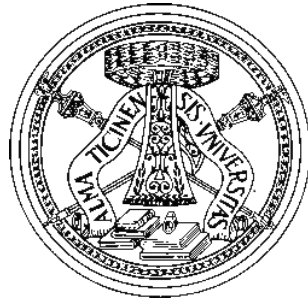


UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PAVIA

Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Sociali

Dottorato di ricerca in Storia



**“THE TRANSIMPERIAL IDENTITIES OSCILLATING
BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE KINGDOM
OF ITALY (1861-1923)”**

Relatore:

Chiar.mo Professore Associato Marco PINFARI

Correlatore:

Chiar.mo Professore Ordinario Massimo ZACCARIA

**Tesi di dottorato di ricerca di
Nurkan SEVER**

Anno accademico 2025/2026

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the study entitled “The Transimperial Identities Oscillating Between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy (1861-1923),” submitted as a doctoral dissertation, is my own original work; that it has been produced in accordance with the principles of academic integrity and research ethics; and that all sources utilized have been appropriately acknowledged and cited. (15 April 2026)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Massimo Zaccaria, who never spared his support throughout this long and arduous process and whose office door was always open to me. Professor Zaccaria was not only my thesis advisor, but also my mentor, guiding me towards various opportunities and encouraging me to develop my academic network.

I would like to mention a few people who played a significant role in broadening my academic vision and in shaping this thesis, either directly or indirectly. Professor Vera Costantini of Ca' Foscari University of Venice expanded my professional network and intellectual horizons by inviting me to join the *Associazione Amicizia Italia-Turchia* and to attend the International Congress on Ottoman Studies (OSARK). Professor Henning Sievert from Heidelberg University provided additional thesis guidance during my studies there, encouraged my participation in seminars and lectures, and offered me the opportunity to present my thesis findings to the *Islamwissenschaft* community. Lara Gülmez was an excellent teaching assistant and a valuable companion during the four-month Turkish language course that I taught at the *Centro Linguistico* of the University of Pavia. Thanks to his native English skills, my friend Oscar Bermudez proved to be a great help with the proofreading processes of both my thesis and my articles. I would also like to thank archivist Francesca Cinquina and her assistant Giuliano Rampotti for their invaluable support during my research at the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ASDMAE) in Rome's *Farnesina*. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Alessandro Maranesi, Rector of *Collegio Ghislieri*, for extending my stay at *Ca' della Paglia* and sparing me the trouble of relocating during this complicated period.

Finally, I would like to mention that my dear family has always supported me in overcoming all the material and emotional difficulties I encountered during this demanding process. Without their unconditional love and support, this long and exhausting journey would certainly have been incomplete.

ABSTRACT

“THE TRANSIMPERIAL IDENTITIES OSCILLATING BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE KINGDOM OF ITALY (1861-1923)”

Sever, Nurkan

PhD Dissertation

PhD Programme in History, Department of Political and Social Sciences,
Università di Pavia

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Marco Pinfari, Co-Supervisor: Prof. Massimo Zaccaria

15 April 2026

The present study examines the transimperial character of Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire, its ethnocultural origins, and the transformation process it underwent after the 1911 Italo-Ottoman War. To this end, the study will firstly theorize the formation and evolution of Italo-Levantine identity, explore its demographic background and composition, and elaborate on its extraterritoriality, which is of a pragmatic nature. In addressing this subject, the study will also explore the role of Italian Jews, who have oscillated between confessional and imperial affiliations since the fifteenth century, in the formation of this identity. Moreover, the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861 signified an evolutionary turning point for the Italo-Levantine community within the Ottoman Empire. This incident subsequently led to post-Risorgimento migrations, characterized by a heightened political sentiment and a strong sense of homeland affiliation. This generation, integrated into the Venetian and Genoese colonies that had been settled for centuries in port cities such as Istanbul and Izmir, also introduced a civic awareness. This diasporic amalgamation within the Ottoman Empire, characterized by its intergenerational and transimperial nature, derived its legal authority from the capitulatory regime, which flourished on the basis of extraterritoriality. As illustrated by the typological classification and the individual cases presented in this study, the pragmatic flexibility of this identity was evident in the practices of naturalization.

The second half of the thesis engages with the wartime transformation of Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire from “capitulatory protégés” to “enemy aliens” following the 1911 invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania. This transformation, which intensified with Italy's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire in 1915, resulted in the marginalization of Italians both institutionally and individually, and their inclusion into a program of demographic design. For a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of “enemy alien,” its historical and conceptual background and its connection to Italian extraterritoriality within the Ottoman context are explored. The final part of the thesis consists of a case study based on the phenomenon of “transimperial jurisdiction” that emerged between the Ottoman and Italian regimes after the 1912 occupation of the Dodecanese. The intersection of Italian colonialism, Greek irredentism, and the Ottoman legacy fostered the transformation of the centuries-old Aegean capitulations into civic designs specific to the region, such as Aegean status and citizenship.

Keywords: Transimperial identities, Italo-Levantines, Italian Jews, extraterritoriality, Ottoman capitulations, naturalization, enemy aliens

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF IMAGES AND TABLES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. CONSTRUCTING A TRANSIMPERIAL HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE ITALO-LEVANTINES.....	27
1.1. An Analytical Overview of the “Mediterranean Imaginaries” of Levantinism.....	29
1.2. Ideological and Revolutionary Origins of the Italo-Ottoman Encounters (1821-1897).....	35
1.3. Migratory Patterns and Diasporic Formations of the Italians.....	40
1.3.1. Theoretical and Conceptual Approaches on Italian Migration and Italian Diaspora.....	43
1.3.2. Reproduction of Public Space within the Italian Diasporic Entities.....	49
1.4. Categorical Formation of “Levantine” as a Transimperial Identity Model (1261-1908).....	53
1.4.1. Linguistic and Ethnocultural Patterns in the Formation of Levantine Identity...62	
1.4.2. Socioeconomic and Institutional Patterns in the Formation of Levantine Identity.....	68
2. DEMOGRAPHIC ORIGINS, COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ITALIAN COMMUNITY WITHIN THE OTTOMAN DOMAINS.....	72
2.1. A Brief Overview on the Demographic Distribution and Figures of Italians as of 1871.....	74
2.2. “Italian Jew” as a Hybrid Identity Oscillating Between Confessional and Imperial Affiliations Since the Fifteenth Century.....	86
2.2.1. Emergence of Italo-Jewish Networks in Ottoman Geography.....	91
3. PRAGMATIC FLEXIBILITY OF THE ITALIAN SUBJECT: NAVIGATING BETWEEN EMPIRES AND IDENTITIES.....	98
3.1. Italian Extraterritoriality in the Ottoman Empire from the Perspective of International Law.....	101
3.2. Naturalization: An Adaptive Strategy for the Individual and a Demographic Design for the State.....	106
3.2.1. Obtaining Italian Protection: “Instrumental Naturalization (1861-1911)” and “Postwar Naturalization (1919-1923)” of the Ottoman Jews.....	116
3.2.2. Avoiding Wartime Expulsion: “Defensive Naturalization” of the Italian Jews (1911-1918).....	128
3.2.3. Eliasciars: Identity Struggle of a Judeo-Italian Family from Jerusalem to Pisa (1911-1922).....	140
3.3. Religious Conversion as a Method of Adaptation and Social Survival.....	155

3.3.1. The Case of Giulia Franzoni as a Marginal Manifestation of Marital Conversion.....	156
4. FROM CAPITULATORY PROTÉGÉ TO ENEMY ALIEN: INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL MARGINALIZATION OF ITALIANS (1911-1916).....	165
4.1. Historical and Extraterritorial Conceptualization of the Enemy Alien.....	168
4.2. Wartime Restriction, Marginalization and Deactivation of Italian Institutional Functions, Services, and Manpower (1911-1916).....	173
4.2.1. Exploring the Origins of Ottoman Concerns Regarding Wartime Espionage.....	186
4.2.2. Wartime Integration of Various Italian Institutions into Ottoman Public Utilities.....	190
4.2.3. Mass Dismissal of Italian Railway Employees during the First World War....	199
4.3. Travel Restrictions Imposed on the Departures of Italian Nationals (1914-1915).....	208
4.3.1. The Efforts of Ambassador Garroni to Lift Ottoman Restrictions.....	212
4.3.2. Situation Subsequent to the Italian Declaration of War.....	217
5. WARTIME REDESIGN: RELOCATION, RESETTLEMENT AND EXPULSION OF ITALIANS (1911-1918).....	223
5.1. Expulsion of Italians Following the Bombardment of Beirut and the Occupation of the Dodecanese (February 25 and May 22, 1912).....	225
5.2. The 1915, 1916, and 1918 Population Censuses Covering Italian Residents.....	247
5.3. Relocation of Italian Residents from Railway Corridors, Coastal Areas, and Military Engagement Zones (1915-1917).....	264
5.3.1. Relocation of Kostantin (Amédée Ivoy): An Italian Employee of the Singer Company in Izmit.....	268
5.3.2. Relocation of Edmond Dussi: The Former British Consul in Tekfurdağı.....	270
5.4. Relocation and Resettlement of Italian Jews in the Syrian Levant.....	272
6. A CASE STUDY ON OTTOMAN-ITALIAN TRANSIMPERIAL JURISDICTION: THE AEGEAN ISLANDS (1912-1936).....	278
6.1. Dodecanese: An Archipelago where Italian Colonialism, Greek Irredentism and the Ottoman Legacy Collide.....	281
6.1.1. The Regime Transformation from an Ottoman Province to an Italian Colonial Possession.....	288
6.1.2. Role of the Pro-Hellenic Press in the Promotion of Anti-Italian Sentiment...	296
6.2. Aegean Capitulations as an Instrument of Civic and Institutional Continuity.....	312
6.2.1. A Retrospective Look at the Aegean Capitulations in the Hellenic Context...	319
6.2.2. A Confusing Legacy of the Former Regime: The Ottoman Institution of Slavery.....	330
6.3. Aegean Citizenship: A Civic Status Specific to the Italian-Occupied Dodecanese....	333
CONCLUSION.....	351
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	364

LIST OF IMAGES AND TABLES

ARCHIVAL IMAGES

Archival Image 1: The Council of State decree authorizing Vittorio Macchioro to renounce his Ottoman status and become an Italian national.....	123
Archival Image 2: The list detailing the personal information and application status of Italian nationals who applied for Ottoman naturalization pursuant to the Supreme Decree of 5 October 1911.....	135
Archival Image 3: The passport issued by the Italian Consulate General in Istanbul on 7 March 1867 to Jakoub Saül Eliasciar, who was born in Pisa and domiciled in Jerusalem.....	143
Archival Image 4: Four-point letter sent by Baruham Eliasciar to the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem on 9 May 1911, in an attempt to endorse and justify the naturalization applications of Eleazar and Avram.....	145
Archival Image 5: Telegram sent by the Directorate General for Private Affairs of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem on 9 March 1914, referring to Giuseppe Eliasciar's Italian citizenship.....	148
Archival Image 6: The document stating that Mareno Eliasciar (incorrectly written as Eliancio) has no civic affiliation with the Commune of Pisa.....	150
Archival Image 7: The certificate issued by the Italian Consulate in Beirut in 1915, verifying Mareno Eliasciar's Italian nationality.....	152
Archival Image 8: The form sent by the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem to the Prefecture of Pisa in 1922, requesting the issuance of a <i>nulla osta</i> certificate for Mareno Eliasciar.....	153
Archival Image 9: Jules Boggetti's petition submitted to the Hüdâvendigâr Governorate on 21 December 1915, requesting permission to travel from Bursa to Istanbul.....	184
Archival Image 10: The original letter written by İsmet İnönü, head of the Turkish Delegation in Lausanne, to the British Delegate Sir Horace Rumbold. Copies of the same letter were also sent to the French Delegate Maurice Pellé and the Italian Delegate Giulio Cesare Montagna.....	198
Archival Image 11: The note verbale issued by the American Embassy on 13 September 1915, regarding the dismissal of Signor Pesarini.....	201
Archival Image 12: The list displaying the French and Italian nationals employed by the Damascus-Hama Railway and Extensions, and by the Port of Beirut, who were held hostage in the Ottoman Empire.....	205
Archival Image 13: The Supreme Decree of 25 February 1912 stipulated the expulsion of Italian nationals domiciled in the Provinces of Beirut, Syria, Aleppo, and the Sanjaks of Jerusalem and Mount Lebanon and, in an amendment on March 24, exempted all Italian clergymen in the region from expulsion.....	229
Archival Image 14: The circular, issued by the Minister of the Interior, Talât Pasha, on 30 May 1915, specifying the recipient provinces and requesting information regarding the Italian populations therein.....	251

Archival Image 15-16: The circular, issued by the Minister of the Interior, Talât Pasha, on 12 August 1916, dividing the recipient provinces into two groups —coastal and inland— and requesting information regarding the Italian populations therein.....	256-257
Archival Image 16-17: Italian populations in Ottoman provinces as of June and August 1918.....	262-263
Archival Image 18: Telegram written by 26 Italian Jewish families in Beirut and dispatched by American Consul General Stanley Hollis to the American Embassy in Istanbul on 17 December 1915.....	275
Archival Image 19: Imperial edict authorizing the Qadi of Rhodes to wear the <i>Ordine della Corona d'Italia</i>	311
Archival Image 20: First page of the memorandum issued by the Permanent Committee on 22 June 1912.....	322

NEWSPAPER IMAGES

Newspaper Image 1: "The bombardment of Beirut caused a severe shock in Turkey but was accepted calmly in France. Will the Italians be subject to expulsion from the Ottoman Empire?," <i>Il Piccolo di Trieste</i> , 26 February 1912.....	230
Newspaper Image 2: "The Italo-Turkish War - The Ottoman Council of Ministers decides to expel Italians from Syria and Beirut," <i>L'Italia Centrale</i> , 27 February 1912.....	232
Newspaper Image 3: "The expulsion of Italians from Asian Turkey and Constantinople - Comments from the Italian and foreign press on the sinking of two Turkish ships in Beirut - News of the Beirut incident provokes enthusiasm in Tripoli," <i>Giornale di Udine</i> , 27 Febbraio February 1912.....	235
Newspaper Image 4: Governor General of Beirut, Hâzım Bey "When Beirut was bombarded by the Italians last February, Hâzım Bey's composure, fortitude, and self-sacrifice earned him the admiration and respect of everyone, both local and foreign.".....	238
Newspaper Image 5: Iconic cover of the Italian newspaper <i>La Domenica del Corriere</i> illustrating the ultimate surrender of the Ottoman troops at Psinthos to General Ameglio on 16 May 1912.....	293
Newspaper Image 6: Qadi Ahmed Şâkir Efendi, The Supreme Judge of the Muslims in the Vilayet of the Archipelago, at the Sulaymaniyah Mosque of Rhodes.....	300

BOOK IMAGES

Book Image 1-2: Chief Secretary of the Beirut Province, Abdülğanî Seniyy Bey, and the cover of his book titled "The Bombardment of Beirut".....	237
Book Image 3: The front page of Stéphanopoli's booklet.....	325

Book Image 4: Cover page of the refutation published by the Ottoman government to disprove Stéphanopoli's claims.....	326

TABLES

Table 1: Number of Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire's direct and indirect dominions as of December 1871.....	77
Table 2: Consular censuses conducted for Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.....	78
Table 3: Demographic Profiles of Italian Residents in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.....	79
Table 4: Distribution of Northern Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.....	80
Table 5: Distribution of Central Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.....	81
Table 6: Distribution of Southern Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.....	82
Table 7: The occupational composition of Italian nationals in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.....	84-85
Table 8: The list detailing the personal information and application status of Italian nationals who applied for Ottoman naturalization pursuant to the Supreme Decree of 5 October 1911.....	133-134
Table 9: The list displaying the French and Italian nationals employed by the Damascus-Hama Railway and Extensions, and by the Port of Beirut, who were held hostage in the Ottoman Empire.....	206
Table 10: Italian male and female populations in Ottoman provinces as of June 1915.....	250-251
Table 11: Italian male and female populations in Ottoman provinces as of August 1916.....	254-255
Table 12: Italian populations in Ottoman provinces as of June and August 1918.....	260

MAPS

Map 1: The map illustrating the geographical distribution of the Jewish population and their movements across the Italian peninsula circa 1730.....	88

INTRODUCTION

The principal theme of this study, which you now hold in your hands, broadly revolves around the processes of construction and transformation of Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire. To this end, the study will primarily examine the transimperial character, ethnocultural origins, demographic composition, and historical evolution of this identity. The components that constitute this identity are sociocultural hybridity, linguistic plurality, geographical mobility, religious and denominational fluidity, and multiple political affiliations. In this regard, I intend to develop an analysis that progresses from the collective to the individual. Thus, as a first step, I will situate the Italo-Levantine diaspora, which is part of a broader Mediterranean imaginary, within a framework of “temporal continuity” and “spatial integrity.” The Italo-Levantine identity, which has prevailed since the thirteenth century through merchant colonies in Ottoman territories, has historically been identified with Christian affiliation and Western origins. However, it is essential to explore the Judeo-Italian codes implicated in the formation of this identity and to map its Judeo-Italian extensions across diverse geographical regions. Therefore, ensuring this temporal continuity and spatial integrity also requires navigating multiple religious affiliations dispersed across various periods and geographical areas.

The establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861 also marked the first instance of the concept of Italian citizenship being addressed within a constitutional framework. Moreover, this year may also be regarded as the inception of transimperial identities gaining civic awareness of their homeland, despite their geographical distance from the Italian peninsula. Indeed, the forms of constitutional citizenship offered by the Kingdom of Italy functioned as a kind of invitation to the homeland or a return to their roots for a proportion of the Italo-Levantine diaspora dispersed across the globe. Furthermore, this date is significant in terms of the onset of mass post-Risorgimento emigration from the Italian peninsula, predominantly to the Americas and select Western European destinations. I am convinced that a framework based upon temporal continuity and spatial integrity will facilitate the interpretation of generational transfers and tensions between these post-Risorgimento migrations and the established Italo-Levantine colonies. My principal objective at this juncture is to question whether this structure, which evolved from colony to diaspora over the centuries and acquired a collective memory, gained a constitutional/civic/national consciousness after 1861.

The extraterritoriality and civic pragmatism of such a transimperial identity will constitute another focal point of this study at this stage. The Italian identity, designated as a Capitulatory Protégé in Ottoman territories, represents a shared and sometimes fragmented jurisdiction and an ambivalent legal sphere. Therefore, I will devote considerable space to the international legal context and attempt to disaggregate the identity into its legal and civic layers. The topic of civic pragmatism will be examined through two approaches: individual and institutional – that is to say, state-centered. Individual-based civic pragmatism will be researched through the transimperial individual’s period-specific tendencies towards Italian or Ottoman naturalization practices. Institutional or state-centered pragmatism will be examined through the prism of citizenship designs introduced to the Dodecanese by Italian colonialism following the 1912 occupation. This period of occupation also paved the way for the formation of a “transimperial jurisdiction” where Italian colonialism, Greek irredentism, and the Ottoman bureaucratic legacy collided. To situate all these processes within a theoretical framework, I intend to present a robust conceptualization grounded in a broad literature.

A substantial proportion of the study will also engage with the “wartime transformation” of Italian residents in the Ottoman realm and their “institutional and individual marginalization.” In this regard, the Italian occupation of Ottoman Tripolitania (modern-day Libya) in 1911 and Italy’s declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire in August 1915 will frequently feature in the thesis as two important breaking points.¹ At this juncture, the primary objective is to explore the shifting status of the Italian individual from “capitulatory protégé” to “enemy alien” during this tumultuous period. The institution-level measures that were applied to Italians comprised mass dismissals, sectoral exclusions, and the expropriation of certain institutions by the state. On the other hand, the individual-level measures ranged from travel restrictions targeting freedom of movement, to regional or empire-wide demographic programs involving relocation, resettlement and even expulsion. Therefore, I intend to scrutinize the pejorative connotations attributed to Italian identity during this period as well as the institutional and sociocultural erosion experienced by Italian individuals. A historical and theoretical analysis of the concept of enemy alien and the revelation of its precursors in international law and political philosophy will facilitate a more profound investigation. Exploration of the areas where wartime conditions intersect with naturalization practices will provide valuable insights into how the civic pragmatism of the “Italian subject” evolved.²

Contextual, Temporal, and Spatial Focus

Despite my initial inclination to title this study *Transcultural Encounters, Interactions, and Controversies Between Italians and Ottomans within the Levantine Provinces under Wartime Conditions (1911-1919)*, narrowing the contextual, temporal, and spatial focus of the subject proved to be an extremely challenging task. This is due to the shared historical experience of Italy and the region, which dates back to the early Middle Ages. This shared history can be

¹ The Ottoman Province of Tripolitania, comprising the regions of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, was an administrative division within the Ottoman Empire, officially known as the *Trablusgarb Eyâleti / Vilâyeti* and unofficially as the Western Hearths (*Garb Ocakları*). This administrative division was comprised of the Sanjaks of Tripoli, Homs, Jebel al-Gharbi, Fezzan and Benghazi, and existed from 1551 until 1912, with certain adjustments. In certain sources, the Tripolitanian region is referred to as Ottoman Libya, and the Italo-Ottoman War (Turkish: *Trablusgarb Savaşı*) is referred to as the Libyan War or Libyan Campaign (Italian: *La guerra / campagna di Libia*). In consideration of the historical context of the ancient Libyan designation, which dates back to 2000 BCE, this naming can in principle be regarded as neither geographically anachronistic nor incongruous. However, it should be noted that the designation “Libya,” which also denotes the modern-day country, did not gain official recognition until the unification of Italian Tripolitania and Cyrenaica into a single colony in 1934. Consequently, in this study, the term “Libya” has been avoided as much as possible when discussing the occupation and the war, and the designations “Ottoman Tripolitania” and “Tripolitanian War” have been preferred instead. However, it is important to recognize that in any potential instances where the toponym “Libya” appears, the region in question undoubtedly refers to the Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, regardless of whether it was under Italian or Ottoman rule.

² Despite the utilization of the term “Italian subjects” throughout this study, it is imperative to acknowledge that this does not imply “Ottoman subjecthood.” Instead, the term denotes Italian nationals who, while technically subject to the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, were legally protected by Italian consular jurisdiction. As will be demonstrated in later chapters, the majority of Italians in the Ottoman Empire did not hold Ottoman subject status, in contrast to the Orthodox Greeks and Armenians. However, it is evident that all Italian nationals residing within the Ottoman Empire extensively benefited from the rights, freedoms, privileges and opportunities stipulated within capitulatory agreements. The mutual transitions between Italian nationality and Ottoman subjecthood, as well as the ontological and anachronistic differences between the concepts of citizenship, nationality and subjecthood will be examined in detail under the heading “Naturalization: An Adaptive Strategy for the Individual and a Demographic Design for the State.”

traced through the existence of the Republic of Venice, which was a nominal extension of the Byzantine Empire, and the Republic of Genoa, which had a mercantile colony in Constantinople.³ The historical ties between Venice and Constantinople extend back to an even earlier period, such as the era of the Exarchate of Ravenna (584–751). Although Venice emerged and developed as an autonomous duchy, it also existed in a symbolic and nominal capacity as an extension of the Byzantine Empire, if not administratively. Furthermore, the Genoese, who had initially established a merchant colony in Constantinople under the Treaty of Nymphaeum in 1261, began to reap the benefits of the capitulations granted by the Ottoman state in the fourteenth century. On the other hand, following its rapid expansion in the fifteenth century, the Ottoman Empire eventually came to share a border with the Venetian Republic. These developments would transform the two Italian maritime republics and the Ottoman Empire into parties conducting diplomacy, engaging in trade, and waging war against each other. The shared destiny of the Italian peninsula and the Ottoman Empire was now firmly and irreversibly sealed.

Although I initially employed the term “Ottoman Italian,” I subsequently recognized that this expression was both historically and conceptually ambiguous and misleading. Firstly, such usage appeared to evoke a profile with an Italian ethnic or national identity and an Ottoman political affiliation. In contrast to the Greeks and Armenians, who were incorporated within the confines of the Ottoman *millet* system, no such distinct Italian ethnicity was recognized in the constitutional framework of the Ottoman state. Secondly, the development of a national identity among Italians in the Ottoman Empire was a process that began in the nineteenth century. Therefore, defining an Italo-Levantine individual whose spatial affiliation with the Ottoman Empire extended back to the thirteenth century as an “Ottoman Italian” was both conceptually problematic and temporally anachronistic. Consequently, I have adopted the term “Italo-Levantines” in contexts pertaining to the formation and origins of identity, and the terms “Italians in the Ottoman Empire” and “the Italians within the Ottoman realm” in contexts relating to civic status and wartime transformation.

From this perspective, the designation “Italo-Levantines” serves to position this identity as part of an extensive diaspora within the broader Mediterranean basin. However, the designation “Italians in the Ottoman Empire” positions the identity as an imperial subject living and operating within Ottoman borders but also possessing civic and national connections to the homeland. As will be discussed in more detail in the sections on naturalization, Italo-Levantines within the Ottoman realm, while of Italian origin, may not yet be Italian citizens or nationals on a legal basis, depending on the circumstances. Moreover, among those who were naturalized as Italians in the Ottoman Empire, there were also individuals of Jewish, Armenian, and Greek origin, alongside Italo-Levantines. Therefore, even if they had established civic and national ties with the Italian state, not every Italian citizen in the context of naturalization was necessarily of Italo-Levantine origin.

³ In this study, the toponymy of Constantinople has been favored for topics relating to Istanbul’s history prior to the Ottoman conquest in 1453. The original toponymy of Constantinople has been faithfully preserved in the direct quotation of institutional names from consulate documents (e.g., American Embassy Constantinople). In a similar manner, the original toponymy of Constantinople has been meticulously preserved in the translations of newspaper headlines (e.g., *L’espulsione degli italiani dalla Turchia asiatica e da Costantinopoli*) and company and institutional titles (e.g., *Société du Chemin de fer Ottoman Jonction Salonique-Constantinople*).

A further foundational element of the Italo-Levantines in the Ottoman Empire would be the Italian Jews, who have been oscillating between religious and imperial affiliations since the fifteenth century. A significant proportion of these Jews were Sephardim who relocated to the Italian peninsula following the Iberian Expulsion of 1492, while the remainder were *Italkim* and Roman Jews who had been settled in the Italian peninsula since ancient times. Given the advancing Aragonese expansionism and increasing Catholic pressure, many of these Jews would leave Italy, with their destinations being Ottoman cities such as Salonika, Istanbul, and Izmir. Through its integration into the Venetian commercial sphere, this Italo-Jewish community would establish commercial, religious, and charitable networks between Italian and Ottoman port cities. Within the Ottoman realm, they would form their own trading diaspora and religious congregation, even leveraging their commercial influence to assume diplomatic roles in the Ottoman court. Demonstrating a pragmatic flexibility in the face of the challenging wartime conditions of the twentieth century, the Italian Jew constituted one of the most compelling examples of transimperial identity forms that oscillated between the Kingdom of Italy and the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, an investigation into the affiliational preferences of such a situational and strategic identity in the twentieth century necessitates the tracing of its ethnocultural origins back to the fifteenth century.

This deep-rooted and sophisticated heritage indicates that an analysis of Italy's diasporic presence in the Ottoman Empire cannot be conducted in isolation or within a specific time frame without considering the principles of causality and continuity. The long-standing sociocultural bonds between the Venetians, Genoese, and the Orthodox Greeks underwent a significant transformation with the conquest of Constantinople, resulting in the emergence of a set of sociocultural codes that persisted until the post-Risorgimento migrations.⁴ In the meantime, the substantial influx of Jews to the Ottoman port cities resulted in the establishment of an Italo-Jewish community, which became part of the existing Italo-Levantine diaspora. This extensive historical trajectory, characterized by colonies, migrations, and shifting allegiances, extended to Italian imperialism, colonialism, and fascism, which were instrumental in shaping the ideological underpinnings of both world wars. The Italian expansionism that was fueled by the

⁴ The post-Risorgimento migrations that began after 1861 and took on a mass character should not be confused with the waves of political and revolutionary exiles who refused to integrate into the Kingdom of Italy during the unification process (1815-1861), fleeing or being expelled from the country. It's evident that these non-mass, ideological, and elite-dominated movements during the Risorgimento period were more political and profession-based exile movements than labor migrations. These waves of exile included partisans such as *Carbonari* members, Mazzini-supporting republicans, and liberal constitutionalists, as well as professional groups such as journalists, printers, engineers, doctors, officers, and sailors. The vast majority of Post-Risorgimento emigrants who left the country *en masse* between 1861 and 1914 due to issues such as rural poverty, tax burdens, military service, and land problems were Southern Italians. The predominant destinations for post-Risorgimento migration were the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Western European countries such as France and Switzerland. The Ottoman Empire, which offered no assurance of land, possessed limited industry, and featured prominent language and legal differences, was not very attractive to Italians and remained a secondary choice of destination. For a comprehensive and sophisticated study on the revolutionary, political, and ideological migrations of the Risorgimento period, please refer to: Maurizio Isabella, *Risorgimento in Exile: Italian Émigrés and the Liberal International in the Post-Napoleonic Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). The volume edited by Gabaccia and Ottanelli offers an exhaustive reading on post-Risorgimento migrations: Donna Gabaccia and Fraser Ottanelli, eds., *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

dream of reviving Ancient Rome had set out to rediscover and revive its ancient ties with North Africa, the Aegean, and Anatolia.

At this juncture, I concluded that a time-framed analysis exclusively based on a periodization inherent to the twentieth century would be both limited and insufficient and would fail to articulate the argument of this study. The contextualization and elaboration of the forms of transimperial encounter, interaction, and conflict between Italy and the Ottoman Empire in the twentieth century can only be achieved by bringing their historical patterns back to the surface. In a similar manner, while the spatial focus of the study is the Ottoman Levant, the contextual background of the study would be incomplete without mentioning the Peloponnese, where Italian republicanism and Hellenism intersect, or without addressing the Italian colony in Egypt, from which the mass migrations originated. Consequently, the Italian-Ottoman encounters at the beginning of the twentieth century were, in fact, rooted in transcultural forms within a shared Mediterranean existence. It is precisely for this reason that I believe such encounters, which transcend both periodic and geographical limitations, must be placed within a dialogical framework that possesses both temporal continuity and spatial integrity.

As previously stated, the scope of the research extends from the Genoese, who began to settle in Byzantine Constantinople in the thirteenth century, to the Italian Jews, who formed their own congregation in Ottoman Istanbul in the fifteenth century. This can be attributed to the fact that signs of extraterritoriality in “transimperial identities” – the central focus of the study – can be traced back to the capitulations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Nevertheless, I have chosen 1861, a critical juncture in the Risorgimento process, as the point of departure for the historical framework of the thesis. The most significant reason for this is that prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy, there was no evidence of the formation of a nation-state or any territorial affiliation with a sociopolitical character. Following the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861, a sense of citizenship with a monarchical and political character began to take root, acquiring both a juridical and civic repertoire. Although there is extant documentation of capitulation charters manifesting the permeability between Italian and Ottoman affiliations dating back to a much earlier period, the civic flexibility and pragmatism of transimperial identities first emerged during the process of Italian nation-state building. The civic consciousness encouraged by constitutional forms of citizenship provided attractive opportunities, such as naturalization practices, not only for Italians in the Ottoman Empire but also for Italians worldwide. The revival of their origins in the Italian homeland through *jus sanguinis* or the facilitation of civic ties with the Italian peninsula through capitulatory protection promoted the personal interests of Italo-Levantines. Furthermore, the naturalization practice would become one of the most significant instruments for avoiding the wartime measures imposed by the Ottoman Empire. In this regard, transimperialism between the two states after the Risorgimento acquired a civic context, but unfortunately, this context has not received sufficient attention in the literature. It is evident that the under-researched nature of the civic transformation of Italo-Ottoman transimperialism constitutes one of the driving forces behind this study. This dearth of research inspired me to investigate the Ottoman extensions of the constitutional citizenship designs introduced by the Italian royal vision.

The primary rationale for selecting 1923 as the temporal endpoint is that the Ottoman Empire, which had exercised sovereignty across three continents between 1299 and 1922, had by then completely withdrawn from the global stage and formally ceded its position to the newly established Republic of Turkey. One of the primary issues addressed by the new republic, as

stipulated in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, pertained to the “capitulatory regime” that the Ottomans had endorsed over the centuries. This extraterritorial repertoire, through which the great powers benefited from numerous rights and privileges by being part of a transimperial jurisdiction, was no longer desired in the new and independent Republic of Turkey. Following its unilateral abolition in 1914 and subsequent reinstatement in 1922, it would now be subject to a mutual and complete abolition under the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty. This treaty not only brought an end to Italian extraterritoriality within the Ottoman Empire but also marked the dissolution of transimperial identities between the two states. In the ensuing process following the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, Italy’s ultimate naturalization program, directed towards the Ottoman Empire, had undertaken to confer minor citizenship upon several thousand Jews. However, the Turkish delegation at the Lausanne Conference objected to the scope of this program, whose official application deadline expired in January 1923, and the numerical quota was reduced in the agreement signed in July.

Italian religious, educational, health, and charitable institutions that had been expropriated or abolished by the Ottoman government during the First World War constituted another dimension of transimperialism between the two states. Despite the complete and bilateral abolition of the capitulations, the Treaty of Lausanne stipulated the recognition of the Italian institutional heritage within the Republic of Turkey, along with the restoration of its rights. Nevertheless, the general trend of these developments indicates that the analysis of transimperial identities between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy should not extend beyond the stipulations of the Lausanne Treaty. The Republic of Turkey, which declared itself an independent nation-state in the post-Lausanne period, entered into a series of bilateral treaties with Germany, Italy, Greece, and the United States, covering friendship, trade, and settlement. However, all of these treaties, which represented the transition from a multi-legal imperial order to a single-legal nation-state, were based on the principles of sovereignty, equality, and reciprocity. Therefore, in a context where the concept of extraterritoriality had become obsolete in the imperial setting, transimperial identities naturally underwent an inherent and ontological dissolution. Nevertheless, the Aegean citizenship design introduced by the Italian occupation administration in the Dodecanese in 1912 and which continued to take shape until 1936 has been comprehensively covered as an independent case study. However, the post-1923 period, in which the Ottoman Empire was expelled from the equation, has not been incorporated into the title formulation, as it lies outside the thesis’s primary timeframe.

The concept of “transimperiality,” which is frequently encountered in modern historiography and recent international law literature, represents the permeability of sovereign boundaries as well as multiple legal and identity regimes.⁵ That is to say, it refers to situations in which the

⁵ James H. Meyer positions the fact of “transimperialism” between the Russian and Ottoman empires within a comparative and interactive framework encompassing interstate and cross-cultural dynamics. The term “transimperial” was first employed by the author in his 2008 article, entitled *For the Russianist in Istanbul and the Ottomanist in Russia: a guide to the archives of Eurasia*. Meyer’s article draws attention to the underlying motives of a group of academics working on Ottoman and Turkish history who were directing their research towards Russia. These historians were exploring transimperial themes, including modernist Islam, pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic discourses, and parallels between symbols associated with the late Ottoman and Russian empires. Thereafter, in his highly regarded and innovative book *Turks Across Empires* published in 2014, he focused on the intellectual fathers of the Pan-Turkism movement who traversed the Russian and Ottoman Empires. Within this framework, the author explores the approaches adopted by transimperial Muslims and bureaucrats in the Russian and Ottoman empires with regard to the border separating the two states. Although the conditions and lifestyles of the Pan-Turkists differed from those of

boundaries of different empires become permeable, and in which the domains of sovereignty, law, administration, and identity become intertwined. This permeability, which can emerge through tools such as colonial administration, capitulations, mixed citizenship, commercial networks, or military occupations, encourages non-absolute sovereignty between two empires. Consequently, a transimperial space cannot be considered as the space of the absolute sovereignty of a single empire. Rather, it is the space of hybrid forms of sovereignty created by two or more empires coming into contact with each other. In recent years, the concept of transimperialism has emerged as an independent discipline within the field of history, with some universities even establishing institutionalized programs in this area.⁶ Emerging at the intersection of Global History, Imperial Studies, and Postcolonial Theory, this new field brings different empires into a single analytical space. Reframing, centralizing and dynamizing Imperial Studies, it treats colonial competition, cooperation and interconnectedness as intertwined processes of imperial transformation. Focusing not only on empires but also on the processes that transcend them, the transimperial approach traces the origins of the major political, economic, and social challenges of the present day to the legacy of colonialism.

The transimperial framework employed in this study adopts the Italian and Ottoman regimes as state actors, whilst simultaneously examining Italo-Levantine and Italo-Jewish individuals who traversed the domains of influence of these regimes as non-state actors. The forms of transimperial affiliation represented by the Kingdom of Italy and the Ottoman Empire were shaped by a number of driving forces such as migratory patterns, diasporic formations, extraterritorial regimes, and wartime vulnerability. Directing separate inquiries into all of these determinants, this thesis aims to uncover the transformations undergone by identities caught between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. The initial chapter of the thesis, which specifically addresses the categorical formations and ethnocultural origins of these affiliations, aims to situate these affiliations within a broader Mediterranean imaginary. In this regard, the chapter,

the majority of trans-imperial Muslims, Meyer observes important parallels between them. Upon examining Pan-Turkism, which acquired an increasingly transimperial character and international grounding during the Young Turk period, he outlines three significant developments that emerged. These include the increase in cross-border human mobility, the wave of revolutions that erupted in Russia and the Middle East, and the emergence of deeply politicized forms of religious and national identity. In stating that the term transimperial signifies more than merely “international,” Meyer emphasizes that the term is employed in its broadest sense to denote “across empires.” The author employs the term to characterize identities that have spent a considerable amount of time between the two empires, possessed dual subjecthood, or simply transcended imperial borders. Furthermore, he observes that these transimperial identities played a pivotal role in the industrial, agricultural, military and fiscal development of both empires. James H. Meyer, *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856–1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 9-10, 19; James H. Meyer, “For the Russianist in Istanbul and the Ottomanist in Russia: A Guide to the Archives of Eurasia,” *Ab Imperio* 2008, no. 4 (January 1, 2008): 281–301, <https://doi.org/10.1353/imp.2008.0116>.

⁶ Leipzig University and Doshisha University have established departments under the title of the Centre for Transimperial History. In a similar vein, an international research team known as the Transimperial History Working Group, based at the University of Pittsburgh, is making significant contributions to the field. “Universität Leipzig: Centre for Transimperial History,” *Universität Leipzig*, accessed December 9, 2025, <https://recentglobe.uni-leipzig.de/en/forschung/forschungsprojekte/centre-for-transimperial-history>; “Doshisha University: Center for Transimperial History,” *Doshisha University*, accessed December 9, 2025, <https://transimperial.org/>; “Transimperial History Working Group | World History Center | University of Pittsburgh,” *University of Pittsburgh*, accessed December 9, 2025, <https://www.worldhistory.pitt.edu/support/working-groups/transimperial-history-working-group>.

which explores both the contemporary legacy and modern alternatives of the *Braudelian* approach, seeks to distil the essence of transimperialism in the phenomenon of *Mediterraneità*.

In contrast to the “liquid continent” conceptualization proposed by Braudel, which envisions a non-static yet structurally centralized and unitary Mediterranean, contemporary Mediterranean studies propose a fragmented topography, dynamic diversity, and multiple identities. However, the most significant common ground shared by both the *Braudelian* approach and its contemporary alternatives is the mutual conviction that the Mediterranean serves as a laboratory in which transimperial experiences are produced. As this concept had not yet been formulated during his lifetime, Braudel did not employ the term “transimperialism.” Nevertheless, the Mediterranean that Braudel envisioned was one that transcended temporal, spatial, and political boundaries, adapted to a common rhythm, and intertwined different imperial, cultural, and religious patterns. Reading different empires as a system that is interconnected across borders, viewing geographical, climatic, and economic networks to be more decisive than empires, and defining the Mediterranean as a civilizational space, all serve to position Braudel as a pioneer of transimperial historiography.

At this juncture, I have recognized that the concept of “transimperial jurisdiction” furnishes a valuable analytical framework for describing the interconnected legal, political and social systems that overlap and operate together across different empires.⁷ This academic concept, which is not defined or established in modern legal legislation, in other words, is not a normative and positive legal term, indicates an analytical and theoretical framework with sociopolitical connotations. The concept, which is related – but not identical – to concepts such as “extraterritorial jurisdiction,” “legal pluralism,” “imperial/colonial jurisdiction,” and “universal jurisdiction,” has not been widely adopted in the extant literature. In the context of this study, I have employed the term “transimperial jurisdiction” principally as a conceptualization that delineates the hybrid regime that emerged between the administrative vision of the Italian occupation corps and the Ottoman bureaucratic legacy, in the Dodecanese. In this regard, it is important to note that the term is employed in a context extending beyond the concept of “extraterritorial jurisdiction,” which is used to denote the dual, permeable, and at times ambiguous legal framework regulating the Italians within the Ottoman Empire.

Research Questions and Objectives

Although the terms “Italo-Levantinism in the Mediterranean” and “Italianness in the Ottoman Empire” are occasionally used interchangeably, the principal objective of this thesis is to address the grey area where these two definitions intersect. From this standpoint, the objective pursued was to unveil the civil individuality of this identity, characterized as either protected Italian national/citizen or naturalized Ottoman subject, within the context of a more extensive

⁷ This analytical concept was first employed in the extant literature by Linda Rupert when examining the complex judicial relations between the Dutch island of Curaçao and the nearby Spanish American mainland in the eighteenth century. Rupert argued that the Roman Catholic Church’s “transimperial jurisdiction” served to augment inter-imperial interaction between these two politically independent imperial domains, thereby giving rise to an “inter-imperial legal zone.” Linda M. Rupert, “Seeking the Water of Baptism: Fugitive Slaves and Imperial Jurisdiction in the Early Modern Caribbean,” in *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500-1850*, eds. Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 218.

Italian-Levantine diaspora. Indeed, it is an irrefutable fact that the Italian individual, who is part of a broader Levantine network in the Mediterranean, is also an extension of the Italian diaspora in the Ottoman Empire. Despite the fact that the concept of Levantinism has been examined through a variety of disciplines and approaches, two of these stand out in particular. The first of these is the *Braudelian* approach, which envisions a Mediterranean that is both centralized and institutionalized. The second is the Purcell and Horden approach, which envisions a fragmented and non-institutional Mediterranean.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that some studies categorize this individual as an “Italo-Levantine in the Mediterranean,” whilst others designate him as an “Italian citizen/national in the Ottoman Empire.” Indeed, as these narratives are produced in different fields and disciplines, they feel the need to position this transimperial individual, who actually possesses both identities simultaneously, in different contexts. Research addressing both the Italo-Levantine origins and civic affiliations of this identity within the same contextual framework is extremely limited. The primary objective of this thesis is to uphold the concept of integrity and continuity, while also ensuring that civic and national statuses are not overlooked when examining ethnocultural origins. At this juncture, the thesis’s primary objective is to address the transimperial nature of the Italo-Ottoman individual through both its formation in the Mediterranean basin and the civic transformations within the Ottoman and Italian states. In this regard, the typological and periodic classification of citizenship statuses and naturalization practices adopted by Italian individuals represents a substantial component of the thesis.

The thesis also engages with the globally recognized Italian identity that transcends the geographical confines of the Italian peninsula. This situation can best be illustrated by the Italian proverb, *Tutto il mondo è paese* (All the world is a village). Drawing upon the findings of diasporic and demographic studies, the study explores the origins of an “Italian civility” (*civiltà italiana*) that has disseminated worldwide through migratory movements. Given the nature of the Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire being also part of a diasporic supra-identity, it is essential to understand both its peninsular affiliations and its liminal position, caught between Italianness and Levantinism. Through a comparative analysis of various approaches, the thesis acknowledges the assumption that not every Levantine individual in the Ottoman Empire considered themselves Italian, nor did every Italian feel Levantine. Based on this assumption, the study also draws attention to questions such as when exactly an Italian becomes Levantine, or what exactly determines a Levantine individual’s Italian identity. Furthermore, it seeks to address the question of whether Italo-Levantine can be considered a social status or class, or whether it is better characterized as a sociocultural categorization. Within the context of Levantine identity, these normative terms, which initially appear to be highly similar and are at times employed interchangeably, in fact possess subtle distinctions. Social status is indicative of the prestige and respectability of a Levantine individual with deep family roots within society. The professional and educational qualities of the individual, along with their peninsular or European connections, serve to further enhance this status. Alternatively, the social class, predicated upon economic foundations and norms, signifies the commercial and economic eminence of Levantines in relation to other groups. The possession of different commercial and sectoral advantages has enabled them to ascend from lower economic groups to the middle and upper classes.

Sociocultural categorization, on the other hand, involves the grouping of Levantines based on their cultural characteristics, religious affiliations, and lifestyles. The prevailing narrative portrays this category as being associated with one of the Christian denominations, communicating in one of the Western languages, and originating from one of the Western geographical regions. How reasonable is it to define Italo-Levantines in such clearly and rigidly delineated terms as religiously Christian, ethnically and linguistically Western, and geographically non-native to the Middle East? In identifying the Judeo-Italian communities in the Ottoman Empire, this thesis dares to challenge this preconceived profiling outlined above and attempts to offer a more inclusive alternative. In accordance with this broader characterization, Jews who have shuttled between the Ottoman and Italian regimes should also be considered a fundamental component of a sociocultural Levantine categorization. Tracing the Judeo-Italian elements within the extensions of the Italian diaspora in the Ottoman domains, the thesis thereby questions the established narrative of the Italo-Levantine image, which is associated with Christian denominations and Eurocentric origins. The majority of Italian Jews who relocated to Ottoman lands were descended from Sephardic Jews who had been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula and had established significant cultural and social ties with European populations over the centuries. Prior to reaching their final destination of the Ottoman Empire, some of these communities migrated to Italian territories, where they consolidated their European heritage. Despite these sophisticated European connections, the fact that their ancestral origins extend back to the ancient Israel-Judah region complicates a Eurocentric categorization and makes it questionable in some respects. However, due to its relatively limited scope, this thesis will not engage in any further ethnological or anthropological discussion regarding the ethnic origins of Italian Jews. The primary concern in this context is that the Jewish element inherent within the Italo-Levantine identity has the potential to render a direct, monolithic, and preconceived Eurocentric categorization controversial.

Another objective of the thesis is to establish a theoretical and conceptual framework for Italo-Levantinism through different approaches. To this end, the study seeks to initiate an ontological discussion on the concepts of Levantinism, transimperialism, and diaspora within the contexts of “space” and “time.” The existence, occupancy and interconnectedness of “diasporic spaces” in the Mediterranean region are interrogated through a range of theoretical approaches. The “group within a group” approach proposed by Thomas Gallant, which articulates the transcendence, dispersion, and self-growth of the diaspora within a transnational space, offers a particularly compelling framework for understanding Italo-Levantinism within the context of the Ottoman Empire.⁸ The integration of a migrant group into an already established diasporic community gives rise to distinct representations of different diasporic generations, even if they hail from the same nation. At this juncture, the shared space represents divergent values for the arriving and receiving generations, with the result that it even engenders tensions in certain respects. Similarly, the concept of “pre-occupied space,” introduced to the relevant literature by Teresa Fiore, provides an excellent reference point for exploring the connections between spatial belonging, cultural expansion, and migratory patterns.⁹ While remapping the transnational and colonial heritage of Italy across the globe through migratory movements,

⁸ Thomas W. Gallant, “Afterword: Writing Mediterranean Diasporas After the Transnational Turn” in *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, eds. Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

⁹ Teresa Fiore, *Pre-Occupied Spaces: Remapping Italy's Transnational Migrations and Colonial Legacies* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017).

Fiore uncovers the varied meanings of the concept of “space” for different generations of immigrants. Each of these approaches is a valuable instrument for the investigation of the generational dynamics and interactions between the Venetian and Genoese colonies established in the Ottoman Empire and the post-Risorgimento migrants.

The second most significant context for establishing a theoretical and conceptual framework for Italo-Levantinism in the Ottoman geography is “time.” Drawing inspiration from theorists specializing in time, such as François Hartog, Matthew Champion, and Reinhart Koselleck, Joseph John Viscomi discusses a “perception of timelessness” in the context of the Italian community in Egypt.¹⁰ In examining the mass migration from Egypt to Italy during the Second World War, Viscomi focuses on the limitations in the perceptions of time of both Italian immigrants and the Italian state. In summary, the notion of “timelessness” surrounding Italian immigrants, both as individuals and within institutional frameworks, represents the primary concern of Viscomi. Drawing attention to the discrepancy between the anticipated outcomes of migration and the actual experiences of migrants, Viscomi interprets the Fascist government’s attempt to incorporate immigrants into an imperialist project to be a “structuring of time” and a “temporal asymmetry.” More clearly, what Viscomi seeks to articulate is that the trajectory of the Italian diaspora in Egypt was shaped not primarily by the volition of these individuals, but rather by the historical circumstances imposed by the fascist state. Through creating a temporal imbalance between past experiences and future expectations, the state effectively shaped the fate of Italians in Egypt, thereby triggering mass emigration. Even after the dissolution of the fascist regime in 1945 and Italy’s loss of its colonies in 1947, the imperial project persisted in shaping the future of the Italian community in Egypt. Arguing that a division of history into sharply defined periods, such as past, present and future, is misleading, Viscomi draws attention to the intertwined nature of these layers of time and their contradictory coexistence.

I shall also remark that Viscomi’s “timelessness” approach proved a significant source of inspiration for the broad chronological framework of this thesis. Initially, I believed that I could analyze the wartime transformation of Italo-Levantine identity in the twentieth century through the limited periodization of 1911-1919. In accordance with this approach, I have set the Italo-Ottoman War of 1911-1912, in which hostilities became concrete, as the point of departure. I have taken the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, which represented the agreement process that officially brought the First World War to a conclusion, as the point of arrival. However, at this juncture, I realized that such a rigid periodization rendered it impossible to examine a transimperial identity whose formative evolution spanned from the thirteenth to the twentieth century. The legal, spatial and institutional origins of the Latin-Genovese identity in Byzantium, which materialized in the Pera district of Constantinople, extend back to the 1261 Treaty of Nymphaeum. Moreover, the civic and constitutional mindset of the Italians in the Ottoman Empire embodied sociocultural codes extending back to the Risorgimento period. Consequently, a periodization confined to the twentieth century would be both inadequate and misleading. To give credit where it is due, I must acknowledge that Viscomi’s conception of “temporal intertwining and contradiction” furnished me with a valuable insight into avoiding the separation of these periods with dense and definitive lines.

¹⁰ Joseph John Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire: Time and the Politics of Departure Between Italy and Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

The thesis' primary argument is based on interpreting this individual's transimperial character through civic consciousness and legal statuses grounded in the construction of a constitutional nation-state. It is imperative to note that without this retrospective analysis, it becomes unfeasible to examine the legal designations attributed to this identity under wartime conditions. Nonetheless, the thirteenth century was a period when Italian identity was defined in contexts based on city-states such as Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, or on religion such as Latin Catholicism, or on communities such as the *Peralı* (residents of Pera), rather than in a national context. Despite the fact that the 1261 Treaty of Nymphaeum offers insights into the institutional and sociocultural origins of Italo-Levantine identity within the Ottoman Empire, such an ancient treaty is anachronistic and problematic with regard to the contextual and temporal framework of this study. Indeed, it may be posited that the constitutional, civic and national awareness of Italians in the Ottoman Empire was linked to the Risorgimento period, which began in 1815 and reached its zenith with the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Consequently, the initial timeframe, set for 1911, was revised and extended to 1861, while the scope of the research question was expanded to encompass the formation of identity. Moreover, the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, which addressed the capitulations, was not the platform where the issue was resolved or concluded; rather, it was at this conference that the issue began to be discussed. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which is widely regarded as the title deed of the Republic of Turkey, resolved the issue of extraterritoriality for Italians in the Ottoman Empire. In light of these findings, it is evident that the wartime transformation of the Italo-Levantines cannot be studied within the confines of a sharp eight-year period in the twentieth century. It is not possible to encapsulate the identity of a people who have experienced transimperial oscillations between the Ottoman and Italian regimes over the course of centuries within such a limited timeframe.

The chronological framework of the thesis identifies the 1911 Italo-Ottoman War as the pivotal juncture in the transformation process of identity. This crucial moment, a recurring theme throughout the study, signifies the transition of the Italian individual from a "capitulatory protégé" to an "enemy alien." The Italian individual, who had been protected for centuries by extraterritorial rights outlined through a capitulatory regime, was now framed as an obvious threat to the Ottoman state. It is therefore the objective of this thesis – from this point onwards – to elaborate on the state-centered marginalization of the transimperial individual, whose formation and origins were revealed in the preceding chapters. The Italo-Levantines, who had become localized and integrated into the Ottoman ecosystem since the thirteenth century with the colonies they established, had now evolved into a completely different status. The State apparatus, which initiated an investigation into the institutional presence of Italians, would periodically reconfigure, restrict or deactivate them.

Furthermore, the measures and sanctions implemented were not confined to the institutional presence of the Italians. Italian individuals also suffered from demographic design policies and were sometimes subjected to travel restrictions, relocated to different regions, or expelled from the empire. The wartime adaptation of Italians in the Ottoman Empire emerges as the dominant paradigm, especially in the later chapters of the thesis. The life-saving potential of transimperial flexibility in wartime scenarios is more attributable to Ottoman naturalization than Italian extraterritoriality. The Italian subject, who had previously employed capitulations as an immunity shield, is now left unprotected in a capitulatory regime that has been unilaterally terminated. At this juncture, the thesis notes a shift in the nature of transimperial flexibility, which had previously been an expression of the search for Italian protection, to now represent

the quest for Ottoman status. Thus, the transimperiality of the Italian-Ottoman individual, oscillating between two regimes and allegiances, traverses a spectrum ranging from extraterritoriality to naturalization.

Hostilities, which reached a peak in 1915 with Italy's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire, did not cease with the conclusion of the war. Instead, they underwent a transformation, becoming a different kind of conflict with the "Italian occupation of Anatolia" spanning from 1919 to 1922.¹¹ The occupation, which also formed part of the Turkish War of Independence, began in Antalya in March 1919 and was subsequently extended to include the town and cities of Konya, Fethiye, Kuşadası, Söke, Milas, Çine, Burdur, and Muğla. Following the invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911 and the Dodecanese in 1912, which were considered relatively peripheral and marginal areas of the empire far from central authority, Italy now found itself in the heartland of Anatolia, that is, at the center of the Empire. However, the crucial point to consider here is that this occupation also gave rise to a paradigm shift in terms of diplomatic relations between the two states. Italy, which had previously maintained a diplomatic representation regime based on capitulations in the Ottoman Empire until the Paris Peace Conference, had now transformed into a military and administrative occupier, thereby asserting *de facto* sovereignty. The Kingdom of Italy, which had previously been legally and diplomatically recognized through its extraterritorial extensions in the Ottoman Empire until 1919, was now a *de facto* occupier. Between 1919 and 1922, it established occupation commands and civil-military high commissariats in Anatolia, and these authorities created a sphere of influence that bypassed and even violated Ottoman jurisdiction.

Despite the fact that references to capitulations at the 1919 Paris and 1923 Lausanne Conferences are addressed in certain sections of this thesis, the paradigm shift brought about by the Italian occupation in legal and civic contexts is not within the scope of the argument. This is attributable to the fact that Italy, which had heretofore functioned as a diplomatic counterpart to the Ottoman Empire, had now evolved into a military and political occupier. Under the prevailing climate of occupation, Italian extraterritoriality in the Ottoman Empire experienced a parallel evolution. In other words, during a period when relations between the two states lost their diplomatic character and became legally ambiguous, the transimperial status of the Italo-Levantine individual also underwent a paradigm shift. The civic and legal statuses of Italians in Ottoman territories during this turbulent and uncertain period undoubtedly warrant further research.

To summarize, the multifaceted and multitiered research question of this thesis is outlined as follows:

What are the ethnocultural origins of transimperial identities that oscillated between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy, and to what time periods and geographical areas do

¹¹ Mevlüt Çelebi is widely regarded as one of the most prolific scholars in the field of Italian occupation of Anatolia, and Italian-Turkish relations during the early years of the Turkish Republic. The following is a list of Çelebi's most prominent books, in order of publication: *Milli Mücadele Döneminde Türk-İtalyan İlişkileri* [Turkish-Italian Relations during the War of Independence] (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2002); *İtalyan Arşiv Belgelerinde Anadolu'da Yunan Mezalimi* [Greek Massacre in Anatolia on Italian Archival Documents] (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2010); *Türkiye-İtalya Siyasi İlişkileri (1923-1939)* [Turkey-Italy Political Relations (1923-1939)] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020); *Türkiye-İtalya Sosyal ve Kültürel İlişkileri, 1923-1939* [Turkey-Italy Social and Cultural Relations 1923-1939] (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2022).

their historical formations extend? At what point and under what circumstances did these identities evolve to acquire a constitutional, civic and national character and consciousness with regard to Italian citizenship? To what extent did Italian citizenship become a disadvantage in the Ottoman realm during wartime conditions?

With a focus on the aforementioned research question, the thesis outlines the following objectives:

- 1) To explore the “temporal continuity” and “spatial integrity” between the Italo-Levantine diaspora, which has settled in the Ottoman realm since the thirteenth century, and the post-Risorgimento migrations, which spread throughout the nineteenth century. To question whether, on the basis of this continuity and integrity, Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire acquired a constitutional, civic and national character after the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861.
- 2) To investigate and disclose the Judeo-Italian extensions that have been incorporated into the Italo-Levantine diaspora in the Ottoman Empire since the fifteenth century. In doing so, to challenge the typical social categorization that equates Italo-Levantine identity with a Christian religious denomination and Western origins. In this manner, to introduce a novel and more inclusive alternative to the prevailing Italo-Levantine formation, one with a Judeo-Italian character.
- 3) To investigate the pejorative connotations attributed to this transimperial identity under the designation of “enemy alien,” by conducting a thorough analysis of the wartime transformations of Italian nationals in the Ottoman realm.

