

THE ISLAMIC QUESTION IN BRITISH POLITICS AND PRESS DURING THE GREAT WAR.

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Abstract

The thesis analyzes the role of the Islamic question in British politics and press during the Great War. The connection between British Muslim subjects and the Caliph is defined as the essence of the Islamic question. In the present work the question is considered as a widespread idea in British politics, which was referred to as a common point. It is suggested that the Islamic question resulted in two separate developments during the Great War: refuting the Sultan's call to jihad, and promoting the transfer of the Caliphate to Arabia. The strategies of refuting the Sultan's call to jihad are analyzed and the stages of the consideration of the idea of the Arab Caliphate in British policy are suggested. Special attention is paid to the year 1917, which witnessed a lack of interest for the Islamic question in the British press, but not in the governmental papers.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations.....	iii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Historiographical and Historical Background of the Islamic Question in British Politics.....	11
1.1. Historiographic background of the research.....	11
1.1.1. Historiography on the question of Caliphate and pan-Islamism.....	11
1.1.2. Islam in relations between Great Britain and Indian Muslims.....	14
1.1.3. The British policy in the Middle East.....	15
1.2. Historical Background: Islamic question in British politics before the Great War.....	17
1.2.1. Meaning of the Caliphate in the 19 th century.....	17
1.2.2. The Islamic question: Muslim population in British-Ottoman relations.....	19
1.2.3. The change of the role of the Islamic factor in British-Ottoman relations during the Balkan wars.....	21
Chapter 2: British Concerns about the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of British Muslim subjects in 1914-1915.....	24
2.1. British Concerns about Muslim opinion during the Period of Neutrality of the Ottoman Empire.....	24
2.1.1. The manifestation of British concerns in different sources.....	24
2.1.2. The influence of concerns about Muslim opinion and the position of Russia on British Policy towards the Ottoman empire.....	30
2.2. The British Refuting of the Sultan's call to jihad.....	35
2.2.1. Arguing that Great Britain is not an enemy of Islam.....	38
2.2.2. Not a religious war for the Ottoman empire.....	43
2.3. The press on the Muslim opinion in 1915.....	45
Chapter 3: The Idea of Establishing a Caliphate in Arabia in British politics (1914-1916)....	49
3.1. Promoting the sharif of Mecca as an ideal candidate for the Arab Caliphate.....	50
3.2. The official acknowledgment of Russian claims to Constantinople and the discussion of the Arab Caliphate in British politics, 1915.....	55
3.3. Doubts about the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliphate in the British press in 1915.....	61
3.4. The move from the Arab Caliphate to the Arab revolt (October 1915 – June 1916)....	63
Chapter 4: The Islamic question in British politics and press during the Arab revolt and after.....	68
4.1. The religious appeal of the Arab revolt.....	68
4.2. The coverage of the Arab revolt or the revolt of the Holy Places of Islam in the British press (1916).....	70
4.3. Islam as political factor in the Eastern reports of 1917.....	79
4.3.1. Religious anti-British propaganda.....	79
4.3.2. Immunity of the Holy places and presence of the Christian troops in Hejaz and Mesopotamia.....	83
4.3.3. India and Hejaz in the Eastern reports.....	87
4.3.4. The Question of Caliphate.....	89
4.4. Changes in covering of Islam in The Times in 1917.....	93
Conclusion.....	99
Bibliography.....	101
I. Primary Sources:.....	101
II. Secondary Sources:.....	104
Appendix: Tables on the sources.....	109

List of Illustrations.

1. A German cartoon about jihad, 1914 (taken from: Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*. London: Abacus, 1997).....35
2. A British cartoon on jihad, from *The Bystander*, June 28, 1916, (taken from: Roy Douglas, *The Great War, 1914-1918: the Cartoonist's View*, London: Routledge, 1995).....77

Introduction.

Though the chronological frames of the research are defined by the period of the Great War, I will not deal with military history in the thesis, but rather with history of international affairs and strategic considerations behind them. The Great War is known to be a first global conflict, which however remained mainly a European war with the principal actors and main struggles in Europe. And even for Great Britain, which was a great colonial power, the war was mainly a European one in which the war against the Ottoman empire had a minor importance.¹ Thus, even in the CEU Library there are studies on international relations during the Great War or even on Great Britain during the Great War which do not even mention the issues connected with the Middle East. But my work will focus on the regions outside Europe: the Ottoman empire and British India. Therefore, though my research is dealing with Great Britain and international affairs during the Great War I realize that these issues are somehow marginal for Great Britain and for international affairs of that period.

However, there are a large number of studies on British politics in the Middle East during the Great War,² which is a research area the present thesis is the most relevant to. These studies would speak about British policy towards the territories of the Ottoman empire, the Middle East, the Arabs, or some country in particular, but not towards the Muslims. They may mention that the war with the Ottoman empire was important because of its impact on the Muslim population of the British empire, but they will not speak much of it, and devote their attention to economic, military or even international issues.

Though I do not doubt the importance of economic and military issues and such studies, their approach seems a bit surprising. These scholars often repeat that from a military point of view the Ottoman empire could hardly be considered a strong enemy.³ According to Marian Kent, even the

¹ It can be seen both in memoirs : W.S. Churchill. *The Great War*. – V.1-3. (London), p.483-484, David Lloyd George. *War Memoirs* (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1938), Vol.I. David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1933) Vol.II., and in historical studies Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London: Abacus, 1997) pp.358-359.

² These studies would be discussed in details in Chapter 1.

³ Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia [Colonel Lawrence: The Man behind the Legend]* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1937)., p. 56; David Fromkin, *A peace to end all peace: the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of modern Middle East* (New York, 1990), p.83; George H.Cassar. *Kitchener's War: British Strategy From 1914 To*

protection of the property of the Oil Company in the Persian Gulf was regarded as less important than the struggle in Europe.⁴ They even argue that Britain paid more attention to the war with the Ottoman empire than was justified from military considerations, and mention concerns about Muslim opinion as the reason for it.⁵ Thus, I think the issue which they admit provided importance to the war with the Ottoman empire (the impact of war on the Muslim population under British rule) deserves more attention. It must be admitted that scholars usually agree that fear of Muslim unrest contributed to the special significance of the war with the Ottoman empire for the British. They may observe that the occupation of Mesopotamia or the Arab revolt were significant because of their impact on Muslim opinion;⁷ that the idea of Caliphate played a crucial role in Lord Kitchener's plan for remaking the post-war world, and contributed greatly to war-time commitments with the sharif of Mecca. But after pointing at this, they precede to discussion of other matters. The way Islam and Muslim opinion were considered in British politics during the Great War, which is the focus of the present study, remains out of the attention of most authors.⁸

Therefore, the **aim** of my paper will be to analyze the considerations about mobilizing potential of Islam in British politics during the Great War. I would try to consider them not only in political decisions, but also in appeals to the subjects of empire.

The thesis will address the following **research questions**:

- What were the origins of the Islamic question in British political thought before the Great war?
- What was done to ensure the loyalty of Muslim subjects, when the Caliph called for jihad?
- How was the scheme of the Arab Caliphate promoted in British politics?
- Was the Arab revolt considered by the British in connection with the question of loyalty of British

1916 (Dulles, 2004), p.44, available at:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=r8qX4MvK8KEC&printsec=frontcover&hl=ru#v=onepage&q=&f=false>, accessed on November 21, 2009.

⁴ Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire. British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil 1900-1920* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers Inc., 1976), p.118.

⁵ For example, Soviet scholar Dantzig arrives at this conclusion on the bases of statistics of costs and losses of Britain in war with the Ottoman empire: B.M.Dantzig. *Irak v proshlom i nastoyashchem* (Moskva, 1960), p.17.

⁶ For instance: Janet Wallach, *Desert Queen. The Extraordinary Life of Gertrude Bell* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), p.138; Cassar, *Kitchener's*, p.44.

⁷ Menteshashvili, Albert. *Irak v gody angliyskogo mandata* (Moskva: Nauka, 1969).

⁸ In September 2009 there was published a research on the topic very close to the present study, but unfortunately it was not used in the present work: Sean Oliver-Dee, *The caliphate question: the British government and Islamic governance* (Lexington Books, 2009).

Muslim subjects and the idea of Caliphate?

- Can the Islamic question be identified in British politics in 1917?

The Islamic question will be regarded as concerns about loyalty of Muslim subjects of the British empire, due to their religion and supreme position of the Caliph for them. The subject was formulated this way for several reasons. First of all, it is called question – like the Polish or the Ukrainian questions, which dealt with population divided between different empires. For each of the empires concerned, such a question was simultaneously a subject of home and foreign policy. Besides, unlike the term “factor”, which implies only influence, “question” presupposes a wider meaning. Unlike the Polish or the Ukrainian questions, identified on the basis of ethnicity, this question is identified on the basis of religion; thus, it is called Islamic. It is worth mentioning, that recently there appeared two studies, based on the same assumptions, but their authors chose a different wording for their research topic. The first is Sean Oliver-Dee, whose book is entitled “The Caliphate Question: The British Government and Islamic Governance”.⁹ The idea of Caliphate is central for our study also, but a term “Caliphate question” does not point out at Muslim population of the British empire, which made this question important. The second is Steven Cox, who focuses exactly on the same concerns regarding Muslim subjects of the British empire, as I do, but calls them “Islamophobia” instead.¹⁰ I find “Islamophobia” to be a rather strong term, which excludes other attitudes to British Muslim subjects. Thus, having considered other possible options, it may be concluded that a term “Islamic question” reflects my approach the best way.

As at the beginning of the 20th century Islam was considered an entity regardless of state borders, it was assumed that policy towards some part of the Muslim world, – for example India, the Holy places of Islam, the Ottoman empire, – would have an effect on all Muslims. Thus, in the present work I will make no distinction between British foreign and colonial policy. The areas with Muslim population which were of special interest to Great Britain were not necessarily parts of the British empire: India, which constituted an empire under direct British rule; indirect British rule in

⁹ Sean Oliver-Dee, *The Caliphate Question. The British Government and Islamic Governance* (London: Lexington books, 2009).

¹⁰ Steven Cox, *The idea of an Arab caliphate in British Middle Eastern policy in the era of the Great War* (Durham University, 2003), available at: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1739/1/1739.pdf>, accessed 15.08.2010.

Egypt, and Sudan; British spheres of influence in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman empire, and independent Persia and Afghanistan, for which Great Britain for a long time competed with Russia.

My desire to show that considerations about Islam, and the impact of the war with the Ottoman empire on Muslim opinion should not be ignored while analyzing British politics towards the Muslim world during the Great War determined the focus of this research on the common features of such considerations which allow us to speak of them as common points accepted by everyone. This defined several features of my approach.

For this reason I will not stress the difference between discourses on the political significance of Islam expressed in the press and by officials. What matters more is that numerous discussions of issues related to Islam in British politics and the press confirm that basic assumptions about the political significance of Islam for the British empire were widely shared during the war. They were expressed in the press, used as a valid argument in a debate about the British policy towards the territories of the Ottoman empire by different sides, and as such influenced political decisions. Of course, being an issue of foreign and colonial policy, the Islamic question should have mattered more for various statesmen and politicians than for common people. Therefore, most of my primary sources were produced by political circles. But many of them were known to the public; therefore, I assume these ideas about the political significance of Islam for the empire were a common point shared not only by the political elite, but also by the public.

For the same reason I will devote attention to discussing at least shortly the emergence, presence and importance of the idea of the Islamic threat to the British empire in the years prior to the Great War. This history of Islamic question in British politics prior to the Great War supports my assumption that even if it was not stressed strongly in the scale of the First World War, these ideas were traditionally important enough for the British foreign policy to play a part in considerations about the effects of the war on Muslim opinion when the war started.

Another feature of my approach is that I will not try to attribute a special attitude to Islam to some political party, though it is possible to speculate that conservatives should have cared more for the affairs of the empire. The main reason is that my sources do not allow me to make such

statements. The newspapers I used (*The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Observer*) were not newspapers owned by political parties, and therefore it is problematic to claim that the views expressed in one of them are the views of one of the parties. The same situation exists with the papers, which originated with some British official. They are more likely to reflect the views of some Office and Department than of a political party. Therefore, instead of speaking about the difference in attitude to Islam between the political parties, I will discuss the difference in attitude to this question among the India Office and the Government of India on one hand and the British representatives in Cairo, that were members of British Residency and the Arab Bureau, on the other hand. Similarly, instead of identifying the views expressed in the newspapers with the political parties, I will try to explain the difference of coverage of the topics related to Islam in these three British newspapers by the difference in their circulation.

If I were to attribute this approach to the influence of the methodology of other historians I would definitely name Edward Said, Benedict Anderson, and methodology developed by representatives of Intellectual history. Edward Said, in my opinion, is the greatest author to write about the European imagining of the other and the Middle East in particular. In “Orientalism” and “Covering Islam” he makes important observations on how the presence or absence of experience of permanent contacts with the East influences the particular image of the East and state policy towards the region.¹¹ It should be contributed to his influence, that in this thesis based on British sources I speak not about situation in the Muslim world, but how it was imagined by the British, and the special role devoted to religion in that image. As well as Said, though perhaps in a different manner, I try to follow how that image of the Muslim world influenced British politics.

The book by Benedict Anderson on imagined communities impressed me greatly, especially his argument that people do not risk their lives and lose their property for the future benefit of the middle-class, to do so they should believe in something. The present study was influenced by his suggestion that imagined things can become a historically significant force, and that history can be

¹¹ In *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) Said opposes British and French ways of imagining the Middle East, he states that thinking about the East for British was in fact thinking about empire, while French in imagining the East referred to more ancient times. In *Covering Islam* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) he shows that American discourse on Islam results from the lack of previous contacts with the Muslim world, which differs it from the British empire.

explained not only as economically determined. Thus, in considering British politics towards the Muslims inside and outside the British empire, I find British views about Islam and the Muslims to be more important than British economic interests in the regions.

I also find some similarities between my methodology and the so-called Intellectual history of Skinner and Pocock. They suggest that each text functions within some society, some language, therefore, it was understood by his contemporaries only if it addressed some common ideas of the period. According to Skinner there are certain conventions that enable an action to be understood in particular way, so intentions underlying such actions are inevitably entities with essential public character.¹² As in the act of writing the author is engaged in the intended act of communication he makes use of such conventions. Pocock in a similar way states that nobody writes in order to communicate to a future reader, his text was not only enabled by the language he used but also could be understood by his readers.¹³ While analyzing a text of a certain author Skinner and Pocock show it on the background of the ideas spread in their time in other works of the same genre or by other authors with similar views. Of course, in the thesis I do not analyze some particular text on the background of similar writings as they do. But as well as Skinner and Pocock I try to define the widespread ideas, the common points with reference to which different positions were expressed, and I treat them as common points exactly because in order for a new messages to be understood it should rely on generally accepted ideas.

The sources used for each of the chapters may be grouped in several categories. The first one is represented by published *diplomatic correspondence*. These are the British White Book on war with Turkey and the Russian Blue Book. The Blue Book is collection of secret telegrams between the Russian Foreign Secretary and Russian consul in India published by the Bolsheviks in 1918.¹⁴ Though the Russian consul comments on the special attention of the Viceroy to Muslim opinion and on the effects of the declaration of immunity of the Holy places of Islam, the Blue book does not contain much material relevant to the present study. Nevertheless it is worth being considered as a

¹² Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. Vol. I, p. 97.

¹³ J. G. A. Pocock, "Texts as Events: Reflections on the History of Political Thought", p.22-23.

¹⁴ *Sin'aya kniga. Sbornik tainykh dokumentov izvlechennykh iz arhivov byvshego ministerstva inostrannykh del (The Blue Book. Collection of secret documents extracted from the archives of the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs)*. (Moskva: NKID, 1918).

contemporary source.

“The White Book on War with Turkey” (or perhaps the White Paper, for it is referred to as such in contemporary articles in *The Times*¹⁵ and in *The New York Times*¹⁶) is a collection of telegrams between the Foreign Office and the British Ambassador in Constantinople, Louis Mallet. It covers the period between the outbreak of war in Europe and the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Ottoman empire and the British. It was published almost immediately after the outbreak of war with the Ottoman empire for the purpose of propaganda – to show that Great Britain was not guilty of the war. It may be observed that for that purpose the book was immediately translated into Russian and published in Petrograd in 1914. In the present study I would rely on that Russian translation of 1914, as I could not find the British original at first.

I searched for it both as the White Book and the White Paper in the internet, but I did not even manage to find references to it. On one of the web-sites dedicated to the history of World War I there are extracts from the French Yellow Book and the German White Book, but this one is not mentioned at all.¹⁷ Even in the Catalog of the National Archives among numerous results for “White Paper” there is none that fits the name of the Russian translation.¹⁸ I thought perhaps, the Book can not be found in the National Archives Catalog as there is no need to preserve propaganda material also if the original correspondence is preserved in the archive. But there were no matching results in search for “Grey” and “Mallet” either. So, if the correspondence is in the Archives, it should be either kept under a name very different from the Russian translation, or as a part of bigger document files. It may also be missing in the Archives, as according to the catalog it contains White papers of the Foreign Office only since 1915.

However, the English original did exist, and the book is not just a Russian forgery for propaganda purposes. The best proof of this are the articles in *The Times*¹⁹ and *The New York*

¹⁵ “The Rupture with Turkey”, *The Times*, December 11, 1914, p.7.

¹⁶ “Turkey Deceptive up to the Last”, *The New York Times*, November 22, 1914, p.10.

¹⁷ “Official Papers” in *WWI Document Archive*, http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Official_Papers (accessed April 27, 2010).

¹⁸ The National Archives Catalogue, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue> (accessed May 20, 2010).

¹⁹ “The Rupture With Turkey”, *The Times*, December 11, 1914, p.7.

*Times*²⁰ mentioned at the beginning of this discussion. *The Times* article contains Mallet's explanation regarding "the White Paper", where he argued against the wrong impression it had produced that Britain had been guilty in the rupture of diplomatic relations with the Ottoman empire. However, the article in *The New York Times* appeared to be more valuable for the further search of the traces of the original, as it contains part of the original name of the published collection: "correspondence respecting events leading to the rupture of relations with Turkey". If we search for this phrase on the internet, the references to it might be found in many google-books. Moreover, the very publication of 1914 is available at "Internet Archive".²¹ However, I found the English original with the correct title only when the thesis was already finished. Therefore throughout the work I would rely on the Russian translation and refer to the correspondence as "the White Book".

The second category of sources is represented by newspapers. These are such British newspapers as *The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian*, and *The Observer*, and one American newspaper – *The New York Times*. Special attention is paid to newspapers in this thesis for several reasons. Firstly, they reflect the ideas spread in society, and show the information about the politics that was made public. This is extremely important for showing that ideas about the special meaning of Islam for the British empire were spread not only among politicians. As a famous quotation of Macaulay reads, the only true history of a country is to be found in its newspapers. Therefore, it is very important to know how the events were presented to their contemporaries, if some treaties were kept secret. Secondly, the analysis of the press is essential, as politics consists not only of secret treaties. Sometimes the policy needs to be carried publicly, especially when we speak about issues like loyalty, which became extremely important during the war years. Thirdly, the Islamic question was essentially imperial, thus it is very important that the British press system was imperial. At the beginning of the twentieth century imperial press system already came into existence. It provided its readers "with a substantial amount of news and comment from around the

²⁰ "Turkey Deceptive up to the Last", *the New York Times*, November 22, 1914, p.10.

²¹ *Correspondence respecting events leading to the rupture of relations with Turkey* (London, 1914), available at <http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924101131922>, accessed June 21, 2010.

empire”,²² and enjoyed a great overseas readership. Moreover, consumption of the imperial press in colonies was not effected by the Great War, thus it had to contain information related to imperial issues.²³

The Times will enjoy more attention in the thesis than the other newspapers. First of all *The Times* was the newspaper which traditionally paid much attention to foreign news. As Harold Herd observes, already on its fifteenth anniversary *The Times* published a long list of important events on the Continent which it announced the first in Great Britain.²⁴ Unlike *The Manchester Guardian*, and *The Observer* which largely relied on Reuter News Agency, *The Times* had foreign correspondents of its own. Thus, it contained more information on foreign and imperial issues than the other two. The other reason that explains the great importance of *The Times* for the present study is its special connections with the British Government. Many materials, such as public appeals of the Muslim leaders of India, published in *The Times* were forwarded to it by the Government. *The Times* was not only influenced by the Government, but also enjoyed the influence on it: Leo Amery and Philip Graves, who influenced British politics during the war were former correspondents of *The Times* in the Middle East.

The third group of sources is the Cabinet papers. These are mostly represented by the Eastern reports, a source peculiar to 1917. This series of weekly resume of political and military political affairs in Russia, Rumania, the Near and Middle East and Northern Africa was started on January 10, 1917. By the end of the year 46 Eastern reports were published. Practically each of them contains accounts about political issues connected to Islam, which is very significant for the present study.

Memoirs make up the fourth group of sources. The Muslim opinion during the war is discussed in the memoirs of Ronald Storrs²⁵ and David Lloyd George.²⁶ The accounts of the Arab

²² Simon J.Potter, *News and the British World. The Emergence of an Imperial Press System 1876-1922*. (Oxford, 2003), p.107, available at: <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com>, accessed April 16, 2010.

²³ Potter, *News*, p.190.

²⁴ Harold Herd, *The March of Journalism: The Story of the British Press from 1622 to the Present Day*. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952), p.88.

²⁵ Ronald Storrs, *Orientalism* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1945); *The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs*. (New York: G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1937).

²⁶ David Lloyd George, *Voennye memuary (War memoirs)* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe social'no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1934), Vol.I-II; David Lloyd George, *Voennye memuary (War memoirs)* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe

revolt can be found in the mentioned above memoirs of Storrs and the well-known memoirs of T. E. Lawrence.²⁷

social'no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1935), Vol. IV.

²⁷ Thomas Edward Lawrence, *Seven pillars of wisdom: a triumph*. (New York: Anchor books, 1991).

Chapter 1: Historiographical and Historical Background of the Islamic Question in British Politics.

The discussion of the Islamic question in British politics and the press during the Great War requires an overview of both the existing historiography on the topic, and historical background, which implies the emergence and development of the ideas on which the war-time discourse about the Caliphate and Muslim loyalty was based. Thus, both the theoretical and historical background of the research will be considered in this chapter. I will start with historiography and consider the place of the present study within it, and then proceed to historical background of the events discussed.

1.1. Historiographic background of the research.

1.1.1. Historiography on the question of Caliphate and pan-Islamism.

The ideas about the unity of all Muslims and the Caliphate which were considered by the British during the Great War were not only the product of their own imagination. Therefore, the studies about the Caliphate and pan-Islamism are essential for the present study. Many studies devoted to the origins of Islam, observe that the title Caliph should mean a successor of the Prophet Mohammed as the head of the ummah (community of believers) in all aspects except for prophecy, as Mohammed was considered to be the “seal of prophets”, the last of the kind.²⁸ The focus on the first centuries of Islam allows them to consider the original meaning of the title, which, however, can not be applied to the realities of Modern history as the title was also a subject to historical change.

The studies of Arnold J. Toynbee and Tufan Buzpinar on the contrary are devoted to the historical meaning of the concept of Caliphate in the 19th century.²⁹ They observe that since the treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji of 1774, when the Ottoman empire was losing its political power over

²⁸ Frederick Denny, *Islam and the Muslim Community* (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1998), p.32, p.130; Glen E. Perry, *The Middle East: fourteen Islamic centuries* (New Jersey, 1997), p.34.

²⁹ Arnold Joseph Toynbee, “The Islamic World since the Peace Settlement” in *Survey of International Affairs 1925*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), V.1.; Tufan Buzpinar, “The Question of Caliphate under the Last Ottoman Sultans” in *Ottoman reform and Muslim regeneration: studies in honour of Butrus Abu-Manne* / Ed. by Itzhak Weismann, Fruma Zachs (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005). pp.17-37.

some territories, the authority of the Caliph over them was maintained. This, as well as the use of the double title of the Ottoman sovereigns in the 19th century: Sultan-Caliph suggested the distinction of functions between the two. The title of Caliph became regarded as denoting spiritual authority. Buzpinar further approaches the spiritualization of the concept of Caliphate in the Ottoman empire,³⁰ while Toynbee points out that prior to the 19th century the title of Caliph was by no means considered as universal and could be applied to several Muslims rulers.³¹ But, in the 19th century most of the Muslims countries came under the European rule, and there remained no rulers except the Ottoman sultans that claimed the title of Caliph.³² As will be shown in this study the view on the Caliph as the universal and spiritual leader of the Muslim world was shared in British politics during the Great War.

One might feel reluctant to rely on Arnold J. Toynbee, taking into account his periodical sympathies with Greek, Jewish or Turkish cases, or historiosophic approach in his famous “Study of History”. But here the use of his “Survey” can be justified by several reasons. He influenced the opinion shared by British statesmen – worked at Political Intelligence Department of the British Foreign Office and even several pieces of his authorship can be found among the Eastern reports, which will be considered in the last chapter of the thesis. The discussion of caliphate in the Survey is entirely based on Thomas Arnold’s work of 1924.³³ Thomas Arnold was a very influential scholar who already published a work on Islam³⁴ before 1914 and during the war held public lectures about Islam.³⁵ Thus it’s an opinion expressed in the “Survey” is of both statesman and scholar.

Except for studies on the Caliphate, there exist a lot of works that consider pan-Islamism as the official doctrine adopted by Abdul Hamid II. Caroline Finkel provides analysis of reasons for his turn to Islamism and a summary of the sultan’s activities in this regard.³⁶ Selim Deringil discusses the changes in the Ottoman symbolism of power with regard to the newly manifested stress on the position of the Caliph, and the factors that could undermine it.³⁷ The Caliph’s power became sensitive to question of protection over the Holy places, which was emphasized as a ground

³⁰ Buzpinar, “Question”.

³¹ Toynbee, “Islamic”, p.36-37.

³² Ibid.

³³ Thomas Arnold, *The Caliphate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924); available at <http://archive.org/details/caliphate029219mbp>, accessed on May 20, 2010.

³⁴ Thomas W. Arnold, *A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.

³⁵ At least they were regularly announced in *The Times*.

³⁶ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1923* (London: John Murray, 2006), pp.493-498

³⁷ Selim Deringil, *The well-protected domains: ideology and the legitimation of power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998).

of the Caliph's title. The opposition of sharifs' to the growing Ottoman control over Hejaz is considered in another article by Buzpinar.³⁸ Caesar Farah expresses doubts that an ideology of pan-Islamism was promoted by the agents of Abdul Hamid.³⁹ According to another article of his, it was only after 1905 that the question of Caliphate gained importance on the international arena.⁴⁰

But quite a few studies on the Ottoman empire consider pan-Islamism after the reign of Abdul Hamid. The books by Shaw, and Shaw and Hasan Kayalı are among the last. Thus, Shaw and Shaw mention supporters of Islamism among the Young Turks, and their use of this ideology.⁴¹ Hasan Kayalı discusses the talks about the Arab Caliphate during the second constitutional period.⁴²

I would also like to pay special attention to the study of Kemal H. Karpat on politicization of Islam, which can not be considered within only one of the above categories. As well as Toynbee, Karpat observes that the Ottoman caliphate gained its universality in the 19th century "thanks to the widespread need of the Muslim leaders to unite around one central institution in order to oppose the Europeans",⁴³ and though he considers that Abdul Hamid provided Islam with the political significance, he partly supports also the argument of Caesar Farah stating that Abdul Hamid was very careful to use his Caliphal position against Europeans.⁴⁴ Karpat explains that though leaders of Muslim countries under European control appealed to the Ottoman sultan as Caliph with the aim of gaining some financial and military help, he responded mainly by sending them some symbolic items bearing his name.⁴⁵ But except for considering these issues Karpat also observes the politicization of Islam in French, Russian and British domains.

