihbarat Servisi özellikle bu konular üzerinde durmuştur. Kemalistlere karşı yapılmış en iyi bilinen “Ermeni katliamı” suçlaması (Kars’ta, KuzeyDoğu Anadolu’da, şehrin Ekim 1920’de ele geçirilmesinden sonra) bir uydurmadır ve Kars’taki Yakın Doğu Yardım’ın temsilcisi bir katliam olmadığına dair tanıklık ifadesi vermiştir. Aslında, “Ermeni firarilerin kendileri Türk birliklerin bu sırada katliam gerçekleştirmediyi itiraf etmişlerdir.” (Donanma İstihbarat Servisi).

Millerand hükümetinin Sevr Antlaşması’nı imzaladığı doğrudur ancak bu durum sadece kömür teslimatına ilişkin David Lloyd George’un şantajı nedeniyle ve İtalyan hükümeti gibi Millerand Sevr’i uygulama niyeti olmaksızın imzalamıştır. 1919-1920 kışında İstanbul’u Türkiye’den koparma projesine karşı çıkarak Marksistlerden aşırı sağcılara aşırı sağa Fransız basının büyük bir çoğunluğu Sevr antlaşmasına muhalefet etmiştir. Türkiye’nin azimli dostları (Pierre Loti, Claude Farrere, Berthe Georges-Gaulis) ve ayrıca liberal ve marksist sol (antiemperyalizm kapsamında), sömürge lobileri (ulusal çıkarlar ve gerçekçilik adı altında) ve muhafazakâr katolik aktivizmi (Ayrılıkçı Yunanistan’ın Türklere karşı “gaddar yöntemleri”, Ermenistan’ın yoldan çıkması etnik sınırlarının ötesine geçti ve Protestan yayımcılığıyla mücadele edilmeli) en iğneleyicileriydi.

Sonrasında, basının büyük bir çoğunluğu Yunanistan’da Kral Konstantin destekçilerinin seçim zaferini takiben Türklere uzlaşmaya gidilmesini savunmuştur. İşin aslı, Kral Konstantin eski Alman İmparatoru II.Wilhelm’in kayın biraderiydi ve Fransız denizcilere Aralık 1916’da düzenlenen ölümcül pusudan şahsen (Alman karısı ile birlikte) sorumluydu. Bundan da öte, henüz Haziran 1920’de parlamentoda Sevr’i onaylayacak çoğunluk olmadığı belliydi ve en geç Kasım-Aralık 1920’de Temsilciler Meclisi ve Senato’da ağır basan görüş antlaşmanın en kısa zamanda tadil edilmesiydi. Ermeni milliyetçilerinin durumunu daha da kötüleştiren bir gelişme de Ermeni-Amerikan ilişkilerinin sadık bir destekçisi olan aday Woodrow Wilson’un Kasım 1920’deki seçimleri kaybetmesi olmuştur. Wilson’ın yerine Anadolu’da ve Kafkaslar’da Amerikan müdahalesi istemeyen Cumhuriyetçi aday gelmiştir.

Sonbahar 1919’dan Ocak 1921’ye kadar olan süreç her anlamda Fransa ve Ermeniler arasındaki ittifakın yara aldığı bir dönemdir.

## **Bölüm V**

Ocak 1921’de Aristide Briand’ın Bakanlar Konseyi Başkanlığı’na atanması Çukurova’nın tahliye edilmesi demektir. Uzlaşmaya ve somut çözümlere bağlı bir adam olarak Briand’ın net bir bakışı bulunmaktaydı: Bölgenin işgali finansal olarak ve başta Kuzey Afrika olmak üzere Müslüman dünyasındaki imaj açısından çok masraflıydı; öte yandan, geleneksel ittifaka dönüş milli çıkarlara da uymaktaydı; Türkiye’deki Ermeni meselesi bir azınlık meselesiydi ve Türklere Türklerin çoğunlukta olduğu bir bölgeyi vermek aslında bir problem de değildi.