Literature Review

The primary sources that have been most frequently referenced in this thesis are explained in the footnotes at their initial appearance in the relevant contexts. However, a thematic classification beforehand would serve to guide and inspire the reader. The breadth of the literature consulted in such long-term and multidisciplinary historicization is remarkable. The study draws on a substantial archival collection, in addition to other primary sources, including government publications and newspapers, as well as alternative sources, such as various websites. During the course of three and a half years of research, over 1,000 documents accessed from the Turkish Presidential State Archives (COA) were transcribed from Ottoman Turkish into modern Turkish, analyzed and synthesized. Of this extensive archival collection, 375 documents are incorporated into the thesis to varying degrees. In addition, approximately 5,000 pages of documents were accessed from the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ASDMAE) and the Central State Archives (ACS) in Rome, approximately 150 documents were translated, and more than 30 documents from the ASDMAE files are cited and discussed in the thesis. From this standpoint, it is anticipated that a study underpinned by the systematic integration of archival materials will make an original contribution to the field. It is highly probable that such an empirical study, founded upon meticulous documentation, will both unveil new avenues for ongoing debates within the extant literature and shed light on hitherto unexplored and unaddressed points. Furthermore, the identification of communication patterns among Ottoman authorities could prompt a renewed exploration and reinterpretation of Ottoman policies towards Italians. In this regard, I am convinced that the archival richness

of this thesis will not only generate curiosity and interest in Italians in the Ottoman Empire but also result in empirical and methodological progress on the subject. In addition to its archival strength and value, the thesis draws upon studies produced in various fields – including history, sociology, law and political science – to establish its theoretical framework and historical narrative. Despite the existence of studies on the subject of the identity construction processes of Italians in the Ottoman Empire, these studies are addressed within the scope of different research conducted in different sub-disciplines. In this regard, the secondary sources utilized in the present study consist primarily of literature pertaining to Levantine Studies, Mediterranean Studies, Jewish Studies, Citizenship Studies, and International Law. Studies on the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese, which are generally classified under Military History and War Studies and occasionally Empire Studies, merit consideration as a discrete category based on their dedication in the thesis.

Levantine Studies

In recent years, Levantine Studies, Mediterranean Studies, Diaspora Studies, Migration Studies, Transcultural Studies and Borderlands Studies have emerged as multidisciplinary and hybrid fields that intersect strongly with postcolonial theory and transimperial history. For instance, Levantine Studies, which has emerged as one of the most prolific fields in recent years, is an area where numerous international conferences and seminars are held. The papers presented at these events are subsequently published as edited volumes, thereby contributing significantly to the field. For instance, A notable recent example is *Levantines of the Ottoman World: Communities, Identities, and Cultures*, edited by Erik Blackthorne-O'Barr and Burhan Çağlar and published in 2023.¹² Bringing together a variety of narratives from diverse locations across the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the work is divided into three thematic sections: Communities: Interactions and Impacts, Identities: Selfhood and Society, and Biographies: Portraits & Personal Narratives. This thematic categorization encompasses a broad and insightful repertoire, ranging from social marginality to criminal networks, from identity formation to changing affiliations, and from intellectual heritage to aristocratic and commercial figures.

Another extensive volume in Turkish literature with a similar format is considerably older and is derived from the *Levantenler ya da Avrupalılar* (Levantines or Europeans) convention held in Izmir in 1998 by the European Students' Forum (AEGEE).¹³ The invaluable work, which was compiled by Aras Yumul and Fahri Dikkaya from the papers presented at the convention, bears the intriguing title *Avrupalı mı Levanten mi?* (European or Levantine?). In addition to etymological discussions of the term Levantine and ontological inquiries into its designation, the work also contains valuable contributions such as family and children in the Levantine world, Levantine identity in the context of social otherness, and the reflections of Levantine architecture in the Ottoman public sphere. However, it should be noted that such comprehensive volumes are not specific to or devoted to Italo-Levantines, as they take the Levantine definition in its broadest form. In other words, it encompasses all other communities that can be included under the Levantine designation, such as Greeks, French, and even English, in addition to

¹² Erik Blackthorne O'Barr and Burhan Çağlar, eds., *Levantines of the Ottoman World: Communities, Identities, and Cultures* (İstanbul: İbn Haldun University Press, 2023).

¹³ Aras Yumul and Fahri Dikkaya, eds., *Avrupalı mı Levanten mi ?* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2006).

Italians. Consequently, while Levantine Studies make a substantial contribution to the scholarship on Italo-Levantines, they are characterized by an overarching macro perspective, which limits their capacity to address the nuances of Italians within the broader context of the Ottoman Empire.

Although they have not been discussed or cited in this thesis due to their broad scope, some academic and scientific articles on Ottoman Levantines particularly stand out in the Turkish literature. These studies, which have been conducted in a variety of fields including geography, urban studies and culture, as well as within the framework of identity studies, make valuable contributions to the extant academic literature on Levantine identity. Raziye Çakıcıoğlu Oban's article, entitled *Levanten Kavramı ve Levantenler Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (An Examination On The Concept Of Levantine And Levantines), has been cited extensively since 2007 and referenced in numerous studies.¹⁴ By compiling a wide array of perspectives from writers and travelers, as well as incorporating encyclopedic information, the study methodically traces the historical evolution of the Levantine concept. Thereafter, the study undertakes an examination of the Levantines' objectives in coming to Ottoman lands, the destinations they ultimately reached, and their family-based geographical distribution. Advıye İkbāl Baydar and Cevdet Yılmaz's *Gündelik Hayat Bağlamında Levanten Kimliğinin Sunumu* (Presentation of Levantine Identity in the Context of Everyday Life) is a contemporary and pioneering article, grounded in in-depth interviews with 15 İzmir Levantines.¹⁵ This qualitative research, focused on everyday life practices, analyses the identity formation processes and presentations of İzmir Levantines within the framework of a phenomenological approach and symbolic interactionist theory.

Furthermore, works on Ottoman Levantines targeting the general readership in Turkish literature have seen a considerable increase in scope and diversity since the 2000s. Although not referenced in this thesis, I have deemed it appropriate to include a few paragraphs here to illustrate this richness. The initial group comprises monographs that concentrate on the role of Ottoman Levantines in the social fabric and urban life; and are intended for a more general readership. One of the most prolific names in this field, Osman Öndeş's *Son Levantenler: Gemi Acenteleri* (The Last Levantines: Ship Agents), which centers on the activities of Levantine ship brokers in Istanbul's Galata, Tophane, and Sirkeci ports, is a valuable resource for researchers in this field.¹⁶ Focusing on the professional lives of these individuals, who were an indispensable part of Ottoman maritime life, the work also provides an insight into their family lives. A further book by Öndeş, entitled *Asıl Efendiler: Levantenler* (The Real Masters: The Levantines) examines the shifting social positions and statuses of the Levantine community as it navigates the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey.¹⁷ Bülent Şenocak's book, *Levant'ın Yıldızı İzmir: Levantenler, Rumlar, Ermeniler ve Yahudiler* (İzmir, the Star of the Levant: Levantines, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews) derives its title from the newspaper *L'Etoile de Levant*, which was formerly published by the Jewish community in İzmir.¹⁸ As Şenocak's study demonstrates, the Levantines and minority groups who constituted

¹⁴ Raziye Çakıcıoğlu Oban, "Levanten Kavramı ve Levantenler Üzerine Bir İnceleme," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 22 (2007): 337-356.

¹⁵ Advıye İkbāl Baydar ve Cevdet Yılmaz, "Gündelik Hayat Bağlamında Levanten Kimliğinin Sunumu," *Sosyoloji Notları* 6, sy. 2 (Aralık 2022): 24-53.

¹⁶ Osman Öndeş, *Son Levantenler: Gemi Acenteleri* (İstanbul: Denizler Kitabevi, 2004).

¹⁷ Osman Öndeş, *Asıl Efendiler: Levantenler* (İzmir: Şenocak Yayınları, 2010).

¹⁸ Bülent Şenocak, *Levant'ın Yıldızı İzmir: Levantenler, Rumlar, Ermeniler ve Yahudiler* (İzmir: Şenocak Kültür Yayınları, 2003).

the cultural mosaic of Izmir played a pivotal role in establishing the city's reputation as the Star of the Levant during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The book written by the urban historian Orhan Türker, which is entitled *Pera'dan Beyoğlu'na: İstanbul'un Levanten ve Azınlık Semtinin Hikayesi* (From Pera to Beyoğlu: The Story of Istanbul's Levantine and Minorities Quarter) is an analysis of the period between 1860 and 1960 in Pera.¹⁹ Drawing upon a range of primary sources, including press and private archives, the work provides a comprehensive account of the transformation of the district's ethnic and economic demographics. The book sheds light on the processes of nationalization and Turkification experienced by the district in the aftermath of the Republic's foundation. Cengiz Can's *İstanbul'un Yabancı ve Levanten Mimarları* (Foreign and Levantine Architects of Istanbul) illuminates an under-researched facet of Ottoman modernization, examining the contributions of prominent Italian architects such as Gaspare and Giuseppe Fossati, Raimondo D'Aronco, and Giulio Mongeri in Istanbul.²⁰ The work is adapted from Cengiz Can's 1993 thesis, an academic in the field of architecture, and reveals the extent to which influential and decisive a role Levantine architects played in the modernization of Ottoman architecture.

On the other hand, monographs, biographies and memoirs authored by or concerning prominent Levantine figures constitute a significant and substantial segment within the Turkish intellectual and literary landscape.²¹ A number of notable Levantine figures born in Istanbul emerge as significant contributors in this domain. The most prominent of these is Rinaldo Marmara, grandson of the Rotondo family, one of Istanbul's long-established Levantine families, and official historian and press spokesman for the Catholic community in Turkey. Having authored nearly 50 books and over a hundred articles to date, Marmara has also served as both a diplomatic and cultural ambassador between the Vatican and Turkey. One of his early works is entitled *Pangaltı: 19. Yüzyılın Levanten Semti* (Pancaldi: The Levantine Quarter of the 19th Century) is the most comprehensive research on the history of *Pancaldi*, one of the historic neighborhoods in Istanbul's Şişli district, which became a Levantine settlement in the

¹⁹ Orhan Türker, *Pera'dan Beyoğlu'na: İstanbul'un Levanten ve Azınlık Semtinin Hikayesi* (İstanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2016).

²⁰ Cengiz Can, *İstanbul'un Yabancı ve Levanten Mimarları* (İstanbul: Arketon Yayınları, 2020).

²¹ Another prominent Levantine intellectual born in Istanbul who stands out in Turkish literary circles is Giovanni Scognamillo (1929-2016), a writer, critic and historian who specialized in Turkish cinema. Scognamillo, who has also worked as a consultant and translator for several film production companies, has authored over 40 works on Turkish cinema. *Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları: İstanbul 1970* (Memories of a Levantine in Beyoğlu: Istanbul 1970), which comprises anecdotes and observations about his 60 years of life in Beyoğlu, is considered to be one of Scognamillo's most renowned and cherished works. Furthermore, Scognamillo's life has been examined by other writers, leading to the publication of various biographies and monographs dedicated to his life and work. In particular, Emel Armutçu's *Bir Levanten Şövalye: Giovanni Scognamillo Kitabı* (A Levantine Knight: The Book of Giovanni Scognamillo), which is based on interviews with the author, successfully recounts his colorful childhood, his career spanning from banking to the art world and cultural figures, and his expertise in classic Turkish cinema, formerly known as Yeşilçam. Gülşah Nezaket Maraşlı Göç's work, entitled *Beyoğlu'nda bir Levanten: Giovanni Scognamillo* (A Levantine in Beyoğlu: Giovanni Scognamillo) is a biographical album containing numerous photographs, and a memoir that reveals Scognamillo's perspective on cinema and his contributions to it. The value of both of these works, written during the author's lifetime, lies in their capacity to reveal the field of transcultural interaction involving an Italo-Levantine intellectual who was born and raised in Turkey. Giovanni Scognamillo, *Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları: İstanbul 1970* (İstanbul: Metis Yayıncılık, 1990); Emel Armutçu, *Bir Levanten Şövalye: Giovanni Scognamillo Kitabı* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2008); Gülşah Nezaket Maraşlı Göç, *Beyoğlu'nda bir Levanten: Giovanni Scognamillo*, Albüm & Biyografi (İstanbul: Biyografi Net Yayıncılık, 2021).

nineteenth century.²² A much more recent and critically acclaimed work, which will be referenced and explained in more detail in this thesis, is *Osmanlı Başkentinde Bir Levanten Semtî: Galata-Pera* (A Levantine Neighborhood in the Ottoman Capital: Galata-Pera).²³ Drawing upon a wealth of original sources, including those from the Vatican and Latin church archives, this work meticulously traces the daily life, cultural exchange, spoken language, religious practices, and commercial activities in two pivotal Levantine settlements, Galata and Pera. An overarching theme in the majority of Marmara's oeuvre is his extensive utilization of visual and archival materials, which serve to illuminate the concept of Ottoman tolerance.

Mediterranean Studies

Mediterranean Studies, a field of enquiry which regards the Mediterranean as a shared historical, cultural, economic and social basin, seeks to elucidate regional interactions and challenges by drawing on a range of disciplines and approaches. The *Braudelian* approach, which has dominated the field since the 1940s, underwent a major revolution and transformation in the 2000s through the contributions of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's volume *The Corrupting Sea*.²⁴ Horden and Purcell introduce a novel analysis of the relationship between humans and the environment in 3,000 years of Mediterranean history through the concept of "micro-ecologies," which they have introduced to the existing literature. Challenging the Braudelian approach, which views the Mediterranean as a natural and cultural unity, these two academics have paved the way for the recently dominant approach of a "fragmented Mediterranean topography" through the concept of "microregions." This approach has also become a reference point for figures such as Maurizio Isabella, Konstantina Zanou, Claudio Fogu, and Valerie McGuire, who position Italian identity, diaspora, and colonial networks within the backdrop of Mediterraneanness.

Despite the fact that Mediterranean Studies addresses Italian transimperialism through Mediterranean imaginaries, the *Longue durée* (the long term) school represented by Braudel remains the dominant paradigm in a significant part of this field. This paradigm, which prioritizes long-term historical structures far beyond events, is an overly longitudinal and diachronic template in terms of micro-historical subjects such as the identity transformations or civic preferences of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. A number of studies in this area extend back to Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and rely on an exceptionally broad range of sources, including literature, archaeology, and social anthropology. While such an extended temporal perspective may initially appear compelling and rich, it ultimately offers a macro-temporal lens compared to the central focus of this thesis. Consequently, while frequently drawing on the extant literature on Italian transimperialism in the context of Mediterranean Studies, this thesis is constructed around a relatively narrower research question, both temporally and geographically. Indeed, the particular nature of this research question is too specific to be adequately and properly concentrated within a large-scale field such as Mediterranean Studies.

²² Rinaldo Marmara, *Pangaltı: 19. Yüzyılın Levanten Semtî* (İstanbul: Şişli Belediyesi, 2001).

²³ Rinaldo Marmara, *Osmanlı Başkentinde Bir Levanten Semtî: Galata-Pera* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020).

²⁴ Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000).

While research in the field of Empire Studies has seen a surge in recent years, it has been observed that the prevailing narrative is predominantly constructed around transimperial individuals situated within the commercial and diplomatic networks of the Mediterranean region. The Italian colonies that emerged in cities such as Istanbul and Izmir through the Ottoman Empire's relations with Italian city-states like Venice and Genoa constitute a particularly fertile field for further research. The reproduction of this transimperialism through the Mediterranean paradigm has led to the questioning of the multi-layered and ambiguous identity of the Italo-Levantine individual. In this regard, original and contemporary works such as Natalie Rothman's *Brokering Empire* adopt an innovative approach to the transimperial intersections between the Ottoman Empire and the Italian maritime republics.²⁵ Rothman's research focuses on transimperial subjects, including colonial migrants, freed slaves, merchants, commercial brokers, religious converts, and diplomatic interpreters known to have regularly traversed the Venetian-Ottoman borders. Their engagement in commercial activities, religious conversion practices, and diplomatic interactions underscores the significance and decisiveness of the roles of these transimperial actors in shaping cultural and political boundaries.

Furthermore, Fogu's *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, to which I frequently referred to in my own work, is the most significant manifestation on how Mediterranean Studies and Identity Studies can intersect.²⁶ Fogu's work is a thoroughly original study that broadened my intellectual horizons considerably during the research process and enabled me to transcend the conventional patterns of thought. Exploring the role of Mediterranean imaginaries in the formation of Italian identity, Fogu challenges the prevailing stereotypical approaches that focus on the territorial notion of the nation-state and equate Italy with its capital, Rome. By placing a collective and Mediterranean-centered Italian identity against a Rome-centered national identity, Fogu explores alternative forms of affiliation within a broader Mediterranean setting. Fogu's endeavor is to establish a designation of an "imagined community" within the Mediterranean context, encompassing a remarkably extensive period of time extending from ancient time to the modern era. In this regard, he conceptualizes a fluid transition between the metaphorical representations of the "fishing net" (the *Emporium*) and the "spider web" (the *Imperium*).

Jewish Studies

Another category of literature that has made a significant contribution to one of the main pillars of this study, and which is frequently referenced in certain chapters, is Jewish Studies. Several edited volumes on Italian Jewry are particularly noteworthy in this regard. The first of these is *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli.²⁷ Successfully tracing the various religious, cultural, and social origins of Italian Jewry in the Middle Ages and the modern era, this compilation examines the encounters between peninsular and global Jewish communities, as well as the migratory movements and

²⁵ E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

²⁶ Claudio Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web: Mediterranean Imaginaries and the Making of Italians* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

²⁷ Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, eds., *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024).

imperial integrations of these communities. It is an unparalleled resource, particularly for examining the trajectories of Sephardim fleeing from the Aragonese crown, stretching from Iberia to Southern Italy, and of Italian Jews escaping Papal persecution, stretching from the Italian peninsula to Ottoman ports. An edited volume by Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti, and Guri Schwarz, titled *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, instead focuses on a more modern time frame.²⁸ The book explores the commercial, sociocultural, rabbinic, and philanthropic networks established by Judeo-Italian communities that dominated Italian ports such as Venice, Ancona, and Livorno, as well as Ottoman ports such as Istanbul and Izmir. The volume also devotes significant space to the reality of Jews in Fascist Italy during the Second World War and touches upon the role of Italian Jewry in the establishment and evolution of Israel.

With regard to the history of Italian Jews in the Ottoman Empire, two particular studies have made unique contributions to the field that remain unsurpassed. The first of these is Minna Rosen's *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, and the second is Henri Nahum's *Juifs de Smyrne* (The Jews of Smyrna).²⁹ Rosen's monograph focuses on the Italians who formed some of the Jewish communities in Istanbul or were later integrated into them, exploring this city's migratory and rabbinical ties with the Italian peninsula. Rosen situates the formative period of the Istanbul Jewish community within the Ottoman golden age, a period spanning from the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 until the death of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566. Nahum's monograph, first published in French, examines the social structures, ideological and political tendencies, and relationships with both state and non-state actors of the Jews of Izmir over a 60-year period from the Hamidian regime to the Second World War Turkey. The text examines the adaptation of the Jews, who constituted a proportion of a larger Italian colony in the city, to the turbulent conditions of Izmir during the war years between 1911 and 1922. To this end, Nahum provides a series of interesting and illuminating examples drawn from primary sources and narratives. While these studies have partially addressed and examined the Judeo-Italian presence in the Ottoman Empire, it is regrettable that a study exclusively dedicated to the Italian Jewish identity in the Ottoman Empire has not yet been introduced to the existing literature.

Given the abundance of extant literature on Italo-Ottoman relations within the context of a shared value system in the Mediterranean, research on Italian Jews in the Ottoman Empire has remained far more limited. Studies on Italian Judaism, pioneered by figures such as Stanislaw Pugliese, Cristina Bettin, and Shira Klein, have entered a fruitful period in recent times.³⁰ However, the majority of these studies either focus on anti-Semitism or are Eurocentric in their

²⁸ Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti and Guri Schwarz, eds., *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: Bridging Europe and the Mediterranean* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

²⁹ Minna Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul, The Formative Years, 1453-1566* (Leiden: Brill, 2002). The Turkish edition of Rozen's book was published in 2010: Minna Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi (1453-1566)* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2010); Henri Nahum, *Juifs de Smyrne: XIXe-XXe siècle* (Paris : Aubier, 1997). On the other hand, the Turkish edition of Nahum's book, translated from the French original, was published in 2000: Henri Nahum, *İzmir Yahudileri: 19.-20. yüzyıl* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000).

³⁰ Stanislaw G. Pugliese, ed., *The Most Ancient of Minorities: The Jews of Italy* (Westport, CT : Greenwood Press, 2002); Cristina M. Bettin, *Italian Jews from Emancipation to the Racial Laws* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Shira Klein, *Italy's Jews From Emancipation to Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

historiography, thus failing to address this gap in the literature. Consequently, the majority of content pertaining to the Judeo-Italian elements of the Ottoman Empire can be accessed either from the domain of Ottoman studies on Jewish communities or from European historiography on Italian Jewry. However, Sarah Abrevaya Stein's book *Extraterritorial Dreams* is a notable exception, representing one of the most intriguing and somewhat unorthodox contributions to this field.³¹ Stein examines the efforts and initiatives of Sephardic Jews, who found themselves caught between the collapsing Ottoman Empire and the newly established nation-states, to obtain European citizenship. This tumultuous journey, spanning from imperial collapse to modern passport regimes, sheds light on the transnational experiences of Jews during a period when political borders began to be delineated along nationalist lines.

Citizenship Studies and International Law

Another significant body of literature that this study draws upon extensively is Citizenship Studies and International Law, with its focus on subjects such as colonial citizenship and naturalization, extraterritoriality and capitulations, and enemy aliens. In particular, an edited volume has served as a valuable source of inspiration and insight for this study. As stated by the editors, Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies* is the first study to contextualize the issue of citizenship and subjecthood within the framework of Italian colonialism.³² Two chapters in particular are worthy of note within this volume, and as such, they are frequently referenced in this thesis. The first of these is Filippo Espinoza's chapter, which focuses on the transformation of Aegean Citizenship, the civic design of the Italians in the Dodecanese, between 1912 and 1936. Another notable chapter is Luca Castiglioni's, which explores the tensions created by these civic designs between various identities. On the other hand, Daniela Caligoti's *War and Citizenship*, which is introduced in detail and frequently referenced in the thesis, is the most organized, comprehensive, and analytical work published to date on the status of "enemy alien."³³ The original work, which I have drawn upon in conceptualizing the post-1911 transformation of Italian subjects within the Ottoman Empire into enemy aliens, presents a highly sophisticated analysis of the theoretical origins and historical evolution of the concept.

The works of Kalu N. Kalu and Sofya Aptekar, which have made significant contributions to the theoretical framework and historical background of naturalization practices, are among the sources cited in the thesis.³⁴ Alessandro Breccia's work, which interrogates the role and function of naturalization in Italian-Ottoman relations, constitutes a highly unique and valuable resource in this regard.³⁵ The concept of extraterritoriality, as evidenced by capitulations in the Ottoman

³¹ Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams: European Citizenship, Sephardi Jews, and the Ottoman Twentieth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).

³² Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, eds., *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943* (New York: Routledge, 2022).

³³ Daniela L. Caligoti, *War and Citizenship: Enemy Aliens and National Belonging from the French Revolution to the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

³⁴ Kalu N. Kalu, *Citizenship: Identity, Institutions and the Postmodern Challenge* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017); Sofya Aptekar, *The Road to Citizenship: What Naturalization Means for Immigrants and the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015).

³⁵ Alessandro Breccia, "Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza: Il personale consolare italiano al tramonto dell'Impero ottomano (1863-1923)," in *Citizenship under Pressure: Naturalisation Policies from the Late XIX*

regime and the transcendence of borders through transimperial jurisdiction, has been the subject of numerous studies in the field of international law. *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, edited by Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull, and Robert Zens, which is referenced frequently in this study, is a particularly noteworthy example.³⁶ The present volume, which has been exhaustively examined in the text, focuses on the Ottoman Empire's stance and reactions in the face of European legal imperialism. Faced with the instrumentalization of international law by European imperialism, the Ottoman bureaucracy developed defensive mechanisms, established institutions, and gained expertise in this field.

Furthermore, the controversial and extraordinary status of this transimperial identity during the wars that ravaged the Ottoman geography between 1911 and 1923 has been largely confined to mainstream narratives within military and political literature. In such extraordinary circumstances, the dialogues established with the state apparatus, and the civic choices, interests, and strategies adopted, suggest a largely unexplored and understudied topic, such as the wartime adaptation of Italian individuals in the Ottoman geography. Çiğdem Oğuz's article, entitled *Ottoman Paperscapes* constitutes a highly innovative contribution to the field by addressing the struggles of enemy aliens in the Ottoman Empire over the issue of citizenship under wartime conditions.³⁷ While not exclusively focused on Italians, the article illuminates wartime naturalization and denaturalization phenomena through the ambiguous and controversial areas of Ottoman citizenship. Grounding these practices in the context of the dissolution of multi-ethnic empires, post-war population movements, and minority policies, Oğuz introduces an analytical concept termed "Ottoman paperscapes." Using this concept, Oğuz emphasizes that citizenship and belonging are not solely based on blood or land ties but are a long-standing and controversial area negotiated through legal documents and political processes.

On the other hand, with the mounting importance of cultural history, identity studies, and ego-documents in recent years, there has been an increase in the production of micro and innovative narratives concerning Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire. For instance, Ramazan Hakkı Öztan's article, which examines the Italian naturalization application of Emmanuel Carasso, an Ottoman citizen of Jewish origin, is a recent and compelling example of such micro-narratives.³⁸ Carasso, a practicing lawyer born in Salonika, entered the Ottoman parliament as a CUP deputy following the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and subsequently became an influential figure in both political and commercial spheres.³⁹ In the aftermath of the First World

Century until the Aftermath of the World War I, ed. Marcella Aglietti (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2021).

³⁶ Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens, eds., *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020).

³⁷ Çiğdem Oğuz, "Ottoman Paperscapes: Subjects, Enemy Aliens, and Nationality Disputes in the Ottoman Empire from World War I to the Treaty of Lausanne (1914–1923)," *Archiv Orientální* 93, no. 1 (May 31, 2025): 27–53, <https://doi.org/10.47979/aror.j.93.1.27-53>.

³⁸ Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "When Emmanuel Carasso Turned Italian: A Biography of Extraterritoriality and Questions of Nationality in the Ottoman Empire," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 63, no. 63 (July 7, 2024): 309–340, <http://doi.org/10.18589/oa.1513050>.

³⁹ CUP is the abbreviation for the Committee of Union and Progress, known in Turkish as the *İttihad ve Terakkî Cemiyeti* and abbreviated as İTC. Founded originally as a revolutionary organization in 1889, the Committee of Union and Progress subsequently evolved into a political party and ignited the spark of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908. The members of the CUP, who deposed Abdülhamid II in 1909 and ruled the

War, Carasso was subjected to trial for charges of wartime profiteering and corruption. In an effort to evade a conviction, he sought Italy's extraterritorial protection. The article makes a highly original contribution by demonstrating the wartime motivations behind Italian extraterritoriality and preferences for Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire. While both articles make remarkable contributions in revealing the wartime imaginaries of Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire, they present selectively focused contexts, as would be expected from their respective research questions and publication formats. The aim of this thesis is to collate and categorize all motivational contexts for Italian naturalization in the Ottoman Empire, and to provide a comprehensive and macro perspective on this collection. While elaborating on Italian nationality within the broader designation of enemy aliens in the Ottoman Empire, the text adopts a specific and micro approach instead.

Demographics

Three significant sources of demographic and diaspora studies have made a substantial contribution to this thesis, particularly in terms of determining the demographic origins, composition, and distribution of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. The first of these is the 1871 government publication *Censimento degli italiani all'estero* (Census of Italians Abroad), the second is Daniel J. Grange's *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896-1911). Les fondements d'une politique étrangère* (Italy and the Mediterranean, 1896-1911: The Foundations of a Foreign Policy), and the third is Donna Gabaccia's volume entitled *Italy's Many Diasporas*.⁴⁰ Despite its relative early timing with respect to the temporal focus of this study, the 1871 Italian census is the most reliable and comprehensive source for profiling Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire. Grange's volume constitutes an exhaustive statistical synthesis, providing a comprehensive analysis of the Italian presence in the wider Mediterranean region. Comprising a substantial number of tables and diagrams, the work focuses on the period between 1896 and 1911, which is more closely aligned with the temporal focus of this thesis. However, due to its extensive coverage of a vast geographical area, it examines Italian colonies within the Ottoman Empire, focusing on specific regional distributions such as the Balkans, North Africa, and Palestine. Consequently, it naturally provides a less extensive and detailed account of the Ottoman provincial demographics when compared to primary statistical reports or archival sources. Furthermore, by subjecting Italy's migratory movements to historical periodization and geographical orientation, Gabaccia unveils the patterns and routes of a "global Italy." In this manner, she effectively conveys the evolution of a peninsula-centered Italian identity, transitioning from local individualism to international cosmopolitanism. However, periods of transformation, such as the Risorgimento, or military conflicts, such as the Italo-Ottoman War, also necessitated the internal contraction and centralization of the diaspora towards the Italian peninsula.

empire under the triumvirate of Enver, Talât, and Cemâl Pasha between 1913 and 1918, were also known as the Unionists (*İttihadçılar*) or Young Turks (*Jön Türkler*).

⁴⁰ Statistica generale del Regno D'Italia, *Censimento degli italiani all'estero (31 dicembre 1871)* (Roma: Stamperia Reale, 1874); Daniel J. Grange, *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896-1911). Les fondements d'une politique étrangère* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1994) ; Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).

Literature on the Italian Dodecanese

The Italo-Ottoman War (known in Turkish as the Tripolitanian War) which commenced with Italy's invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911, expanded in 1912 to include secondary fronts such as North Africa, the Red Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Aegean, with the intensity of hostilities increasing.⁴¹ In the extant literature on military history and war studies addressing Italian-Ottoman hostilities, the two most fruitful topics are, respectively, the 1911-1912 Tripoli War and the 1912 Italian occupation of the Dodecanese. Furthermore, the administrative, institutional and sociopolitical transformation undergone by the Dodecanese region during the Italian colonial period offers a wealth of content that extends far beyond the scope of military history studies. As a separate chapter is devoted to this transformation from a centuries-old Ottoman province to an Italian colonial possession, the bibliography on the Dodecanese is of vital importance for this thesis. The first of the most frequently cited sources in the study is Luca Pignataro's *Il Dodecaneso Italiano*, which describes the Italian Dodecanese in three volumes covering three periods.⁴² The respective volumes are as follows: *L'occupazione iniziale: 1912-1922* (The Initial Occupation), *Il Governo di Mario Lago: 1923-1936* (Mario Lago's Government), and *De Vecchi, guerra e dopoguerra: 1936-1947/50* (De Vecchi, War and Post-war Period). This multidisciplinary masterpiece is regarded as the most comprehensive work in Italian literature on the Italian islands of the Aegean. In his seminal work, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, Nicholas Doumanis undertakes a meticulous ethnographic and historical investigation into the shifting dynamics between the Italian administration, positioned as the colonizer, and the Dodecanese peoples, positioned as the colonized.⁴³ The Italian edition of the book was published in 2003 under the title *Una faccia, una razza. Le colonie italiane nell'Egeo* (One face, one race. Italian colonies in the Aegean Sea).⁴⁴ This authentic monograph, which is based on interviews conducted between 1990 and 1995, draws on collective memory in order to update stereotypical patterns surrounding Italian colonialism and Greek irredentism.

Giovanni Cecini's *La guardia di finanza nelle isole italiane dell'Egeo: 1912-1945* (The Financial Police on the Italian Islands of the Aegean Sea: 1912-1945), a seminal book focusing on the activities of the Italian Financial Police in the Dodecanese, is a unique military/administrative study that has exerted significant influence on related scholarship.⁴⁵ Cecini's work provides a comprehensive analysis of the post-occupation transformation of the islands, which, although administratively linked to Istanbul, were designed as an Ottoman province with a certain degree of economic autonomy. The practices of the *Guardia di Finanza*, which restructured the socio-economic system and redefined common interests, gradually

⁴¹ Despite being referred to as the Tripolitanian War (*Trablusgarp Savaşı*) in Turkish literature and the Libyan War (*Guerra di Libia*) in Italian literature, it is more commonly known as the "Italo-Turkish" or the "Italo-Ottoman War" in international literature. In order to avoid potential confusion, the international name has been preferred in this study. For a contemporary and sophisticated study on the place and importance of the war in Turkish historiography and literature, please refer to: Nurkan Sever, "The Italo-Ottoman War in Turkish Historiography and Literature," *Africa Rivista Semestrale Di Studi E Ricerche* 1/2025 (January 1, 2025): 67-94, <https://doi.org/10.52056/9791257010911/04>.

⁴² Luca Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano 1912-1947. Vol. 1: L'occupazione iniziale: 1912-1922* (Chieti: Edizioni Solfanelli, 2011).

⁴³ Nicholas Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean: Remembering Fascism's Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997).

⁴⁴ Nicholas Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza. Le colonie italiane nell'Egeo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003).

⁴⁵ Giovanni Cecini, *La guardia di finanza nelle isole italiane dell'Egeo: 1912-1945* (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2016).

transformed the islands into a possession with their own tax and customs regime. Andreas Guidi's recent publication, *Generations of Empire*, constitutes a significant contribution to the field of Empire Studies.⁴⁶ The study explores the impact of colonial design in the Dodecanese on the sociocultural life, political preferences, and educational policies of Rhodes. Due to the richness of its content and contextual depth, the monograph is also recognized as a significant contribution to the fields of sociocultural history and even Borderland Studies. Guidi examines the intergenerational dynamics of the harsh transformation experienced by the island, which first became an Italian colonial governorate after the Ottoman Empire's absolute and constitutional monarchies, and later underwent fascist annexation.

While the extant literature offers the opportunity to examine the fluid and pragmatic nature of the Italian individual in the Ottoman Empire from different perspectives, no study has yet been produced that is dedicated to both the construction and transformation of this transimperial identity. At this juncture, the central lacuna that this thesis seeks to address is the prevailing absence of a synthesis that comprehensively examines the formative origins of identity and its transformative essence in its entirety. When examining the construction and transformation of identity through broad lenses such as Levantine Studies or Mediterranean Studies, the temporal and spatial focus can extend to very broad ranges. From this standpoint, addressing the Italo-Levantine identity, which is dispersed throughout the entire Mediterranean region and divided into extended temporal periods, in a single, comprehensive manner poses a significant challenge.

On the other hand, an examination of the civic status of Italians in the Ottoman context requires reference to the doctrinally complex fields of Citizenship Studies and International Law, which demand a high level of expertise and conceptual sensitivity. However, an analysis based solely on these studies may result in an overly restrictive conception of identity, one that is constrained by normative and prescriptive patterns. This may lead to an excessive focus on the legal and institutional construction of identity, while the political and cultural dimensions may be relegated to the background. Consequently, while this study seeks to illuminate the formation of a sociocultural identity within the Mediterranean context, it also endeavors to encompass the construction of a legal, institutional, and political identity within the frameworks of Ottomanness and Italianness. To this end, the study does not address Italians in the Ottoman Empire merely as members of the Italo-Levantine community that established commercial, diplomatic, and cultural networks in the Mediterranean basin. Additionally, the study identifies them as transimperial actors who sought to initiate a civic dialogue with the Ottoman state apparatus to which they were subject, as well as to establish a civic affiliation, albeit from a distance, with their homeland, Italy.

Outline of the Thesis

Upon closer examination of the structural flow of the thesis, it appears that the initial three chapters concentrate on the transimperial character, demographic composition, and the extraterritorial and civic flexibility of Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire. These three chapters, engaging with the construction of identity, seek to define the transimperial nature of

⁴⁶ Andreas Guidi, *Generations of Empire: Youth from Ottoman to Italian Rule in the Mediterranean* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022).

the Italian individual navigating between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. This process is characterized by the utilization of flexibility as a strategic advantage and liminality as a potential impediment. The construction of Italo-Levantine identity, framed within the Mediterranean template, is explored through the prism of diasporic formations and migratory patterns, as well as socio-economic, ethnocultural, and linguistic origins. The flexible nature of identity, on the other hand, manifested itself through two mechanisms: a transimperial jurisdiction and a civic repertoire. A typological classification of Italian naturalization is to be developed, grounded within a theoretical framework, and then elaborated upon through the practices of Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The exploration of Italian identity through the lens of diverse civic cases is of paramount importance for unravelling the complex and individual trajectories of this identity within the Ottoman geography. In this manner, the thesis aspires to transcend the conventional categorization that has hitherto delineated the Italian individual within the Ottoman Empire as a constituent of an Italo-Levantine group within a broader Mediterraneanness paradigm. Parallel to this, such cases serve to facilitate understanding by translating transimperialism from theoretical constructs to practical applications, thereby engendering concrete representations of transimperial imaginaries within the reader's cognitive framework. Consequently, the primary objective of the initial three chapters is to establish the Italo-Levantine concept as a diasporic entity within the reader's cognitive framework, delineate its sociological and demographic boundaries, and subsequently extend it to an individual and civic dimension through its constituents.

The fourth and fifth chapters concentrate on the manner in which this identity was marginalized by the Ottoman state apparatus during wartime conditions. This marginalization, occurring at both the individual and institutional levels, indicates the wartime reconfiguration of social cosmopolitanism within the increasingly shrinking imperial borders. Italian individuals and institutions, recognized as "capitulatory protégés" in the Ottoman domains until then, gradually became "enemy aliens" after the 1911 invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania and underwent rapid identity erosion. Throughout the First World War, these individuals were subject to various social control mechanisms and demographic design programs introduced by the Ottoman state. In order to reinforce the historical narrative, the practical implications of these mechanisms and programs will be examined through a variety of different cases and characters. These implications reveal that the Italian subject, which had been positioned as an extraterritorial protégé in the eyes of the Ottoman state apparatus, was now being treated according to the priorities imposed by the extraordinary conditions of war. The sixth chapter, which is structured as a case study, examines the Ottoman-Italian "transimperial jurisdiction" that emerged in the Dodecanese region during the period of Italian occupation. This administrative and legal hybridity, bearing traces of the Ottoman, Greek, and Italian regimes, paved the way for the introduction of new civic designs and, consequently, the formation of new transimperial identities. The discovery of the continuity between the centuries-old Aegean capitulations granted by the Ottomans and the citizenship formulas introduced by Italy emerges as a feature that differentiates the Dodecanese from other Ottoman domains.

1. CONSTRUCTING A TRANSIMPERIAL HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE ITALO-LEVANTINES

This chapter presents a conceptual analysis of the historical background and transimperial/transnational nature of the Italo-Levantines, who constituted a diasporic network and a common system of values within the Ottoman realm.⁴⁷ Prior to an examination of the 1911-1919 period, it is imperative to investigate the shared values, collective memory, and historical legacy of the Italian subjects who inhabited the Ottoman coastline. The “New Rome” that the Italians sought to revive in the Aegean Islands and Anatolian lands following the 1911-1912 Ottoman-Italian War was not merely a cultural reproduction. An ambition driven by the colonial vision was reinforced by an emulation of historical origins that extended well beyond the mere reproduction of symbols, thereby creating a distinct perception of reality. Rome’s connection with the Aegean and Anatolian lands was not only rooted in ancient history but also nourished by contemporary experience. Since the early nineteenth century, Italian elements have been present on these shores. Through linguistic, religious, cultural, and, most importantly, commercial networks, they have formed a collective consciousness, consolidated their identity, and gained a form of “self-representation” in the eyes of the European community, albeit *de facto*. It is an undeniable fact that Italians also had a considerable gravity in the Ottoman public sphere, although they constituted a smaller proportion of the non-Muslim population than other groups, such as Orthodox Greeks, Armenians, or Jews. Despite their relatively small population, Italo-Levantines left their mark on the urban history of Ottoman metropolitan cities such as Istanbul and Izmir. This legacy was built on their representation of religious institutions and missions, their engagement in linguistic and cultural initiatives, and their maintenance of commercial relations with the Italian Peninsula.

In addition to being a period of significant population movements driven by colonialism and commercial activity in the Mediterranean, the nineteenth century was also a time of revolutionary change.⁴⁸ From the repercussions of the French Revolution in the Italian Peninsula, the Ionian Islands and Egypt to the Young Turkish Revolution of 1908, this distinctive process was characterized by significant events where external pressures and foreign interventions interacted with domestic social and political dynamics. Anti-imperialist and anti-

⁴⁷ It will be seen that the terms “transimperial” and “transnational” are used interchangeably many times throughout the study. The need to eliminate historical and geographical limitations when defining diasporic identities in recent studies has led to the emergence of many terms with “trans” in the title. Scholars such as Gallant even take the issue one step further and argue that phrases such as trans-national, trans-imperial and trans-regional have gained their own ontological independence. In a period when the consciousness of nationalism is not yet fully formed and nation-building processes have not yet begun; it may seem healthier to use only the term “transimperial.” However, diasporic and migration studies generally refer to both pre- and post-nation-building periods in the conceptualization of the subject and often do not make a periodic distinction in essence. This ambiguity becomes even clearer when one considers that Italians began to acquire a post-Risorgimento national consciousness at a time when the Ottoman Empire was promoting the fusion and harmony of different elements. Thus, it should be remembered that in an imperial age without nation consciousness and self-determination, the term ‘trans-national’ can also be perceived as an imperial “subject” (*tebaa*), “element” (*unsur/anâsır*) or “nationality” (*uyruk/milliyet*) and substituted for a diasporic “nation” (*millet/ulus*). It should also be noted that the word *millet*, which characterized the system of confessional and self-jurisdictional elements that constituted the Ottoman Empire, still stands for “nation” in modern Turkish.

⁴⁸ Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou, “Introduction: The Sea, its People and their Ideas in the Long Nineteenth Century,” in *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, eds. Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 7.

colonialist uprisings, military interventions, peasant revolts and civil wars were some of the events that occurred during this process, which exhibited a distinctive intensity, diversity and frequency. This process was driven by the simultaneous and military-led uprisings of the 1820s, which brought together Portugal, Spain, Turin, Naples, Sicily, Greece and the Atlantic. Furthermore, the July Revolution of 1830 and the Springtime of the Peoples of 1848, which brought the Mediterranean and, in particular, the Italian peninsula into contact with Western and Central Europe, as well as with the Balkans, constituted an integral part of this process.

In the post-Risorgimento period, mass population movements between the Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire, matrimonial and familial ties with Levantine families, and the rapid increase in commercial exchange paved the way for the formation of an Italo-Levantine elite. Initially driven by a profit-oriented and capitalist mindset, commercial expansionism later took on a political nature and became one of the building blocks of the colonial vision. On the other hand, the gradual displacement of the Italian language by French, which had become the language of diplomacy and culture in imperial domains, would spark Italian cultural and linguistic expansionism. Catholicism, which had always been perceived as a supra-national phenomenon, would become identified with Italianness in the age of imperialism and would soon become intertwined with public education. Catholic orders, fraternities and congregations, which would become the most important catalyst for international schooling, would constitute a symbiotic representation of both the Pope in Vatican and the King in Rome throughout the Ottoman geography.

The Italo-Levantines, who had long settled in port cities such as Istanbul and Izmir for several centuries, and the recent Risorgimento immigrants, the so-called “second generation Italians,” gradually became part of this imperial strategy. Although the Risorgimento is often regarded as a “gradual process of unification” in the context of Italian nation-building, its impact on diasporic communities was, in fact, markedly different.⁴⁹ This historical phenomenon, which served the global design of Italian emigration through both domestic and international demographic movements, was also a major determinant of Italian migration to the Ottoman Empire. As the wars that would shake the continents drew near, Italy was rapidly transformed into one of the imperial powers. Somehow, it would become a pragmatic choice to be an Italian subject/national/citizen in the territories where it pursued a colonial policy or operatively occupied in line with its military strategies. As will be discussed in greater detail in the subsequent chapter on demography, the Italian naturalization would be adopted by numerous non-Muslim individuals in the Ottoman Empire as a strategic survival method.

⁴⁹ Claudio Fogu, on the other hand, addresses the methodology of recreating Italianness through an anachronistic discourse in the nation-building process that the Risorgimento aimed at and promoted from the outset. Fogu identifies an inversion of the cultural theory of nation-building through the maxim *Fatta l'Italia, bisogna fare gli Italiani* (*), which can be more accurately unfolded as “We have established a unified Italy; now we must foster a unified Italian identity.” Indeed, one of the principal discourses surrounding the unification of Italy was the assertion that a unified Italy should be promoted in parallel with the advancement of a unified Italian identity. However, as Fogu emphasizes, in the case of Italian unification, this mechanism would operate retrospectively, in contrast to the antecedent or simultaneous operation observed in other cases. A linguistic and cultural community, which is the constituent subject of the nation, is initially posited as non-existent and subsequently presented as a goal to be achieved through a retrospective and necessary act of legitimization. Fogu acknowledges that national communities are a perpetual work in progress and that they continue to be reconstructed ceaselessly after the nation-state has been established. Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 11. (*) Literal meaning of the saying is “We have made Italy; now we must make Italians”

1.1. An Analytical Overview of the “Mediterranean Imaginaries” of Levantinism

The desire to elucidate the implicit and neglected interconnections between regions that have traditionally been viewed as distinct from one another is a significant factor in the advent of “trans-political, -national and -cultural” trends that have characterized recent cultural, visual and historical studies.⁵⁰ In the case of the Mediterranean, the necessity of exploring contacts, influences and encounters beyond political borders had already emerged with the groundbreaking conceptualization of the “fluid continent” (*continent liquide*) attributed to (or derived from) Fernand Braudel’s 1949 masterpiece.⁵¹ In his seminal volume titled *La Méditerranée et le Monde méditerranéen à l’époque de Philippe II*, Braudel advances a novel interpretation of the historical regions of the Mediterranean, portraying them as interconnected “islands” that, whilst sharing a fluid unity and cultural heritage, retain their distinct and independent character.⁵² Braudel’s work had a profound impact on the subsequent generation of cultural historians, who were engaged in investigating the phenomenon of hybridity within diverse geographical and historical contexts. In essence, Braudel’s work prompted a challenge

⁵⁰ Paolo Girardelli and Ezio Godoli, eds., *Italian Architects and Builders in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Design Across Borders* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), vii.

⁵¹ Despite the direct translation of the term from French is “liquid continent”, the adjective “fluid” is always preferred in academic studies as it more accurately conveys the dynamic, transformative and shifting nature of persistent mobility within the Mediterranean basin. Although the concept of a “fluid continent” is widely accepted as having been introduced by Braudel, inspired by Paul Valéry, Manuel Borutta contends that the term within the Mediterranean context was initially coined by the French writer Gabriel Audisio in his 1935 work titled *Jeunesse de la Méditerranée* (Youth of the Mediterranean). Indeed, the term liquid continent does not appear verbatim in Braudel’s aforementioned work, but it is attributed to or derived from the author’s theoretical framework and conceptualization. In accordance with Borutta’s account, Audisio categorically rejects the European perspective that perceives the Mediterranean as a constituent of Europe. According to Audisio, who contests the claims of European nationalists and regionalists to the Mediterranean, the region was the common homeland of all its peoples. Therefore, the regional unity and integrity of this fluid continent was the result of a cultural and racial blend that extended far beyond the confines of Europe, encompassing interaction with the Phoenicians, Arabs, and Jews. It is more interesting to note that the region’s nomadic mobility and multicultural past, which has been reproduced on multiple occasions, has been the most significant reason for the Mediterranean’s transcendence of fixed borders. In Audisio’s words, the boundaries of religion, culture, politics and demographics have shifted in multiple directions on numerous occasions since ancient times. Manuel Borutta, “Mediterraneum,” EGO | European History Online, January 11, 2021, accessed April 25, 2025, <https://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/border-regions/manuel-borutta-mediterraneum>. Although Fogu also attributes the term “liquid continent” to Gabriel Audisio, he cites his 1936 work *La Mer* as the primary source. Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 116, 117.

⁵² For instance, Braudel’s seminal work posits the concept of Lombardy as a “continental island,” situated between the Alps and the Apennine Mountains, wedged between the pastoral Piedmont and the semi-Byzantine realm of Venice. Furthermore, he advances the observation that Portugal, Andalusia, Valencia, and Catalonia constitute a series of “peripheral islands” connected to the Iberian continent via Castile. He underscores the geostrategic significance of Catalonia, emphasizing its maritime access and role as a conduit between the Iberian coastline and its hinterland. Additionally, he makes a notable reference to the permeability between its French and Spanish historical legacies. According to Braudel, Syria, located at the far eastern end of the Mediterranean region, was an island both geographically and metaphorically. It functioned as an intermediate station between the sea and the desert, and served as a source of numerous elements, including people, techniques, empires, civilizations, and religions. Braudel also compares major Mediterranean islands such as Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily, Cyprus, Crete and Rhodes to miniature continents. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II: Volume One* (London and New York: Fontana/Collins, 1981), 148, 161.

to the nationally and religiously bounded historiography and its long-standing stereotypical academic practices across all fields, including the visual and spatial. In considering the mutual migratory interactions and hereditary patterns between the Italian peninsula and the Ottoman coasts, it may be argued that an analysis of these encounters outside the context of Mediterranean studies would produce a problematic historiography that is disconnected from its essence. As Girardelli and Godoli cite Linda Darling in their seminal work, the discredited clichés, such as “the eternal opposition of the West to the East” or “the East’s inertia in the face of Western progress,” should be discarded in historiography. The issue, however, is that the productivity stimulated by this paradigm shift was primarily concentrated in the early modern period, when the imaginary boundaries between nations were not as clearly delineated as in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, research on encounters and interactions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has predominantly centered on colonialism, imperialism and non-Western modernization.

More than half a century after Fernand Braudel’s “monumental treatment” of the history of the Mediterranean, recent work has renewed the Mediterranean as a “category of historical analysis” in a more creative and inspiring way.⁵³ This “new thalassology” of the Mediterranean, as Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell describe it, has brought a non-traditional approach to the study of maritime history, challenging both the notion of “unity” and its opposite, “fragmentation.”⁵⁴ Moreover, Braudel’s idea of the “natural and cultural unity of the Mediterranean space” has been replaced by a new approach that sees the Mediterranean as a “fragmented topography of micro-regions.” In contrast to the more structuralist and centralist image of the sea promoted by Braudel, recent historians tend to see the Mediterranean as a world that is both dynamic and, despite its fragmented nature, united through multiple connections.⁵⁵ Scholars such as Julie Clancy-Smith, Manuel Borutta and Sakis Gekas have abandoned narrowing national frameworks and occidentalist narratives of modern Mediterranean history and have attempted to reconstruct the full range of interactions, entanglements and shared experiences across the region. In addition, recent historians have also sought to overcome the chronic fragmentation of national and regional studies of Mediterranean history by integrating histories that are typically analyzed in isolation. Offering a more macro-level perspective, this methodology has positioned the Mediterranean as a laboratory of transnational and transimperial experiences, sometimes even colonial experiences.

⁵³ Isabella and Zanou, “Introduction,” 1-2; Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, “The Mediterranean and “the New Thalassology,” *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 722-740, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.3.722>.

⁵⁴ The “thalassological approach,” coined by Horden and Purcell and derived from the Greek word *thalassa*, meaning “sea,” is predicated upon the views they articulated in their seminal book, *The Corrupting Sea*, published in 2000. The book also provides a highly satisfying read on the concept of “thalassocracy,” which is sometimes referred to as “maritime empires” or “seaborn empires,” and clearly denotes empires in which maritime activities and naval power are prominent. Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 10-13, 24-25, 38-43, 486-523, 530-543.

⁵⁵ The analyses of Braudel are based on a range of mobility, including migration, trade, cultural exchange, and piracy, and therefore cannot be regarded as “static.” Nevertheless, in comparison to contemporary postcolonial or network-based Mediterranean imaginations, which are cultivated by dynamic diversity and multiple identities, they may appear to be more structuralist and centralized. To summarize, whereas the concept of “fluidity” in contemporary approaches to Mediterraneanism is characterized by dynamic and variable networks and micro-regionalisms, the “fluidity” in the *Braudelian* approach is more controlled, sedate, and driven by structures.

The realization of *Mare Nostrum* (Our Sea), which would regain prominence during the Mussolini era, idealizes the resurrection of Italian sovereignty over the Mediterranean, which was interned as an inland sea during the heyday of the Roman Empire.⁵⁶ The framework developed by Valerie McGuire, who applied the Horden and Purcell's "thalassological approach" to the Italian notion of *mediterraneità* (Mediterraneanness), is a truly inspiring interpretation of the Italian discourse surrounding the Aegean and Levantine Seas.⁵⁷ She attributes Italy's *mediterraneità* to the national instability in its own land and a "crisis of origins" it experienced through the paradox of homogeneity and diversity in the context of nation-state building. At this point, McGuire has successfully analyzed how the Italian representation turns into a discourse construction. Because this Mediterraneanness was shaped not only through an imaginative geography based on alterity or difference as in the Orientalist approach, but also through an imaginative geography based on unity and nationhood. In other words, according to McGuire, Italy's imagination of an overseas empire through Mediterraneanness was a way to glorify the project of national unity and move away from the overt regionalism that plagued it.

Furthermore, throughout the nineteenth century, the Mediterranean region was conceptualized as a geographical and civilizational space by utopian socialists, such as the *Saint-Simonians*, who established the foundations of positivism, and by subsequent thinkers who emulated their approach at the local level.⁵⁸ This mentality predicted that the Mediterranean, after a long period of decline, would once again become a focal point of global attention within the current century. The opening of the Suez Canal, which provided access to the railway networks along its shores, would facilitate commercial exchanges and link the Mediterranean to global systems. This would lead to the region being regarded as the cradle of modern civilization, as it had been in antiquity. As Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou have successfully argued, the Mediterranean Sea could now be reimagined both conceptually and factually as a nation's sphere of sovereignty for a number of reasons. These would be its geographical location, the civilizational mission it undertook, or the natural connection that existed between its coastal regions.⁵⁹

The Mediterranean Sea and its civilization were historicized by both European (such as Braudel) and Eastern Mediterranean intellectuals.⁶⁰ Its ancient past, associated with political and economic modernity, was revisited for multiple and conflicting purposes. In the early nineteenth century, some Italian liberals, seeking to criticize contemporary European conquests around the Mediterranean, interpreted pre-Roman Mediterranean communities as models of peaceful colonialism. In the second half of the century, Italian intellectuals revived memories

⁵⁶ McGuire's recent, comprehensive, and groundbreaking study offers a tremendous reading for the ideological, ontological and semantic definitions and approaches introduced by the Italians towards both the Mediterranean Sea as a whole and towards the Aegean and Levantine Seas, which are considered to be its marginal seas. Valerie McGuire, *Italy's Sea: Empire and Nation in the Mediterranean, 1895–1945* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 1-6.

⁵⁷ McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 7-12.

⁵⁸ Isabella and Zanou, "Introduction," 9-10.

⁵⁹ In this context, Isabella and Zanou provide a clear and accessible explanation of the phenomenon of "imagined and claimed territories," with a pertinent reference to the case of Syria being interpreted as part of France. Another pertinent case in this regard was the reclaiming of the Adriatic Sea by Italian and Albanian nationalists as their own sea during the nineteenth century, when Greek nationalists dreamed of reviving the Byzantine Empire. Isabella and Zanou, "Introduction," 10.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

of the Venetian Empire in order to support the colonial ambitions of the new state. Overall, the intellectuals' objective was to give the Mediterranean a new centrality in the modern world by linking its present and future to its glorious past.

In her work, Julia Clancy-Smith introduces the term "Mediterranean community of thought" as a conceptual framework for understanding the circulation of ideas and people that took shape in the Mediterranean world in the nineteenth century.⁶¹ This community, defined beyond the limitations of a simplistic Eurocentrism, was an interactive formation in which Italians, French, Ottomans and Tunisians coexisted. The actors of the community interacted with each other in the context of the technological, cultural and economic transformations of the time, producing a wide spectrum of original syntheses. Ottoman culture and the tradition of Islamic thought continued to be an extremely important backdrop, providing tools and arguments for this community to understand modernity. The Ottoman world, which spanned a geographical area large enough to rule over three continents, played a crucial role in the formation of political ideas and the evolution of political spaces, as well as in the circulation of these ideologies and actors throughout the century.

Claudio Fogu, building on the observations of Roberto Dainotto, discusses the exponential growth in production and discourse inflation in the academic literature on the Mediterranean in recent years.⁶² Fogu highlights that this prolific debate has proliferated far beyond the Mediterranean basin in a remarkably rapid and far-reaching fashion, in stark contrast to the physical introversion that characterizes the Mediterranean. The phenomenon of the Mediterranean has grown so rapidly and widely that a comparative assessment of its common themes and key contributions, or even a consideration of its own participants, is rendered impossible. Fogu makes a pertinent reference to Dainotto's argument that the "Mediterranean has become a global business" and "liquidity has become its *modus operandi*." He further elaborates on the fact that this transformation conceals the fundamental "asymmetry" between European and non-European perspectives on the Mediterranean, as demonstrated by Dainotto's comparative analysis of literature. It is not uncommon for an Italian author to engage with the Mediterranean without referencing the works of Turkish or Algerian writers. Nevertheless, it is unfeasible or even self-destructive for a Turkish or Algerian writer aiming to reach an audience beyond their national borders not to engage with the "canonized Mediterranean" as represented in European literature. Fogu's work at this juncture acknowledges that the concept of the Mediterranean is a discursive construct created by Europeans for Europeans and that it has failed to garner sufficient interest among non-Europeans, even among the countries and cultures of the Mediterranean region.

Rather than concerning with the Mediterranean Sea as a physical-geographical entity, Fogu focuses on its metaphorical existences such as "Mediterranean imaginaries," "Mediterranean-ness" and forms of "Mediterraneanism."⁶³ By Mediterranean imaginaries, Fogu means

⁶¹ Ibid., 14-15.

⁶² Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 1-2, 258-259.