So, though these studies do not focus on the period of the Great War, they provide an opportunity to identify the common ideas about pan-Islamism and the concept of Caliphate in the

³⁸ Buzpinar, Tufan. "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdulhamid II: 1877-1882", *Die Welt des Islams: International Journal for the Study of Modern Islam*, Vol. 36, Issue 1 (Mar., 1996), pp. 59-89; available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693438>, accessed on May 20, 2010.

³⁹ Caesar E. Farah, "Reassessing Abdulhamid II's Islamic policy", *Archivum Ottomanicum* 14 (1995/96): pp.198-199.

⁴⁰ Caesar E. Farah, "Great Britain, Germany and the Ottoman Caliphate", *Der Islam*. Volume 66, Issue 2: p. 264, pp.269-271.

⁴¹ S. J. Shaw, and E. K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), Vol. II.: Reform, revolution and republic: the rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, p.304-305.

⁴² Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.144-150.

⁴³ Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (Oxford University Press, 2001), p.49.

⁴⁴ Karpat, *Politicization*, p.46.

⁴⁵ Karpat, *Politicization*, p.46, p.50.

Ottoman empire of Abdul Hamid's time and the British ideas about Islam during the Great War. Among such common points is their focus on the figure of the Caliph, his supreme position over all Muslims, and also the symbolism of the Caliph's power.

1.1.2. Islam in relations between Great Britain and Indian Muslims.

The ideas about the unity of Islam and the Caliph as its religious leader gained political significance due to Muslim population under British control. Therefore, a few words should be said about the studies that consider the role of Islam in relations between Britain and her Muslim subjects. The works of Azmi Özcan and Kemal Karpat, though they pay little attention to the Great War, are the most complete studies on this issue.⁴⁶ They observe both the development of the relations between the Ottomans, the British and Indian Muslims in the 19th century, and the post-war Caliphate movement in India.⁴⁷ Abdul Rauf approaches pan-Islamism in one of the Indian provinces in the same manner as Azmi Özcan.⁴⁸

While Kemal Karpat and Caroline Finkel attribute the beginning of this special relations between the Indian Muslims and the Ottoman Sultan to British influence, which first appealed to the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph during the Indian Mutiny; Abdul Rauf and Azmi Özcan point to the Indian Muslims instead, as had they not regarded the Ottoman sultan as their Caliph there would be no need for the British government to address him as such and to try to influence their Muslims subjects through him.

Several other studies that consider Indian Muslims in British policy have no common points. Farah observes how the British-German rivalry contributed to the increase in the importance of the Caliphate in 1905-1914.⁴⁹ Lawrence James in his studies on the British empire observes the influence of considerations about the Muslim opinion on issues like the dispatch of the Indian

⁴⁶ Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam*; Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain, 1877-1924* (Leiden, New York, Köln, 1997).

⁴⁷ Geoffrey Malcolm Gathorne-Hardy, "The Islamic World" in *A Short History of International Affairs 1920-1939* (London: Butler & Tanner Ltd, 1950), pp.110-142

⁴⁸ Abdul Rauf, "Pan-Islamism and the North West Frontier Province of British India (1897-1918)" *Perceptions* Vol. 12 (Winter 2007): pp. 21-42; available at: <http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/volume12/winter/winter-002-PERCEPTION%28abdulrauf%29%5B2%5D.pdf>, accessed April 18, 2010.

⁴⁹ Farah, "Great Britain".

troops to Egypt and the Persian Gulf.⁵⁰ Chandrika Kaul in the study on India in the British press makes valuable remarks on the reasons and means of encouraging the loyalty of Indian Muslims during the Great War.⁵¹ Finally, Gathorne-Hardy discusses the “Kaliphate movement” in India.⁵²

1.1.3. The British policy in the Middle East.

As the present study will discuss the British considerations regarding the Ottoman empire, and British policy towards its territories will be considered, it can be classified as belonging to the vast group of studies about Britain and the Middle East during the Great War. Though there is a great number of books devoted to the Great War which focus on European issues and pay little attention to the issues of the Middle East, the British policy towards the Middle East was never understudied and enjoys a great historiography of its own. This is mainly due to the “Eastern Question School”, as Selim Deringil calls it. According to his definition, the school focused on how the Ottoman empire figured in strategic calculations of European powers during the 19th – the beginning of 20th century.⁵³ According to such characteristics most of the books which were used while working on the thesis belong to this vast category of “the Eastern Question school”.

Some of these studies do not pay attention to the issues of religion at all. For instance, the book on Mesopotamian oil by Marian Kent,⁵⁴ and the study about British politics in the Persian Gulf by Briton Cooper Bush.⁵⁵ However, most of the studies about the British politics towards the Middle East refer to Islam and the Muslim opinion when they discuss the Arab revolt.

Among the studies, which consider the religious meaning of the Arab revolt, two approaches can be distinguished. Liddell Hart and Wallach, for instance, argue that Hussain was chosen as an ally because he was the most influential leader in religious matters, a sharif, and the emir of the Holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the possession of which enabled the sultan’s claims to

⁵⁰ Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London: Abacus, 1997), p.440-445; Lawrence James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* (London: Abacus, 1998), p.444.

⁵¹ Chandrika Kaul, “War and Government Publicity” in *Reporting the Raj: the British press and India, c. 1880-1922* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp.119-134.

⁵² Gathorne-Hardy, “The Islamic”, pp.110-142

⁵³ Deringil, “Introduction” in *The well-protected domains*.

⁵⁴ Kent, *Oil*.

⁵⁵ Briton Cooper Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

Caliphate.⁵⁶ Therefore, they suggest, by supporting Hussein the British deprived the Sultan of his claims to Caliphate. George Antonius speaking about Arab national awakening discusses in a similar way that the Arab revolt was important for undermining the Chaliph's call to jihad.⁵⁷ Such an interpretation, however, provokes a number of questions: why would there be a need to counteract jihad after 2 years of war? Should something not have been done earlier?

The second approach is represented by Fromkin, Cassar, and Kent. They argue that the alliance with Hussein was determined much more by a post war perspective: as Russian claims to Constantinople were well known, after the war she would also possess a Caliph and in the case of revival of old rivalries it would pose a much greater threat than the German-controlled Caliph during the war.⁵⁸ In the studies of Friedman and Tibbi it is also shown that the McMahon-Hussain correspondence inspired sharif to establish a Caliphate of his own.⁵⁹ Though the second approach to the Arab revolt seems to be much better supported by archival sources, it also raises a number of questions regarding the British attitude to the Ottoman Caliph. If a post-war perspective on the Caliphate influenced British politics, is it possible that the Caliph's influence on the British Muslim subject was ignored when war was declared? And if the Arab revolt was not called to undermine the influence of the Ottoman Caliph, how was his call to jihad counteracted?

Thus, both the accounts of the Arab revolt, either as a means of counteracting Sultan's call to jihad or as a result of the scheme of the Arab Caliphate are episodic and not trace the Islamic factor in British politics throughout the war. However, recently there appeared several studies which focus on the idea of the Caliphate in British politics. The first is a book by Sean Oliver-Dee, entitled "The Caliphate Question: The British Government and Islamic Governance".⁶⁰ The book encompasses a wider chronological period, than the present study, with one of the chapters being devoted to the Caliphate Question during the Great War. In it, Oliver-Dee provides a short description of the period, and analyzes several British documents on Caliphate on the background of it. However, the

⁵⁶ Wallach, *Desert*, p150; Liddell Hart, *Lawrence*, p. 43-44.

⁵⁷ George Antonius, *The Arab awakening: the story of the Arab national movement* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1945).

⁵⁸ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.98; Karpat, *The politicization*, p.256; Cassar, *Kitchener's*, p.57.

⁵⁹ Isaiah Friedman, *The Question of Palestine, 1914-1918. British-Jewish-Arab Relations* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p.65; Bassam Tibi, *Arab nationalism: a critical inquiry* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1991), p.115.

⁶⁰ Oliver-Dee, *Caliphate*.

documents he analyses are about meaning of the term Caliphate, and not British policy. Moreover, they are produced by experts who argue against a popular opinion, that a Caliph is a spiritual leader first of all. The second study worth mentioning is a thesis of Steven Cox, who focuses exactly on the Great War, and studies how so-called Islamophobia contributed to the development of the idea of the Arab Caliphate.⁶¹

1.2. Historical Background: Islamic question in British politics before the Great War.

1.2.1. Meaning of the Caliphate in the 19th century.

In theory the Caliph should be both a spiritual and temporal authority over all Muslims.⁶² But, as often happens, theory does not always coincide with practice. Thus, for example in the 10th - 11th there were states called Caliphates (the Abbasid Caliphate, the Fatimid Caliphate, the Caliphate of Cordoba), which existed at the same time, which means it was not considered that there should be only one Caliph as the head of all Muslim world. According to Toynbee, who in his turn refers to T.Arnold, even in the 16th -17th century the title of Caliph was used to denote rather a completely sovereign ruler, than any claim to “exclusive sovereignty over the entire Islamic community”, for in the correspondence between the Ottoman court and Mughal rulers of India the title was applied to both sides.⁶³ Karpát also observes that the “idea of Islamic unity remained an alien concept to Muslim rulers until the 19th century”.⁶⁴ But in the course of 19th century the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph became regarded as a spiritual head of the Muslim community of the world, and was accepted as such on the international level. So, it needs to be considered how that change occurred.

The first development that contributed to the view of the Caliphate as spiritual authority was the loss of the Muslim territories by the Ottoman empire from the end of the 18th century onwards. According to the treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji of 1774 with the Russian empire, the Ottomans acknowledged their loss of political authority over the Crimea, but it was stated Crimea remained

⁶¹ Cox, *Idea*.

⁶² Frederick Denny, *Islam and the Muslim Community* (Illinois, 1998), p.32, p.130; Glen E.Perry, *The Middle East: fourteen Islamic centuries* (New Jersey, 1997), p.34.

⁶³ Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.31.

⁶⁴ Karpát, *The Politicization*, p.48.

under the authority of the Caliph.⁶⁵ Thus, as Toynbee and Buzpinar point out, this was the first international treaty, where the notion of Caliphate was explicitly stated,⁶⁶ the first time Caliphate became an active factor in international relations.⁶⁷ It was also the first document to uphold a separation between the political authority of the sultan and religious authority of the Caliph.⁶⁸

The second development which enabled to regard the Caliph as the supreme spiritual authority of Islam was that most of the previously independent Muslim states became dependent on European powers.⁶⁹ Thus, there remained no rulers except the Ottoman sultans that claimed the title of Caliph.⁷⁰ The European advance caused even independent peripheral Muslim leaders to look to the Sultan-Caliph “as a potential source of military and economic help” to resist the Europeans.⁷¹

The official policy of Abdul Hamid, who gave “the caliphate and the faith a hitherto nonexistent ideological force”,⁷² also contributed to that development. Though “Caliph” was a part of title of the Ottoman rulers from 1517, it was never emphasized before the 19th century.⁷³ The position of Caliph helped Abdul Hamid to define a new focus of state loyalty after the loss of the Christian territories, and to increase his influence among the Muslims beyond the Ottoman empire.⁷⁴ Finkel observes, that he organized something like “Islamic Vatican” in his palace in Yildiz, invited Arab religious leaders to live in Istanbul as his advisers, employed them on missions to the Arab provinces.⁷⁵ He sent religious mission to Africa and China, received messengers from India and Egypt, which claimed their allegiance to him as Caliph.⁷⁶

But due to the new importance attached to the title of Caliph, the legitimate grounds of belonging of the Caliph title to the House of Osman were also emphasized. Among them figured the transfer of title from the last Abbasid Caliph to Selim I, the Caliph’s role of the protector of

⁶⁵ Finkel, *Osman’s Dream*, p.493; Lee, “Abdulhamid II”, p.659-660; Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.32-35.

⁶⁶ Buzpinar, “The Question”, p.19.

⁶⁷ Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.33.

⁶⁸ Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.33; Buzpinar, “The Question”, p.19.

⁶⁹ Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.33, p.36-37; Lee, “Abdulhamid II”, p. 660.

⁷⁰ Toynbee, “The Islamic”, p.36-37.

⁷¹ Karpas, *The Politicization*, p.48.

⁷² Karpas, *The Politicization*, p.15.

⁷³ Farah, “Great Britain”, p.264; Selim Deringil, *The well-protected*, p.46-48; Buzpinar, “The Question”, p.17.

⁷⁴ Finkel, *Osman’s*, p.492, p.498; Lee, “Abdulhamid II”, p. 660.

⁷⁵ Finkel, *Osman’s*, p.495.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Mecca and Medina, and possession of the Holy relics.⁷⁷ At the same time the view of the Hanafi schhol was promoted, that it was not necessary for the Caliph to belong to the tribe of Koreish.⁷⁸

Thus, in the 19th century the Caliph was regarded as the spiritual leader of all Muslims. The active policy of Abdul Hamid contributed to the general acceptance of this view, and raised questions about the basis for the assumption of Caliphate.

1.2.2. The Islamic question: Muslim population in British-Ottoman relations.

Two factors contributed to the British acknowledgment of the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of British Muslim subjects: the rivalry with Russia in Asia, and the need to reassure the loyalty of the significant amount of Muslims in the British empire.

More than the half of the Muslim population of the world lived under British rule in India, Egypt and Sudan. This contributed to the need to consider their religious feelings. Only in India, Muslims constituted one-fifth of the population, about 60 million, besides Muslims constituted the majority in the Indian army.⁷⁹ They appealed to the Ottoman sultan as their Caliph. With the establishment of British rule in Egypt in 1882 that officially remained a part of the Ottoman empire, the need to consider the religious attachment of Muslims to the Caliphate was reinforced. To understand the significance given to religious feelings of the Muslims, it might be remembered that the subordination of all spheres of life in the Orient to religion impressed the imagination of European travelers in 19th - the beginning of the 20th century the most.⁸⁰

Besides, the British had experienced a number of uprisings of their Muslin subjects inspired by religion. First of all this was the Indian Mutiny of 1857-1858, which started with the refusal of the Hindu and Muslim soldiers to bite paper cartridges to load their rifle, as it contained pork and beef fat. The Mutiny spread over several provinces and caused the pass of authority from the East India Company to the India Office.⁸¹ Finkel observes that during the Indian Mutiny the British appealed to the help of Abdul Mejid as the Caliph of their Muslim subjects, and “he co-operatively

⁷⁷ Deringil, *The well-protected*, p.24; Buzpinar, “The Question”, p.21.

⁷⁸ Finkel, *Osman's*, p.494.

⁷⁹ Fromkin, *A peace*, p.97; Storrs, *Orientations*, p.83.

⁸⁰ Fromkin, *A peace*, p.36, p.96.

⁸¹ Fromkin, *A peace*, p.97; Özcan,.

responded with a letter to be read out in Indian mosques enjoying the people to remain calm”.⁸² During the next decade the Caliph’s name began to be mentioned at Friday prayers in India.⁸³ The British occupation of Quetta in 1876 was followed by the anti-British propaganda of Amir of Afghanistan who was calling the Indian Muslims to jihad against the British.⁸⁴ And again, it was counteracted with the help of the Caliph, as Abdul Hamid suggested his assistance to calm down the anti-British agitation in India and Afghanistan.⁸⁵ The revolt in 1883 in the Sudan was also inspired by religion, as it was led by a religious leader referred to as Mahdi.

Sometimes such uprisings were connected with Muslim sentiments towards the Ottoman empire. During the war of 1877-1878 between the Ottoman and Russian empires Indian Muslims warned the British that if they did not assist the Ottoman empire, they would be hated in India. This made Viceroy Robert Lytton exaggerate the Muslim danger in India; he suggested that in case of Russian attack there would be resistance in India, but if the Ottomans would attack India they would be supported by Indians.⁸⁶ During the war between the Ottoman empire and Greece in 1897 there was an uprising in the North West Frontier Province of India, which according to a Lahore newspaper was caused by rumors that the Turks waged a war against Christians, and that Indian Muslims should also exterminate infidels.⁸⁷ It is observed that during the war the Muslims of India expressed strong dissatisfaction with the lack of British support to the Ottoman empire.⁸⁸ Pan-Islamic excitement in Egypt and India in 1905-1906 also caused significant British concerns.⁸⁹ Writing about these years Storrs observed that it was necessary in Egypt to take into account the objectively existing pan-Islamism of Egyptians, who acknowledged that they should submit to the will of the Caliph regardless of their personal sympathies.⁹⁰ To support his point Storrs quotes a letter from one Arab, that warns the British that in the case of war the hearts of the Muslims would

⁸² Finkel, *Osman's*, p.497.

⁸³ Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, p.19.

⁸⁴ Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, p.79.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, p.72.

⁸⁷ Rauf, “Pan-Islamism”, p.26.

⁸⁸ Philip Graves, *The Life of Sir Percy Cox* (London, Melbourne: Hutchinson & Co, 1941), p.176; James, *Raj*, p.444; Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, p.103.

⁸⁹ Farah, “Great Britain”, pp.271-272.

⁹⁰ Storrs, *Orientations*, pp.82-83.

hear only the voice of the Caliph.⁹¹ Thus in order not to provoke the discontent of British Muslim subjects, the British tried to avoid any conflicts with the Ottoman Sultan, the Caliph of their Muslim subjects.⁹²

But it was not only a policy which aimed to avoid conflicts, but a policy of active alliance. The Russian empire was a common enemy that threatened both the British India and the Ottoman Empire, and the fact that that Great Britain had a significant Muslim population, whose religious leader was the Ottoman Caliph, created the basis for the establishment of a common front of the two largest Muslim states against the Russian threat.⁹³ That is why in 1913 Lord Cromer observed that the British were constantly reminded that King George V was “the greatest Mohammedan ruler in the world” and it was “a duty incumbent on Great Britain to defend the interests and to secure the welfare of Moslems all over the world because a very large number of their co-religionists are British subjects and reside in Britain”.⁹⁴ Thus British rivalry with Russia during the 19th century contributed to the British recognition of the spiritual authority of the Turkish Sultan as the Caliph and the allegiance with the Ottoman Empire.

1.2.3. The change of the role of the Islamic factor in British-Ottoman relations during the Balkan wars.

The role played by the question of Caliphate in British-Ottoman relations was to be revised after 1907-1908, when Britain signed an allied agreement with its traditional rival – the Russian empire, and the Young Turk revolt took place in the Ottoman empire. The Young Turks replaced the doctrine of pan-Islamism by a nationalistic ideology.⁹⁵ Both events could deprive traditional British-Ottoman relations of their basis. However, pan-Islamism continued to play a role in Ottoman politics: there existed pan-Islamic societies,⁹⁶ and in 1910-1911 the Young Turks

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Storrs, *Orientations*, p.83.

⁹³ Aaron Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: the Cairo Conference of 1921* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p.3.

⁹⁴ Evelyn Baring, “England and Islam” in *Political and Literary Essays (1908-1913)* (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1913), p. 407-408.

⁹⁵ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.46; Finkel, *Osman's*, p.521.

⁹⁶ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, pp.304-305.

attempted to use the authority of the Caliph to influence the loyalty of Albanians.⁹⁷ During Talaat Pasha's visit to London British politicians continued to emphasize the importance of the sentiments of the Indian Muslims in relations with the Ottoman empire.⁹⁸ The new situation in British-Ottoman relations became evident only during the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. Thus, this part of the chapter will be devoted to reasons which contributed to the shift in British politics regarding Russia and the Ottoman empire and how this shift became evident during the Balkan wars.

From the 1880s Germany, not Russia became regarded as the main threat to British interests in the Middle East, which contributed to the fact that in 1907 a treaty was negotiated between Russia and Britain.⁹⁹ It should be mentioned that Germany not only competed with Great Britain in economic issues, but also tried to use the Islamic factor to its advantage. The speech of Kaiser Wilhelm II in Damascus on November 8, 1898, in which he stated that the Sultan and 300 million Muslims around the world can be confident in his friendship, was perceived as evidence of Germany's ambitions and her intentions towards Britain and its Muslim subjects.¹⁰⁰ In 1908 von Oppenheim reported to Berlin about the British sensitivity to the influence of the Ottoman Caliph on British Muslims.¹⁰¹

Thus, if before 1907 the religious sentiments of the Muslim population under British rule and the need to counteract the Russian threat combined in British support for the Ottoman Empire, after the agreement with Russia they were in contradiction. Great Britain could no longer openly support the Ottoman Empire, not to provoke the dissatisfaction of her new ally.¹⁰² Considering this, Lord Cromer observed, after the agreement with Russia, it was easy to predict that British officials would have to answer to what extent their diplomacy in Europe would depend on the sentiments of Muslims in India.¹⁰³

The new situation became evident during the Balkan War. On the one hand, it showed significant activity of the Muslims of India, who forwarded their demands to Britain and the Sultan,

⁹⁷ Finkel, *Osman's*, p.521.

⁹⁸ "Exploiting the Crescent. Pan-Islamic Aims", *The Times*, April 27, 1915, p.7.

⁹⁹ Kent, *Oil*; Fromkin, *A Peace*, p.30.

¹⁰⁰ *The Art of the Possible: Documents on Great Power Diplomacy, 1814-1914* (New York, 1996), p.270.

¹⁰¹ Farah, "Great Britain", p.268.

¹⁰² Fromkin, *A peace*, p.31-32.

¹⁰³ Baring, "England and Islam", pp.410-411.

organized a collection of funds for the defense of the Holy places of Islam.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, as Lord Cromer observes, it revealed that no one in the Government suggested supporting the Ottoman empire and adopting a policy similar to the one observed during the Crimean war.¹⁰⁵ In this new situation, Sir Edward Grey maintained that religious sentiments of Muslim subjects of the Crown would be respected, that British policy would never be one of intolerance or unprovoked aggression against a Muslim power. However, he observed, that Britain cannot protect the Ottoman empire from the consequences of her own action.¹⁰⁶

In a similar way the demands of Muslims of India who “seek to dominate the external policy of the British empire and demanded that British ministers should take up arms for the defense of the Ottoman empire” were considered as unsubstantiated in the articles of *The Times*.¹⁰⁷ However, additional emphasis was made on the duty of British Muslims to remain loyal. Thus, *The Times* published an address from Aga Khan, urging Indian Muslims to refrain from any actions that might undermine the British confidence in the loyalty of Muslims and Islam in India.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, on the eve of the Great War, the Caliph was considered to be the spiritual leader of all Muslims. But because of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, Britain could not continue to support the Ottoman empire, which became evident during the Balkan wars and resulted in the dissatisfaction of British Muslim subjects. However their dissatisfaction was considered less important than alliance with the Russian empire.

¹⁰⁴ “Mahomedan Movements in India”, *The Times*, April 19, 1913, p.9; “Indian Moslems and British Policy”, *The Times*, July 15, 1913, p.9; “Mahomedan Agitation In India. Effect of the Balkan War”, *The Times*, October 7, 1913, p.5.

¹⁰⁵ Baring, “England and Islam”, pp.410-411.

¹⁰⁶ Baring, “England”, p.412.

¹⁰⁷ “Indian Moslems And Turkey”, *The Times*, September 15, 1913, p.5; “Indian Moslems and British Policy”, *The Times*, July 15, 1913, p.9.

¹⁰⁸ “Indian Moslems and the Balkan War. Appeal by the Aga Khan”, *The Times*, February 14, 1913, p.5.

Chapter 2: British Concerns about the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of British Muslim subjects in 1914-1915.

As was already discussed in the Introduction, little attention is usually paid to the Islamic factor in British policy towards the Ottoman empire during the Great War. It is usually either mentioned as one of the reasons for military decisions, or is considered in connection to the Arab revolt.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, in this chapter I want to demonstrate that concerns about the Ottoman sultan as the religious leader of British Muslim subjects were present in British policy and public opinion at the beginning of the war, and then to consider how they were handled prior to the Arab revolt of 1916, in particular by what means the British counteracted the threat of jihad. This would allow us to judge the importance of the Islamic factor in British policy towards the Ottoman empire.

2.1. British Concerns about Muslim opinion during the Period of Neutrality of the Ottoman Empire.

In this part of the chapter I would like to argue that concerns about the influence of the probable war with the Ottoman empire on British Muslim subjects were a wide-spread phenomenon during the Ottoman neutrality (August-October 1914), and to consider how they influenced the state politics during that period.

2.1.1. The manifestation of British concerns in different sources.

In August 1913, Lord Cromer reproached British politicians for underestimating the dangers that might arise from the religious connection of Muslim subjects of the British empire with the Caliph.¹¹⁰ But when in August 1914 war started in Europe and the position of the Ottoman empire, which declared neutrality, was uncertain, these very dangers were received much attention.

These concerns are most evidently reflected in later descriptions, like memoirs¹¹¹ and biographies.¹¹² These sources show pan-Islamic sentiments of British Muslims towards the

¹⁰⁹ The issue was discussed in the Introduction.

¹¹⁰ Baring, "England", p.407.

¹¹¹ Lloyd George, *Voennye*, Vol.I-II, p.66-68; Storrs, *Orientations*, p.149.

¹¹² Liddell Hart, *Lawrence*, p.43; Wallach, *Desert*, p.147-148.

Ottoman Sultan as the overall basis of British concerns about the probable war with the Ottoman empire.¹¹³ David Lloyd George recorded that a war with Turkey gained special significance and was a delicate issue due to the possible effect on British Muslims.¹¹⁴ Ronald Storrs recalled that “the chief menace lay in the influence which Turkish hostilities with Great Britain might have upon the Muslim population of British India, Egypt, and Sudan”.¹¹⁵ There was a fear that the Caliph’s call to Holy war would provoke mass discontent throughout the empire.¹¹⁶ These sources identify both the British fears of religious discontent and point out to the reason of these fears.

The same concerns about the Caliph’s influence on British Muslim subjects though not expressed that explicitly, should have been the basis for the attention of the British Embassy in Constantinople to the joint German-Ottoman agitation that appealed to religious sentiments of Muslims in the Ottoman empire and outside it. Thus, Louis Mallet in the cables to the Foreign Office reported about religious anti-British oral agitation, leaflet propaganda, and campaigns in official Turkish media. Louis Mallet assigned importance to hostile religious propaganda exactly because of its influence on the Muslims of the British empire. Otherwise, why would he inform his government about it?

Most often Louis Mallet reported about oral agitation, referring to it as either religious propaganda,¹¹⁷ or anti-British campaigns conducted in the mosques¹¹⁸ or by the imams.¹¹⁹ The most vivid example of the propaganda of such kind, Mallet reported about, was a campaign in Aleppo, where the Muslims were so excited that they believed that the German emperor adopted Islam, and that the Germans were fighting for Islam with Russia.¹²⁰

The only leaflet propaganda which Louis Mallet considered important enough to inform the British government about was the Manifesto of Aziz Shawin which appealed to the

¹¹³ Storrs, *Orientations*, p. 149; David Lloyd George, *Voennye*, Vol. IV, p.66; Wallach, *Desert*, p.147; Menteshashvili, *Irak*, p.83.

¹¹⁴ David Lloyd George, *Voennye*, Vol. IV, p.67.

¹¹⁵ Storrs, *Orientations*, p.149.

¹¹⁶ Wallach, *Desert Queen*, p, P.148.