Henüz Mart 1921’de Sevr Antlaşması’nı yeniden düzenlemesi öngörülen Londra Konferansı’nın sonunda, Fransa’ya ekonomik avantajlar karşılığında askeri işgalin sonunda Hristiyanlara garantiler tanıyan bir antlaşma imzalanmıştır. “Ermeni Milli Yurdu” (Kuzeydoğu Anadolu’da bir nevi özerk bölge) Londra Konferansı’nın sonucunda belirtilmiş ama Fransız Hükümeti’nin böyle bir fikri uygulamaya koyma gibi bir niyeti olmamıştır, nitekim Fransız Dışleri Bakanlığı’nın dahili belgeleri de bunu göstermiş ve İngiliz Hükümeti’nin kendisi dahi bu projenin uygulanabilir olduğuna inanmamıştır: Dışleri, (Fransız Hükümeti’ni utandıracığından neredeyse emin bir şekilde) Ermeni milliyetçilerine Adana’yı istemelerini önermiştir. Ermeni milliyetçilerinin protestoları ve onların kendi aralarında da epey bölünmüş Anglo Sakson dostları (Ermenistan’ın Özgürlüğü için Taşnak Amerikan Komitesi (ACIA), Ermeni-Amerikan Topluluğu (AAS) ve Britanya-Ermenistan Komitesi (BAC), son ikisi Ramkavar bağlantılı; ACIA, “Ermeni Milli Yurdu” projesinin imkânsız olduğunu düşünmesinden ve BAC’in AAS’yi desteklemesinden AAS’ya şiddetle düşman) gerek devlet kurumları gerekse basın tarafından dinlenmemiştir: Komünistlerden aşırı sağa, gazeteler ve değerlendirmeler anlaşmayı desteklemiştir. BAC’in gerçek bir Fransız muadili bulunmadığından, bu başarısızlıkları anlamak zor olmamıştır. Buna rağmen, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi anlaşmanın TBMM’nin ekonomik egemenlik programına uymaması ve bundan da öte Fransızların Nisan 1921’deki Yunan saldırısını engellememeleri nedeniyle Londra’da imzalanan metni onaylamayı reddetmiştir.

Bunu önemsemeksizin Briand hükümeti (Yunan zaferine hiçbir ihtimal vermeyen ve Kemalist Türkiye’nin Sovyetler karşısında önemine vurgu yapmaya devam eden Donanma İstihbarat Servisi, Anadolu’daki olayların Fas’taki etkisinden endişelenen Fas’ta mukim General Marshall Hubert Lyautey ve *Le Temps*’ın uluslararası ilişkiler editörü ve Ankara ile ivedi barışın destekçisi Jean Herbet’in de desteğiyle) Mayıs’ta (Berthe Georges-Gaulis) ve sonra Haziran’da (Henry Franklin-Bouillon) gayri resmi müzakerelere başlamıştır. Ankara Temmuz’da Paris’e kendi müzakarecesini yollamış, ardından da Franklin-Bouillon Eylül’de geri dönmüştür. Nihai antlaşma 20 Ekim 1921’de imzalanmış ve Fransa basınının büyük bir çoğunluğu, bazen Mart’a nazaran daha az bir hevesle bazen de coşkuyla, bu anlaşmayı

desteklemiştir. Leon Rouillon (yetkililerce yardım edilmiş eski bir asker), Pierre Loti, Claude Farrere ve Berthe Georges-Gaulis'in kitaplarının basımı gazetelerde ve değerlendirmelerde olumlu karşılanmış ve Ankara Antlaşması için elverişli bir ortam yaratılmasına katkı sağlamıştır.

Bu sırada Ermeni komitelerinin ve onların Anglo Sakson dostlarının tüm denemeleri Fransız Dışleri Bakanlığınca görmezden gelinmiştir. Ankara'da imzalanan metin her iki tarafça da sıkı bir şekilde uygulanmıştır: Fransız Tahliye Komisyonu "taahhüt edilenler bütünsel olarak etkin, enerjik ve nazik Türk yetkililerce yerine getirildiğini ifade ederken çekilmeye ilişkin takvim de Fransızlar tarafından günü güne uygulanmıştır. Tam tersine Çukurova'ya tayin edilen Türk yüksek memurları, özellikle de "dürüst ve temelinde demokrat olan bu adam" diye adlandırılan Hamit Bey, Fransız temsilcilerine çok iyi bir izlenim bırakıyorlar. "Türk rejiminin tekrar yerleştirilmesi en iyi şartlar altında yapıldı", ve "sağ salim olan ve iyi halde giysilerle giyinmiş" Fransız esirlerinin iadesi dâhil olmak üzere, bütün vaatler harfiyen uygulandı.