⁶³ Fogu argues that the discourse of "Mediterranean-ness" that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century was thoroughly a Southern European discourse and that non-European and Mediterranean-region intellectuals were not involved in its formation. Therefore, Fogu's usage of a hyphenated Mediterranean-ness in conceptualizing the term throughout his study refers to its artificial, synthetic and unconventional nature. What is implied here by a hyphenated "-ness" could possibly be a sense of Mediterraneanness that is uninherited, unestablished and unintegrated, to which the English suffixes "-ish" or "-esque" might correspond. I will adopt a similar approach and use the hyphenated version of the term in all instances

configurations of mental, verbal or visual images that explicitly or implicitly refer to ideas of Mediterranean-ness.⁶⁴ The concept of Mediterranean-ness, on the other hand, refers primarily to a necessary commonality that exists between the cultures, mentalities and peoples inhabiting a Mediterranean geography that is not divided into nation-states. Mediterranean-ness, which describes a way of life, emotional state, identity, geographical affiliation or cultural conditions inherent in everyday practices, is a more organic, experiential and sometimes subjective concept. It is less critical and more positive, humane and internalized, akin to a common cultural sentiment embraced and shared by those who live in or belong to the Mediterranean. This necessary commonality also coexists with a “continental liquidity” that develops and spreads on a sense of belonging that is rooted in the exchange practices between these peoples. In other words, the Mediterranean is a “liquid continent,” in which harbor cities form its borders and islands form its capitals, and which exists in the territorial and expansionary ambitions of landlocked states towards island capitals and coastlines. On the contrary, the concept of Mediterraneanism can be defined as an ideological set of values that reconstructs the Mediterranean from an extrinsic perspective, thereby imbuing it with meaning and representation. This external structure constructs, critiques, and represents the Mediterranean from the outside, in a manner similar to Orientalism, through an academic or political

where I cite Fogu. In other sections of the study, the form I use will remain as Mediterraneanness in accordance with the original terminology. Furthermore, Fogu observes that the term “Mediterraneanism” was initially articulated by the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld in the post-war era, primarily to critique the construction of a Mediterranean otherness within French and British anthropologies. Herzfeld had previously investigated the ways in which Northern European social scientists had alienated and exoticized Southern Europeans through their normative distance from the North. The British anthropologist introduced the term Mediterraneanism, which shares similarities with Orientalism, to underscore the methods employed predominantly by French and British scholars. Fogu’s term “Epiphanic Mediterraneanism” is also applicable to the construction of Mediterranean-ness in Southern Europe, but it addresses a broader range of mental, discursive and cultural representations than those within the field of anthropology. Fogu employs the term Mediterraneanism as a parallel, cognate, and partially antithetical concept to modernism. However, he emphasizes that the opposition of artists and intellectuals from the Mediterranean region seeking an alternative modernity conceals the cultural construction of Mediterranean-ness. Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 3, 118-119, 130-131. Ingo Plag, *Word-Formation in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁶⁴ Although Fogu posits that non-European and Mediterranean intellectuals were not engaged in the discourse of Mediterranean-ness, he is not reluctant to cite an exceptional example from the Ottoman lands. Nevertheless, the French journalist Pierre Loti persistently praised the Mediterranean identity of his cherished Ottoman Turkey and even urged France to intervene to halt Italian aggression in 1911-1912. However, it is evident that the exceptions did not invalidate the rule, and the case of Loti did not disrupt the imaginative and orientalist nature of the general discourse. Accordingly, Fogu asserts that the concept of Mediterranean-ness as an imagined projection of the Mediterranean at the level of identity formation is almost entirely absent from the Ottoman imaginary. Despite centuries of struggle and warfare against Christian powers, ongoing piracy and the slave trade, Ottoman writers refrained from regarding the Mediterranean as a Turkish sea and did not adopt a Turkish-Mediterranean heritage or identity. The Turks’ conception of the Mediterranean was that of the Black Sea, with the Mediterranean itself being referred to as the White Sea (*Akdeniz* or *Bahr-i Sefid*). This reflected their perception of the Mediterranean as a purely European entity. Fogu posits that the inaugural authentic discourse on Mediterranean-ness in the Arab world emerged in the post-Ottoman era with the establishment of Greater Lebanon under French protectorate in 1920. In his account of five years in France (*An Imam in Paris*, 1832), Egyptian Rifa’a al-Tahtawi described the Egyptian city of Alexandria as a quasi-European city akin to Paris. He adopted a discourse of a Parisian Mediterranean rather than an autochthonous Ottoman Mediterranean. For numerous other Egyptians and Muslim Arabs, however, the Mediterranean was never a source of self-identification and consistently remained the “Sea of Rum,” which could be characterized as a Christian other. *Ibid.*, 116-119.

perspective. Meanwhile, by resorting to the notion of liquid continent, Fogu also pays homage to the *Braudelian* paradigm, which is explicitly based on the relationship between water, land and history and divides historical time into three modes of movement: geographical time; social time; individual time.⁶⁵ However, when doing so, Fogu elects to acknowledge Gabriel Audisio, the literal introducer of the term, rather than Fernand Braudel, the widely accepted theorist behind its conceptualization.⁶⁶

In the title of his book, Fogu employs the metaphors of a "fishing net" and a "spider web" to symbolize the transformation of the Mediterranean into *Mare Nostrum* by Rome as a centralizing power.⁶⁷ Rome justified the saying "all roads lead to Rome" by weaving a spider's web instead of a fishing net in the Mediterranean and establishing itself at its center. The establishment of a network of roads linking Rome to the ports of the Italian peninsula and the Mediterranean basin contributed to the territorialization of the Mediterranean Sea. Fogu identifies the commercial ports of Pozzuoli (*Puteoli*) and the military port of Misenum (*Mysenum*) in Naples as pivotal in the territorialization of the Mediterranean. He emphasizes that the connection of these two ports to the cities of Alexandria, Constantinople, Marseilles and Barcelona imbued the Roman spider web in the Mediterranean with a dual military and commercial character.

Joseph John Viscomi's pioneering recent study illuminates the shared Mediterranean heritage through an examination of migratory experiences between Italy and Egypt.⁶⁸ Furthermore, it offers a critical analysis of the "Mediterranean imaginaries" that developed and overlapped between the two countries. In analyzing these imaginaries that Fogu introduced to the literature, Viscomi states that, in contrast to Fogu's perspective, he is aware that they are and remain far beyond mere images and are tied to concrete historical processes. While critiquing Fogu on the limitations of these imaginaries, he posits that they constitute a broader and contemporary political-economic network linking the two countries through migratory routes. Indeed, the fact that the contingencies to which they refer shape legal, political and social categories of belonging in and across the Mediterranean suggests that their presence and productivity extend beyond an "abstract liquidity." The concepts of "liquidity" and "fluidity" are frequently employed in cultural studies of the Mediterranean to elucidate the historical dynamism in and around the Sea. However, despite their flexibility, Viscomi does not employ them, as he believes that they are not as fluid as liquid metaphors suggest and that they flatten asymmetrical histories.

⁶⁵ Samuel Kinser, "Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism of Fernand Braudel," *The American Historical Review* 86, no. 3 (February 1981): 63-105, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/86.1.63>.

⁶⁶ In contemporary postcolonial or network-based Mediterranean imaginations, the tendency to attribute the conceptualization of the "liquid continent" directly to Braudel is diminishing. Instead, there is a greater tendency to trace its origins back to literary sources, such as Paul Valéry and Gabriel Audisio, and to establish connections with Braudel's successors.

⁶⁷ Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 40-41.

⁶⁸ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 1-3; Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 3-4.

1.2. Ideological and Revolutionary Origins of the Italo-Ottoman Encounters (1821-1897)

The liberal ideals of early nineteenth-century Italian intellectuals were configured by displacement, exile and travel, as Isabella demonstrates in his seminal chapter.⁶⁹ These figures were in constant motion between the continental or insular regions and the metropolitan centers of the Mediterranean basin, shaped by the presence and revolutionary conditions of the French and British Empires. Isabella provides an apt description of this formation as “the network of trans-Mediterranean patriots,” whose members were in direct or indirect contact with each other and associated with centers of political ideology with high reputations, such as London and Paris.⁷⁰ Serving as intermediaries between the imperial peripheries and their political and intellectual capitals, these actors had acquired the ability to discuss, reshape, and adapt imperial ideologies to their own political ends. Culturally Italian or Italo-Greek, these early liberals perceived the Mediterranean Sea as a potential space for reconciliation between disparate imperial and national structures and were actively engaged in its geopolitical transformations. Consequently, their advocacy for a Mediterranean autonomy on a regional scale, as Isabella termed it, prompted them to challenge the legitimacy of Europe’s southern and eastern expansion. Furthermore, Isabella emphasizes that these figures were neither Italian nor Greek nationalists, but rather Mediterranean liberals. Moreover, these figures, often imperial subjects, were engaged in transnational debates about the political reconfiguration of the Mediterranean Sea. In these transnational debates, national concerns were only one part of a larger set of issues in which liberty was sometimes accommodated to imperial rule and colonial expansion.

In addition to their diasporic formations and migratory patterns, it is noteworthy that the history of Italian-Ottoman encounters is also framed within an ideological and political context nourished by the Greek War of Independence. The contribution of limited but influential Italian exile groups such as the *Counts of Carbonari* to European Philhellenism would facilitate the emergence of an overseas sphere of ideological production.⁷¹ Their cultural alliance with European civilization and Christianity in the face of Ottoman hegemony and the anti-imperialist role they played in the Greek War of Independence between 1821 and 1829 would enable the Italians to formulate different ideological and political perspectives towards the Ottoman regime. Nevertheless, the ideological foundations of the Italo-Greek alliance that paved the way for these encounters can be primarily attributed to the nationalist and unifying movements that originated in Northern Italy.

The dissident movement initiated by Santorre di Santarosa in Switzerland in 1821 and subsequently matured in France with the objective of expelling the Austrians from Piedmont and uniting Italy under the House of Savoy would later evolve into the Piedmontese

⁶⁹ Maurizio Isabella, “Mediterranean Liberals? Italian Revolutionaries and the Making of a Colonial Sea, ca. 1800–30,” in *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, eds. Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 78–80.

⁷⁰ Additionally, Isabella and Zanou observe that during the initial decades of the nineteenth century, revolutionary upheavals in Southern Europe and the Ottoman Empire resulted in a surge of immigration of war refugees. In the context of the Greek struggle for independence in the 1820s, for instance, some Cypriot families sought refuge in Marseilles, Venice and Trieste, while some Christian families from Asia Minor and the Aegean islands settled on the Black Sea coast. Isabella and Zanou, “Introduction,” 5–6.

⁷¹ Isabella, *Risorgimento in Exile*, 66–69.

Revolution.⁷² Santarosa, one of the Italian exiles who laid the foundations of the Risorgimento, resided in Switzerland, France and England prior to travelling to Greece in 1824, where he joined the ranks of volunteers fighting against the Ottomans. Santarosa, who would become a Pan-European Philhellenic icon, comparable to an Italian version of Lord Byron, would die during an engagement in the Greek War of Independence in 1825. In the discourse of the republican exiles, the Austrians and the Italians who had allied with them were consistently described as barbaric and often compared to the barbarism and despotism of the Ottoman Empire.⁷³ Antonio Panizzi, a prominent figure among the patriotic exiles, was vehemently critical of the Duchy of Modena, his place of origin, for having become a puppet regime of Vienna. He posited that the despotism practiced by the Duke was unparalleled except in Turkey, and he identified the Ottoman regime as a benchmark for despotic governance. He did not refrain from subjecting his own country to a rhetorical comparison with the Ottoman regime, which he had previously rebelled against due to its submission to the Viennese regime and the oppression of its own citizens.

As early as the 1820s, democratic and patriotic exiles such as the Paris-based GianBattista Marochetti were deeply influenced by French Republicanism.⁷⁴ They pursued the vision of creating an industrial and commercial society and believed that commercial and industrial behaviour would bring civilization not only to Italy and the Mediterranean Islands but also to the Ottoman Empire. Marochetti, who had become a revolutionary while serving as deputy governor of Napoleonic Piedmont, became one of the leaders of the uprising of 1821 and subsequently fled first to Switzerland and then to France, as did many others.⁷⁵ His *Partage de la Turquie* (1826) constituted a response to the influential liberal writer Dominique De Pradt, who had advocated the serious consideration of the diplomatic implications of the Greek revolution in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.⁷⁶ While both were of the opinion that the solution to Europe's geopolitical problems could be found in the East, Marochetti was particularly vocal in his assertion that the Ottoman Empire was incapable of sustaining itself. Marochetti depicted the Ottoman Empire as the antithesis of Western civilization, associating it with notions of degeneration and decay, and likening it to a paralytic and gangrenous limb that could not be readily detached from the body. In opposition to De Pradt's proposal to revive the old Greek Empire, the Piedmontese revolutionary advocated for Austrian expansion eastwards. Pursuing an unreasonable and ungrounded vision, Marochetti would have welcomed such an expansion followed by the birth of an independent Turkish state under the rule of an Austrian prince

Additionally, there were Italian exiles who, while defending the constitutional system and fundamental freedoms within a European context, opposed the wholesale adoption of every "European" regime and institution.⁷⁷ Alfio Grassi, a Sicilian who had journeyed across the Mediterranean to Istanbul, became an ardent critic of the Glorious Revolution and the British constitution in particular, as well as a staunch defender of Ottoman regimes and institutions. It was Grassi's contention that a polity, even one that was European in character, could not be

⁷² Ibid., 11, 68-89, 244.

⁷³ Ibid., 203.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 63, 108, 146, 157, 177, 179.

⁷⁵ Isabella, "Mediterranean Liberals," 89.

⁷⁶ It was subsequently reprinted in 1830 under the title *Indépendance de l'Italie*.

⁷⁷ Isabella, *Risorgimento in Exile*, 98, 135, 237.

considered fully civilized unless it had established constitutional freedoms. He was vehemently opposed to all forms of imperial and despotic rule in the Mediterranean. He asserted that the Ottoman Empire was superior to the British, Russian and Austrian Empires in its observance of the rule of law and its adoption of constitutional guarantees over the peoples it ruled. It is worthy of note that Grassi's authentic works *Charte Turque* (1825) and *La Sainte-Alliance, Les Anglais et Les Jésuites; Leur système politique à l'égard de la Grèce* (1827) merit particular attention at this juncture.⁷⁸ In these works, he presents a comparative assessment of all the empires involved in the Mediterranean in geopolitical terms. Both of these works played a significant role in challenging Italian prejudices against the Ottomans and in reshaping Italian perspectives on the subject. The provocative nature of Grassi's argument can be attributed to his assertion that the Ottoman Empire exhibited greater tolerance and liberalism than other European empires, particularly the British Empire. He argued that long before civilized nations had constitutions, parliaments and opposition parties, the Ottomans had established their empire on these three foundations, which they regarded as the pillars on which it was intended to stand. In Grassi's discourse, Russia and Austria may have been considered European, but they were not regarded as civilized precisely for this reason. The British government also failed to meet the standards of this model of civilization, as it did not grant constitutional rights to the peoples under its rule. Isabella makes the remarkable observation that Grassi was convinced that the British government was more tyrannical than any pasha in power.⁷⁹

In fact, the originality of Grassi's arguments lay not in the novelty they brought to eighteenth-century intellectualism, but rather in their timing.⁸⁰ To be more precise, Grassi put forward pro-Ottoman arguments in an era of Philhellenism, when they were not supported at all. However, Grassi's arguments were also self-contradictory in some respects. On the one hand, he provocatively privileged Ottoman rule over other empires and persistently rejected stereotypical descriptions of the Turkish population. On the other hand, he found the grievances of the Greek revolutionaries fully justified and supported their demands unconditionally. Grassi's main problem was that he identified constitutionalism with the universally accepted principles of liberalism and self-determination, thus emphasizing the impotence of imperial rule in the face of constitutionalism. Unlike other Italian and Greek liberals in exile, however, Grassi attempted to refute the argument for the superiority of Christian and European civilization over Eastern Islamic culture, which was central to the Philhellenic discourse. For this he was attacked

⁷⁸ Isabella, "Mediterranean Liberals," 85-86.

⁷⁹ As Isabella remarkably suggests, the distinctive quality of Grassi's work was his demonstration that the growing interest in the Greek Revolution and the pro-Ottoman stance could, in fact, coexist. Grassi, who had an impeccable knowledge and command of European literature on the Ottoman Empire, had developed an ardent pro-Ottoman stance during his travels to Istanbul and Greece in 1825. His admiration for the Ottoman Empire was predicated on two key factors: the regime's high degree of religious and cultural tolerance and the absence of an aristocracy in the ruling class. Grassi's analysis of the interaction between the different intra-imperial institutions leads to the conclusion that the Ottoman legislative body, which subordinated even the Sultan due to its reliance on the Koran, could be considered a genuine constitution. The Emperor's actions were subject to the influence of religious circles, including muftis and ulema, as well as the major military and bureaucratic classes. It was only a matter of time before the Emperor was perceived as a threat by these circles or classes if his actions were deemed to be contrary to the laws or principles of the Prophet. Throughout the eighteenth century, such institutions were frequently invoked to argue that the Ottoman Empire constituted a genuine democracy. Grassi, however, went far beyond this by characterizing Ottoman politics as liberal to some extent. Isabella, "Mediterranean Liberals." 85-86.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

and dismissed as absurd by many European writers, such as Jacovaky Rizo Néroulos, who described Ottoman policy as theocratic despotism.

Some other exiles, such as Giorgio Libri-Bagnano, shared Grassi's vision of exposing the contradictions in European Mediterranean policy and challenging the dominant arguments at the heart of Hellenic discourse.⁸¹ Libri was sharply critical of Chateaubriand's *Note sur la Grèce*, which presented an ambiguous discourse of European Philhellenism by describing the Greek War of Independence as merely a clash of civilizations. Libri adopted a non-European and specifically Ottoman perspective to criticize the Holy Alliance and contemporary French foreign policy. Libri described himself as the son of Muslim immigrants who had lived first in Livorno and then in Marseilles and who had adopted European institutions and customs without abandoning their ancestral beliefs. Like Grassi, he was an enthusiastic supporter of the liberation of Greece, which he characterized as an essentially anti-despotic cause. Libri also argued that the European powers, who displayed a clear and persistent inconsistency in their behaviour and political stance, ignored national and individual rights both in the Mediterranean and in southern Europe. Moreover, Libri's own conception of philhellenism, which stipulated that human rights should be defended regardless of skin color and geographical region, contrasted sharply with Chateaubriand's. Thus, according to Libri, 'the Greeks should be supported not because of their Christianity but because of the oppression they have suffered, and the Turks should be attacked not because of their Turkishness but because of the oppression they have committed'.

The indirect link between Italian Socialism and Italian emigration also provided a notable setting for Italo-Turkish encounters in the post-Risorgimento period. This encounter, which has received limited scholarly attention, involved the voluntary participation of the Garibaldi Legion, the successor of the Red Shirts, in the Greco-Turkish War of April-May 1897.⁸² Interestingly, fate had once again brought the Turks and Italians face to face on Hellenic soil. To analyze the background of this encounter, it is necessary to zoom in on the socialist awakening that began in Sicily in the 1890s and spread throughout Italy in the following decade.⁸³ The *Fasci Siciliani*, a movement of poor and exploited Sicilian townspeople who

⁸¹ Ibid., 87-88.

⁸² Giuseppe Maria Garibaldi (1807-1882) was born into a modest merchant family in Nice, a city with a significant north-western Italian population. He was raised speaking the regional dialect of *Provençal*. As a sailor, he travelled extensively in the Orient, reaching Istanbul, Izmir and the Black Sea. During his nearly three years in Istanbul (1828-1831), he taught Italian, French and mathematics. During a sea voyage to Istanbul in 1833, Garibaldi encountered Émile Barrault, a prominent figure in the *Saint-Simonian* socialist movement. On his way to found a *Saint-Simonian* community in Istanbul, Barrault's powerful and persuasive indoctrination during the voyage would ideologically influence Garibaldi and shape his political thinking. That same year, in the Russian port of Taganrog, he met Giovanni Battista Cuneo, joined the *Giovine Italia* movement founded by Giuseppe Mazzini and adopted Mazzini's republican ideology. Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 49; Alfonso Scirocco, *Garibaldi, Citizen of the World: A Biography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 7, 12-18, 32-33.

⁸³ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 108-109, 113; Carina Frid de Silberstein, "Migrants, Farmers and Workers: Italians in the Land of Ceres," in *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*, eds. Donna R. Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 80-81; Lindra Reeder, "When the Men Left Sutera: Sicilian Woman and Mass Migration, 1880-1920," in *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World*, eds. Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022), 49; Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta, "Virgilia D'Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile," in *Women, Gender, and Transnational*

united in the 1890s to defend their rights against land and mining owners, also generated an emigration movement. Peaking in the summer of 1893 and threatening the existing order, the movement spiraled out of control, leading to the declaration of a nationwide state of emergency and was brutally suppressed by the Italian army. With no hope left, large numbers of workers and peasants began to leave the country. When the *Fatti di Maggio* riots broke out in Milan in May 1898 against rising food prices and taxes, the picture of emigration became even bleaker. After the bloody suppression of these two movements, 80 percent of the Socialists fleeing Italy would go to European countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France, where labor networks were better organized. Amilcare Cipriani and some other socialists, such as Giuseppe De Felice Giuffrida (one of the founders of the Fasci Siciliani) and Nicola Barbato, would join the Garibaldi Legion under Ricciotti Garibaldi and fight on the side of the Serbs and Greeks against the Turks in the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. The *Corriere dell'Umbro* newspaper, in its special edition of 15 November 2010 dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy, reports on the Garibaldian Alarico Silvestri of Amelia and recalls this historic event under the following title:

“The Desperate Defense of the Island of Crete: Alarico Silvestri from Amelia, fought in the volunteer corps commanded by Ricciotti Garibaldi. It was the Italians who protected the retreating Greek army after the Turkish attack.”⁸⁴

The Risorgimento political exiles that reached Istanbul and Anatolia, especially in 1820 and after 1848-1849, and the mutual circulations between the Italian Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire facilitated the exchange of political ideas and practices.⁸⁵ For instance, the informal *Carbonari* network, which was a secret revolutionary organization and played a major role in Italian unification, was a great source of inspiration for Ottoman Freemasonry, whose ideological and bureaucratic influence on the Young Turks was indisputable. In short, it would not be wrong to say that the history of Italian unification in the nineteenth century constituted a reference and model for the Ottoman Constitutional Monarchy proclaimed in 1908, both in terms of field experience and moral legitimacy. In addition, for nations such as the Albanians, who achieved their independence from the Ottoman Empire with the rebellions of 1910 and 1912 shortly after Young Turk Revolution, Italy meant less imperialist protection and colonial threat compared to other great powers. Many Albanian intellectuals, who feared that their newly established country would not be self-sufficient in the face of multiple invasions during the First World War, envisioned Italian protection as the best option in order to eliminate a possible collapse in the future.

Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022), 302.

⁸⁴ A cura dell'associazione Libera Storia. “La Disperata Difesa Dell’isola Di Creta. Furono gli italiani a proteggere l’esercito greco in ritirata dopo l’attacco della Turchia,” *Corriere Dell’Umbro* [Regione Corriere edition, sec. 1861>2011>> 1500 anniversario Unità d’Italia], November 15, 2010, accessed October 18, 2024, <https://liberastoria.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/corriere-umbria-15-11-10-pagina-5.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Marie Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities—Circulations, Identifications, and Sociability in Nineteenth Century Istanbul,” in *Italianness and Migration from the Risorgimento to the 1960s*, eds. Stéphane Mourlane, Céline Regnard, Manuela Martini and Catherine Brice (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 197.

1.3. Migratory Patterns and Diasporic Formations of the Italians

In their seminal and widely reprinted work, *The Age of Migration*, Haas, Castles and Miller explore the interconnections between migrant profiles and models of citizenship.⁸⁶ The volume posits that the primary concern of migrants is not the precise content of citizenship, but rather the means of achieving it in order to obtain a legal status that is equal to that of other residents. In other words, the primary concern is the ability and method of “access” to citizenship status, rather than its essence. Moreover, the authors stress that the notion of access varies considerably on a country-by-country basis, contingent on the “prevailing concept of the nation.” From this perspective, the book presents a typological classification of ideal citizenship models, which is divided into four categories. Although the first of these, the “Imperial Citizenship Model,” appears to be applicable to the case of Italian immigrants’ access to Ottoman citizenship, it is important to recognize the paradigm shift that occurred between imperial and national regimes. In this context, the term imperial model is used to denote a conceptualization of national belonging as a subjection to a particular power or ruler. Although there was no consciousness of nation-state building within the Ottoman Empire at the time, the term “nation” could be used to describe the Turkish-Muslim subjects, who represented the dominant and constituent elements of the empire. Similarly, during a period when the concept of “constitutional citizenship” was not yet established, the term “citizenship” could have been used to refer to “imperial subjects” who were entitled to the same rights as other inhabitants.

The most notable contribution of Haas, Castles and Miller’s work is their comprehensive review of all existing macro, meso and micro theories in the literature on the causality and persistence of migration.⁸⁷ Whereas “functionalist” theories of migration are predominantly developed to elucidate spontaneous, voluntary, and unrestricted migration, “historical-structuralist” theories emphasize the role of large-scale labor recruitment in shaping contemporary migration systems. The question that must be addressed at this juncture is which theoretical framework is most appropriate for analyzing the significant Italian emigration that occurred after the Risorgimento, which was predominantly undertaken by Southern Italian peasants. Historical-structural theories posit that migrants lack free and active choice, largely due to constraints imposed by structural forces. The migrant is not regarded as a self-determining actor; rather, they were

⁸⁶ Hein de Haas, Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World - Sixth Edition* (London: Red Globe Press, 2020), 88-89.

⁸⁷ Since the late nineteenth century, a wide range of social science disciplines have produced a multitude of theories on migration, seeking to elucidate the underlying causes and the intrinsic nature of migratory processes. The theories in question exhibit considerable variation in their underlying assumptions, thematic foci and levels of analysis. They offer insights that range from changes in migration patterns to the transnational identities of migrants. The volume classifies, examines and illustrates all these theories under two principal paradigmatic headings: “functionalist” and “historical-structuralist.” The functionalist perspective typically views migration as a beneficial phenomenon, conceptualizing it as an ‘optimization mechanism’ that serves the interests of the majority and enhances productivity and equality. In contrast, the “historical-structural” approach, which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and is rooted in neo-Marxist political economy, tends to view migration as a “mechanism of exploitation.” Theories belonging to this second category posit that social, economic, cultural and political structures act as constraining and directing forces on the behaviour of individuals, thereby fostering and reproducing inequality. To be more precise, labor is controlled and exploited by driving forces such as states, multinational corporations and employment agencies for the sustainability of the capitalist system. Therefore, migration is essentially a way for capital to mobilize cheap labor. While this system serves the interests of the wealth of the receiving region, it increases social and geographical inequalities by causing a brain drain in the sending regions. Haas, Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 42-45, 48-49, 51-52.

compelled to migrate as passive victims of social transformation, accompanied by the advent of capitalism, mechanization and land ownership.

However, this approach, which assumes that capitalism was the primary factor in the uprooting of stable peasant societies and ignores the role of human agency, is insufficient to explain the Emigration of the Mezzogiorno.⁸⁸ The “peasants” (*contadini*) of Southern Italy who migrated to the USA do not fit into Skeldon’s “myth of the immobile peasant,” which assumes the existence of an isolated, stable, homogenous and egalitarian peasant community and the exceptionalism of migration. Furthermore, Vecoli notes that this group does not align with the “myth of the Italian village,” which posits a unified social entity characterized by solidarity, community, and neighborliness. In contrast with these assertions, the typical southern peasants, who constituted the majority of the more than four million Italians who immigrated to the United States between 1880 and 1920, had actually lived in extremely desperate and exploitative conditions. It can therefore be concluded that the emigration of the Italian peasantry from the Mezzogiorno was a deliberate choice made in order to escape the constraints imposed on them by the traditional system and to pursue opportunities in different geographical areas. As Haas observes, the insatiable demand for labor created by European imperialism, colonialism and industrialization between 1869 and 1920 drove approximately 15 million Italians to Northern European countries, mainly France, Switzerland and Germany, as well as North and South America. By 1940, the number of Italians who had emigrated abroad had reached 16.4 million, representing almost half of the Italian population in 1900.

The impetus behind the globalization that characterized the twentieth century has resulted in a notable increase in the number of Italians migrating worldwide. Consequently, postmodern analyses of the international transformation of the Italian image and of the migratory transmission of Italian culture have emerged as a fruitful area of research.⁸⁹ It is, however, first of all essential to mention a classic work on this subject that has already demonstrated its enduring relevance and value. Gabaccia’s *Italy’s Many Diasporas* is regarded as the most comprehensive work to date on Italian migration movements, routes and statistics.⁹⁰ It has served as a source of inspiration and reference for numerous subsequent works in the field. The book effectively addresses the origins, destinations, social classes and gender ratios of the mass migratory movements between 1200 and 1975 through the use of tables.

Gabaccia broadly categorizes the migration periods and destinations of Italian residents into three principal categories.⁹¹ The initial migration period, spanning from 1200 to 1500, saw the movement of Italians around the Mediterranean Sea and along the Alps, establishing

⁸⁸ Haas, Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 52, 106; Hein de Haas, *How Migration Really Works: A Factful Guide to the Most Divisive Issue in Politics* (London: Viking, Penguin Books, 2023), 17-18.

⁸⁹ Indeed, the existing literature on this topic is so elaborate and extensive that even the transformations and continuities created by Italian immigration in the Italian language have been subjected to detailed analysis: Massimo Vedovelli (ed.), *Storia linguistica dell'emigrazione italiana nel mondo* (Rome: Carocci, 2011). A remarkable and relatively recent study on this topic offers a highly intriguing perspective, focusing on the place of Italian migration in different artistic and literary forms, such as cinema, music and novels. Furthermore, the study draws on a number of sub-disciplines that have recently gained considerable importance, including ethnic and gender studies : Graziella Parati and Anthony Julian Tamburri, eds., *The Cultures of Italian Migration: Diverse Trajectories and Discrete Perspectives* (Madison, WI and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011).

⁹⁰ Gabaccia, *Italy’s Many Diasporas*, ix.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 5, 24.

connections between Africa, Asia and Europe. Between 1500 and 1900, Italians successfully traversed the Mediterranean and Alps to reach the Atlantic world. Nevertheless, at this juncture, an analysis of the factors that precipitated the revolutionary upheavals that swept across the European continent and shaped the course of nineteenth-century migration patterns is of paramount importance. It is evident that Italians would also become part of this revolutionary agenda and extend their reach to different geographies, driven by a combination of ideological, political, and economic factors. Additionally, Gabaccia highlights that Italian immigrants expanded their reach to the Pacific world in the period following 1900. Another crucial finding of Gabaccia's is that he identifies 1500 as the pivotal year that marked a shift in the orientation of Italian migrations. He attributes this shift to the cessation of the expansion of Venetian and Genoese merchants into the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean by the Ottoman Empire after 1500. In the initial phase of Italian overseas migration, the principal destinations were the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia, accessed via neighboring Orient. Subsequently, however, the direction of migration shifted towards the Western Mediterranean and subsequently towards the Atlantic world.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire emerged as the most popular destination for Italians, largely due to the modernization reforms and capitulatory advantages that were introduced at the time.⁹² Indeed, the demographic expansion of the Italian colony during this period of ascendancy is clearly reflected in the burial statistics of non-Muslims in Istanbul. Italian nationals constituted 23 percent of all burials in the city's Latin Catholic cemetery between the years 1892 and 1915. In reference to Angiolo Mori's work, published in 1906, Marmara posits that the Italian colony in Istanbul was divided into three principal groups. The initial cohort comprised Italians from the Princes' Archipelago who had already taken up residence in Istanbul, along with Jews who had obtained Italian citizenship and subsequently settled in the Ottoman Empire following their refuge in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany during the Spanish Inquisition. The second group were the new immigrants, who constituted the majority and settled in Istanbul (most likely referring to those who had emigrated in the post-Risorgimento period). The third group were the new workers who arrived to work on large construction sites, such as the Port of Heraclea and the railway network, where foreign labor is particularly in demand.

The term "diaspora," derived from the Greek word for "scattering of seeds," was initially employed to denote the population forcibly displaced from their homelands and resettled in the Aegean archipelago and adjacent coastal regions during the Peloponnesian War (431-405 BC).⁹³ It is evident that the seed metaphor, which is founded upon a biological illustration, characterizes an entity that is not only spatially but also temporally associated with the soil in which it is cultivated. In other words, the seed establishes a symbiotic relationship with the field by feeding on the mineral, microbial, and water resources provided by the soil in which it is planted. Moreover, this process entails a temporal aspect, as it is contingent on meteorological factors, namely the seasons. These diasporas, which migratory movements either created from scratch or contributed to their formation, would also become sites for the invention and

⁹² Marmara, *Osmanlı Başkentinde Bir Levanten Semti*, 62, 64.

⁹³ Stefano Luconi, "Italian Migrations and Diasporic Approaches: Historical Phenomena and Scholarly Interpretations," in *The Cultures of Italian Migration: Diverse Trajectories and Discrete Perspectives*, eds. Graziella Parati and Anthony Julian Tamburri (Madison, WI and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), 154.

development of ideas by Italian, Greek or Albanian-speaking patriots.⁹⁴ The notions of “nationhood” and “empirehood” were initially developed in the “mobile spaces” hosted by these diasporas, frequently co-existing with other forms of cross-border affiliations. These diasporas have been categorized as “spaces of communication,” and it could be argued that they have also been perceived as “spaces where cultural influences can be denied.” In Mary Louise Pratt’s famous concept of “contact zones”, diasporas are formulated as “social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other.” The edited volume, entitled *Mediterranean Diasporas* and edited by Isabella and Zanou, takes the concept of diaspora beyond the traditional definition of “the unity symbolized by a dispersed people who take an imaginary homeland as a common reference point.” Therefore, at a certain point, the fact of diaspora becomes both an expression of geographical fragmentation and a multiplicity of cross-border loyalties and affiliations.

In contrast, the reverse emigration of Italians from Egypt, which by 1805 had become a semi-independent emirate or vassal state of the Ottoman Empire, represents a highly unusual case for the study of Italian migratory patterns across the Mediterranean.⁹⁵ The gradual departure of more than 40,000 of the Italian diaspora in Egypt (totaling 50,000 inhabitants) between 1945 and 1961, following the Second World War, provides the inspiration and starting point for Viscomi’s study.⁹⁶ In order to elucidate the interconnectivity between “historical temporalities” and “political membership,” the author has selected this reverse migration as a historical reference point and conducted an in-depth micro-scale analysis. Viscomi challenges existing assumptions regarding the categorization of Italians in and from Egypt, noting that these individuals do not fit neatly into the categories of “colonizer” or “colonized.” In particular, he emphasizes that this case has the potential to challenge the stereotypical assumptions about nation and empire in the Mediterranean context. Viscomi successfully argues that, as actors in relations between the metropole and the colony, the nation and the empire, these Italians were part of a layered story of imperialism, colonialism and decolonization.

1.3.1. Theoretical and Conceptual Approaches on Italian Migration and Italian Diaspora

As Andreas Guidi has notably demonstrated, “national history” is now widely regarded as a narration inherent to nation-state institutions, which are increasingly perceived as products of European and Western history.⁹⁷ Therefore, the emergence of novel spatial categories within

⁹⁴ Isabella and Zanou, “Introduction,” 6-7.

⁹⁵ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 3-5, 11; Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 3-4.

⁹⁶ Viscomi classifies Italian immigrants in Egypt into the following five categories: those who arrived after the earthquakes of 1905 and 1908 in Calabria and Sicily; those who arrived during the period of mass emigration between 1870 and 1914; Italian Jewish protégés from Ottoman lands in the eastern Mediterranean; political exiles who fled the peninsula during the Risorgimento (1815-1861); and merchants who arrived since the times of the Maritime Republics.

⁹⁷ Andreas Guidi, “Storia italiana, storia mediterranea: nuove prospettive su un passato imperiale e coloniale,” *ITALIA CONTEMPORANEA*, no.298 (July 2022): 350-369, <https://doi.org/10.3280/ic298-0a4>. Guidi’s profoundly inspirational and insightful work represents a reevaluation of Italian history through four recent books published in English, repositioning it within a broader Mediterranean context. The article engages with the continuity of mutual need and dialogue between Italian and Mediterranean historiographies, depicting the Mediterranean as an imperial sphere defined by ongoing decolonization processes. The following books are examined in the article, which provides a different perspective on Italy’s dialogue with other geo-historical areas of the Mediterranean and on the decolonization processes whose

the domain of international historiography over the past three decades has been instrumental in fostering the development of transnational disciplines such as diaspora studies. At this juncture, referring to Karl Schlögel, Guidi observes that historiography, influenced by disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology and economics, experienced a “spatial turn” at the dawn of the twenty-first century. This development represents “a shift from a static and singular space to a plural and transformative spatiality,” thus providing “a critical perspective on the current revisions of temporality and discursivity” in historical research. In the words of Guidi, adopting a re-evaluation of the relationship between Italy and the Mediterranean provides an opportunity to embrace the criticisms that the globally-oriented approach in historiography directs at the Eurocentric perspective and the primacy of the nation-state. The driving forces behind the relationship between Italian and Mediterranean histories can be considered as a constantly evolving but never-ending dialogue and a process of decolonization whose traces continue to this day. At this juncture, Guidi’s article unveils that a Mediterranean on a regional scale renders the spatial dimension of global history more concrete. It is therefore possible to interpret the far-reaching transformations of the ongoing dialogue between Mediterranean and Italian histories through notions such as “connection”, “mobility” and “flows.” Guidi’s article notably observes that the only factor that will enable comprehension of these transformations is to shift away from a Mediterranean imagination that has been reproduced on the Italian peninsula for a pre-designed Italian history.

In order to situate Italian migrations and diasporic formations within a Mediterranean-oriented conceptual framework, it may be beneficial to engage in theoretical inquiry. At this point, Thomas Gallant’s analytical approach to both the “interdependence” and “substitution” of the terms “diaspora” and “transnationalism” makes a major contribution to the field.⁹⁸ Home to some of the largest diasporic cultures in world history, such as the Greeks, Jews and Armenians, the Mediterranean has long been a central focus of research on population dispersal and settlement. Together with the Iberian and Italian peninsulas, the Mediterranean is considered to be the most diasporic region in the world, making it a fertile and ideal field for scholars to study and interrogate this phenomenon. However, with the recent focus on two closely related concepts, “transnationalism” and “cosmopolitanism,” the concept of diaspora has to some extent fallen out of favor. Although the term transnationalism has always played a leading role in defining a diasporic entity and the two concepts have been closely linked, the compound terms “trans” and “transnational” have acquired their own independent ontological status, as have the compound terms “transitional,” “transimperial” and “transregional.” The fact that it is so closely linked to the mass migrations and overseas settlements of a few specific groups, and that this legacy begins to seem analytically too limiting, has led to the concept of diaspora becoming outdated. On the other hand, what the definition of diaspora excludes, and transnationalism includes are the multiple movements of different peoples and things across time and space. Through the transnational turn, historians have broadened their vision by

traces extend to the present day: Stephanie Malia Hom, *Empire’s Mobius Strip: Historical Echoes in Italy’s Crisis of Migration and Detention* (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2019); Pamela Ballinger, *The World Refugees Made: Decolonization and the Foundation of Postwar Italy* (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2020); Valerie McGuire, *Italy’s Sea* and Dominique Kirchner Reill, *The Fiume Crisis: Life in the Wake of the Habsburg Empire* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).

⁹⁸ Gallant, “Afterword,” 205-206.

focusing on a variety of different contemporary fields associated with various modalities and flows.

As Gallant notes, one of the most crucial approaches to transnational history is the examination of biographies that illuminate the roles of individual or collective actors who have directly or indirectly influenced historical processes.⁹⁹ It is evident that an analytical advantage can be gained from tracing the careers and movements of individuals, families and groups that were part of a broad historical process, such as Italian expansionism in the Mediterranean. Such actors may be mainstream professionals, such as financiers, merchants or soldiers, but also revolutionary refugees, itinerant intellectuals or displaced politicians who lived their lives partly or entirely outside the borders of their national homeland. Furthermore, Gallant poses two questions that may challenge the conventional and ontological definition of a diasporic network. These are: can multifaceted transnational networks that share a similar ideological orientation be considered a diaspora in their own right? Or are they merely migratory flows embedded in a larger and more national diaspora?

Gallant posits that these networks are unquestionably defined as a “transnational dispersion” in accordance with the diaspora’s own conceptualization.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, he is not reluctant to inquire whether these networks deliberately self-identified as diasporas. As the case studies in the volume titled *Mediterranean Diasporas* illustrate, even if these networks did not identify themselves as a coherent diaspora, they were aware of their connection to a wider network. Gallant’s other significant observation regarding the decline of diaspora as an analytical category is the emergence of cosmopolitanism. From a traditional perspective, the term “diaspora” denotes the migration of a national group to a new territory and its subsequent settlement and integration into an existing, or sometimes larger, group. Gallant referred to this as “a group within a group.” The concept of cosmopolitanism, as recently reconceptualized, engages with the cultural heterogeneity and hybridity of many groups and classes of society, as well as elites.

The shared culture of diasporic communities is therefore shaped by the collective actions and aspirations of their members in relation to their homeland, rather than by the homogeneity or class consciousness of the groups themselves. This common cultural identity, in turn, facilitates subsequent affiliation to a larger network. From this perspective, it can be argued that the Ottoman Levantines also constructed their own cultural identity through shared interests and similar orientations, despite the absence of a unified political ideology or social class. In the subsequent phase, these disparate colonies positioned themselves as an extension of a broader transnational network, and they consciously behaved as though they were part of this network.

Gallant’s phrase “a group within a group,” which refers to the self-growth of the diaspora through its internal integration and articulation, is actually quite inspiring. This phrase, which he refers to in the epilogue of the volume *Mediterranean Diasporas* and does not feel the need to emphasize, may encourage new approaches or frameworks to the spatial belonging and reception of diasporas. Teresa Fiore must have perceived a need for such an approach, as she takes the phrase to a different dimension and introduces a spatial approach to the phenomenon of Italian migration.¹⁰¹ Fiore introduces the concept of “Pre-Occupied Space” which is based

⁹⁹ Ibid., 206.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Fiore, *Pre-Occupied Spaces*, 1-4.

on Italo Calvino's short story *Tutto in un punto* (All at One Point).¹⁰² In this story, Calvino invites his readers to imagine an impossible space. Calvino's imaginary space is an area where everyone and everything is gathered at a single point before the Big Bang, that is, prior to the formation of even space. Inspired by this fantastical story, Fiore seeks to uncover the implicit interconnections between the notions of spatial affiliation and cultural expansion, as well as migratory destinations. She argues that migrations are perceived and defined through a variety of geographies, including physical, social, and imaginary, while acknowledging the role of statistics and numbers in shaping this perception. She posits that the contemporary history of Italian civilization can be understood not only through its colonial and imperial experiences, but also through the effects of outbound and inbound migrations. In the 100-year period between 1876, shortly after the unification, and 1976, approximately 27 million Italians departed from the peninsula for various economic and political reasons, ultimately settling on all continents worldwide.¹⁰³ From 1976 to 2012, this figure rose to 30 million. Fiore asserts that such a substantial outbound movement could more accurately be characterized as a "hemorrhage," particularly given that Italy had 27 million inhabitants in 1871.

Fiore positioned the phenomenon of "pre-occupied space" at the core of her research, undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the concept of "pre-occupation" from both lexical and contextual perspectives.¹⁰⁴ This analysis also indicates a shift in semantics, as evidenced by the different meanings attributed to the two versions of the word, "pre-occupied" and "preoccupied." In Fiore's analysis, the initial hyphenated version is seen to correspond to both the material and immaterial occupation undertaken by migrants, whereby they reach a space that has already been occupied/filled/possessed by their predecessors. This "pre-occupation" initiates the interaction between the migrant and the space, thereby facilitating the transfer of both inherited traditions and the introduction of new traces. In other words, the migrant leaves new traces of himself while adopting the traditional heritage of the spatial past.

The second unhyphenated version portrays a context in which the arrival and settlement of migrants give rise to anxieties in the destination country and tensions between newcomers and the local population.¹⁰⁵ In this case, spaces are "preoccupied," that is, "absorbed in preoccupation," as they host newcomers and defensive residents who perceive them as illegitimate intruders. Nevertheless, the notion of "preoccupation" in this version gives rise to both tension and the potential for transformative action. In other words, this preoccupation is not only a matter of control over physical space, but also a theoretical rethinking of the ways of being in space and of changing it. In this context, the author posits that the expression "preoccupation with space" offers a distinctive lens through which to examine the movement of people from, to and around Italy. Furthermore, this perspective is characterized by the recognition of common narratives between migration actors, transcending the boundaries of space and time. In the author's own terms, striking parallels emerge between the migratory experiences of Italians in colonial and postcolonial contexts and diachronic and synchronic

¹⁰² Depending on the context, the title may also mean "Everything in one place."

¹⁰³ According to Gabaccia, whom Fiore also cites as a source, the exact date ranges and the numbers of emigrants are as follows: 1876-1915: 14.037.531, 1916-1945: 4.482.347, 1946-1975: 7.335.081, Sum: 25.854.959, Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Fiore, *Pre-Occupied Spaces*, 16-17.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

axes. The author concludes that these parallels lead to a remapping of Italy within a broader field preoccupied with the richness of human experience on the move.

By micro-historicizing a contemporary case of migration, focusing on conflicting temporalities at the empirical level and interrogating ruptures and continuities in historical time, Viscomi seeks to explore the interconnected histories of the Italian diaspora in Egypt.¹⁰⁶ In reference to the notion of “time” as articulated in the title of his work, Viscomi draws attention to the “sense of timelessness” (out-of-time-ness) experienced by Italian migrants in Egypt, both prior to and following their migration. At this juncture, it is crucial to consider the observations of a government official stationed in Egypt during the Second World War. This Italian diplomat noted that the sense of belonging of the Italian population of 50,000 was out of synchronization with the environmental transformations that were occurring. Furthermore, he described the entire Italian community as being “out of time” (*fuori tempo*). According to Viscomi, the diplomat’s use of the phrase “out of time” implied two different limitations at the same time. The first was the limited horizon of the Italians themselves before, during and after their departure from Egypt. The second was the limited horizon of both state institutions and international organizations in relation to these individuals. To put it another way, there was a lack of awareness of the temporal conditions surrounding Italian migrants, both at the individual and institutional levels. Drawing on many different theories and models such as *Chronocenos*, Viscomi’s multidisciplinary study offers a tremendous temporal tracing through the contradiction of expectations and outcomes before, during and after the Second World War.¹⁰⁷ Referring to François Hartog’s *Regimes of Historicity*, he points out that temporal processes do not emerge in a uniform fashion, nor are they detached from their contexts. It draws a deeper and thought-provoking distinction between the “multiplicity” and “plurality” of time and suggests further contributive readings on “multiplicity of interrelated temporalities.”

Instead of myths of rupture that divide the Mediterranean into “early modern” and “modern” seas, or that place it in a transition from “cosmopolitan” to “national,” Viscomi adopts Matthew Champion’s “fullness of time” approach.¹⁰⁸ Instead of such rigid frameworks and categorizations, the book takes a historically holistic view of how the departure of Italians from Egypt was anticipated, experienced and remembered. Moreover, the elaboration of how historical temporalities overlap, coexist and compete in this whole migration process brings about a teleological reassessment according to Viscomi. His book considers how historical time

¹⁰⁶ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 3-4.

¹⁰⁷ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 16; François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Dan Edelstein, Stefanos Geroulanos and Natasha Wheatley, eds., *Power and Time: Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2020).

¹⁰⁸ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 13-16; This approach, which gives Champion’s book its title, analyzes the struggle of developing cultures with time by investigating how time was experienced, perceived, measured and produced in the Low Countries (now the Benelux) at the heart of fifteenth-century European innovation. Champion reveals how this struggle continues to influence historical narratives of the emergence of modernity today through the shifting conceptions of temporality it represents and embodies. The second lens of Champion’s work is to question the ways in which productive cultures of ritual, sound and music, text and image shaped and reflected these forms of temporality. Through experiences such as musical life, time measurement, circulated texts, work habits and worship practices, Champion questions how the passage of time in the Low Countries is regulated by the rhythms of human action. By reframing traditional modes of “telling the history of time” in historiography, the book brings a new approach to the understanding of periodic temporalities. Matthew S. Champion, *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities of the Fifteenth-Century Low Countries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 2.

multiplies and stratifies social and political histories between the processes of empire collapse, nation building and mass migration. Drawing on major theories on periodization, notably that of Reinhart Koselleck, he concludes that in the case of a multiple and layered view of time on the basis of future possibilities, “pasts and futures are not evenly distributed in historical time.”¹⁰⁹ At this point, Viscomi refers to Koselleck’s theory that historical time is based on the balance between “experience,” which embodies the past, and “expectation,” which embodies the future. Quoting Koselleck, he states that the balance between experience and expectation enables the concrete empirical processes of historical time to be grasped. He illustrates this through the Mussolini government’s attempt to involve the Italians in Egypt in the fascist regime’s imperial projects in the Mediterranean and Eastern Mediterranean. For, although this means the active and conscious participation of diasporic subjects in imperialist modernity, it is in fact the government from the beginning that structures historical time with a temporal asymmetry and determines the fate of the Italians in Egypt, causing mass migration. After the collapse of the Fascist government in 1945 and the loss of most of Italy’s colonies in 1947, imperialist modernity lost its institutional support but continued to shape the expectations of many Italians in Egypt. Viscomi therefore resists the traditional periodization of modern history and the categorization of time into discrete conceptual units, drawing attention to the contradiction of the arrangements of past, present and future.

David Ohana’s chapter, titled “Levantinism as a Cultural Theory,” serves as a tribute to the conceptualization of Levantinism by the Cairo-born Jewish intellectual Jacqueline Kahanoff (1917-1979).¹¹⁰ This conceptualization is an alternative model, designed to address the identity crisis of Israel, through a reconsideration of the multi-layered historical, cultural and identity positions of Judaism, between East and West. Constituting an alternative to an Israeli culture dominated by Ashkenazim of Eastern European origin, it promotes the heritage and representations of Sephardim, who have Oriental and Middle Eastern origins, as well as Mizrahim hailing from Arab countries. In summary, Kahanoff’s initiative can be defined as an endeavor to integrate the newly established State of Israel into the Eastern Mediterranean, which is characterized by a rich mosaic of cultural diversity and historical dialogues. While Kahanoff’s creation is inspired by a vision of an Israel at peace with the Levant, its theoretical framework is based on the principles of cultural pluralism and social openness that are inherent to the Levant microcosm. This foundation for dialogue, reproduced in the context of historical continuity, engenders multi-layered, transitional, and interactive identities rather than static ones. According to Gil Z. Hochberg, Kahanoff’s Levantinism represents a domain for literary production, cultural dialogue and creative collaboration, liberated from colonial connotations and transcending national, linguistic and geographical boundaries. Consequently, this version of the Levant, which is characterized as a time-related cultural concept and as a living political and cultural force, cannot be grasped within the confines of nativistic-spatial terms.

Another salient terminology inherent to Kahanoff’s Levantinism is the “mythical geography” which he introduces as a conceptual alternative to the physical geography of the Levant.¹¹¹ The

¹⁰⁹ For further research on Koselleck’s theory, which elaborates a conceptual historicization and proposes to construct historical time through the balance between experience and expectation, please see: Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁰ David Ohana, *Israel and Its Mediterranean Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 77-97.

¹¹¹ Ohana, *Israel and Its Mediterranean Identity*, 83-86.

cultural meanings attributed to the concepts of "mythical space" and "mythical time" transcended geographical boundaries on maps, transforming places such as Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Tunis, and Algiers from physical locations into heartfelt and mental images. The historical events, such as conquests, alliances, exiles, discoveries, and migrations, resulted in the facilitation of intellectual exchange and mutual interaction, and the recognition of similarities among these cities and their inhabitants. Consequently, these cities became an integral part of both personal memory and the collective narrative of the Jewish diaspora. Kahanoff posits the argument that the dialectical encounters between Greeks and Jews in Hellenistic Alexandria constituted one of the intellectual foundations of Christianity and Western civilization. This intellectual legacy subsequently expanded from Rome to Byzantium and was transmitted from Ottoman cities to modern Mediterranean metropolises. Therefore, this conceptualization of Levantinism is no longer confined to a mythical space associated with the land; it also represents a mythical time, or, to use Kahanoff's terminology, a "psycho-historical time." Indeed, the reconstruction of a culture necessitated the detachment from the contemporary and continuous perception of time and its spatial dimensions, which are regarded as partial and flawed. This detachment was required for the adaptation to the 'mythical time', which is regarded as complete and harmonious. At this juncture, Kahanoff's modern form of Levantinism encompasses both the mythic spaces of disparate cultural narratives and the mythic times of numerous cultures and religions. Ohana attributes particular significance to Kahanoff's analogy of the Levant to a cultural mosaic, composed of numerous elements and in a state of constant flux, or to a prism reflecting daylight from different angles at different times of day.¹¹² From the perspective of Ohana, this framework, which transcends ethnic, religious, and ideological divisions, remains valid and continues to inspire a variety of modern approaches. As he asserts, Kahanoff's notion of the Mosaic of the Levant can be regarded as a very early precursor to the contemporary Mediterranean theses developed by Horden and Purcell in the 2000s, through the postmodernization of the *Braudelian* approach. In his article "Ambivalent Levantine," Kahanoff also revealed the dual and hybrid character of Levantine identity, caught between embracing Western knowledge and technology and striving to remain faithful to its traditional roots. While the Levantine individual's position between the colonial West and the colonized Middle East may initially evoke negative connotations, Kahanoff contends that it also confers a distinct advantage. This duality underscores the Levantine's capacity to leverage their acquired knowledge for the transformation and reconstruction of their own society, thereby enabling them to compete with Westerners on their own terms. Kahanoff advanced the argument that the "Levantine individual's sense of inferiority in the face of the dominant power" would ultimately evolve into "an absorption of the dominant culture's ideas and techniques." However, the process of absorption, which Kahanoff refers to as "the phase of imitation and acquisition," is not a blind progression but rather a process characterized by ongoing questioning. The Levantine figure, cognizant of the power and superiority of the West, would adopt a more skeptical and critical approach towards the West, while simultaneously cultivating a greater level of understanding and appreciation for the old society.

1.3.2. Reproduction of Public Space within the Italian Diasporic Entities

By invoking the famous Italian proverb *Tutto il mondo è paese* (All the world is a village), Gabaccia touches upon both the potential of the world as a global village and the sameness and

¹¹² Ibid., 78-79, 83, 89-90.

mutual understanding of the peoples who inhabit it.¹¹³ Concurrently, this saying also exemplifies the migratory character of Italians and their capacity to establish a sense of familiarity and belonging in any locale they inhabit. The term *paese*, which has undergone a semantic shift in the context of Italian nationalist discourse since the unification of Italy, is now used to refer to both the Italian nation and the Italian country as well as the village. However, Gabaccia emphasizes that this is not the case in the context of the proverb and instead speaks of a unity of the global and the local, in which no nation, state or church acts as an intermediary between them. Given that the Italian word *casa* signifies merely “house” and not “home,” the proverb acquires a more profound and philosophical significance. In other words, for Italians, the entire world has become both a village and a homeland. Additionally, Gabaccia illustrates the proverb’s prevalent usage in Italian geography by presenting its equivalents in various regional languages and dialects:

Tuttu lu munnu è paìsi. (Catania, Sicily)
Tutto lo munno è paiese. (Naples)
Totu su mundu est paesu. (Sardinia)
Tutto 'l mondo è 'n paese. (Marches)
Da par to 'tt us viv. (Rome)
Tutt al mond è paes. (Bologna)
Tutto u mondo u l'e paize. (Genoa)
L'è tât mond e païs. (Bergamo)
Tuto 'l mond xe paese. (Venice)
Tut mond è païs. (Piedmont)

Through this proverb, Gabaccia elucidates the dual nature of Italian life, encompassing local and cosmopolitan dimensions at both the regional and the international level.¹¹⁴ Thus far, the majority of scholars have produced studies on the phenomenon of “Italians in the wider world” (*gli italiani nel mondo*) and concentrated on the international connections between “Italians living outside of Italy” (*gli italiani fuori d'Italia*). Conversely, some scholars have highlighted the concept of an “Italy outside Italy” (*Italia fuori d'Italia*), indicating the existence of a global and cosmopolitan culture originating in Italy. Describing an elite culture that developed in Italy between 1000 and 1600 and spread across Europe, the concept of *civiltà italiana* also recognizes the role of Italian culture in constructing an identity among immigrants. Although Marxist scholars tend to view contemporary Italian immigrants as members of an international proletariat, Gabaccia asserts that Italy’s distinctive migration history should be interpreted in light of the interconnections between cosmopolitan/international (*il mondo*) and local/personal (*il paese*) dimensions. While Gabaccia acknowledges that the civilizing mission of the *civiltà italiana* has historically been a source of pride for educated Italians, he asserts that it is a fragile foundation upon which to construct a modern nation. He highlights that 90 percent of the social profile of the contemporary mass emigration from Italy was shaped by Italian peasants and workers, among whom sentiments of Italian identity (*Italianism/italianità*) were not particularly strong. Gabaccia argues that these migrants, the majority of whom were not even proficient in Italian, demonstrated a lack of awareness of the *civiltà italiana* and exhibited a disdain for the

¹¹³ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 174.

¹¹⁴ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 5, 8.

Italian national state. Consequently, they were incapable of consolidating Italy's numerous independent diasporas into a unified national one.

Malte Fuhrmann astutely observes that the capitulatory powers placed significant emphasis on the rights of their subjects in the Ottoman lands, sought to leverage their loyalties, and attempted to transform them into "storm troops" in the service of their imperial interests.¹¹⁵ Within this system, it was of particular importance for individuals to safeguard and uphold the respectability and reputation of the countries they represented. Fuhrmann emphasizes that individuals who undermined the reputation of their homeland were compelled by their consular authorities to leave the Levant, or at the very least its major cities. In rare instances, they were forcibly extradited to their country of origin. The model for integrating immigrants into port cities was based on the concept of establishing a "colony." The term was used in a broad sense to define an institution comprising individuals from the same country, connected by hierarchical ties. These individuals accepted the authority of their respective consular representatives and that of other notable figures with privileged positions, who were responsible for community affairs. The colonies were frequently governed by inflexible notions of respectability, displaying a patronizing and occasionally even oppressive attitude towards those who did not adhere to social norms or possessed limited social capital. Integration was also possible for working-class individuals, although they were seldom regarded as equals to their middle-class counterparts. Loose moral conduct was discouraged and not permitted on the grounds that it was detrimental to the collective identity of the colony. An additional option was the phenomenon of "port city society," which Fuhrmann defines as "the heterogeneous amalgam of people of different origins present in the ports" and can be categorized as a supra-class entity.

In the evolution process of the Italian colonies, which consisted of sporadic inhabitations along the Ottoman coastline, the phenomenon of "port city society" was of paramount importance. Despite their integration into Ottoman society, these settlements created their own microcosms around a flexible identity model and within invisible borders. Their distinctive behavior in the public sphere, the visible importance they attributed to their own traditionality, and the sociocultural consciousness they developed through their membership in Italian organizations resembled an attempt to "construct a remote nationalism" even though they resided outside the Peninsula. In addition to the movement of goods, colonialism also strengthened the movement of individuals such as civil servants, soldiers and settlers, created new routes of maritime trade and mobility, and paved the way for the emergence of newly thriving port cities.¹¹⁶ Formerly moribund ports such as Alexandria, Beirut, Izmir, Tunisia and Algeria were transformed into boom towns under the direct or indirect influence of colonial rule.

Fuhrmann concentrated on the two principal cosmopolitan port cities of the empire, Izmir and Salonika, and examined the process of Europeanisation of the public spaces of these cities, which were densely populated by Levantine communities.¹¹⁷ He has successfully analyzed the ways in which the *Smyrniotes*, inhabitants of Izmir (Smyrna), and the *Saloniquenos*, inhabitants of Salonika, adapted the Europeanized public space to their lifeworld, through the phenomenon of "quay tours." Fuhrmann emphasizes that the old and the new are happily intermingled in this context. Furthermore, he notes that the answers to questions such as what the mixture

¹¹⁵ Malte Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press , 2020), 321.

¹¹⁶ Isabella and Zanou, "Introduction," 5.

¹¹⁷ Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 82, 102-104.

should look like and where the limit for non-European is laid vary from person to person. Adherence to the norms of civilized behaviour was signified by the practice of dressing in a manner that was considered tasteful and then strolling up and down the main streets of the quays or promenades with family or friends. This was a widespread habit. It was customary to greet neighbors and colleagues encountered along the route, to stop for refreshment or to observe local phenomena. The quay tours, known as *corso* in Izmir and *volta* in Salonika with their names adapted from Italian, also served as a means of displaying one's family status through one's spouse and children, social role through public conversations and wealth through dressing style. These quay tours, which have become a platform that can initiate all kinds of activities with wide participation, have also created a very helpful opportunity to meet the opposite sex, flirt and socialize together in Izmir.