¹¹⁷ *Belaya kniga o voine s Turtziyei (The White Book on War with Turkey)* (Petrograd, 1914), p.34, p.100, p.139.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 100.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.135

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p.89.

religious solidarity of Muslims. Mallet informed the Foreign Office that the Manifesto was signed by 10 representatives of the Muslim countries under foreign rule and called the Muslim soldiers to leave the armies of the Entente powers and join in the uprising to defend Islam.¹²¹ According to Mallet's reports, copies of the manifesto were distributed in Beirut, Syria, Egypt, India and other Muslim countries.¹²²

Mallet paid special attention to the views expressed in the Ottoman press, especially when with the proclamation of the neutral status of the Ottoman empire censorship was introduced there. Mallet stated that the censorship prevented publishing of alternative views, and therefore the published materials could be regarded as revealing the position of the Ottoman government.¹²³ He reported about the use of the press for "the excitation of religious fanaticism".¹²⁴ He informed the Foreign Office of those articles in the Turkish central and local newspapers, which portrayed Britain as an enemy of Islam.¹²⁵ In particular, Mallet pointed out to the article in *the Terjuman-i-Hakkikat* from September 19th which stated that England wanted to drag the Muslim states in the holy war against Germany.¹²⁶ A month later Mallet reported about the campaign in the press which aimed to show that Great Britain is going to strike a decisive blow on Islam,¹²⁷ and that it has been reported in the Ottoman press that the British closed the Al-Azhar mosque in Egypt,¹²⁸ and had forbidden the pilgrimage from Egypt, or forced the Egyptian government to adopt fetva of the same content.¹²⁹ He informed that the Telephone agency¹³⁰ circulated the "news" that amir of Afghanistan declared a holy war and attacked India.¹³¹

The German origin of such propaganda is strongly emphasized in the White book. Mallet considered that there should be no doubts, that behind the scenes of all of it were the

¹²¹ Ibid, p.135.

¹²² Ibid, p.137, p.142.

¹²³ Ibid, p.130-131.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p.140.

¹²⁵ Ibid, p.132, 138.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p.135.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.138.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p.140.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p.138.

¹³⁰ This should be either German or Ottoman news-agency.

¹³¹ *Belaya kniga o voine*, p.141.

Germans, which excited the religious fanaticism of Turks against the British.¹³² For instance, it is stated that in order to ensure that Great Britain was an enemy of Islam the German Embassy everyday issued “streams of lies and defamation”, which were circulated in Turkish newspapers all over the country.¹³³ Attention to the religious propaganda and identifying its origins with the enemy of Britain therefore reveals that Mallet had concerns about the possibility of the enemy use of appeals to Muslims.

The same concerns can also be identified in discussions on pages of the British press of August-October 1914. Most of the articles do not focus on enemy religious propaganda, except the short notes about the Manifesto of sheikh Aziz Shawin¹³⁴ (which Mallet also wrote about). It was characterized as “the inflaming document urging Mahomedans to fight against Great Britain” and is reported to have been disseminated through Syria, and probably India. Notes on Dr.Prueffer activities in Syria “trying to incite the people to take part in this conflict”¹³⁵ and a campaign of intrigues in Egypt¹³⁶ were even more vague.

Though remarks on enemy religious propaganda were short and vague, a lot of space was devoted in the press to show enemy plans to raise Islam as “intrigue” based on the miscalculations, and condemned to failure. Thus, unlike the reports of the White Book, *The Times* articles pointed out at the aim of the intrigues and of pulling the Ottoman empire into the war: to provoke the Holy war and Muslim diversion in India, Egypt, and Caucasus. Later it was recognized even in the press, that there were concerns the enemy intrigue would prove successful,¹³⁷ but during Ottoman neutrality this possibility was fully denied. For instance, in *The Observer* it was argued that “in the view of our real troubles it is desirable to reduce those of comparatively unsubstantial character to their true proportion. Among these I venture to class the constantly recurrent German threat to raise the spirit of Islam against England”.¹³⁸

It is remarkable that in the press German origin of the intrigues was stressed as the

¹³² Ibid, p. 140.

¹³³ Ibid, p.101.

¹³⁴ “German Plot in Turkey”, *The Times*, November 1, 1914, p.1-2.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ “Alternatives for Turkey”, *The Times*, September 30, 1914, p.9.

¹³⁷ “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

¹³⁸ “Turkey and England: Mr.Sidney Whitman and Moslem Feeling”, *The Observer*, August 30, 1914, p. 5.

main reason of their supposed failure. This was stressed both in the articles which attempted to influence the Ottoman position, and in those which appeared when there were already no doubts about the Ottoman position and addressed only British subjects.

Thus in the articles that could influence the Ottoman position, journalists of both *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* suggested that the advice the Germans give to Turkey indeed were very prosperous for Germany, as unrest in Egypt, Caucasus and the Holy war in the Northern Africa would assist German military operations, but they expressed doubts whether Turkey may gain something from it.¹³⁹ They warned that German advice should not be trusted, if compared to long well-known British support.¹⁴⁰ It was stated in the articles that Turkey stood at the crossroads of two paths. The Entente countries, the states that might help her the most and threaten the most, proposed the Ottoman empire to preserve its neutrality to prevent the spread of this European war and were ready to guarantee the integrity of her territories, to provide financial support.¹⁴¹

However, it was continued, if the Turks would choose war on the provocation of Germany, they risked their existence as a state. Therefore, despite the assurances of friendly attitude and reminders of the cases of British support to the Ottoman empire as well as Islam, because of the last statement that in case of war the Ottomans risk their existence as a state, these proposals of upholding the neutral status are of a threatening character. Especially if one considers that they were accompanied by statements that the garrison in Egypt was well-prepared,¹⁴² the Ottoman empire was open to attacks in many directions,¹⁴³ or that Allies' troops were well prepared as well as British troops in Egypt¹⁴⁴ and if needed their actions would be drastic.¹⁴⁵ These threats are often followed by accounts that demonstrate the

¹³⁹ "The Choice of the Turks", *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9; "Turkey begins hostilities", *The Manchester Guardian*, October 30, 1914, p.7.

¹⁴⁰ "The Choice of the Turks", *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴¹ "The Choice of the Turks", *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.; "Alternatives for Turkey", *The Times*, September 30, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴² "Turkey as a Combatant", *The Times*, October 31, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴³ "The Choice of the Turks", *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.; "Alternatives for Turkey", *The Times*, September 30, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴⁴ "Turkey Enters the Fray", *The Times*, October 30, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴⁵ "The Choice of the Turks", *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.

advantage of the Allied forces in the war¹⁴⁶ and expressions of confidence in the victory of the Allied powers.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps, this demonstration of power was expected to convince the Turks to take the side of the winner, but they sound rather threatening.¹⁴⁸

After the attack of *Goeben* and *Breslau* on Russian sea-ports, it became evident that the Ottoman empire had chosen to join the Central powers, thus after this event the articles stressed that the world of Islam would not follow the German intrigue. It was maintained, that “the Turk cannot preach a Holy War when he has exchanged the fez for Prussian Pickelhaube, and taken up the sword in defiance of Sultan’s wishes”.¹⁴⁹ The attempt to provoke problems with the Muslim population of the Allies by “cultivating an assiduous Pan-Islamic propaganda” was proclaimed to be “one more of the many miscalculations of the German Government”.¹⁵⁰ It was stated that though Turkey has yielded to Prussian intrigue and gold, Islam as a whole did not have an intention of becoming pliant tool for furtherance of German ambitions.¹⁵¹ Examples of Muslims already fighting in the allied forces in France were used to prove that.¹⁵² Not only was it stated that the German intrigue cannot influence the allegiance and loyalty of 70 million of Muslims in India and the Muslim inhabitants of Egypt,¹⁵³ but that Muslims should look with detestation at the actions of Turkey, feel bitterly about the degeneration of their coreligionists,¹⁵⁴ or watch it with sorrow.¹⁵⁵

Thus, this constant denial of possible success of the “German intrigue” in the British newspapers supports the assumption that concerns about the influence of war on Muslim subjects were wide spread. Were the British not anxious about it, there would be no need to reiterate again and again that there was no Islamic threat. This denial appears as a means to calm down the anxieties of the British public, and to persuade Muslim subjects of the British

¹⁴⁶ “Turkey as a Combatant”, *The Times*, October 31, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴⁷ “Alternatives for Turkey”, *The Times*, September 30, 1914, p.9.

¹⁴⁸ “New Islam Lurks Behind the Smoke of Battle”, *The New York Times*, March 12, 1916; James, *Raj*, p.444.

¹⁴⁹ “Turkey as a Combatant”, *The Times*, October 31, 1914, p.9.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² “Turkey as a Combatant”, *The Times*, October 31, 1914, p.9; “British Moslems: Declaration of Unflinching loyalty”, *The Observer*, August 30, 1914, P. 5.

¹⁵³ “German Plot in Turkey”, *The Times*, November 1, 1914, p.1-2; “Warning To The Porte”, *The Times*, November 2, 1914, p.10.

¹⁵⁴ “German Plot in Turkey”, *The Times*, November 1, 1914, P.1-2.

¹⁵⁵ “The Choice of the Turks”, *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.

empire that there was a foreign influence on the Caliph, which made his position questionable.

Therefore, it may be concluded that concerns about the influence of war with Ottoman empire on British Muslim subjects were really wide-spread, as they were mentioned in memoirs, caused the attention of the British Ambassador at Constantinople to religious propaganda, and resulted in the arguing of the British press that they were unlikely to turn to reality.

2.1.2. The influence of concerns about Muslim opinion and the position of Russia on British policy towards the Ottoman empire.

The official policy of Great Britain, if the word policy can be applied to it as Allan Cunningham remarks,¹⁵⁶ in this period was directed on preserving Turkish neutrality. The importance of preserving it was repeatedly stressed in the correspondence between the Foreign Office and the British Embassy in Constantinople.¹⁵⁷ The policy of preserving Ottoman neutrality demonstrates well the place of the considerations about the Caliphate in the British political thinking at that time.

On the one hand, the probable war with Turkey seemed to be a delicate question and its effect on the British Muslim-subjects was considered. They caused Britain to ignore certain violations of Ottoman neutral status during this period. According to Lord Asquith, on August 17, 1914 when Churchill learned about “the purchase” of *Goeben* and *Breslau*, he proposed to send a torpedo flotilla to sink them if necessary.¹⁵⁸ But the Cabinet adopted the views of the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary of State for India, who argued that it would be damaging for Britain to appear as the aggressor against the Ottoman empire.¹⁵⁹ The British Prime Minister, Lord Asquith himself was “very much against any aggressive action vis-a-vis

¹⁵⁶ Allan Cunningham, “The Wrong Hourse? Anglo-Ottoman Relations before the First World War” in *Collected essays* / Ed. by Edward Ingram, (London: Frank Cass, 1993), Vol.2, p.242.

¹⁵⁷ *Belaya*, p.17, p. 33, p. 48.

¹⁵⁸ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.65-66.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Turkey, wh. [ich] w[oul]d. excite our Mussulmans in India & Egypt".¹⁶⁰ According to Philip Graves, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, also realized the risks of undertaking any action that would accelerate the Ottoman Empire's movement to war and produce a false impression on the Muslims of India as to British intentions in the war.¹⁶¹ The Viceroy's suggestion was to wait until the Turks declared the war, which would enable the British to preserve the Muslim opinion in calm.¹⁶² General Delamain, who was sent to the Persian Gulf to land there expeditionary force there in a case of war was instructed to avoid any preventive actions, that might offend Turkish or Arab opinion or provoke discontent of "Mohammedans" of India and Afghanistan.¹⁶³

These British attempts to avoid the role of aggressor were an effective tool in preventing the effect of hostile propaganda appealing to the religious solidarity of the British Muslim subjects. Fromkin remarks that Berlin was disappointed that continuous presence of *Goeben* and *Breslau* did not provoke Britain to declare war.¹⁶⁴ On November 20, 1914 when the Ottoman empire finally entered the war, a journalist of *the New York Times* observed that: "It was with a view to this result [to provoke a Holy war in the dominions of Great Britain, France and Russia] that every effort was made to make it appear that Turkey was the victim of aggression and was forced to take up arms in defense of the territory and the authority of the Sultan".¹⁶⁵ However, he continued, as the Allies "remained patiently irresponsible" to the provocation and the final entry of Turkey on the field of war was made by a wanton attack upon Russian ports, the German plan was seriously damaged, as "the Moslems outside of direct Turkish rule acknowledge no authority in the Sultan to call them to arms except in defense of his office".¹⁶⁶

But, on the other hand, these concerns should not be overestimated, because, as Lord Kinross remarks, the policy of preserving neutrality was by definition a negative policy, as

¹⁶⁰ Quoted from: Fromkin, *Peace*, p.74.

¹⁶¹ Graves, *Life*, p.177-178.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ James, *Raj*, p.445.

¹⁶⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, P.67.

¹⁶⁵ "Turkey and the Moslems", *The New York Times*, November 20, 1914, p. 8.

¹⁶⁶ "Turkey and the Moslems", *The New York Times*, November 20, 1914, p. 8.

Britain neither proposed the Ottoman empire alliance nor agreed to satisfy the Turkish demands regarding capitulations.¹⁶⁷ Allan Cunningham shares the view that active actions during August-October 1914 could help to win over the Ottoman's position, but the British policy in 1914 would not permitted Mallet to try to do this.¹⁶⁸ In 1914 as well as during the Balkan war, Britain could not afford herself the active support of the Ottoman empire in view of the alliance with France, and especially Russia, whose attitude was accorded more importance than the position of the Ottoman empire.¹⁶⁹

It is possible to state that the considerations about the impact of hostilities with the Ottoman empire on Muslim subjects did influence the British policy. First of all, Ottoman influence on British Muslim subjects was taken into consideration when decisions were made about the dispatching of the Indian troops to Egypt and the Persian Gulf. According to Jeremy Wilson, the dispatch of the Indian troops to Egypt was partly motivated by the concerns about the effects of propaganda of jihad in Egypt, where the pro-Turkish sentiments were spread.¹⁷⁰ In a Memorandum dated September 2, 1914 Arthur Hirtzel, a Secretary of the Political Department of the India Office, justified the policy of Britain in the Gulf, saying that to leave the region now would be disastrous, even though from a military point of view Turkish sabotage in the region should not be taken into consideration.¹⁷¹ In his reasoning the British presence there was necessary to prevent the political effect that the Turks and Germans hoped to have upon Muslim sentiment in India.¹⁷² Therefore, on the September 26, 1914 General Barrow was ordered by the Secretary of State for India to land the British troops at Shut-al-Arab in order to protect the interests of the Oil Company and to demonstrate British intentions to Turks and Arabs.¹⁷³ This landing was expected to impress the opinion of the Muslim population in the Gulf and to prevent the penetration of the Ottoman propaganda to

¹⁶⁷ Lord Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), p. 601, 605-606.

¹⁶⁸ Cunningham, "Wrong", pp.242-244.

¹⁶⁹ James, *Raj*, p.444.

¹⁷⁰ Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: the authorized biography of T.E.Lawrence* (London: Mandarin Paperbacks, Octopus Publishing Group, 1990), p.166.

¹⁷¹ Graves, *Life*, p.175.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Menteshashvili, *Irak*, p.83-84.

India.¹⁷⁴

Taking into considerations the probability of war, the British authorities in India, Egypt and the Sudan tried to prepare the public opinion for it. After the outbreak of war with Germany Sir Reginald Wingate, the Governor-General of Sudan and the Sirdar of Egyptian Army, held frequent meetings with senior Egyptian officers and with the principle sheiks and notables on his way back from Cairo to Khartum, and the public reception at Omdurman, where he explained the causes of war with Germany.¹⁷⁵ Though the speeches of Sir Reginald Wingate were dedicated to Germany, he and his staff in private conversations “were always careful to make it clear that Turkey was steadily drifting to war” under the German influence.¹⁷⁶

A different strategy was used regarding the Muslims of India. The Indian Muslims who supported the Ottoman empire during the Balkan wars were given a word in condemning the policy of Germany and involving Turkey in war. In a letter to the Grand Vizier the Muslims of Bengali are reported to have expressed allegiance to the British crown and disapproval of estrangement between England and Turkey.¹⁷⁷ Both *The Times* and *The Observer* quote abstracts from a resolution of “the British Moslems Association”, in which indignation of Muslims resident in England at the German Press threatening to incite the Islamic population of the British empire to rise in revolt is expressed. The resolution declares:

Our Holy Faith enjoy upon us to be loyal to whatever country under whose protection we reside. Recognizing the religious liberty, equity and justice accorded by England to the Mussulmams who dwell under its flag, we feel confident that our brethren throughout the British Empire will decline to listen to the wicked behests of Germany.¹⁷⁸

Words could not be found to express the anger felt at Germany’s daring to proclaim that British Islamic subjects would prove false to their religion and cowardly enough to attempt to take a mean and contemptible advantage of the country to whom they owed allegiance and

¹⁷⁴ James, *Raj*, p.445; Menteshashvili, *Irak*, p.83.

¹⁷⁵ “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

¹⁷⁶ “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

¹⁷⁷ “The Choice of the Turks”, *The Times*, August 28, 1914, p.9.

¹⁷⁸ “British Moslems: Declaration of Unflinching loyalty”, *The Observer*, August 30, 1914, p. 5.

which had accorded them civil and religious liberty and protection.¹⁷⁹

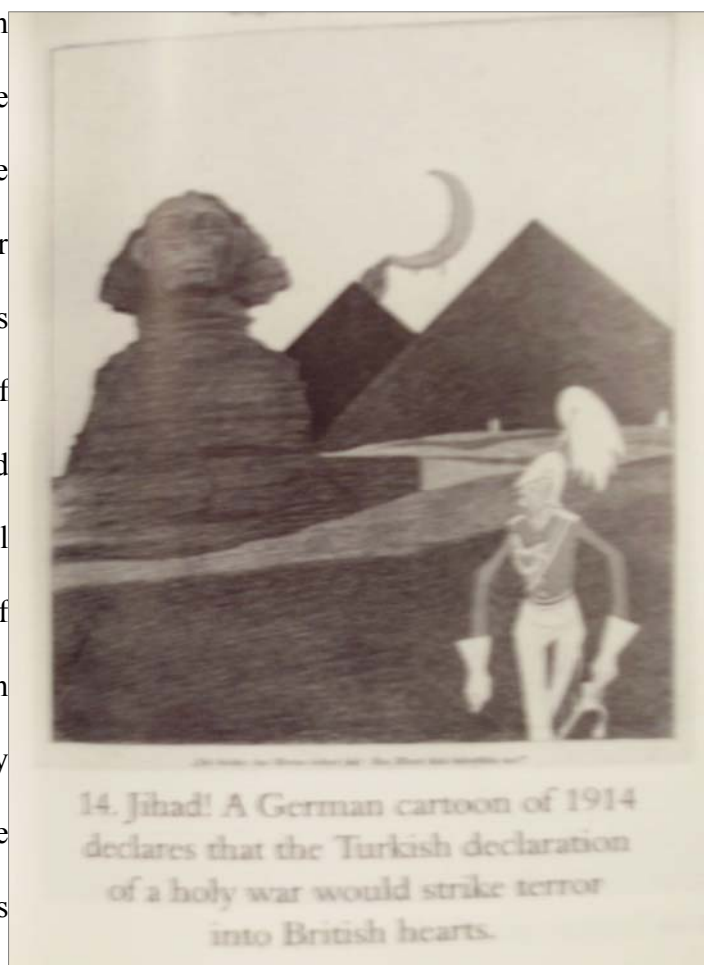
Thus, though during the period of the Ottoman neutrality the concerns about the religious feelings of British Muslim subjects definitely were considered less important than the position of Russia, they were not ignored. In August-October 1914, the impact of the Caliph on the Muslims of India, Egypt and the Sudan was perceived in Britain as a potential threat. Various sources in different ways reflect the awareness of this threat during the period of Turkey's neutrality. Memoirs, written afterwards when the threat no longer existed, state directly that Turkey's entry to war might provoke problems among the British Muslim subjects. Contemporary sources put more effort in condemning the threat and do not recognize it might cause some impact. Though Louis Mallet did not speak about the Islamic threat to the British empire, these concerns influenced his cables, making him pay attention to the hostile propaganda that appealed to religious solidarity of Muslims, and could be used to provoke problems in the territories under British control. Newspaper articles reveal how these issues were treated in public. By predicting the failure of the enemies plan to stir up the Muslim opinion and to cause their unrest, and discussing the reasons of this supposed failure newspapers simultaneously functioned as propaganda, arguing that in fact there was nothing to fear. In British politics, the Islamic threat was considered less important than the position of Russia as an ally. Thus, Great Britain was trying to preserve neutrality of the Ottoman Empire, and despite of the military preparations undertaken by both the British and the Ottoman sides, to refrain from taking preventive actions that could affect Muslim opinion.

¹⁷⁹ "Moslems And The Empire. An Offer of Service", *The Times*, September 25, 1914, p.9.

2.2. The British Refuting of the Sultan's call to jihad.

After the attack of the Turkish fleet on the Russian ports of Odessa and Theodosia, on October 30, 1914, diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the Ottoman empire were ruptured.¹⁸⁰ On November 7, 1914 the rupture of diplomatic relations was followed by the Ottoman declaration of war on the Allies and the proclamation of jihad on behalf of the Sultan-Caliph on November 11, 1914. This chronology shows why some measures to counteract the Sultan-Caliph's influence appeared before the official proclamation of war.

In regard to the present study and the British concerns about the effect of hostility with the Ottoman empire on its subjects, it should be mentioned that both the Ottoman declaration of war and proclamation of jihad appealed to the religious feelings of the Muslims. In the sultan's declaration of war it was proclaimed that "Russia, England, and France never for a moment ceased harbouring ill-will against our Caliphate, to which millions of Mussulmans, suffering under the tyranny of foreign dominations, are religiously and whole-heartedly devoted".¹⁸¹ The argument was continued that the present war was called to put an end to the attacks made against the Caliphate, and therefore later in the



declaration the war was referred to as sacred and supreme.¹⁸² In the address to the army the sultan emphasized that "the very existence of our empire, and of 300,000,000 Moslems whom I have summoned by sacred Fetva to a supreme struggle, depend on your victory".¹⁸³

The Sultan's call to jihad was supported by the fetva issued by sheikh-ul-Islam Essad

¹⁸⁰ "The Rupture With Turkey", *The Times*, December 11, 1914, P.7.

¹⁸¹ "Proclamation by Sultan Mehmed V, November 1914" in *Source Records of the Great War*, Vol. III; available from http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/mehmed_fetva.htm, accessed May 25, 2007.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

Effendi. The fetva was structured according to the traditional form, as answers to the questions about the proper understanding of the prescriptions of Islam regarding certain norms of behavior. Thus, in a very rhetorical form the fetva proclaimed that Muslims of all countries, especially subjects of Russia, France, and England, the countries which “aimed at annihilating Islam”, must participate in the Holy war proclaimed by the Caliph “in conformity with the sacred words of the Koran”.¹⁸⁴ And the refusal to join it is qualified as sin.¹⁸⁵ Though both the Sultan’s proclamation and the fetva emphasized the sacred character of the struggle in defense of Islam, it was the second one that addressed Muslims living in the enemy countries, and could provoke the effect the British feared of during the period of the Ottoman neutrality.

Moreover, it is known that such effect was also hoped for by the Germans. On August 15, 1914 the German foreign ministry cabled the ambassador in Constantinople, that “His Majesty the Sultan must summon Mussulmans in Asia, India, Egypt, and Africa to holy war for Caliphate”.¹⁸⁶ Fromkin maintains that in German Foreign Ministry it was hoped that Sultan’s proclamation would awaken the fanaticism of Islam and lead to large-scale revolution in India.¹⁸⁷ *The Times* quoted the report of “the German Press” that “Sheikh-ul-Islam has published a Fetwa according to which every Musulman must, as a religious duty, fight to the utter most against England, Russia, and France the oppressors of Islam. This Fetwa will be distributed throughout the entire Mahomedan world, and is now proclaimed to the pilgrims in Mecca. This means the Holy War for the whole Islamic world”.¹⁸⁸ The Wilhelmstrasse ordered copies of the proclamation to be forwarded to Berlin for translation and further leaflet dissemination among Muslim troops in enemy armies,¹⁸⁹ and according to George Antonius a spate of subsidiary literature actually did follow the formal utterances and

¹⁸⁴ “Issuance of Ottoman Fetva by Essad Effendi, Sheik-Ul-Islam, November 1914” in *Source Records of the Great War*, Vol. III; available from http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/ottoman_fetva.htm, accessed May 25, 2007.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Quoted from: Cunningham, “Wrong”, p.242.

¹⁸⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.109.

¹⁸⁸ “The Kaiser on the ‘Holy War’”, *The Times*, November 19, 1914, p.8.

¹⁸⁹ Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p.117; Fromkin, *Peace*, (New York, 1990), p.109.

was “smuggled into Egypt, the Sudan, India, Persia, and Afghanistan and beyond”.¹⁹⁰

Thus, it would be logical to suppose that the British empire which had considerable Muslim population, would undertake some measures to counteract this call to jihad, especially, as there had been certain anxiety about the Muslim reaction to the possible hostilities with the Ottoman empire during the previous months. Some scholars, like George Antonius, Janet Wallach, and Basil Liddell Hart suggest that the correspondence with the sharif of Mecca who thus did not support the Sultan’s call with his authority and the Arab revolt of 1916 were the key-factors that helped the British to counteract the Sultan’s call to jihad.¹⁹¹ But this interpretation seems to be not sufficient. It seems doubtful that secret correspondence with the sharif of Mecca would be enough to counteract active German-Ottoman propaganda. The suggestion that the main step in refuting Sultan’s call to jihad was the Arab revolt, which occurred 2 years after the Sultan’s call seems not very probable either. Should not something have been done earlier? Especially, as we know, that the call to jihad did not come as surprise for the British but was considered even before the Ottoman entry into the war. Therefore, in this part of the chapter I will consider what was done to refute the Sultan’s call to jihad during the months that immediately followed its proclamation. The discussion will be based mainly on *The Times*, which devoted much attention to how the threat of Muslim response to the sultan’s call was dealt with in the British empire (nearly 50 articles devoted to that issue appeared during only October-December 1914). Most of these articles reproduced some declarations or telegrams received by the British government from the Muslim leaders, therefore their publication in *The Times* should be regarded as a part of the policy of the state in this question.

Similar lines of argumentation can be observed in all those diverse documents as international declarations, speeches of prominent statesmen, addresses of Muslim authorities, and news-reports *The Times* provides us with. Therefore it seems more proper to approach them according to their arguments, and not the authority that issued them. It is possible to

¹⁹⁰ Antonius, *Arab*, p.141.

¹⁹¹ Wallach, *Desert*, p.150; Liddell Hart, *Lawrence*, p. 43-44; Antonius, *Arab*, pp.143-145.

distinguish two main lines of argumentation: 1) that it was not a religious war for Great Britain, and that she was not an enemy of Islam; and 2) that it was not a religious war for the Ottoman empire either.

2.2.1. Arguing that Great Britain is not an enemy of Islam.

As one of the main points of the Caliph's call to jihad was that Allies aimed at annihilating Islam, and the Muslims had to defend it, one of the main strategies of refuting the Caliph's call to arms was arguing that the Allied forces and Great Britain in particular were not the enemies of Islam.