Buna rağmen, Ermeni milliyetçiler komitelerin göçmenlerin mallarından sorumlu Ermeni üyelerine karşı ölüm tehditleri dâhil dindaşlarını kitlesel göçe zorlamıştır. Bu Ermeni milliyetçileri Yunan hükümeti tarafından desteklenmiş ve Atina ile olduğu kadar BAC ile de işbirliği halinde başta Dörtyol olmak üzere İngiliz müdahalesinin gerekçesini oluşturmak amacıyla sorunlar çıkarmaya çalıştılar. Söz konusu müdahaleye yönelik denemeler başarısız olmuş ancak Mersin ve Dörtyol'da kitlesel göçler gerçekleşmiştir. Ermeniler tarafından "ümit edilen" Kilikya'daki Fransız işgalinin idamesiyle de, Türkiye'deki Hıristiyan azınlıkları konusu Milletler Cemiyeti'nin gündemine konsun diye komiteler Belçika'nın müdahalesini talep edip elde ediyor. Oysa bu müdahaleden önce bile Belçika Büyükelçisi bu konuda olumsuz bir cevap almıştı. Brüksel'deki Fransız Büyükelçisi diplomatik ve nazik terimler kullanarak: "Açıkçası şaşıktık, buna da hakkımız var" diye yazıyor.

Milliyetçi etmenlerin gücünün azaldığı Ocak 1922'de Kilis ve Gaziantep'teki Ermenilerin çoğunluğu evlerindeydi.

İttifak değişimi ayrıca silahların teslimi için yapılan iki anlaşmayla da gerçekleşmiştir: ilki 1921 Eylül'ünün ortasında İstanbul'daki Kemalistler ile Fransa'nın İstanbul Yüksek Komiseri General Maurice Pelle arasında imzalanan ve 100.000 tüfek, 1.3 milyon mermi, bir ağır top ve 194.000 fişek için yapılan anlaşma ve sonra Ocak 1922'de Aristide Briand ayakkaşlarıyla birlikte 10.000 giysi, 1 milyon fişek ile 10.000 Mauser tüfeği, 2000 at, 10 uçak, 10 yedek motor, 10 çadır ve Adana'nın radyo materyallerinin ücretsiz teslimini emretmiştir.

1922 Ocağı'nda da Ermenistan Cumhuriyeti'nin heyeti (Taşnak), "Sevr Antlaşması'nın tam uygulanmasını" talep ediyor. Boşuna, tabii ki.

## **Bölüm VI**

Ocak 1922'de Aristide Briand yerine Raymond Poincare geçmiştir. Poincare için Türklere genel bir barış Fransa tarafından Suriye'nin sakin bir kafa ile yönetilmesi ve Almanları zararların karşılanmasına zorlama için en kısa sürede sağlanmalıydı. Ermenilerin zaten Erivan'da Cumhuriyetleri bulunmakta ve orası onların ulusal yurdu olmalı ve Türkiye'de kalanlara da Yunanistan ve Polonya'daki azınlıklar gibi garantiler, ancak daha fazlası değil, sunulmalıydı. Poincare'nin amaçladıkları kısa süre içinde Briand tarafından istifasından bir gün önce alınan silahları Türklere ücretsiz teslim etme kararının uygulanmasıyla kanıtlanmıştır. En başından itibaren Doğu sorunu ve hatta Almanya nedeniyle Poincare ayrıca (kişisel ve siyasi olarak) David Llyod George ile sadık bir muhalefette yer almıştır.

Bu sırada, Ermeni milliyetçilerinin henüz 1918-1919'da başlayan Yunanistan ile ittifakı Londra'daki Ermeni Taşnak Cumhuriyeti'nin eski askeri ateşesi "General" Torcom komutasındaki Batı Anadolu'daki Yunan kuvvetleri için gönüllülerden oluşan yeni bir birlik ile kuvvetlendirilmiştir. Ancak 15 Mayıs 1919'da Yunan Ordusu'nun varışından önce bile Atina'nın hedeflerine Dışişleri Bakanlığı ve ordu tarafından karşı çıkmıştır. Türklere karşı yapılan katliamlar, yağmalar ve tecavüzler şüphesiz Yunanistan'ın imajını geliştirmemiştir. Daha Kasım 1919'da Fransız Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Yunan birliklerinin işledikleri suçlara ilişkin belgeleri sızdırmaya başlamış ve bu sızıntı 1920 ve 1921'de de devam etmiştir. Sonuç olarak, Rum-Ermeni ittifakı Fransa'da kötü algılanmış, hattı Kral Konstantin'in tekrar başa gelmesinden sonra 1920'nin sonunda bu algı daha da kötüleşmiştir: Kral Konstantin bir düşman olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Buna ek olarak, Temmuz 1922 İzmir'deki Fransız Toplumunun (seçilmiş) başkanı kendisinden yazması istenilen raporu Fransız Dışişleri Bakanlığı'na iletmıştır: Raporunda Rum ve Ermeni gönüllüler tarafından öldürülen Türk sayısının "150.000'i geçtiğini" hesaplamıştır.