Fuhrmann suggest that the unravelling of the "Aegean port city society" can be attributed to a shift in the rhetorical construction of gender and class identities.¹¹⁸ This rhetorical shift, which saw a transition from a position of openness and experimentation to a more aggressive tone, was also influenced by the Turkism movement that began to manifest itself after the 1908 revolution. To illustrate, films that had been exhibited in Izmir with Greek subtitles in addition to their original language since 1908 commenced being shown in French, English and Italian originals in 1913 in order to reduce expenditure and time. However, this practice was not viewed favorably by Turkish nationalists, who organized demonstrations for the release of the movies captioned in Ottoman Turkish. Moreover, the vibrant array of headgear observed on the waterfront ceased to serve as an indicator of the city's global prominence, or in other words, its 'internationality'. Instead, it became perceived as an instance of 'aberration' within the broader social landscape. Despite the pressure exerted by Turkish nationalists on non-Muslims to remove their fezzes, Greek nationalists persisted in wearing theirs as a means of provocation. Nevertheless, Fuhrmann emphasizes that this aggressiveness did not discredit the Occidentocentric "cosmopolitan" pattern of the port city society. Furthermore, the initial drive of "unraveling" emerged during the Italo-Turkish War. Italian expansionism was blatant and aggressive; and did not require an ostensible justification through universal or liberal values. This confirmed that the European Dream was a lie. Furthermore, many Italian residents of Eastern Mediterranean port cities would come to realize that foreign passports were no longer just a shield against the harsh sanctions of the Ottoman state or an advantage that facilitated business and employment opportunities. They were also a wartime liability.

While not situated within the geographical context of the Levant, the examination of an Italian port city can nevertheless offer a seminal perspective in this regard.¹¹⁹ The city of Trieste, which is home to a multilingual, multi-religious and cosmopolitan community, as well as a *porto franco* (free port), represents an intriguing case study for the development of an anti-nationalist theoretical framework. In the 1840s, Pacifico Valussi, the editor of *La Favilla* (The Spark), identified borderlands such as Trieste as potential centers of a cosmopolitan nationhood where the discriminatory and threatening tendencies of nationalism could be dispersed and resisted. In Valussi's view, Venice, Trieste and the Adriatic were predestined, due to their geographical position and the volume of traffic they handled, to become a conduit between disparate nations. The transformation of port cities into physical centers enabled the fluid extensions of ideal nations to interact with one another, thereby representing the vision of a Mediterranean

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 390-392.

¹¹⁹ Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 26.

nationhood. However, Fogu posits that within the subsequent decade, Valussi would become one of the most ambitious irredentists, advocating for the annexation of Veneto, Friuli, and Istria into Italy.

1.4. Categorical Formation of “Levantine” as a Transimperial Identity Model (1261-1908)

Philip Mansel briefly but aptly describes the Levant as a field, a dialogue and a quest.¹²⁰ Just as the word “Orient” is derived from the Latin word *oriens* meaning “rising,” the word “Levant” is derived from the French word *levant*, which corresponds the same meaning. For Western Europeans, the Levant represents the land where the sun is rising, in other words the lands on the shores of Eastern Mediterranean. These lands which were the domains of the Ottoman Empire from sixteenth to twentieth century, now constitute modern states such as Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Egypt. In his groundbreaking work, Mansel places Izmir, Alexandria and Beirut, the three key ports on the Levant coast, at the heart of the Levantine dialogue, and successfully reveals the origins, languages, cultures, statuses, and characteristics of the Italian families settled there. In an inspiring way, he delves into the organic ties established by the French and Italians, the non-Muslim communities that predominantly inhabited in these cities, with the locality. In this way, we understand how the influence and legacy of these two communities, especially through their own linguistic backgrounds, goes beyond being diasporic. Mansel writes that Galata’s Italian families, such as the *Salvago*, *Testa*, and *Fornetti*, raised and provided generations of dragomans for Western embassies. For example, the *Salvagos* provided translation services to Venice, the *Fornettis* to France, and the *Testas* to Venice, the Netherlands, Austria, Prussia and Sweden.¹²¹

In this context, Elizabeth Shlala offers a more precise and accurate interpretation of the etymological origin of the term.¹²² The maritime merchants of the Italian peninsula, inspired by the rising sun to the east of Venice, gave this region the name Levante, derived from the Latin word *levare*, meaning “to raise.” The Levantine identity, which in the early modern period was primarily associated with Latin Catholics from Venice, Pisa and Genoa, subsequently became linked with the non-Muslim inhabitants under the protection of the Ottoman Empire. These communities were predominantly concentrated in the coastal urban centers and included Jews as well as Eastern Catholic subjects such as Greeks, Italians, Syrian Christians and Armenians. These subjects, who enjoyed the special privileges and protections afforded to them, including the creation of their own courts, were nevertheless subject to certain obligations in this regard. They were referred to as *levantini* in Italian and as *Levantenler* (Levantines) or *Tatlısu Frenkleri* (Freshwater Franks) in Turkish. On the other hand, Shlala points out that this phenomenon serves to resolve the misinterpreted dichotomy between imperial and local interests.¹²³ In presenting a selection of the super-identities in which Levantines have recently been included, Shlala argues that the Levantine identity places them both spatially and temporally within a living historiography. She exemplifies these super-identities as “*gens de passage*, local

¹²⁰ Philip Mansel, *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 1.

¹²¹ Mansel, *Levant*, 12.

¹²² For a sophisticated and recent analysis of the etymological origin and definitional background of the term “Levant,” please see : Elizabeth H. Shlala, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt: Hybridity, Law, and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 1-9.

¹²³ Shlala, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt*, 4.

notables, cultural intermediaries, cultural creoles, transimperial subjects, communitarian cosmopolitans and legal chameleons.” These subjects were capable not only of surviving in their environment, but also of adapting and thriving both within and through the dominant culture into which they were integrated. However, at this juncture, Shlala makes a direct reference to the progressive dissolution of the Levantine identity in the changing world order from the age of empires to the age of nation-states. Although their cultural fluency facilitated their regional longevity as long as empires existed, their resilient hybridity could not help them to overcome a rapidly rising liberal nationalism.

Malte Fuhrmann attributes the emergence and existence of the Levantines to the Ottomans, who adopted and implemented the liberal practices of international maritime trade.¹²⁴ He exemplifies this situation by comparing the cautiousness and restrictiveness that China and Japan displayed towards international trade networks before the mid-nineteenth century, with the Ottoman Empire’s encouragement of the same entities. Despite the overly cautious and restrictive measures imposed by China and Japan against foreign merchants’ access to their territories, the Ottomans in some cases strategically and deliberately encouraged them. In other cases, however, Ottoman authorities simply failed to impose restrictions on the issues such as foreigners’ stay on their territory, access to real estate, trade barriers and consular protection on residents, unintentionally and indirectly encouraging merchants.

Among the most prolific and prominent scholars recently focusing on Italo-Levantines who settled in Istanbul and Izmir, Francesco Pongiluppi merits particular attention.¹²⁵ The author traces the presence of Italian colonies arriving in Constantinople and the Eastern Mediterranean from Maritime Republics and other regions such as Florence and Ancona, back to the Byzantine period. Pongiluppi characterizes the district granted by Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos to the Venetians in Constantinople in May 1082 as the birth certificate of the Italian colonies. The migratory influx initiated by Latin peoples engaged in commercial activities was further fueled by the turbulence of the Risorgimento, eventually resulting in the establishment of a shared superordinate identity among the various Italian-speaking communities in the Ottoman capital. Consequently, the Italo-Levantines evolved into a distinct and unique group, no longer confounded with more general categories such as Franks or Catholics, and no longer identified with the Genoese, Venetians, and other specific communities inherent to the Levantine cosmos. Furthermore, Pongiluppi draws attention to the phenomenon of “migration from the western Mediterranean to the eastern coastline,” which is inherent in the literary use of the term Levantine. In doing so, he implies that the concept is not only geographically oriented but also motion motivated. Furthermore, he does not hesitate to recall the pejorative connotations of “cunning” (*furba*) and “shrewd” (*scaltra*) that the term has been associated with in the past. In addition, when employed as a noun, the term Levantine denotes an individual born in the Levant

¹²⁴ Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 288-289.

¹²⁵ Francesco Pongiluppi, “La Colonia Italiana di Costantinopoli attraverso gli articoli de La Rassegna Italiana – Organo degli interessi italiani in Oriente,” in *Imperia. Lo spazio mediterraneo dal mondo antico all’età contemporanea*, eds. Giampaolo Conte, Fabrizio Filioli Urano, Valerio Torreggiani and Francesca Zaccaro (Palermo: New Digital Frontiers, 2016), 220-221. In this literature, which is dominated by studies on Istanbul, the Levantines of Izmir represents a more untouched yet equally fertile field. The pioneering volume titled *Smirne e l’Italia*, edited by Pongiluppi and Selvelli, is a compilation that provides a comprehensive overview of the subject, bringing together a plethora of inspiring articles on the Italians of Izmir. Francesco Pongiluppi and Luis Miguel Selvelli, eds., *Smirne e l’Italia. Comunità, relazioni, istituzioni* (Palio Faliro: ETP Books, 2022).

who is of non-Islamic faith and Western European origin. Therefore, as Pongiluppi also points out, objective and standard criteria for defining a Levantine individual do not exist. Consequently, the term is subjective from a lexicographical perspective and highly ambiguous from a semantic perspective. According to Pongiluppi, the historical transformation of the denomination under discussion began with the term *Frenk* (Franco), which initially referred to Europeans of Catholic and Protestant faith. Subsequently, in reference to the Pera district that formerly housed Levantines, these individuals began to be designated *Peralı*, signifying the “inhabitants of Pera” in Turkish. Eventually, *Peralı* was replaced by the generic term *Latini*, which referred not only to those of European origin in the Middle East but to all Catholics. However, Pongiluppi contends that the fundamental issue lies in the inability of these terms to delineate this group with clear boundaries and criteria. In other words, despite the initial similarities in terms of nationality, origin and religious beliefs that may be apparent among individuals, inherent differences in the nature of self-identification as Levantine are still present. Alessia Ceccarelli’s recent work challenges the prevailing perception that the Ottoman conquest of the Port of Caffa located in *Genoese Gazaria* in 1475 marked a significant rupture in the Republic of Genoa’s relations with the East.¹²⁶ The southern shores of the Crimean Peninsula underwent a rapid transformation into a Genoese colony following the Treaty of Nymphaeum (*Trattato di Ninfeo*) in 1261, reaching complete Genoese dominion by 1266. Of greater concern is the fact that the Ottoman conquest in 1475 marked the loss of Black Sea and the termination of maritime supremacy for the Genoese. Nevertheless, Ceccarelli’s compelling book, *Nostalgia d'Oriente* (Nostalgia of the Orient), convincingly refutes the prevailing assumption that Genoa distanced itself from the Orient and severed its ties after the conquest. On the contrary, the author contends that Genoa experienced a transformation and reinterpretation of these ties within the political, cultural, and symbolic realms. This counterargument prompted Ceccarelli to investigate the manifestation of Levantine identity in the fluctuating relations between Genoa and the Eastern Mediterranean following the conquest of Caffa. Therefore, the author endeavors to reconstruct Genoa’s transimperial ties with the Eastern Mediterranean as far as is feasible, placing particular emphasis on the political, social and cultural spheres. Although these ties sometimes became quite tenuous, fleeting, and cryptic to an almost imperceptible degree, they never perished, either in an individual sense or in a public context. Consequently, within Genoese imaginaries and political discourses, such elements are sustained through memories, longings, remnants, and diplomatic initiatives.

In Ceccarelli’s words, the Eastern Mediterranean continued to be represented in Genoa’s sixteenth and seventeenth-century efforts towards a “return to the Orient.”¹²⁷ This representation, which marked a distinctive feature of the period, was manifested at the memorial, devotional, ideological, and programmatic levels. The century in which the Genoa-Spain alliance reached its zenith (1528-1628) gradually weakened and gave way to a period (1628-1682) in which memories, histories, and remnants belonging to the Orient would be revived. The profound political, economic, and cultural experiences with the Orient reached their most vibrant, fruitful, and promising level during the *Durazzo* period (1659-1682). The reactivation of commercial and diplomatic relations with Istanbul by Doge Cesare Durazzo, and the two missions to the Sultan’s court by his nephew Giovanni Agostino Durazzo, represented the first tangible prospects the Genoese had gained in Ottoman territory since the

¹²⁶ Alessia Ceccarelli, *Nostalgia d'Oriente. Genova, Roma e il Mediterraneo nel Cinque e Seicento* (Roma: Donzelli Editore, 2022), VII- XXI, 1-28, 70-105, 165-177, 209-212.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

fall of Chios in 1566. The War of Candia (1645-1669), in which Venice lost its dominance in the Mediterranean, provided a functional and useful backdrop for Durazzo's initiative to succeed. Despite the emergence of novel diplomatic and strategic patterns for the Genoese in the Levant amidst the conflicts in the west, the impact was transient, and the Genoese withdrew from Izmir in 1680, thereby ending their commercial activities in the region.

Ceccarelli contends that Genoa's Levantine identity cannot be reduced merely to nostalgia and symbolic representation.¹²⁸ In contrast to popular belief, she asserts that it was more active, strategic, and effective during periods of political transformation, despite the Genoese defeats and losses. Addressing the Levantine extensions and legacy in Genoa, however, Ceccarelli's research deviates from the prevailing paradigm at this juncture, marking a departure from the predominant focus on the Genoese influence in the Levant. To illustrate this point, we may consider the actions of prominent aristocratic families such as the *Giustiniani*, who hailed from Chios, and the *Lercari*, who originated from Genoa. These families employed their extensive references and connections in the Levant to consolidate their political and social status. Furthermore, a plethora of indicators suggested the long-term integration of Levantine identities into Genoese society. For instance, the etymological origins of numerous Genoese surnames, including *Calvocoressi*, *Angelasto*, *Rodocanachi*, *Sevastopulo*, *Coressi*, *Damala*, *Schilizzi*, and *Ralli*, indicate an Oriental heritage that was subsequently Italianized. As demonstrated in Ceccarelli's research, transimperial ties between Genoa and Greece extended to ancient cities of the Byzantine world, including Nicaea, Trebizond and Constantinople. Furthermore, the city of Genoa, and more specifically the *Torre dei Greci* (Tower of the Greeks) located in the vicinity of the port, served as a sanctuary for non-Muslims originating from the Ottoman domains. These communities included Orthodox Greeks, Armenians, Ragusans, and Levantine Jews.

However, alongside the cultural harmony and permeability that facilitated the formation of these transimperial identities, there was also an interfaith intolerance, even a confessional dichotomy.¹²⁹ At this juncture, Ceccarelli skillfully draws attention to long-standing antagonisms, such as Liguria's renowned anti-Ottoman prophecies. As a prime example of this phenomenon, she cites Annia da Viterbo's seminal work *De futuris* (On the Future), which was first published in Genoa in 1480. Moreover, confronted with Genoa's direct exposure to the Ottoman threat in the Mediterranean realm, certain Genoese intellectuals adopted an Orientalist perspective, while others engaged in the production of anti-Ottoman rhetoric. As Ceccarelli pertinently observes in his review, intellectual figures such as Uberto Foglietta, Andrea Spinola, and Gian Paolo Marana had, in fact, created a pejoratively charged image of the Levant in Genoa's early literary and cultural encounters with the Orient. Among these, the works of the historian Foglietta were noteworthy, as they took on the role of defending Christian Europe against the Ottomans. Gian Paolo Marana's fictional work, *l'Esploratore turco* (The Turkish Explorer) (1684-1686), utilized the correspondence of an Ottoman explorer named Mahmut to provide a series of critiques concerning religion, morality, politics, and culture, directed at European society. Ceccarelli devotes a separate section to this book, which is widely regarded as one of the earliest examples of Orientalist literature, portraying a mirror-image of Europe from an Ottoman standpoint.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

Marie Bossaert argues that studies of the Italian presence in the Ottoman Empire mostly approach Italians as a community or colony, or as individual identities through prominent figures -such as court artists and musicians, the Sultan's advisors, and military reformers.¹³⁰ Based on the argument that not all Levantines are Italian and not all Italians feel Levantine, Bossaert problematizes *Italianness* as an individual Ottoman identity by removing it from the context of the community and traces the shifting paths from Italian to Levantine. When exactly did an Italian become a Levantine? What shaped the sensitivity towards deciding and certifying who was or was not Italian? And finally, how could Italianness in Istanbul be characterized in terms of the feelings it evoked and the lives it left behind? Although she does not intend to deny the existence of community structures, Bossaert challenges communal approach by analyzing *Italianness* through the cross-identifications, loyalties and sociabilities. She examines how the encounters and interactions between the Italo-Levantines, who had settled in Istanbul centuries ago, and the Peninsular Italians who had arrived in Istanbul in the nineteenth century, disrupted the feeling and gathering patterns among the Italian individuals. Bossaert questions the diplomatic and social transformations created by these circulations between the Italian Peninsula and the Ottoman imperial domains, through both Italianizing an Ottomanizing this history.

Shlala posits that the identification of Levantines is a fundamentally instrumental process, as it serves to dismantle a series of social constructs.¹³¹ The simultaneous signaling of both "difference and sameness" by these social constructs has the effect of obscuring our vision of the past. The concept of "hybridity," which represents the mixture of east and west as a common duality in historiography, is reflected in the Levantine identity as a state of "ambivalence" and "liminality." In Shlala's approach, this in-betweenness, which is deeply associated with Levantine identity, serves as a device of cultural production in areas such as law. Furthermore, she emphasizes that terms such as "identity," "hybridity" and "fluidity" often lose their analytical value due to their overuse and ambiguity. She elucidates this situation by arguing that all human beings inevitably develop an identity, that all cultures exhibit some degree of hybridity, and that cultural hybridity can become increasingly fluid over time. Shlala therefore suggests that Levantine identity cannot be distinctively and effectively contextualized through the mere literal interpretations of these three highly popular concepts. She develops this argument by analyzing the concept of "Italo-Levantine identity," which she characterizes as a Levantine version of hybridity. Shlala identifies hybridity in the context of the Italo-Levantine people with "resilience," which she interprets as the capacity for cultural adaptation or change in the face of hostility or innovation. She argues that this nineteenth-century phenomenon, which she defines as "resilient hybridity," relied on extraterritoriality and integrated geographical, intellectual and colonial boundaries between Europe and the Middle East.

At this point in the discussion, it would be highly stimulating to consider the definitions and interpretations of a member of the Levantine community on the subject, based on his own first-hand testimonies and research. The work of Rinaldo Marmara, the official historian and press spokesperson of the Conference of Catholic Bishops in Turkey (*Türkiye Katolik Ruhani Reisler Kurulu*) and a Levantine born in Istanbul, represents one of the most recent, authoritative and authentic studies on the subject published in Turkish literature.¹³² The book, whose title can be

¹³⁰ Bossaert, "Crisscross Italianities," 183-184.

¹³¹ Shlala, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt*, 4.

¹³² Marmara recalls that in literature, the term "Levantine" was employed by La Fontaine in the seventeenth century in the opening line of the fable *Le Rat qui s'est retiré du monde* (The Rat Retired from the World) as

translated into English as “A Levantine Neighborhood in the Ottoman Capital: Galata-Pera,” provides a chronological overview of the historical origins and social life of Italians concentrated in Pera and Galata. The fact that the study places the reformative evolution of the Ottoman Empire in the background enables an analysis of how imperial reforms facilitated the settlement of the Italian colony in Istanbul. Marmara, who is of Italian and French heritage, asserts that he is weary of the pejorative adjectives employed by Western travelers and writers when referring to Levantines. He attributes these negative attitudes to envy and resentment on the part of the writers, who found themselves in a situation where they were confronted with a Western community that was living a life that was similar to or even superior to their own lives, within the unique exoticism of the East.

Given his Italo-Franco dual identity, Marmara’s research encompassed not only Italo-Levantines but also the full range of communities inhabiting Istanbul under the umbrella of the Levantine super-identity.¹³³ He posits that the defining characteristics of the Levantine identity were as follows: (1) an origin from the West; (2) a specific date of arrival; (3) adherence to Christianity, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Anglican; and (4) non-native status in the Middle East. Marmara, however, introduces a sociocultural categorization based on the comparison of Levantines with other minorities and nationalities within the Ottoman Empire. He asserts that the Levantines, who lacked the requisite population size and were of foreign origin, could not be recognized as a nation or minority group in the same manner as Armenians, Greeks or Jews. Furthermore, as the Levantines lacked their own educational and medical institutions, at least in the sense that other nations or minorities did, he also posits that they were never fully institutionalized. It is evident that the establishment and operation of such facilities was largely undertaken by the communities and parishes of the Catholic Church. In this respect, according to Marmara, it is more accurate to categorize the Levantines, who are mostly identified with the Latin-Catholic religion, as an “ethno-confessional” group.

At this point, it is quite intriguing how the *Genoese* and *Venetians*, who lived in Istanbul and adopted the supra-identity of Ottoman Levantine, perceived the awakening of Italian unification during the Risorgimento and the building of a new nation state afterwards.¹³⁴ Bossaert’s seminal work, which questions the effects of Italian unification on the Italian presence and lifestyles in Istanbul, can be considered one of the first studies to approach the phenomenon of “post-Risorgimento Italianness” through the context of the Italian diaspora. However, Bossaert’s analysis goes beyond a mere *Italianization* of this historical nation-building process, situating it within the broader context of *Ottomanness*. Notably, she does not neglect the fact that these people were integral components of the Ottoman ecosystem. Emphasizing that the issue of *Italianness*, when examined in the context of the exclusivism of nations, concerns not only the Italians but also the non-European Ottomans, she particularly reminds that this fact has received little attention so far. At this point, Bossaert’s work also includes the reverse circulation from the empire to the Peninsula in terms of its effects on the sense of belonging to Italy.

Les levantins dans leur légende (The Levantines in their legend). In other words, La Fontaine deliberately opted for the term “Levantine” in preference to “Oriental” or “Easterner” regarding a narrative of an Eastern legend, with the intention of elucidating a semantic distinction or nuance. Marmara, *Osmanlı Başkentinde Bir Levanten Senti*, 205-207.

¹³³ Ibid., 206-207.

¹³⁴ Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities,” 185.

So, what did this sense of belonging, or in other words, what did it mean to be Italian despite never stepping foot in Italy before?¹³⁵ From a diasporic perspective, it meant having more or less distant Italian origins, great ancestors from a mythologized peninsula, and a collective memory passed down from generation to generation through an Italian-sounding name and the ability to speak some Italian. It also meant being neighbors with other non-Muslim communities in life and death, coexisting in the same European neighborhood, worshiping in the same church and being buried in the same cemetery. At this very point, Bossaert divides the Italian inhabitants of Istanbul into two categories: the Levantines, who came and settled centuries ago, and the immigrants who left the Peninsula and came to the imperial capital during the waves of emigration throughout the nineteenth century. Levantines, who left the Peninsula as early as the fifteenth century and settled in Galata and Pera, relatively Europeanized districts of Istanbul, were an indispensable part of the narratives of nineteenth century Istanbul and its Italians. According to observers, writers and agents, although these Levantines were Italian and even though they were the strongest evidence of the Italian character of the Eastern Mediterranean, they had to insist on their identity because they were not yet Italian enough. Those who migrated throughout the nineteenth century had different motivations and justifications, such as political, economic and “existential.” The first waves of emigration were politically motivated and generally consisted of Risorgimento exiles sent as a result of the pro-unification rebellions that broke out in the independent Italian states in the first half of the nineteenth century. As a result of the failure and harsh suppression of the rebellious and revolutionary movements that occurred after 1821, in the early 1830s and between 1848-59, many waves of departure hit Istanbul, and by the 1850s the city turned into a base of conspirators and revolutionaries. Along with France, Great Britain, Spain and Americas, the Ottoman Empire had now become a political asylum that assured an environment in which the ideas of Italy and Italianness could elaborate, and a destination that promised future prospects through this critical role and experience. Already with the period of reform policies (*Tanzîmât*) that started in 1839, the Ottoman Empire began to host an environment of openness and professional opportunities where different political pursuits could yield results. Another reason for emigration was the convergence between supply and demand, which was one of the consequences of the challenging economic conditions and unemployment that emerged especially at the end of the century in the newly established Italian kingdom. In addition to political and economic ones, there was also an impulsive or, in Bossaert’s words, an “existential” motive for the opportunity to discover a new life in a new place through being fascinated by the ambiance of the Orient.

The process of social homogenization within the Italian diaspora was also contingent upon familial ties, particularly in the context of matrimonial strategies.¹³⁶ As Giuseppe Zaccagnini, director of the Technical-Commercial School in Istanbul and branch president of the *Società Dante Alighieri* (Dante Alighieri Society), observed, the fundamental issue was that this colony of *Genoese* and *Venetian* origins had been forming familial ties with indigenous families through marriages for centuries. Zaccagnini argued that the matrimonial network had resulted in a transformation of not only the Italian diaspora’s racial identity but also their individual characters and emotions. Additionally, the Italian language had reached a point where it was no longer spoken and understood in most families. As Bossaert cites Oliver-Jens Schmitt, the bourgeois immigrants, driven by social rather than national concerns, were inclined to marry members of prominent Levantine families rather than compatriots with scarce resources.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 186-187.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 191-192.

Furthermore, in certain instances, the formation of a sense of national identity may have been in conflict with or intertwined with regional affiliations on the Peninsula. For example, tensions in Italy could be reflected in the Ottoman lands, or local affiliations and regional networks on the Peninsula could even affect the membership applications to the Istanbul branch of the *Società Operaia Italiana*. On the other hand, a profound sense of religious fidelity has consistently persisted on the supranational plane, predicated on the inextricable link between Italian identity and the Catholic faith. Despite the secularization of Rome as the capital of the nation-state, it continued to serve as the emblematic center for both Catholicism and the Papal States for Italians dispersed across the globe.

In her inspiring chapter, Bossaert draws a portrait stretching from the earliest and most established Levantines to second-generation Italian immigrants.¹³⁷ While the Levantines self-identify as more Italian than the Italian population, the second-generation immigrants, who were raised by patriotic but stateless fathers, have effectively abandoned their Italian identity. At this very point, Mark Choate also touches upon an important detail regarding the applicability of the term “diaspora” to post-Risorgimento Italian emigrations.¹³⁸ While he states that some academics today apply the term diaspora for Italian emigrations, he underlines that Italians, unlike the Jewish and African diasporas, have never been stateless and that Italy always provided diplomatic aid and return home support abroad. He adds that the state aimed to unite all Italians around the world with the aim of restoring Italy’s former glory through international prestige, power and wealth. This suggests a possible distinction between diasporic communities that are involuntarily separated from their homeland or have no homeland at all, and the voluntary and strategic emigrations of Italians after the Risorgimento. On the other hand, this approach contradicts in some respects the phenomenon of *concittadini senza patria* (fellow citizens without a homeland) as quoted by Bossaert from Edmondo de Amicis’s work *Costantinopoli*.

Natalie Rothman’s substantial and comparative analysis of the presence, categorization and otherness of Ottoman subjects operating in the Venetian commercial sphere elucidates the evolution of the category of Levantine through a transimperial lens.¹³⁹ Citing Vercellin’s seminal work, Rothman asserts that the Venetian distinction between Turks (*Turchi*) and “the nations subject to the Turks” (*di nazioni suddite turchesche*) at the beginning of the seventeenth century gave way to the supra-category of Orientals (*orientali*) by the late eighteenth century.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, she traces the evolution of the Levantine category in a linear and chronological manner, examining its institutionalization in different areas and moments. Rothman’s chronological analysis of the term’s usage in specific historical periods demonstrates that the category of Levantine was constituted through a complex process of institutional formation and

¹³⁷ Ibid., 198.

¹³⁸ Mark I. Choate, *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 7.

¹³⁹ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 211-213.

¹⁴⁰ Vercellin’s work, which was highly praised by Rothman for its originality, constituted a significant contribution to the field, offering a novel perspective that diverged from the prevailing approaches in the existing literature. These approaches either embraced the fluidity and ambiguity of the Venetian and Ottoman categories of belonging or pursued an uncompromisingly militant discourse against the Turks. Giorgio Vercellin, “Mercanti turchi e sensali a Venezia,” *Studi Veneziani*, n.s. 4 (1980): 45–78. For a comparative analysis of fifteenth-century Ottoman Venetian commercial encounters please see also: Giorgio Vercellin, “Mercanti turchi a Venezia alla fine del Cinquecento: Il Libretto dei contratti turcheschi di Zuane Zacra sensale,” *Il Veltrò: Rivista della civiltà italiana* 23, (marzo–agosto 1979): 243–276.

negotiation between transimperial subjects and Venetian elites.¹⁴¹ Additionally, Levantinism (*La levantinità*) constituted a comprehensive conceptual framework for the integration of disparate yet interrelated dimensions of political jurisdiction, confessional affiliation, and ethnolinguistic identity. This transimperial category, constructed on the basis of the occasionally compatible and occasionally conflicting motives of both the Venetian and Ottoman states, represented an attempt to achieve a balance through the pursuit of their respective strategic objectives and pragmatic values.

Rothman also observes that a number of merchants, brokers, and other state-driven transimperial subjects were reluctant to be uniformly categorized within super-categories such as “Levantine.”¹⁴² Instead, they sought to emphasize their own distinctiveness. These individuals, whom Rothman refers to as “early modern transimperial subjects,” positioned and determined themselves by asserting their cultural difference within the sets of relations that emerged between Venice and Istanbul. The sets of relations driven by the categorical determinism of these Venetian or Ottoman actors were intertwined with a more complex web of relations that today is called the Mediterranean world. On the other hand, the pragmatic context of the definition was empowered by certain references and implications that were mutually advantageous to both parties. The Levant, as officially addressed by the Venetian Board of Trade, was a region that proved instrumental in salvaging Venice’s waning economic fortunes and safeguarding its commercial interests. Furthermore, *Levantini* was an inclusive and practical framework that eliminated the juridical, confessional and ethno-linguistic distinctions implied by the category of “Turks.” This transimperial framework even extended beyond Ottoman subjects to Venetians and Safavids, especially in exceptional circumstances such as wartime, thus eliminating the political and legal sanctions that the enemy status would have entailed.

As they did not adhere to a single religion, language or legal system, the identity of the Levantines was not constituted by a uniform group character.¹⁴³ In Bourdieu’s terms, this identity was characterized by the socialized norms and tendencies that guided their modes of existence in the Levant. Their engagement with the surrounding host culture was pivotal to the formation of Levantine identity, as they promoted syncretic or hybrid forms of conduct in order to maintain the collective stability of their community. Consequently, their culture, dress, art, cuisine, architecture, superstition, language and law were either responses to, or adaptations of, the dominant Islamic culture into which they were integrated. Through their own press and educational and cultural institutions, they acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to become more European, becoming cultural brokers around the world and playing a critical role in facilitating the exchange of knowledge at the crossroads of empires.

¹⁴¹ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 212, 216. This centennial period, characterized in particular by the Venetian Board of Trade, began with the admission of Levantine Jews to Venice in 1541 and continued with the issuance of the first charter of rights in 1589. The process which received a major impetus in 1621 with the establishment of the *Fondaco dei Turchi*, a clearing house for Ottoman-Muslim merchants on the Grand Canal but would be challenged after the economic collapse of the 1630s, when different taxes were imposed on Jews, Armenians and other Ottoman and Safavid merchants. Finally, with the outbreak of the Venetian-Ottoman War of Crete in 1645, Ottoman subjectship would take on a negative connotation in Venetian domains, and the term Levant would be used implicitly to refer to the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 26, 212-213.

¹⁴³ Shlala, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt*, 5.

1.4.1. Linguistic and Ethnocultural Patterns in the Formation of Levantine Identity

The renowned Italian linguist and dialectologist Fiorenzo Toso remarks that following the Treaty of Nymphaeum in 1261, which resulted in the exclusion of the Venetians from Black Sea trade, Pera came under Genoese control.¹⁴⁴ This suburb of Constantinople, located to the north of the Golden Horn, constituted an enclave which was administratively independent from the Genoese state. For a period of approximately two hundred years, it served as a center for the Latin population situated at the heart of the empire. Following the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans in June 1453, the Genoese of Pera accepted the personal protection of Mehmed the Conqueror on the condition that they retain their administrative and religious concessions. Therefore, the *Magnifica Comunità di Pera*, characterized by its administrative autonomy and decision-making bodies, came into existence. Founding agreements, which were renewed on several occasions until 1682, gradually extended to other Europeans who settled here, and Pera progressively became the center of Western diplomatic missions. Consequently, the Genoese identity, which constituted the dominant and collective representation of the colony, began to shift towards a broader Latin-Catholic identity that extended to different origins. Furthermore, with the incorporation of Jewish, Greek, Armenian and Muslim communities into this population, Pera acquired a more cosmopolitan character. As posited by Louis Mitler in his extensively cited and highly esteemed academic article, *The Genoese in Galata: 1453–1682*, the Genoese colony in Pera had undergone an erosion of identity and had begun to disintegrate both institutionally and demographically by 1682. However, this dissolution was accompanied by a transformation, evolving the *Peroti* into a broader, overarching Italo-Levantine category rather than eliminating them.

At this juncture, it is imperative to draw attention to the significant semantic shifts that the term Levantine underwent as a result of the sixteenth-century Mediterranean maritime trade.¹⁴⁵ These shifts signified the interchangeability of specific ethnocultural and socioeconomic patterns that constituted the essence of the term. By the end of the fifteenth century, Sephardic Jews expelled from the Iberian Peninsula had settled in Ottoman territory and established commercial relations with Venice. These merchants commenced the establishment of commercial influence in the Italian peninsula, subsequently becoming known as Levantine Jews. Consequently, the term Levantine came to be used as a defining characteristic of, and even a synonym for, the Sephardic Jew. However, the semantic shifts that the term *Levantini* underwent were not limited to this point and the word would subsequently evolve in a more dramatic fashion. Over the following century, the term was applied not only to Jews, but to all Ottoman merchants residing or operating in Venice, regardless of their ethnicity, language or religion. By the end of the sixteenth century, the term had acquired a number of new meanings, including “shifty, sketchy men” and “natives of the Levant region.” However, it was now being used to focus on assumed origins and character traits rather than diasporic commercial activities. In the eighteenth century, the terms *levantin* and *Levantine* were incorporated into the French and English dictionaries as lexical items. It was primarily used to describe the natives

¹⁴⁴ Fiorenzo Toso, “I Levantini, La più antica comunità storica Italoфона all'estero: Europa e Mediterraneo d'Italia. L'italiano nelle comunità storiche da Gibilterra a Costantinopoli,” *Treccani Magazine*, October 2, 2020, accessed September 22, 2025, https://www.treccani.it/magazine/lingua_italiana/articoli/scritto_e_parlato/Europa12.html; Louis Mitler, “The Genoese in Galata: 1453-1682,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10, no. 1 (Feb 1979) 71–91. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/162479>.

¹⁴⁵ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 74, 213.

or inhabitants of the Levant as an Eastern population, and secondarily to refer to the general populace employed in the Mediterranean.

Toso's brief yet noteworthy article furnishes valuable insights into the linguistic and cultural erosion experienced by the Genoese colony in Pera.¹⁴⁶ Despite the region's gradual adoption of a more expansive Latin-Catholic character, the testimonies of embassies and travelers documented the partially continued use of Genoese dialect among the Levantines of Pera until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, the 1618 account of the Italian traveler Pietro Della Valle, in which he stated that some Italian families in Pera had adopted the Greek language, clothing and traditions, also signaled a local Hellenization. Nevertheless, Della Valle's writings indicate that these families also preserved and maintained Catholic rituals and the Italian and Turkish languages as part of a shared culture. The records of the English traveler George Sandys from 1610, in which the "Pera interpreters" (*dragomanni Peroti*) were referred to as the *Greek Genoese*, thus confirming the trend towards Hellenization in the district many years earlier. Notwithstanding the increasing Hellenic influence, the Italianization of Pera had not yet come to an end. In 1667, the recently appointed Genoese ambassador to Istanbul was greeted with notable warmth by the *Peroti*, who subsequently welcomed him as a valued member of their *Casaccia* fraternity. While acknowledging the linguistic heritage of the distinct and enduring Genoese component within the Pera community, Toso also recalls that Italian subsequently became widespread as both the language of the community and of diplomacy. The requirement for a common language that could address the entire Latin population necessitated the replacement of the Genoese dialect with Italian. Moreover, the active role of the Levantines in cultural mediation resulted in Italian language assuming great importance in relations between the Ottoman Empire and the West until the end of the eighteenth century.

According to Mansel, the common value system that constituted the fact of Levant did not only include geography, diplomacy or capitulations.¹⁴⁷ This multi-layered entity consisting of social, commercial and diplomatic networks in which Muslim and Christian elements are intertwined, could also be defined by the fact of *lingua franca* (*lisan al-franji* in Arabic). This neutral and functional language, born in line with the communication-based necessities of the system, was a spoken but not a written language. Essentially, it was a version of simple Italian, devoid of grammar, syntax and gender distinction, and contained French, Provençal, Castilian, Turkish and Arabic words depending on the location. Molière used this language in his play *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* in 1699, Rousseau, who had connections with watchmakers in Pera, learned a few words of it, and Lord Byron referred to this language, which he learned in Athens in 1809-10, as Levant Italian. As Viscomi notes, until the second half of the nineteenth century, a creole form of the Italian language functioned as the *lingua franca* in the eastern Mediterranean and maintained its linguistic superiority over other languages.¹⁴⁸ This linguistic dominance maintained by the Italians in Egypt was the product of the political influence of a wealthy, professional and merchant class, which was to decline at the time of unification in 1861. A variant of pidgin Italian was sustained as a vernacular among the lower socioeconomic strata of European and Egyptian populations until the early twentieth century. However, this usage coexisted with the proletarianization of the Italian colony in Egypt, a process that reflected the influx of Italian immigrants from the working class following the 1870s. From the

¹⁴⁶ Toso, "I Levantini."

¹⁴⁷ Mansel, *Levant*, 14.

¹⁴⁸ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 5.

1840s to the 1860s, a transition period from Italian, which was the language predominantly spoken along the Levantine coastline, to French was experienced.¹⁴⁹ The wave of Francophonie that started in Alexandria and Beirut would extend to Izmir and even a regional accent of the language, Smyrniot French, would emerge. As Mansel eloquently points out by referring Paul Rycaut, who served as the British Consul in Izmir between 1667 and 1678, “Smyrna was not only the eye of Asia, but also one of Europe’s eyes in Asia.” In 1863, the Italian Consul General complained that Italian was disappearing and succumbing to the linguistic dominance of French, even among some Italians resided in the city. On the other hand, French was rapidly gaining ground among the city’s religious, educational, commercial and intellectual classes. For instance, the French language was given more priority than Turkish in the Jewish schools in Izmir and was promoted by the Jewish clergy as well. In return, the Italian Government aiming to expand Italian influence, would grant citizenship to many Izmir Jews in the early twentieth century. Greek poet George Seferis was raised in French as well as Greek by his family and Turkish intellectual Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil was tenured to a post in a government school and became the first Turk to be employed by the Ottoman Bank thanks to his knowledge of French. In fact, this intensive attention that French attracted was not only its transformation into a language of diplomacy, culture, science and modernity from Mexico to Persia, but also France’s manifestation of becoming a great power. However, the real gravity of the situation lay in the fact that their own nationals were corresponding in French even among themselves, as the Italian and Greek Consuls also complained. Realizing that the threat of language assimilation was about to turn into a cultural erosion, the Italian government founded the Dante Alighieri Society in 1898 to challenge this. Their fundamental doctrine was simple but result-oriented: “Italianize our colonies bastardized by French feelings and the French language.” Although many Egyptian and Lebanese intellectuals in the twentieth century preferred to write in French due to its gradual dominance over time, the influence of Italian on colloquial language would continue for many years. For instance, words such as *bosta* (post), *gambari* (shrimps), *torta* (cake), and *roba vecchia* (old clothes), which were inherited from Italian to Alexandrian Arabic, were still used in the locality until the mid-twentieth century.

The Levantines of Pera, historically known as Italian speakers, appear to have adopted a greater degree of adaptation to global trends and local settings in the recent past.¹⁵⁰ In the context of foreign relations, French has been the dominant language of choice, largely due to its rapidly rising international prestige. Conversely, in daily interactions, Greek has emerged as the more prevalent language, despite its perceived inferior status. Indeed, the notions attached to the different uses of these three languages were embodied in a local saying: *L'or c'est le français, l'argent c'est l'italien, le bronze c'est le grec* (Gold is French, silver is Italian, bronze is Greek). Despite the establishment of French as the language of social relations in the nineteenth century, Italian continued to be utilized in the Ottoman capital, due to the emergence of relations with the Italian peninsula, as well as the occurrence of reciprocal migration movements. Following the inauguration of a Savoy Consulate (*Consolare Sabauda*) in Istanbul in 1815, Levantines who had been settled there for an extended period, along with new immigrants arriving from Italy, began to perceive themselves as a unified national group. This cultural unification was further consolidated by the ideological vibrations and migratory waves reaching from the

¹⁴⁹ Mansel, *Levant*, 25, 27, 145, 147, 166-167, 217.

¹⁵⁰ Toso, “I Levantini.”; Fortunato Maresia, “Storia dell’Artigiana,” in *Gli italiani di Istanbul. Figure, comunità e istituzioni dalle riforme alla repubblica (1839-1923)*, eds. Attilio De Gasperis and Roberta Ferrazza (Torino: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2007), 193-196.

peninsula during the Risorgimento. In Istanbul, the initiative was championed by Consul Ludovico Sauli, a prominent figure hailing from a long-standing Genoese family residing in Galata. Sauli's endeavors to restore the collective memory of the ancient *Perota* community were also noteworthy. The aforementioned spirit of national solidarity, which was largely formed by people of Genoese origin in Istanbul, paved the way for Italian civil society awareness in the city. *Associazione Commerciale Artigiana di Pietà* (The Charity Association of Merchants and Craftsmen), which was founded in Harbiye in 1838, is recognized as the forerunner of Italian civil society organizations in Istanbul. The association was established by Giacomo Anderlich, a merchant from Fiume, with the objective of providing assistance to the elderly, impoverished working families, and children.

The morphological structure and usage patterns of the language favored by this community were also a subject of curiosity and debate among Italian intellectuals.¹⁵¹ In his 1878 travelogue on Istanbul, which was subsequently published as a book, Edmondo de Amicis delivered a series of harsh criticisms regarding the linguistic habits of the Levantines in Pera. Amicis disparaged this language as “a bastardized Italian” (*un italiano bastardo*), a combination of several languages, and mockingly remarked that if a *Della Cruscan* academic heard it, he would fall into bed with a tertian fever. In Amicis's own words, the jarring nature of Pera Italian was akin to the following:

“The tongue that might be made by mixing together the dialect of a Piedmontese porter, a Lombard fruit-seller, and a Romagnolo carter would, I think, be less horrible than that which is spoken on the shores of the Golden Horn. It is an already bastard Italian mingled with four or five other tongues bastardized also.”

An Italian boy aged 16 or 17, born in Pera, once accompanied Amicis while they were taking a walk. However, despite Amicis's persistent attempts, the lad hesitated to engage in conversation with him, managing only a few words with great embarrassment. Amicis shared the following anecdote about the boy's language:

“In fact, he did speak the oddest Italian, full of deformed and incomprehensible words, resembling the so-called lingua-franca, which, according to some French joker, consists of a certain number of words and phrases in Italian, Spanish, French, and Greek, that tumble out rapidly one after the other until one at length appears that may be understood by the person listening”

However, Amicis adds a further observation that, in Pera, where almost everyone, including Turks, understands a little Italian, there is no need for Italian of high literary quality.¹⁵² Given that French was the most widely used language in written communication, Italian literature had not yet been able to establish itself in the region. Amicis's travelogue offers a further noteworthy observation in this regard, highlighting the prevalent use of Genoese as a spoken language throughout Galata, in addition to French and English. According to his observations, the Genoese exhibited behaviours that suggested a sense of familiarity and ease, as if they were in

¹⁵¹ Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople*, translated by Caroline Tilton (New York and London : G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896), 50, 136-137.

¹⁵² Amicis, *Constantinople*; Toso, “I Levantini.”

their own homes. The sense of superiority they exuded was reminiscent of the period when they exercised control over the port according to their own volition and defended it with cannons against any imperial threat. Within this complex linguistic environment, which Amicis pejoratively characterized as “eternal barbarism,” one could occasionally encounter a sophisticated word or a refined phrase exhibiting traces of “celestial Tuscan speech” (*Toscano parlare celeste*). Toso emphasizes that Amicis’s subjective assessments, while exhibiting a certain degree of “humaneness,” were also marked by “ungenerosity.” This emphasis is attributable to the fact that, from the 1870s to the 1900s, consuls, religious institutions and private organizations in Istanbul were committed to reviving Italian. Furthermore, despite increasing administrative and financial difficulties, local Italian schools continued to provide education from primary to secondary level. In other words, Toso may have considered Amicis’s apparent disregard and indifference for all these efforts to be unfair.

As Francesco Pongiluppi persuasively demonstrates, the Levantine character of Oriental Italians functioned as a mode of survival and constituted a significant barrier to their unconditional acceptance of the Italian language.¹⁵³ This is attributable to the fact that these individuals were compelled to adapt to their interlocutors or changing circumstances and to resort to the different linguistic tools available in their environment. Soft-power publications such as *La Rassegna Italiana* persistently emphasized the national character of Italian and its role in commercial influence, extensively promoting its utilization in commercial circles. Italian companies operating within the Italian homeland were strongly encouraged to correspond with Levantine merchants in Italian, a language many of these merchants had been educated in. The primary function of this initiative would be to revive the Italian linguistic heritage that had existed in the Levant for centuries. Furthermore, it would serve to consolidate the commercial presence and national prestige in the Italian geopolitical sphere at a minimal cost. The centuries-long commercial and cultural interactions between the Italian maritime republics and the Levant had now evolved into a trajectory, leaving enduring traces in the maritime language employed in the Ottoman domains. At this juncture, Pongiluppi’s article elucidates that these shared terms, which have been inherited and are still in active use in both the Ottoman and Italian languages, represent the most salient manifestation of this enduring trajectory. *La Rassegna Italiana*, meanwhile, sought to accentuate this trajectory by publishing analyses on the etymological connections and similarities between Italian and Eastern languages such as Arabic, Turkish, and Persian. Another effective method of cultivating Italianness was through education, whose vital role in the processes of both nation-building and the transnational building of national identity is now well established.¹⁵⁴ Considering emigration as an asset rather than a weakness and aiming to obtain maximum return from it, Italy began to pursue an ambitious schooling policy abroad under the initiative of Prime Minister Francesco Crispi in the early 1890s. The heart of the project, which was launched with the aim of schooling worldwide at the beginning, was the Mediterranean and particularly the Ottoman Empire, where the Italian elites were trying to get a share of the cake of European imperialist ambitions. In order to compete with other imperial powers in this arena of confrontation, numerous Italian schools were created, nationalized or funded throughout the Empire during this period. The primary objective was to ensure the adoption of the Italian mindset through promoting the Italian language, and in this direction, secondary schools and a *Scuola Tecnico-Commerciale* were established in European neighborhoods of Istanbul such as Pera, Galata and Pancaldi (*Pangaltı*). The Italian language,

¹⁵³ Pongiluppi, “La Colonia Italiana di Costantinopoli,” 228-230.

¹⁵⁴ Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities,” 189-190.

which had been the primary means of communication among Europeans for centuries both in the capital and in Ottoman port cities such as Izmir, was progressively replaced by French, a language of culture, diplomacy and daily life by the nineteenth century. The fact that the French investments to increase linguistic influence in the Ottoman Empire yielded positive results, alarmed the Italian authorities soon after the unification. Italian observers sent to Istanbul and Thrace after the Berlin Congress reported that even some Italians in the colony did not speak Italian, as they were educated in French. As a result, a policy was initiated to re-establish the position of Italian language in the Eastern Mediterranean through both state schools and private institutions such as the Dante Alighieri Society.

When it comes to the reverse circulation from Ottoman lands to the Italian Peninsula, we encounter a completely different but much more interesting picture.¹⁵⁵ An Ottoman Armenian named Artaky Oundjian, who received his education at the *Collegio Moorat-Raphael* in Venice, glorified Italy in his job application both as his second homeland and as the country to which he owed all his education and moral and intellectual development. Yet this was less a rhetorical statement by a job seeker and more a sign of the larger structural relations between Italy and the Empire's ethno-religious groups such as Armenians, whether Catholic or not, Albanians or Aromanians (Vlachs). Although it seemed like a cultural affinity at first, the emphasis on the "second homeland" was actually both a form of patriotism shown through gratitude and evidence of the Ottoman youth's Italianization through hospitality. In addition to Armenians attending the *Mechitarist* school in Venice, Catholic Albanians were also sending their sons to the *Collegio Sant'Adriano*, an *Arbëreshë* school in San Demetrio Corone, Calabria. Just like *Moorat-Raphael*, *Sant'Adriano* was an institution that served to build the Albanian national consciousness, and the Italian practice of hosting foreigners through colleges was a typical nineteenth century phenomenon that served as a catalyst for nationalist movements. Such populations, who built their nationalized futures in foreign countries thanks to crisscrossed circulations, gained their national identities through a mechanism consisting of national variations and mutual influences. In other words, these generations adopted a new country, culture, language and geography in these religious institutions that shaped their formative education, own national consciousness and political awakening, and returned to Istanbul more Italianized than a Levantine incapable of speaking her own language.

It is an intriguing fact that art also facilitated the amalgamation of Italian identity with various communities in the Levant.¹⁵⁶ In particular, the *commedia dell'arte*, a precursor form of European theatre with masked characters, reflects the wider Mediterranean context, including exchanges between cultural and linguistic communities in the Mediterranean. In his analysis, Fogu cites Erith Jaffe-Berg to argue that the longevity, geographical spread and structural characteristics of the *commedia dell'arte* represent a context that extends far beyond the perspective of the Italian peninsula. As such, the *commedia dell'arte* constituted an intercultural platform for non-Christian minorities, such as Jews and Muslims, both within Italy and across Europe. The travelling performers of this art were immersed in non-European languages, which led to a proliferation of linguistic interactions between Levantine communities. Consequently, Romani, Jewish, Armenian, Turkish and Arab characters were integrated into the Italian masks in the plays, and the scenarios began to focus not only on Naples, Venice and Rome, but also on Mediterranean localities such as Istanbul, Mallorca and Cyprus.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 193-194.

¹⁵⁶ Fogu, *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web*, 64.

The Italian Renaissance, born in the peninsular geography where fragmented city-states hosted a contested court society, was perceived as a struggle for cultural hegemony between Venetian and Florentine painters.¹⁵⁷ This was an era when Italian merchants in the Mediterranean region employed the term “native” (*natio*) exclusively in reference to their own cities. The most prevalent idiomatic expression among them was *tutto il mondo è paese*, implying that the whole world is the same wherever one goes. In light of these observations, Fogu posits that the impact of the multilingual and multicultural representation of Italian identity espoused by the *commedia dell’arte* may have been more significant than that of its sole rival, the *civiltà italiana*. The potential influence of the Renaissance on the Levantines, which represented Europe’s transition from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern Age and permeated literature, history and archaeology as well as arts, could be the subject of an independent research project.¹⁵⁸

1.4.2. Socioeconomic and Institutional Patterns in the Formation of Levantine Identity

In order to Italianize “a colony without a national spirit,” it was necessary to activate some channels that would reproduce and disseminate a collective national identity.¹⁵⁹ The mission undertaken by the *Società Operaia Italiana* (English: Italian Workers Society, Turkish: *İtalyan Amele Cemiyeti*), which was founded in Italy in the middle of the century and became a wider network abroad to promote mutual support within the Italian diaspora, served this purpose through the notion of solidarity.¹⁶⁰ The primary purpose of the Istanbul branch, opened in 1863, was to increase the patriotic awareness of the Istanbul diaspora through a solidarity network and to maintain and even strengthen their ties with the “homeland” (*madre patria*). The members of the association were so proud that their founding members and honorary presidents were Mazzini and Garibaldi that one of the first exhibits shown to visitors of the historical building on *Perukar Street* was the letter signed by these two. Additionally, commemorations of historical events such as the annexation of Rome to the Italian Kingdom targeted and appealed to both members of old Levantine families and recent Italian immigrants in Istanbul, beyond the actual members of the Peninsular society. Because after a certain point, as the proportion of Istanbul-born Italians gradually increased, they became the primary target of disseminating the idea of a newly defined Italianness.

Another socio-economic entity that emerged as the voice of the Italian colony was the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Istanbul (*La Camera di Commercio Italiana di Costantinopoli*), which was founded in 1885.¹⁶¹ While its primary function was to establish new socio-economic environments for Italian immigrants and to represent the Italian state’s commercial interests in

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 65.

¹⁵⁸ For two recent studies on the artistic interactions and exchanges between Europe and the Ottoman Empire during the Renaissance that merit further consideration, please see: Stefano Carboni, *Venice and the Ottoman Empire: A Tale of Art, Culture, and Exchange* (New York: Rizzoli Electa, 2024); Elisabeth A. Fraser, *Mediterranean Encounters: Artists Between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, 1774–1839* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017).

¹⁵⁹ Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities,” 188–189. Bossaert uses the Italian version of this expression as *Colonia dove non c’è spirito nazionale*.

¹⁶⁰ The full and official name of the association is *Società Operaia di Mutuo Soccorso Italiana in Costantinopoli* (Italian Workers’ Mutual Aid Society in Constantinople).

¹⁶¹ Pongiluppi, “La Colonia Italiana di Costantinopoli,” 219–235.

the Orient, the organization's activities extended far beyond this, acting as an international cultural ambassador and even a diplomatic mission. The organization assumed the role of socio-economic and cultural intermediary between the Italian colony and the motherland, as well as managing relations between Levantine circles and the Ottoman Government. The collaboration between the Italian Chamber of Commerce and the Dante Alighieri Society resulted in the establishment of *La Rassegna Italiana* magazine in 1896, which served as the official press organ of the Italian community in Istanbul. However, owing to administrative disagreements and financial issues, the magazine was transferred to the direct management of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Istanbul a year later. It became the official publication of the Chamber and was renamed *La Rassegna Italiana – Organo degli Interessi Italiani in Oriente* (The Italian Review – Organ of Italian Interests in the East). Following the crossing of this threshold, the magazine assumed a pivotal role in the formation of transimperial identities by accentuating the multiple affiliations of Levantine identity, thereby transcending the confines of a simple economic bulletin.

At this juncture, Francesco Pongiluppi's article, in its authentic capacity, has convincingly demonstrated how the *La Rassegna Italiana* evolved into a collective memory instrument that played a pivotal role in shaping the identities of Italians within the Ottoman context.¹⁶² The publication initially served to forge a transimperial identity intrinsic to the Italian colony in Istanbul, and subsequently to integrate this identity into the public sphere and national discourse of the Italian homeland. To this end, a discursive framework was established, introducing prominent Italian figures within the Ottoman territories and addressing both their achievements and challenges. This discursive framework was then synthesized with the domestic political debates within Italy and the international affairs relevant to the nation. The establishment of this intellectual bridge enabled the successful dissemination of the experiences, insights, and achievements of the Italian community in Istanbul, as well as the broader Ottoman context, to the Italian public.

However, it should be noted that despite its status as a non-governmental publication, the ideological orientation of *La Rassegna Italiana* was fully aligned with the national interests of Italy.¹⁶³ It is therefore apparent that, by promoting Italian influence and language in Ottoman territories, it essentially functioned as an instrument of soft-power. Nevertheless, as Pongiluppi persuasively demonstrated, *La Rassegna Italiana*'s most significant contribution was to illustrate how national identities were reproduced and transformed in foreign lands. The Italian state's persistent attempt to maintain equilibrium between its national interests and the multiple allegiances of the Levantine communities necessitated the establishment and cultivation of a transimperial public sphere. Consequently, the daily practices of the Levantines, the multicultural environment of Istanbul, and the commercial and diplomatic motivations of Italy became intertwined through *La Rassegna Italiana*. Utilizing this transimperial public sphere, the magazine effectively transposed Italy's national narrative into the Ottoman context, thereby illustrating how identities oscillated between national, imperial, and cosmopolitan affiliations during the modern era. Pongiluppi makes reference to the reflection of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 in *La Rassegna Italiana* as follows:

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

“On 23 July 1908, the radiant sun of freedom reappeared in Turkey and, without bloodshed, swept away the absolute regime that had kept the peoples of the Empire in chains for thirty years. Italians enthusiastically welcome the restoration of parliamentary rule in Turkey and, as sincere friends of the Ottomans, will follow the work of their revival with the greatest sympathy. Under the regime of freedom, the traditional Italian-Ottoman friendship will be further consolidated, and the two nations will be able to give greater impetus to their conspicuous economic relations.”¹⁶⁴

Another channel that accelerated the mutual integration of Italians with the Ottomans was the civil service, in which the prominent Levantine families were active and reliable especially in diplomatic and consular posts.¹⁶⁵ Unlike other European countries that employed only members of their own nationality in their diplomatic missions, Italy followed the traditional *Ancien Régime* practice of recruiting consular dragomans from both Italian and Ottoman local families. This practice created a reliable and skilled employee pool that eliminated the need to appoint expats from Italian Peninsula, and the workforce of the Italian consulate and embassy in Istanbul was monopolized by Levantine families.¹⁶⁶ As Italian authorities increasingly embraced familial ties as an element of trust and guarantee, the inheritance of positions such as consul, dragoman and service personnel from father to son became traditional. In this way, a social integration emerged between the Italian administration and the local Levantine community without any direct experience in the Peninsula. For example, when Dragoman Oscarre Missir applied for a position in Istanbul, he praised his family’s century-long service under the Kingdom of Sardegnia and Unified Italy and referenced the success of his father’s translation career in Izmir. However, this phenomenon which Bossaert calls bureaucratic Italianity, was susceptible to the families’ reshaping of their services in line with their own strategic interests, the production of fluctuating loyalties, and the violation of the cause of a Unified Italy. The loyalty of families such as the Missir (Izmir), Barrone or Vernoni (Istanbul) to the Kingdom of Sardinia, and by others to Venice or the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, represented a contextual incarnation of the state rather than serving to a national and unitary state.

Finally, affinity to Italy was a way for some Ottoman subjects to obtain rights, privileges, and protective support through acquired statuses such as consular patronage and naturalization.¹⁶⁷ The other political dimension of this bureaucracy-driven patronage was the support and solidarity it provided to nationalist movements such as Philhellenism, which emerged and developed throughout the empire in the nineteenth century. Both the Risorgimento movement and Unified Italy established solidarity connections with many expansionist organizations, especially in Istanbul and the Balkans. Thus, Italian power circles and official authorities encouraged and supported these entities, sometimes for a liberalizing mission and sometimes

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 231.

¹⁶⁵ Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities,” 195-196.