Sometimes it was stated directly that the present war has nothing to do with religion, and these were not Muslims with whom the British were at war with. For instance, Lloyd George stated that there was nothing worse than to decide religious issues by the means of war and that British fought not with the enemies of Christianity, not with the Muslims, but with the Turks.¹⁹² In the same manner Wingate, the Governor-General of the Sudan emphasized that Great Britain had "no quarrel with the Mahomedan world, with Islam, or with its spiritual leaders. Her anger is directed solely against the Germans and their Turkish allies".¹⁹³ In the appeal to the Indian Muslims Aga Khan stated that no Islamic interest was threatened in this war and Islam was not in peril.¹⁹⁴ In an early November article of *The Times* it was argued: "There has been no menace to Islam. The best proof is that thousands of Mahomedans are gallantly fighting for the King-Emperor, for the Tsar, and for France, while there is not a single Moslem sword in all the ranks of Germany."¹⁹⁵ According to *The Times* summary of an article by some prominent Muslim of the Sudan, "any man can see that this is not a war in which the Christians are fighting against Moslems from religious motives, in an endeavour to secure the ascendancy of one faith over the other. The Christians have divided into two parties and the reason for their deadly strife has nothing to do with religion".¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Devid Lloyd George, *Rech, proiznesennye za vremya voyny. Cherez uzhasy k pobede* (Petrograd: Knigoizdatelstvo M.V.Popova, 1916), p.69.

¹⁹³ "The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty", *The Time*, December 29, 1914, p.8.

¹⁹⁴ "The Aga Khan's Message to Moslems", *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.8.

¹⁹⁵ "The Betrayal of Islam", *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

¹⁹⁶ "The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty", *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.8.

But whether the religious character of the war was denied explicitly or not, the “evidences” of the British friendly attitude to Islam were provided to support the statement. The strongest and the most emphasized argument in favor of the British friendly attitude to Islam and the Muslims is the proclamation of immunity of the Holy places of Islam. On November 6, 1914 the Government of India issued a declaration that maintained:

his Excellency, the Viceroy is authorized by his Majesty Government to make the following public announcement in regard to the Holy Places of Arabia, including the Holy Shrines of Mesopotamia, and the Port of Jeddah, in order that there may be no misunderstanding on the part of his Majesty's most loyal Moslem subjects as to the attitude of his Majesty's Government in this war in which no question of religious character is involved. These holy places and Jeddah will be immune from attack or molestation by the British Naval and Military forces so long as there is no interference with pilgrims from India to the holy places and shrines in question.¹⁹⁷

Further it was stated, that the governments of France and Russia have given similar assurances.¹⁹⁸ Thus, this declaration is also referred to as the joint declaration of the Allied powers in regard to the immunity of the Holy places of Islam.

But a few days prior to this international declaration, on 2-3 November 1914 the Government of India issued general assurances to the Gulf sheikhs, that there would be no British or Indian molestation of Mecca, Medina, the port of Jeddah and Holy Places of Mesopotamia, if there is no interference with pilgrimages from India.¹⁹⁹ The Governor - General of Sudan also proclaimed that:

The world policy of Great Britain will remain unchanged. She will ever maintain, and enforce on others the maintenance of the sanctity and inviolability of the Holy Places. As previously, she will shelter and protect all Mahomedans and mosques within her borders in the same way as for over one hundred and fifty years she had guarded the interests of the sixty-two millions

¹⁹⁷ This is the official text of the Declaration reproduced in *The Times*: “The Holy Places. Declaration by the Indian Government”, *The Times*, November 6, 1914, p.7.

¹⁹⁸ “The Holy Places. Declaration by the Indian Government”, *The Times*, November 6, 1914, p.7.

¹⁹⁹ Marian Kent, “Asiatic Turkey, 1914-1916”, *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). - P. 439, available from: <http://books.google.com/books?id=VJ08AAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Edward+grey&hl=ru#PPA436,M1>, accessed 08.05.2009; “Indian Moslem Loyalty. Not a Religious War”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.7.

of Mahomedans of our Indian empire.[...] She will continue to improve in every possible manner the facilities for the Pilgrimage and for the practice of the Mahomedan religion.²⁰⁰

In the Aga Khan message and one of *The Times* articles the guaranties of immunity of the Muslim Holy places issued by the Entente powers are opposed to German plans to control them.²⁰¹

The argument about inviolability of the Holy places of Islam is often repeated in the sources, which suggests it should have been ascribed a special meaning. I suppose that it was considered as a means with the help of which the appreciation and loyalty of the Muslims could be won during the war with the Ottoman empire. This can be suggested on the bases of reports about the reaction of Muslims to the declaration.

Philip Graves observed, that after learning from Sir Percy Cox about the declaration the Wahhabi leader Ibn Saud stated his pro-British position.²⁰² The Russian council in Calcutta reported to his government that the propaganda of jihad failed in India due to the success of “our common declaration”.²⁰³ Lord Curzon in a speech before the Parliament acknowledged, that due to the declaration of inviolability of the Holy places of Islam “the world of Islam knows we are not on war with Islam” and the British could be sure in loyalty of Indian Muslims.²⁰⁴ *The Times* correspondent also observed that assurances as to inviolability of the Holy places of Islam were met with gratitude in India.²⁰⁵ *The Times* also reported that “All India Moslem League” expressed its deep gratitude to the British Government for the assurances given to Muslim subjects as to the immunity of the Holy places of Islam in Arabia from attacks or molestation and for obtaining such assurances from allies. The appreciation was also expressed by religious organizations such as Khuddam-i-Kaaba Society, which in 1913 was collecting money in support of the Sultan.²⁰⁶ The declaration is also reported to be

²⁰⁰ “The Sudan and the War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

²⁰¹ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7; “The Aga Khan's Message to Moslems”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.8.

²⁰² Graves, *The Life*, p.187.

²⁰³ *Sin'aya kniga*, p.34.

²⁰⁴ “Parliament”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, pp.12-13.

²⁰⁵ “Indian Moslem Loyalty”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.7.

²⁰⁶ “Indian Moslem Loyalty”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.7.

met with gratitude by the Indian Muslims soldiers in France.²⁰⁷

Another argument emphasized that it was not Great Britain that started the war, therefore, there was no threat to Islam. For example, in a speech before the parliament King George V stated: “My Mussulman subjects know well that a rupture with Turkey has been forced upon Me against My own will”.²⁰⁸ He is reported to have paid special attention to “the conduct by which Turkey has dug her grave with her own hands and numbered herself amongst our [British] enemies”,²⁰⁹ and pointed out to the British efforts to preserve friendly neutrality “in spite of continuous and aggravated provocations”.²¹⁰ Sir Percy Cox issued a proclamation to the Arabs in Basra in which emphasized that present war with Turkey was a forced step, caused by hostility of the latter, used for German purposes.²¹¹ The Governor-General of the Sudan Sir Reginald Wingate before the assembly of ulema about a state of war between Great Britain and the Ottoman empire emphasized that this war had not been sought by Great Britain and that the war had “frustrated the friendly policy Great Britain has ever pursued towards the Turkish empire”.²¹² He maintained that “Great Britain has not entered into this war heedlessly or with the object of gaining territory or advantage at the expense of a Mahomedan State. [...] She has entered this war solely because she has been forced to defend her essential interests.” Nawab of Rampur also pointed out that Great Britain did not desire the war.²¹³ In their declarations of loyalty, the prominent Muslim leaders, such as Nawab of Tonk and Aga-Khan expressed regret that the Ottoman empire did not appreciate the British support and joined the enemies of Great Britain.²¹⁴

The special relations between the British empire and Islam was also an argument used to support the idea that war was not about religious issues. Thus, Lloyd George in his speech on Turkey’s entry to the war argued that there were more Muslims in the British empire, than

²⁰⁷ “The Indian Army In France”, *The Times*, November 16, 1914, p.7.

²⁰⁸ “Parliament: The King and the War”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, pp.12-13.

²⁰⁹ “British Patience Abused”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.9.

²¹⁰ “British Patience Abused”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.9.

²¹¹ Graves, *The Life*, pp.179-180.

²¹² “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914. p.7.

²¹³ “Indian Moslem Loyalty. Not a Religious War”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.7; “Indian Moslem Loyalty”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.7.

²¹⁴ “The Aga Khan’s Message to Moslems”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.8; “Indian Moslem Loyalty”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.7.

in the Ottoman, therefore it is Britain not Turkey that should be referred to as the greatest Muslim power.²¹⁵ In a telegram to the Governor-General El Sayed Ali El Morgani stated: “The justice of England embraces ninety millions of our Mohamedan brethren all over the world; England is the true and close friend of all Mahomedans”.²¹⁶ Begum of Bhopal in her appeal for the Muslims of India reminded them of the many examples when Great Britain showed herself as a true friend of Muslims and of the Ottoman empire.²¹⁷ The more detailed accounts of the cares and friendly attitude of the British to their Muslim subjects are reported to be used in Egypt and Sudan. Wingate reminded the ulema of the Sudan that the British had never interfered with any man in the exercise of his religion. He supported his statement with examples of special care about Islam by the British: “We have subsidised and assisted the men of religion. We have built, and given assistance for the building of new mosques all over the country. The Kadis and others have received a free and thorough education in the Koran and in the tenets of the Mahomedan religion”.²¹⁸ The argument about the British care for its Muslim subjects was also often employed by Muslim leaders, who should have been considered more likely to influence their coreligionists and refute the Caliph’s appeal. The declarations of loyalty by the grand mufti and the ulema of the Sudan repeated the arguments of Reginald Wingate, that Great Britain granted them education, order and justice and made the pilgrimage to Mecca more accessible.²¹⁹

Thus, as the Ottoman Sultan declared that Britain and her allies were waging a war against Islam, one of the strategies to counteract his appeal was denying that the war with the Ottoman empire had something to do with religion. To support this statement the British officials and the press stressed that this was not Britain that started the war (so there was no need to defend Islam from the British), and that Britain enjoyed a special position in the world of Islam: it had more Muslims than the Ottoman empire, and did care of their religious

²¹⁵ Lloyd George, *Rechi*, p.69.

²¹⁶ “Sudanese Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 31, 1914, p.10.

²¹⁷ “Indian Moslem Loyalty. Not a Religious War”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.7; “Indian Moslem Loyalty”, *The Times*, November 12, 1914, p.7.

²¹⁸ “The Sudan and the War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

²¹⁹ “Sudanese Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 31, 1914, p.10.

needs. The British declaration of immunity of the Holy places of Islam was emphasized as the best proof that Britain remains a friend of Islam inspite of the present war.

2.2.2. Not a religious war for the Ottoman empire.

The second dominant line of argumentation aimed to prove that the call to jihad originated not from Caliph, but from the powers that tried to manipulate him. In such a case the declaration of jihad could not be regarded as legitimate and therefore it did not put any obligations on the Muslims.

As it was discussed earlier, already in the period of the Ottoman neutrality the newspapers and the British officials (such as Wingate) spoke of the German attempts to involve the Ottoman empire into the war. Therefore, the German intrigue in driving the Ottomans to war was re-emphasized when Turkey did enter the war. As in the period of the Ottoman neutrality the German attempt to manipulate Islam was declared to be a failure and miscalculation. "Islam has risen and gone forth to battle in many causes, but its devotees in other lands will never march beneath the banners of a German Kaiser".²²⁰ It is argued that only in Teutonic mind could appear the idea that Islam will follow such a holy war.²²¹ How can be there a Holy war in alliance with infidels, questioned Lord Cromer.²²² *The Times* journalist listed the advantages which gave the Ottomans a predominant place in Islam: the Holy Relics; the position of the guardians of the Holy Cities of Islam; accepted claims to be Chaliphate. He suggested, that the Ottoman empire might have enjoyed her prominence in Islam without any serious question had she kept clear of intrigues with Germany.²²³ The Turkish leaders were criticized for having sold the interest of Islam for the German gold and a couple of cruisers.²²⁴ It was stressed that "this is the war for German interests and prestige".²²⁵

It is interesting to observe, that the argument about the German intrigue was used both

²²⁰ "The Betrayal of Islam", *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

²²¹ "The Battle of Lodz", *The Times*, December 3, 1914, p.9.

²²² "German Methods In The East", *The Times*, December 15, 1914, p.9.

²²³ "The Betrayal of Islam", *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

²²⁴ "The Betrayal of Islam", *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

²²⁵ "The Sudan And The War.Unanimous Loyalty", *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

by those, who did not question the authority of the Sultan-Caliph, and by those who attempted to undermine his prestige. Thus, such Muslim leaders as Aga-Khan and sharif El Morgani maintained, that declaring the war was not the true will of the Sultan, who was against the war, that the German officers and other non-Muslims forced their will on him.²²⁶ This shows that they still regarded him as the authority, though being manipulated. In 1915 in *The Times* it was reported that some sections of the Ottoman society, the officers and ulema also considered that the war was being waged not for the interests of Islam.²²⁷ In one of the articles it was stated that “the Sultan does not want to go to war, because he perceives the ruin which must overtake his House in consequence”.²²⁸ In the same article it was declared that the Sultan was aware of how slender and disputable were his claims to the Caliphate: he was not of the blood of the tribe of the Koreish, from which the Prophet sprang, after the loss of Constantinople and the Holy cities there would be no basis for his claims to Caliphate.²²⁹

Compared to the period of the Ottoman neutrality a new argument appeared after Turkey's entry to the war that the Committee of Union and Progress can't speak for Islam, as it consists of atheists, Jews (crypto-Jews or Jews from Salonika), and Gypsies and intriguers of low background.²³⁰ It is argued, that “had true Moslems been at the helm in Constantinople” there would be no plunging of Turkey into an adventure under the leadership of Germans, crypto-Jews and a few “harebrained young Moslems”,²³¹ “the Committee of Union and Progress, most of whom are crypto-Jews or atheists”.²³² Though it might be considered as a rhetorical statement here, it should be remembered that these ideas had the history of their own. While identification of CUP with atheists should have originated with

²²⁶ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.; “Loyalty of British Moslem Subjects. The Aga Khan's Message to Moslems”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.8; “Sudanese Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 31, 1914, p.10.

²²⁷ “Turkish Mistrust Of Bulgaria”, *The Times*, August 20, 1915, p.5; “Turkey Divided against Herself. Sheikh-ul-Islam's Resignation”, *The Times*, September 10, 1915, p.8; “Turkey Losing Faith in her Allies”, *The Times*, September 14, 1915, p. 7.

²²⁸ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7

²²⁹ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7

²³⁰ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7; “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914. - P.7; “The Rupture with Turkey”, *The Times*, December 11, 1914. - P.7; “The Armenian Massacres. Exterminating a Race”, *The Times*, October 8, 1915, p.5; “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

²³¹ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

²³² “The Sudan And The War. Unanimous Loyalty”, *The Times*, December 29, 1914, p.7.

their policy of secularization, identification of the CUP with the Jews also had a long history, and was reported first by the British Ambassador in Constantinople at the time of the Young Turk revolt.²³³

The circumstances of accession of Mehmed V were also being questioned, but not very frequently. Thus it was stated that many of his subjects doubt the validity of fetva of sheikh-ul-Islam, and “in their hearts” still consider Abdul Hamid to be their Caliph.²³⁴ It was argued, that the present Caliph had never enjoyed the authority of Abdul Hamid, and had never had such personal independence as Abdul Hamid.²³⁵ His role as Caliph was weakened by the parliamentary government.²³⁶

In all these points the basis for denying religious character of the war for the side of the Caliph, was the idea that the power of the Caliph should be supreme and independent. Therefore, by pointing to the fact that the Sultan is depended upon the German influence, the Young Turks, or the parliament, the legitimacy of his call to jihad was being put into question.

Therefore, to the Ottoman call to jihad the British opposed a well-developed system of argumentation, which denied the religious character of the war both for the British empire and for the Caliph.

2.3. The press on the Muslim opinion in 1915.

The discussion of Muslim opinion was continued in the press in 1915, though the number of articles devoted to this issue throughout the whole year of 1915 equals to the number of articles which appeared during the first two month after the Ottoman entry to the war (November-December 1914). This shows that the threat was felt mainly in 1914, and that these concerns were not that strong in 1915. But, again, the very fact that the press continued to devote attention to Muslim opinion and enemy attempts to manipulate it is significant. It demonstrates these views on Muslim subjects of the British empire were widespread and

²³³ Kedourie, *Arab Political Memoirs and Other studies* (London., 1974), pp.243-248; Fromkin, *A Peace*, pp.41-43.

²³⁴ “The Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, November 3, 1914, p.7.

²³⁵ “The Future of the Khalifate”, *The Times*, April 24, 1915, p.9.

²³⁶ “Indian Moslem Loyalty. Not a Religious War ”, *The Times*, November 4, 1914, p.7.

depended not only on the enemy propaganda. The articles in general continued the discourse of 1914.

The main focus of the newspaper articles remained on loyalty. During 1915 the proclamations of the Sultan of Zanzibar to the Muslims of East Africa were published twice in *The Times*.²³⁷ As the declarations of loyalty in 1914, these proclamations of the Sultan argued that this war was not religious, that the Ottoman government sacrificed the country for the German ambitions, and that even the Turks did not want to fight with the British, whom they regarded as their friends. Therefore, the Sultan of Zanzibar called the Muslims to remain loyal to the British protectorate, which respected and protected their religion.²³⁸ The declarations of the chiefs of Nigeria passed to the Governor-General of that colony were similar in content.²³⁹ The appeals to Indian Muslims in 1915 called them not only to be loyal, but also to refrain from making political demands and holding the session of the Muslim League, while the empire was in danger.²⁴⁰

Some of the articles observed the positive impact on Muslim opinion of the declaration on the inviolability of the places of Islam,²⁴¹ and appeals of such leaders as the Aga Khan and the nizam of Hyderabad.²⁴² Especially praised was the loyalty of Indian Muslims, which was affected neither by the entry of Turkey into the war and by the appeals of pan-Islamists, nor by the increase of prices due to the war and dispatching of the majority of military forces from India.²⁴³ In one of the articles the friendly attitude of the Khan of Afghanistan is observed within the context of loyalty of Indian subjects.²⁴⁴ The decision of the government and the ulema of Egypt to limit the sacrifice on holiday Kurban Bairam to one sheep in the

²³⁷ "A Loyal Sultan's Message", *The Times*, February 24, 1915, p.5; "Sultan of Zanzibar's Loyalty", *The Times*, June 2, 1915, p.5.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ "Homage of British Moslems to King George", *The Times*, May 5, 1915, p.9.

²⁴⁰ "Political controversy in India", *The Times*, December 7, 1915, p.8; "The Aga Khan on Indian Extremism", *the Times*, December 8, 1915, p.9; "Moslem Loyalty", *The Times*, October 7, 1915, p.7.

²⁴¹ "British Care for the Holy Places", *The Times*, January 23, 1915, p.7; "Loyal India", *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.18

²⁴² "Loyal India", *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.18; "New order in Egypt", *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.19.

²⁴³ "Loyal India. Troops in Five War Areas", *The Times*, January 14, 1915, p.7; "Loyal India", *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.18

²⁴⁴ "Loyal India", *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.18.

view of shortage of food supplies was also appreciated as a sign of their loyalty.²⁴⁵

If compared to the articles of 1914 it may be observed that in 1915 the possible negative impact of some events on Muslim opinion was articulated. Lord Crewe stated in Parliament, that at the beginning of the war Islam as a whole could turned against the British.²⁴⁶ It was also discussed in Parliament that the Muslims of India might find it difficult to believe in crimes committed by the Ottomans on Armenians, so they should be provided irrefutable proof.²⁴⁷ It was observed that the annexation of Egypt in December 1914 could become a weapon in the hands of hostile propaganda, and hurt the feelings of Indian Muslims, but the declaration of protectorate helped to avoid these.²⁴⁸ It was discussed whether the capture of Baghdad would not offend the religious feelings of Muslims was.²⁴⁹

In 1915, as well as in the previous period, German attempts to manipulate Islam that failed were discussed in *The Times*. The agitation of German and Turkish agents in Persia and Afghanistan which appealed to the most fanatical elements of society was opposed to the position of the British, “who never pretended that they had accepted Islam”, and appealed to the rational element of the Muslim world.²⁵⁰ It was observed that the Germans fabricated and spread at home and in the neutral countries the story about the large-scale uprising of the Muslims, which had never occurred.²⁵¹ In 1915 *The Times* made fun of a German book about the defeat of England and Russia by the forces of Islam,²⁵² the German expectations of riots in Egypt, India and the French Morocco,²⁵³ and the announcements in Persia and the Ottoman empire that the German Emperor adopted Islam and fight for it with Britain.²⁵⁴

Therefore, the concerns about the influence of the war with the Ottoman empire on the loyalty of British Muslim subjects were widespread in 1914-1915. In the period of the

²⁴⁵ “The Sacrificial Sheep In War Time”, *The Times*, October 21, 1915, p.9.

²⁴⁶ “House Of Lords”, *The Times*, July 21, 1916, p.10.

²⁴⁷ “Parliament. House of Lords. The Armenian Massacres”, *The Times*, October 21, 1915, p.14.

²⁴⁸ “New order in Egypt”, *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.19.

²⁴⁹ “Story Of A Campaign. Fighting the Turks in Mesopotamia”, *The Times*, July 23, 1915, p.4.

²⁵⁰ “Parliament. House of Lords”, *The Times*, December 8, 1915, p.14.

²⁵¹ “Loyal India”, *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.18

²⁵² “In Germany To-Day”, *The Times*, May 31, 1915, p.5.

²⁵³ “Exploiting the Crescent. Pan-Islamic Aims”, *The Times*, April 27, 1915, p.7; “German Intrigues in Morocco”, *The Times*, December 28, 1915, p.6; “New order in Egypt”, *The Times*, May 22, 1915, p.19.

²⁵⁴ “Herr Von Kuhlmann At The Hague”, *The Times*, March 20, 1915, p.9; “German Intrigues in Persia”, *The Times*, June 2, 1915, p.5.

Ottoman neutrality they contributed to British policy of preserving the Ottoman neutral status, the decision of dispatching Indian troops to Egypt and the Persian Gulf. The public opinion in India and Egypt was informed about German attempts to involve the Ottoman empire into the war. When the Ottoman empire finally entered the war and the Sultan called the Muslims to jihad, the British refuted his call by a well-developed system of argumentation, which denied the religious character of the war both for the British empire and for the Caliph. The special importance was accorded to the declaration of the inviolability of the Holy places by the Allies, and the appeals by the Muslim leaders to their coreligionists. Discussion of German attempts to manipulate Islam and the reasons for British Muslims to remain loyal continued in press throughout 1915. Though the arguments were mostly the same, the articles in 1915 recognized the possibilities of Muslim discontent, which suggests that the threat was already less urgent. Besides, the number of articles per month significantly decreased, which also confirms the conclusion that the threat was already less urgent.

Chapter 3: The Idea of Establishing a Caliphate in Arabia in British politics (1914-1916).

In the previous chapter the influence of the Islamic question on British politics in 1914-1915 was considered. It dealt with British concerns provoked by the war with the Ottoman empire like German-controlled caliph, Muslim loyalty and jihad. In this chapter I would like to show that the idea about the special connection between the Caliph and British Muslim subjects resulted not only in concerns about his influence, but also in British attempts to manipulate it.

The idea of the Arab Caliphate was discussed in Egypt as early as in end of the 19th century,²⁵⁵ but it did not enjoy the influence on British politics until the Great War. Thus before moving to the discussion of how it happened, it is necessary to point out what made such development possible. The Russian claims to Constantinople and Lord Kitchener's influence on the British foreign policy during the Great War can be distinguished as the principal factors which contributed to the fact that scheme of establishing the Arab Caliphate was considered in British politics during the war.

The Russian claims to Constantinople as the former capital of the Byzantine empire, the great Orthodox state, were well-known long before the war. According to Fromkin, Sir Edward Grey, one of the initiators of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, promised Constantinople and the Straits to Russia already in 1908.²⁵⁶ Thus, during the war there were practically no doubts that after its end the city would belong to Russia. Practically immediately after the Ottoman empire had entered the war king George V told Alexander von Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador to London in 1903–16, that it was clear that the Straits and Constantinople should be Russian.²⁵⁷ And the British Ambassador to Russia, George Buchanan, was instructed to inform the Russian government that in case of victory

²⁵⁵ For more details: Tufan Buzpinar "Opposition", pp. 59-89, available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693438>.

²⁵⁶ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.138.

²⁵⁷ Alan J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.540.

the fate of Constantinople would be settled according to Russian needs.²⁵⁸ This contributed to the formulation of British war aims in the East, and provoked the British attempts to reconcile the promises to Russia with the concerns about Muslim attachment to the Ottoman empire.

Lord Kitchener, a well known military leader, spent most of his career in Muslim regions of the empire: the Sudan (where in 1898 he became known as ‘Lord Kitchener of Khartoum’), India (Commander-in-Chief in 1902–1909, and in 1910-1911 was considered for a position of the Viceroy) and Egypt (Consul-General in 1911-1914). Due to it he was on the one hand a popular figure, a hero of the empire, and on the other hand he had no party associations. These two qualities made him an ideal candidate for the Head of the War Office.²⁵⁹

As the Head of the War Office he exercised great influence on British policy towards the Middle East. Even Lloyd George, who often criticized Lord Kitchener in his memoirs, acknowledged that for the first few months of the War his influence was paramount.²⁶⁰ The second volume of Lloyd George’s *War Memoirs* even starts with a famous war poster that pictures Lord Kitchener. In this very volume after dealing with the death of Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George characterizes him as rather controversial, but no doubts great and influential figure.²⁶¹ Except being an influential figure, due to his career Kitchener was regarded as an expert on the Middle East. According to Fromkin and Cassar, Kitchener’s views became decisive for the Foreign Office, they report that on one of the cables sent from Cairo to the Foreign Office Grey minuted: “Does Lord Kitchener agree? Of so, I approve”.²⁶² They regard this note to be so characteristic for the situation and that it could be penned each time a decision on the Middle East was to be taken. He contributed to the development of Arab caliphate scheme in British politics in various ways.

Kitchener planned to return back to Cairo after the war, therefore relied on his staff

²⁵⁸ George Buchanan, *Memoirs of a diplomat* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1991), p. 146.

²⁵⁹ David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, Vol.I, (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1938) p.130.

²⁶⁰ David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, Vol.I, (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1938) p.130.

²⁶¹ David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, Vol.II, (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1933) pp.750-760, with rather a negative characteristics on p.752 and p.759.

²⁶² Cassar, *Kitchener's*, p.44; Fromkin, *Peace*, p.86.

there, which thus gained more influence on the British Middle Eastern affairs than it ever had. It may be argued, that Cairo staff gained influence on Foreign office as British embassy in Constantinople disappeared, but as we shall see in the subsequent parts of this chapter, Storrs and Clayton sent their reports to Lord Kitchener, not the Foreign Office. And it was he, not Sir Edward Grey, who suggested them to hint the grand sharif at the opportunity of Arab caliphate.

Lord Kitchener returned to London from Cairo, where there were talks about the Arab Caliphate already during the reign of Abdul Hamid II.²⁶³ As Steven Cox points out, a period when Kitchener held a post of Consul-Governor in Egypt “coincided with a renewed and more urgent interest in the matter of the Caliphate among imperial powers and Muslims alike”.²⁶⁴

And finally, having spent so many years in the East defending the interests of British empire, Kitchener still regard Russia as the principal enemy and rival of Britain, and considered the present alliance to be temporal.

²⁶³ Buzpinar “Opposition”, pp. 59-89.

²⁶⁴ Cox, *Idea*, p.79.

3.1. Promoting the sharif of Mecca as an ideal candidate for the Arab Caliphate.

In this part of the chapter it will be considered how the idea of the Arab Caliphate entered British politics during the Great War. It will be devoted to the period of September-December 1914 when certain steps in establishing communication with the sharif of Mecca were already undertaken, but the question was not yet brought to the attention of the departments of the British government involved in its policy towards the Muslim population.