Doğru bir biçimde bilgilendirilmiş ve Llyod George Hükümetini ikna etmeye ilişkin umutlarını yitirmiş Poincare hükümeti 10.000 makineli tüfek, 7 uçak ve 150 ton sağlıkla ilgili materyali Yunanistan'a rağmen Temmuz 1922'de Türklere yollamış, ardından Rum kuvvetleri Ağustos ve Eylül'de komünistlerden aşırı sağcılara Fransız basının çoğunluğu tarafından bir kez daha memnuniyetle karşılanan ezici bir mağlubiyet almışlardır. Ancak daha 1920'de bile Ermeni

gönüllüleri sadece Yunan komutasında Türk sivillere karşı suç işlemiyor ama birçok olayda olduğu üzere Yunan gönüllüleri ve sıradan askerlerin kabahatlerini örtbas etmek amacıyla kullanılıyorlardı. Bu uygulama Yunan yetkililerin Fransız Hükümeti'ne yerel Katolik misyonlarda oluşan zararların giderilmesinden kaçındıkları için Eskişehir'in yıkımının Ermeniler'den kaynaklandığı iddia ettikleri (ki bu yanlış bir bilgidir: Kundakçıların çoğunluğu Yunandır) ve büyük bir kısmını Ermeni milliyetçilere yaptırdıkları İzmir yangının yaşandığı 1922'de zirve yapmıştır. Bu noktada İzmir Başkonsolosu Michel Graillet'in son sözünden alıntı yapmak uygun olur: "Yalanlar ve fanteziler mevcut gerçeklere karşı bir şey yapamaz ve bu insanlar İzmir'i acilen terk eden kişiler oldukları için hayal gücü daha da kuvvetlidir." Michel Graillet ve Amiral Charles Dumesnil tarafından ikna edilen Poincaré Hükümeti Fransa Büyükelçilerinden Yunan Ordusu tarafından empoze edilen "terör rejimini" protesto etmelerini talep ediyor. Nitekim Poincaré şunlara çok öfkeleniyor: Yunan Ordusu Eskişehir'deki Fransız misyonuna ait olan binaları ateşe verdi ve de Bursa'yı yakmaya çalıştı. Aynı dönemde ise Kemalist Ordu sıkı bir disiplin uyguluyordu Ermeni milliyetçi ağının 1918'den sonra yeniden inşa edilemediği Bursa'ya büyük ölçüde Yunan komutasına Antant'ın net müdahalesi sonucu neredeyse hiç dokunulmamıştır. En önemlisi Türk tarafının daha 1922'de yayınladığı nitekim 1910'dan itibaren İzmir itfaiye teşkilatının amiri olan Paul Grescovich'in raporudur. Grescovich tartışmasız bir biçimde Türklerin değil, Ermenilerin ve Yunanların şehri ateşe verdikleri sonucuna varmıştır. Ayrıca Arnold Toynbee'nin "gizli bir Ermeni örgütünü" (bu örgüt yerli Ermeniler tarafından değil, Kilikya'dan sürgün edilmiş kin besleyen Ermeniler tarafından desteklenmekteydi) suçlayan soruşturması da bu etkenlerin varlığını doğrulamıştır.

Bu bağlamda Anadolu'da özerk bir Ermeni bölgesi ("Ermeni Yurdu") dayatma denemeleri bir bir başarısız olmuştur. Mart 1922'deki Paris Konferansı öncesi ARF ve/veya Ramkavar liderlerinin Fransız Dışleri Bakanlığı ile olan müzakereleri sırasında Ermeni milliyetçileri defalarca planlarının uygulamak için "oldukça zor" olduğunu ve Fransız yetkililer tarafından zorlukların giderilmesi için hiçbir çözümün sunulmadığını söylemiştir. Ramkavar lideri Gabriel Noradoukian'ın becerisizlikliği özellikle Bakanlar Konseyi Başkanı Raymond Poincare'yi rahatsız etmiştir. Konferans esnasında Poincare sürekli olarak özellikle Ermeni Yurdu hususunda Lord Curzon'a karşı çıkmıştır. Poincare, Çukurova'nın Ermeni Yurdu olduğuna ilişkin ifadeleri reddederek Kuzeydoğu Anadolu'ya ilişkin özel atıflara da karşı çıkmıştır. Sonuç, Kemalist bölgesel programın kısmi bir kabulüdür: Türkiye'nin Anadolu'nun tamamındaki egemenliği Birleşik Krallık, Fransa ve İtalya'nın ateşkes teklifinde yer almaktadır –ki bu durum Ermeni Yurdu'nun açıklanan perspektifiyle uyuşmamış ve Türk tarafı da bu durumu Ermeni