¹⁶⁶ In Ottoman toponymy, the Italian name Scutari represents both the Shkodër Province (İşkodra/Shkodra), which is today part of Albania and Montenegro, and the Üsküdar Sanjak of the Istanbul Province. Although Bossaert associated the *Guracucchi* family of Albanian origin, who were educated in San Demetrio, with the Consulate and Embassy in Istanbul, it is important to remember that Italy did not have a secondary consular mission or agent in the Üsküdar district of Ottoman Istanbul. In any case, Italian diplomatic yearbooks were consulted regarding the possible affiliation of the *Guracucchi* family with the Italian Consulate in Pera/Beyoğlu, and it was confirmed that Pietro Guracucchi was the interpreter of the Shkodër Provincial Consulate. Ministero per gli Affari Esteri, *Annuario Diplomatico del Regno d'Italia per l'anno 1890* (Roma: Tipografia delle Mantellate, 1890), 96, 253.

¹⁶⁷ Bossaert, “Crisscross Italianities,” 196-197.

for their own political and economic agenda. These entities were largely anti-Turkish until the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which the Italians interpreted as *Quarantotto turco* (Turkish Forty-eight) in reference to the 1848 revolutions throughout Europe. The proclamation of the Ottoman constitution in 1908 manifested the distinction between the Turkish nation and the Ottoman Empire, based on the fact that the Turks were also oppressed by the Sultan, and this initiative was also sympathized by nationalist movements in Europe.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC ORIGINS, COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ITALIAN COMMUNITY WITHIN THE OTTOMAN DOMAINS

This chapter seeks to elucidate the demographic background, composition, and distribution of the Italian inhabitants within Ottoman domains prior to their pragmatic and processual transformations, which will be covered in the subsequent chapters. While they did not possess the same level of population and influence as other non-Muslim communities, such as the Orthodox Greeks or Armenians, Italians nevertheless played a prominent role in many areas. Although the vast majority of Italians in the Ottoman Empire did not possess official Ottoman subjecthood status, in contrast to Orthodox Greeks and Armenians, they nevertheless enjoyed a range of rights, freedoms and opportunities that were granted by the capitulations. As will be demonstrated in the following parts, Italian subjects could be authorized or delegated to different institutional and bureaucratic networks within the empire. However, in order to gain insight into their public standing within the imperial system, it is essential to examine the individual identity of an Italian in the context of Ottoman sociopolitical pluralism and its defining characteristics. At this juncture, the study of transitional processes from imperial subjects to national citizenship represents a highly original and productive field of research. Likewise, research on identity construction and transformation in the context of different empires has recently attracted considerable attention and gained momentum. However, it should be noted at the outset that the intention of this chapter is not merely to analyze intra-imperial identity formations in the context of the dynamics and conditions surrounding them. Rather, the primary objective is to analyze the phenomenon of transimperiality, which represents the subjects' in-betweenness or ambiguity between two imperial entities.

At this juncture, an investigation will be conducted into the multifaceted Italian Jewish identity, which initially transcended ethnic, geographical and communal affiliations and subsequently evolved around the nexus of Ottoman imperial subjecthood. This permeable and flexible identity, while falling within the confines of the Italo-Levantine category within the Ottoman context, exhibited a perpetual oscillation between Jewish confession and Italian peninsular citizenship when viewed through the lens of its historical origins. Aragonese expansionism, which began in the thirteenth century and became increasingly prevalent, combined with the Spanish Inquisition that emerged in the fifteenth century and resulted in the expulsion of Jews from both the Iberian Peninsula and Southern Italy. While some of the Jews of southern Italy embarked on a northward migration, others found their ultimate destination along the Ottoman coastline. The migratory movements of Italian Jews destined for Ottoman territories continued gradually over several centuries, resulting in the establishment of overseas networks with the Italian Peninsula. The survival of cultural exchange can be attributed to the commercial connections maintained by Italian Jews in major port cities such as Venice, Ancona, and Livorno with local congregations in Istanbul and Izmir. Moreover, given the significance of cities such as Livorno and Pavia in the context of Jewish theology, it is evident that Ottoman congregations had connections with the Italian peninsula through rabbinical missions and Talmudic principles.

The Italian case, which commenced nation-building at an early stage through the Risorgimento, was markedly experimental and idiosyncratic in comparison to the French and British Empires. A comparison of the Ottoman Empire and Italy reveals a number of similarities in terms of temporal and spatial contexts, while also demonstrating notable inconsistencies. The principal distinction between these cases lies in the fact that the process of nation-building entailed a

group of individuals from a now-disintegrated imperial entity acquiring and transforming a geographical and cultural common heritage. In contrast to the Turkish national entity, which emerged from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the Italian process of national unification and construction was based on the administrative and geographical unification of disparate principalities, duchies, and kingdoms. It is also notable that Italy commenced its pursuit of national unity and awareness at an earlier point in time than the Turkish national identity was recognized and adopted. The most salient similarity is that the Italians, akin to the Turks, initially sought to forge a national unity on geographical grounds and subsequently endeavored to construct an identity in a retrospective manner. Nevertheless, an analysis of the paradigm shifts from imperial to national in the context of Italian national formation is contributory but insufficient for a study focusing on Italians as one of the constituent elements of the Ottoman mosaic. This is due to the fact that the majority of the population under study consisted of Italo-Levantines, who had been in possession of a diasporic sub-identity of their own, while simultaneously being subject to an imperial supra-identity, for centuries.

In the context of an era characterized by the imminent dissolution of empires, the acquisition of national consciousness undoubtedly represents a decisive dynamic in the construction of identity. Furthermore, the forms of comprehension and participation of an Italo-Levantine into the nation-building process were very different from those of a "Peninsular Italian." A Peninsular Italian ceased to be the subject of a principality or a duchy and acquired a supra-identity under the national auspices of an integrated Italy. Conversely, an Italo-Levantine within the Ottoman realm developed a composite identity within a cosmopolitan and heterogeneous imperial structure, geographically distant from his own. Nevertheless, this particular research does not seek to analyze the process of national self-determination of an imperial component. It remains an intriguing question whether the Italian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire exhibited any national tendencies or acquired national consciousness prior to, during, or following the Risorgimento. This question may be addressed and elaborated in further research. The objective of these two chapters is to examine the ambivalence of an Italian caught between two imperial super-identities through the concepts of "transimperiality" and "transnationality," which can be used interchangeably throughout the study.

It is therefore evident that the Risorgimento process has the potential to affect Italians in the Ottoman domains for an extended period of time, either in terms of migratory movements, political developments or the evolution of Italian political and social ideologies. However, due to the differing contextual and temporal focus of my study, I will restrict myself to making references to this process only and will not engage in any further discussion. The primary focus of my study will be the ambivalent and turbulent period of approximately 10 years between the commencement of the Tripolitanian War and the conclusion of the First World War. The objective is to question how the social and political identity of an Italo-Levantine individual in the Ottoman lands existed and what it meant or could have meant during this period. In this context, social identity can be perceived as a manifestation of the demographic categories and trajectories to which individuals belong. In contrast, political identity represents a manifestation of the direct or indirect effects on this social identity of a system of shared values formed by wartime developments and requirements. Notwithstanding their background positions, ongoing political, diplomatic and military developments retain the capacity to influence the aforementioned demographic categories and trajectories. In particular, certain forms of belonging and affiliation, such as wartime conversion, naturalization or affiliation to a

group/association/party, cannot be explained by personal preferences alone. Indeed, it is quite possible that some pragmatic choices and transformations, driven by wartime necessities, are underpinned by a natural survival instinct.

The exploration of the transimperial dimensions of practices such as conversion and naturalization, in addition to the origins of hybrid identities such as that of the Italian Jew, is likely to prove highly instructive in this process. The Italo-Ottoman conflict, which began in 1911 with the invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania, rapidly expanded to the Red Sea, Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean in 1912, and subsequently acquired an international dimension in 1915 with the formation of an alliance between Italy and the Entente Powers against the Ottoman Empire. However, to comprehensively grasp the transformative potency of this long-standing hostility on transimperial identities, it is imperative to delve much further back in time. Prior to a more detailed investigation, it is necessary to undertake an analysis of the demographic composition of the Italian population settled in the Mediterranean geography, with a distinct focus on regional distribution.

2.1. A Brief Overview on the Demographic Distribution and Figures of Italians as of 1871

The initial intention of this section was to demonstrate and analyze the transformation of Italian demographics in the Ottoman Empire through specific population figures. However, the rapid shrinkage of the empire in the second half of the nineteenth century, due to substantial territorial losses, is reflected in the considerable discrepancies between figures obtained from different sources. At this juncture, data obtained from various secondary sources, including Grange and Shlala, offer a general geographical framework for the distribution of the Italian population within the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, precise provincial distributions can only be obtained from the December 1871 census conducted by the Kingdom of Italy on the Italian diaspora living worldwide. Despite the fact that this date is relatively early with respect to the primary timeframe of the study, the 1871 census represents the most comprehensive and satisfactory source available for the study of Italian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, an analysis of archival sources reveals that the Ottoman government conducted its first official censuses with a focus on Italian residents at a relatively late stage, during the First World War. Consequently, definitive provincial distributions pertaining to the primary timeframe of this study can only be obtained from the official censuses conducted by the Ottoman government in 1915, 1916, and 1918. Given that these three censuses formed part of the “wartime redesign” process targeting Italians that commenced in 1911 and concluded in 1918, the contextual integrity of the study necessitated their coverage in the sixth chapter.

One of the most invaluable and rare works on Italian demography is Daniel J. Grange’s outstanding two-volume monograph, titled *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896-1911)*.¹⁶⁸ Grange provides an in-depth analysis of the political, military, naval, economic, religious, sociocultural, and demographic background of the Italian presence in the Mediterranean, based on a comprehensive archival and statistical investigation. The study’s most significant contribution is its analysis of Mediterranean Italians in terms of their demographic structure, population movements, commercial and professional activities, capital distribution, and religious/sectarian affiliations at the regional level and in the context of Italian colonial evolution. The data

¹⁶⁸ Daniel J. Grange, *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896-1911)*.

synthesized by Grange between 1891 and 1906 indicates that, in the early 1900s, the number of Italians residing in Ottoman Europe ranged between 18,000 and 20,000.¹⁶⁹ Of this total, 7,500 to 8,000 individuals were residing temporarily or permanently in the Balkan provinces and Crete. It is estimated that 12,000-14,000 Italians were resident in Istanbul. The first calculation and estimate of the Italian population in the Ottoman Empire as a whole was presented in 1902 by the Ambassador to Istanbul, Marchese Malaspina di Carbonara. He estimated the number of Italians residing in the Ottoman Empire at 25,000, with 15,150 in the European provinces, 9,000 in the Asian provinces, and 850 in the African provinces. This figure represented a stable population; however, in the 1890s, the number of Italians had increased to 35,000 due to the need for labor for the construction of the railways. A second, and considerably more accurate, report was produced in 1903 by Leopoldo Corinaldi, the embassy attaché in Istanbul. Based on consular records, it estimated the Italian population in the Empire to be an average of 30,000. The number of Italians residing in European Turkey ranged from 18,000 to 20,000. Of these, 20 percent were recent arrivals, while 80 percent had been resident for an extended period.

The largest concentration of Italian populations across the Mediterranean was in North Africa, where they established the second largest European colony in Egypt.¹⁷⁰ As evidenced by Grange's data, the population of the Italian colony in Egypt increased from just over 16,000 in 1881 to 45,000 in 1907, before declining to 35,000 in 1911. Conversely, Shlala's data range on the Italian population in Egypt covers a more extensive period and presents disparate figures.¹⁷¹ Shlala points out that according to censuses conducted in Egypt, there were 18,665 Italian inhabitants in 1881, rising to 24,454 in 1897, 34,926 in 1907, 40,198 in 1917 and finally 52,462 in 1927. Looking at the gradual change in these figures over a period of nearly 50 years, the fact that there was an increase of over 180 percent from 1881 to 1927 is truly remarkable. As illustrated by Shlala's data, the Italian community constituted the second largest Levantine group in Egypt, following the Greek community. The latter exhibited a notable growth, with its population nearly doubling from 37,301 in 1882 to 62,973 in 1907. The growth of Italian populations in French colonial possessions was even more noteworthy. In Tunisia, the Italian population exhibited a notable increase, rising from 7,000 in 1870 to 30,000 in 1890, 80,000 in 1903, and finally reaching 109,000 in 1911. In 1861, Algeria was home to an Italian population of approximately 11,000 individuals, comprising Piedmontese and Genoese, as well as Neapolitans, Tuscans, and Calabrians. The Italian population in Tunis, which had reached approximately 45,000 in 1886, experienced a decline to around 36,000 in 1896. After a period of fluctuation, it once again approached 37,000 in 1911. While the number of Italians in these French colonies was more than twice that of French settlers, Italians were almost absent from Libya, the only North African region in which they were not a significant presence. In Tripoli and Cyrenaica, the Italian population had increased from 620 in 1903 to 930 on the eve of the invasion in 1911, representing approximately one-fifth of the European colonial population of approximately 4,500. In the period following the Italo-Turkish War of 1911, the growing social antipathy and hostility towards Italians led many Italians to leave both Istanbul and other parts

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 472-473. For a province-based breakdown of the Italian population in the Ottoman Balkans, see the *Tableau 87: Les colonies italiennes dans les Balkans ottomans* in the same source.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 508-510, 536-538, 541-542.

¹⁷¹ Shlala, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt*, 5, 8.

of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷² They subsequently emigrated to relatively nearby regions such as Egypt.

The most detailed, reliable and authoritative source on the Italian population in the Ottoman Empire is the demographic report entitled *Censimento degli italiani all'estero* (Census of Italians Abroad) published by the General Statistics Office of the Kingdom of Italy.¹⁷³ During the course of my research, unfortunately I was unable to find a more recent edition of the publication. Therefore, I referred to the 1874 edition, which includes the December 1871 census results. Despite the fact that it presents relatively historical numerical data, this census report can be regarded as the most insightful and inspiring demographic observation regarding the Italian population in the Ottoman Empire. This official publication is notable for its extensive and precise character, offering a comprehensive numerical distribution of the Italian population residing worldwide, categorized by empire or country. The publication, which is based on consular data, goes beyond this, and even provides subdivisional breakdowns of the Italian populations within the foreign countries. The source discloses the origins of these populations by province and even city within the Kingdom of Italy, in addition to their demographic specifications such as gender, age, education, place of birth, religion, and language, as well as their occupational composition.

While the source contains highly detailed analyses of the provincial distribution of the Italian population in the Ottoman Empire, the central and subdivisional Italian populations of Ottoman cities are also presented separately. For instance, the censuses of vice-consuls and consular agents operating within the primary consular jurisdictions of major cities such as Istanbul, Alexandria, Tunis, and Cairo have been systematically categorized. However, given that the inclusion of all this data would result in the inclusion of too many tables and take up a large amount of space in the study, it has been filtered, tabulated and interpreted in such a way as to obtain more overall data. In light of these synthesized tables, the demographic profiles of Italian nationals in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century will be briefly analyzed.

¹⁷² One such individual was Salvatore Passaro, a musician born in Istanbul in 1907 who subsequently emigrated to Alexandria with his family in 1912. His father, born in Naples in 1868, would provide financial support for the family by offering violin lessons in Alexandria and Mansoura. Salvatore, who would become one of the most accomplished musicians in Egypt, would initially perform in nightclubs in Suez and subsequently in Cairo during the 1930s. Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 120-121.

¹⁷³ Statistica generale del Regno D'Italia, *Censimento degli italiani all'estero*.

State	Consulates or other subdivisions	Figures provided by the consular census
Ottoman Empire	Direct dominions of the Sublime Porte	10,908
	Egypt-Alexandria	7,312
	id. - Cairo	3,367
	Tunis	5,889
	Romania (Moldavia and Wallachia)	830
	Serbia	45
	Total	28,351

Table 1: Number of Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire's direct and indirect dominions as of December 1871.¹⁷⁴

It is evident that as recently as 1871, Egypt, Tunisia, Romania (Moldavia and Wallachia) and Serbia were still subject to the authority of the Ottoman Empire as vassal states or autonomous principalities, thereby signifying the considerable geographical scope of the census during this period. The Italian population, numbering 28,351 across the empire, was distributed across a vast geography encompassing Europe, Anatolia, North Africa, and the Middle East. As demonstrated in the second table below, the cities with the highest Italian populations were Alexandria with 7,312, Tunis with 5,889, Istanbul with 4,733, Cairo with 3,367, Izmir with 2,899, and Salonika with 1,336. While the figures for Alexandria, Tunis and Cairo demonstrate the remarkable concentration of the Italian population in North African provinces, the density in Istanbul, Izmir and Salonika reflects the cosmopolitan nature of the empire's three most prominent port cities.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., LXVI-LXVII.

Consulate	Population
Alexandria	7,312
Tunis	5,889
Istanbul	4,733
Cairo	3,367
Izmir	2,899
Salonika	1,336
Beirut	465
Galatz	458
Tripoli	396
Bucharest	372
Aleppo	272
Chania	259
Cyprus	139
Ruse	128
Ioannina	97
Shkodra/Scutari of Albania	95
Damascus	62
Belgrade	45
Sarajevo	27
Total	28,351

Table 2: Consular censuses conducted for Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.¹⁷⁵

With regard to demographic profiles, the male population of 17,544 constitutes 62 percent of the total Italian population in the Ottoman Empire, while the female population of 10,807 constitutes 38 percent. The 24,179 individuals over the age of seven constituted 85.3 percent of the total population, while the 4,170 individuals under the age of seven constituted 14.7 percent. While the 17,085 individuals, representing the 60.2 percent of the surveyed population, demonstrated proficiency in both reading and writing or, at least, reading, the 11,187 individuals, constituting the remaining 39.5 percent, lacked literacy skills in any capacity. The analysis revealed that 13,897 individuals, constituting 49 percent of the surveyed population, were born in the Kingdom of Italy, while 11,219 individuals, constituting 39.6 percent of the surveyed population, were born outside the Kingdom of Italy. The Catholic community, numbering 21,100 individuals, constitutes 74.4 percent of the total population, while the Jewish community, numbering 5,477 individuals, constitutes 19.3 percent. The remaining 6.3 percent of the population adhere to other faiths and denominations. With regard to the languages spoken, Italian is the most prevalent, with 22,173 speakers constituting 78.2 percent of the population. Greek is the second most common, spoken by 2,558 individuals, making up 9 percent of the total. Arabic is the third most spoken language, with 1,954 speakers, accounting for 6.9 percent of the population. The remaining 5.9 percent of the population

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., XLVIII-L, 48,74, 110-111.

speak other languages, with 989 individuals (3.5 percent) speaking languages other than Spanish, French, Illyrian, German and English.

Demographic Profile		Figure	Total
Gender	Male	17,544	28,351
	Female	10,807	
Age	Under seven years	4,170	
	Above seven years	24,179	
	Unspecified	2	
Education	Can write or at least read	17,085	
	Illiterate children	3,374	
	Illiterate adults	5,210	
	Total illiteracy	11,187	
	Unspecified	79	
Origin	Born in Italy	13,897	
	Born abroad	11,219	
	Unspecified	3,235	
Religion	Catholic	21,100	
	Jewish	5,477	
	Evangelical, Lutheran, Protestant	92	
	Greek Orthodox	835	
	Muslim	17	
	Rationalist	43	
	Unspecified	787	
Language	Italian	22,173	
	French	134	
	English	6	
	Spanish	386	
	Greek	2,558	
	German	18	
	Arabic	1,954	
	Illyrian	38	
	Other	989	
	Unspecified	95	

Table 3: Demographic Profiles of Italian Residents in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 74-75. *Tavola I: Classificazione dei sudditi italiani all'estero per sesso, età, istruzione, luogo di origine, religione e lingua parlata famigliarmente.*

Consulate	Piemonte	Liguria	Lombardia	Veneto	Northern Italy Total
Izmir	77	1,031	104	152	1,364
Alexandria	410	98	306	273	1,087
Istanbul	175	188	248	160	771
Cairo	336	56	223	108	723
Salonika	86	24	206	168	484
Tunis	110	247	62	15	434
Galatz	22	98	33	70	223
Bucharest	19	8	63	95	185
Aleppo	18	16	3	25	62
Beirut	24	15	13	6	58
Belgrade	5	-	-	36	41
Ruse	7	20	4	8	39
Tripoli	2	28	1	-	31
Chania	1	14	1	6	22
Shkodra/Scutari	3	2	5	8	18
Sarajevo	5	-	1	12	18
Cyprus	2	-	1	7	10
Damascus	7	-	-	2	9
Ioannina	7	-	-	1	8
Total	1,316	1,845	1,274	1,152	5,587

Table 4: Distribution of Northern Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.¹⁷⁷

The publication, which also explores the origins of this particular population according to provinces within the Kingdom of Italy, further divides the Italian realm into four distinct regions: Northern and Central Italy, Neapolitan Italy, and Insular Italy. The consular reports, extending to a total of 13 autonomous provinces, one consolidated province (Abruzzi and Molise) and two provisional administrations (Lazio and Umbria), did not conclude there, but also furnished the cities affiliated with the provinces and the city-based origins of the pertinent populations. However, in order to avoid any potential confusion and to reduce the volume of data, Neapolitan and Insular Italy have been combined here and tabulated as Southern Italy. Furthermore, city-based breakdowns have been omitted, with the data presented only in terms of provincial distribution. A cursory glance at the cities predominantly inhabited by Northern Italians is sufficient to discern that Izmir has the highest population, with 1,364 inhabitants, followed by Alexandria with 1,087, and Istanbul with 771. It is particularly noteworthy that the majority of the 1,031 Ligurian population in Izmir consists of 1,019 Genoese. The demographic composition of Northern Italians in Alexandria was as follows: 410 Piedmontese, including 174 from Turin and 111 from Alessandria; 306 Lombards, including 128 from Milan and 62 from

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 108-109. *Tavola II: Classificazione dei sudditi italiani all'estero per provincie e per compartimenti di origine.*

Como; and 273 Venetians, including 147 from Venice. Among the 771 Northern Italians residing in Istanbul, the following provinces are notable: Lombardy (248 inhabitants), including 86 from Como and 78 from Milan; Liguria (188), including 183 from Genoa; Piedmont (175), including 71 from Novara and 61 from Turin; and Veneto (160), including 78 from Venice. A substantial proportion of the Northern Italian community in Cairo is comprised of Piedmontese individuals, with 336 out of a total of 723 Northern Italians belonging to this region. Among these Piedmontese individuals, 143 hail from Turin, while 94 originate from Cuneo. Of the 223 Lombards residing in Cairo, 113 are from Milan, and of the 206 Lombards residing in Salonika, 132 are from Como.

Consulate	Emilia	Toscana	Marche	Umbria	Lazio	Central Italy Total
Alexandria	260	1,805	252	11	100	2,428
Tunis	17	1,245	2	3	37	1,304
Cairo	188	449	102	5	50	794
Izmir	39	532	58	-	47	676
Istanbul	110	193	100	6	62	471
Galatz	35	58	36	2	6	137
Salonika	60	37	21	-	9	127
Aleppo	4	115	4	-	4	127
Tripoli	-	118	-	-	-	118
Bucharest	53	21	11	3	10	98
Beirut	4	35	3	-	10	52
Shkodra/Scutari	5	12	8	2	9	36
Damascus	1	24	1	1	1	28
Ruse	5	7	3	-	6	21
Chania	5	8	1	-	1	15
Ioannina	14	-	1	-	-	15
Sarajevo	4	2	1	-	-	7
Cyprus	-	-	1	-	-	1
Belgrade	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	805	4,661	605	33	352	6,456

Table 5: Distribution of Central Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.¹⁷⁸

A closer look at the situation of the Central Italians within the Ottoman territories reveals the marked predominance of the Livornese from the province of Tuscany. Of the 1,805 Tuscans residing in Alexandria, 1,105 were of Livorno origin, as were 1,104 of the 1,245 Tuscan inhabitants of Tunis, 406 of the 532 in Izmir, 211 of the 449 in Cairo, and 131 of the 193 in Istanbul also hailed from Livorno. Of the 127 Central Italians residing in Aleppo, 113 originated from Livorno, as did 109 of the 118 Central Italians in Tripoli. Beyond these figures, it is also

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 109-110.

noteworthy to mention the 252 Marche natives, including 183 from Ancona, and the 260 Emilia natives, including 64 from Bologna, in Alexandria. Of the 110 Emilian Italians residing in Istanbul, 43 are from Bologna, while 64 of the 100 Marchese Italians are from Ancona. The majority of the 127 Central Italians in Salonika is comprised of 60 Emilians, 41 of whom hail from Bologna, and 37 Tuscans, 32 of whom are from Livorno.

Consulate	Abruzzi Molise	Campania	Puglie	Basilicata	Calabrie	Sicilia	Sardegna	South. Italy Total
Tunis	13	321	12	4	26	3,141	314	3,831
Alexandria	21	466	317	36	181	859	30	1,910
Izmir	3	138	376	31	4	216	11	779
Istanbul	11	196	45	24	35	438	3	752
Cairo	11	159	172	22	85	143	2	594
Salonika	4	75	25	52	3	54	5	218
Tripoli	-	38	-	1	9	120	6	174
Chania	1	-	149	1	-	11	1	163
Galatz	1	52	5	1	1	21	-	81
Ioannina	-	4	39	-	-	3	-	46
Bucharest	2	18	11	6	-	4	-	41
Beirut	3	5	8	4	1	9	2	32
Shkodra/Scutari	2	3	9	2	-	5	-	21
Aleppo	1	8	-	-	3	5	-	17
Cyprus	-	2	10	-	-	5	-	17
Ruse	-	3	-	2	1	3	3	12
Damascus	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Belgrade	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sarajevo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	73	1,488	1,179	186	349	5,039	377	8,691

Table 6: Distribution of Southern Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire by province of origin as of December 1871.¹⁷⁹

Across the empire, the Southern Italians constituted the largest population, with 8,691 individuals. It is noteworthy that of the 3,831 Southern Italians residing in Tunisia, 3,141 are of Sicilian origin (2,608 of whom hail from Trapani) and 321 are of Campanian origin (318 of whom are from Naples). A similar situation was observed in Alexandria, where of the 1,910 Southern Italians residing there, 859 were identified as Sicilians (519 originating from Messina) and 466 as Campanians (350 hailing from Naples). A significant proportion of the 779 Southern Italians residing in Izmir are Pugliesi, with 376 being from Terra di Bari. Of the 752 Southern Italians residing in Istanbul, the majority hailed from Sicily with 438 individuals, notably 297 of whom were from Messina. The only region from which a notably greater number of

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 110-111.

Sardinians were recorded was Tunisia, with 312 individuals from Cagliari and 2 from Sassari. The 594 Southern Italians residing in Cairo are predominantly comprised of 172 individuals hailing from Puglia (164 from Terra di Bari), 159 from Campania (122 from Naples), and 143 from Sicily (84 from Messina and 37 from Catania). The aggregate population of Northern, Central, and Southern Italy, as enumerated in the tables, is 20,734 individuals. However, when 7,617 unspecified individuals are incorporated, the total census result ascends to 28,351. As demonstrated by the available data, as of 1871, the Italian populations across the Ottoman Empire were predominantly Sicilian, with 5,039 individuals, followed by those from Tuscany (4,661), Liguria (1,845), Campania (1,488), Piedmont (1,274), Lombardy (1,179), and Veneto (1,152). With regard to the city-based origins of the individuals in question, the ranking is as follows: Livorno in Tuscany (3,294), Trapani in Sicily (3,275), Genoa in Liguria (1,809), Messina in Sicily (1,295), Naples in Campania (1,184), Terra di Bari in Puglia (1,065), Turin in Piedmont (599), Venice in Veneto (508), and Milan in Lombardy (492).

The final section of the report presents a table classifying 14,014 of the 28,351 Italian nationals in the Ottoman Empire according to their occupational groups. While a total of 237 occupational categories has been identified for the Italian populace as a worldwide entity, it is evident that Italians residing within the Ottoman Empire were engaged in a total of 169 occupations. Notwithstanding the additional classification system that has been implemented in the list, which differentiates according to the Consulates of Istanbul, Alessandria, Cairo, and Tunis, the data presented herein exclusively encompasses the empire in its entirety. Despite the table's alphabetical arrangement according to Italian occupational names, a reordering has been implemented based on the number of individuals representing each occupational category. The list is particularly remarkable for the diversity of crafts, occupations, and trades it documents, and for the extent to which it reflects this richness in its details. For instance, distinctions have been observed even between different occupational branches within similar sectors, such as ship builders (*costruttori navali*) and ship owners (*armatori*), bookbinders (*legatori libri*) and booksellers (*librai*), gardeners (*giardinieri*) and market gardeners (*ortolani*), or tinnerns (*stagnai*) and tinsmiths (*lattonieri*). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that distinctive and marginal profiles, such as beggars (*mendicanti*), prostitutes (*meretrici*), wet nurses (*nutrici*), and monkey trainers (*ammaestrice di scimmie*), are also classified as professions. As illustrated in the table, the five most prominent occupational categories are merchants (*commercianti*) with 1,543 individuals, students (*studenti*) with 1,374 individuals, sailors (*marinai*) with 967 individuals, bricklayers (*muratori*) with 694 individuals, and employees (*impiegati*) with 658 individuals. However, it is regrettable that the age profiles, school categories, or academic disciplines of a broad group such as students, and similarly the sectoral breakdowns of employees, are not provided. The second five most popular occupations are shop assistants (*commessi negozianti*) with 593 people, tailors (*sarti*) with 558 people, day laborers (*giornalieri*) with 395 people, shoemakers (*calzolai*) with 353 people, and brokers (*sensali*) with 300 people. Given the absence of specification regarding the domains of activity in which the brokers operate, it remains unfeasible to ascertain how many brokers are engaged in various sectors, including but not limited to general trade, agriculture, livestock, transport, and real estate.

Profession	Number	Profession	Number
Merchants	1,543	Pasta Makers	63
Students	1,374	Teachers	61
Sailors	967	Consular Agents	60
Bricklayers	694	Industrialists	60
Employees	658	Lawyers And Legislators	59
Shop Assistants	593	Carpenters	59
Tailors	558	Millers	59
Day Laborers	395	Interpreters	57
Shoemakers	353	Confectioners and Pastry Chefs	54
Brokers	300	Entrepreneurs	53
Religious Personnel And Priests	281	Stone Carvers	53
Theater Artists	262	Coffee Sellers	52
Property Owners	254	Laundrymen	51
Miners	252	Professors	46
Waiters	238	Watchmakers	44
Blacksmiths	227	Potters	43
Fishermen	206	Ship Builders	42
Doctors And Surgeons	182	Firemen (Stokers)	40
Musicians	164	Various Agents	37
Exchange Agents	143	Public Scribes	37
Servants	141	Tinners	37
Painters	140	Saddlers	35
Cooks And Pantrymen	134	Linen Weavers	34
Hoteliers and Innkeepers	125	Ship Owners	32
Cabinetmakers	119	Sea Captains	32
Seamstresses	115	Warehousemen	31
Pharmacists	113	Butchers	29
Peasants	112	Stone Cutters	28
Engineers	108	Basket Makers	27
Goldsmiths	102	Sculptors	27
Laborers	100	Milliners	26
Hairdressers And Barbers	85	Traveling / Street Musicians	26
Music Teachers	85	Carriage Makers	25
Bankers	83	Farmers	23
Gardeners	82	Caulkers	23
Upholsterers	82	Delicatessen Sellers	23
Mechanics	80	Gunsmiths	21
Ironers	80	Gilders	21
Bakers	79	Printers	19
Coachmen	77	Typographers	19
Municipal Guards	70	Boiler Makers	18
Philharmonic Musicians	68	Traveling Salesmen	18
Machinists	63	Brewers	17

Profession	Number	Profession	Number
Designers	17	Farriers	4
Tutors	17	Cereal Measurers And Weighers	4
Hat Makers	15	Wet Nurses	4
Figurine Makers And Modelers	15	Brass Workers	4
Photographers	15	Peddlers	4
Varnishers	15	Theatrical Agents	3
Horse Trainers And Breakers	14	Antique Dealers	3
Road Workers And Pavers	14	Florists	3
Carters	13	Fencing Masters	3
Midwives	13	Umbrella Makers	3
Marble Workers	13	Coppersmiths	3
Prostitutes	13	Embroiderers	3
Grocers	12	Street Performers	3
Tinsmiths	12	Stucco Workers	3
Dyers	12	Tobacconists	3
Cashiers	11	Veterinarians	3
Dentists	11	Travelers	3
Brick Makers	11	Piano Tuners	2
Foundry Workers	10	Governesses	2
Liquor Makers	10	Monkey Trainers	2
Lithographers	10	Artists	2
Military (Officers And Soldiers)	10	Trunk Makers	2
Decorators	9	Wagon Makers	2
Bookbinders	9	Ropemakers	2
Wood Carvers	8	Distillers	2
Market Gardeners	8	Iron Bed Makers	2
Botanists	7	House Painters	2
Charcoal Burners	7	Theater Managers	2
Porters	7	Nurses	2
Journalists	7	Mattress and Straw Mattress Makers	2
Beggars	7	Mosaicists	2
Engravers	6	Cigar Makers	2
Stablemen	6	Commission Agents	1
Grinders	5	Soda Makers	1
Boatmen And Rowers	5	Chair Stuffers	1
Coopers	5	General Merchants	1
Tanners	5	Pyrotechnicians	1
Junk Dealers	5	Receivers	1
Chair Makers	5	Sawyers	1
Weavers	5	Ushers	1
Turners	5		
Greengrocers	4		
Booksellers	4	Total	14,014

Table 7: The occupational composition of Italian nationals in the Ottoman Empire as of December 1871.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 118-125. *Tavola III: Classificazione dei sudditi italiani all'estero per professione.*

2.2. “Italian Jew” as a Hybrid Identity Oscillating Between Confessional and Imperial Affiliations Since the Fifteenth Century

First of all, it should be noted that the term “Italian Jew” may appear problematic at first glance in the context of this study. This is because not all Italian Jews residing in Ottoman territories were actually of Italian descent or origin. This is due to the fact that a significant proportion of these individuals were Iberian Jews who had voluntarily or involuntarily migrated to the Italian Peninsula or Sicily, their first stop before seeking refuge in the Ottoman regime. However, Asher Salah’s findings provide a more crystallized, insightful, and inclusive conceptualization at this point.¹⁸¹ Salah emphasizes that the formation of a distinctive Italian Jewish identity at the end of the sixteenth century marked a pivotal moment for the Jewish community in Italy. At the same time, he emphasizes that this identity was not based on an essentialist categorization, meaning that not all Jews who identified as Italian were actually of Italian descent. In essence, Salah’s vision encompasses an Italian Jew who transcends ethnic, geographical, and congregational affiliations. He draws parallels here with the fact that not all Sephardic Jews necessarily hail from the Iberian Peninsula, and that not all Ashkenazi Jews come from Central and Eastern Europe. He even provides some examples to demonstrate the potential pitfalls of making communal or congregational distinctions based on surnames, highlighting the potential for such practices to be both unhealthily divisive and misleading. To clarify, having a German surname does not necessarily indicate that an individual is part of the Ashkenazi community, just as having a Spanish surname does not necessarily imply Sephardic heritage. For instance, although the surname Luzzatto is most likely of German origin, deriving from the Lausitz region, and there is an Ashkenazi synagogue named Luzzatto in Venice, a significant proportion of Venetian *Luzzatti* were members of the Italian community. According to Salah, the surnames borne by Jews do not represent a linear connection that would enable ethnic and national identification based on their countries of origin and the communities with which they are affiliated. Rather, they are indicative of an intertwined situation. Consequently, Salah posits that the decision to self-identify as Italian, Spanish, or Ashkenazi was driven by political motivations, including the desire for recognition by Christian authorities and the attainment of social influence.

Furthermore, Salah examines the formation of Christian and Jewish rituals and identities based on a common “Italian” characterization through a comparative analysis.¹⁸² The formation of an identity that could be termed “Italian-Christian” can be traced back to the Risorgimento period,

¹⁸¹ Asher Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian’ in early modern Hebrew sources,” in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 57-59. The most recent and comprehensive study on the historical background of Italian Jews in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period is undoubtedly the edited volume by Borýsek and Liberatoscioli. Enriched by contributions from scholars representing a wide range of perspectives, the work presents a substantial panorama of all Jewish demographic movements, both incoming and outgoing, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, covering both the city-states of the Italian peninsula and the southern kingdoms. The volume also serves as an extensive compendium of conceptualizations, discourses, and theological, literary, and artistic symbolism of Italian Judaism in different periods and sources. For instance, Salah’s chapter comprises highly original contributions, including the symbolic importance of Italian geography in Jewish theology and literature, and the rabbinic connections between Rome and Constantinople, known as the “New Rome.” Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian,’” 46.

¹⁸² Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian,’” 57-59.

a time when the majority of Christian individuals still identified themselves as Florentine, Venetian, or Milanese rather than Italian. Alternatively, the Italian community's emergence within the context of Jewish history occurred at a considerably later juncture than the formation of groups such as the Sephardim and Ashkenazim, which transpired during the ninth and eleventh centuries. Nevertheless, a transnational comparison independent of temporal and spatial constraints points to a semantic shift in the term "Italian" from a Jewish perspective. This is attributable to the fact that the formation of a transnational Italian identity among Jews preceded that of their Christian neighbors by a minimum of a century. According to Salah, the term "Italian" had already shifted from a geographical origin marker to a cultural and ethnic identity marker for Jews long before the Risorgimento. This suggests the possible emergence of a transnational Italian community possessing its own political and religious institutions long before the peninsular consolidation. Additionally, Salah rejects stereotypical approaches, generalizations and preconceptions that fail to acknowledge the diversity of Jewish groups within Italy and assume that Italian Judaism is part of the Sephardic world. A recent approach characterizes the Sephardim as a loose aggregation of disparate ethnicities and nationalities, subdividing this structure into two subgroups: Western and Eastern. The latter incorporates Italian Jews, who are also designated as *Italkim* or *Italkian*. However, Salah contests this assertion, proposing that Italian Judaism, as of the eighteenth century, evolved as a nexus or a median ground between the Ashkenazi and Sephardic worlds. At this juncture, a quote from Rabbi Moses David Valle of Padua is particularly illuminating:

“If the Ashkenazi is a synthetic mind and the Sephardi is analytic, the Italian Jew is a mixture of both.”



Map 1: The map illustrating the geographical distribution of the Jewish population and their movements across the Italian peninsula circa 1730.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Michaël Gasperoni, "Inheritance and Wealth Among Jewish Women in the Ghettos of North-central Italy (17th-18th Centuries)," *Mélanges De L'École Française De Rome. Moyen Âge* 130, no. 1 (January 12, 2018): 183-97, <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.4060>.

The distribution and transformation of the Jewish population in Italy is a highly complex issue that can be approached from several angles. However, when considered in general terms, they can be divided into the major categories outlined below:¹⁸⁴

Italkim/Italkian Jews: Local Italian Jews who have lived throughout the Italian peninsula since ancient times, are not considered to be of Sephardic or Ashkenazi origin and have their own unique traditions.¹⁸⁵

Roman Jews (Hebrei Romani): Jews who lived alongside Christians in Rome and its surroundings for over two thousand years.¹⁸⁶ This community, which spoke a distinct dialect known as *giudeo-romanesco* (Judeo-Roman), is considered the most established subgroup of the *Italkim* Jews.

Sephardic Jews: Jews who began to emigrate from the Iberian Peninsula in the 1300s due to rising anti-Semitism and settled in Southern Italy (*Mezzogiorno*), including Sicily, Sardinia, and the Kingdom of Naples. Over time, they assimilated the characteristics and culture of the local *Italkim* communities.

Ashkenazi Jews: Jews who came from Central European countries such as Germany, Austria, and Slovenia in the second half of the fourteenth century and settled in northern Italian cities such as Trieste, Treviso, Cividale del Friuli, and Cremona.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ In addition, there were some more specific communities that did not belong to any of the aforementioned categories. These communities were unique to a limited geographical area. For instance, the *APpaM* community, comprising French Jews of *Provençal* origin who settled in the towns of Asti, Fossano and Moncalvo in Piedmont following the French expulsions of 1182, 1306 and 1394, is a notable example. The acronym *APpaM* stands for the Hebrew initials of the three Piedmontese cities of Asti, Fossano and Moncalvo, representing the provincial Judeo-Piedmontese dialect and ritual specific to local Jews. Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian,’” 56-57; Pierre Savy, “Responses to Jewish diversity of origins among Italian princes (1450–1550),” in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 109; Musée D’Art Et D’Histoire Du Judaïsme, “2. Jews in France in the Middle Ages,” *Musée D’Art Et D’Histoire Du Judaïsme*, last modified August 11, 2025, accessed April 18, 2024, <https://www.mahj.org/en/permanent-collection/2-jews-france-middle-ages>; “The *APpaM* Dialect: The Hebrew-Piedmontese dialect and the ‘*APpaM*’ prayer,” *Musei E Comunità Ebraica Di Casale Monferrato*, last modified November 29, 2023, accessed April 18, 2024, <https://www.casalebraica.org/en/jewish-monferrato/appam-dialect>.

¹⁸⁵ Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian,’” 43-59; Alessandra Veronese, “Italian Jews encountering Ashkenazi Jews in northern Italy during the late Middle Ages (late fourteenth and fifteenth century),” in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 29; Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, “Introduction,” in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 2. For a comprehensive overview of the social and cultural foundations of the *Italkim* Jews, along with an analysis of their migratory patterns to the Holy Land during the 1940s, please refer to the following source: Marcella Simoni, “Young Italian Jews in Israel, and Back: Voices from a Generation (1945–1953),” in *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: Bridging Europe and the Mediterranean*, eds. Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti and Guri Schwarz (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 178-199.

¹⁸⁶ Alice Grazzini, “Italian Jewry in the ‘Theater of languages’. Sephardic and Italian Jews in a Roman *giudiata*,” in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 124, 127, 129; Pierre Savy, “Responses to Jewish diversity,” 114.

¹⁸⁷ Veronese, “Italian Jews encountering Ashkenazi Jews,” 27-30.

Although precise figures are not available, it is possible to state that Jews residing in Italian territory mainly migrated to the Ottoman Empire during the following periods of expulsion:¹⁸⁸

- Expulsion from Sicily and Sardinia in 1493
- Expulsion from the Kingdom of Naples in 1541
- Expulsion from the Papal States in 1593

It is evident that the gradual strengthening of the influence of the Spanish-origin Aragonese Kingdom, which successfully conquered Sicily in 1282, Sardinia in 1324, and finally the Kingdom of Naples in 1442, had a detrimental effect on the Jewish population.¹⁸⁹ During the late fifteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries, the attitude of the Kings of Naples towards the Jewish presence underwent a shift under the rule of the Aragonese Crown, from pragmatic acceptance to marginalization. Following the arrival of the Spanish Inquisition in the region in 1493, all Jews in Southern Italy were compelled to choose between conversion to Catholicism and exile. The vast majority of Jews opted for the latter option. The demographic of the group under discussion included both native Jews who had been settled in the region for millennia and later arrivals, such as Sephardic Jews from Iberia. In 1493, the expulsion of all unconverted Jews from Sicily and Sardinia marked a significant turning point in the history of the region. This was followed by the expulsion of Jews from the entire Kingdom of Naples, primarily from Calabria and Puglia, in 1510 and 1541, based on a decree issued by King Federico in 1496. A significant proportion of these Jews migrated to Ottoman cities such as Salonika and Istanbul, while others sought refuge in the Papal States to the north. Following the accession of Pope Paulus IV in 1555, those residing under Papal rule faced persecutions of a similar nature. This period was characterized by the actions of Paulus IV, who was known for his intolerance of the Jewish population. The persecution of Jews became systematic with the issuance of the *Cum nimis absurdum* bull in 1555, and ghettos were established. Following the issuance of the *Caeca*

¹⁸⁸ It is important to note that independent expulsions of Jews from various Italian cities also occurred at different times. Examples of this phenomenon include the expulsions from Vicenza in 1486, Bologna in 1565, and the Duchy of Milan in 1596-97. It is conceivable that individual or collective migrations to the Ottoman Empire may also have occurred from these locations. However, as might be expected, the focus of this study is on expulsions that were significant in terms of mass scale and importance as a destination for the Ottoman Empire. For further information regarding independent expulsions based on cities, please refer to the following sources: Borýsek and Liberatoscioli, "Introduction," 6; Serena Di Nepi, "Others within others. On scale and diversity in the ghetto of Rome (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)," in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 204; Joseph A. Skloot, "Silkworms and bookworms: the partners of Bologna and their boundary-crossing Jewish library," in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 102; Rachele Scuro, "Building the ghetto: the many facets of Venetian Jewry in the sixteenth century," in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 247.

¹⁸⁹ David Abulafia, "What happened to the Jews of southern Italy?" in *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, eds. Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 181-184; Cesare Colafemmina, *The Jews in Calabria* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 63; Borýsek and Liberatoscioli, "Introduction," 5-6, 15, 18; Marina Caffiero, *The History of the Jews in Early Modern Italy: From the Renaissance to the Restoration* (New York: Routledge, 2022), 20, 22, 86, 103; Serena Di Nepi, *Surviving the Ghetto: Toward a Social History of the Jewish Community in 16th-Century Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 3, 53, 60, 82, 85.

et obdurata bull by Pope Clement VIII in 1593, Jews were formally expelled from all cities except Rome, Ancona, and Avignon, which were still hosting ghettos.

2.2.1. Emergence of Italo-Jewish Networks in Ottoman Geography

Prior to an examination of the facts of "instrumental" and "defensive naturalization" in the context of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there is value in providing a historical background on the emergence of Italian Jewish communities in the Ottoman domains, as this will serve to support the narrative. The widely acclaimed Jewish historian Minna Rozen has noted the presence of a small congregation of Italian Jews in Istanbul as early as 1490, highlighting their connections to Joseph Colon Trabotto*, the internationally renowned rabbi of Pavia.¹⁹⁰ One of the earliest and most prominent Jewish figures of Italian origin in Istanbul was Jacobo Gaeta, who served as court physician under the name *Hekim Yakub*. Gaeta served as both the personal physician and confidant to Sultan Murad II and subsequently to his son and successor, Mehmed the Conqueror, until 1481. Furthermore, there were those who voluntarily and individually migrated and settled in the conquered Ottoman territories from Sicily, Calabria, and especially Messina before the expulsions. Although it is acknowledged that there were Jews of Italian origin in fifteenth-century Istanbul, Ottoman records do not contain any evidence of a community existing prior to the Iberian expulsion. Consequently, it would be more precise to assert that a tangible Italian-origin Jewish presence in Istanbul first emerged in the 1490s as a consequence of expulsions that initiated in specific locations across Europe, predominantly the Iberian Peninsula. Following their expulsion from Spain in 1492, a significant number of Sephardic Jews sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire, while 120,000 crossed the border and settled in Portugal. Rather than converting to Christianity, they opted to leave Spain, thereby abandoning their property and possessions. While some of this initial wave of exiles arrived in Istanbul by the close of that summer, others initially established temporary settlements in Italy and North Africa before ultimately reaching the city. Regrettably, a significant proportion of these Jews were subjected to theft, enslavement, sale into bondage, and even rape at the hands of pirates during their travels. Furthermore, in 1497, Portugal subjected its Jewish population to forced conversion without offering them the option to emigrate. This led to a mass exodus of the 120,000 Jews residing in Portugal, who fled to the Ottoman territories, following in the footsteps of their ancestors. Consequently, a second wave of Jewish emigration from the Iberian Peninsula successfully reached and sought refuge under the Ottoman regime. Concurrently,

¹⁹⁰ Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 31, 46-48, 71, 78; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 30, 47-48, 71-72, 392, 401. Rozen's 2002 volume is unquestionably among the most exhaustive and extensively cited works on Jewish communities in the Ottoman lands. The volume focuses on the arrival of Jews from various parts of the world, particularly the Iberian Peninsula, in Istanbul, their religious, cultural, and social origins, and their attempts to create an Istanbulite Jewish community and shared identity. Furthermore, the text delves into the circumstances that led to the exodus of Jewish communities from different geographies and their search for refuge in the Ottoman regime. The book thus provides valuable insights into the integration of Jewish communities into Ottoman society and their impact on commercial and property relations within the Ottoman realm.

* Joseph Colon ben Solomon Trabotto (1420-1480): Regarded as one of the most prominent Jewish scholars of Italy and the foremost Talmudist of his era, he was also known as *Maharik* and was considered to be one of the most distinguished rabbis of the fifteenth century. In this capacity, he was highly regarded for his "rulings" (*responsa*) on both religious and civil matters, which were sought after in German cities such as Ulm and Nuremberg, as well as in Istanbul. For a more detailed analysis, please refer to the following source: Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 463.

expulsions occurred from Sicily and Sardinia in 1493 and from the Kingdom of Naples in 1510 and 1541, with the majority being relocated to Istanbul where they established their own Italian synagogues and communities. Rosen also makes reference to the existence of a congregational affiliation known as *Talia*, which is believed to have been associated with Italian Jews in Istanbul, even during such an early period.

However, not all of the exiles who travelled from southern Italy to the Ottoman Empire were as fortunate as those in Istanbul when it came to establishing their own communities, building temples, or practicing their rituals.¹⁹¹ The majority of these Jews, who were invited and welcomed by the Sultan, assimilated into the *Ladino* (Judeo-Spanish) speaking world of the Eastern Mediterranean Sephardim. In certain Ottoman domains located distant from Istanbul, such as Safed (presently within the borders of Israel) and Corfu (presently within the borders of Greece), multi-ethnic Jewish communities were predominant. To illustrate this point, it is noteworthy that in the sixteenth century, a small proportion of the 12 Jewish communities in Safed were comprised of immigrants from Puglia and Calabria. In such urban areas, where Italian Jews did not possess temples to conduct their own ritual practices, they predominantly assimilated into Sephardic or, less frequently, Romaniote communities, yet remained distanced from Ashkenazim. A similar process of assimilation from religion to culture was also evident among Sicilian Jews, whose origins were rooted in various regions of the Mediterranean. The Sicilian Jews, who were comparatively few in number in relation to the Sephardic communities that were subject to Ottoman rule, underwent rapid assimilation, resulting in the loss of their distinctive traditions and customs. Nevertheless, the existence of synagogues bearing the names *Otranto*, *Puglia*, and *Calabria* in Salonika demonstrates the determined efforts of Jews from southern Italy to preserve their cultural heritage.

Following their expulsion, the Iberian Jews dispersed to various locations, establishing both a Mediterranean Jewish community and an international trade network through their kinship and commercial connections.¹⁹² Their settlement within the Ottoman domain and subsequent integration into a prominent segment of the merchant class resulted in a substantial growth in Istanbul's commercial volume. Following their naturalization as Ottoman subjects, they commenced commercial activities with the Italian peninsula, enjoying certain privileges, such as tax exemptions. Moreover, the Ottoman Jews' privileged access to the Italian market, ensuring an uninterrupted supply of goods, resulted in heightened competition among Italian ports such as Ancona and Venice. In 1534, the Papal State of Ancona granted commercial rights to Levantine merchants in an attempt to divert trade between Italy and the Ottoman Empire to its own territory. In 1541, the Venetian Senate extended an inaugural welcome to Levantine Jews (*Ebrei Levantini*), who were engaged in purely commercial activities, and granted them the right of residence in the newly established quarter of the city's ghetto (*Ghetto vecchio*). For the majority of the sixteenth century, the Italian term *Levantini* (Easterners) was typically used to refer to a sub-branch of the Sephardic diaspora in almost all port cities, including Ferrara, Ancona, Livorno, and Venice. Prominent Levantine Jewish merchants, such as the renowned

¹⁹¹ Salah, "On the meaning of 'Italian,'" 56-57; Abulafia, "What happened to the Jews," 198.

¹⁹² Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 34-35, 237-238; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 34, 233-234; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 74, 213. For a very useful account of the history of the Jewish presence in Venice and the foundation and development of the Venetian Ghetto, please see: Marcella Ansaldi [Director of Museo Ebraico di Venezia], "The Jews in Venice (1516-1917)," *History of the Venetian Ghetto-Ghetto Venezia*, last modified March 8, 2023, accessed October 29, 2024, <https://www.ghettovenetia.com/en/the-history/>.

Cohen, Nasi, and Segura families, engaged in a wide range of business activities, encompassing international trade, brokerage, craftsmanship, and the importation of technology from the Ottoman domains. These merchants, who had previously enjoyed a certain degree of influence and immunity at the Ottoman court, sought to leverage this into a tangible commercial advantage in Venice. Furthermore, the profound influence exerted by these families in Venice, coupled with the intense competition they engendered in Istanbul, ultimately led to the withdrawal of Christian Italian businesses from the latter city.

A seminal moment in the history of Italian Jewish families under the Ottoman regime was the Ancona port boycott, instigated by a group of Portuguese Jews seeking refuge in the Papal States.¹⁹³ This event resulted in a grave crisis between the Jewish communities in Istanbul and the Papal and Ottoman authorities. In 1547, the Papacy expanded the rights of Jewish Levantines, including Sephardic Jews who had survived for a time in Portugal as New Christians and later settled in Ancona. Subsequent to this tolerant period, which commenced in 1547, Jews were permitted to practice their religion freely. However, in 1555, with the accession of Pope Paulus IV to the Papal throne, the Jews were arrested, tortured, and tried as apostates for their Jewish faith. Thirty-eight of the individuals were compelled to revert to Christianity and were sentenced to “galley servitude as oarsmen” (*kürek cezâsı*), while one individual committed suicide. The remaining 24 were executed by being tied to stakes and burned in the square of Ancona. Among the casualties were the relatives of Don Joseph Nasi, who had been naturalized as an Ottoman subject and was the “tax collector” (*mültezim*) for a number of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent’s properties. Notwithstanding the Sultan’s insistence that the members of the Nasi family be pardoned and released, they were ultimately executed. In a reprisal for the execution, the Nasi family orchestrated a commercial boycott at the port of Ancona, seeking to redirect Adriatic trade to the port of Pesaro in the Duchy of Urbino, situated approximately 60 km north of Ancona. However, the Jewish communities in Istanbul found themselves in a difficult position, caught between the potential jeopardy of all Jewish lives in Italy and the prevailing economic interests of Ottoman Jews. As a result, they were unable to reach a consensus on a common stance of solidarity. The Romaniotes, who had no commercial ties or relatives in Italy, demonstrated an initial and overt lack of concern for the boycott. Moreover, members of the Portuguese, Spanish and Italian communities, representing different generations, interests and sensitivities, were unable to unite around a common “Iberian Jewish” identity.

In contrast to the Portuguese Jews, the Levantine Jews were able to continue their lives and commercial activities in Ancona without suffering any harm during this tragic period.¹⁹⁴ These fortunate individuals were regarded as subjects of the Ottoman Empire solely on the basis of

¹⁹³ During this period, it is also noteworthy that some Iberian Jews opted to remain in their homelands and adopted Catholicism as a means of survival. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Jews in Spain and Portugal who converted to Christianity, either voluntarily or under duress, in order to evade persecution and death, were designated “New Christians,” “Crypto-Jews,” or, in a derogatory term, *Marranos*. This pejorative term, derived from the Spanish word for “pig,” alludes to the prohibition of pork consumption in both Judaism and Islam. Upon arriving in Italian territories, they were referred to as *Ponentini* (Westerners) because they had come directly from Iberia, or *Cristiani Novelli* (New Christians) or *Conversi* (Converts) because they had previously converted to Christianity. Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 36-37, 44, 97-98, 192, 237; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati’nin Tarihi*, 36-37, 44, 97-99, 190, 234, 486-487; Borýsek and Liberatoscioli, “Introduction,” 5-6.

¹⁹⁴ Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 34-37; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati’nin Tarihi*, 33-37.

their prior temporary residence in the Empire. Furthermore, a similar series of rights were granted to Levantine merchants in Florence in 1549 and 1551, in Ferrara in 1550 and 1559, and in Urbino in 1550 and 1551. Despite being considered second-class subjects in principle, according to Rozen, the survival and flourishing of Ottoman Jews in many different geographical areas was facilitated by the regime's pragmatic and protective attitude. Christian states merely tolerated Jews as temporary migrants and recognized their rights only *jure soli*, i.e., based on their territory of residence. Consequently, when a Jew departed the territory of a Christian ruler, he forfeited all the rights that the ruler had previously bestowed upon him. However, it should be noted that Ottoman Jews were beneficiaries of *jure sanguinis*, or rights based on blood, which afforded them protection even outside the borders of the Empire, under the sultan's protection. To summarize, a Jew travelling outside the empire was considered to be equivalent to a Muslim Ottoman abroad, and his interests were protected with the same degree of responsibility and effectiveness.

Italian trade rapidly evolved into the most dynamic and lucrative domain for international Jewish merchants.¹⁹⁵ The fundamental nature of Jewish entrepreneurship in Italy was rooted in family connections, while its growth was primarily driven by a trust-based branching model. The most common practice was for a company based in Istanbul to establish a branch in Venice or Ancona and appoint one of the founder's sons, brothers, or nephews as a partner to head that branch. Ultimately, this branch would flourish, evolve into an independent entity, and become firmly established within the Italian context. In certain instances, members of the same family residing in disparate commercial centers would establish international commercial partnerships and engage in joint ventures. However, the commercial acumen, skill, and at times manipulation of the Jews began to cause irritation among the Venetian Christian merchants. In 1560, Marino Cavalli, Venice's *bailo* in Istanbul, lodged a formal complaint that the Venetian commercial volume in the city had almost entirely come under the control of the Jewish community. This was due to a distorted interpretation of the capitulations, whereby Ottoman Jews were acting in a manner akin to Venetian merchants, transporting goods on Venetian ships. Furthermore, in the event of a jeopardy of their commercial relations within Venetian territories, they found a solution in converting their personal interests into those of the Sultan, or in establishing a link between the two. In instances where the commercial activities of prominent families such as Nasi and Segura were threatened, this had a secondary impact of indirectly undermining Ottoman interests, precipitating diplomatic crises. For instance, in 1566, the news that a substantial cargo belonging to Aharon de Segura, the tax collector of the alum mines in Foça, was to be seized in Venice due to his debts alarmed Sultan Suleiman. In response, the Sultan issued an edict on the matter, appointed a special envoy to Venice, and threatened to arrest Venetian diplomats in Istanbul as a retaliatory measure.

Rozen identifies the activities of the Iberian Jews in the Ottoman-Italian arena with the concept of "commercial diaspora" as defined by Philip Curtin.¹⁹⁶ Curtin characterized this diaspora as existing without the need for a state, and as playing a cultural mediating role until it underwent changes. Rozen also corroborates the notion that the Sephardic Jews were not reliant on

¹⁹⁵ Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 35, 237-238; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 35, 234-235.