Already in September 1914, when it became clear that the Ottoman empire was inclined to join the Central Powers, Ronald Storrs submitted a short note to Lord Kitchener through Gilbert Clayton with a suggestion that timely consultations with Mecca might secure the neutrality of Hejaz in the case of German aggression, because the only kind of vessel that could cross Sinai Peninsula were the camels.²⁶⁵ He argued that as long as the negotiations with the sharif would last, it is possible to be sure that the Arabs of Hejaz and their territory will not be used by the Turks.²⁶⁶

However, Clayton forwarded Storrs's note with a memorandum of his own which urged Kitchener to enter into conversation with the ruler of Mecca for other purposes. One of them was that the sharif might assist Britain in the question of pilgrimage. Clayton argued, that Muslims in India and Egypt might forgive Britain waging the war against the Ottoman empire, but he doubted whether they would forgive the disruption of pilgrimage. Thus, it was important that the sharif of Mecca could safeguard the right of British Muslims to visit the Holy places despite of the war.²⁶⁷ Approximately at this time Turkish propaganda reported that Britain prohibited the pilgrimage,²⁶⁸ which shows that disruption of pilgrimage was considered to be an important issue for Muslim opinion. But were this Clayton's main argument, his memorandum could have been considered in the previous chapter together with other measures undertaken to counteract the influence of the Ottoman sultan on the British

²⁶⁵ Storrs, *Orientations*, p.148.

²⁶⁶ Storrs, *Orientations*, p.154.

²⁶⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 101; Cassar, *Kitchener's*, p.55.

²⁶⁸ *Belaya*, p.138.

Muslims. The reason for discussing it separately from means to counteract the sultan's influence, is that Clayton's memorandum raised the issue, that in case the Ottoman sultan could be replaced as the Caliph by an Arabian leader friendly to Britain, emir of Mecca, the guardian of Holy places, would be an obvious candidate.²⁶⁹ Thus, Clayton's memorandum, which appeared as early as during the period of the Ottoman's neutrality initiated discussion on the prospects of establishing an Arab Caliphate.

Clayton's memorandum should have been really very persuasive, because the features of the proposed candidate matched the way the British imagined the features of a Caliph. Thus, Toynbee stated that British researches of the beginning of the 20th century had maintained, that from 11th -12th century "Koreishite blood" was regarded as "an essential qualification for holding the Caliphate"(though, he observes it did not influence the practice much).²⁷⁰ The cult of belonging to the blood of the Prophet, was observed in the book by Lowell Thomas, which made Thomas Edward Lawrence a legendary figure by the end of the war.²⁷¹ In the novel of John Buchan, a British politician, published during the war, it was argued that religious leaders already caused ferment among the Muslim population: "Your Mahdis and Mullahs and Imams were nobodies, but they had only a local prestige. To capture all Islam [...] the man must be of the Koreish, the tribe of the Prophet himself".²⁷² And if from the time of Abdul Hamid the possession of Mecca and Medina, and the protection of pilgrimages was stressed as part of his ideology,²⁷³ the fact that Hussein was the ruler of Hejaz and also took care of the pilgrimage was significant. As Fromkin summarizes, Hussein's descent from the Prophet's family, and his position of a ruler of Hejaz put him in position to assume the mantle of the Caliph.²⁷⁴ Even the authors that do not pay special attention to religious factor in the Arab revolt of 1916 repeat that Hussein was the protector of the Holy places, the sharif (a title applied to the descendants of the Prophet) and the most

²⁶⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.100.

²⁷⁰ Toynbee, "Islamic", p. 32.

²⁷¹ Lowell Thomas, *With Lawrence in Arabia*, pp.47-48.

²⁷² John Buchan, *Greenmantle*, London,1916; available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/559>, accessed October 15, 2008.

²⁷³ Deringil, *Well-protected*, p.33.

²⁷⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.101.

influential ruler from religious perspective.²⁷⁵

Already on September 24, 1914 Storrs received a telegram from Lord Kitchener, which read that he should send secret and carefully chosen messenger to Abdullah, the son of the sharif of Mecca, to ascertain whether “should present armed German influence in Constantinople coerce Sultan against his will, and the Sublime Porte, to acts of aggression and war against Great Britain, he and his father and Arabs of the Hejaz would be with us or against us”.²⁷⁶ And in December 1914 Kitchener attached to his message a passage that encouraged Hussein to cherish ambitions of a Caliphate: “It may be that an Arab of the true race will assume the Caliphate at Mecca or Medina, and so good may come by the help of God out of all evil which is no occurring”.²⁷⁷ This should be one of the documents, because of which the correspondence with the sharif of Mecca was kept unpublished long after the Great War as it could precipitate the indignation of the Muslims with the British interference in the matters of Islam.²⁷⁸

Clayton’s memorandum was brought to Edward Grey’s attention, and he is said to be so impressed by it that he called it very important.²⁷⁹ But at this time the issue of the Arab Caliphate was not debated between different Offices and departments, thus when on December 12, 1914 Arthur Hirtzel from the India Office learned about the message that had already reached Mecca, he criticized it as “a very dangerous correspondence”, which by hinting at the Arab Caliphate does the very thing, which the India Office thought that the British government would not do, interfering in the issues of Islam.²⁸⁰

During the 8 months which followed Clayton’s memorandum Hussein did nothing to associate himself or Mecca with the jihad, thus a new High Commissioner in Egypt, Henry McMahon reported to Kitchener on February 2, 1915 that the sharif had done what was

²⁷⁵ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence*, p.43-44; Wallach, *Desert*, p.150.

²⁷⁶ Quoted from: *The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs* (New York: G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1937), p.163.

²⁷⁷ Quoted from: Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.165.

²⁷⁸ Friedman, *Question*, p.65

²⁷⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.101.

²⁸⁰ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.106.

required from him, and there was no need for immediate action.²⁸¹ But the members of the British Residency in Cairo continued to promote the establishment of the Arab Caliphate. Thus on January 27, 1915, Storrs wrote to Kitchener, that the sharif of Mecca was “a more paying proposition for our care and attention than any purely local Chieftain (however powerful in himself) who cannot enjoy the prestige of receiving the annual homage of the representatives of Islam throughout the world”.²⁸² Wingate promoted the idea of Caliphate through personal correspondence with Hussein, which was carried through religious leader in the Sudan sharif El Morgani. Captain G.S.Saymes, Wingate’s private secretary, also submitted a memorandum where the Caliphate was an integral part of the pan-Arab scheme.²⁸³ On May 2, 1915 Storrs also submitted a memorandum in support of the Caliphate, while Clayton and Lawrence emphasized the need to include Syria in the Arab Caliphate.²⁸⁴ In summer 1915 Storrs again paid Kitchener’s attention that Hussein’s chances for the general recognition as the Caliph were good as he could reconcile Arabian leaders without claiming any political rights on their territories.²⁸⁵ They also brought the plan to raise the sharif of Mecca to the position of Caliph to attention of Mark Sykes during his visit to Cairo in summer of 1915.²⁸⁶

3.2. The official acknowledgment of Russian claims to Constantinople and the discussion of the Arab Caliphate in British politics, 1915.

As it was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter the plan of establishing the Arab Caliphate was also connected with the idea that Constantinople should be guaranteed to Russia. Thus, I want to trace how the official acknowledgment of Russian claims to Constantinople contributed to the development of scheme of the Arab Caliphate.

On March 4, 1915 because of the start of the military campaign in the Dardanelles and the prospect of capturing Constantinople, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei

²⁸¹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.115.

²⁸² Quoted from: Fromkin, *Peace*, p.115.

²⁸³ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.144.

²⁸⁴ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.165-180.

²⁸⁵ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.144.

²⁸⁶ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.169.

Sazonov inquired about the inclusion of Constantinople to the Russian empire.²⁸⁷ The British ambassador in Russia George Buchanan and the French ambassador Maurice Paleologue in their memoirs recall that Tsar Nicholas II and his ministers referred to the importance of Constantinople to the public opinion in Russia, as reward for the people for their sacrifices in the war.²⁸⁸ On March 12, 1915 Grey and Asquith with the approval of the opposition agreed to recognize Russian claims, in exchange of Russian acknowledgment of British interests in other areas, including a neutral zone of Persia.²⁸⁹ Grey personally sympathized with Russian demands, and certain promises in regard to Constantinople were already made earlier to Russia. Nevertheless, in the additional memorandum dated the same day, Grey emphasized that by accepting the Russian proposals the British Government was giving the greatest possible proof of its friendship and loyalty to Russia, he called the meeting of Russian desires “a complete reversal of the traditional policy of His Majesty’s government, and is in direct opposition to the opinions and sentiments at one time universally held in England and which by no means died out”.²⁹⁰ Fromkin observes that the agreement was to be kept secret because Grey worried about the effect on Muslim opinion in India if its terms were revealed and Britain appeared to be “a party to the distraction of the last remaining independent Mohammedan power.” Therefore Grey warned the Russians that if the terms of the agreement would become known, he would announce that “throughout the negotiations, His Majesty’s Government have stipulated that the Musulman Holy places and Arabia shall under all circumstances remain under independent Mussulman domain”.²⁹¹ This reveals not only that in spite of his sympathies with Russia, Grey had also to consider the opinion of the Muslim population, but also that by the time of Russian proposal in regard to the settlement of Turkey-in-Asia after the war Grey already had an idea of establishing an independent Muslim state with the Holy places of Islam as its center.

A position of the head of the Foreign Office, Sir Edward Grey demonstrates how strong

²⁸⁷ Taylor, *Struggle*, pp. 541-542.

²⁸⁸ B'yukenen, *Memuary*, pp.146-147; Paleolog, *Tzarskaya Rossia*, p.166-168.

²⁸⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.139; Taylor, *Struggle*, p. 541.

²⁹⁰ Quoted from: Fromkin, *Peace*, p.140.

²⁹¹ Quoted from: Fromkin, *Peace*, p.140.

the conviction of the need to give Constantinople to Russia was. He refused both to support the revolt in Constantinople in March 1915 (secretly discussed with Talaat bey)²⁹² and to accept the support of the Greek troops in attack against Constantinople in December 1915, because both the Turks and the Greeks had claims on Constantinople.²⁹³ The claims made these possibilities of bringing the Ottoman empire out of the war, unacceptable, because then he could not guarantee Russia the possession of Constantinople, which could have a negative impact on Russia, and caused her to change sides in the war. But, as during the Balkan wars when it was important to save Russian position as an ally without provoking the opposition from British Muslims, Grey found it reasonable that Britain had to compensate Islam for the destruction of the Ottoman Empire by establishing Muslim state elsewhere. Mecca and Medina made from a religious point of view impossible for it to appear in other place, but Arabia. In addition, the promise was easy to fulfill, as no country had claims for the desert of Arabia.²⁹⁴

Lord Kitchener also shared the belief that after the war Constantinople will belong to Russia, however, unlike Grey, who treated Russian demands with sympathy, Kitchener was among those who continued to see Russia as the principal rival of Britain in the East.²⁹⁵ Thus, if after the war the Russia was sure to possess Constantinople, and unless something were done about it, the Caliph.²⁹⁶ Compared to temporary threat from the German-controlled Caliph, Lord Kitchener considered a Russian-controlled Caliph to be a mortal danger to the British empire (the traditional Russian threat to India, which would result in permanent pressure). For Lord Kitchener, who recently held an office in Egypt, where possibilities of the Arab Caliphate were considered, the way out was that Britain should support its own candidate to the caliphate, which would not be associated with Constantinople. As the Prophet Mohammed was Arab, according to Lord Kitchener, it was advisable to encourage

²⁹² Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 138, p.151.

²⁹³ Fromkin, *Peace*, pp.125-127.

²⁹⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.140.

²⁹⁵ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 98.

²⁹⁶ Geoff Simons, Tony Benn, *Iraq: from Sumer to Saddam* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), p.189. Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 97

the view that his successors as Caliph should also be the Arabs. Transfer of the seat of Caliphate to the Arabian Peninsula, the coastline of which could be controlled by British fleet, would help Britain to establish control over caliph and isolate him from the influence of rival powers.²⁹⁷

British acknowledgment of Russian claims was the push for Kitchener to promote his views. In memorandum from March 16, 1915 Lord Kitchener warned that after the war the old rivalry with Russia, France, or both might resume, so:

it is to our interests to see an Arab kingdom established in Arabia under the auspices of England, [...] and containing within it the chief Mahommedan Holy Places. This in [the British' Empire's] position as the greatest of Moslem States, would greatly enhance our prestige amongst the many millions of our Mahommedan subjects.²⁹⁸

During the following days of March 1915 the Committee of Imperial defense encouraged the discussion of Kitchener's scheme between different departments. Charles Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, who was more preoccupied with establishment of Indian colony in Mesopotamia,²⁹⁹ approved of Kitchener's proposal of establishment the Arab Caliphate when the war was over. His note reads:

It has been a principle of our policy to leave the Caliphate to take care of itself as a matter of purely domestic concerns to Mussulmans; but we have made no public announcement on the subject. If the *de facto* possessor of the Holy places is Caliph, and if the Grand Sharif of Mecca definitely dissociates himself from the Turks, he will *ipso facto* become Caliph at all events temporarily; and when Turkey's wings have been clipped as it presumed that they will be, there will be no Mussulman power possessing both the will and the power to eject him. [...] If, as appeared anticipated, Enver Pasha should displace the present Sultan, the Caliphate will by common consent of Islam revert to the descendants of the Prophet's family in Mecca, if whom the present head is the Sharif, and who I feel sure would command Bin Saud's support in such an event rather than his antagonism.³⁰⁰

The argument about the establishment of the Arab Caliphate was also used by Arthur

²⁹⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.100.

²⁹⁸ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.179.

²⁹⁹ CAB 24/1/0016, "The Future Settlement of Eastern Turkey in Asia and Arabia", March 1915, p.50-back.

³⁰⁰ CAB 24/1/0016, "The Future Settlement of Eastern Turkey in Asia and Arabia", March 1915, p.54-front.

Hirtzel, the Secretary of the Political Department of the India Office to oppose Edmund Barrow's suggestion for supporting the Ottoman empire as a regional power after the war and of establishment indirect rule like in Egypt or the Sudan in Mesopotamia.³⁰¹ In the "Comments on Sir Edmund Barrow's Note" Arthur Hirtzel argued that politico-religious advantages claimed for Barrow's scheme were based on the identification of Islam with the Ottoman empire. Hirtzel acknowledged that probably in India these were "convertible terms". However, he argued:

In Arabia and Africa will not the overwhelming majority almost certainly be for the Arab Caliphate, if on the fall of Constantinople the Grand Sharif throws off the Turkish yoke and proclaims himself possessor of the Holy Places? As has already been pointed out, it will be beyond the power of Turkey to eject him, and Indian Mussulmans will have to choose which Caliph they will serve. As access to the Holy Places will depend on the goodwill of the Grand Sharif, there can be little doubt which way their choice will eventually go. There will, no doubt, be an uncomfortable period of suspense and hesitation; but when it is once realized that we do not intend to interfere in Arabia, and that the Holy Places there and in Mesopotamia are secure against Christian intrusion, it seems highly probable that Indian Mussulmans will understand that there is nothing anti-Islamic in our policy, and will acquiesce.³⁰²

The question of establishing the Arab caliphate was discussed further at the War Council on March 19, 1915 Edward Grey posed a question regarding the Russian desiderata in the East:

Ought we not to take into account the very strong feeling in the Moslem world that Mahommedanism ought to have a political as well as religious existence? [...] If the latter question were answered in the affirmative, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia were the only possible territories for an Arab empire. If we took this standpoint we could say to our Moslem subjects that, as Turkey had handed itself over to the Germans, we had set up a new and independent Muslim state.

In further discussions Grey also observed that Britain's first requirement was the preservation of a Muslim political entity and the pledged maintenance of the Muslim Holy places.³⁰³ Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, presented the two different views

³⁰¹ CAB 24/1/0016, "The Future Settlement of Eastern Turkey in Asia and Arabia", March 1915, pp.54-back – 55-front.

³⁰² CAB 24/1/0016, "The Future Settlement of Eastern Turkey in Asia and Arabia", March 1915, p.57-front.

³⁰³ Quoted from: Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: the authorized biography*, p.180.

expressed by the Political and the Military departments of the India Office, discussed above. Lord Kitchener approved of the position of the Political department and stated the Turks “would always be under pressure from their strong Russian neighbour, with the result that Khaliphate might be to a great extent under Russian domination, and the Russian influence might indirectly assert itself over the Mohammedan part of the population of India. If, on the other hand, the Khaliphate were transferred to Arabia, it would remain to a great extent under our influence.”³⁰⁴

It might be concluded that the de-Bunsen committee also approved the scheme of the Arab Caliphate. This was a special interdepartmental committee formed to consider British desiderata in Turkey-in-Asia in response to already known Russian and French demands. Its final report to the War council from June 30, 1915 reads that assurances given to the sharif of Mecca should be maintained, and that Arabia and the Muslim Holy places should remain under independent Muslim rule.³⁰⁵ It is important, that these two statements are put together in the report, and that the report was submitted before Hussein’s inquiry about the borders of his kingdom (August 1915), thus it was not inspired by it. Therefore, it might be interpreted as an approval of the scheme of Arab caliphate by the de-Bunsen committee.

Though, in general scheme of an independent Arab Caliphate was accepted, certain misunderstandings remained. McMahon and Maxwell, who supported Lord Kitchener’s scheme for the caliphate around Mecca and believed that its impact could be spread far beyond the Arabian peninsula, as Jeremy Wilson observes, considered Grey’s formula of an independent Muslim state irrelevant. In their opinion Arab leaders could accept his spiritual authority over them, not political power.³⁰⁶ While in India Office there remained doubts whether Muslims would accept a Caliph, who will be under the foreign influence. Lord Curzon, who in 1899-1905 was the Viceroy of India, in 1915 wrote to Lord Cromer, that the situation is very uncertain to make plans for the caliphate, as “we” (allies? British?) are not in

³⁰⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, pp.144-145.

³⁰⁵ Aaron Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: the Cairo Conference of 1921* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p.5.

³⁰⁶ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.187, p.193.

a possession of Constantinople, therefore even if a Caliph might be replaced, there is no certainty, that Muslims would accept it.³⁰⁷ Secretary of State for India, Lord Crew, maintained that the religious prestige of the present Caliph remained undamaged in spite of the war, and that even if Indian Muslims will accept his replacement, it is doubtful that they will accept if that replacement would take place in result of foreign interference.³⁰⁸

Thus, the Russian claims to Constantinople stimulated the interdepartmental discussion of British own aims in current war with the Ottoman empire, and Kitchener's scheme of establishment of an Arab caliphate after the war was generally accepted. Even the circles connected with India seem not to oppose the scheme, though they had doubts in its success.

3.3. Doubts about the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliphate in the British press in 1915.

Though a campaign in British press in 1915, which questioned the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliphate, might be regarded as a part of refuting Ottoman call to jihad (discussed in the previous chapter), it might also be suggested that it was preparing the ground for accepting an idea of the Arab caliphate. To support this view I would just remind that arguing for the Arab Caliphate Kitchener suggested encouraging the view that as Mohammed was an Arab, his successors as Caliph should also be Arabs.³⁰⁹ Writing about a different issue Amery states: "We [he and Lloyd George] at once passed on our information to Geoffrey Dawson at *The Times* and Gwynne at *The Morning Post*, urging them to write as strongly as they could".³¹⁰ So the possibility of the governmental influence on the press in this regard is more than probable.

In 1915 when the scheme of the Arab Caliphate was being debated, *The Times* articles less emphasized German influence on the Caliph (it was mentioned only in 5 articles). And if the bravest argument used to challenge the position of Mehmed V as the Caliph in 1914 was

³⁰⁷ John Fisher, *Curzon and British imperialism in the Middle East, 1916-19* (London, Portland: Frank Cass, 1999), pp.54-56.

³⁰⁸ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.106.

³⁰⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.100.

³¹⁰ Amery, *My Political Life* (London: Hutchinson, 1953), Vol. 2, p.16.

opposing him to Abdul Hamid, as the true Caliph, in 1915 this argument was no longer used. Due to the massacres of Armenians which occurred in 1915, Abdul Hamid was mentioned only as a negative character, for Armenian massacres occurred during his reign also.³¹¹

However in course of 1915, the rights not of an individual ruler, but of the Ottoman dynasty to the Caliphate were questioned. The letters of George Birdwood and Lord Cromer, published in *The Times*, of course stated that the issue of caliphate should be decided exclusively by the world of Islam, and that Britain should not interfere in the affairs of Islam, but they pointed out that according to the prescriptions of Islam, a Caliph should be from the blood of Koreish, the tribe of the Prophet. And this is something that the Sultan of Turkey can not claim. Appropriation of the title of Caliph by the Ottoman emperors, they continue, based on dubious tradition of Selim I, who got the title after the conquest of Egypt in 1515.³¹² George Birdwood goes even further. Wahhabis, he reminded, had never recognized the Turkish caliphate emperors of Constantinople. He claimed their caliphate to be a blasphemy for all Muslims, Shia and Sunni alike.³¹³ It may be added that George Birdwood advocated that caliphate should be transferred to the sharif of Mecca as early as at the end of 19th century, so publication of his articles is very demonstrative.³¹⁴

Besides these letters, in April 1915 *The Times* also reported that the future of the Caliphate was debated in the House of Lords, as probable dissolution of the Ottoman empire was foreseen even by the Muslims of India.³¹⁵

The Indian press, which I didn't access personally, was also preparing the public opinion for the idea of the Arab caliphate. The declaration of ulema of Mecca in support of sharif's revolt reads:

If you keep this in mind and remember what the Indian paper Mashrek wrote on September

³¹¹ "Wholesale Murder in Armenia", *The Times*, September 30, 1915, p.5; "The Armenian Massacres. Exterminating a Race", *The Times*, October 8, 1915, p.5; "More Armenian Atrocities", *The Times*, December 21, 1915, p.10; "The Armenian Massacres", *The Times*, October 8, 1915, p.7; "The Martyrdom of the Armenians", *The Times*, December 14, 1916, p.9.

³¹² "The Future of the Khalifate", *The Times*, April 24, 1915, p.9; "The Khaliphate", *The Times*, April 29, 1915, p.9.

³¹³ "The Khaliphate", *The Times*, April 29, 1915, p.9.

³¹⁴ Tufan Buzpinar, "The Question of Caliphate", p.27.

³¹⁵ "Parliament. House of Lords. Minor Theatres of War", *The Times*, April 21, 1915, p.12; "The Future of the Khalifate", *The Times*, April 24, 1915, p.9

12th and 19th on the subject of the disqualification of the Beni Osman to be the Caliphs of Islam, you will understand that we have risen in order to avert these dangers and to put the Islamic rule on a firm foundation of true civilization according to the noble dictates of our religion.³¹⁶

In fact, they borrow their arguments that the Ottoman sultans are disqualified to be caliphs from the Indian press.

3.4. The move from the Arab Caliphate to the Arab revolt (October 1915 – June 1916).

According to the original considerations, communication with Hussein was intended to keep him from using his spiritual authority against Britain during the war, and in the future when the rivalry with Russia would renew might be used for the benefit of Britain. However, in the second half of 1915 Hussein came to be regarded as a force that can be applied against the Ottoman empire in the war. So, this sub-chapter will be devoted to how that change in attitude to Hussein occurred.

If the British did not expect sharif Hussein to enter the war, it should be mentioned that he did not intend to do it either. He maintained communication both with the British in Cairo and the Young Turks. However, in January 1915 he found written evidence that Turks were planning to replace him as Emir Hejaz after war.³¹⁷ This made him reconsider his position, and decide for entering the war against the Ottoman empire. Moreover, as he had a British proposal of establishing the Arab Caliphate, which he should have regarded as an offer to become a head of a large Muslim state, which a Caliphate is in Islam. Thus, in 1915 the sharif sent his son Feisal to Constantinople, to learn about the plans for the Hejaz there and on the way there to inquire in Damascus about possibility of obtaining support for a rebellion under his leadership from the Arab secret organizations.³¹⁸ As most of the members of secrets societies were arrested, by the time Feisal stopped there on the way from Damascus, those

³¹⁶ "Proclamation of the Ulema Regarding Independence from Turkey, March 1917", *Source Records of the Great War*, Vol. IV; available from http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/arabindependence_ulema.htm, accessed on 25.03.2007.

³¹⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.174.

³¹⁸ Ibid, p.174.

who remained free agreed to support Hussein, and passed Feisal a document known as the Damascus Protocol, which defined the territories they wanted to be Arab and independent.³¹⁹ As Bassam Tibbi, who studies the Arab nationalism, observes, before that time the cooperation between the Arab nationalists of Damascus and the sharif of Mecca, who was the traditional leader was hardly possible, they had very different ideas of the State, for Hussein it was Muslim state, Caliphate, not a national one.³²⁰ But both the sides in 1915 were not strong enough and needed cooperation.

So, in August 1915 demands from the sharif of Mecca as to the borders of Arabian kingdom under his authority, which included the territories mentioned in the Damascus Protocol, were received in Cairo. Fromkin and Wilson write, that though the British Residence in Cairo encouraged him to announce a Caliphate, his territorial demands came for them as surprise and were evaluated as very exaggerated.³²¹ Lord Curzon, and the new Secretary of State for India Austen Chamberlain agreed that sharif demanded more than he can claim,³²² this view was also shared in Cairo, but as Hussein was considered a valuable ally McMahon proposed to answer Hussein that the discussion of boundary details is premature during the war.³²³

British attitude to the sharif's demands changed after al-Faroqi episode in October 1915. Being a deserter from the Ottoman army, al-Faroqi informed the British officials in Cairo about a secret organization of Arab officers in the Turkish army, who were ready to support Hussein's uprising. However, he warned, if Britain would wait long with recognition of their demands, they might support Germany.³²⁴

On October 12, 1915 Kitchener was reported about powerful secret organization behind the enemy lines.³²⁵ At that time British forces at the Dardanelles were in a deadlock. British troops suffered heavy losses and the Commander in Chief of British troops in Gallipoli, Ian

³¹⁹ Ibid, p.175.

³²⁰ Bassam Tibi, *Arab nationalism: a critical enquiry* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1991), p.115.

³²¹ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.195-196.

³²² Fisher, *Curzon and British imperialism*, p.54; Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.195-196; Fromkin, *Peace*, p.174.

³²³ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.195.

³²⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.176; Wilson, *Lawrence*, pp.198-200.

³²⁵ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.176; Wilson, *Lawrence*, pp.198-200.

Hamilton, asked for military assistance.³²⁶ The revolt in Mecca supported by the Arab officers of the Ottoman army was seen as an opportunity to save the British troops in Gallipoli.³²⁷ A year later McMahon recalled that the decision to back the Arab movement and accept sharif's territorial demand was purely military business: "It began at the urgent request of Sir Ian Hamilton at Gallipoli. I was begged by the Foreign Office to take immediate action and draw the Arabs out of the war".³²⁸ In November Clayton was persuading Mark Sykes, a representative of Kitchener at the de-Bunsen Committee, that the Arab armies were a key to the victory over the Ottoman empire.³²⁹ Thus on behalf of Britain McMahon promised Hussein the British support in the uprising, and the negotiations concerning the borders started. As Fromkin observes, in the Foreign Office agreement with Hussein was treated as that Britain promised to support the Arab independence if only the Arab part of Ottoman empire would rise against the sultan.³³⁰

But except purely military considerations there were argument for the Arab revolt based on the Islamic question. In October 1915 Maxwell wrote to Lord Kitchener: "I feel certain that time is of the greatest importance and that, unless we make a definite and agreeable proposal to the Shereef at once, we may have a united Islam against us".³³¹ He stressed the danger of a revitalized jihad, which can be avoided by the cooperation with the Arabs.³³² Around the same time also in October 1915 Gilbert Clayton wrote a memorandum arguing, that although jihad until then was a failure, it might come alive.³³³

Both lines of reasoning for the Arab revolt were reemphasized, when in 1916 the evacuation of the British troops at the Dardanelles and surrender of the garrison of General Townshend at Kut damaged prestige of the British in the East. These could be used by the enemy propaganda and affect Muslim opinion. In such a situation a rebellion in any part of the Ottoman empire would have a tremendous propaganda value for the Allies, not to speak

³²⁶ Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia*, p.198.