tarafın anladığı kadar anlamıştır. Sonra, Lozan Konferansı arifesinde 1909-1914 yılları arasında İstanbul Büyükelçisi olan ve barış antlaşmasının önemli görüşmecilerinden Maurice Bompard (beyhude bir şekilde) Ermeni milliyetçileri ve arkadaşlarını özerklik projesinden vazgeçirmeye çabalamıştır. Konferans sırasındaki denemeler kendiliğinden başarısız olmuş ve Fransız temsilciler de bu bağlamda müdahil olmaktan kaçınmıştır: Fransız temsilcilerin ilgileri başka yerdedi (kapitülasyonlar, Osmanlı borçlarının ödenmesi, Türkiye-Suriye sınırındaki çetelere karşı mücadele). 1922 yılının ilk aylarında konuyu es geçtikten sonra, en sonunda Fransız Dışişleri Bakanı, Ermenistan'ın artık Sovyetler Birliği'ne girmiş olduğuna göre, Ermenistan Cumhuriyeti'ne bağlı heyete, gelecekte üyelerinin Lozan'daki Barış Konferansı'na katılması mümkün olmadığını ve bu yüzden bir Ermeni ocağının kurulması da imkânsız gibi görüldüğünü açıklıyor. EDF kararlılıkla ABD'ye bakarak 1923 baharında İstanbul'daki kendi basınında Fransız karşıtı makaleler yayınlıyor. Bazıları da SSBC ile muhtemel bir ittifakı umut ediyorlar.

Eğer kapitülasyonların sona ermesi Fransa'da birçok kişiyi, özellikle büyük işletmeler ve Katolikler arasında, hayal kırılığına uğratmışsa, Lozan Antlaşması'ndan kaynaklanan davalar (borçların ödenmesi, Türkiye-Suriye sınırının kesin bir şekilde çizilmesi, vd.) bir sonraki on yıllık dönemde giderilmiş ve buna rağmen Ermeni komiteleri ile olan ilişkiler kötüleşmeye devam etmiş olup (ülke içindeki şiddet ve Suriye, Lübnan ve Fransa'daki mültecilere sağlanması gereken mali katkıların eksikliği nedeniyle) 1933 de bu bağlamda doruk noktasıdır.

## **Sonuç**

Ermeni milliyetçilerinin hataları esas itibarıyla kendilerinin devlet kültürü eksikliği (örnek vermek gerekirse, aralarındaki azılı rekabet nedeniyle Vaşington ve Londra'yı Paris'e karşı kullanmaya çalışmaları ters tepmiştir), Türklerin yeniden küçümsenmesine neden olan ırkçılık ve ayrıca söz konusu dönemde Fransa'da Türkofobi için toplumsal bir talep olmamasıdır. "Fransız ihaneti" savı gerçeklere uymuyor. Kaynaklar tam tersini işaret ediyor. Fransa'ya karşı Ermeni komitelerin nerdeyse daimi olan samimiyetsizliği söz konusudur. Bu samimiyetsizlik, komitelerden öte, Ermenilerin hepsi de "gerçek bir felakete" benzeyen bu politikadan sorumlu tutulmazsa bile, özellikle Kilikya'da sivil Ermenilere pahalıya mal oldu.

Fransa Cumhuriyeti ile Ermeni Komiteleri arasındaki ilişkilerin incelemesi şunu da gösteriyor: Ermeni Sorunu'na dair emperyalist güçlerin tutumu tek bir blok oluşturmuyor.

1918-1923 arası dönemin mirası 1939'da özellikle görülebilir, Türk ulusal hareketinin en azılı destekçilerinden olan Edouard Daladier (ve Ermeni milliyetçilerinin iddialarının en sadık muhaliflerinden) 1920-1921'de, şimdi Bakanlar Konseyi Başkanı, Hatay'ı Türkiye'ye geri vermiş ve Ankara'yla müttefik olmuştur. Ancak 1970ler itibariyle hafıza kaybolmuş yeni nesiller eskilerinin yerini almıştır.

## APPENDIX H: TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM

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### YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : .....

Adı / Name : .....

Bölümü / Department : .....

### TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English) :

.....  
.....  
.....

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: Yüksek Lisans / Master  Doktora / PhD

1. Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır. / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.

2. Tez iki yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of **two years**. \*

3. Tez altı ay süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for period of **six months**. \*

\* Enstitü Yönetim Kurulu kararının basılı kopyası tezle birlikte kütüphaneye teslim edilecektir.

A copy of the decision of the Institute Administrative Committee will be delivered to the library together with the printed thesis.

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Tarih / Date .....