¹⁹⁶ Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*, 242-243, 270-271; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 239-240, 265-266, 447, 450-451, 464.

institutional state structures or unifying political entities to conduct their activities within the Mediterranean world. However, she particularly emphasizes that, in the absence of the specific political privileges, conditions, and instruments provided by the Ottomans, the possibility of flourishing and expanding in international trade would have proven unfeasible. The driving force that enhanced the opportunities and expanded the scope of this diaspora was therefore a combination of the Ottoman capitulation system and state power. Furthermore, it was the same capitulation system that restricted the interaction of Judeo-Spanish networks with Italian states in the final quarter of the sixteenth century and caused them to shift from Christian Europe to the East in the late seventeenth century. Nevertheless, it should be noted that interactions between Italian Jews and the Ottoman domains were not confined to international trade. In fact, a significant number of Jews of Italian origin or with Italian residency sought refuge in Ottoman territories for theological, mystical, and cultural reasons.¹⁹⁷ The demographic composition of Istanbul's artistic community, specifically its musicians, actors, dancers, and painters, was significantly shaped by the presence of Jews of Iberian and Italian origin. The cultural milieu from which these individuals hailed regarded music and theatre not solely as an expressive form of creativity but also as a reflection of personal qualities such as good education and upbringing. Rozen even remarks that Italian Jews in Istanbul were known to provide their children with music and dance instruction.

Following Venice and Ancona, Livorno emerged as the preeminent Italian Jewish network hub, owing to its strategic position as a major port and international trade center within the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.¹⁹⁸ In 1593, the Grand Duke established a free port in Livorno, thus granting permission for foreign settlement. Livorno, which became home to one of the largest Jewish communities in eighteenth-century Europe and was dominated by Portuguese Jewish merchants, also served as a crossroads for numerous trade networks. Furthermore, Livorno's Jewish merchants not only sustained their commercial relations with Jewish merchants in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa but also engaged in trade within intricate networks that

¹⁹⁷ The biographical lexicon entitled "Who is Who?" (*Kim Kimdir?*) at the end of Rozen's book is quite useful and contributes greatly to identifying Italian Jews who had theological, mystical, and cultural connections with the Ottoman Empire. The following names are of particular note when considering the chronology of their arrival in or interaction with the Ottoman Empire. The first and most significant of these was Don Vidal Benvenisti, a Spanish theologian and literary figure who participated in the Disputation of Tortosa (1413-1414), one of the most significant polemics between Christianity and Judaism in history. Following the publication of his poem in Rimini during the years 1525-1526 by the Ashkenazi Jewish printer Gershom Soncino, Benvenisti was compelled to depart Italy and seek refuge in the Ottoman territories. The Spanish scholar, book collector, and editor Avraham Aqrish is also considered to be among the most prominent figures in this field. In 1553, Aqrish's books were confiscated by the Venetian government in Candia, Crete, and were about to be burned, but after intense negotiations with the ruler, he managed to save his library and emigrated to Istanbul. Aqrish resided temporarily in the domicile of the distinguished Italian-Jewish tax-collector Don Yosef Nasi, residing in Istanbul until approximately 1578, and producing a significant proportion of his works there. The Italian scholar and Kabbalist Mordekhai Dato also visited the city of Safed (presently within the borders of Israel) in the Ottoman province of Damascus in 1560, spending a productive year there, during which time he contributed to Italian Judaism with his theological works. The Italian-born rabbinical scholar, lexicographer, and poet Menahem ben Judah di Lonzano is notable for writing his first and most important poetic work in Istanbul in 1572. Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*, 447-448, 450-451, 464.

¹⁹⁸ Isabella and Zanou, "Introduction," 4; Matthias B. Lehmann, "La Puerta de la Franquía: Livorno and Pan-Jewish Networks of Beneficence in the Eighteenth Century," in *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: Bridging Europe and the Mediterranean*, eds. Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti and Guri Schwarz (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 43-45.

encompassed Christian and Hindu merchants in the region extending from Portugal to Goa. Furthermore, Livorno played a pivotal role in the realm of Jewish theology and literature, serving as a vibrant nexus for religious scholars hailing from diverse regions, including Italy, North Africa, and the Ottoman territories. These scholars converged on Livorno to pursue rabbinical education and to engage in the practice of Hebrew printing, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and the enrichment of cultural exchange. Moreover, the city functioned as a major hub for charitable activities, providing assistance to Jews across the Mediterranean and Europe.¹⁹⁹ This included individuals who had been kidnapped by pirates in the Mediterranean and those encountering difficulties in the holy cities of Palestine. This Tuscan port played a crucial role in establishing connections between Ottoman Jewish communities and their counterparts in Europe and North Africa. It also served as a pivotal interface between commercial and charitable networks, underscoring its undeniable importance and irreplaceable function within the broader socio-cultural landscape of the time. Livorno hosted fund investments and facilitated the transfer of donations collected in North Africa or Europe, initially to Istanbul and subsequently to Israel, thereby effectively managing nearly all fundraising activities.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a further wave of Jewish migration resulted in the settlement of significant numbers of Jews in Morocco, Tunisia, and the Italian peninsula.²⁰⁰ In his original book, titled *İzmir Yahudileri* (The Jews of Smyrna), Henri Nahum writes that among these immigrants, Spanish and Portuguese *Marranos* flocked particularly to the port of Livorno and the wider Tuscany region. From there, due to the city's dynamic trade relations with Eastern Mediterranean cities, they migrated to Salonika, Tunis, and Izmir. Sarah Abrevaya Stein also observes that following the Ottomans' granting of new capitulations to France, Tuscan merchants of Livorno origin arrived in Ottoman territories under the protection of the French Consulate. These merchants, known locally as *Franko* in Ladino, meaning "European," acted as intermediaries between the local Jewish population and French merchants. Stein

¹⁹⁹ At this juncture, Matthias Lehmann's work makes a distinctive contribution to this subject by investigating the pivotal role and influence of the Tuscan city of Livorno in the early modern Sephardic fundraising network. To this end, the investigation has yielded a more nuanced understanding of the organic connections between the Italian peninsula and the Levant. Lehmann examines how Livorno became a "leading connector" and a "central node" for the extensive Sephardic communities in Northern Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and North Africa, operating as a pivotal fundraising center. The mobility of "fundraising emissaries" (*shadarim*) resulted in the establishment of a network of connections that transcended geographical and national boundaries. This network facilitated the shaping of transregional ideals of Judaism and the testing of local loyalties and identities. Furthermore, the strategic location of Livorno greatly facilitated the fundraising activities carried out by Ottoman Jewish officials. These fundraising activities included a broad spectrum of causes, ranged from supporting needy diaspora communities in locations such as Palestine to responding to disasters such as the Great Fire of Smyrna in 1742. Lehmann's analytical perspective facilitates comprehension of the multifarious forms of attachment that early modern Jewish communities acquired by focusing on local contexts within an interregional network. His analysis demonstrates that the fundamental characteristic of the Livorno example is a relationship of trust based on Sephardic ethnic origins, common languages such as Spanish or Judeo-Spanish (*Ladino*), and reliable information flows. The facilitation of fundraising activities transpired not solely within the paradigm of "pan-Jewish solidarity" but also through a system of trust that was nurtured by face-to-face interactions and bilateral relationships. Consequently, initiatives that operated outside these established trust networks, such as the visits of Ashkenazi envoys to Livorno, aroused suspicion and hindered the success of fundraising missions. Lehmann, "La Puerta de la Franquía," 18-19.

²⁰⁰ Nahum, *İzmir Yahudileri*, 34-35; Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, 13-14; Alice Grazzini, "Italian Jewry in the 'Theater of languages,'" 137-139.

characterizes this phenomenon as “collaboration between a stateless diaspora and state commercial power.” Furthermore, she establishes a correlation between France’s economic might and its semi-colonial influence in the Mediterranean region during the eighteenth century, attributing this phenomenon to the aforementioned factors. Alice Grazzini’s research indicates that all Sephardic Jews, including those in Livorno, maintained persistent interactions with the Ottoman Empire, leading to the eventual adoption of traditions analogous to those of Muslim Turks. However, she adds that Sephardic and Italian Jews, whether from Livorno or elsewhere, differed greatly from each other in their clothing, culture, and traditions such as marriage. Furthermore, Grazzini posits the argument that Jews of Spanish and Italian origin who encountered each other in the Ottoman public sphere hated each other because of both religious differences and pride.

3. PRAGMATIC FLEXIBILITY OF THE ITALIAN SUBJECT: NAVIGATING BETWEEN EMPIRES AND IDENTITIES

The preceding chapters addressed the historical origins of the Italo-Levantine category, its multi-layered transimperial identity oscillating between different affiliations, and its demographic distribution within Ottoman domains. From this chapter onwards, Italian-Levantines will be addressed not as a social class or category but as social subjects, with a particular focus on their wartime liminality between the Kingdom of Italy and the Ottoman Empire. The present chapter's contextual structure is built around the phenomenon of 'naturalization', which is encouraged by a range of factors, including social integration and belonging, as well as wartime adaptation. The pragmatic orientations and shifts observed between Italian citizenship and Ottoman subjecthood can be attributed to the permeability, flexibility, and multi-layered nature of transimperial identity.

The present chapter will primarily focus on the concept of extraterritoriality from the perspective of international law and will attempt to explore the position of capitulatory regimes within the Ottoman legal system. The privileges granted to Italian protégés through an extraterritorial (capitulatory) regime increased the authority of their home (the origin) state, the Kingdom of Italy, over the host (receiving) state, the Ottoman Empire, resulting in the restriction of Ottoman sovereignty. Extraterritoriality, defined as the exemption of a foreign protégé from the laws of the state of residence and their subjection to the laws of their state of origin, created a "transboundary jurisdiction" deriving its power from capitulations. The question of the abolition of extraterritoriality became a more sensitive matter during periods of war, as it could represent a significant advantage or disadvantage for the parties involved, depending on the circumstances.

A further salient point in this regard is the manner in which Europe's legal imperialism, manifested through the doctrine of extraterritoriality, influenced the Ottoman Empire, compelling it to adopt a particular strategy. In response to Europe's utilization of international law to legitimize imperial expansion, the Ottoman Empire adopted the same legal instrument with the aim of safeguarding its territorial integrity and sovereignty against European influence. Confronted with the inequality and asymmetry fostered by Europe through a legal framework, the Ottoman state adopted and institutionalized international law as a diplomatic defense strategy. The establishment of the Office of Legal Counsel (*Hukuk Müşavirliği İstişare Odası*) within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1883, with the remit of overseeing international law, represented the greatest manifestation of this.²⁰¹ Moreover, within the confines of this office, a

²⁰¹ The archive documentation cited in this study repeatedly references the "Office of Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte" in numerous processes pertaining to Capitulatory Agreements. Carter Findley, who has conducted the most sophisticated and comprehensive studies to date on the bureaucratic structure of the Ottoman Empire, has positioned the Office of Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte within the 1908 organizational chart of the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, in his more recent study (1989), he has noted that İbrahim Hakkı (Grand Vizier between 1910 and 1911) was appointed by the Sultan in 1894 as one of the two Legal Counsellors to the Sublime Porte—thereby becoming co-director of the Office of Legal Counsel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Findley's findings and archival details indicate that there was a single legal counselling office attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, formed by two legal counsellors who performed joint and coordinated duties. As international law concerns all state departments in general, these counsellors also provided advice to the Grand Vizier and were therefore also referred to as Legal Counsellors of the Sublime Porte. In summary, there has been an assignment of a dual role and affiliation to the principal staff, consisting of two legal counsellors in a single office. In this study,

department known as “ancient / capitulatory agreements” (*uhûd-ı atîka*) was created for the exclusive purpose of dealing with capitulations.²⁰² The section will also comprise Viscomi’s study, which established the correlation between Italian extraterritoriality in Egypt and the national consciousness and political participation of Italian nationals residing in the region. The Ottomans had previously granted capitulations to the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1824, which were subsequently transferred to the Kingdom of Italy in 1863 following the unification. These capitulations were also applied to the Italian colony in Egypt from that date onwards. Viscomi concludes that such extraterritoriality in Egypt encouraged the transimperial politicization of the Italian *protetti*, a phenomenon that continued to have an impact even after the abolition of the capitulations in 1936.

The second section, centered on the phenomenon of naturalization, will explore the civic origins, motivations, and methodologies of this practice. In addition, the different representations of naturalization in the eyes of Italian individuals and the Ottoman state will be covered. In this regard, the evolution of the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law, enacted to ensure a civic standardization, sovereignty, and control over the state’s subjects, will be briefly reviewed in the introduction. This particular law was instrumental in clarifying the ambiguous links between the concepts of nationality, subjecthood, and citizenship. Additionally, it was designed to deter subjects from renouncing their nationality for the purpose of evading Ottoman jurisdiction. This section will also address the conceptualizations of the naturalization practice in the existing academic literature, exploring sub-concepts such as “instrumental,” “protective,” and “defensive naturalization.” The “instrumental naturalization” sought by Ottoman Jews to obtain Italian protection since the Risorgimento and the “defensive naturalization” sought to avoid wartime sanctions, beginning by the 1911-1912 Italo-Ottoman War, will be addressed under separate headings. Jewish communities, which were densely populated in port cities such as Istanbul and Izmir and engaged in trade, oscillated between Italian and Ottoman allegiances in a turbulent geography marked by wars, and occupied the authorities of both states from time to time.

A thorough examination of Italian naturalization applications on individual cases has revealed a broad spectrum of motivations, ranging from commercial and business ventures within the Kingdom of Italy to teaching positions in Italian schools. This process, beginning with the unification of Italy in 1861, persisted until the Italian occupation of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911, and was subsequently reversed with the onset of the Italo-Ottoman War. During the war, which can be regarded as a significant turning point in terms of the civic preferences of the Italians within the Ottoman Empire, the trend of naturalization underwent a shift from Italian to Ottoman. A significant proportion of Italian residents, seeking to evade wartime measures and sanctions imposed by the state, such as relocation and expulsion, renounced their Italian citizenship and applied for Ottoman naturalization. Furthermore, Italy’s declaration of war on

both office titles are used as they appear in the archives or written sources. The expansive staff of the Legal Counsel Office, which had 50 nominal employees under the Hamidiye regime, experienced a reduction after 1908, and consisted of two legal counsellors, one office director, seven assistants, and several secretaries. Carter Vaughn Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 235, 256, 260, 262, 315, 322-323; Carter Vaughn Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 196.

²⁰² The term *uhûd-u atîka* or *kadîme*, literally meaning “ancient agreements,” underscores the age-old and deeply rooted nature of the “capitulatory agreements” that have endured since the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566).

the Ottoman Empire in 1915 led to its official designation as an enemy state by the Ottomans, resulting in the marginalization of Italians within the Ottoman Empire, both individually and institutionally. During this turbulent period, which lasted intermittently from 1911 to 1918, Italian citizenship became a dangerous burden that needed to be shed as soon as possible, thereby encouraging applications for Ottoman naturalization.

Following the end of the First World War, however, this trend underwent a reversal once more, as evidenced by the renewed interest among the Ottoman Jewish community in Izmir in acquiring Italian citizenship. This is due to the fact that at the 1919-1920 Paris Peace Conference, which formally concluded the First World War in accordance with international law, the Kingdom of Italy revisited the issue of naturalization and introduced a new citizenship program for Ottoman Jews. It is important to note that the term "postwar" as I utilize it to characterize this naturalization trend refers exclusively to the end of the First World War. Despite the fact that the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918 brought an end to hostilities for the Ottoman Empire on the military front, the Paris Peace Conference, which ensured the partition of Ottoman territories among the Allied Powers, led to the Turkish War of Independence. The subsequent Treaty of Sèvres, signed in 1920, further intensified and galvanized Turkish national resistance. This turbulent period, during which the war raged with full force in Anatolia between 1919 and 1922, ended with the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which marked the official foundation of the Republic of Turkey. Consequently, although the term postwar is employed here to denote the prevailing naturalization trend during this period, the war was in fact still being waged at full intensity in Anatolia. However, my postwar periodization is based on the cessation of the First World War, which prompted the Italian Kingdom to introduce its naturalization program for the Ottoman Jews.

This chapter will also address individual cases through the experiences of naturalization and conversion of Italian-origin Jews and Italian citizens in the Ottoman Empire. An intriguing case concerning a Jewish family residing in Jerusalem, tracing their origins back to Pisa, evolved into a complex discourse surrounding Italian identity. This protracted process, which at times resulted in confrontation with both the Ottoman and Italian authorities, transpired from 1911 to 1922 and encompassed numerous members of the Eliasciar family. Eleazar, Avram, and Giuseppe Eliasciar, who sought enlistment in the Italian Army, attempted to prove and restore their original nationality by establishing family ties through the civil registration record of their Pisa-born grandfather, Jakoub Saül. Furthermore, Mareno Eliasciar, a native of Jerusalem and subsequent resident of Beirut, initially established his connection with the Pisa population registry through the *jus sanguinis* (right of blood). He subsequently provided evidence of his Italian nationality and submitted an application for an Italian passport. The majority of applicants in this process were covered by the Italian Citizenship Law, which came into force in 1912 and facilitated naturalization under certain conditions.

Ultimately, the chapter will direct its attention to the case of a 17-year-old Italian girl in Adana who converted to Islam by marrying a local Ottoman policeman in 1911. This intriguing case, in which the Ottoman governor, the Italian consul, and the Catholic clergy were involved as arbitrators or advisors, was first discussed in the Adana Provincial Council, a local legislative body. Upon reaching the Italian Embassy and the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior, the issue escalated to become one of international concern. Initially presented in the Italian public sphere using inflammatory and misleading language as a case of forced conversion, the Giulia Franzoni case quickly escalated into almost a cultural crisis between the two countries. Despite the

absence of a direct correlation with naturalization practices and citizenship programs, this marital conversion case exemplifies the interplay of Ottoman and Italian identities within a transimperial context. Furthermore, prior to elaborating on the incident, a concise overview of religious conversions and matrimonial unions between Italian and Ottoman societies will be provided.

3.1. Italian Extraterritoriality in the Ottoman Empire from the Perspective of International Law

In his original study, entitled *Legal Imperialism*, Turan Kayaoğlu examines the extraterritorial courts established by Western powers in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁰³ Engaged with the emergence, function, and dissolution of the system of extraterritoriality, the book offers a novel approach to the development of the concept of sovereignty in the nineteenth century. This historical approach establishes a link between Western colonial expansion and jurisprudence, on the one hand, and non-Western political development and legal institutionalization processes, on the other. Kayaoğlu defines "territoriality" as a state of sovereignty in which a state claims exclusive jurisdiction over all people within its territorial borders, regardless of their nationality. In contrast, "extraterritoriality" refers to a legal regime in which a state claims exclusive jurisdiction over its citizens residing in another state. As a sovereignty of a transcendent nature, which is not constrained by geographical boundaries, the concept of extraterritoriality essentially refers to a distinct jurisdiction, fostered by capitulations and harboring transimperial/transnational identities. In the context of capitulatory regimes advocating consular jurisdiction, transimperial individuals are exempt from the laws of the host state to which they are subject by virtue of birth or naturalization. In other words, with regard to their legal status, they are exclusively subject to the laws imposed by their countries of origin and, in legal cases involving them, to the jurisdiction of consular courts. Nevertheless, in extraordinary situations concerning public order and safety, the host country's law enforcement agencies and administrative authorities might also intervene.

Indeed, the doctrine of extraterritoriality is characterized by its ability to unofficially increase the authority of a powerful state over the host state.²⁰⁴ Under the protection of extraterritoriality, citizens of the home/origin state are encouraged to relocate to the host/receiving state for business and missionary purposes. This privileged status, established on a reciprocal legal framework between two territories, can initially be characterized solely by its benefits. However, depending on the policies pursued by either the original or the receiving regime, or in situations involving both, the inherent liminality of this identity has sometimes become ambiguous and challenging for transimperial individuals. The capitulatory regime in the Ottoman Empire, which had been unilaterally abolished by the Unionist government in a decree issued in September 1914, was reinstated by the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920. Concerned ahead of the Lausanne Conference, the British, French, and Italian Chambers of Commerce in Istanbul convened in October 1922 and sent a memorandum to their respective embassies, demanding the continuation of the extraterritoriality regime in Ottoman territories. The request asserted

²⁰³ Turan Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1-2.

²⁰⁴ Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism*, 56, 133-134, 142-145.

that even the slightest diminution of extraterritorial protection would immediately jeopardize the safety of their citizens' lives and property. The administration of justice and the inviolability of the domicile and of the person were particularly emphasized. Notwithstanding the concerns and reactions of certain foreign-based political and commercial circles in Turkey, capitulations would be abolished bilaterally on permanent grounds under articles of 22 and 28, agreed upon at the 1923 Lausanne Conference. Following protracted deliberations, European states collectively consented to the abolition of the "extraterritorial jurisdiction" of foreign courts. However, this was contingent upon Turkey's acceptance of specific judicial reforms and regulations, as well as ensuring judicial guarantees concerning foreigners.

Another invaluable and contemporary study on the subject of extraterritoriality in the Ottoman Empire is the volume entitled *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, which was edited by Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull, and Robert Zens.²⁰⁵ With a focus on the role, function, and methodological applications of European legal imperialism and extraterritoriality vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire, this collection of articles seeks to demonstrate how this juridical interaction shaped the overall development of both European and Ottoman legal thought. As emphasized in the work, the Ottoman Empire functioned as a critical laboratory in which a wide variety of international legal instruments were tested by Europe. Within this framework, the work elaborates on how international law gained importance, was interpreted, and internalized within the Ottoman state. At this juncture, a pivotal question posed by the book concerns the application and experience of Eurocentric international legal thought by Ottoman jurists, statesmen, and ordinary people. In this process, the question arises as to whether these figures merely reproduced European expertise, or whether they were capable of offering original Ottoman contributions that changed the prevailing European paradigm. Through such inquiries, this compelling volume seeks to reconstruct an Istanbul-centered history of the "law of nations," which underwent a gradual evolution throughout the nineteenth century. In their reconstruction of the process, the authors convincingly demonstrate that the capitulation regime, a system limiting Ottoman sovereignty, compelled Ottoman state authorities to adopt an instrumental specialization in both citizenship law and international law.

Aimee M. Genell's article offers a profound exploration of the historical underpinnings of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry's conscious adoption of international law and its diplomatic modernization vis-à-vis Europe.²⁰⁶ Her research is centered on the Office of Legal Counsel, an institution that was established in 1883 under the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the remit of managing issues related to international law. The office continued to function until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, at which point it underwent a transformation and was integrated into the new regime. The institution is notable for its integration of international law into the fabric of Ottoman diplomatic practice, thereby providing a systematic mechanism for the defense of the empire's territories. While European ministries employed international law to legitimize imperial expansion, the Ottoman state adopted it as a strategy to ensure territorial integrity and internal power consolidation, and to limit European influence.

²⁰⁵ Lâle Can and Michael Christopher Low, "Introduction," in *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, eds.

Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 3, 8-12.

²⁰⁶ Aimee M. Genell, "The Well-Defended Domains: Eurocentric International Law and the Making of the Ottoman Office of Legal Counsel," in *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, eds. Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 36-38.

However, following Italy's unprovoked invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911 and the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, the faith and trust of Ottoman bureaucrats and jurists in international law were seriously shaken.²⁰⁷ By 1914, a considerable proportion of Ottoman jurists, who had formerly been staunch proponents of international law, had begun to regard it as a pragmatic instrument of European imperialism. Their conviction was that international law had become a tool used to legitimize the unequal treatment of the Ottoman Empire in the international arena. From their perspective, international law created a significant "unfairness" between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in order to promote European imperialism and colonialism.

Genell's observations on the central role, function and contribution of capitulations and extraterritoriality in Ottoman diplomacy and international legal practice provide a remarkable insight into the subject.²⁰⁸ At this juncture, the author posits that the legal, economic and administrative restrictions imposed by Europe on Ottoman sovereignty compelled the state to engage with international law at a procedural level. In addition to the judicial and fiscal privileges previously granted to Europeans, new economic control mechanisms were established, such as the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (*Diyyûn-ı Umûmiye*), and autonomous provinces, including Egypt and Lebanon, were placed under European protectorate. Despite being legally part of the empire, certain regions, in which authority was exercised at the local rather than the central level, created legal and administrative puzzles. All of these extraterritorial restrictions, which were framed and justified by Europe in accordance of international law, disrupted the balance of Ottoman sovereignty and prevented it from exercising full control over its own territory. In this sense, from the standpoint of the Ottoman Empire, international law had evolved into a mechanism that entrenched inequality rather than establishing a just order, thereby engendering numerous dilemmas for the state. The only means of overcoming this situation was to maneuver within the framework of international law, whose boundaries were defined by Europe. Consequently, the Ottoman state was required to gain competence in the field of international legal affairs.

Genell states that the issues dealt with by legal advisors additionally encompassed the settling of disputes between individuals that required expertise in private international law.²⁰⁹ Such cases frequently originated from capitulations, enquiries related to consular protection, jurisdictional issues, or disputes concerning a person's citizenship, passport, or travel documents. Genell's research indicates that the privileges enjoyed by Europeans within the Ottoman territories, including tax exemptions, immunity from local courts, and protection from house searches, served to encourage the Ottoman Foreign Ministry to adopt and specialize in international private law. Consequently, Ottoman jurists, entrusted with the establishment of jurisdiction and the resolution of disputes between Ottoman citizens and privileged Europeans

²⁰⁷ The Hamidian regime appointed prominent Ottoman-Armenian and Muslim-Turkish jurists such as Gabriel Noradounghian and Ibrahim Hakki Pasha as legal counsellors. The function of these counsellors was to interpret European law in a manner that supported the state's diplomatic and territorial claims. The subsequent CUP (Unionist) regime would appoint Hakki Pasha as Grand Vizier in 1910 and Noradunghian as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1912. Despite the fact that their successors, Hrant Abro, Ahmed Reşid (Turnagil), and Mehmet Münir (Ertegün), too regarded international law as a critical defense strategy, Genell reveals that their faith in the capacity of law was dramatically shaken and diminished following Italy's invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania (1911) and the Balkan Wars (1912-13). Genell, "The Well-Defended Domains," 42-47.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 39-40.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 9, 39-40.

(i.e. capitulation beneficiaries), concurrently acquired proficiency and expertise in the realm of international private law.

Furthermore, as Viscomi's research on Italian residents in Egypt also illustrates, during the era of rising imperial expansionism, a mutual harmony was achieved between extraterritoriality and nationalism, political awareness, and pluralism.²¹⁰ Therefore, even though extraterritoriality became obsolete in Egypt upon the termination of the capitulations in 1936, its legacy continued to encourage the transnational political participation of Italians. Viscomi examines the correlation between territoriality, political awareness and capitulations in relation to Italian residents in Egypt, drawing upon the perspectives of two Italian consular judges who served in Egypt in 1907 and 1937. Despite the legal reality differing in terms of sovereignty, in 1907 Italian law did not recognize an Italian resident in Egypt as territorially abroad, while Italian diplomacy treated him as if he lived inside Italy. Despite its flexibility and variability, the Italian colony in Egypt was regarded by Italian governments as a coherent social entity since the unification of Italy in 1861 and throughout the fascist *ventennio* that followed.²¹¹ Although subject to an "extraterritorial jurisdiction," Italians were more deeply involved in national, international and imperial politics than many citizens in their localities. With the abolition of the capitulations in 1936, which exempted European subjects from local laws and taxation, "extraterritoriality" would disappear, and Italian residents would be considered to be in Egypt both *de facto* and *de jure*. However, as Viscomi points out, the capitulations were more than treaties demarcating the boundaries of legal pluralism in the Mediterranean and that, despite their abolition, they fostered transnational forms of political membership. This is due to the fact that the phenomenon of extraterritoriality emerged in the setting of heightened nationalist and imperial expansionism, thus engendering a distinctive and fruitful conjuncture. Consequently, the early modern forms of legal pluralism in the Mediterranean region did not cease even with the territorialization of nation-states and the centralization of state institutions. Specifically, even in instances where extraterritorial jurisdiction was completely abolished, legal plurality and ambiguity coexisted with the emergence of notions of territorial sovereignty. The Ottoman capitulations, for instance, engendered multiple and sometimes contradictory political positions for Italian subjects and diplomats, both during their period of validity and subsequent abolition.²¹²

²¹⁰ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 33-34, 37.

²¹¹ The Italian term *ventennio*, signifying a 20-year period, historically denotes the Mussolini regime, which ruled from 1922 to 1943.

²¹² In this final sentence, it is evident that Viscomi's use of the term "Ottoman capitulations" does not imply a specific reference to those in Egypt. Rather, it is a reference to the broader context of the various capitulatory regimes that the Italians were subject to within the Mediterranean domains of the Ottoman Empire. Egypt, having previously been an Ottoman province until 1805, was captured in that year by an Ottoman-Albanian commander, Mehmed Ali Pasha (*Kavalalı*), thus establishing it as a semi-independent state in de facto administrative affairs, though still legally subject to the Ottomans. Following the recognition of the autonomous vassal status of the Egyptian province by the Ottoman Sultan in 1867, the region was transformed into the Khedivate of Egypt under the rule of Mehmed Ali Pasha. Between 1867 and 1914, the Egyptian province was legally subordinate to the Ottoman Empire, yet it functioned as an independent principality or emirate in its internal affairs. However, with the advent of the First World War, the British ousted Khedive Abbas II from power, and Egypt was subsequently ruled as a Sultanate of Egypt under British protectorate from 1914 to 1922. The British martial law declared in 1914 stipulated that the capitulations in Egypt would remain in force until the war's conclusion, at which point the question would be revisited. Following the United Kingdom's recognition of Egypt's independence in 1922 and the subsequent reduction of its own military and political influence in there, Egypt's sovereignty was

According to Viscomi, the Ottoman capitulations were capable of configuring the conditions that led to migration possibilities and of placing consulates at the center of Mediterranean networks.²¹³ The term “capitulation” is derived from the Latin word *capitula*, meaning “chapters.” In Turkish, it corresponds to *ahdnâmeler*, meaning “letters of promise/oath,” and in Arabic, it is known as *al-Imtiyâzât*, meaning “privileges.” These were unilateral agreements that granted commercial and residential privileges to European city-states and merchants in the Ottoman Empire with a view to encouraging commercial exchanges and committing to political alliances. These individuals, whose rights and privileges were bestowed upon them by the Ottoman regime and formally documented through specific certificates, known as *berat*, issued by the Sublime Porte, were designated as the *berathlî* (beneficiaries of the berat).²¹⁴ Although similar versions appear in some early diplomatic agreements with the city-states of Genoa and Venice, the modern forms of capitulations date back to the diplomatic relations that developed after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Viscomi contends that, whilst Italian nationalist intellectuals were inclined to trace the origins of these treaties to the maritime republics of the tenth and eleventh centuries, this ontology was in fact largely based on the imperial rivalry and nationalist tensions between France and Italy that emerged in the Mediterranean in the nineteenth century.

From the 1860s to 1914, this protection status based on capitulations functioned to establish a nationalist-oriented diasporic network, thereby enabling the Italian state to exert its influence in Mediterranean port cities.²¹⁵ A significant proportion of the Jews who had settled in the eastern Mediterranean since the era of the Italian maritime republics asserted historical ties to Italy, consequently becoming eligible for protection status from the Italian state. These protégés, or *protetti*, whose commercial activities and mobility were guaranteed by the Italian authorities, facilitated Italy’s access to transnational and transimperial commercial networks. Ottoman Jews, in particular, frequently resorted to “change of venue” and “naturalization” in order to improve their social status and expand their sphere of personal and commercial freedom. As Viscomi emphasizes, this method proved to be an instrumental and fruitful one for numerous non-Muslim subjects who sought refuge with the Italian consular authorities in Egypt following their expulsion from cosmopolitan cities such as Izmir during the Italo-Turkish War of 1911.

strengthened, leading to the establishment of the Kingdom of Egypt, which endured until the revolution in 1953. During the inter-war period, the majority of the judicial privileges previously granted by the capitular régimes were revoked in Tunisia (1881), in Italian-occupied Libya (1912), in the Ottoman Empire (1914) and subsequently in Turkey (1923), which had signed the Treaty of Lausanne. The capitulations in Egypt were initially negotiated through the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which was ratified by both Egypt and Britain. These capitulations were formally abolished in 1937 by the Montreux Convention, a treaty to which 14 countries, including the United States, Britain and France, were signatories. Despite the absence of the Ottoman Empire from the negotiations due to its dissolution into history, the legal origins and frameworks of the capitulations were entirely Ottoman legacies. These capitulations, established by the Ottomans, were subsequently inherited by the British and persisted in various capacities throughout their administration of Egypt. Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 55; Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, *A Short History of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); William L. Cleveland, Martin P. Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East: 6th Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

²¹³ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 38.

²¹⁴ Abrevaya Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, 13.

²¹⁵ Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 40-41.

Drawing upon the extensive archives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and meticulous consular correspondence, Viscomi identifies three primary categories of *protetti*.²¹⁶ The initial category comprises individuals who arrived as immigrants in the mid to late nineteenth century and assimilated seamlessly with the local population, becoming indistinguishable from the indigenous communities. The second category consists of those who could not furnish documentation substantiating their affiliation with Italy, owing to their prolonged residence in Ottoman territories. The third category consists of individuals who either hailed from Livorno or claimed *Livornese* ancestry by providing documentation attesting to their former membership in the local Jewish communities. Viscomi suggests that the increase in the population of Italian Jews in Egypt from 4,348 in 1897 to 6,629 in 1917 may have been due to the arrival of the *protetti*. However, with the introduction of the Italian Racial Laws by Mussolini's government in 1938, the fate of many Italian Jews in Egypt, who considered themselves as patriotic as other Italians, would undergo a rapid transformation.²¹⁷ They would be obligated to declare their race, their loyalty to the homeland would be called into question, they would be categorized as second-class citizens, they would be dismissed from governmental positions and subjected to numerous prosecutions. Subsequent to the initiation of the internment process, a number of them were apprehended and incarcerated in designated concentration camps within Egypt, whilst the remainder departed the country with the encouragement and assistance of Italian, American and Israeli Jewish organizations.

3.2. Naturalization: An Adaptive Strategy for the Individual and a Demographic Design for the State

In his compelling chapter, Will Hanley examines the evolution of the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law (*Tâbiyyet-i Osmâniye Kanunnâmesi*), highlighting the dynamic interplay between the legal definitions of nationality, subjecthood, and citizenship.²¹⁸ The clarification of the permeable and intertwined links between these concepts constitutes one of the primary areas of focus for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Office of Legal Counsel. Delving into the slippery nature of this cross-conceptual relationship is therefore quite helpful in illuminating the historical ground on which Italo-Ottoman naturalization practices took root. In contrast to the prevailing contemporary approaches that predominantly trace the origins of the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law to the Imperial Reform Edicts of 1839 and 1856 (*Gülhâne* and *Islâhat Hatt-ı Humâyûnu*), Hanley draws attention to a "citizenship misconception" that is derived from these documents. As the author emphasizes, the term "subject" in the abovementioned *Tanzîmât* edicts did not denote "citizen" but rather "subject of the sultan", i.e., "those under his rule." At this juncture, Hanley contends that this misconception overshadows the original connection between the 1869 Nationality Law and the 1863 Protégé Regulation, which was designed to impede the rise of

²¹⁶ Viscomi, *ibid*, 41, 54.

²¹⁷ For a further and comprehensive analysis on the situation of Italian Jews in Egypt before, during and after the Second World War, please see: Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*, 81-82, 87, 93-94, 104, 138, 155-160, 191-192, 202-203, 208, 215, 219, 252, 254.

²¹⁸ Will Hanley, "What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not," in *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, eds. Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 9-10, 61.

capitulations and “foreign protégés” (*berathlıar*).²¹⁹ The 1863 regulation presented protégés with two options: either to accept the nationality of a foreign state and thereby become its full citizen, or to submit to Ottoman jurisdiction and remain subjects of the Sultan. Contrary to prevailing expectations, the regulation resulted in a significant number of protégés becoming naturalized citizens of foreign states while continuing to reside in Ottoman territories and enjoying the rights possessed by Ottomans. Consequently, while the number of protégés decreased, the number of individuals who acquired foreign citizenship increased rapidly. This state of affairs, which complicated the state’s sovereignty over citizenship and nationality, paved the way for a more stringent legislation in the form of the 1869 Nationality Law.

One issue that deserves further attention here is the manner in which the concepts of “civic status”, “nationality”, and “citizenship” are all addressed within a unified term in Ottoman documentation: namely “subjecthood” (*tâbiyyet*). Nevertheless, in order to circumvent any potential confusion arising from the permeability between concepts and the abundance of terminology, the terms “nationality” and “status” have been broadened to include both the facts of “Ottoman subjecthood” and “Italian citizenship” throughout this study. Therefore, in instances where the contextual distinction between “Ottoman subjecthood” and “Italian citizenship” is not imperative or evident, the terms “nationality” and “status” may have been utilized to denote both. In instances where the distinction is already clear or necessary, the terms “subjecthood” and “citizenship” are addressed particularly. Moreover, instead of the literal yet peculiar translation “Ottoman Subjecthood Law”, the term “Ottoman Nationality Law” has been utilized, as it is in the majority of other literature. However, it is important to note that the concept of an “Ottoman nationality” was nonexistent during the period under discussion. The Ottoman imperial demography consisted of a “system of nations” (*millet sistemi*) comprising numerous ethno-national and ethno-religious groups. Despite the fact that the term “Ottoman nationality” was occasionally misused in some Italian documents, it is evident that this term was employed on occasion to denote Ottoman subjecthood and at other times to signify Turkish nationality. Notwithstanding the fact that this type of multiple usage may appear to be anachronistic from a temporal perspective, it is almost impossible to avoid anachronism in a period when empires were being superseded by nation states on a global scale. Consequently, within the context of such research, the emergence of terminological confusion, overlapping, or intertwining is to be anticipated. It is hoped that this explanation will serve to eliminate any potential confusion and facilitate a more coherent reading experience.

Hanley challenges the prevailing approaches that argue the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law intended to establish a modern sense of political citizenship and a patriotic identity grounded in ethnic nationalism or sectarianism.²²⁰ While certain approaches make reference to an “imperial citizenship” characterized by political participation, the “legal membership” of the Ottoman Empire was more concerned with the identification of individuals as subjects of the state than with the people’s right to engage in governance or claim rights.²²¹ Furthermore, a class-based

²¹⁹ The 1863 Consular Regulations (*Konsolosluk Nizamnâmesi*), referred to here by Hanley as the Protégé Regulation, will also be discussed in the sub-section titled “Instrumental Naturalization.”

²²⁰ Hanley, “What Ottoman Nationality Was,” 56-59, 61, 74-75.

²²¹ Hanley preferred to use “membership,” a broader and more conceptual term, rather than the more legal and technical term “subjecthood.” Membership can be thought of as a civic, legal, and administrative framework associated with inclusion in the Ottoman population, bureaucratic registration, and a network of rights and obligations.

allegiance and political participation within the framework of Ottomanism were not adopted. In a similar manner, an Ottoman citizen who embraced and owned his country, independent of religious affiliation, was not encouraged. Alternatively, the impetus behind the Ottoman state's formulation of the 1869 Nationality Law can be attributed to two key factors: the influence of European nationality legislation and the external pressure exerted by foreign states through capitulations. This particular law was thus an international legal arrangement intended to protect the territorial and legal sovereignty of the Ottoman state, as well as its status vis-à-vis foreign states. In essence, its objective was to restrict the abuse of capitulations by focusing on the conditions for acquiring and losing nationality, while making no reference to religious or ethnic elements. Since this was a legislation which did not directly concern civil or political rights in domestic law, it specifically preferred to utilize the language of international law. Despite the varied interpretations by different actors and perspectives, the primary function of the 1869 law was to extend state control over the subjects, define the scope of subjecthood, and clarify the Ottoman civic status in its relations with foreign states. The 1869 Nationality Law constituted a major step in the Ottoman legal and bureaucratic modernization, resulting in the standardization and clarification of "membership" (subjecthood). As a consequence, the state gained greater control over its population, the complexity arising from individuals with protected status was reduced, and the relationship between the concept of Ottoman subjecthood and foreign nationality was further clarified.

To put it more precisely, the Ottoman Nationality Law of 19 January 1869 is somehow interpreted as an extension of the concept of "citizenship," which is often associated with the *Tanzîmât* Edicts of 1839 and 1856.²²² However, as Hanley aptly notes, the employment of the term "subjects" – which signifies allegiance to the Sultan – rather than "citizen," which implies a constitutional identity, actually points to a legal framework distinct from citizenship in the modern sense. Indeed, the primary and direct context of this law was the legal issues raised by the 1863 Protégé Regulation—enacted to establish the conditions for Ottoman subjects placed under foreign protection. In this particular context, the primary objective of the 1869 law was not to establish citizenship in the modern sense, but rather to regulate the issue of evading Ottoman legal obligations through expatriation (i.e. renouncing citizenship), a practice sometimes referred to as "jurisdiction dodging." From this perspective, the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law can be regarded as a pragmatic regulation designed to address the crises created by the capitulations and to defend Ottoman sovereignty on the international stage, rather than as an embodiment of the *Tanzîmât's* abstract ideal of citizenship. Moreover, given the controversy surrounding the law following its implementation, two supplementary texts were drafted to address these concerns and emphasize the law's function. These were the "explication" (*îzahnâme*) published in March 1869 and circulated to provincial governors, and Ali Pasha's memorandum published in April 1869 and directed to foreign consulates. These are regarded as two fundamental documents that both clarify the law's internal implementation and defend its legal and political legitimacy against external powers.

²²² Hanley, "What Ottoman Nationality Was," 62-65. Within the legal framework of the nineteenth century, it is important to note that the term "expatriation" signifies more than mere departure or removal from the country; it also encompasses the concept of voluntarily severing one's ties with the state's citizenship bond, a process referred to as "renunciation of citizenship." The involuntary implementation of this practice by the state, against the will of the individual, can be referred to as "denaturalization."

The *îzahnâme* addressed to local authorities in March 1869 specifically emphasized that the 1869 Nationality Law had no retroactive effect and could not be used to evade existing lawsuits or criminal charges.²²³ It was also stated that the age of majority could be determined according to each community's own rules, that expatriation was subject only to the permission of the central authority, and that unauthorized expatriation could be punished by banishment or expulsion. In addition to this, Ali Pasha's memorandum of April 1869 stated that the Ottoman Empire recognized the principle of individuals' freedom to choose their nationality. However, it was further noted that the capitulations had distorted this freedom within Ottoman territories. In other words, these privileges had encouraged a significant number of Ottoman subjects to seek foreign protection, to the extent that, at a certain point, the number of protégés had exceeded the number of foreigners themselves. Although the 1863 regulation temporarily reduced the number of protégés, it gave rise to another problem and increased the number of Ottoman subjects who had acquired the citizenship of foreign states. Ali Pasha remarked that the Ottoman state had initially exhibited patience and goodwill towards foreign powers and did not anticipate any exploitation of this process for their own interests. Moreover, the Ottoman party had a strong expectation that the capitulations would be reviewed in accordance with the 1856 Treaty of Paris. However, when these expectations were subsequently frustrated, the Ottoman state found itself unable to manage the deepening crises arising from the dual-status issue and was compelled to implement the 1869 Nationality Law. Ali Pasha also opposed the claims advanced by European states, which asserted that the issue of Ottoman citizenship was an international matter and that the Ottoman Empire lacked the capacity to make unilateral regulations. Arguing that the 1869 law did not violate existing treaties and had no retroactive effect, Ali Pasha had characterized foreign intervention as “interference in the relationship between the Sultan and his subjects.”

The 1869 law, which remained in force throughout the Hamidian regime through various regulations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was comprehensively revised during the Second Constitutional Era.²²⁴ The 1909 draft, grounded in the *jus sanguinis* principle, recognized the legitimate children born to Ottoman fathers and the illegitimate children born to Ottoman mothers as Ottoman. Nonetheless, it was stipulated that the legitimate children born to an Ottoman mother would be granted the nationality of their father. The draft also recognized marginalized groups within the Ottoman Empire, including children of unknown identity, stateless persons, Muslim women who had entered into forbidden marriages with Iranian men (Shia-Sunni marriages), those not registered in the population registry, and “persons whose identity was concealed” (*mektûme*). Expanding the *jus soli* principle (citizenship based on place of birth), the draft legislation recognized everyone living in Ottoman territory as Ottoman subjects unless proven otherwise. Following the expansion of the *jus soli* principle, the right to apply for naturalization after three years of residence was granted to persons of legal age, without a criminal record, and financially sound. At this juncture, the draft clearly distinguished between nationality and political citizenship, linking the acquisition of Ottoman “political rights” (*hukuk-ı siyâsiye*) subsequent to naturalization, to 10 years of residence, or five years of residence for “refugees” (*muhâcirin*). The administrative discretion granted to Ottoman authorities with regard to naturalization applications, as well as the provisions that granted

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid., 66-70.

broad powers to the government during wartime, reflected both concerns about this practice and the state's increasing centralization and desire for bureaucratic control.

Hanley emphasizes the multiplicity of motives that influenced the 1909 revision, which was never implemented, and divides them into internal and external factors.²²⁵ The most significant internal motive pertained to the relatively conservative modernization of existing “nationality practices.” This form of controlled modernization was entirely consistent with the conservative objectives of the new government, which sought to preserve the *status quo* rather than transforming the empire. Furthermore, the most prominent external motive was the Ottoman Legal Bureau's competition with other states on nationality issues and its necessity to demonstrate its currency and competence. Consequently, the Bureau closely monitored the solutions implemented in other countries and aspired to adopt those that were deemed suitable. Furthermore, the emergence of conflicts with the Armenian community, coupled with the influx of refugees from the Balkan crises during the same period, gave rise to nationality issues that required resolution. Therefore, mounting international pressure under the discourse of “protection of minorities” compelled the Ottoman administration to formulate new regulations in 1909. However, the 1909 revision, which sought to integrate novel practices by drawing on the preceding 40 years of experience, remained only in draft form and was never implemented, despite all the underlying motives and efforts. New nationality issues continued to arise in the ensuing process, and in 1912–1913, the Council of State reiterated the issue of citizenship by declaring that individuals who converted to Islam would no longer automatically acquire Ottoman nationality. Concurrently, the successive political crises and military conflicts experienced during the Second Constitutional Era diverted the state's administrative priorities to other areas, thereby creating significant difficulties in implementing a comprehensive citizenship reform. Nevertheless, the 1909 draft, which was never implemented, is of great importance in the sense that it demonstrates the Ottoman Empire's efforts to clarify the nationality issue under an extremely complex population structure and in the face of international pressures.

Despite the fact that the terms *tebdîl-i tâbiyyet*, *tâbiyyete dehâlet*, and *telsik* all serve to denote the concept of “naturalization” in the context of the Ottoman bureaucracy, they in fact possess slightly divergent connotations. The term *tebdîl-i tâbiyyet* is translated as “change of nationality.” The term *tâbiyyete dehâlet* is translated as “seeking refuge in the nationality of a country or empire,” and *telsik* is translated as “acceptance into or acquisition of nationality.” In the period preceding the formation of nation states, the concept of a “nation state identity” predicated on ethnic-cultural affiliations was non-existent. Furthermore, a contemporary definition of “constitutional citizenship” – wherein individuals were endowed with rights and obligations and defined as members of a nation state with equal status – was absent. Consequently, in a manner consistent with other empires of the era, the Ottoman Empire did not adopt the concepts of “constitutional and political citizenship” or “nationality.” Instead, the concepts “imperial subjecthood” (*tâbiyyet*) and “subjects of the Sultan” (*tebaa*) were employed to denote the legal status of its citizens. In other words, the concept of “citizenship acquisition” or “naturalization” in the modern constitutional sense had not yet been established. *Tâbiyyet*, a term denoting a legal status or membership rather than an ethnic or cultural designation, was

²²⁵ Ibid., 66-67.

employed to signify allegiance to a state, that is to say, the status of an individual as a subject of a ruler.

However, it is important to note that the affiliation of the Italians within the Ottoman realm with their own homeland, which had already completed its process of unification and nation-building, may have had acquired a “national,” “civic” and even a “political” character. Consequently, it can be argued that within an imperial superstructure such as the Ottoman Empire, Italians could have affiliations that transcend subjecthood, whether through the mechanisms of capitulatory protectorate or through direct acquisition of Italian citizenship. Therefore, the employment of disparate terminology such as “subjecthood” in the Ottoman context and “nationality” or “citizenship” in the Italian context entails the risk of conceptual complexity and confusion in this particular study. This contradiction in terms may be primarily attributed to the transition from imperial structures to nation states, a period which was accompanied by a significant and rapid increase in the permeability between these three concepts.

The phenomenon of naturalization was characterized by a reciprocal and often pragmatic approach for both nationalities, whether from Ottoman to Italian or Italian to Ottoman. Moreover, this process between the two nationalities has included not only Italian-origin individuals associated with the Catholic denomination but also Ottoman subjects linked to other confessions, such as Jews, Armenians, and Greeks, on occasion. These minorities, who were neither Italian nor Catholic in essence, sought Italian citizenship solely for pragmatic purposes, such as benefiting from Italian protection and capitulations. Additionally, Italian Jews who were already under capitulatory protection appeared to renounce their Ottoman subjecthood and pursue Italian citizenship solely to achieve certain objectives in their homeland. Furthermore, the act of naturalization into Ottoman status was largely driven by fears stemming from wartime sanctions, such as expulsion from the country. This category also encompassed numerous individuals of Jewish, Armenian, and Greek descent who had previously obtained Italian citizenship for specific reasons, justifications, and necessities. This is due to the fact that the policies and sanctions triggered by wartime conditions had the potential to transform Italian nationality into a burdensome, even dangerous, liability. In such cases, where identities had become highly politicized and risky, the naturalization process, which had previously been sought with great enthusiasm, assumed a reversed nature and transformed into a process of renunciation. In order to facilitate understanding, the naturalization of the Italians in the Ottoman Empire was broadly categorized based on the following orientations and motivations:

- I. From Ottoman subjecthood to Italian citizenship: “Instrumental Naturalization” (1861-1911)
 - a. Italo-Levantines with Ottoman status pursuing life, business, or careers in their homeland, Italy.
 - b. Non-Muslim minorities such as Jews, Armenians and Greeks pursuing Italian naturalization to enjoy Italian patronage and capitulations.
- II. From Italian citizenship to Ottoman subjecthood: “Defensive Naturalization” (1911-1918)

- a. Italians pursuing Ottoman naturalization to avoid wartime sanctions such as expulsion from Ottoman lands.
 - b. Jews, Armenians and Greeks who had previously naturalized as Italians but preferred to restore their Ottoman status to avoid wartime sanctions such as expulsion from Ottoman lands.
- III. Acquisition or restoration of Italian citizenship after renunciation of Ottoman subjecthood: “Postwar Naturalization” (1919-1923)
- IV. Mutual from both nationalities: “Marital Naturalization”
 - a. Women from both nationalities acquiring Italian or Ottoman status through marriage

Prior to delving further into the use of these conceptualizations in the context of Italian nationals in the Ottoman Empire, it is beneficial to offer a concise review of their precursors in the extant academic literature. In contrast to the transimperial framework examined in this study, these precursors were devised and advanced in response to dynamics such as “migration,” “integration,” and “dual citizenship” that emerged within the transnational environment of the nation-state era. Notwithstanding this fact, they have furnished a foundational reference point for subsequent studies concerning both the theoretical essence and typology of the concept of “naturalization.” One such concept is that of “instrumental (or purposive) participation,” which provides a foundational point of reference for the concept of “instrumental naturalization” that is discussed in this study.²²⁶ The concept of “instrumental participation,” as initially defined in the 1978 study by Robert H. Salisbury, refers to the pursuit of personal interests through active political engagement. In this regard, Salisbury's emphasis on instrumentality underscored a purposive mode of participation, with the aim of encouraging citizens to assume an active role in political processes. Such participation was seen as a means to effect desired changes at specific levels of the political system or in specific public policies. Although this form of “political instrumentalism” has no direct connection to the “civic instrumentalism” evident in

²²⁶ Robert H. Salisbury, *Key Concepts of Citizenship: Perspectives and Dilemmas* (Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare- U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 10-14, 28. The concept of “instrumental participation,” as outlined by Salisbury, refers to the acquisition of power by citizens who pursue their own interests, subsequently using this power to redistribute social resources. The political nature of this form of participation is characterized by the presence of conflicting interests and the distribution of resources among individuals and groups. Consequently, the approach adopted by Salisbury is designed to emphasize two key concepts: the redistribution of resources and the tension between individual interests and the public good. From this perspective, it appears to have no direct connection to the capitular protection provided by the Italian state or to Ottoman subjects pursuing “instrumental naturalization” to secure their interests on the Italian peninsula. However, a crucial commonality exists between the “instrumental participation” introduced by Salisbury and the “instrumental naturalization” of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. This can be attributed to the perception of citizenship not as a matter of belonging or identity, but rather as a means to access specific advantages such as legal protection, economic opportunities, and political rights. In other words, while “instrumental participation” provides access to resources and power within a political domain, “instrumental naturalization” serves as a means to access certain rights and advantages within a civic domain.

naturalization practices, both are fundamentally concerned with transforming citizenship from a form of identity into a pragmatic tool.

In his highly influential book published in 2017, Kalu N. Kalu traces the origins of instrumental citizenship back to the *Aristotelian* concept of a republic, which emphasizes the functional and instrumental aspects of citizenship and essentially rejects the notion of rights.²²⁷ By dividing the concept of citizenship in liberal societies into instrumental and normative categories, Kalu's argument asserts that instrumental citizenship is guided by the individual's socioeconomic and political status. To the extent that political participation and economic access are not possible for all members of a society, Kalu further argues that instrumental citizenship creates and reinforces social inequalities. Accordingly, the notion of instrumental citizenship has undergone a paradigm shift since the 1970s, acquiring a meaning based on personal interests such as security, rights and opportunities. In this version, the naturalization of the individual is predicated more on a pragmatic choice focused on personal interests, benefits, status, and security rather than on values such as active political participation or national affiliation.

Conversely, Greta Gilbertson and Audrey Singer's 2003 work, which introduced the concept of "protective naturalization," presented a counterargument in the existing literature.²²⁸ Inspiring a plethora of subsequent works, it challenged the prevailing understanding that conceptualized the acquisition of citizenship as a means of active political and civic participation. Gilbertson and Singer have argued that the concept of a "good citizen" refers to an individual who adheres to the law rather than engaging in political activism. In their article, the authors examined the migratory and legal statuses of three distinct cohorts of the Castillo family, who migrated from the Dominican Republic to the United States between 1975 and 1997. Numerous members of the Castillo family who had been granted American citizenship and the right to vote did not participate in the electoral processes of either the Dominican Republic or the United States, thereby rejecting conventional political engagement. While recognizing that the protective nature of naturalization was not a novel concept, Gilbertson and Singer proposed a more interactive, permeable and pragmatic model of citizenship in the context of transnationalism. In this context, the term "protection" was redefined as a means of reducing uncertainties in both places and maximizing resources through transnational family ties. Utilizing a transnational model of citizenship, the Castillo family, upon their integration into the receiving American society, demonstrated a commitment to maintaining their loyalty, relationships, and ties to their country of origin, the Dominican Republic, throughout this process.

To summarize, the concept of protective citizenship functioned as a shield to safeguard one's rights against the state and other individuals, as well as to protect oneself from state intervention.²²⁹ This version corresponds to a liberal citizenship based on the reflex of protecting freedoms against state intervention rather than active political participation. In his subsequent article, Gilbertson observed that the naturalization process could adopt an

²²⁷ Kalu, *Citizenship*, 26, 31-32.

²²⁸ Greta Gilbertson and Audrey Singer, "The Emergence of Protective Citizenship in the USA: Naturalization Among Dominican Immigrants in the Post-1996 Welfare Reform Era," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 26, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 25-51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870022000025261>.

²²⁹ Greta A. Gilbertson, "Regulating Transnational Citizens in the Post-1996 Welfare Reform Era: Dominican Immigrants in New York City," *Latino Studies* 2, no. 1 (March 25, 2004): 90-110, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.lst.8600063>.

instrumental character based on self-interest, and that this character could be assigned a pejorative meaning. As Gilbertson noted, during the late 1990s, a number of Dominican immigrants were accused by certain circles in the US of having obtained citizenship for purely instrumental reasons, such as gaining access to social benefits. Despite having become citizens as a result of anti-immigrant legislation and programs designed to encourage naturalization, these individuals were subsequently treated as if they had violated the fundamental principles of citizenship.

The concept of “defensive citizenship,” which may initially be confused with protective citizenship, is a more postmodern and Eurocentric phenomenon that is experiencing a rapid increase in worldwide recognition.²³⁰ Izhak Berkovich’s statistical article represents a significant contribution to the extant literature in this field, revealing that defensive citizenship is associated with initiatives aimed at protecting the interests of rights-bearing citizens who are under threat. By distancing himself from the ongoing citizenship debate in terms of legal status, Berkovich introduces a novel approach grounded in two types of action-oriented civic participation that manifested during a period of welfare cuts. The first of these is “proactive citizenship,” defined as the group’s drive and actions to utilize social resources and conditions in support of their own social rights or those of other groups. The second is “defensive citizenship,” which consists of the group’s impulses and actions to resist institutions and changes that erode their social rights. The concept of defensive citizenship is predicated upon distrust of political institutions, anti-immigrant attitudes, and coercive personal circumstances. Indeed, Berkovich’s emphasis on “proactive” appears to coincide with the concept of protective citizenship,²³¹ which can be defined as the acquisition of citizenship in another country for the purpose of maintaining one’s current lifestyle, rights, and freedoms. Both can be regarded as preventative insurance policies that are designed to provide proactive protection against future state interventions targeting freedom. Conversely, the concept of defensive citizenship pertains to the act of an individual acquiring citizenship in another country with the intention of evading sanctions, punishment, or exclusion that is currently being faced or that constitutes an imminent threat. This reactive behaviour is adopted with a view to avoiding direct sanctions such as deportation, internment, dispossession, or the transition to enemy alien status, thereby ensuring immediate protection for the individual.

The concept of defensive citizenship, which emerged as a reactive action, in stark contrast to the proactive nature of ‘protective citizenship,’ is the subject of a seminal study by Sofia Aptekar, published in 2015.²³¹ The book explores the intentions and expectations of eight million immigrants who became American citizens between 2000 and 2011. In this regard, it seeks to demonstrate that a considerable proportion of these immigrants sought the relative security provided by citizenship as a reaction to a politically and socially hostile context. According to Aptekar, the phenomenon of defensive naturalization is indicative of the prevalence and predominance of criminalization of immigrants, non-whites, and the impoverished within twenty-first-century American society. Aptekar’s argument posits that naturalized and integrated immigrants have gradually developed a sense of belonging and

²³⁰ Izhak Berkovich, “Defensive Citizenship in Europe: Definition and Measurement,” *Political Studies Review* 19, no. 1 (April 1, 2020): 148–156, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929920906996>.

²³¹ Sofya Aptekar, *The Road to Citizenship: What Naturalization Means for Immigrants and the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015), 6, 12, 77-78, 82, 140.

attachment. Nevertheless, the fact that some of them perceive naturalization solely as a protective shield against deportation and the violation of their rights is not disregarded. In the face of mounting anti-immigrant policies at both the local and state levels, coupled with the emphasis on deportation at the federal level, individuals are increasingly seeking citizenship to safeguard their present and future rights. In contrast to other connotations attributed to citizenship, Aptekar contends that 'defensive naturalization' is not aligned with the social reproduction of the nation. She further asserts that this phenomenon has unfortunately become the new normal in the legislative and rhetorical climate of the US, which is exhibiting an anti-immigrant trend.