³²⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.166.

³²⁸ Quoted from: Fromkin, *Peace*, p.178.

³²⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.180.

³³⁰ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.185.

³³¹ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.211.

³³² Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.209.

³³³ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.109.

about the revolt in the Holy places of Islam. But if the Arabs decide not in the favor of the few advantages of alliance with Britain, it was feared they could rise in an affective jihad.³³⁴

But if the India Office seemed to be accepting the scheme of the Arab Caliphate as a post-war perspective, it was not so with the plans of the Arab revolt. The loyalty of Indian subjects, among whom there were many Muslims was a priority for the India Office and the Government of India. Thus, they regarded policies of both Constantinople and Cairo equally dangerous to Muslim sentiments in India, especially taking into account the influence that was now exercised by the British residence in Cairo.³³⁵

The India Office and the Government of India feared that the involvement of Mecca in world politics may disturb opinion in India at a time when any disturbance could prove fatal, as most of the forces were sent to Europe.³³⁶ The Viceroy of India, Lord Charles Hardinge opposed the idea of the Arab revolt arguing, that Great Britain was the largest Islamic empire in the world, and tens of millions of Indian Muslims are Sunnites, whose religious leader was the caliph, the Ottoman Sultan, however, they were not Arabs and in the case of revolt would most probably take the side of the caliph, and he as a viceroy was not willing to provoke problems in India.³³⁷ All these arguments are already familiar to us from the previous chapter. Besides, counteracting the main argument of proponents of the revolt – that Hussein was in charge of the Holy places and pilgrimage, Lord Hardinge emphasized that Hussein was highly unpopular among Indian pilgrims to Mecca.³³⁸

The second issue, which caused concerns of the India Office and the Government of India was that promises to Hussein were being made regarding the territories that guarded as their sphere of interest.³³⁹ This may be the reason, why the Viceroy of India regarded the promises made to Hussein to be fantastic and fatal, and argued that there are parts of Turkey

³³⁴ Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.204.

³³⁵ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.110.

³³⁶ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.110.

³³⁷ Wallach, *Desert*, p.153-154.

³³⁸ Friedman, *Question*, pp.72-73.

³³⁹ Fromkin, *Peace*, pp.107-108; Klieman, *Foundations*, p.5; Wilson, *Lawrence*, p.249.

unfit for representative institutions.³⁴⁰ Arthur Hirtzel opposed perspectives of Arab independence, on the basis that the Government of India was interested in weak and ununited Arabia. Clayton wrote Wingate, that the fears of India were groundless; as such a state would never exist unless they were stupid enough to create it. Lord Hardinge in a letter to the Head of the India Office, questioned such approach, as he did not approve of making promises, if there was no intention to fulfill them.³⁴¹

Thus, though other reasons were also involved, both the British Residency in Cairo and newly formed the Arab Bureau on the one hand, and the Government of India and the India Office on the other, justified their opposite positions by reference to the impact on British Muslim subjects, which was considered to be a rather strong argument. While the staff in Cairo, promoted the ideas of both the Arab Caliphate and revolt, the India Office which first seemed to accept the scheme of the Arab Caliphate, strongly opposed the plans of the Arab revolt and any territorial promises made to the sharif of Mecca.

Therefore, Lord Kitchener brought the scheme of the Arab Caliphate to British politics; the idea, which before that was considered only in Cairo. The sharif of Mecca was suggested as an obvious candidate for the position of a Caliph as early as in September 1914, when the Ottoman empire has not yet entered the war. Russian demands for Constantinople in March 1915, in their turn, brought the scheme of the Arab Caliphate under the consideration of different departments. It was promoted as a part of post-war settlement; therefore it was approved even by the India Office. However, when due to military reasons the British Residency in Cairo began to argue in favor of the revolt of the sharif of Mecca, this was strongly opposed by the India Office, which was much concerned about the effect of such revolt on Muslim opinion.

³⁴⁰ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.169.

³⁴¹ Fromkin, *Peace*, p.186.

Chapter 4: The Islamic question in British politics and press during the Arab revolt and after.

4.1. *The religious appeal of the Arab revolt.*

The religious side of the revolt is rarely considered in historiography, and the revolt is usually regarded as nationalistic, therefore, though this part of the chapter will be devoted mainly to the way the revolt was presented in the British press, I find it necessary first of all to argue, that the interpretation of the press is not groundless.

One of the reasons for regarding the revolt as Arab (not the revolt of Mecca, of the Holy Places or of Islam, as it is often described in the press) is the famous memoirs of T. E. Lawrence which showed the revolt as such. In the first few chapters of “Seven Pillars of Wisdom”, a book devoted mostly to the progress of military operations in Arabia, T. E. Lawrence states that he wants to rationalize the campaign and to show how inevitable was its success.³⁴² In the first chapters Lawrence clearly situates the revolt within a nationalistic framework, by defining who the Arabs were,³⁴³ the languages they speak,³⁴⁴ and making several remarks on the “Arab spirit”. Lawrence states it was his intention to create a new nation³⁴⁵, but even in “Seven Pillars of Wisdom” it can be traced that nationalistic interpretation is problematic. After discussing how promising was the Arab cause, he states that his colleges did not share his belief in the Arab movement³⁴⁶ (though he arrived there already when the Arab bureau was created). Later on he also makes a point about the difficulty of consolidating the Arabs, for they lacked that national sentiment.³⁴⁷ This definitely raises doubts about interpreting the revolt as nationalistic. Moreover, even in Lawrence memoirs, it is stated that for Hussein that the Young Turks were unbelievers and a threat to Islam.³⁴⁸ Lawrence’s biographers, both contemporary as Liddell Hart and modern as Jeremy Wilson do mention, that revolt appealed to religious feelings of the Muslims.

³⁴² Lawrence, *Seven*, p.23.

³⁴³ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.33-38.

³⁴⁴ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.33, p.45.

³⁴⁵ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.25.

³⁴⁶ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.59-60.

³⁴⁷ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.100.

³⁴⁸ Lawrence, *Seven*, p.52.

Furthermore, the British correspondence with Hussein is known to be kept secret for a long time because of its interference with the issues of Islam. It can also be suggested that Lawrence's emphasis on the national was partly due to the expressed views that Britain should not interfere in religious issues of Islam. Therefore, though perhaps the nationalists from Syria backed the revolt because of nationalistic reasoning, considering it within the nationalistic framework is surely not enough, and the religious side of the revolt should also be taken in the account. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that Lawrence's nationalistic account of the revolt is problematic.

Luckily, in arguing that there was also a religious appeal of revolt, it is possible to rely not only on the authors like Tibbi or Liddell Hart, which observe that the revolt started under the motto of liberation of Islamic world and against the Turkish heretics.³⁴⁹ More important, is that the proclamation of Hussein issued at the beginning of Revolt and the proclamation of the ulema of Hejaz in support of him, issued a year later, are available and also suggest that Hussein appealed to the religious feeling of his co-believers.

In the proclamation of Hussein it is declared that emirs of Mecca supported the Ottoman empire until the Society of Union and Progress took over the administration, and "plunged the state into the horrors of war", and "caused Moslem hearts to ache with grief for the Empire of Islam". The sharif stated that the CUP "proceeded next to sever the essential bond between the Ottoman Sultanate and the whole Moslem community, to wit, adherence to the Koran and the Sunna", he regarded an article "maligning the life of the Prophet" in one of the central newspapers as a proof of that. He accused the Young Turks for destroying "one of the five vital precepts of Islam, the Fast of Ramadan", ordering the troops stationed at Medina, Mecca or Damascus to break the fast in the same way as troops fighting on the Russian frontier, thereby falsifying the clear Koranic injunction, which allows to do so only in the case of illness or journey; innovations touching the fundamental laws of Islam regarding penalties and inheritance. They "destroyed Sultan's power, robbing him even of the

³⁴⁹ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence*, p. 59-60; Tibi, *Arab*, p.114.

right to choose the chief of his Imperial Cabinet [...], and breaking the constitution of the Caliphate of which Moslems demand the observance.” The fact that the Ottoman army fired at the Kaaba when the country demanded its independence was called to demonstrate their real attitude to religion and the Arab people. Thus, the sharif almost fully justifies his revolt by reasons connected with religion, and ends his proclamation with the appeal to all the Muslims to support their case: “This is the policy we have undertaken in order to fulfill our religious duty, trusting that all our brother Moslems in the East and West will pursue the same in fulfillment of their duty to us, and so strengthen the bands of the Islamic brotherhood”.³⁵⁰ Though the religious message of the proclamation of ulema is even more interesting, as it was issued a year later when perhaps the conditions were different, it will be considered later.

4.2. The coverage of the Arab revolt or the revolt of the Holy Places of Islam in the British press (1916).

Having shown that there actually was a religious appeal in the grand sharif’s revolt, I will proceed to how the revolt was treated in the British press. The focus on the press seems especially appropriate, as the revolt was first reported in the press, and only afterwards received an official response.

The revolt was first reported by Reuter on June 22, prior to the proclamation of Hussein, in which he explained the reasons of his revolt. It is interesting that the proclamation itself was reported by Reuter and thus published in the British press almost a month later from its appearance.³⁵¹ Though it might be suggested that the delay could be intentional, it is more probable that the proclamation reached Cairo with that delay, for *The Times* correspondent in Cairo reported about the Muslims reaction to the sharif’s proclamation around the same time.³⁵² The public announcement of the position of the British government in regard to the revolt was articulated in announcement “promulgated among the Moslem

³⁵⁰ “King Hussein’s Proclamation, 27 June 1916”, in *Source Records of the Great War*, Vol. IV, available from: http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/arabindependence_hussein.htm, accessed March 25, 2007.

³⁵¹ “Sherif Of Mecca On His Revolt. Enver’s Betrayal of Islam”, *The Times*, August 25, 1916, p.5, “Turkey Denounced. Grand Sherif on Enver Pasha’s crimes”, *The Manchester Guardian*, August 26, 1916, p.7.

³⁵² “Imperial And Foreign News Items”, *The Times*, September 4, 1916, p.7.

communities in British Colonies”, as Reuter called it.³⁵³ The announcement for the British colonies was very careful in avoiding the religious meaning of the revolt. It stated, that revolts against Turkish domination were frequent in Arabia, and thus as Turkey got under the German influence, the sharif of Mecca decided that the time for revolt had come, and placed himself on the side of the Allies against the common enemy. British sympathy with Arab aspirations is acknowledged, but “the fixed policy of Great Britain to abstain from all interference in religious matters” is stressed, as well as “unalterable point” of British policy that the Holy places should remain under independent Muslim rule. At the end a hope is expressed the sharif actions would make the pilgrimages more secure.³⁵⁴

Both local and central newspapers considered the religious significance of the revolt, but nevertheless their discourse essentially differed. I would like to demonstrate that difference by comparing two articles from June 22, 1916 in *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian*, as this difference between *The Times* and local newspapers is also evident in further articles. On June 22, 1916 it was the first time the news of the revolt in Mecca was reported in British press. Both the articles begin with identical accounts of the revolt received from the Reuter correspondent in Cairo, but give different comments on it. According to the original account of Reuter correspondent: “Authentic news has been received that his Highness the Grand Sherif of Mecca supported by the Arab tribes of the West and Central Arabia, has proclaimed Arab independence of Turkey and of Ottoman rule under whose maladministration and inaction the country has so long suffered.”³⁵⁵ It is stated that the revolt began on June 9, and Mecca, Jeddah and Taif were already captured, while Medina was “closely besieged”. The Reuter announcement ends up with a statement that as sharif’s rule is firmly established over the Holy places of Islam “it is therefore confidently expected that the difficulties which have attended the annual pilgrimage to the holy places during the past years

³⁵³ “Great Britain And The Holly Places”, *The Times*, July 28, 1916, p.7.

³⁵⁴ “Great Britain And The Holly Places”, *The Times*, July 28, 1916, p.7.

³⁵⁵ “Mecca Captured. Arabs rise against Turkey”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1916, p.5; “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9

will now be removed”.³⁵⁶ Thus, from the variety of topics which involved in the discussion of Muslim opinion during the war, in Reuter account there was mentioned only the question of pilgrimages.

The comments of *The Manchester Guardian* contained explanations why these 3 cities (Mecca, Medina, and Taif) and port of Jeddah were important for Islam, a question obvious to *The Times* readers, so that there are no comments on this issue. Than *The Manchester Guardian* article moves to the relation with the question of caliphate:

They passed into the hands of the Turks in 1516, when the Sultan first became Caliph, and their permanent lose would strip the Turkish ruler of much of his prestige in [few words difficult to read] of the world and might even ultimately destroy his authority as the religious chief acknowledged by most Mahometans. The caliphate was acquired by conquest, and might be lost in the same manner.³⁵⁷

So, it definitely states that revolt might result in the lost of the caliphate by the sultans of Turkey, and the author does not bother that this might effect the loyalty of British Muslim subjects.

The article in *The Times* provides another context for the same account of Reuter correspondent. A reader is reminded not of the meaning of the captured cities for Islam, but of the declaration of November, 1914 about immunity of the Holy places, as long as they are under independent Muslim rule, and that the Government promised not to interfere in questions of religion.³⁵⁸ These issues already suggest that the author considered the influence of events in Mecca on Muslim opinion, and that there might be dissatisfaction with it, so it is necessary to state why the British would not interfere. In *The Times* the origins of revolt are explained by the resentment of German control over Constantinople, which according to the flow of declarations of loyalty in 1914-15 was expressed by the Muslims of the empire, and that “Mohammedans [not Arabs!] began to feel that Turkey had finally forfeited the right to control Mecca and Medina, and the pilgrimage of pious Musulmans to these sacred spots.

³⁵⁶ “Mecca Captured. Arabs rise against Turkey”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1916, p.5; “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9

³⁵⁷ “Mecca Captured. Arabs rise against Turkey”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1916, p.5.

³⁵⁸ “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

Nowhere was resentment more bitter than in Arabia, and, according to report, in Mecca itself.”³⁵⁹ The last sentence of this quotation points to special piety characteristic to Mecca, which is also stressed in the parallel article in the *Manchester Guardian*: “When, after Mahomet’s death, the desert tribes refused obedience to Abu Bekr, the Second Caliph, Mecca, Medina and Taif remained faithful.”³⁶⁰

The sensitiveness to the Muslim opinion displayed by *The Times* article and more clearly stated meaning of the revolt in regard to the issues of caliphate in *The Manchester Guardian* characteristic to these two articles, can be traced also in the other articles of these newspapers.

First of all *The Times* stressed that the revolt was caused by the Ottoman defection from Islam. Thus in regard to revolt of the Grand sharif *The Times* quoted several times the message of the Aga-Khan to the Muslims in India and other British Dominions, where he warned that by becoming a tool in the German hands, the Ottoman empire “lost her position of trustee of Islam, and evil will overtake her”.³⁶¹ This was interpreted, in the way that this is exactly what had happened in Mecca: the forecast of the Aga-Khan turned into reality. It was claimed that a full obedience of Turkey to the Germans was the reason why the sharif of Mecca and other Arab leaders decided to overthrow the Turkish yoke.³⁶²

The lost of authority of the Ottoman rulers was opposed to the religious authority of the sharif of Mecca. “As soon as the gang of gipsies, aliens, and atheists who dominate the Committee of Union and Progress came into the daylight, it was certain that the orthodox Moslems of Arabia, of whom the Grand Sherif is the principal representative, would eventually thrust the Turks from Mecca”.³⁶³ In the same article, which was also published at the day when the revolt was first reported the sharif is characterized as very pious and deeply respected by Muslims “partly because of his lineage, and because he is of the tribe of

³⁵⁹ “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁶⁰ “Mecca Captured. Arabs rise against Turkey”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1916, p.5.

³⁶¹ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “The Trusteeship Of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.7.

³⁶² “Great Britain And The Holly Places”, *The Times*, July 28, 1916, p.7, “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “The Fighting in Macedonia”, *The Times*, August 28, 1916, p.7.

³⁶³ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

Koreish, to which the Prophet belonged ”.³⁶⁴ It is stated that “his position is temporal, though with an ecclesiastical tinge”.³⁶⁵ Thus though the question of caliphate is omitted, the emphasized features of Hussein are exactly the same, as the features which the Ottoman sultan does not possess.

Further in a very careful manner sympathy with the sharif’s side is expressed. With the reference to the declaration on the immunity of the Holy places of Islam, it is maintained that Britain would not interfere in the uprising, but was willing to accept the sharif as an independent Muslim ruler of the Holy places.³⁶⁶ Lord Cromer even expressed a view in Parliament that perhaps the sharif was encouraged in his revolt by the declaration “very wisely made by his Majesty’s Government that they had no intention of interfering with the administration or independence of the people of Hejaz”.³⁶⁷ It is stated that the British government always treated with sympathy Arab inspirations, but until the Ottoman empire sided with the British enemies, refrained from expressing it. And that Britain will continue to refrain from interfering in the affairs of Islam and to protect the Holy places of Mecca and Medina from the aggression.³⁶⁸

And though in one of the first articles on the revolt of the sharif of Mecca it is stated that “there should be no attempt to read in the [Reuter] announcement more than it warrants at this stage”,³⁶⁹ the articles in *The Times* are full of expectations that as the revolt concerns the Holy places it “will profoundly stir the whole Mahomedan world and may lead into very deep waters”,³⁷⁰ or that as it began in response to the violation of norms of Islam it must find a response in the whole Muslim world.³⁷¹ Thus, the most interesting is that the revolt of sharif Hussein was expected to be supported by the uprising in Kerbella.³⁷² It is noted that the Turks accepted the revolt in the most serious manner since it means the failure of their

³⁶⁴ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁶⁵ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁶⁶ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁶⁷ “Parlament. Lord Selborne And The Cabinet”, *The Times*, June 28, 1916, P.12.

³⁶⁸ “Great Britain And The Holly Places”, *The Times*, July 28, 1916, p.7

³⁶⁹ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁷⁰ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

³⁷¹ “The Fighting in Macedonia”, *The Times*, August 28, 1916, p.7.

³⁷² “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916. - P.9; “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “Parlament. Lord Selborne And The Cabinet”, *The Times*, June 28, 1916, P.12.

pretended jihad and the decline of the spiritual prestige of the Sultan,³⁷³ thus it is reported that in Constantinople the news of the revolt were kept secret for long.³⁷⁴ Moreover, *The Times* correspondent from Contstantza (the Balkans) predicts the revolt in support of the sharif of Mecca in Constantinople, as ulema and sheikh-ul-Islam there are “much excited at the Arab revolt”, they “sympathize with Grand Sherif, who, they hope, will proclaim himself Caliph and obtain the recognition of the Moslem world.”³⁷⁵

And as “anything which affected the Holy Places touched very nearly the interests of the whole Moslem world”³⁷⁶ *The Times* correspondents reported that the news of the revolt was welcomed in Egypt³⁷⁷ and India.³⁷⁸ *The Times* correspondent in Bombay observes that “Indian Moslems are watching the action of the Grand Sherif of Mecca and the Arab tribes with intense interest”, that they had “too long groaned under the exactions and spoliation of their pilgrimage”, and that in Calcutta the local Muslims are also delighted and hope that the sharif would ensure the safety of the pilgrimages.³⁷⁹ The article ends with an unexpected statement that “Indian Moslems respect the temporal power of Islam more than the spiritual authority of the Caliph”, which shows why the news about the attitude of Indian Muslims to the revolt was important. The correspondent from Cairo reports that news from Mecca enjoyed more attention in Egypt, than any other event in the war, and that the Muslim community in Egypt was deeply moved by the proclamation of the sharif,³⁸⁰ even those who previously sympathized with Turkey are reported to be “aghast at the revelations of Turkish cruelties and disregard of precepts of Islam”.³⁸¹ The ulema and students of Al-Azhar mosque, “which is the real barometer of Moslem feeling, is most sympathetic to the Mecca

³⁷³ “Moslem World And Mecca Revolt”, *The Times*, June 27, 1916, p.7.

³⁷⁴ “Mecca And The Holy Places”, *The Times*, June 29, 1916, p.7; “German News Of The Arab 'Treason'”, *The Times*, August 10, 1916, p.5.

³⁷⁵ “Tyranny Of The Young Turk. Secret movement for its overthrow. Sympathy with Arab revolt”, *The Times*, August 7, 1916, p.6.

³⁷⁶ “Parliament. Lord Selborne And The Cabinet”, *The Times*, June 28, 1916, p.12.

³⁷⁷ “Moslem World And Mecca Revolt”, *The Times*, June 27, 1916, p.7; “Imperial And Foreign News Items”, *The Times*, September 4, 1916, p.7.

³⁷⁸ “Great Arab Revolt”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9; “India And The Mecca Revolt”, *The Times*, June 26, 1916, p.8.

³⁷⁹ “India And The Mecca Revolt”, *The Times*, June 26, 1916, p.8.

³⁸⁰ “Imperial And Foreign News Items”, *The Times*, September 4, 1916, p.7.

³⁸¹ “Imperial And Foreign News Items”, *The Times*, September 4, 1916, p.7.

movement”.³⁸²

Thus, in *The Times* the sharif's revolt is explained through the violation by the Young Turks of the precepts of Islam and through the lost of independence to the German control. The features of the sharif that should underline his religious prestige are stressed. But in order to precipitate the negative reaction it is observed that such development was professed by the Aga-Khan in the beginning of the war, and that at the beginning of the war the declaration about immunity of the holy places was issued, therefore, the government will not interfere, but that it hopes that the sharif will help to renew the pilgrimages, thus expressing a certain sympathy with him.

The articles of *the Manchester Guardian* are fewer in number (8-10), and I found only 2 articles devoted to the topic in *The Observer*. As it was observed with the examples of the first articles when the revolt was reported, there were surely similarities between *The Times* and these newspapers: they speak about the importance of the Holy places, of religious prestige of the sharif of Mecca, and also about the expectations from the revolt. But in each of these issues the idea of caliphate is more pronounced. While the issue of pilgrimages, was practically not paid attention, as it is mentioned only in 2 articles,³⁸³ perhaps because in *The Times* this topic was raised in articles by correspondents from empire, and these newspapers did not have correspondents of their own in Egypt or India.

Among the “causes which led to the expulsion of the Turks from the towns of Mecca, Taif, and Jeddah, by the spiritual guardian of the holy places of Islam” it is stated that Turks do not observe the norms of Islam, but the pride of the Arabs that “the true Prophet was an Arab, from the powerful Arab tribe of Kuraish” is stressed more.³⁸⁴ The argument develops, that “in spite of the considerable and incessant bribes distributed to the guardian of the holy places by the Sultan of Constantinople, and notwithstanding the numerous pamphlets circulated to prove his claim to the Caliphate, the local spiritual leaders seldom acknowledged as a true Caliph of God and His Prophet a Turkish ruler Western Mongolia.

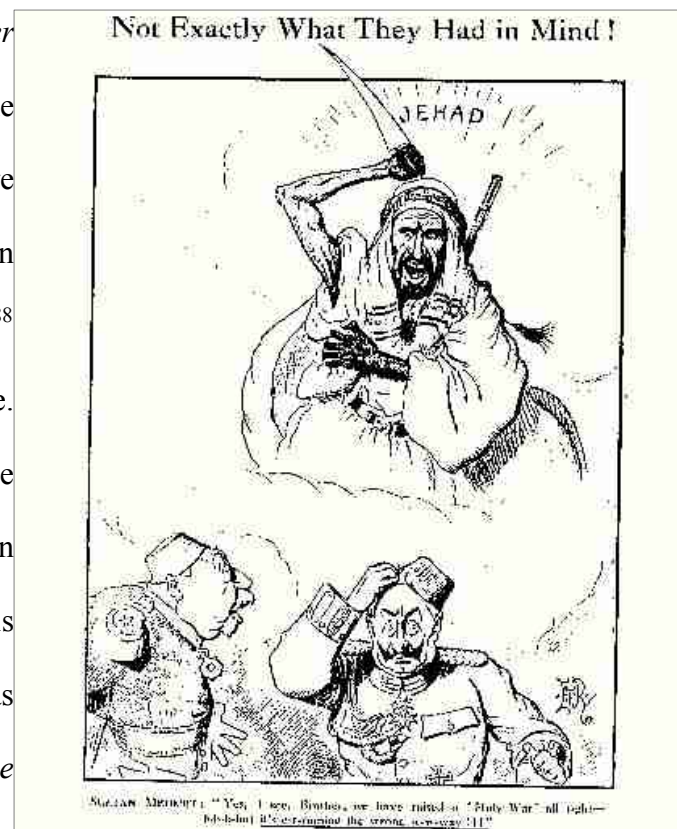
³⁸² “Moslem World And Mecca Revolt”, *The Times*, June 27, 1916, p.7.

³⁸³ “Miscellany”, *The Manchester Guardian*, July 31, 1916, p.3.

³⁸⁴ “At the Back of the Revolt”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 26, 1916, p. 10

Their books of jurisprudence, theology, and history are almost unanimous in their statement that a Caliph must be of the Arab tribe of Kuraish”.³⁸⁵ It is suggested that as the Ottoman pretensions to the Caliphate were snatched by force of arms by Sultan Selim, are strictly in contravention of the law of Islam, which lays down that the Caliph must be an Arab of the tribe of Koreish.³⁸⁶ Among the reasons of the revolt “the Sultan’s blunder in proclaiming Jihad” is mentioned: “The spectacle of a Caliph unsheathing his sword in the name of Allah and Prophet in aid of unbelievers is contrary to law and common sense from point of view of Mecca”.³⁸⁷ So, in regard to the reasons of the revolt the topic of Caliphate requires significance.

The Manchester Guardian and *the Observer* were much more optimistic about the meaning of the revolt, than *The Times*. As well as in *The Times* there are suggestions that it will provoke the revolt in Kerbela, and will alienate many Muslims in India,³⁸⁸ but in general their conclusions are far more decisive. According to one of the conclusions, the meaning of the revolt was that “The ill-fated holy war proclaimed in Berlin has turned against the Kaiser and his advisers”,³⁸⁹ it should be suggested that this idea was also spread, for there is even the cartoon from *The Bystander* provides the same interpretation to the



revolt.³⁹⁰ On this cartoon we probably see the sharif of Mecca (or an abstract Arab) with a knife in hand attacking the Sultan and the Kaiser. The cartoonist puts into the mouth of the Sultan the words: “Yes, [...] we have raised a 'Holy war' all right, but it emning (?) the wrong

³⁸⁵ “At the Back of the Revolt”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 26, 1916, p. 10

³⁸⁶ “Miscellany”, *The Manchester Guardian*, July 31, 1916, p.3.

³⁸⁷ “Miscellany”, *The Manchester Guardian*, July 31, 1916, p.3.

³⁸⁸ “At the Back of the Revolt”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 26, 1916, p. 10; “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Observer*, June 25, 1916, p. 8.

³⁸⁹ “At the Back of the Revolt”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 26, 1916, p. 10

³⁹⁰ *The Bystander*, June 28, 1916, taken from: Roy Douglas, *The Great War, 1914-1918: the cartoonist's view*, London: Routledge, 1995, p.65

way”.