One of the most prominent scholars researching the turbulent and ambivalent nature of the relationship between war and citizenship is Daniela Luigia Caglioti.²³² A substantial proportion of her ambitious and comprehensive volume, published in 2021 and entitled *War and Citizenship*, focuses on the transformation from citizens to "enemy aliens" during the First World War. By meticulously examining the phenomena of affiliation, mobilization, inclusion and exclusion in the context of warring nations, Caglioti offers an insightful presentation of the redesigned concept and practice of citizenship under wartime conditions. Her observations on the phenomenon of "wartime naturalization" are particularly noteworthy and inspiring. She contends that the dynamics of war and revolution have served to radicalize ongoing processes of exclusion. Concurrently, these dynamics have functioned to restrict the boundaries of subjecthood and citizenship through the attribution of novel meanings to these categories. This shift in policy resulted in the facilitation of denaturalization and statelessness, while the process of naturalization became more intricate and challenging. It is evident that wartime conditions compelled parliaments and governments to frequently revise the existing legislation pertaining to citizenship and naturalization. Furthermore, these re-legislation processes necessitated not only inclusion policies but also exclusion policies to be grounded in a legal framework. In other words, in accordance with wartime priorities, lawmakers were required to restrict the progressive expansion of citizenship and civil rights. In order to prevail in the war and maintain public support, states resorted to various strategies, including naturalization, denaturalization and the deprivation of rights. Subsequently, more stringent measures were implemented, including expulsion, deportation, repatriation, forced migration, confinement, and internment. Governments that have sought to reallocate rights by exploiting the war have frequently engaged in futile attempts to reduce the ethnic and national complexity of their own societies.

Caglioti has observed that, in regard to wartime naturalization and denaturalization, empires tended to adopt a similar approach to nation-states.²³³ Particularly due to conscription policies, the warring parties associated the concept of citizenship much more closely with that of nationalism than they did in peacetime. This association led to the territorialization of legal allegiance to the state, rendering it contingent on ethnic origin, religion, language, or, in certain instances, social class, as evidenced in Bolshevik Russia. Ambiguous scenarios, such as national uncertainty and dual citizenship, became a greater concern during the war. This was especially the case for states that had previously experienced significant migration, prompting them to pursue the uniqueness of citizenship. Military requirements and security concerns

²³² Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*, 263, 265.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 283-285.

prompted state organs and bureaucracies to reimagine foreigners, including even their own citizens, as dangerous internal foes owing to their origins or affiliations with enemy nations. This redefinition overshadowed the fundamental and legal requirements of citizenship, including residence and birth. For instance, certain groups or individuals were stripped of their citizenship and reduced to the status of stateless or illegal, in order to be rendered harmless, interned, have their property confiscated, or be more easily deported. Conversely, those who had the potential to contribute to the war effort were incorporated into society or reintegrated through naturalization, even if their national affiliation had not previously been recognized.

The ensuing two subsections will focus on two different categories of naturalization, centering on the case of Ottoman Jews who initially sought Italian nationality in a persistent manner, and then, as a consequence, sought to renounce this status at the earliest opportunity. The first of these is an “instrumental naturalization” driven by pragmatic reasons, such as the revival of business connections in the Italian peninsula and the exploitation of the privileges granted to Italians by the Ottoman Capitulatory regime. The second is a “defensive naturalization” aimed at evading the sanctions and coercive practices imposed on Italian nationals by wartime policies. In the first case, the Italian status was a highly desired goal, pursued with great passion and persistence; in short, it was a goal that was deemed to be broadly favored in all respects. However, this goal, which had initially been considered favored, subsequently became a risky burden that had to be eliminated with the outbreak of the Italo-Ottoman War in Tripolitania in October 1911.

3.2.1. Obtaining Italian Protection: “Instrumental Naturalization (1861-1911)” and “Postwar Naturalization (1919-1923)” of the Ottoman Jews

It is noteworthy that the concepts of “instrumental and defensive naturalization” intersects and occasionally contradicts the Jewish confession and Italian nationality in twentieth-century Ottoman geography. In accordance with the temporal and spatial context of this study, my primary focus is on the fact that Italian Jews in Ottoman territories transformed their naturalization practice into a pragmatic means of protection. As demonstrated above, the transition from Ottoman subjecthood to Italian citizenship in this study is characterized by a tendency towards “proactive and protective instrumentality.” The individual seeks to sustain and cultivate his personal or commercial networks on the Italian peninsula, and, in pursuit of this objective, to acquire the protection of Italian capitulations. These Jewish communities were comprised of individuals who had either inherited or assumed Italian citizenship as a result of their ancestors having emigrated from the Italian peninsula or Sicily. Indeed, it is also true that many Ottoman Jews engaged in commercial activities had long since chosen to adopt Italian citizenship in order to benefit from the protection and capitulations granted to Italians for centuries, regardless of their Italian origin. However, in the event of war between the Ottoman Empire and Italy, the extraordinary sanctions imposed on Italian institutions and individuals within the Ottoman realm often transformed this nationality into a heavy burden, even an unbearable one. . In this particular instance in which Italian citizenship was converted to Ottoman subject status, the individual adopted a “reactive defense” strategy against the state’s wartime policies and the subsequent reduction to enemy alien status. In such situations, Italian Jews were observed attempting to shed their Italian identity and regain their Ottoman identity.

At the beginning of her eye-opening book, Stein quotes a very insightful anecdote from the memoirs of Italian-American writer André Aciman, who was born in Alexandria:²³⁴

“Like most young Jewish men born in Turkey toward the end of the century, Vili disparaged anything to do with Ottoman culture and thirsted for the West, finally becoming ‘Italian’ the way most Jews in Turkey did: by claiming ancestral ties with Leghorn²³⁵, a port city near Pisa where escaped Jews from Spain had settled in the sixteenth century. A very distant Italian relative bearing the Spanish name of Pardo-Roques was conveniently dug up in Leghorn—Vili was half Pardo-Roques himself, whereupon all living ‘cousins’ in Turkey immediately became Italian.... Uncle Vili knew how to convey that intangible though unmistakable feeling that he had lineage—a provenance so ancient and so distinguished that it transcended such petty distinctions as birthplace, nationality, and religion...”

Aciman’s anecdote addresses and elucidates the motivation of Vili, a Sephardic Jew whose ancestors had fled Spain, to become European.²³⁶ This motivation towards Europeanisation was further defined by his strong disdain for the Ottoman Empire and his subsequent glorification of the West. The establishment of an extraterritorial affiliation, as evidenced by the Spanish surname Pardo-Roques and the Livornese inheritance, resulted in the recognition of all of Vili’s cousins residing within the Ottoman Empire as Italian citizens. However, it should be acknowledged that the establishment of affiliations between Livorno and the Ottoman Empire was facilitated by the commercial cooperation that was encouraged and promoted by the capitulatory regime. *Franko* families such as the *Allatini*, *Fernandez*, and *Modiano* in Salonika and Istanbul emerged as prominent beneficiaries of the evolving Ottoman economy and the most active reformers of their time. Stein observes that the *Frankos*, who had previously held French, Dutch, or Tuscan nationalities, began to acquire Italian nationality following Italy’s unification as a nation in the nineteenth century. This population underwent a series of dramatic legal transformations without ever leaving Ottoman territory, becoming distinguished not only by their legal status but also by their social class, and transforming into an elite subgroup within the broader Jewish community. Giacomo Saban (1926-2022), an Italian Jew born in Istanbul, asserted that the *Franko* community in Istanbul had requested protection from the Italian Embassy in 1862. The basis for this request was that the majority of members of the community continued to use Italian as their primary language in their homes and synagogues, despite already holding Italian citizenship. It is evident that the *Franko* population was endeavoring to achieve linguistic and cultural autonomy within the context of the Ottoman regime, under the aegis of consular protection. However, throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, some foreign governments that claimed legal jurisdiction over such protected individuals encountered intense resistance from the Ottoman government under

²³⁴ Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, xii,13; André Aciman, *Out of Egypt: A Memoir* (New York: Macmillan, 1994). Stein’s volume is the most comprehensive and original study published to date on the adoption and acquisition of European nationalities by Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The author elucidates the manner in which these Jewish individuals obtained an “extraterritorial” status through their naturalization in Europe, with a particular focus on the twentieth century. The study examines the civil and legal statuses bestowed upon Ottoman Jews by European passports, as well as the cultural, economic, and social consequences of this phenomenon. Ultimately, Stein successfully interrogates the concepts of citizenship, identity, and national belonging that emerged with the advent of the nation-state era through the complex and multiple identities of Sephardic Jews.

²³⁵ This is the traditional English name for Livorno.

²³⁶ Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, xii, 13-14, 142, 147-148.

certain circumstances, leading to diplomatic disputes. The rationale behind this phenomenon pertains to the endeavors of the Ottoman administration to assert and establish its legal sovereignty, even over subjects who were originally nationals of foreign states, in instances where such matters concerned its own imperial interests.

Nahum observes that the *Frankos*, who were part of the Jewish community in Izmir, adopted Italian city names such as Padova, Taranto, Pontremoli and Romano as their surnames.²³⁷ Due to their partially Italian origins, and because Italian was the language of trade in the Mediterranean basin until the mid-nineteenth century, the *Frankos* of Izmir spoke Italian for most of the century. While the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, the leading Paris-based school of the city's Jewish community, used French as the language of instruction, in 1913 the Italian Consul General proposed offering Italian language classes at the school. The Italian government covered the costs of the project, which was facilitated by an Italian-born Jewish notable in the locality. The director of the *Alliance* school was greatly influenced by this proposal due to the newly established shipping line between Izmir and Italy and the imminent opening of the Banco di Roma branch in Izmir (1919). Anticipating Italy's rapidly growing economic influence, he believed that teaching Italian to Jewish students would prove beneficial for their future. During the Turkish-Greek War (1919–1922), the relationship between the Italian government and the Izmir Jews took on a very different character. The Greek occupation of Izmir brought about a struggle for survival and profound changes for the city's Jewish population. On the eve of the occupation and at its outset, a significant number of Jews rushed to the French consulate in an attempt to obtain official French protection. However, under the likely influence of Greek pressure, the French consulate suspended Jewish applications. During this period, Italy demonstrated a resolute commitment to asserting its claims over Izmir, a territory that had been promised to it in the 1917 Treaty of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne. Italian foreign policy sought to have the decision to hand over the city to Greece, which was taken at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, reconsidered. At this juncture, the claim of an Italian population in Izmir could have been instrumental in legitimizing Italian claims over the city in the eyes of the international public. Consequently, following the French consular refusal, the Italian government approached the Jews and sought their support by offering protection or naturalization. In order to be considered eligible for this opportunity, it was sufficient for an individual to have even distant kinship with an Italian national, or even kinship with a Jew from an Anatolian city under Italian occupation. For instance, 500 Ottomans of Jewish origin residing in Denizli utilized this occasion to be evacuated from the region under Italian military protection, thereby ensuring their survival.²³⁸

Prior to an examination of the naturalization cases between Italy and the Ottoman Empire, it would be illuminating to consider the conflicts between the citizenship laws of both states and the political tensions engendered by these conflicts.²³⁹ A seminal article by Alessandro Breccia, entitled *Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza: Il personale consolare italiano al tramonto dell'Impero ottomano (1863-1923)* (Policies and Visions of Citizenship: Italian Consular Staff at the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire), offers a unique analysis revealing the legal conflicts between the two states regarding nationality. The article focuses on a six-month report sent by

²³⁷ Nahum, *İzmir Yahudileri*, 161-162, 189, 190.

²³⁸ Ibid., 190-191. Nahum frequently refers to the AAIU (*Archives de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle*) in Paris for insights on this particular era.

²³⁹ Breccia, "Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza," 26.

Giovanni Cesare Majoni, who served as the Italian Vice-Consul in Istanbul from 1903 to 1905, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 19 April 1906. The report, entitled *Stranieri e sudditi ottomani nella Turchia d'Europa. Conflitti giuridici di nazionalità*, revealed the progress of scientific, legal, and political debates on the issues of protection, citizenship, and Italian naturalization, which were always on the agenda of Italian-Ottoman relations.²⁴⁰ Despite the elapse of 11 years since the Council for Diplomatic Disputes (*Consiglio del contenzioso diplomatico*) reached its decision regarding the practice, the Italian government's traditional stance on the recognition of naturalizations had become confusing and open to question.

According to the Vice-Consul Majoni, the Ottoman government's determination to increase the number of its subjects at any cost was the fundamental reason for the dispute between the two states over citizenship.²⁴¹ It was therefore incumbent upon the Italian authorities to exercise the utmost caution when assessing the decisions made by Ottoman officials, who undertook every possible effort to achieve this goal. However, the Italian government also had to reconsider its restrictive and rigid approach to citizenship and protection applications. While the Ottoman authorities readily granted citizenship to foreigners, the Italian government, despite having no legal obligation to do so, required applicants to provide a release certificate stating that they had been stripped of their own country's citizenship. Furthermore, Italian consulates were required to adopt a more distant and less conciliatory attitude towards those who renounced Italian citizenship and became Ottoman citizens. According to Majoni, the primary rationale for adopting this non-conciliatory stance was the persistent foundation of Ottoman private law in Sharia, the historical Islamic legal tradition. In other words, there was no guarantee that those who acquired Ottoman citizenship would fulfil their previous obligations to their countries of origin in the areas of civil and criminal law. Furthermore, as a result of being compelled to acquire Ottoman citizenship by following their husbands, wives were placed under a comparatively weaker protection system than that of the kingdom. It is evident that Majoni's observations, in reference to the *Codice Pisanelli of 1865* — the foundational document in the establishment of Italian citizenship law — have ultimately indicated a substantial discrepancy between Italian and Ottoman legislations.

An examination of the experiences of Italian Jews in the Ottoman Empire regarding their naturalization reveals a three-pronged trend. The first two trends are, respectively, the transition from Ottoman subjecthood to Italian citizenship from the Unification of Italy (1861) to the Tripolitanian War (1911-1912), and the transition from Italian citizenship to Ottoman subjecthood from 1911 to the end of the First World War (1918). The third trend, which I refer to as "postwar naturalization," began with the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and continued until the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. It involved Jews renouncing Ottoman subjecthood and acquiring or restoring Italian citizenship throughout the Turkish War of Independence and the subsequent establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The primary motivation for Jews to seek Italian naturalization was their incorporation into the Ottoman capitulation regime, which had granted privileges to foreign subjects for centuries. Initially, Ottoman Jews eagerly sought Italian nationality by claiming geographical, organic, or identity-based ties to Italy. However, following the sanctions imposed in the aftermath of the Italian occupation of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911, this trend underwent a reversal. In order to evade impending sanctions

²⁴⁰ The English translation of the title of Majoni's report is "Foreigners and Ottoman Subjects in European Turkey. Legal Conflicts of Nationality."

²⁴¹ Breccia, "Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza," 26-27.

such as expulsion, relocation, closure of businesses, or dismissal from work, a significant number of Jews renounced their Italian nationality and reverted to Ottoman subjecthood. Applicants seeking to switch their status from Italian to Ottoman or vice versa were subjected to a meticulous investigation by Ottoman local authorities and security departments. In instances where the applicant's place of residence was situated beyond the geographical boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, the investigative process would encompass international dimensions, assuming a diplomatic character.

For instance, the case of Joseph Penso (ژوزف پنسو), an Italian Jew born in Trieste, who submitted a request to change his status from Ottoman to Italian in July 1900, can be considered a particularly suitable example for this type of application.²⁴² Penso, a resident of Brussels and a member of the Italian Chamber of Commerce, submitted his application for naturalization through the Ottoman Embassy in Brussels (*Brüksel Sefâret-i Seniyyesi*) to the Bureau of Nationality in Istanbul. Ahmed Sâmî, the director of the Bureau, requested that the applicant's "place of birth" (*maskat-ı re's*) and residence in the Ottoman Empire be verified prior to the initiation of the necessary procedures. Secondly, in the absence of any impediments to the process, an "imperial authorization" (*müsâade-i / ruhsat-ı seniyye*) was required to be issued, stipulating that the individual had the capacity to "renounce his Ottoman subjecthood" (*terk-i tâbiyet*) in accordance with the prescribed procedure. Finally, the Brussels Embassy was requested to obtain a written undertaking from the applicant stating that "he would not return to the Ottoman Empire" (*bir daha Memâlik-i Şâhâne'ye avdet etmeyeceğine*) and that, "should he do so, his foreign status would be deemed null and void" (*ve şâyed gelirse tâbiyet-i ecnebiyesi keen-lem-yekün hükmünde kalacağına*).

Another case of particular interest is that of Rober Moiz Maccia (روبر موئیز مآچا), who was born in Balat but originally hailed from Livorno, and how his application process in July 1904 progressed with the local authorities.²⁴³ According to government correspondence, it appears that Rober Moiz Maccia claimed Italian citizenship by virtue of his alleged connection to Livorno. Consequently, he was the subject of an investigation by local authorities at the behest of the Ministry of Public Security (*Zabtiye Nezâreti*). The Istanbul Police Directorate (*İstanbul Polis Müdürlüğü*) was tasked with investigating the Maccia family's status and nationality, as well as their familiarity by the police and the existence of any criminal records. Furthermore, the Beyoğlu *Mutasarrıfate* (Sanjak Governorate) was requested to contact the Balat neighborhood, the place of birth of the aforementioned individuals, and to inquire about any records or information concerning them. The investigation yielded a surprising result: namely, that no records or information were found indicating that the individual was a subject of the Ottoman Empire, nor that any procedures he had carried out to obtain Ottoman subjecthood. The investigation further revealed that Rober Moiz's grandfather, a native of Livorno, had initially resided in Balat with his family approximately 60 years ago. He subsequently relocated to the Tünel area 17 years ago and passed away in Italy a further nine years later. It was apparent that Rober's father, Vitali, and his brother, Elber, were engaged in trade in London. Meanwhile,

²⁴² COA, HR.İD.131/31/Lef 3, 12 Temmuz 1316 – 25 July 1900; HR.TH.244/68/, 12 Temmuz 1316 – 25 July 1900, Sublime Porte - Department of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of the Bureau of Nationality - Ahmed Sâmî (*Dâire-i Hâriciye Tâbiyet Müdüriyeti- Tâbiyet Müdîri Ahmed Sâmî*). The names of Italian individuals cited in the archival documents are accompanied by their Ottoman Turkish transcriptions.

²⁴³ COA, ZB.337/27, 04 Temmuz 1320 – 17 July 1904; ZB.337/49, 09 Teşrîniyevel 1320 – 22 October 1904, From the Correspondence Office of the Ministry of Public Security to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Mektûbî Kalemîne Mahsûs- Hâriciye Nezâretine*).

Rober Moiz was engaged in commercial activities, operating his own fabric stores near the Beyoğlu Tünel and Çorbacı Han in Mahmutpaşa. The report submitted to the Ministry of Public Security revealed that there was an absence of evidence to suggest that these individuals were Ottoman subjects. As evidenced by both the passport issued in Rome on 10 August 1861 and “statements made by the leader and prominent members of the Jewish community in Istanbul” (*Müsevî cemâat başıyla sâirlerinin ifâdelerine nazaran*), these individuals were, in fact, identified as Italian nationals. However, given that Rober Moiz did not hold Italian citizenship at the time, it is highly probable that the passport in question belonged to his father or grandfather. Notwithstanding the assumption that his father and grandfather were protégés living under Italian protection encouraged by the Ottoman capitulatory regime, it remains an enigma that Rober Moiz did not possess either Italian or Ottoman nationality. Given that he had only recently submitted an application for Italian nationality, he was not yet a legal Italian citizen. However, official investigations had revealed that he was not a subject of the Ottoman Empire either. If the individual in question was neither of these nationalities, what was his status? While it is highly probable that he was a national of another foreign state, no details concerning this were mentioned in the correspondence.

The application for Italian naturalization submitted in March 1907 by Professor Vittorio Macchioro (ویتوریو ماخیورو) is a subject of interest due to the applicant’s profile and background.²⁴⁴ Born in the Austrian city of Trieste in 1880, Macchioro was affiliated with the Jewish community of the Ottoman Empire. He was awarded his degree from the Department of Ancient History at the University of Bologna in 1904; and went on to become one of Italy’s most eminent archaeologists and museologists. He produced numerous significant academic, literary and artistic works until his death in Rome in 1958. In 1907, Vittorio, who was residing in the Italian city of Camerino, found himself in need of a change of nationality “in order to teach history at a private Italian high school” (*İtalya mekteblerinde muallimlik edebilmek*) located within the same city. In order to achieve this objective, he submitted an application to the Ottoman Embassy in Rome, requesting imperial permission to renounce his Ottoman identity and instead become an Italian national. A written undertaking, signed and attached by Vittorio, stated that he would not return to the Ottoman Empire upon acquiring Italian nationality. A thorough investigation conducted by the Bureau of Nationality revealed that Vittorio’s father, David Macchioro, was born in Spalato (presently Split, Croatia), Dalmatia, but had been residing in Trieste for a period of many years. The father had been “recognized and registered as an Ottoman subject” (*tebaa-i Devlet-i Aliyye sıfatıyla mazbut ve mukayyed*) by the Ottoman Consulate General in Trieste (*Trieste Baş Şehbenderhânesi*). However, “there were no records indicating any liability or connection of Vittorio to Ottoman territory” (*Memâlik-i Osmâniye’de bir gûnâ kaydı ve ilişiği bulunmadığı*). The Grand Vizier’s Office has

²⁴⁴ COA, ŞD.2763/13/Lef 4, 03 Mart 1323 – 16 March 1907; ŞD.2763/13/Lef 3, 10 Mart 1323 – 23 March 1907, From the Correspondence Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Sublime Porte to the Grand Vizirate (*Bâb-ı Âlî Dâire-i Hâriciye Mektûbî Kaleminden Sadâretpenâhîye*); For further information regarding the life, academic career, and influential works of Vittorio Macchioro, one of Italy’s most prominent figures in archaeology and ancient history, please refer to the following online sources: Antonella Parisi, “Macchioro, Vittorio,” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 67 (Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, 2006), accessed June 14, 2025, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vittorio-macchioro_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vittorio-macchioro_(Dizionario-Biografico)/); “Vittorio Macchioro,” Mimesis Edizioni, accessed June 14, 2025, <https://www.mimesisedizioni.it/catalogo/autore/5520/vittorio-macchioro>; Christian Pugliese, “Vittorio Macchioro,” *Associazione Italiana di Filosofia della Religione*, accessed June 17, 2025, <https://www.pensierofilosoficoreligiosoitaliano.org/node/60>.

stated that the applicant, who has submitted all the necessary documentation in accordance with the established procedure, should be granted permission from the Sultan. This was due to the fact that the change of nationality of such individuals, whose residence was registered abroad but who were essentially subjects of the Ottoman Empire, was “contingent upon the issuance of a Sultanic decree” (*irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i Pâdişâhîye muallak*).

However, further correspondence dated October 1908 reveals that Macchioro’s application to renounce his Ottoman status had not been resolved for a period exceeding two years, and that he had not yet obtained Italian nationality.²⁴⁵ According to his biographies in Italian sources, Macchioro was awarded the competition for the curatorship of the Civic Museum in Pavia (*Museo Civico di Pavia*) in October 1907 and held this position until August 1909. However, Ottoman correspondence referred to him as “the director of the Pavia museum” (*müze müdürliğinde müstahdem*). In October 1908, Macchioro submitted a second application for Italian nationality, which was related to his intention to participate in the forthcoming “Competition for the Position of Inspector of Italian Museums” (*İtalya Müzehâneler Müfettişliği Müsâbakası*). For this purpose, he submitted his application through the Ottoman Embassy in Rome, as he had previously done, and requested official permission from the Sublime Porte. In his petition, written in French, Macchioro expressly pledged that he would not return to the Ottoman Empire upon acquisition of Italian status. The Ottoman Bureau of Nationality, which received the application, first inquired about the identity of the applicant’s father and which locality and community of the Ottoman Empire he belonged to. It would appear that the 1907 inquiry was not considered to be sufficiently compelling, as further details were requested from the Roman Embassy and the Trieste Consulate General for this purpose.

²⁴⁵ COA, HR.TH..368/88/Lef 1, 12 Teşrîniyevvel 1324 – 25 October 1908, Department of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of the Bureau of Nationality (*Dâire-i Hâriciye Tâbiyyet Müdîriyeti*).

In April 1909, the applicant was requested to pay 520 qurushes in paperwork fees, consisting of the official licence fee, donation and stamp duty.²⁴⁶ Despite the elapse of a six-month period since the submission of the application, the emphasis placed on such documentation was indicative of the prevailing conditions within the complex Ottoman bureaucracy. The Civil Affairs Division (*Mülkiye Dâiresi*) of the Ottoman Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*), which convened in July 1909, reached a decision on the case of Macchioro in light of the investigations conducted in Rome and Trieste. Although the investigation confirmed that Vittorio's father, David, was born in Spalato and resided in Trieste, it further indicated that the family had previously been subjects of the Ottoman Empire and were "members of the Istanbul community" (*Dersâadet ahâlisinden*). To elaborate further, the paternal grandfather of Vittorio, known as Rafael, was born in Bosnia and subsequently migrated to the Dalmatian coast. Despite the absence of explicit statements to this effect in the documentation, there is a high probability that Vittorio's ancestors, who were affiliated with the Sephardic Jewish community in Istanbul, initially migrated to Bosnia and subsequently to the Dalmatian coast. Consequently, the Council of State formally acknowledged Vittorio as an Ottoman subject, a status that was attributed to his father's origins in Bosnia.²⁴⁷ Despite the fact that both he and his father were born in foreign cities, his Bosnian origin rendered Vittorio eligible for Ottoman subjecthood. Furthermore, Vittorio had no known affiliation, liability or connection to Ottoman territory that would prevent him from changing his status of nationality. In his petition, he also stated that he was obliged to reside in Italy from that point onward and that he would never return to Ottoman territory. In this regard, the Sultan issued the "official authorization" (*ruhsatnâme-i resmîye*) required for Macchioro's change of nationality in August 1909 and ordered that it be sent to the applicant as soon as possible.

The attempts of the Ottoman Jews to obtain Italian and Spanish citizenship in a practical and feasible manner attracted the attention of the Ottoman authorities, who issued a memorandum in 1907 to address this issue.²⁴⁸ The memorandum highlighted "the significant number and diverse nature of naturalization documents" (*kesret ve sûret-i mürâcaatları nazar-ı dikkate alınmaya şâyan ahvâlden olup*) that certain Jewish residents of the Ottoman Empire had

²⁴⁶ COA, HR.TH..374/91/Lef 1, 31 Mart 1325 – 13 April 1909; Department of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of the Bureau of Nationality (*Dâire-i Hâriciye Tâbiyyet Müdîriyeti*); İ..HR..418/28/Lef 1, 08 Temmuz 1325 – 21 July 1909, From the Deputy Chief of the Civil Affairs Division of the Council of State to the Grand Vizirate (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet - Mülkiye Dâiresi Reis-i Sânisinden Dâire-i Sadârete*); İ..HR..418/28/Lef 2, 11 Temmuz 1325-24 July 1909, The Office of the Grand Vizier, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, Chief Secretary of the Imperial Council (*Sadrâzam Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, Dâire-i Sadâret, Âmedî-i Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn*) ; DH.MKT.2907/18/Lef 1, 04 Ağustos 1325 – 17 August 1909, From the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Directorate of Public Security (*Dâhiliye Nezâretinden Hâriciye Nezâretine ve Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdîriyetine*).

²⁴⁷ Although Bosnia and Herzegovina remained under the territorial control of the Ottoman Empire following the provisions of the Berlin Treaty of 1878, it was agreed that the country would be occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary as of that date. Ottoman sovereignty was maintained in nominal terms, however, the practical administration of the Bosnian Vilâyet, both civil and military, had now been entirely assumed by Austria-Hungary. Despite its subsequent decline to a largely symbolic component of the Ottoman administrative structure, Bosnia was officially recognized as a geographical affiliation that rendered Ottoman subjecthood Vâlid in the Macchioro case. Until its official annexation by Austria-Hungary on 5 October 1908, Bosnia and Herzegovina maintained a sociocultural heritage that exerted a significant influence on Ottoman civil administration and population bureaucracy.

²⁴⁸ COA, HR.ID..121/53/Lef 2, 04 Kânûnuevvel 1323 – 17 December 1907. This is a copy of a memorandum issued by the Bureau of Nationality on 17 December 1907 (*04 Kânûnuevvel 1323 tarihiyle Tâbiyyet Kaleminden yazılan müzekerre sûretidir*).

obtained from Italian and Spanish consulates and submitted for authorization. Despite efforts to ensure that all such processes were carried out in accordance with the law and established procedures, the significant increase in the number of applications had begun to lead to bureaucratic disputes and difficulties. The Bureau of Nationality proceeded to categorize the Jewish applicants into three distinct classifications.

- The initial category comprised individuals who had originally been subjects of the Ottoman Empire and had subsequently acquired Italian or Spanish status without departing Ottoman territory, or by residing in these countries for a stipulated period in accordance with their local laws.²⁴⁹
- The second category comprised individuals who were born and resided in Ottoman territories, but whose original nationality was questionable.²⁵⁰ These individuals sought to claim nationality based on documents obtained while passing through Italy or Spain on a journey, despite not having resided in either country.
- The third category comprised individuals who were originally nationals of another foreign state or temporary government but sought to obtain Italian or Spanish status without departing Ottoman territory and without residing in these countries for the period stipulated by law.²⁵¹

The memorandum also emphasized that the majority of Italian and Spanish nationals residing in Ottoman territories were originally from their respective countries and were subjects of their respective states.²⁵² A proportion of the remaining individuals had acquired nationality in accordance with the respective laws of the aforementioned countries prior to the promulgation of the Ottoman Nationality Law of 1869. Finally, there were also individuals who had renounced Ottoman status with the government's permission, acquired Italian and Spanish citizenship after fulfilling the necessary conditions, but whose previous Ottoman residency was not exceptionally prohibited. The memorandum made reference to the 1863 Consular Regulations (*Konsolosluk Nizamnâmesi*), "which extended foreign protection status" (*himâyet-i ecnebiye usûlû temdîd ve ilka edilmiş*), and the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law, "which regulated naturalization issues" (*mesâil-i tâbiyyet taht-ı intizâma alınmış*). Despite these two legislative regulations, it was unclear how the applicants managed to obtain documents proving

²⁴⁹ "Eşhâs-ı merkûme esâsen üç sınıf üzere olup bunlardan birincisi aslen tebaa-i Devlet-i Aliyye'den oldukları hâlde Memâlik-i Osmâniye'den infikak etmeksizin veyâhut İtalya ve İspanya'da kavâin-i mahâlîye mûcibince bizzat ve muayyen müddet ikamet eyleyerek devlet-i müşârünileyha evrâk-ı tâbiyyetini istihsâle muvaffak olanlar."

²⁵⁰ "ve ikincisi tâbiyyet-i asliyeleri meşkûk olunarak Memâlik-i Osmâniye'de mütevellid veya mukîm olup da İtalya ve İspanya'da bulunmaksızın veyahut berây-ı seyâhat oralarından geçtikleri esnâda elde ettikleri evrâka istinâden mezkur devletler tâbiyyetini iddiaya kıyâm edenler"

²⁵¹ "ve üçüncüsü de diğer bir devlet-i ecnebiye veya hükûmât-ı sagîre ahâli-i asliyesinden iken Memâlik-i Şâhânedan çıkmaksızın ve İtalya ve İspanya'da kanûnen meşrûat olan müddet-i ikamet etmeksizin işbu devletler tâbiyyetini hâiz olmak isteyenlerdir."

²⁵² COA, HR.ID..121/53/Lef 2, 04 Kânûnuevvel 1323 – 17 December 1907.

their nationality to those states without leaving Ottoman territory or residing in the territory of the relevant states at least for the legally specified period.

Despite the Bureau of Nationality requesting clarifications from the Italian and Spanish embassies, their inquiries were consistently met with brief responses, attributing the jurisdiction to the respective governments.²⁵³ In this particular context, the Bureau did not limit its inquiries to the explicit content of the documents presented by Jewish applicants. Rather, it endeavored to conduct further investigations into the individuals concerned, with the objective of ascertaining their true nature, to the greatest extent possible. Furthermore, the Bureau did caution the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that this meticulous and cumbersome procedure applied could potentially result in complaints from the relevant embassies. It was imperative that the gravity of the situation be clearly and appropriately communicated to the foreign ministries of the relevant countries, and that the outcome be conveyed to the Ottoman embassies in Rome and Madrid. Only by following this course of action “could the Ottoman government be shielded from potential challenges, violations and abuses that might be encountered” (*Hükümet-i Seniyyece müsâdîf oluna gelen bâzı müşkilât ve sû-i istîmâlâtın def’ ve izâlesi maksadıyla*) in diplomatic platforms. It was evident that the Ottoman authorities had been unsettled by the large-scale conversion of Jews to Italian and Spanish nationality. Consequently, this had led to subsequent alarm and the initiation of certain measures. However, it is obvious that the necessary sensitivity was exercised to ensure that these measures did not lead to a diplomatic crisis with the two countries in question.

Following the official annexation of Tripoli and Benghazi by Italy on 24 February 1912, the number of Italians who had acquired Ottoman citizenship to circumvent the adverse consequences of the war increased considerably.²⁵⁴ This upward trend persisted throughout the First World War and subsequently constituted a topic on the post-war international agenda. At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, the question of these individuals’ restoring their original citizenship without the consent of the Ottoman government was formally addressed. The High Commissioner of Italy in Istanbul, Marchese Garroni, proposed a resolution regarding the reinstatement of Italian citizenship for those who had previously chosen to become Ottoman subjects during the Libyan campaign. Provided they rectified their status, these individuals would be reinstated as Italian citizens within a period of two to three years following the ratification of the peace treaty.

In addition to those adversely affected by the ongoing situation arising from the Italy-Turkey conflict, Garroni had identified a new category of beneficiaries.²⁵⁵ These individuals were families of Italian origin who currently held Ottoman subject status and were categorized as part of the so-called Latin community. Garroni proposed the addition of a clause to the peace treaty, one which would grant citizenship to the individuals concerned, with no requirement for permission from the Sublime Porte. It appears that the cessation of hostilities at the conclusion of the First World War reignited the Italian Kingdom’s aspiration to expand its demographic influence, with citizenship policies beginning to function as a strategic instrument to that end. Garroni’s prospectus advocated for potential concessions and flexibility for the naturalization of individuals deemed to serve and contribute to Italian interests. However, the Italian delegation at the conference approached these proposals with a degree of caution and negativity,

²⁵³ COA, HR.ID..121/53/Lef 2, 04 Kânûnuevvel 1323 – 17 December 1907.

²⁵⁴ Breccia, “Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza,” 28.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

arguing that such an application could lead to similar demands from other victorious powers. In this scenario, the generalization of such practices in such an uncertain environment would serve to expand the capitulation regime rather than strengthen Italy's influence in Asia Minor. Therefore, the result would be to the benefit of small states such as Greece more than Italy itself.

In addition, "the Jewish community" (*Milel-i Mûseviye*) of Rhodes, many of whom adopted Italian nationality following the 1912 invasion, also exhibited a high degree of mobility across the transimperial identities and borders in order to survive in wartime conditions.²⁵⁶ Referred to as the "native inhabitants of Rhodes" (*Rodos sekene-i asliyesi*), these Jews demonstrated the pragmatic flexibility required by the war, owing to the cross-border advantages afforded by multiple forms of identity. Stein's account asserts that, prior to the advent of the First World War, a group of approximately 4,500 individuals belonging to the Jewish community of Rhodes sought refuge in France. According to Stein, the French authorities' designation of these Jews as "Italian protégés from Rhodes" (*Rhodiciens protégés italiens*) rather than Levantines or Ottomans can be attributed to the strategic priorities of French foreign policy in the Mediterranean region. In other words, despite the French bureaucracy's acknowledgement of these individuals' birthplace as the Ottoman Empire, it refrained from categorizing them as "Levantines" within the social sphere or as "Ottomans" within the legal framework. Another notable instance of the transimperial flexibility demonstrated by the Rhodian Jews concerned the eight who arrived and settled in Finike on 2 August 1914, prior to the Ottoman mobilization. To evade military service, these Jews declined to issue and acquire "Ottoman identity documents" (*tezkire-i Osmâniye*) and asserted their claim to Italian citizenship. However, the Ottoman authorities were not willing to allow these Rhodian Jews to remain in a strategically important port city like Finike during those challenging wartime conditions. Since August 1915, the Mutasarrifate of Teke, in line with numerous other Ottoman coastal administrations, had been implementing a policy of relocating Italians from the coast to the interior. Accordingly, in order to "expel and officially remove" (*tard ve ihrâc*) the eight Italian Jews in question, Mutasarrif Edhem Bey requested approval and destinations from the Minister of Interior, Talât Pasha, in October 1916. Talât Pasha subsequently ordered the "banishment" (*teb'id*) of these individuals to the Bozkır district of Konya province, which is located in the Anatolian heartland.

While adopting a rigid and reserved stance in the short term, Italy subsequently exhibited a more decisive and courageous approach during the Greek occupation of Izmir in 1920.²⁵⁷ This paradigm shift was driven by strategic ambitions that entailed the assumption of Italian protection over the prominent members of the city's Jewish community, thereby integrating them into the Italian political sphere. This initiative would facilitate the dissemination of the Italian language and culture, thereby fostering commercial relations with Anatolia and augmenting Italian influence in the Eastern Mediterranean region. This strategy, devised by Carlo Senni, Italy's Consul General in Izmir, was also endorsed by the Rome-based Italian Jewish Communities Committee (*Comitato delle comunità israelitiche italiane*). At the national

²⁵⁶ Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, 80-81, 85; COA, DH.ŞFR.502/110, 14 Kânûnuevvel 1331 - 27 December 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.29/44/Lef 2, 02 Teşrînievvel 1332 - 15 October 1916, From the Teke Sanjak Governorate to the Ministry of Interior (*Teke Mutasarrıflığından/Mutasarrıf Edhem'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.29/44/Lef 1, 10 Teşrînievvel 1332 - 23 October 1916, From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Teke Sanjak Governorate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden / Dâhiliye Nâzırı Talât Beyefendiden Teke Mutasarrıfı Edhem Beye*).

²⁵⁷ Breccia, "Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza," 28-30.

congress convened in 1920, it was formally declared that the organization stood in solidarity with the Sephardic Jews inhabiting the Mediterranean region. Furthermore, it was asserted that the interests of the Jewish communities residing in Salonika, Izmir and Istanbul were aligned with the regional objectives of Italy. By the close of 1922, a few thousand Jews, selected on the basis of their financial prosperity and political and commercial integrity, had eventually accepted Italy's offer and were granted protected status. Furthermore, the aforementioned individuals have been assured of full citizenship in the near future by the Foreign Minister, Carlo Schanzer. In Schanzer's words, the Italian government sought to establish "core groups of individuals under robust protection, who would be granted citizenship rights through subsequent measures".

In this regard, the status of "minor citizenship" (*piccola cittadinanza*), which had been abolished by the 1912 citizenship law, was reinstated.²⁵⁸ By virtue of this exceptional practice, limited citizenship rights were granted to this select group, drawn from the most industrious and intelligent segments of the local Jewish population. The decree dated September 10, 1922, expanded the status of these individuals, enabling their eventual transition to full citizenship. However, a stringent four-month deadline, expiring in January 1923, was imposed for the submission of applications. In response to this situation, the new Turkish government, led by Mustafa Kemal, seized the initiative during the Lausanne Conference, formally rejecting the expanded and privileged naturalization conditions stipulated in Article 128 of the Treaty of Sèvres. In other words, the Turkish government approved the recognition of Italian citizenship for a maximum of 1,500 former Ottoman subjects. As a consequence, a significant number of Jews who had previously been promised citizenship but missed the final application deadline were excluded. Despite the attempts of the Italian consulate in Izmir to incorporate a group of three hundred individuals who had previously been invited to settle in Livorno, the Italian authorities rigorously adhered to the provisions of Lausanne, thus rejecting this request. In addition to the Italian government's subsequent retraction of its commitments regarding protection and citizenship in the post-Lausanne era, Consul Senni in Izmir had even covertly proposed the revocation of the previously granted citizenships. The aforementioned developments, which left the Jewish population in question in an uncertain and insecure status between two regimes, were primarily a reflection of the inconsistency of Italy's foreign policy. Moreover, it exposed the fragility of a fundamental right such as 'citizenship' in the context of international politics and diplomatic negotiations.

3.2.2. Avoiding Wartime Expulsion: 'Defensive Naturalization' of Italian Jews (1911-1918)

Prior to an examination of the wartime naturalization of Italians in the Ottoman Empire and their subsequent designation as enemy aliens, it is instructive to consider the internal and external political dynamics of the Ottoman Empire between 1908 and 1915.²⁵⁹ The Young Turk Revolution of 23 July 1908, emerging with the slogan "Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood, and Justice" and proclaiming the Second Constitutional Monarchy, marked the onset of one of the

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 30-33.

²⁵⁹ Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 150-155.

most tumultuous decades of the Ottoman Empire. The fledgling CUP (The Committee of Union and Progress) regime initially sought to limit the authority of the monarchy by establishing a provisional government and conducting the first parliamentary elections in November-December 1908. However, the sequence of events did not proceed as anticipated. On 13 April 1909, the Unionist government became the subject of an insurrection initiated by adherents of the ancien régime, Islamists, liberals, and non-Turkish nationalists. The widespread uprisings in Istanbul were suppressed with the assistance of the Third Army, which had been dispatched from Salonika, and the disrupted order was barely re-established. This unfortunate event, known as the 31 March Incident (in reference to its date in the Rumi calendar), resulted in the harsh neutralization of all opposition forces, the restriction of individual freedoms and social movements, and the complete elimination of the Hamidian regime. Nevertheless, the pro-monarchy opposition to the CUP government continued to gain momentum. On 21 November 1911, a group of figures from a broad spectrum, ranging from Muslim ulema to non-Muslim liberals, convened under the same umbrella and established the Freedom and Accord Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası*).

In order to achieve a greater understanding of the nature of Ottoman-Italian relations, it is particularly beneficial to take a closer look at the political developments taking place within the Ottoman Empire in September 1911.²⁶⁰ The military faction of the Monarchist opposition, under the leadership of retired colonel Sâdık Bey, was exploiting the international dispute between Italy and the Ottoman Empire over Tripoli, in the domestic public opinion. The opposition's exploitation of this diplomatic crisis as a bargaining chip compelled the Unionists to seek partners to establish a coalition government. The cabinet of İbrahim Hakkı Pasha convened on numerous occasions in order to deliberate on the Italian demands with regard to Ottoman Tripolitania, and a series of diplomatic talks were initiated between the two states. The Ottoman government was requested to provide guarantees for the protection of Italian interests and residents in Tripoli and Benghazi. Nevertheless, the primary objective was to weaken Ottoman authority in the region under the pretext of reform, thereby enabling colonial Italy to expand its influence. Despite the Ottoman government's request for intervention from Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Ottomans received nothing more than the opinions and recommendations of the German Ambassador, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein. The ambassador stated that the CUP government, which pursued a policy of nationalizing the economy and blocking the entry of foreign capital, had earned the enmity of the European Powers. Therefore, the German government had urged the Ottoman authorities to meet the economic demands of Italy. On September 25, Grand Vizier Hakkı Pasha declared that the Ottoman Empire was prepared to grant Italy economic privileges on the condition that Tripoli remain within Ottoman territory. However, on September 28, the political situation underwent a fundamental shift with the issuance of an ultimatum by Italy's Ambassador to Istanbul, Marchese Camillo Garroni Carbonara, to the Ottoman government.

The text signed by Foreign Minister Marchese Antonino di San Giuliano commenced with a reminder that the Italian government had issued repeated warnings to the Ottoman Empire for many years regarding the poor administration, disorder, and backwardness in Tripoli and

²⁶⁰ Aykut Kansu, *İttihadcıların Rejim ve İktidar Mücadelesi 1908-1913* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 241, 244-245.

Cyrenaica.²⁶¹ It asserted that despite the Italian demands and initiatives for the development of the region in accordance with the requirements of civilization, the Ottoman government had disregarded them and even systematically impeded them. Moreover, drawing upon its prior experiences, Italy no longer regarded the economic privileges proffered by the Ottomans as either sincere or realistic. Drawing upon Italian consular reports, the ultimatum asserted that Ottoman officers in Tripoli and Cyrenaica had engendered a hostile environment towards Italian citizens, thereby jeopardizing their lives.²⁶² Consequently, the Italian government, whose extant demands regarding the region had not been met, officially announced its intention to militarily occupy Tripoli and Cyrenaica within 24 hours under the pretext of protecting its honor, interests, and citizens.

With the outbreak of the Italo-Turkish War in October 1911, the Ottoman authorities were confronted with an intense demand from their Italian residents to acquire Ottoman subjecthood.²⁶³ Following the communication of the situation to the Sublime Porte by the Bureau of Nationality (*Tâbiyet Kalemi / Müdiriyeti*), the Council of Ministers urgently convened on 5 October, issued a Supreme Decree and notified the necessary authorities. The decree commenced with the affirmation of the imperial government's authorization to expel Italian subjects from Ottoman territory, a measure precipitated by the state of war with Italy. It was therefore expected that Italians would attempt to acquire Ottoman subjecthood "in order to avoid expulsion" (*teb'ide dūçâr olmamak için*). In accordance with the rights granted to the belligerent state by the Law of Nations (*Hukuk-u Düvel*), the Ottoman government was entitled to resort to the expulsion of Italians at its discretion. Likewise, it was free to accept the applications and fulfil the requests of Italians who wished to acquire Ottoman status. In accordance with the second article of the Ottoman Nationality Law, Italians who had resided in Ottoman domains for a period of five years without interruption were eligible to acquire Ottoman subjecthood, upon fulfillment of the necessary procedures.²⁶⁴ Likewise, according to the third article, Italians who were born in the Ottoman Empire and who had not exceeded three years after reaching the age of majority could also benefit from this possibility.²⁶⁵ The

²⁶¹ Charles Stephenson, *A Box of Sand : The Italo - Ottoman War 1911-1912 : The First Land , Sea and Air War* (Ticehurst: Tattered Flag Press, 2014), 236. "Appendix A: Ultimatum from Italy to Turkey regarding Tripoli. 28 September 1911."

²⁶² The toponym "Cyrenaica," which was predominantly employed in Italian discourse, denoted a more extensive geographical and political region that extended beyond the spatial and temporal confines of the city of Benghazi. Employing the term in a political-administrative context, the colonial Italian state sought to designate a distinct province or administrative region, while also seeking to align the region with its ancient Roman heritage.

²⁶³ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 2-4, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911, Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte – Cabinet Decree on the Naturalization of Italians (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirlîği - İtalyalıların Tebdîl-i Tâbiyetine Dair Tâbiyet Müzekkeresi*); HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 12, 18 Eylül 1327 – 01 October 1911, From İzzet Bey, Director of the Bureau of Nationality, to the Grand Vizirate (*Tâbiyet Müdîri İzzet Beyden Sadâretpenâhîye*); HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 11, 09 Teşrîniyevvel 1327 – 22 October 1911, From Grand Vizier Said Pasha (*Sadrâzâm Said Paşa'dan*); BEO.3963/297189/Lef 1, 02 Teşrînisânî 1327- 15 November 1911, From the Grand Vizier's Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kaleminden Hâriciye Nezâret-i Celîlesine*); BEO.3963/297189/Lef 2, 03 Teşrînisânî 1327- 16 November 1911, From the Bureau of Nationality- Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Grand Vizirate (*Dâire-i Hâriciye Tâbiyet Müdîriyeti'nden Sadâretpenâhîye*).

²⁶⁴ In some documents and texts, it is referred to as the Imperial Law of Nationality (*Tâbiyet-i Kanunnâme-i Hümâyûn*).

²⁶⁵ The question of which law should determine the age of majority in such cases is a controversial one, of course. This is due to the fact that the age of majority in Western countries at the time was subject to

procedural framework for this process is outlined as follows.²⁶⁶ Initially, the Italian Consulate would be contacted to ascertain whether the applicant had any affiliations, had been subject to a criminal prosecution or had been convicted of a criminal offence. Even in the event of a positive response from the Italian Consulate and approval from the Ottoman authorities, it was a *de facto* practice that an applicant with other pending legal matters or cases would still be considered Italian. Individuals with such known liabilities were not even required to undergo an initial consular examination as they were already ineligible for naturalization.

The decree also stipulated that Italians who wished to acquire Ottoman status would be subject to direct investigation by the Ottoman security forces with regard to their past moral behaviour. This was primarily due to the fact that Italians were “beneficiaries of the privileges of the former international treaties” (*uhûd-u kadîme imtiyâzâtından müstefid*), namely the capitulations. In other words, they had hitherto been subject to the jurisdiction of the Capitulation Courts, which were established within the consular bodies, and which were exempt from the scope and sanctions of Ottoman law. Thus, the credibility and reputation of the applicant were subject to scrutiny, as the request for a criminal record from the Italian consulate alone might be considered inadequate or biased. Furthermore, the aforementioned articles stipulated the conditions under which the Ottoman authorities were permitted to naturalize the applicants’ wives and children. In the absence of her own application or consent, a woman was not automatically recognized as naturalized on the basis of her husband’s status. Furthermore, subsequent to the naturalization of the parents, the minor children were also required to alter their nationality. This was due to the fact that members of a family should not have partly Italian and partly Ottoman nationality. Otherwise, maintaining a divided family status and relationship could soon result in potential complications, both in bureaucratic and personal terms.

Consequently, Italians who had no criminal record and who had fulfilled the five-year residency requirement were eligible for Ottoman subjecthood. At first sight, it appeared that this course of action might lead to Italian consuls raising objections and creating difficulties in the future. However, within the framework of the General Law of European Nations (*Avrupa Hukuk-u Umûmiye-i Düvel*), to which Italy was subject, each state was autonomous in its actions pertaining to nationality and naturalization. Furthermore, in the event of any dispute pertaining to naturalization, the governing law for the individual concerned, in this case Ottoman law, would take precedence. This meant that the Italian side was neither *de jure* nor *de facto* able to raise any objections or difficulties. Nevertheless, the Ottoman government resorted to a different measure in order to avoid a possible crisis in the future and to guarantee itself.²⁶⁷ A

variation, ranging from 21 to 25 years. In contrast, within the Ottoman Empire, the minimum age of majority was set at 15 years of age, which was considered to mark the end of puberty, and the maximum age was limited to 21 years of age. Fahrettin Tızlak, *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Kapitülasyonların Uygulanışı (İmtiyâzât-ı Ecnebiyenin Tatbîkât-ı Hâzırası)*, Mehdi Fraşerli (Isparta: Fakülte Kitabevi, 2008), 15.

²⁶⁶ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 2-4, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911.

“Bu veçheden olarak İtalyalılardan biri tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’ye dâhil olmak istediği takdirde müsted’inin bir iliğinin olup olmadığı ve hakkında tâkîbât-ı cezâiye icrâ edilip edilmediği hususlarının İtalya Konsoloshânesinden istifsârı ve sûret-i icâbiyede cevâb geldiği ve merkumun talebi is’af edildiği hâlde muallak kalan masâlih ve deâvîde İtalyan addedilmesi fiilen takarrür etmiş bir usûldür.”

²⁶⁷ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 2-4, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911.

“Mâhâzâ müşkilât-ı melhûzeyeye de mehmâemken mukabil olmak üzere tâbiyet-i Osmâniye istidâsında bulunacak İtalyanlardan bâdema sûret-i dâimede tebaa-i Osmâniye sıfatıyla hareket edeceklerine, hiçbir vakit İtalyalılık iddiasında bulunmayacaklarına ve İtalya konsoloshânelerine mürâcaat eylemeyeceklerine

“declaration of allegiance” (*taahhüd senedi*) was demanded from the applicants that they would henceforth act permanently as Ottoman subjects, that they would never claim to be Italian, and that they would not apply to Italian consulates. In accordance with this declaration, they were required to “consent to be expelled from Ottoman domains” (*Memâlik-i Osmâniye’den teb’ide râzı*) if they acted contrary to their commitments. The same commitments were also required from their spouses and elder children who were “old enough to have free will” (*fâil-i muhtar*). In cases where they had minor children, parents were required to act as guarantors and give these undertakings on their behalf. In the event that a parent violated these commitments on behalf of his or her underage child, both the parent and the child were liable to expulsion. Conversely, if the child itself violated these commitments after reaching majority, only the child itself would be expelled. The declaration was to be drawn up in duplicate and filed in two archives, one copy in the relevant Governorate Office and the other in the Bureau of Nationality of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Istanbul. Both offices were tasked with keeping a register of Italians who had acquired Ottoman subjecthood and ensuring the continuous updating of this information.

The decree stipulated that aforementioned procedure could be applied on a case-by-case basis, unless a state policy of mass expulsion of the Italian inhabitants was adopted.²⁶⁸ Conversely, in the event of a further decree for mass expulsion being issued, applications for Ottoman naturalization would no longer be accepted. According to the decree, the conversion of nationality could easily become a pragmatic practice, highly susceptible to abuse, as it could save the Italians from certain material and moral losses. Furthermore, the government of the Ottoman Empire could not guarantee that these naturalizations would not be disputed or that the commitments of the applicants would not be violated. It is also noteworthy that the decree contains the following statement. “Although it is possible that this may lead to a dispute with the Italian consular authorities in the future, at least an attempt would have been made to reduce the number of foreigners on Ottoman soil.” This statement signaled a shift towards a policy of *Turkification* by the Committee of Union and Progress government, with naturalizations serving as a demographic instrument in this regard.

ve taahhüdleri hilâfında hareket ettiklerinde Memâlik-i Osmâniye’den teb’ide râzı olacaklarına dâir bir sened almak münâsib olur.”

²⁶⁸ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.111/36/Lef 2-4, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911.

“Tedâbir-i mârûza Memâlik-i Osmâniye’de mukîm İtalyalıların ihrâcı hakkında devletçe bir karar ittihaz buyurulmadığı takdirde tatbik olunabilir. Zirâ bu takdirde âtiyen İtalya Konsoloshânelerine ihtilaf tahaddüs edeceği melhûz olmakla beraber hiç olmazsa şu vâsita ile Memâlik-i Osmâniye’deki ecânibin mikdârını taklîl etmeye teşebbüs [...] olunur. Fakat şâyed ihrâc muâmelesi taht-ı karara alınacak olur ise İtalyalılar tarafından tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’ye duhûl hakkında vâki olacak taleblerin hiçbirini is’af etmemek merci olur. Zira tebdîl-i tâbiyet onları hiss olunacak derecede kesir birtakım zâyîâtlardan tahlis edeceği gibi bil-mukabele Hükûmet-i Seniyye bunların tebdîl-i tâbiyetlerinin âtiyen îtirâzâta uğramayacağından ve mârrü’z-zikr senedâtta münderiç tedâbirin mevki-i icrâ’ya vaz’ında müşkilâta tesâdüf etmeyeceğinden sûret-i [...] emin olamaz.”

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Bureau of Nationality

The list of applicants who have applied since the announcement of the Supreme Decree.

Number	Name	Title	Family Members	Remarks
1	Guglielmo (son of Francesco)	-	-	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 15 November 1911, but no response has yet been received.
2	Illia Fracci Effendi	Doctor (<i>Tabîb</i>)	His wife Madame Mari	Following the necessary investigations by the relevant local authorities and the verification of his Italian citizenship, a notification was sent to the Population Registry Office, requesting that the necessary procedures be observed in accordance with the Supreme Decree and that the individual be duly registered.
3	Pietro Guglielmi (son of Alfonso)	Disciplinary Supervisor (<i>Mubassır</i>) at Lycée de Galatasaray (<i>Mekteb-i Sultânî</i>)	His wife Nektar	Following the verification of his Italian citizenship, a notification was sent to the Population Registry Office, requesting that the necessary procedures be observed in accordance with the Supreme Decree and that the individual be duly registered.
4	Natali	Pharmacist (<i>Eczâcı</i>) in the El-Azîz Regular Army Division (<i>Fırka-i Nizâmiye</i>)	-	In accordance with the directives of the Ma'mûretü'l-Azîz Province, the Ministry of the Interior has issued a statement, and the necessary measures have been implemented.
5	Igor Francesco Telemaco	-	-	He has submitted a petition but has not yet formally applied.
6	Alfredo Ansaldo	-	-	He has submitted a petition but has not yet formally applied.
7	Alfred (son of David Ayas)	Greengrocer (<i>Zerzevatçı</i>)	Madame Fortuna	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 15 November 1911. No response has been received yet.
8	Paoli Ribonato (incorrectly written as Ribanotti)	Bricklayer (<i>Duvarcı Ustası</i>)	His wife Mari and his daughter Camali	Following the notification from the Hüdâvendigâr Province, an investigation was conducted, and it was determined that they were eligible for the decree. A letter was sent to the relevant local authority requesting that this individual, along with his wife and daughter, be admitted and registered.
9	Hektor Nahum	-	Ester Jilda	In his application for "Ottoman identity" (<i>tezkiye-i Osmâniye</i>), he asserted that he was under Italian protection, citing his grandfather who had previously worked as a translator at the Italian Consulate. However, given that the state had already terminated Italian protection, his application with this status was rejected, and he was granted Ottoman naturalization on the basis of "loss of nationality" (<i>tazyî-i tâbiiyet</i>).
10	Avram Benzonana	Town Crier (<i>Dellâl</i>)	His wife Victoria	Following the verification of his Italian nationality after the investigation, a letter was sent to the Population Registry Office requesting that the necessary procedures be observed in accordance with the Supreme Decree and that the individual be duly registered.

11	Augusti Madella	-	His wife Zafirico	Following the notification of the İzmit Mutasarrifate, the individual's application deemed eligible for the decree, and the relevant local authority was requested to record and register the person.
12	Spiridon Cantaro	-	His wife Caleiro	A memorandum inquiring his Italian nationality and civil status was sent to the Üsküdar Mutasarrifate on 16 November 1911, but no response has yet been received.
13	Giovanni Padalino Perdichizzi	Employee (<i>Müstahdem</i>) in the Bosphorus Ferry Company (<i>Şirket-i Hayriye</i>)	-	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 15 November 1911.
14	August Ianni	-	His wife Josefina	Upon notification from the Province of Konya, a response was sent on 18 November 1911 regarding their approvals.
15	Casimir Talasso	Insurance Officer (<i>Sigorta Me'mûru</i>)	-	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 18 November 1911, but no response has yet been received.
16	Domenico Mattio (son of Carlo)	-	His wife Erini	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 18 November 1911, but no response has yet been received.
17	Micheli Longinotti	-	His wife Mari	A memorandum requesting an investigation into him was sent to the Beyoğlu Mutasarrifate on 18 November 1911, but no response has yet been received.
18	Alfons Spalletti	Personnel Clerk (<i>Me'mûrîn Kısmı Kâtibi</i>) at the Office of Health Affairs (<i>Dâire-i Umûr-u Sıhhiye</i>)	His wife Elvira	His "documents proving foreign nationality" (<i>evrak-ı ecnebiye</i>) are in perfect order, and due to his employment in the Health Department, his foreign status and circumstances do not require further investigation. A letter requesting his registration was sent to the Population Registry Office on 18 November 1911.
19	Stefano Barducci	Pension Department Manager (<i>Tekâüd Kısmı Müdürî</i>) at the Office of Health Affairs	His wife Smaragda	His documents proving foreign nationality are in perfect order, and due to his employment in the Health Office, his foreign status and circumstances do not require further investigation. A letter requesting his registration was sent to the Population Registry Office on 18 November 1911.
20	Ahliya (son of Eligio Molinari)	-	His daughter Mari	He has submitted a petition but has not yet formally applied.
21	Giuseppe	-	His wife	Upon notification from the Province of Konya, a response was sent on 18 November 1911 regarding their approvals.