The meaning of the revolt for the Ottoman empire, the Caliphate, and British interests in it is also considered in the articles of *The Manchester Guardian*. It is maintained that “Turkey is doomed, wounded as she has been in her most vital spot” by the revolt,³⁹¹ that rising in Mecca and the proclamation of the sharif as King of the Hejas is a heavy blow for the Ottoman empire, for it comes not from Christian, but from Muslim hands.³⁹² The following passage is worth quoting at long for it clearly connects the meaning of the revolt with the institution of caliphate:

Turkey’s influence in the Moslem world is due in part to her control of the three sacred cities of Islam – Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. The action of the Shereef of Mecca, now acknowledged as Sovereign of Hedjaz and one of the potent religious personalities of the Mohammedan world, shakes heavily the claim of the Sultan of Turkey to be Khalif, the Commander of the Faithful, and it deprives him also of the most sacred, and may soon deprive him also of the second most sacred of the three cities.³⁹³

And if the articles of *The Times* continued the official line that there should be no inference in the issues of religion, in *The Manchester Guardian* it was clearly stated that “No power, now that Turkey is our declared enemy, has a greater interest than ourselves in destroying Turkey’s claims to the hegemony of the Moslem world and, by liberating Arabia and the holy cities, restoring to Moslems their original freedom to determine their own spiritual organization and relations”.³⁹⁴ Which corresponds with the conclusion of one of *the Observer* articles: “The question raised in the Middle East by the Arab Revolution presents moral opportunities which if used with the firmness and discretion dictated by our position in India and Egypt, may be of far-reaching influence for good”.³⁹⁵

Thus, the Arab revolt of 1916 appears in the British press as an issue highly connected with the questions of Muslim loyalty and the Caliphate. *The Times* as a newspaper, which

³⁹¹ “At the Back of the Revolt”, *The Manchester Guardian*, June 26, 1916, p. 10

³⁹² “Turkey and Arabia”, *The Manchester Guardian*, January 4, 1917, p.4.

³⁹³ “Turkey and Arabia”, *The Manchester Guardian*, January 4, 1917, p.4.

³⁹⁴ “Turkey and Arabia”, *The Manchester Guardian*, January 4, 1917, p.4.

³⁹⁵ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Observer*, June 25, 1916, p. 8.

enjoyed also imperial and international readership was more careful in presenting the Arab revolt, while the newspapers like *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Observer* were more straight-forward pointing to the connection of the revolt with the issue of Caliphate.

4.3. Islam as political factor in the Eastern reports of 1917.

Though, there was a discussion of the sources in the introduction, I would like to remind that Eastern reports were a “weekly resume of political and military political affairs”, “compiled from the papers supplied by the War Office, Foreign Office, Colonial Office, and Admiralty”.³⁹⁶

4.3.1. Religious anti-British propaganda.

One of the British concerns from the beginning of the war was that the Germans and the Ottomans might attempt to manipulate Islam. This resulted in British attention to religious propaganda in 1914 as well as in 1917. The Eastern reports of 1917 display attention to anti-British religious propaganda connected with the Arab revolt, the Ottoman-German attempts to manipulate pan-Islamism, and the disposition of Muslim population in various regions to “religious fanaticism”.

According to the Eastern reports the main proponent of the Muslim critique of the sharif’s revolt was the imam Yahya of Yemen, though it is pointed out that his proclamation “shows traces of Turkish authorship”.³⁹⁷ According to the information from Cairo, the proclamation of imam Yahya was circulated in Hejaz, but was not known in Aden.³⁹⁸ It is even reported that the views of the imam received appreciation in *the Osmanischer Lloyd* (a German newspaper published in Constantinople) on February 20, 1917.³⁹⁹ The quotes from his proclamation demonstrate that he appealed to the religious feelings of his co-believers. The imam Yahya denounced and disapproved the attitude adopted by Hussein, late Emir of Mecca,⁴⁰⁰ and adopted the view that the revolt was in fact disobedience of God’s will.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁶ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.8-front.

³⁹⁷ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.51-back.

³⁹⁸ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.51-back.

³⁹⁹ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.100-back.

⁴⁰⁰ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.100-back.

After pointing that the imam of Yemen portrayed Great Britain as the enemy of Islam. He claimed that their only object was “to commit crimes upon and persecute those, who solely worship the only God”.⁴⁰² In his proclamation their misrule over Muslims is stressed: “There is no one who has not heard of what the British Government has done – how they have acted aggressively against the port of Jiddah, [...] bombed the Moslem places on the coasts”.⁴⁰³ “They have gone so far as to open gun-fire from the sea on some Islamic places on the coast of our country, the Yemen [...] They may have imagined that these menaces and threats would lead the Yemen people to desert their religion submissively”, “Look at what happens in Egypt, the Sudan and India, under infidel British flag” Thus he stated “the alliance of the Turkish government with the Germans is against our enemies, the English, French, Russians and Italians, and not against our Moslem brothers”,⁴⁰⁴ and he called the Muslims to “rise for the jihad which is a duty to all Moslems, and one for which they should offer their life and money”. The Ottoman newspaper observes “late Emir of Mecca, who in collusion with the English, revolved against the Ottoman government”, and “Yahia has proved his attachment to the Khalifat and to Imperial Government”.⁴⁰⁵ A meeting devoted to the question of the Caliphate was reported to have been held in April 1917 in Lausanne, where it was argued that it was British intention “to rob Turkey of the Caliphate and hand it over to the Arabs”.⁴⁰⁶

Examples of appealing to Islam in support of the Ottomans are also observed in the Eastern reports. For example, a letter from al-Masur to Ibn Saud dated January 11, 1917, in which al-Masur claimed that he would “carry out faithfully what God ordered me in His unchangeable book in regard to Jihad against non-believers”, and stated that the Turkish Government was “a protection to the purity of Islam” was considered important enough to be presented in Cabinet Memorandum.⁴⁰⁷ It was observed that some leaders in Western desert

⁴⁰¹ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.52-front.

⁴⁰² CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.52-front.

⁴⁰³ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.52-front.

⁴⁰⁴ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.52-front.

⁴⁰⁵ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.100-back.

⁴⁰⁶ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.156-back.

⁴⁰⁷ CAB/24/143/0009, “Eastern Report No.9”, March 29, 1917, pp.135 front-back.

preach jihad,⁴⁰⁸ and that though in Abyssinia “the Moslem danger is over for the time being,” but “Lij Yasu might well have succeeded in uniting the Mohamedans and making them a formidable power”.⁴⁰⁹ It was reported that the Germans were spending great sums of money on established a center of pan-Islamic preaching was in Morocco.⁴¹⁰

The danger of pan-Islamism is brought to the attention of the Government several times. In February the British Ambassador in Russia, George Buchanan, reports the government about “a numerous assembly of mujahids and shaykhs”, which had a character of a Muslim general council, which was held in Constantinople under the presidency of former shaykh-ul-Islam. It is observed that the idea of the assembly should have originated with the German Emperor. Buchanan also reported about its principal decisions, which definitely show that the basic concerns underlying his report were the same as in 1914:

(1) that Shaykh-ul-Islam should be invited to publish a new fetwa 'inviting Mussulman subjects of Turkey and enemy states to revolt'; (2) to send Hajji Sami to India with letters from Hindoo officers inviting their compatriots to rise against England; (3) to organise an insurrection in Morocco with the secret help of Spain; (4) to continue with all possible energy the holy war against the Italians in Tripoli.⁴¹¹

Later on, he stated that Sami had already left for India.⁴¹² According to W. Ormsby-Gore, who wrote the appreciation of this report, this Islamic council “marks a fresh step in the German Middle Eastern policy”. He suggests “A regular machine for the purpose of stimulating rebellion and assassination in Entente Moslem Areas is being built up”.⁴¹³

Later it was observed that “a Turkish mission was sent to Kerbela, the spiritual centre of the Shia Mohammedans”, and that “this Turco-Persian combination has definitely intention of reaching India with its propaganda”.⁴¹⁴ Pan-Islamic sedition in India, Egypt and among the

⁴⁰⁸ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.167-front.

⁴⁰⁹ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.177-back.

⁴¹⁰ CAB/24/144/0014, “Eastern Report No.39”, October 25, 1917, p.136-back.

⁴¹¹ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.9-back.

⁴¹² CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.10-front.

⁴¹³ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.8-front.

⁴¹⁴ CAB/24/143/0004, “Eastern Report No.4”, February 21, 1917, pp.71back – 72-front.

Indian troops in Mesopotamia was reported in November 1917.⁴¹⁵

The second increase of attention to pan-Islamism comes with the discussion of pan-Turanian movement. Though there are pieces that observe that pan-Islamism and pan-Turanian movements were incompatible,⁴¹⁶ or which in propaganda purposes stress that pan-Islamism was an obstacle for Turanian movement,⁴¹⁷ their inner connection is stressed in the Eastern reports. It is observed that the CUP used the two ideologies simultaneously, pan-Turanianism at home and pan-Islamism abroad.⁴¹⁸ And that the CUP aimed to ensure for the Ottoman government pan-Islamic and pan-Turanian expansion in Central Asia, India and Africa.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, often no distinction is observed between the two. For example, in one of the reports it is maintained that German government was encouraging “formation of Turanian clubs, formed expressly to inculcate the belief that every effort must be made by Moslems to constitute a Moslem empire stretching from the Mediterranean to China”.⁴²⁰ Wingate quoted a paragraph from No.91 of *the Kibla*, a newspaper published in Hedjaz, that pan-Turainians engaged Indian Muslims in their service under the veil of servants of Holy Temple (Khuddam-i-Kaaba).⁴²¹ V. P. Vivian, Assistant Director of Criminal Intelligence in Simla also stated that Khuddam-i-Kaaba was rather pan-Turanian, than pan-Islamic organization, and that pan-Islamism was only used to mask the true nature of Turkish propaganda. He argued that Indian Muslims were regarded as the descendants of the Moghals, and therefore one of the Turkish people.⁴²²

It is partly in this context that the effects of using of Islamic propaganda in certain Muslim areas are evaluated. For instance, the cold reception of any Turkish or Senussi agents in Muslim Nigeria was observed in the Eastern reports. It is pointed out that in Nigeria the people lived “apart from general current of the Muslim world and have not the slightest real

⁴¹⁵ CAB/24/144/0018, “Eastern Report No.43”, November 22, 1917, p.168-front.

⁴¹⁶ CAB/24/25/0082, “Memorandum on Panturanian movement, September 7, 1917, 365-back; CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.204-front, p.205-front.

⁴¹⁷ CAB/24/144/0001, “Eastern Report No.26”, July 26, 1917, p.3-back

⁴¹⁸ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.197-back.

⁴¹⁹ CAB/24/144/0003, “Eastern Report No.28”, August 9, 1917, p.19-front.

⁴²⁰ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.190-back.

⁴²¹ CAB/24/144/0001, “Eastern Report No.26”, July 26, 1917, p.3-back

⁴²² CAB/24/144/0015, “Eastern Report No.40”, November 1, 1917, p.154-front.

interest in or feeling about many questions which loom so large in Eastern politics”, they did not know of the Aga Khan, Indian Muslims, and regard the Sultan of Turkey as equal to Emir of Sokoto.⁴²³ But, “they are far more fervid believers in and votaries of the essential tenets of Islam than the average Turk or Arab of North Africa. They would be quite capable render certain circumstances of fighting for their faith”.⁴²⁴ Another Appendix is devoted to the situation in colonies and dependences in East Africa: the Sudan, Uganda, British East Africa, and German East Africa.⁴²⁵ It is observed the area represented “two large Mohammedan populations, separated by Uganda”, “whose tendency is to adopt Islam with ease and enthusiasm”. There conclusion is made, that there is therefore “a considerable field for Mohammedan propaganda and pan-Islamism”.⁴²⁶ It is observed that German East-Africa is “a common ground for pan-Islam”, that it is inhabited by the descendents of Mahdists from the Sudan, and that here most people identify themselves primary as Muslims.⁴²⁷

4.3.2. Immunity of the Holy places and presence of the Christian troops in Hejaz and Mesopotamia.

It might be remembered that at the beginning of the war Great Britain and her allies declared immunity of the Muslim Holy places, both in Hejaz and in Mesopotamia. The declaration was to assure the loyalty of British Muslim subjects and counteract the influence of the Ottoman Sultan. Kent considers this declaration to lay the ground for the war time policy of Great Britain and interaction with Hejaz.⁴²⁸ It also might be remembered that German interference in matters of religion was a point of propaganda against the Ottoman empire in 1914-1916. Even in 1917 the arrival of 22 German officers at Medina was characterized in a telegram from Cairo as a measure “which will stiffen the tribes against him [Fakri Pasha], neutralize his propaganda and alienate the city”.⁴²⁹

Therefore, in spite of the support in of the sharif of Mecca, it is not surprising that the

⁴²³ CAB/24/143/0008, “Eastern Report No.8”, March 22, 1917, p.121-front.

⁴²⁴ CAB/24/143/0008, “Eastern Report No.8”, March 22, 1917, p.121-front.

⁴²⁵ CAB/24/144/0001, “Eastern Report No.26”, July 26, 1917, p.5-front.

⁴²⁶ CAB/24/144/0001, “Eastern Report No.26”, July 26, 1917, p.5-front.

⁴²⁷ CAB/24/144/0013, “Eastern Report No.38”, October 18, 1917, p.128-front.

⁴²⁸ Marian Kent, “Asiatic Turkey, 1914-1916” in *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey* / Ed. by F. H. Hinsley (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 436-451.

⁴²⁹ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.30-back.

British were sensitive to the effect which the presence of their troops in Hejaz would produce on their Muslim subjects. In 1917 this topic constantly appears in the Eastern reports. It is suggested that the Turkish offensives in Medina were intended to “induce us to land troops in the Holy Land, to the advantage of the Turkish Sinai operations and of pan-Islamic propaganda directed from Medina”.⁴³⁰ Speaking about the possibilities of military help to Hedjaz, it is stressed that “it would be undesirable to furnish any grounds for suspicion in the Moslem world that Hedjaz had fallen under Christian influence”.⁴³¹ British brigade should wait “until the King declares himself responsible for the induction of Christians into Hejaz. He is little likely to do this unless his affairs are at desperate pass”.⁴³² Even when Wingate telegraphed that he had received a formal application from the King for a British brigade to be landed at Rabegh,⁴³³ he was replied

that the Cabinet had decided that the brigade should not be sent unless and until the King of Hejaz had (1) in writing made a request for its dispatch, and accepted full responsibility for the presence of Christian troops in Hejaz; and (2) had prepared for issue to the Moslem world a suitable proclamation explaining why Christian troops had been landed, which proclamation must before issue be submitted to His Majesty’s Government.⁴³⁴

The similar situation occurred when the King of Hejaz requested for 1500 Muslim troop and an “able Moslem General”, to which Storrs replied that the British had never dreamed of so marked and direct interference in his internal affairs.⁴³⁵ Even when Wingate suggested changing Colonel Wilson’s title from the pilgrimage officer into head of the British mission in Hejaz, Balfour suggested postponing the change unless the matters are urgent.⁴³⁶ Mark Sykes observed that the publication of a photo of Egyptian officer, who received the cross for taking Mecca in *The Daily Mail*, would provide the basis for enemy propaganda.⁴³⁷

At the same time the desire to avoid direct interference in Hejaz was counterbalanced

⁴³⁰ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.50-front.

⁴³¹ CAB/24/143/0005, “Eastern Report No.5”, February 28, 1917, p.79-front.

⁴³² CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, January 10, 1917, p.1-front.

⁴³³ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, January 10, 1917, p.5-front.

⁴³⁴ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, January 10, 1917, p.5-back.

⁴³⁵ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.16-back.

⁴³⁶ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.44-back.

⁴³⁷ CAB/24/144/0007, “Eastern Report No.32”, September 6, 1917, p.65-back.

by rivalry with France for the influence on Hussein. The reports about the dispatch of French Muslim doctors to Hejaz or the purchase by the French government a building for pilgrims are accompanied by suggestions that the Viceroy should undertake similar steps.⁴³⁸ When the French proposed to form the Arab battalion, it was proposed to send a small party of native officers and men of Indian army to King Hussein.⁴³⁹ Even the mission of Algerian notable to Hejaz in questions concerning French pilgrimage interests, was observed with suspicion.⁴⁴⁰ Some reports from Cairo expressed strong dislike of French officials who do not believe in Arab movement.⁴⁴¹ It should have been communicated to the French, for “The French government had replied in a lengthy note to the request for the withdrawal of the military mission to Hejaz. It laid stress on the importance to France, as a great Moslem Power, of maintenance of the sovereignty of the king of Hejaz and of the defense of Mecca”.⁴⁴²

Less attention is paid to the presence of the British forces in the Holy places of Mesopotamia. It was mainly considered by James Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the part of India known as the United Provinces, in regard to the future administration of Mesopotamia. He learned about the view of Lord Curson’s committee that Mesopotamia should be “under British control” and suggested on methods of government in Baghdad, “and more precisely over the Holy Places of Islam in that area – Kerbela, Najaf, etc”.⁴⁴³ On the assumption that the degree of British control was not yet decided, he suggests that it “would be well to ascertain the feeling of our Mahomedan fellow-subjects on the point”.⁴⁴⁴ In his note Meston argued that the Shia had a special devotion for the shrines of Kerbela and Nejef, and that any protectorate over these places by a Christian power would offend “the deepest sentiments of our Mahomedan population”.⁴⁴⁵ He observed that the Shia sect, dominating in Persia and forming a substantial element in Indian, was especially loyal. “When the Sharif of Mecca’s

⁴³⁸ CAB/24/143/0003, “Eastern Report No.3”, February 14, 1917, p.44-back; CAB/24/143/0004, “Eastern Report No.4”, February 21, 1917, p. 73-front.

⁴³⁹ CAB/24/143/0004, “Eastern Report No.4”, February 21, 1917, p.73-back.

⁴⁴⁰ CAB/24/143/0018, “Eastern Report No.18”, May 31, 1917, p.240-back.

⁴⁴¹ CAB/24/143/0015, “Eastern Report No.15”, May 10, 1917, p.203-back.

⁴⁴² CAB/24/143/0018, “Eastern Report No.18”, May 31, 1917, p.240-front.

⁴⁴³ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

⁴⁴⁴ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

⁴⁴⁵ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

assertion of independence was first made known, an attempt was begun to organize an agitation against him and his claims. The Shiah took no part in this outcry”.⁴⁴⁶ Though they were unhappy about campaign in Mesopotamia, they have never raised a voice in protest. “They have withstood all suggestions for Jihad (or Holy War) and have justified their opposition on strong theological grounds”.⁴⁴⁷ But the Christian protectorate over the Shia shrines in Mesopotamia, Meston argued, would mean for them something similar to the end of the world.

Less attention is paid in the Eastern reports to the conditions of shrines and the question of pilgrimage than to the Christian presence in the Holy places. Thus, the damages to the shrines of Medina are reported only twice in 1917,⁴⁴⁸ while the condition of the shrines of Kerbela, Nejef, Kufa was observed more often.⁴⁴⁹ Except for the passages which discuss the arrangements for pilgrimage in the context of rivalry with France, there are very few reports that discuss the question of pilgrimage. In the report from April 26, 1917 it is proclaimed that “The maintenance of the Haj is one of the most vital elements in our policy, both from the Arabian and Indian points of view”.⁴⁵⁰ Therefore, it is argued that every effort should be made to secure reasonable facilities for the journey to Mecca, as “The keeping open of the Haj during the war will have very lasting effect upon our position after the war, and in this matter the long view is very necessary”.⁴⁵¹ The Government of India proposed to issue the communiqué, approved by Chamberlain that the Government of India had been considering arrangements for pilgrimage to Mecca, and it regretted that shortage of shipping would be an obstacle in the pilgrimage that year.⁴⁵² In November 1917 Mark Sykes observed that the pilgrimage in 1917 took place without serious problems, though, according to him, a more dangerous place than Hejaz during the pilgrimage can hardly be imagined, as “fanaticism,

⁴⁴⁶ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

⁴⁴⁷ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

⁴⁴⁸ CAB/24/143/0008, “Eastern Report No.8”, March 22, 1917, p.119-front; CAB/24/143/0009, “Eastern Report No.9”, March 29, 1917, p.133-front.

⁴⁴⁹ CAB/24/143/0020, “Eastern Report No.20”, June 14, 1917, p.272-back.

⁴⁵⁰ CAB/24/143/0013, “Eastern Report No.13”, April 26, 1917, pp.180-back – 181-front.

⁴⁵¹ CAB/24/143/0013, “Eastern Report No.13”, April 26, 1917, pp.180-back – 181-front.

⁴⁵² CAB/24/143/0013, “Eastern Report No.13”, April 26, 1917, p.183-back.

lust of plunder, and political excitement are all easily aroused”.⁴⁵³

4.3.3. India and Hejaz in the Eastern reports.

In the previous chapter a special attention was paid not only to the issue of promoting the scheme of the Arab caliphate and Arab uprising, but also the opposition to the scheme from the India Office. It was also observed that from the first reports in press it was claimed that the news of the revolt were welcomed in India. The Eastern reports suggest that the topic was not exhausted in 1916 debates. Various reactions of Indian Muslims on the Hejaz revolt were observed throughout 1917.

The position of the Government of India remained the same as in 1915: with the view on the opinion of its Muslim subjects, they tried not to interfere in the questions of religion. While the Russian Intelligence Staff requested a copy of the original proclamation of independence with the sharif's signature or seal, or facsimile of the original for reproducing and distributing among the Turks and the Arabs,⁴⁵⁴ the Viceroy maintained that “the Indian Government was convinced that for it to push the proclamation, either publicly or secretly, would defeat its object.” He stated that it was “impossible for the Indian Government to indulge in propaganda, or the support of propaganda without becoming a party to religious controversy”.⁴⁵⁵ When Culling Carr in the letter to *The Morning Post* from February 5, 1917 suggested that the proclamation of Hussein showed that the British Government was fighting not against Islam, “but against those who have desecrated the Holy Places and have attempted to overthrow the Mohammedan religion”,⁴⁵⁶ and recommended the Indian Government should publish the “Proclamation of the High Priest and religious Chief of Islam”, and its copies should be distributed to every Muslim in India and the Indian soldiers “fighting in Africa and elsewhere”, the Viceroy observed, that “Mr. Colling Cave letter cannot assist anyone but our enemies; the seditious in India will make use of it as an unveiling of our

⁴⁵³ CAB/24/144/0017, “Eastern Report No.42, November 16, 1917, p.161-front.

⁴⁵⁴ CAB/24/143/0004, “Eastern Report No.4”, February 21, 1917, p.73-front.

⁴⁵⁵ CAB/24/143/0001, “Eastern Report No.1”, February 1, 1917, p.11-front.

⁴⁵⁶ CAB/24/143/0002, “Eastern Report No.2”, February 7, 1917, p.40-back.

alleged hypocrisy”.⁴⁵⁷ Thus, the Indian government was really concerned about the opinion of Indian Muslim subjects tried not to interfere in the matters of religion not to provoke the dissatisfaction of its subjects.

The negative attitude of Indian Muslims to the sharif’s revolt was considered in the Eastern reports. For instance, the reaction of Indian students at Oxford to the speech of Lord Curzon in the House of Lords on affairs in Persia and Near East was.⁴⁵⁸ They are reported to have commented that: “In Hejaz the British are playing the same game as they did in Egypt”; “Medina is still in the hands of Turkey”; “They [the British] are forcing war at and near Mecca”; “The Sherif of Mecca should be shot”.⁴⁵⁹ Even the Hindus stated that the center of Islam was in danger, as “they know that the idea would please Muhammadans”.⁴⁶⁰ The author of Appreciation to that report suggested that this deplorable state of affairs might be improved by counter-propaganda. But in his view “It tends to confirm the opinion of those who believe that Indian pro-Turkism has its real roots in hatred of Great Britain, not in religious sentiment”.⁴⁶¹

Even in the issues of the Arab Bulletin published in Cairo, which emphasized that Indian Muslims were taking the sharif’s side, observed that their original reaction was different. It is observed that “after all the reports which were received anticipating an upheaval in India on King of Hejaz’s first entering the war, it is interesting to see an Indian Moslem coming out openly on the King’s side”.⁴⁶²

Attention is paid that during the Friday prayer in the Chinian mosque, Lahore, on January 27, 1917, the leader of the community read out the proclamation of the sharif of Mecca, and “when the proclamation was being read, the audience were weeping and lamenting the disobedience of God’s commands by the Turks”.⁴⁶³ In the “Note by Arab Bureau” on the news this was regarded as significant, as that mosque had been “a center for

⁴⁵⁷ CAB/24/143/0002, “Eastern Report No.2”, February 7, 1917, p.35-back.

⁴⁵⁸ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.102-back.

⁴⁵⁹ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.102-back.

⁴⁶⁰ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.102-back.

⁴⁶¹ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.99-back.

⁴⁶² CAB/24/143/0006, “Eastern Report No.6”, March 7, 1917, p.93-front.

⁴⁶³ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.166-front.

preaching of Jihad and since 1915, several Moslem students from Lahore have crossed the border to take part in the Jihad against us with the “Hindustani Fanatics” and the frontier tribes”.⁴⁶⁴

However, unexpectedly warm reaction to the sharif revolt was also reported. The Indian General Staff reported that Mubarik Ali, a retired official of Hyderabad in a letter to the head of the pan-Islamic society Khuddam-i-Kaaba at Lucknow, had describes that “on hearing the news of the Arab revolt, he proceeded to Arabia in order to see for himself the state of affairs in Hejaz”. He suggested to the sharif that “an association of Mohammedans of all countries, similar in organization to the Anjuman Khuddam-i-Kaaba, should be founded for the purpose of defending the holy places of Islam and supporting the King’s claims to the caliphate”. According to this report the retired Muslim official supposed that this association should request the Turks to get rid of the Germans, and ask the British Government to send Muslim troops to help the sharif.⁴⁶⁵ It is observed, that he also suggested that a deputation of men learned in Koran should be send from India to congratulate King Hussein.⁴⁶⁶

Thus, as that Muslim reaction to the revolt was not unanimous even in 1917, the news in *The Times* about the enthusiasm of Indian Muslims might be considered as exaggeration and propaganda. At the same time, the position of the Indian government remained unchanged from 1915.

4.3.4. The Question of Caliphate.

The question of caliphate is considered in a great number of the Eastern reports. Most of them consider the sharif of Mecca as the future Caliph, but there are also several articles by David George Hogarth, a British orientalist, and Arnold J. Toynbee that consider the question within the broader frameworks of the British politics and the historical development.

There are also several reports that argue, that as Britain invented or the Caliphate of the Ottomans, the British should be careful with supporting the sharif’s claims and that they have

⁴⁶⁴ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, pp.166-front-back.

⁴⁶⁵ CAB/24/143/0006, “Eastern Report No.6”, March 7, 1917, p.97-back.

⁴⁶⁶ CAB/24/143/0006, “Eastern Report No.6”, March 7, 1917, p.97-back.

the right to decide upon the fate of the Turkish capital and that should.⁴⁶⁷

The assumption that the sharif of Mecca would acquire a caliphate rested mainly on his position of the guardian of the Holy places. It is stated that an Arab kingdom which would hold the Holy places would be “technically adequate to maintain the Caliphate”,⁴⁶⁸ and that “the guardian of the Holy places would in time become *ex officio* Caliph”.⁴⁶⁹ It is observed that “Islam is centred in Mecca, and the Sovereign of the Holy Cities of Islam is the natural center to which Pan-Islamism and kindred ideas either consciously or unconsciously gravitate”,⁴⁷⁰ and that the Arab revolt had already “divested the Ottoman Sultan of the strongest of his claims to the caliphate – the possession of the Kaaba”.⁴⁷¹ Though it is observed that “The general consent of the Arabs, however, will not easily be accorded to a new Caliph unless and until he has proved himself conspicuously powerful without Christian help; and should the Ottoman Sultan survive, non-Arab Moslems will be slow to transfer their allegiance”.⁴⁷²

It is worth paying attention that the British officials in 1917 considered the sharif's claims to caliphate to be strong enough to influence the Ottoman policy. Once it was suggested the CUP removed most of the ulema from Constantinople in order to anticipate an assumption of the Caliphate by the King of the Hejaz.⁴⁷³ Several times it was reported that the Ottomans would offer Hussein the position of caliph to win him to their side. Thus, in one of the reports it is stated:

The discussion in Switzerland regarding the Caliphate are interesting. It may be that in the last resort the Turks may try to compound with the King of the Hedjaz by offering him a shadowy form of spiritual authority without any temporal power.⁴⁷⁴

According to a well-informed agent it is reported that the Turkish Government has decided to endeavour to come to terms with the King of the Hedjaz, offering him and his descendants the

⁴⁶⁷ CAB/24/143/0005, “Eastern Report No.5”, February 28, 1917, p.79-front; CAB/24/143/0006, “Eastern Report No.6”, March 7, 1917, p.93-front.

⁴⁶⁸ CAB/24/144/0001, “Eastern Report No.26”, July 26, 1917, p.5-front.

⁴⁶⁹ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.276-back.

⁴⁷⁰ CAB/24/143/0020, “Eastern Report No.20”, June 14, 1917, p.246-back.

⁴⁷¹ CAB/24/144/0015, “Eastern Report No.40”, November 1, 1917, p.154-back.

⁴⁷² CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.224-back.

⁴⁷³ CAB/24/143/0007, “Eastern Report No.7”, March 15, 1917, p.112-back.

⁴⁷⁴ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.154-front.

Caliphate with spiritual powers only.⁴⁷⁵

However, according to the authors of the Eastern reports these proposals to the King of Hejaz of a spiritual Caliphate without temporal power would not be successful. It is stated that “King Husein is very unlikely to look at such a proposal”,⁴⁷⁶ and that he “is sufficiently acquainted with Islamic tradition to know that any such titular Caliphate, such as was suffered by Mameluke Sultans of Cairo between the fall of Baghdad and the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, is never likely to be worth much again”.⁴⁷⁷ It is observed that “the whole essence of the Caliphate is independent temporal power, and without this there is no chance of his obtaining recognition as Caliph by Sunnis in India or elsewhere. Any idea that we or any other Christian Power can obtain the recognition by Moslems of a Caliph of our choosing is barren in the extreme”.⁴⁷⁸ In a different place Cromer is quoted on the issue: “the due exercise of the spiritual power cannot be assured unless Khalif is placed in a position of assured political independence”, “The recognition of a Khalif who could directly or indirectly be brought under non-Moslem influences would be strongly resented”.⁴⁷⁹

The conditions of the future rule over Hejaz and the question of caliphate were among the terms of peace suggested by various Turkish parties. Reshid Pasha, who spoke for the Turkish liberal party residing in Geneva suggested that “Hejaz would be recognized as an independent kingdom; the question of the Caliphate being settled by Moslems who alone had any interest in the matter”.⁴⁸⁰ While in the terms of peace communicated by Talaat Pasha it was maintained that “Autonomous Arabia would not be under the King of Hejaz, and under no conditions could the Sultan of Turkey submit to the loss of the caliphate”.⁴⁸¹

In the note by David George Hogarth entitled “The Next Caliphate”⁴⁸² the possibility to “approve” an Arab Caliphate is considered. Hogarth observed that “neither the nomination nor the establishment of a Caliph is any business of a Christian Power”, but the British

⁴⁷⁵ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.158-front.

⁴⁷⁶ CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.225-front.

⁴⁷⁷ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.154-front.

⁴⁷⁸ CAB/24/143/0012, “Eastern Report No.12”, April 19, 1917, p.154-front.

⁴⁷⁹ CAB/24/143/0021, “Eastern Report No.21”, June 21, 1917, p.277-front.

⁴⁸⁰ CAB/24/143/0022, “Eastern Report No.22”, June 28, 1917, p.280-front.

⁴⁸¹ CAB/24/144/0003, “Eastern Report No.28”, August 9, 1917, p.21-back.

⁴⁸² CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.224-front.

committed by a message sent to the emir of Mecca to “approve” an Arab Caliphate. He suggested that when that message was framed, it was not realized that “any official 'approval' of a Caliph as such by a Christian power would be a novelty”.⁴⁸³ Hogarth considered British acknowledgment of Caliph was characterized by “the negative attitude adopted by the Government of India”, which did not interfere with the practice of praying for the Ottoman Sultan, even when a state of war exists between him and Great Britain. But this attitude was a subject to change, as “if formally approached by a new Caliph, we could hardly, for example, be at one and the same time approving' his Caliphate and continuing to suffer Indian Moslems to pray publicly for an Ottoman Caliph”.⁴⁸⁴

Hogarth observed that the “negative attitude” of the British was rooted in the official pretense that the Caliphate is only spiritual headship, and though he maintained that “Moslems as a whole do not regard a Caliph as analogous to a Pope”, he argued that in “approving” the Arab caliphate it was “perfectly reasonable for us to say that we, for our part, do so regard him”.⁴⁸⁵ In another note by Hogarth he argued that neither Mecca nor Damascus might be regarded as the proper capitals of “the Hashimite Caliphate”, and suggested Baghdad as the capital of the future caliphate.⁴⁸⁶

A. J. Toynbee in his analytical note considered the possibility if Hussein’s political and ecclesiastic authority in the Hejaz were recognized under the Ottoman suzerainty. He suggested, that as such proposals were made to the sharif of Mecca, this showed that the Ottomans continued to attach importance to their pan-Islamic policy.⁴⁸⁷ Toynbee supposed that under successful circumstances that might result in something like Austro-Hungarian Dualism.⁴⁸⁸ Therefore, he stated that “from the point of view of British interests” the Arab movement is a double-edged weapon, which might be used by the Ottoman pan-Islamism.⁴⁸⁹

Therefore, though I did not manage to cover all the topics connected to the Islamic

⁴⁸³ CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.224-front.

⁴⁸⁴ CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.224-back.

⁴⁸⁵ CAB/24/143/0014, “Eastern Report No.16”, May 17, 1917, p.225-front.

⁴⁸⁶ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.206-back.

⁴⁸⁷ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.200-back.

⁴⁸⁸ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.201-front.

⁴⁸⁹ CAB/24/144/0019, “Eastern Report No.44”, November 29, 1917, p.201-front.

question in this overview of the issues discussed in the Eastern reports, I think I provided enough evidence to demonstrate that the Islamic question was considered important in the Eastern reports.

4.4. Changes in covering of Islam in *The Times* in 1917.

While the Eastern reports in 1917 continued to pay attention to all those issues, which provided Islamic question with political significance, the manner of the newspaper articles changed a lot in 1917, so that it is quite problematic to say whether they should be considered as a continuation of the past discussions. They preserve some similarities with the articles of the previous years of the war, but their focus is different.

The concerns for loyalty of Indian Muslims, for which they were so praised in 1914-1916 gives way for the discussion of the home rule for India (like appreciation of that loyalty), demands for home rule,⁴⁹⁰ and some comments against immediate actions.⁴⁹¹

Contrary to the attention which the Arab revolt enjoyed in the Eastern reports, in *The Times* there is only one article devoted the Arab revolt, which reproduces the proclamation of ulema (which gives praises for the sharif Hussein as very religious person, and argues that it is not for the Turkish Jannissaries to decide upon the question of caliphate).⁴⁹²

But much attention is paid to occupation of Baghdad and Jerusalem. The occupation of Baghdad is perhaps the topic that was in 1917 accorded the role similar to the revolt of Mecca in 1916. Though the difference is also evident. The year 1916 was not successful for British in the East (the defeat at the Dardanelles, and surrender at Kut) and the revolt of Mecca was a kind of compensation. As, it was stated in one of the articles: "The Arab leaders are exceedingly shrewd people, and their political judgment is generally sound. They have not been misled by the British withdrawal from the Dardanelles and unfortunate episode of

⁴⁹⁰ "Indian Congress Programme", *the Times*, August 1, 1917, p.5; "Mr. Montagu's Visit To India", *the Times*, November 6, 1917, p.4; "Indian Demand", *the Times*, January 4, 1918, p.5; "Mrs. Besant and India", *the Times*, January 2, 1918, p.7; "Home Rule For India", *the Times*, January 3, 1917, p.7; "Indian reform", *the Times*, December 1, 1917, p.7.

⁴⁹¹ "India And Empire", *the Times*, October 31, 1917, p.5; "Mr. Gokhale's Political Testament", *the Times*, August 15, 1917, p.7.

⁴⁹² "Turkey Under The 'Janissaries'. Orthodox protest from Mecca", *the Times*, March 7, 1917, p.5.

Kut”.⁴⁹³ While the year 1917 was definitely successful from the military point of view, a great number of reports about captures of the cities is the clearest sign of that.

But it is to be noticed, that there existed also the similarities between these two discourses. First of all, the capture of Baghdad, as the revolt of Mecca was connected to the idea of the caliphate. Now it was stressed that Baghdad was the city of the caliphs.⁴⁹⁴ Prosperous city, and a center of learning where “culture famed”,⁴⁹⁵ which got under the Turkish rule, and was turned to poverty. But the past greatness of Bagdad was to signify Arabs' superiority to the Turks (as it is even stated in one of the articles),⁴⁹⁶ as well as the high moral qualities of the sharif of Mecca in 1916, or Lloyd George's suggestion at the beginning of the war that Turks have nothing in common with the highly-educated Arabs and Indians.

Second, the occupation of Baghdad as well as the revolt of the sharif of Mecca was expected to produce a great impact on the Muslim world and to influence the prestige of the Ottoman empire. In *The Manchester Guardian* it is observed that strategically Baghdad is of little importance, but it is “a great disaster to Turkish arms and prestige”.⁴⁹⁷ In articles of *The Times* the importance attached to the fall of Baghdad in the Ottoman empire is stressed. Thus, one of the articles is devoted to “important councils” held in Constantinople in regard to defeat in Mesopotamia.⁴⁹⁸ The other article observes that “the Sheikh-ul-Islam, the principal Musulman ecclesiastic of Constantinople, is said to have been so perturbed by the fall of Baghdad that he has proclaimed a Holy War”, but it is suggested that “he is little late”, as “Islam looks no longer towards Stanbul”.⁴⁹⁹ It is even observed, that the news of fall of Baghdad was welcomed in Jassy where its “moral effect” on Muslim world was appreciated.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹³ “The Revolt of Islam”, *The Times*, June 22, 1916, p.9.

⁴⁹⁴ “Baghdad. The City of the Caliphs”, *The Times*, March 12, 1917, p.10; “The Arab World: Its Past and its Future”, *The Times*, March 30, 1917, p.7; “Victory At Baghdad”, *The Times*, March 12, 1917, p.9.

⁴⁹⁵ “The Fall of Bagdad”, *The Manchester Guardian*, March 12, 1917, p.4.

⁴⁹⁶ The Arab World: Its Past and its Future, *The Times*, March 30, 1917. - P.7.

⁴⁹⁷ “The Fall of Bagdad”, *The Manchester Guardian*, March 12, 1917, p.4.

⁴⁹⁸ “Turkish concentration in Asia Minor”, *The Times*, March 17, 1917, p.6.

⁴⁹⁹ “The Hindenburg Line”, *The Times*, March 22, 1917, p.9.

⁵⁰⁰ “Satisfaction in Rumania”, *The Times*, March 17, 1917, p.6.

The capture of Jerusalem enjoyed even more attention, but as the city was important not only for Islam, but also for Christianity and Judaism, in the articles devoted to this occasion the meaning of this victory for the Muslim world is less emphasized. In regard to Islam it was usually just generally stated that Jerusalem is the third of the Muslim holy cities, and Muslim rights should be respected.⁵⁰¹ It is also commented that the fall of Jerusalem is “a sign that the tyranny of the Turk is doomed end that the dawn of a new freedom is rising over his dominions. To all whom he oppresses - to Greeks and Armenians, to Arabs, Jews, and to Syrians”.⁵⁰² Among more interesting comments on the capture of Jerusalem, is that in one article Jerusalem is called “the proudest of Caliph Omar’s conquests”, and a few lines later when the author proceeds to the Turkish contest he says it “devastated the land”.⁵⁰³ Thus, two events similar in meaning received opposite evaluations. “The Jewish Word is quoted in *The Times* that with the capture of Jerusalem “the greatest Christian and the greatest Mahomedan Power of the world takes to herself a third religious dignity”.⁵⁰⁴ Before the capture of Jerusalem, when the sufferings of believers were described, the Bishop of London publicly “wished that the Turks should be driven out of Europe”,⁵⁰⁵ a statement that definitely could not appear in *The Times* during the previous years because of its possible effect on the Muslim opinion.

The relations between the Ottoman empire and Germany are reported not in the terms of the “German intrigue”. Thus, there appear articles devoted to Turkish mission to the Kaiser,⁵⁰⁶ and Kaiser’s visit to Constantinople⁵⁰⁷ The first of the two also comments on progress from enthusiasm to mistrust in German-Turkish relations. The author observes, that “in spite of this official outward show of respect for Turkey, the Germans in conversation do not scruple to express their contempt for their Turkish ally”, and goes on to recall as at the beginning of the war in Berlin there were held lectures devoted to the Ottoman empire, the

⁵⁰¹ For example: “Jerusalem”, *The Times*, December 11, 1917, p.8; “Jerusalem”, *The Times*, December 11, 1917, p.7.

⁵⁰² “Jerusalem”, *The Times*, December 11, 1917, p.7.

⁵⁰³ “Viceroy in Palestine”, *The Times*, March 30, 1917, p.7.

⁵⁰⁴ “News in brief”, *The Times*, December 12, 1917, p.8.

⁵⁰⁵ “Turkish Cruelties”, *The Times*, February 21, 1917, p.3.

⁵⁰⁶ “Berlin To-Day”, *The Times*, June 15, 1917, p.5.

⁵⁰⁷ “Kaiser in Constantinople”, *The Times*, October 17, 1917, p.7.

courses for Turkish were full, and in the book-shops Turkish grammars were sold in thousands.⁵⁰⁸ But frightened by “this sudden affection”, the Turks passed various laws “making it very plain to the Germans that Turkey is for the Turks”, he observes.

A number of articles is devoted to the mistreatment of Muslims by Germans and Turks. There were articles devoted to the bad treatment,⁵⁰⁹ and articles that emphasized the hostile treatment of Islam. Thus *The Times* publishes a translation of an article in Egyptian newspaper, where the eyewitness tells that sheikh-ul-islam issued a fetva that forbidden the troops to fast, and 17 Arabs were shot in his part for their refusal to obey it.⁵¹⁰ *The Times* also publishes a translation from a letter printed in Arabic in Algiers about hostile attitudes of Germans to Islam in East Africa, where by that moment “German tigers” were hunted by “victorious British forces”.⁵¹¹ In the letter a Muslim from Dar-es-Salaam complains that “the Germans above all transgressed against our benevolent religious law”, forbidden to open schools where Koran is taught, forbade the rite of circumcision, compelled the natives to rear pigs, and kept a strict watch over judges and imams, and “shamefully ill-used them”.⁵¹²

But not only is the mistreatment of Muslim population paid attention. In the article “The 'Clean Fighting Turk'” the author opposes the Old Turk, as really intelligent and religious to the Young Turk, who lacks those positive features. He argues, that for them “the Arabs are to be robbed of tongue and leading; the Armenians are to be exterminated; Christianity is to be abolished in Turkey; Islam is to be overthrown and Shamanism and Fetishism revived”.⁵¹³ There are also 2 articles about Armenian atrocities, which mention Islam and Muslims. One reports that now as Baghdad is captured it is possible to rescue Armenian refugees, living in Muslim families in Baghdad.⁵¹⁴ In the other two Muslim witnesses tell about the decrees to kill Armenians, one of the witnesses recalls, that they brought “‘fetva' from Sheikh-ul-Islam saying that Armenians had shed Muslim blood and that

⁵⁰⁸ “Berlin To-Day”, *The Times*, June 15, 1917, p.5.

⁵⁰⁹ “Turkish Cruelties”, *The Times*, February 21, 1917, p.3; “Turkish Tyranny. Treatment of subject races in Baghdad”, *The Times*, June 22, 1917, p.5.

⁵¹⁰ “Turkish Cruelty To Arab Troops”, *The Times*, September 3, 1917, p.4.

⁵¹¹ “Germany As Oppressor Of Islam”, *The Times*, March 13, 1917, p.5.

⁵¹² “Germany As Oppressor Of Islam”, *The Times*, March 13, 1917, p.5.

⁵¹³ “The 'Clean Fighting Turk'”, *The Times*, February 20, 1917, p.7.

⁵¹⁴ “The Armenian Tragedy”, *The Times*, June 21, 1917, p.5.

it is lawful to kill them”,⁵¹⁵ and that at Trebizond Muslims were warned that “they would be liable to the death penalty if they sheltered Armenians”.⁵¹⁶

However, the German intrigue appears in a number of articles devoted to Persia, India, Spanish Morocco. Some Indian Muslims deported in 1907 by Lord Morley, were reported to go in 1915 to Berlin. There together with the editor of *Islam Fraternity*, an anti-British paper published in Japan, they visited the house of Baron Oppenheim, known for bringing the idea of Caliphate to the German politics.⁵¹⁷ Few months later the “Germanization” of Spanish zone of Morocco is reported to be a problem as the British can't afford to establish “unchecked center of anti-British and anti-French intrigue amongst the Moslem people”.⁵¹⁸ An author of a letter to the editor of *The Times* states: “It is known that Germans were in close touch with the conductors of some of the more seditious Indian Journals, whilst prominent Mohamedan agitators were in constant communication with such German tools as Enver and Talaat bey”.⁵¹⁹ The discontent in the region of the Indian frontier is proclaimed to be the aim of the German intrigue in Persia. It is suggested that German intrigue in Persia should be but in a wider context:

It was common knowledge that before the war began Germany had been engaged in intriguing for the extension of her power to the Indian Ocean with a view to striking at the dominion of Great Britain in India and taking from us the hegemony of the Eastern world. In order to carry out this plan, [] Turkey was to become her slave in order that she might obtain control of the Straits; Egypt was to be menaced; Persia was to be controlled; Afghanistan was to be stirred up. This plot dated as far back as 1890s, when the German Emperor made a theatrical entry into Jerusalem, and afterwards addressed a great meeting and told the 300 millions of the Moslem world to look upon him as their true and only friend. The principal instrument' of this policy was to build the Baghdad Railway.⁵²⁰

I would suggest that this quotation points to German pan-Islamic aspirations.

⁵¹⁵ “The Murder of a Race”, *The Times*, January 1, 1917, p.8.

⁵¹⁶ “The Murder of a Race”, *The Times*, January 1, 1917, p.8.

⁵¹⁷ “German Aid To Indian Sedition”, *the Times*, May 19, 1917, p.5.

⁵¹⁸ “Germans In Spanish Morocco”, *the Times*, October 11, 1917, p.8.

⁵¹⁹ “German Spies”, *the Times*, February 26, 1917, p.7.

⁵²⁰ “The Conduct Of The War”, *the Times*, February 21, 1917, p.10.

There is a report about thousands of propagandist pamphlets seized on board the neutral steamships, with the description of the those items: a brochure intended to the neutral countries entitled “The Neutiality of India to England”, a pamphlet on the Denshawi incident of 1906, about British cruelty, and a pamphlet entitled “Islam’s Glory”, with “a flaming red star and, crescent on the cover”.⁵²¹

The lack of concerns about Muslim opinion differ the newspaper articles of 1917 from the publications of the previous years. The publications of 1914-1916 could be characterized by the phenomenon which K. Karpat calls the politicization of Islam, while in 1917 the articles refer to Islam and Muslims not as political categories, but as religious and cultural. Though there might be suggested a variety of reasons to explain that, the fact that the discourse in the Eastern reports did not change means that it was not the change of the government and the adoption of different views by the British government. The most probable explanation of this change, to my point of view is suggested by the article of *The New York Times* from March 12, 1916. In that article entitled “Islam lurks behind the battle smoke” it is argued that the state can not be sure in the loyalty of its Muslim subjects as long as there is a probability of the military defeat, for in that case the Muslims would side with the winner. Thus, as 1917 was the year of British victories in the Middle East, it should have reduced the concerns about the loyalty of British Muslims.

Arguments of the proclamation of the sharif of Mecca appealed to the religious feelings of the Muslims. Therefore, it is not surprising that the British press in 1916 observed it within the framework of its understanding of the Islamic question, with *The Times* stressing that revolt was not an obstacle for Muslim loyalty, and the local newspapers stating explicitly that it could result in the transfer of the seat of caliphate. The Eastern reports of 1917 also continued to consider the revolt as the central to the British politics in regard to the question of caliphate and the Muslim loyalty. But the press in 1917 did not speak about the revolt at all. Moreover, it practically did not attribute any political significance to religious issues.

⁵²¹ “The Prize Court”, *the Times*, June 29, 1917, p.4.

Conclusion.

On the eve of the Great War the British considered Islam to be a unity under the spiritual leadership of the Caliph. This understanding was the result of the international changes which occurred within the Muslim world during the 19th century. The spiritual leadership of Caliph was significant for the British empire, that had more Muslims, than the Ottoman empire. By the beginning of the Great War the British had both the experience of the uprisings in the Muslim parts of empire that appealed to the religious sentiments. Some of them originated with the attachment of British Muslim subjects to the Caliphate, in others the authority of the Caliph was used by the British to cope with the unrest. But due to Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, Britain could not continue to support the Ottoman empire, which resulted in dissatisfaction of British Muslim subjects during the Balkan wars.

During the Great War these ideas resulted in two separate developments: the concerns about the influence of the Caliph on loyalty of British Muslim subjects and the attempt to change the situation by promoting the transfer of the Caliphate to Arabia.

When in August 1914 the war started in Europe, the concerns about the influence of probable war with the Ottoman empire on the loyalty of British Muslim subjects were widespread. But as Russia was a British ally in the current war, these concerns resulted not in some active policy with the object of winning the Ottoman empire on British side, but only in preserving the Ottoman neutral status. The public opinion in India and Egypt was informed about the German attempts to involve the Ottoman empire into the war. When the Ottoman empire entered the war and the Sultan called the Muslims to jihad, the British refuted his call by a well-developed system of argumentation, which denied the religious character of the war both for the British empire and for the Caliph. The special importance was accorded to the declaration of the inviolability of the Holy places by the Allies, and the appeals by the Muslim leaders to their coreligionists.

At the same time the move of Lord Kitchener to power in 1914 contributed to the fact that the scheme of the Arab Caliphate, that before the war was considered only in Cairo

entered the British politics. In a secret memorandum in September 1914, when the Ottoman empire had not yet entered the war, Clayton suggested that the sharif of Mecca was an obvious candidate to assume the Caliphate. The Russian demands for Constantinople in March 1915 brought the scheme of the Arab Caliphate under the consideration of different departments, which approved of the scheme. It was only when the British Residency in Cairo began to argue for the revolt of the sharif of Mecca, that the India Office opposed the plan. In that discussion both the sides used the arguments about the influence of revolt on the Muslim opinion.

These two separate lines of British policy coincided after the Arab revolt. What was supposed to be a scheme for post-war settlement was used now to undermine the prestige of the Ottoman Caliph, while there were also concerns about the effect of the revolt on British Muslim subjects.

Though the Arab revolt is usually considered as national, it should be remembered that the proclamation of sharif of Mecca appealed to the religious feelings of the Muslims. The way the revolt was considered in the British press was determined by the pre-war understanding of the Islamic question. *The Times*, which was circulated throughout the empire stressed that revolt was not an obstacle for the Muslim loyalty, and was a predictable result of the German interference in the matters of Islam. While the local newspapers did not refrain from stating explicitly that the revolt might result in the transfer of the seat of Caliphate.

The Eastern reports of 1917 also continued to consider the revolt as the central to the the British politics in regard to the question of caliphate and the Muslim loyalty. But the press in 1917 did not attribute the political significance to the questions of religion. It might be suggested the British victories in 1917 reduced their concerns about the loyalty of British Muslim subjects.

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Appendix: Tables on the sources.

Table 1: The quantity of articles devoted to the Islamic question in *The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian*, and *The Observer* during 1914-1917.

	August-October 1914 (Ottoman neutrality)	November- December 1914	1915	1916	1917
The Times	8	50	51 ⁵²²	49	45 ⁵²³
The Manchester Guardian	2	5	9	6	20
The Observer	-	8	7 ⁵²⁴	3	-

Table 2: The topics of *the Times* articles in 1917 connected to the question of Islam.

India and Home rule	Baghdad + Jerusalem	Cultural news: celebrations, awards, deaths	Armenian case	Turkey, Germany, enemy propaganda and Islam
8	6 + 13	7	2	16

Table 3: The Islamic question in the Eastern reports (1917) – 1.

As each of the reports provides information about the progress of the Arab revolt, in the table these accounts are not taken into consideration. Only the issues connected to Islam are considered in the table.

	Muslim opinion ⁵²⁵	Question of pilgrimage	Caliphate
Quantity of reports that discuss the issue	27	9	13
Quantity of reports that mention the issue	2	3	4

⁵²² Including 5 articles on Armenian massacres, which are included as they mention Abdul Hamid and islamization.

⁵²³ The details on this number are considered in Table 2.

⁵²⁴ 2 articles on Armenian cruelties are not included, as they do not raise questions of religion.

⁵²⁵ German sedition, India and Hejaz, Christian troops in the Holy places

Table 4: The Islamic question in the Eastern reports (1917) – 2.

“+” the issue is discussed

“+/-” the issue is mentioned

“-” the issue is not discussed

Eastern report No., date	Muslim opinion	Question of pilgrimage	Caliphate
1; January 10, 1917	+	-	-
1; February 1, 1917	+	-	+/-
2; February 7, 1917	+	-	-
3; February 14, 1917	+	-	-
4; February 21, 1917	+	-	-
5; February 28, 1917	+	-	+
6; March 7, 1917	+	-	-
7; March 15, 1917	+	+	+
8; March 22, 1917	+	+	+/-
9; March 29, 1917	+	+	-
10; April 4, 1917	-	+	-
11; April 12, 1917	-	-	-
12; April 19, 1917	+	-	+
13; April 26, 1917	-	+	-
14; May 3, 1917	+	-	-
15; May 10, 1917	+/-	-	+
16; May 17, 1917	-	-	+
17; May 24, 1917	-	-	-
18; May 31, 1917	+	+/-	-
20; June 14, 1917	-	+	+
21; June 21, 1917	+	+	+
22; June 28, 1917	-	-	+
23; July 5, 1917	-	-	-
24; July 11, 1917	-	-	-
25; July 19, 1917	-	+/-	-
26, July 26, 1917	+	-	-
27, August 2, 1917	-	-	+/-
28, August 9, 1917	-	-	+
29, August 16, 1917	+	-	-
30, August 23, 1917	+/-	-	-
31, August 29, 1917	-	-	-
32, September 6, 1917	-	-	+
33, September 14, 1917	+	-	-

34, September 19, 1917	+	-	-
35, September 26, 1917	-	+	-
36, October 4, 1917	-	-	-
37, October 11, 1917	+	-	-
38, October 18, 1917	+	-	+
39, October 25, 1917	+	-	-
40, November 1, 1917	+	-	+
41, November 8, 1917	+	-	-
42, November 16, 1917	+	+	-
43, November 22, 1917	+	-	-
44, November 29, 1917	+	-	+
45, December 6, 1917	-	-	+/-
46, December 13, 1917	+	-	-