Table 8: The list detailing the personal information and application status of Italian nationals who applied for Ottoman naturalization pursuant to the Supreme Decree of 5 October 1911.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ COA, BEO.3963/297189/Lef 2, 03 Teşrînisânî 1327- 16 November 1911; Lef 3, 05 Teşrînisânî 1327- 18 November 1911. From the Bureau of Nationality- Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Grand Vizirate (*Dâire-i Hâriciye Tâbiyet Müdîriyeti'nden Sadâretpenâhiye*).

فرايتك ببقعه مكنه قد راجعه اينك اسيد

ردیف	اسم	صفحه	افراد عاقل
۱	کولولو ولد زرخشو	طیب	زوجه بیارامی
۲	ایلی خانی اف	مکتبہ مصنفه	زوجه بیارامی
۳	یم سرد کولولی ولد لغوس	الغیر خرد لغوس افواجی	
۴	ناخالی		
۵	لیغور زرخشو زارامو		
۶	افغودو اسلده	خرد لغوس	مادر لغوس
۷	افغودو ولد دادب لاسه	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۸	بارلی ریاسوی	استد بطل	
۹	لغور زارامو		
۱۰	ارام نیردانا	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۱	آکوسی ماردهو	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۲	ایلی مدونه قاسارو	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۳	جولی لایو بریکچی	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۴	ارکوت بائی	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۵	قازر شالاسو	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۶	رونیغورما یو ولد قارو	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۷	میکولی لایو	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۸	الغور باقی	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۱۹	استغاثو باروچی	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۲۰	افلیا ولد الحیدر مولیاسی	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی
۲۱	چوروم	زوجه بیارامی	زوجه بیارامی

Archival Image 2 : The list detailing the personal information and application status of Italian nationals who applied for Ottoman naturalization pursuant to the Supreme Decree of 5 October 1911.

As demonstrated in the above list, between 5 October 1911, the date of issuance of the Ministerial decree, and 18 November, a total of 37 Italians, including 21 adult males and 16 wives and daughters, had “sought Ottoman subjecthood” (*tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’ye dehâlet*). Among the Italians who had “renounced their nationality” (*terk-i tâbiyet*) in such a brief period of two weeks, notable names include Hektor Nahum and Avram Benzonana. It is evident that these individuals were of Jewish descent, whose ancestors had migrated to the Ottoman Empire from Italian territories centuries prior, or had subsequently acquired Italian nationality. In addition to Istanbul, applications from relatively distant locations such as Elazığ (*Ma’mûretü’l-Azîz*), Bursa (*Hüdâvendigâr*) and Konya indicate that the process was also successfully implemented in rural areas. In a letter written by the Director of the Naturalization Bureau, İzzet, it was particularly emphasized that the procedures were being carried out in accordance with the ministerial decree, both in Istanbul and in the provinces. In other words, with the exception of minors, all individuals were obliged to sign a declaration of allegiance, and their names were “registered” (*tescil*) in the Ottoman population registry only after being notified to the German Consulate General.²⁷⁰ Furthermore, the “compliance of the foreign status of the applicants” (*sıfat-ı ecnebiyelerinin mertebe-i tahakkuka îsâli*) was a point that required exceptional care and was carefully investigated before registration. In addition, in view of the necessity for greater caution and foresight during periods of war, information and testimony from law enforcement officials regarding the social status and previous circumstances of the applicants were also requested.

In August 1915, following Italy’s declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman government formally recognized Italy as one of the “enemy states” (*düvel-i muhâsama*), alongside France, Russia and England.²⁷¹ However, it should be noted that conditions had changed significantly since November 1914. At this point, the Ottoman government found the existing regulations, which had been applied to other enemy states until then, to be insufficient. Consequently, on 25 August 1915, the Ottoman government adopted a series of specific resolutions concerning Italian officials, subjects, institutions, companies, and interests within its territories. One of these was directly linked to the two earlier ministerial decrees issued at the onset of the war against the nationals of enemy states. These two “supreme decrees” (*tezkire-i sâmiye*), issued on 5 and 9 December 1914, allowed for and regulated the acquisition of Ottoman subjecthood by Jewish subjects of enemy states with a view to preventing their expulsion. Nevertheless, the later decisions of 25 August 1915 stipulated that these existing provisions would not be extended to Italian Jews and that they would not be able to benefit

²⁷⁰ A few days after the outbreak of the Italo-Ottoman War, on 2 October 1911, all Italian subjects in the Ottoman domains were transferred to the political and consular protection of the German consulates under the general law of European states. COA, BEO.3942/295590, 19 Eylül 1327 - 02 October 1911. (*Dâire-i Sadâretten Dâhiliye ve Adliye Nezâretlerine*).

²⁷¹ COA, HR.SYS.2967/6/Lef 2, 12 Ağustos 1331- 25 Ağustos 1915, Consultative Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte (*Nezâret-i Umûr-ı Hâriciye / İstişâre Odası- Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirî*); HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/25/Lef 2, Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte / Certified Copy of the Minutes- The ensuing decisions have been reached in regard to Italian officials and citizens, institutions, companies, and other matters pertaining to Italians (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği / Zabıtnâme Sûreti - İtalya me’mûrîni ve tebaası ve müessesâtı ve şirketleri ve İtalyalılara aid hususât-ı sâire hakkında mukarrerât-ı âtiye ittihaz olunmuştur*) ; HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/28/Lef 3, 31 Mart 1332 - 13 April 1916, Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte / Abstract: Memorandums from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and the Bureau of Nationality regarding the Jews who are nationals of the Italian state and do not accept Ottoman subjecthood. (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği- Hülâsa: İtalya devleti tebaasından olup tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’yi kabûl etmeyen Müsevîler hakkında Başkumandanlık Vekâlet tezkiresiyle Tâbiyet Müdriyetinin tezkiresi*).

from this right. The decision of the Ministry of the Interior can be attributed to the wartime pragmatism and insincerity demonstrated by Italian Jews in their endeavors to obtain Ottoman status. From the perspective of the Ottoman authorities, these individuals were regarded as Italian subjects who sought Ottoman status exclusively for the purpose of evading the sanctions imposed on enemy states. Consequently, the applications in question did not accurately reflect the true intentions of the applicants, and their approval could potentially compromise the state's order and security.

However, in 23 December 1915, the Ottoman government adopted a more lenient stance, opting to accept applications from Italian Jews “whose nationality status was not disputed” (*sıfat-ı tâbiyetleri münâzaa'un fih olmayan*).²⁷² To elaborate further, applications from individuals who fulfil the criteria stipulated in the Nationality Law should be subject to scrutiny by the Ministry of the Interior, and approval would be granted if deemed suitable. Individuals whose nationality was disputed were initially required to make a declaration of allegiance to the Ottoman Empire and were subsequently encouraged to adopt Ottoman identity. Should they be “persuaded to declare their allegiance to the empire, accept Ottoman status and obtain identification” (*bir taahhüd senedi mukabilinde tezkire-i Osmâniye ahzına icbâr ve iknâları hâlinde*), “their deportation would not be necessary” (*ihrâc olmamaları münâsib*). It was evident that the practice, which was initiated after the Italo-Ottoman War and wherein the state operated on the basis of the applicant's personal declaration, had been re-established. However, it is apparent from extant correspondence that this complex debate continued among Ottoman authorities from October 1915 to April 1916. It is evident that the Ottoman government found it challenging to achieve a consensus on the practices to be applied to Jewish subjects with ties to different enemy states.

In April 1916, the Supreme Military Command (*Başkumandanlık Vekâleti*) and the Bureau of Nationality collectively sought the Grand Vizier's ruling on the matter of whether Jews who did not renounce Italian nationality and adopt Ottoman status should face expulsion from the empire.²⁷³ The initial issue addressed in this memorandum was whether, if adopted, this practice would be subject to the decision previously taken and implemented regarding the Jewish subjects of other enemy states.²⁷⁴ The memorandum also called into question the present and future situations of the Jews from other nations who did not submit applications for naturalization within the designated timeframe, that is to say, those who declined to become Ottoman subjects.²⁷⁵ The fundamental question was whether they were, in fact, deported in accordance with the stipulated decision, as intended, and if this would continue to be the case in the future. It was evident that the Bureau, which questioned the previous situation and fate of non-Italian Jews in particular, acted with considerable foresight in determining the policy to be applied to Italians. The remaining text concerned whether the government had promulgated any specific edicts or regulations regarding the expulsion of Italian Jews.²⁷⁶ Ultimately, the

²⁷² COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/28/Lef 3, 31 Mart 1332 – 13 April 1916

²⁷³ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/28/Lef 3, 31 Mart 1332 – 13 April 1916

²⁷⁴ “İtalya tebaasından olup tâbiyet-i Osmâniye'yi kabûl etmeyen Mûsevîlerin memleket hâricine çıkarılmaları keyfiyetinin diğer muhasım devletler tebaasından olan Mûsevîler hakkında ittihaz ve tatbik olunan karara tabi bulunduğu,”

²⁷⁵ “İtalya devletinden mâadâ muhasım devletler tebaasından olup mehl-i muayyene zarfında telsikini istid'â etmemiş olan Mûsevîlerin ber-mûcib-i karar Memâlik-i Osmâniye'den tard ve teb'îdi cihetine gidilip gidilmediği”

²⁷⁶ “ve İtalya tebaasından olan Mûsevîlerin tard ve teb'îdine dair bir karar ittihaz olunup olunmadığını,”

Grand Vizier determined that there was a lack of clarity regarding the categorization of Italian subjects as either of Jewish origin or not.²⁷⁷ It was therefore deemed appropriate to implement a uniform approach in practice, irrespective of the religious affiliations of the subjects in question. Moreover, no ministerial decision has been issued regarding the expulsion of Jews of Italian nationality or the extension of the naturalization procedures applied to other enemy nationals, in a manner which would also include Italians. Within this paradigm, Italian Jews, akin to those from other adversarial states, were obligated to adopt Ottoman status within a stipulated timeframe, irrespective of their ethnic or religious affiliations. By consenting to this measure, they were assured of immunity from expulsion.

In order to evade the sanctions that followed the declaration of war in August 1915, a significant number of Italians, irrespective of their Catholic or Jewish faith, applied for Ottoman naturalization.²⁷⁸ In October 1915, the Deputy Governor of Aleppo, Hilmi, reported that he had received instructions from the Fourth Army Command “not to accept Italian applications seeking Ottoman status” (*İtalyanların tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’ye dehâlet hakkındaki istid’âlarının adem-i kabûlû*). It was evident that the authority of Military Governor Cemâl Pasha, who had assumed control over all Syrian provinces, was more decisive than that of civil administrators in such a sensitive matter as wartime naturalization. Nevertheless, the governor, seeking to act in accordance with procedure, requested approval from the ministry and questioned the procedure to be followed. In the aftermath of the governor’s inquiry, the Ministry of the Interior submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recommending that eligible Italian nationals residing in Syria be granted the status of Ottoman subjects. In the correspondence, these individuals were described as persons “who had settled in the Ottoman domains for a considerable duration, had adopted these lands as their homeland” (*öteden beri Memâlik-i Osmâniye’de temekkün ve tavattun etmiş*), and “had gradually acquired Italian status in order to benefit from the provisions of capitulatory agreements” (*ve uhûd-u atika ahkâmından istifâde etmek üzere İtalya tâbiyetini ihrâz etmiş*). Moreover, while applications for Ottoman subjecthood from nationals of other enemy states had already been accepted for some time, there was no obvious rationale for the rejection of those from Italy. In the aftermath of this communiqué, Italian Jews residing in the provinces of Syria, Aleppo, Beirut, and Jerusalem were offered the prospect of avoiding deportation, and were given a deadline for switching to Ottoman subjects.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ “Mârûzât-ı ânifeden müsteban olunduğu üzere İtalya tebaa-yı Müsevîsi olmak ve olmamak dolayısıyla diğer muhasım tebaa gibi farklı muâmeleye tabii tutulduğuna dair bir sarâhat olmamasına binaen tatbîkatta her İtalyalının yeknesak bir muâmeleye tabii tutulmuş olacağı derkâr olup düvel-i muhasama-i sâirenin tâbiyet muâmeleleri hakkındaki ahkâmın aynen İtalyanlara teşmiline dair bir karar bulunmadığına nazaran da İtalyalı Müsevîlerin diğer düşman tebaa Müsevîleri gibi alelittlak bir müddet-i muayyene zarfında tâbiyet-i Osmâniye’ye dehâlete icbâr ve iknâları halinde ihrâc edilmelerine mahal olmamak lazım gelir.”

²⁷⁸ COA, DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 1, 10 Teşrîniyevvel 1331 – 23 October 1915, From Hilmi Bey, the Sanjak Governor and the Acting Governor of Aleppo, to the Ministry of Interior (*Haleb Vâli Vekîli Mutasarrıf Hilmi’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 2, 15 Teşrîniyevvel 1331 – 28 October 1915, From the Directorate of General Internal Administration to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*İdâre-i Umûmiye-i Dâhiliye Müdîriyetinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 1, 05 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 18 January 1916, From Enver Pasha, Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Ottoman Army, to the Ministry of Interior (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyunu Başkumandan Vekîli Enver Paşa’dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

²⁷⁹ The fate of Italian Jews in the Syrian Levant, a region that experienced turbulent times due to the war, will be examined in greater detail in the sections on Travel Restrictions in Chapter 4 and Relocation and Resettlement in Chapter 5.

In December 1915, a telegram from the Tekfurdağı Sanjak of the Edirne Province reported that a number of Jewish, Armenian and Greek residents currently holding Italian status had submitted applications for Ottoman naturalization.²⁸⁰ It is evident that the non-Muslim populations of Tekfurdağı, in an effort to evade the sanctions imposed during the war, adopted a pragmatic approach and found a solution in becoming Ottoman subjects. In a telegram transmitted to the Ministry of the Interior, Governor Zekeriya Zihni confirmed the receipt of the applicants' petitions and the completion of the requisite investigations, accompanied by the relevant documentation. Not all of the aforementioned individuals fully met all the criteria set out in the circular that was announced on 6 December 1914. However, they were originally local residents of Tekfurdağı and were engaged in trade. This signified that even in case of potential war-time deportation, "they would still be eligible for return to the town once the war ended, albeit as foreigners" (*bâde'l-harb yine ecnebî sıfatıyla avdet edecekleri cihetle*). The governor has asserted that "the naturalization of these non-Muslim individuals into Ottoman status would prove to be a beneficial move for the empire, both in the present and in the future" (*tâbiyet-i Osmâniye'yi iktisâb etmeleri hâlen ve âtiyen fâideli olacağından*). It is evident that the strategic-minded governor was keen to preserve this valuable class and their investments, which were crucial for the town's commercial activity. It could be argued that it would be more advantageous for national interests for them to remain under Ottoman jurisdiction rather than returning here under a foreign status of a protégé after the war. In matters concerning foreigners, Talât Pasha would request the opinion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as he had done on previous occasions.

The situation in Izmir was on the verge of escalating into a minor diplomatic crisis between the Ottoman and Spanish authorities but was averted at the last minute.²⁸¹ In October 1915, the Ministry of the Interior informed the authorities in the province of Aydın that Italian Jews who did not wish to accept Ottoman subjecthood in Izmir were at liberty to depart the city. In July 1917, the Spanish Embassy submitted an official note of protest to the Ottoman government, claiming that "some Italian Jews residing in the province of Aydın were compelled to accept Ottoman naturalization." (*İtalya tebaasından bâzı Müsevîlerin tâbiyet-i Osmâniye'yi kabûle icbâr edildiklerinden*). The Embassy, which had the responsibility of protecting Italian interests during the war, officially condemned the Ottoman government for this "violation of international law" (*hukuk-u milele mugayir olan bu hâlden dolayı*). The Ottoman Ministry of the Interior promptly initiated an inquiry into the circumstances in the province of Aydın and issued a directive to cease any coercive measures that may have been in progress. The Governor of Aydın, Rahmi Bey, who was also questioned by the Spanish Consulate in Izmir, categorically

²⁸⁰ COA, DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 5, 24 Teşrînisânî 1331 – 07 December 1915, From Zekeriya Zihni, the Governor of Edirne, to the Ministry of Interior (*Edirne Vâlisi Zekeriya Zihni'den Dâhiliye Nezâret-i Celîlesine*); DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 6, 30 Teşrînisânî 1331 – 13 December 1915, From the Directorate of General Internal Administration to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*İdâre-i Umûmiye-i Dâhiliye Müdîriyetinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*).

²⁸¹ COA, DH.ŞFR.57/109, 11 Teşrînievvel 1331 – 24 October 1915, From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Aydın Governorate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdîriyetinden Aydın Vilâyetine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.41/41/Lef 2, 01 Ağustos 1333 – 01 Ağustos 1917, From Rahmi Bey, the Governor of Aydın, to the Ministry of Interior (*Aydın Vâlisi Rahmi Beyden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.41/41/Lef 4, 12 Temmuz 1333 – 12 Temmuz 1917, From the Directorate General of Political Affairs - Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-u Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmîyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

denied the allegations and assured both the Spanish and Ottoman authorities “that such coercive practices had never been applied” (*böyle cebri bir muâmele yapıldığının asıl ve esâsı olmayıp*). Indeed, the Spanish Consulate in Izmir also confirmed the unfounded nature of these allegations in its response. The assertion that Italian Jews, who had not attempted to abandon their lives, businesses and investments in Izmir, even during wartime, were facing such pressure, did not appear to be very credible or substantiated. As Henri Nahum also noted, throughout the First World War, the entire Jewish community in Izmir, irrespective of their Italian origin, continued to live their lives in a largely normal fashion, without feeling any sense of threat.²⁸²

3.2.3. Eliasciars: Identity Struggle of a Judeo-Italian Family from Jerusalem to Pisa (1911-1922)

In her recent and comprehensive study, Vanda Wilcox examines Italy’s imperial and colonial motivations during the Great War through a transnational lens, thereby tracing the origins of Italy’s wartime irredentism and cultural mobilization.²⁸³ In situating the wartime Italy between 1911 and 1923, the book approaches the Italian entity as both a system of overseas colonies and an informal global empire made up of immigrants scattered across the world. Wilcox also explores the multilayered and ambiguous nature of Italian identity, drawing upon the example of Italian Jews in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. A significant proportion of Egypt’s sizable Jewish community, despite being recognized as Egyptian nationals, could trace their lineage to families in Livorno and Pisa. However, given that their ancestors had resided in Aleppo or Beirut for one or two generations prior to reaching Alexandria, this did not constitute a direct migration from Italy to Egypt. The majority of them still held Italian citizenship, and some were even able to produce documents that traced their surnames back to pre-unification Tuscany. Notwithstanding their Italian citizenship or ancestry, Wilcox emphasizes that these individuals exhibited remarkably weak cultural affiliations with their homeland. For instance, Italian Jews resided in Alexandria often refrained from participating in the local Italian community or speaking Italian in their homes. Nevertheless, these individuals responded to the conscription calls issued by the Italian Kingdom with patriotic sentiments and willingly performed their military duties alongside their fellow citizens.

As Wilcox observes herein, the ambivalent situation faced by Italian Jews residing in Palestine and Syria was of a similar nature, and that this nature rendered it difficult to ascertain what Italian identity truly was.²⁸⁴ Firstly, given that Jews were also regarded as Italian, religion or

²⁸² Nahum’s account indicates that at the onset of the occupation in May 1919, the Greek authorities predominantly adopted an anti-Semitic stance, leading to the oppression and persecution of the Jewish community in Izmir, with the aim of cultural assimilation. Rather than favoring a Greek-aligned Izmir, Jewish Smyrniotes expressed a preference for Turkish administration under European control. On occasion, this manifested in passive resistance, even to the extent of clashing with Greek forces in certain locations. Conversely, a Jewish segment viewed Greece as a representative of Europe and Western civilization, expressed admiration for it, and characterized the period of Greek occupation as the golden age of Izmir. Greek authorities were fully aware of this and sought to win over the hearts and minds of the divided Jewish community. In an attempt to draw them to their side, they created an open-minded and freedom-loving city for non-Muslims, thereby laying the groundwork for the emergence of Zionism. Nahum, *İzmir Yahudileri*, 162-173, 175-201.

²⁸³ Vanda Wilcox, *The Italian Empire and the Great War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 174.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

denomination was not a definitive criterion of Italianness in this region. Moreover, although the use of the Italian language was to some extent significant, the fact that those who spoke Hebrew and Arabic in their daily lives were also considered Italian indicated that language was not mandatory and therefore not decisive. On the other hand, the fact that they had previously resided in Syria or Egypt for two generations did not negate their Italian identity, suggesting that the location of their residence was clearly unimportant. In light of these findings, Wilcox, who questions whether these individuals were “racially Italian,” exposes the contradictions of the race-based understanding of nationhood in Europe at the time. The act of responding to conscription calls and enlisting in the military was presented as an indicator of Italianness, thereby manifesting the manner in which modern nationalism shaped citizenship as a performative identity. By interrogating whether identity is determined by the state or the individual, Wilcox poses the question of whether the decisive factor is religion, language, race, place of residence, or the willingness to fight for the state. Through these questions, whose answers are unclear, Wilcox actually implies that national identities and citizenships in modern states are constructed, historically configurable, and variable, rather than natural. Despite claims of homogeneity, the national identities of nation-states at the time were in fact quite heterogeneous, and loyalty to the state often took precedence over religious, linguistic, or racial criteria.

Following the Italian invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania in October 1911, which marked the beginning of the Italo-Turkish War, the majority of Italian nationals residing in the Ottoman Empire sought to obtain Ottoman subjecthood. However, the *Eliasciar* case, which began months before the war, followed a completely opposite trend and turned into a long and complicated dispute between Italian and Ottoman authorities.²⁸⁵ This was the ambiguous situation of the two descendants (great grandchildren) of Jakoub Saül Eliasciar (*Yâkub Şaul Elyaşar* - يعقوب شاول اليشار), who was born in Pisa but became an Ottoman national in Jerusalem in 1880. The applications for Italian naturalization submitted by Eleazar bin Yosef and Avram bin Nesim Eliasciar in 1911 were stalled due to reservations and objections raised by the Ottoman authorities. As is apparent from the correspondence, both individuals had recently attained the age of majority stipulated by Italian legislation at the time, which was 22 years. In April 1911, the Mutasarrif of Jerusalem, Azmi Bey, conducted an inquiry into the familial lineage of Eleazar from the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, subsequently sharing the findings with the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem. According to the report, Eleazar’s ancestor Jakoub Saül, who was claimed to be a *Pisano*, was born in Safed, and his grandfather Haim

²⁸⁵ The family name appears as “Eliasciar” in some Italian documents and “Eliazar” in others, however, in Ottoman documents it appears as “Elyaşar” (اليشار). Archivio storico e diplomatico del Ministero degli affari esteri- Archivio del Consolato sardo in Palestina poi Consolato d’Italia a Gerusalemme 1843-1943 (Historical Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - The Archive of the Sardinian Consulate in Palestine, later the Consulate of Italy in Jerusalem), ASDMAE - Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione (Naturalization) / “Cittadinanza” (Citizenship), Busta (Folder): 14, Fascicolo (Fascicule): 58, Anni (Years): 1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar (“Citizenship”, Nationality of the Eliasciar family). From “Azmi, The Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem” to the “Consulate General of the Italian State in the Holy City of Jerusalem” (*Kudüs-i Şerif Mutasarrıfı Azmi’den İtalya Devlet-i Fahîmânesinin Kudüs General Konsolosluğu Cânib-i Behiyyesine*), 17 Nisan 1327- 30 April 1911; From “Eleazar bin Yusuf Elyaşar and Avram bin Nesim Elyaşar” to the “Consulate General of the Italian State in the Holy City of Jerusalem” (*Kudüs-i Şerif İtalya Devlet-i Fahîmânesi Konsolosluğu Cânib-i Aliyyesine*), 8 Mayıs 1327- 21 May 1911.

was born in Jerusalem.²⁸⁶ Therefore, they had adopted Safed and then Jerusalem as their homeland long before the Ottoman Nationality Law was introduced in 1869. It was evident that the Eliasciar family, which had been registered and certified in both the former and contemporary records of the Ottoman state for a period exceeding a century, had been recognized and acted under Ottoman status until that point. Mutasarrif Azmi's interpretation of Eleazar's claim to Italian citizenship was that it represented a mere attempt to avoid military service.²⁸⁷ Moreover, in the absence of compelling evidence and authentic documents to contradict the existing Ottoman records, it was inherently infeasible to address this claim.²⁸⁸ In conclusion, Azmi Bey advanced the argument that Eleazar, his father, and other family members were regarded as Ottoman subjects and should consequently be subject to treatment in accordance with Ottoman law.²⁸⁹

In response to the claims made by Mutasarrif Azmi Bey, the two grandsons, Eleazar and Avram, sought to refute these allegations and provide a more accurate account of the circumstances.²⁹⁰ In May 1911, they submitted letters to the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem, detailing the results of their own research into the family records. Their great-grandfather, Jakoub Saül, who was born in Pisa, had renounced his original nationality in 1880 and, as the spiritual leader of the Jews, had been registered in the Jerusalem population records under Ottoman status. However, records indicated that Jakoub's sons, Haim and Nesim Eliasciar, had obtained Italian citizenship on 23 October 1894, and were recognized and treated accordingly by local authorities from that date onwards. According to the grandchildren's claims, official documents and registers in the archives of the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem undeniably and indisputably proved that Jakoub himself, his sons, and even his grandchildren were Italian citizens. Furthermore, upon proving their legal age, the grandchildren had filed "a lawsuit to regain their original nationality" (*tâbiyyet-i asliyemi istirdâd dâvâsı*), citing the eighth article of the *Düstûr* (Ottoman Code of Public Laws). Additionally, in accordance with the official military documentation in their possession, they had been selected and registered as "reserve soldiers" (*neferât-ı redifeden*) by the Italian state. Nevertheless, given their registration in the Jerusalem population records, they were also being sought for military recruitment by the Ottoman army. At this juncture, Eleazar and Avram petitioned the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem to establish official contact with the Ottoman government and army, and to issue a notice requesting the removal of their names from the Jerusalem population registers. As registered Italian nationals, they sought to be removed from the Ottoman military conscription lists and, if required, expressed a preference for serving in the Italian army.

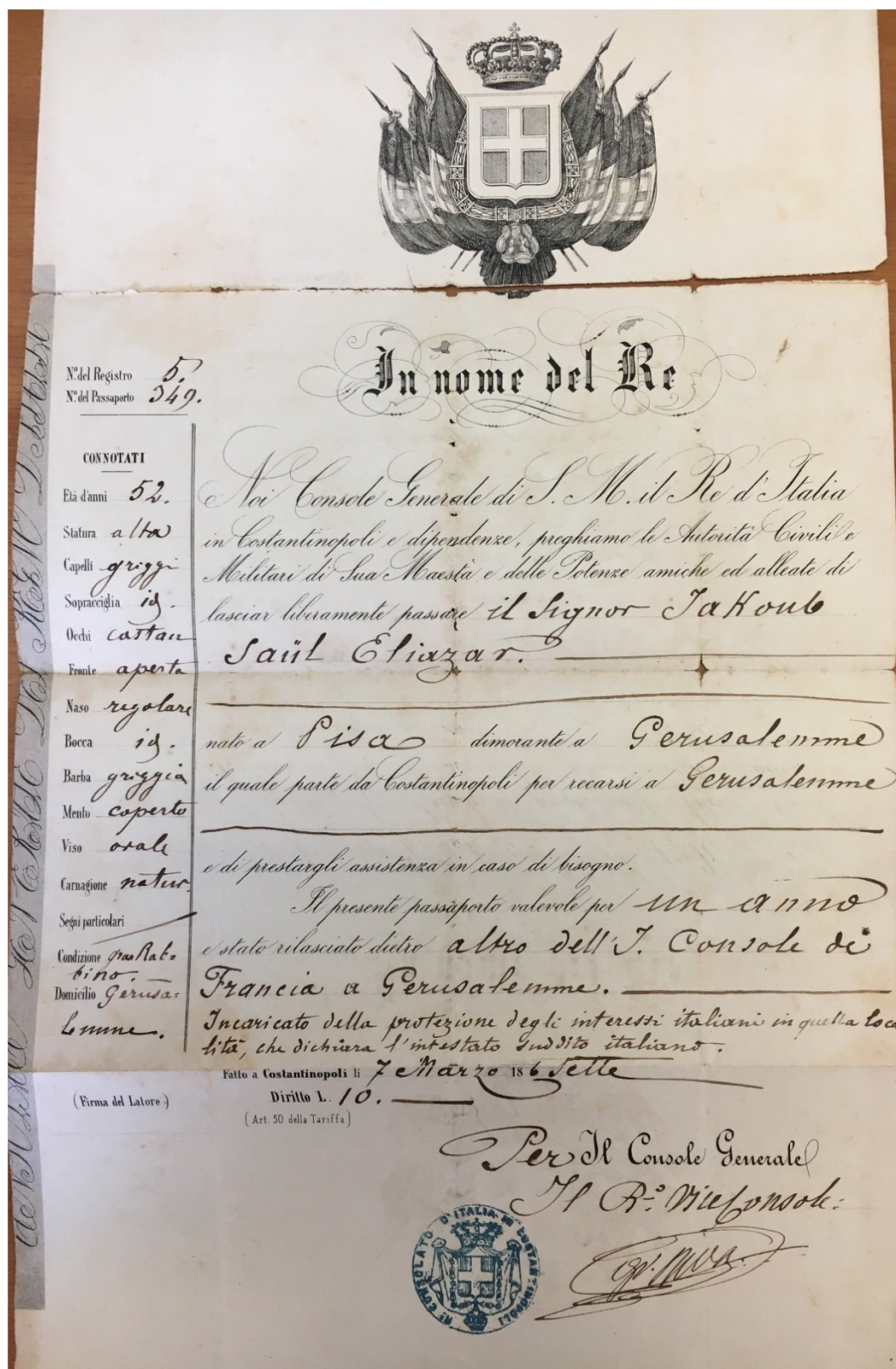
²⁸⁶ "merkumun cediti Yakub Elyâşar'ın Safed ve dedesi Haim'in Kudüs'te tevellüd eylediği ve bu âilenin Tâbiyyet Nizamnâmesinin neşrinden mukaddem Safed'de ve bilâhare Kudüs'te tavattun ederek bir asrı mütecâviz zamandan beri Devlet-i Osmâniye atik ve cedit sicillâtında mukayyed ve müseccel bulunduğu"

²⁸⁷ "ve şimdiki kadar tebaa-yı Osmâniye sıfatıyla hareket eyleyen âile-i merkumeden mütevellid merkum Eleazar'ın İtalyalılık iddiası mahzâ askerden kurtulmak maksadına mebnî olduğu cihetle"

²⁸⁸ "kuyûdât-ı esâsiye-i Osmâniye'yi delâil-i muknia ve evrâk-ı mütebere-i sahîha ibrâziyla cerh etmedikçe iddia-yı vâkıanın nazar-ı itibâra alınamacağı tabî"

²⁸⁹ "ve binâberin gerek merkum Eleazar'ı ve gerek peder ve sâir âilesi efrâdının Osmanlı tebaasından mâdud olup haklarında Osmanlı muâmelesi icrâsı zarûrî bulunduğu"

²⁹⁰ ASDMAE- Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Eleazar bin Yusuf Elyâşar and Avram bin Nesim Elyâşar" to the "Consulate General of the Italian State in the Holy City of Jerusalem", 8 Mayıs 1327- 21 Mayıs 1911.



Archival Image 3: The passport issued by the Italian Consulate General in Istanbul on 7 March 1867 to Jakoub Saül Eliasciar, who was born in Pisa and domiciled in Jerusalem.²⁹¹

²⁹¹ ASDMAE- Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar.

On 9 June 1911, Italian consular authorities received a letter from Baruham Eliasciar, apparently a slightly older and more experienced member of the family, endorsing and justifying the cause of Eleazar and Avram.²⁹² It has been reported by Baruham's lawyer in Istanbul that the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs viewed the applications as controversial. The applications were thus placed on hold, and the Mutasarrif of Jerusalem was requested to re-examine the situation. Baruham had drafted a four-point statement to address any potential ambiguities regarding the applications and elucidate the situation. The initial article addressed the documentation provided by the Italian government to Grandfather Jakoub Saül, thereby certifying the Italian identity of family members. This dossier, comprising a population registry, court orders and passports, had been dispatched by the Jerusalem Command to the central authorities in Istanbul. Drawing upon the contents of the aforementioned documents, Baruham advanced the argument that the Eliasciar family had invariably been regarded as subjects of the Italian state. However, a document issued by the land registry office on 19 January 1911 somehow noted that Nesim Eliasciar was a subject of the Ottoman Empire. While it remains uncertain whether this annotation was made erroneously or whether it was an intentional act, the possibility exists that it was done to facilitate a transaction at the land registry office. However, according to Baruham, the rigorous examination of the documents dispatched to Istanbul has already rendered this annotation invalid. The second article advanced the argument that the ongoing presence of the grandchildren of the Eliasciar family in the Jerusalem population registers represented a direct violation of the eighth article of the *Düstûr*. In accordance with the provisions of the Ottoman Nationality Law, the children of individuals who renounced their Ottoman status were also considered to have restored their original nationality under the guardianship of their parents. By this logic, the children of the Eliasciar family were considered to have automatically renounced their Ottoman status and restored Italian citizenship.

²⁹² ASDMAE- Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Baruham Elyaşar."

[illegible]

145

As is apparent, Baruham's petition referenced pertinent laws and regulations, thereby countering the claims of the Ottoman authorities with what he deemed to be valid arguments.²⁹³ The third article focused on the military service obligations of Eleazar and Avram, who were presumably cousins of Baruham. According to official documents received from the military authorities of Pisa, the hometown of Eliasciars, Baruham had also been enlisted as a reservist in the Italian army. Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of international law, no state other than the Kingdom of Italy had the legal authority to enlist or conscript them for military service. The fourth and final article was devoted to Baruham's assurances that their applications for Italian naturalization were "solely for the purpose of regaining and maintaining their original nationality" (*tâbiyet-i asliyemi muhâfaza etmek*). Six years earlier, in 1905, Baruham had reached the age of 22 - which was the age of majority according to Italian law then in force - and had submitted an application for Italian citizenship. Contrary to the governor's allegation, naturalization would not have constituted a reasonable ground for evading or being exempted from compulsory military service at that time. This was simply attributable to the fact that the Second Constitutional Monarchy (*Meşrûtiyet-i Sâni*) had not yet been declared, and no legislation regarding the conscription of non-Muslim subjects had been introduced.²⁹⁴ In a similar manner, Eleazar and Avram - who had reached the age of majority as of today - "had no other purpose than to show respect for their national sentiments" (*asıl maksad mahzâ hissiyât-ı milliyemize hürmeten*). Therefore, their demands to maintain and preserve their original nationality were "both reasonable and legally sound" (*iddiaları fikren ve kanûnen muvâfıktır*). Concluding his letter, Baruham expressed his hope that the matter would now be clarified and that the necessary procedures would begin.

On 9 March 1914, an unconventional telegram was dispatched from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Italian Consulate General in Jerusalem, regarding the application of Giuseppe Eliasciar for Italian citizenship.²⁹⁵ As Giuseppe is believed to be the Italian equivalent of the Hebrew name Josef, it can be deduced that the applicant was likely another grandson of Jakoub Saül. The telegram suggested that the pending application of Giuseppe could be

²⁹³ ASDMAE- Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Baruham Elyaşar."

²⁹⁴ Compulsory military service was a practice that exempted non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire from paying the *jizya* tax until 1835. While the implementation of the system was first initiated in 1835, and was at first exclusive to the navy, it was subject to consistent opposition, contradictions, and even large-scale rebellions in the subsequent period. In practice, the system underwent numerous legal reforms through the 1839 Tanzimat Edict (*Tanzîmât Fermânı*), the 1851 Jizya Regulation (*Cizye Nizamnâmesi*), and the 1856 Imperial Reform Edict (*Islâhat Fermânı*). The duration of exemptions and the scope of payments were subject to variation, yet flexibility was invariably provided in exchange for the 'military exemption tax' (*bedel-i askeriye*). However, this tax was completely abolished with the Law of Conscription (*Ahız-ı Asker Kanunu*) issued on 7 August 1909, one year after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. During the turbulent period from 1910 to 1918, the Ottoman government maintained a consistent policy of conscription of non-Muslim subjects. The most original and prominent work regarding the conscription of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire is undoubtedly Gülsoy's book titled "The Ottoman Empire's Non-Muslim Soldiers: From Jizya to Citizenship": Ufuk Gülsoy, *Osmanlı'nın Gayrimüslim Askerleri: Cizyeden Vatandaşlığa* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2010), 10, 41-44, 56-58, 147, 204.

²⁹⁵ No other documents were found in the Archives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ASDMAE) regarding the Eliasciar case, except for a few from 1914, 1915, and 1922. ASDMAE- Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Ministero degli Affari Esteri- Direzione Generale degli Affari Privati" (No: 12405/6 - Pos:163142) to "Regio Consolato Generale d'Italia in Gerusalemme", Subject: Eliasciar Giuseppe cittadinanza, Rome, 09 March 1914.

finalized in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of the new Citizenship Law that came into force on 13 June 1912.²⁹⁶ In light of the prevailing circumstances, it was an indisputable fact that Giuseppe should be regarded as a foreigner in terms of civil status. This was due to the fact that Giuseppe's father also had lost his citizenship and therefore held foreign status at the time of his son's birth. Consequently, in accordance with the prevailing legislation, Giuseppe was automatically recognized as the offspring of a foreign national. However, the recently enacted law has introduced a significant degree of leniency for underage individuals who could demonstrate that their father, mother, or paternal grandfather is a "citizen by birth" (*cittadini per nascita*), thereby enabling them to acquire Italian citizenship. In accordance with the second paragraph of the previously cited third article, such an individual could become an Italian citizen provided that he established residence in the Kingdom by the age of 21 and declared his intention to choose Italian citizenship by the age of 22. Moreover, the initial paragraph of the third article conceded such applicants an additional option to obtain citizenship if they "performed military service in the Italian Kingdom" (*prestasse servizio militare nel Regno*) or "accepted employment within the Italian State" (*accettasse un impiego dello Stato*). As is evident, the aforementioned legislation (*Legge 13 giugno 1912, n. 555. Sulla cittadinanza italiana*) was structured in such a manner that citizenship acquired by birth could be inherited by subsequent generations, even in the event of its subsequent loss.

²⁹⁶ The relevant third article of the law and its translation were as follows:

Art. 3

Lo straniero nato nel Regno o figlio di genitori quivi residenti da almeno dieci anni al tempo della sua nascita diviene cittadino:

1° se presta servizio militare nel Regno o accetta un impiego nello Stato;

2° se compiuto il 21° anno risiede nel Regno e dichiara entro il 22° anno di eleggere la cittadinanza italiana;

3° se risiede nel Regno da almeno dieci anni e non dichiara nel termine di cui al n. 2 di voler conservare la cittadinanza straniera.

Le disposizioni del presente articolo si applicano anche allo straniero del quale il padre o la madre o l'avo paterno siano stati cittadini per nascita.

Art. 3

A foreigner born in the Kingdom or the child of parents who have been resident there for at least 10 years at the time of his birth becomes a citizen:

1° if he performs military service in the Kingdom or accepts employment in the State;

2° if, upon reaching the age of 21, he resides in the Kingdom and declares within the age of 22 that he wishes to acquire Italian citizenship;

3° if he has resided in the Kingdom for at least 10 years and does not declare within the period referred to in paragraph 2 that he wishes to retain his foreign citizenship.

The provisions of this article shall also apply to foreigners whose father or mother or paternal grandfather was a citizen by birth. Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, "LEGGE 13 Giugno 1912, N. 555 Sulla Cittadinanza Italiana. (012U0555), Entrata in Vigore Del Provvedimento: 01/07/1912, (Gazzetta Ufficiale n.153 del 30-06-1912)," *Normattiva: Il Portale Della Legge Vigente*, last modified 2024, accessed June 28, 2025, <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1912-06-13;555@originale>.

R. MINISTERO
DEGLI
AFFARI ESTERI

R. Consolato Generale d'Italia
in Gerusalemme

Roma,

-9. MARZO 1914

226 Ricev. 20 - 3191/4

P. 30

Direzione Generale degli affari privati

Div. 4 SEZ. 1

N. 12405/6

Posizione 163142

N. R. — Nella risposta indicare la Divisione, la Sezione, il numero e la data della presente. In un rapporto trattare di un solo argomento.

Oggetto

Eliasciar Giuseppe
cittadinanza

Illmo Signore

Riferendomi al rapporto del 26 gennaio p.p.,
N° 75/26, mi pregio informare la S.V. conformemen-
te al parere espresso dal regio Ministero di Grazia
e Giustizia che il caso del Giuseppe Eliasciar
può essere risoluto tenendo presente quanto dispo-
ne l'articolo 3 capov. della nuova legge sulla cit-
tadinanza 13 giugno 1912. Invero non è dubbio che
l'Eliasciar sia da conderarsi attualmente stranie-
ro, perchè figlio di padre che al tempo della sua
nascita aveva perduta la cittadinanza italiana e
quindi era straniero; ma, se il padre stesso, o la
madre, o l'avo paterno siano stati cittadini per na-
scita, egli, che non ha ancora compiuto il venti-
duesimo anno di età, potrà divenire cittadino ita-
liano, purchè a norma del N° 2 del citato articolo
fissi la residenza nel Regno e, sempre entro l'an-
no della maggiore età, dichiarare di eleggere la cit-
tadinanza italiana. A norme del N° I dell'artico-
lo medesimo, l'Eliasciar potrebbe poi, in pari tempo,
divenire cittadino italiano, quando, oltre a dimo-
strare di essere figlio di padre, o di madre, o di
avo paterno, i quali siano stati cittadini per na-
scita, prestasse servizio militare nel Regno o ac-
cettasse un impiego dello Stato.

Gradisca, Illmo Signore, i sensi della mia di-
stinta considerazione.

Regio Console Gen.

Gerusalemme

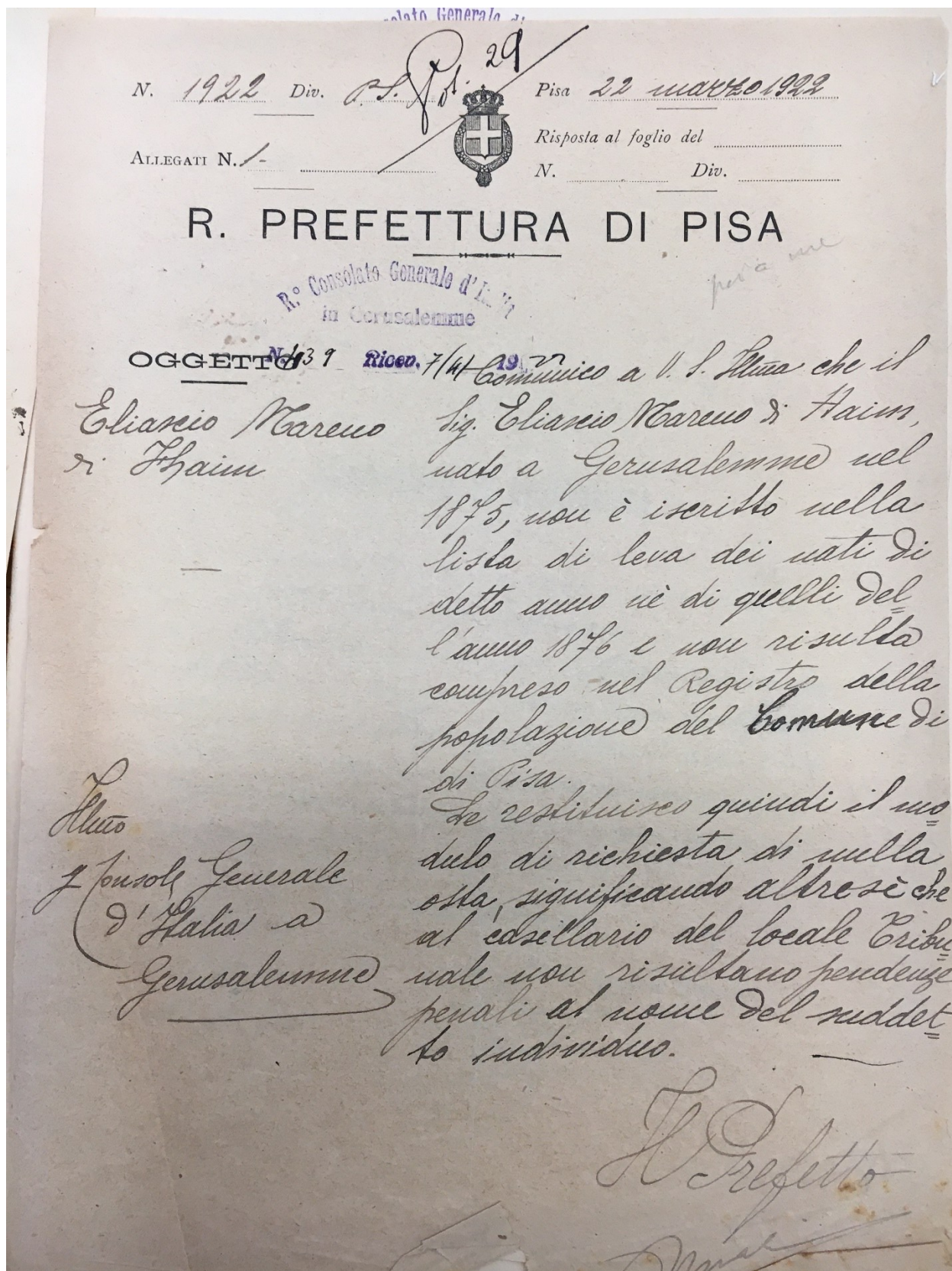
Pel Ministro

[Signature]

Archival Image 5: Telegram sent by the Directorate General for Private Affairs of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem on 9 March 1914, referring to Giuseppe Eliasciar's Italian citizenship.

The final correspondence regarding the Eliasciar family is that between the Prefect of Pisa and the Italian Consulate General in Jerusalem, dated January and March 1922, and referring to the passport application of Mareno, son of Haim Eliasciar and Vita Panizel.²⁹⁷ Given his birth in 1875 and his status as Haim's son, it is evident that he belonged to the earlier generation preceding all the other grandchildren previously discussed. The Consulate had requested from the Prefect to issue a *nulla osta* certificate for Mareno Eliasciar, who had declared himself to be registered in the Pisa population registry and had applied for an Italian passport. The document, a mandatory component of international citizenship procedures, functioned as a "no impediment certificate" or a "clearance letter," thereby affirming the validity, legality and completeness of the application. In other words, it asserted that there were no legal impediments to its approval and implementation. However, the Prefect responded that Mareno, who was born in Jerusalem in 1875, was not registered in the military service lists for either the year of birth 1875 or 1876. In addition, upon noting the absence of Mareno from the population records of the Pisa Commune, the Prefect duly returned the "application form" (*il modulo di richiesta di nulla osta*) to the consulate in Jerusalem. It was particularly noted in the concluding remarks of the telegram that no criminal charges were pending against Mareno in the local court records. Consequently, although Mareno did not appear in the civil and military records of the Pisa district, he was a person with a clean judicial record at the local level.

²⁹⁷ ASDMAE-Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30. Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Prefettura di Pisa" (N.1922, Pos.29) to "Regio Consolato Generale d'Italia in Gerusalemme", Subject: Eliancio Mareno di Haim, Pisa, 22 March 1922.



Archival Image 6: The document stating that Mareno Eliasciar (incorrectly written as Eliancio) has no civic affiliation with the Commune of Pisa.

However, it is noteworthy that the correspondence also included a Certificate of Nationality (*Certificato di Nazionalità*), issued by the Italian Consulate General in Beirut on 6 March 1915.²⁹⁸ The document certifying Mareno Eliasciar's Italian nationality indicated that he was a resident of Livorno and also an "employee" (*impiegato*). This signifies that Mareno had previously submitted an application for citizenship to the relevant authorities in Beirut and had, in principle, substantiated his Italian nationality on the basis of "right of blood" (*jus sanguinis*). However, in the application made to Pisa in 1922, Mareno's status was indicated as "domiciled in Pisa" (*domiciliato a Pisa*). Given the geographical proximity between Pisa and Livorno (approximately 25 km), it is quite logical to assume that he relocated his residence from Livorno to Pisa during that period, or that he maintained dual residence. However, the fact that an Italian national who had officially certified his nationality in Beirut in 1915 was still seeking a passport from Jerusalem in 1922 and attempting to prove his affiliation with Pisa raises significant questions. It is unfortunate that no further documentation has been located in relation to this case, thus preventing further elucidation.

²⁹⁸ ASDMAE-Consolato a Gerusalemme, 1843-1943, Pos.30. Naturalizzazione / "Cittadinanza," 14/58/1895-1922, Nazionalità della famiglia Eliasciar, From "Consolato Generale di S.M. Il Re D'Italia in Beirut", (Art. 24 della Legge Consolare No:32), Beirut, 06 March 1915.

SEZ.
V
Ilmo Signore

CONSOLATO GENERALE

DI

S. M. IL RE D'ITALIA
IN BEIRUT

Art. 24 della Legge Consolare

N.º 32

CERTIFICATO DI NAZIONALITÀ

Il Console Generale di S. M. il Re d'Italia in Beirut certifica che il
Signor Mareno Eliasciar
figlio di Haim nato in Gerusalemme
addì 1876 domiciliato nel Regno nel comune di Livorno
di professione Impiegato è cittadino italiano e come
tale si trova iscritto nel registro dei nazionali di questo regio ufficio al N. 154

Il presente certificato è valevole per il titolare, la moglie e i figli minorenni
e dev'essere rinnovato in ogni anno.

Beirut, addì 6 Marzo 1915

Percy. n. 201

Art. 59

Diritto fr. 10

Il R. Console Generale



ole Ge

Gerusalemme

Archival Image 7: The certificate issued by the Italian Consulate in Beirut in 1915, verifying Mareno Eliasciar's Italian nationality.

T. 23 d. Prot.
 Pos. 29
 R. (1) Consolato Generale d'Italia in Gerusalemme
 Domanda di « nulla osta » per passaporto da rilasciarsi all'estero
 889

Il sottoscritto richiede il signor Prefetto di Pisa
 di restituirgli il presente foglio debitamente completato, dichia-
 rando se possa essere rilasciato il passaporto a Eliasciar
Mareno figlio di Haim
 e di Vita Panizel (domiciliato a Pisa) nato
 a Gerusalemme addì (2) Venti luglio
Milleottocento settantacinque
 di condizione impiegato attualmente residente
 a Gerusalemme ed ascritto alla classe 1876
 (Data) Gerusalemme li 5 Gennaio 1922
 (Firma) H. R. Console Generale
 (Bollo) 

R. Prefettura di _____
 Il sottoscritto dichiara (3) _____
 _____ passaporto alla persona sopra indicata.
 (Data) _____ (Firma) _____
 (Bollo) _____

(1) Ambasciata, Legazione o Consolato.
 (2) In lettere.
 (3) nulla osta a che venga rilasciato ovvero non poter essere rilasciato.

Archival Image 8: The form sent by the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem to the Prefecture of Pisa in 1922, requesting the issuance of a *nulla osta* certificate for Mareno Eliasciar.

As demonstrated, members of the Eliasciar family from different generations were involved in numerous processes between the Ottoman and Italian authorities. The most intriguing point to emerge from this analysis is that the Eliasciar family members exhibited a pattern of behaviour that ran counter to the post-1911 trend of Italian nationals in the empire opting for Ottoman status. In other words, despite the potential risks associated with Italian nationality within the Ottoman Empire during this period, which spanned from the Italian-Ottoman War to the First World War, Eliasciars appeared to voluntarily assume these risks. This may be indicative of a lack of concern for their current situation in the Ottoman Empire, as they may have intended to move to Italy immediately after acquiring citizenship. In any event, it is regrettable that these questions remain unanswered, since no further documentation regarding Eliasciars could be located. However, since the Conscription Law No:113 (*Ahz-ı Asker Lâyiha-i Kanuniyesi*), which was introduced on 7 August 1909, imposed a considerable obligation on many non-Muslim subjects, it is possible that Governor Azmi Bey's estimate at this point may have been partially accurate.²⁹⁹ Notwithstanding the numerous objections raised by various groups and circles, the law – enacted by the Young Turk government with unionist and nationalist motivations – was applied with resolute determination from 1910 to 1918. The initial article of the law stipulated that the "military exemption tax" (*bedelât-ı askeriye*) previously imposed on "Non-Muslim elements of the Ottoman Empire" (*Anâsır-ı gayri Müslime-i Osmâniye*) was hereby abolished. In addition, the people of Galata, Eyüp and Üsküdar, which had long been regarded as "exceptional neighborhoods" and were predominantly inhabited by non-Muslim residents, were also to be included in the military service obligation from this point onwards. Consequently, it is not surprising that Ottoman Jews sought to avoid conscription by applying for Italian naturalization.

However, the response of Christian organizations and the clergy in the Ottoman Empire was one of reluctance, pragmatism and obstruction at this critical juncture.³⁰⁰ During military examinations, conscription, and the dispatch of recruits, widespread resistance and riots were staged by Christian populations in many provinces of the empire. The recruitment of troops from remote locations such as Egypt, Samos, Cyprus, Mount Lebanon, Hijaz, and Yemen was not a viable option, as these regions were home to non-Turkish majorities. Furthermore, a considerable number of Christians sought refuge in foreign countries, chiefly the United States and Egypt, with the objective of evading conscription. Such attitudes have been interpreted as indicative of the failure to achieve the Unity of Elements (*İttihâd-ı Anâsır*), an ideology that has been long desired since the *Tanzîmât* era and which represents a sense of common homeland among Muslims and Christians. However, in such a situation, the high volume of Italian nationals seeking Ottoman naturalization following the 1911 Italo-Ottoman War gives rise to significant questions. Firstly, it is necessary to consider whether Italian males would genuinely be willing to adopt Ottoman status to the extent that they would consent to conscription. Furthermore, it is imperative to conduct a thorough investigation and ascertain the number of Italian males of military age who were aware of the compulsory nature of conscription under Ottoman law. When considering that the youngest non-Muslims conscripted into the Ottoman

²⁹⁹ Faruk Aydın, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tanzimat'tan Sonra Askeralma Kanunları (1839-1914)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1994), 46-48; Rıfat Bali, *Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya: Amerika'ya İlk Göç Eden Türklerin Yaşam Öyküleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 82, 357.

³⁰⁰ Faruk Aydın, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tanzimat'tan*, 46-48; Ufuk Gülsoy, "Cizye'den Vatandaşlığa: Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni," in *Türkler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt14: Osmanlı*, eds. Hasan Celâl Güzel, Kemal Çiçek and Salim Koca (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), 143-163.

army across the empire in 1910 were 21 years old and the oldest were 26, this situation becomes somewhat clearer. Consequently, senior Italians who anticipated an exemption from conscription may have opted to remain in Ottoman territory, while junior Italians may have favored departure. In this particular context, it is highly probable that Italian men who had obtained Ottoman status were already beyond the age of conscription and therefore exempt from military service. Moreover, despite meticulous research in the Turkish Presidential State Archives, no details have been found regarding an Italian national who was conscripted into the Ottoman army following his naturalization into Ottoman subjecthood. However, it should be noted that this issue warrants further investigation, including a search of the Turkish Military Archives.

3.3. Religious Conversion as a Method of Adaptation and Social Survival

Prior to examining more recent examples of the phenomenon of religious conversion among the Italians in the Ottoman Empire, it would be helpful to explore the geographical and historical contexts in which the paradigmatic precedents emerged. At this juncture, the conversion practice narrated and analyzed by Natalie Rothman through the vibrantly interactive atmosphere of the Venetian commercial sphere offers some of the most seminal insights.³⁰¹ Born in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, during the Safavid period, Teodoro Dandolo submitted a petition to the Venetian Senate in 1608, requesting appointment as an interpreter of Persian, Turkish, Arabic and Hindi. Dandolo had encountered the Venetian consul in Aleppo around 1600, had travelled to Venice at his behest and had undergone a process of conversion and baptism. In order to earn a livelihood, he was seeking employment as an official interpreter, or dragoman, for Ottoman merchants and dignitaries in Venice. However, Teodoro Dandolo was born into the Muslim faith and held a foreign legal status. Despite his subsequent conversion to Christianity and pledge to adhere to linguistic precision, both his professional reliability and imperial loyalty were subjected to scrutiny and deemed unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, due to the frequent absence of the incumbent Public Dragoman and Dandolo's success in liaising with Armenian merchants, his appointment was soon decided upon. However, archival tracing by Rothman reveals that Dandolo was not appointed to any post until 1615, when he was finally appointed commercial commissioner for Turkish, Greek, Jewish and other Levantine merchants.

Rothman posits that the case of Dandolo, characterized by a complex bureaucratic process, reflects the broader ambiguity in the legal-political background of Muslim-Christian conversion in early modern Venice.³⁰² It is possible that the Venetians' systematic distrust of Muslim-to-Christian conversion was partly due to their ignorance of the conversion practices of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the unwavering and undivided allegiance of the Ottoman subjects to their Sultan appears to be a more significant factor in this approach. From the Venetians' perspective, such practices represented an "otherness" and "subjectivity" embodied in the patronage and guidance of the Ottoman Sultan, rather than the individual and spiritual will of the Ottoman subjects. For the Venetians, the potential for Eastern despotism to exert coercive influence over religious affiliation and conversion meant that the suppression of individual will was necessary in order to ensure loyalty to the regime and the religious-political

³⁰¹ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 89-91.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

homogeneity of society. Consequently, this ideological, skeptical and polarized framing of Ottoman confessionalism in the Venetian perspective resulted in the characterization of Muslim converts as insincere, weak-willed and insecure. From the Venetian perspective, which regarded conversion as a mere means of glorifying, regulating and strengthening Catholicism, the instrumentalization of personal faith in the name of loyalty or devotion to the state was highly unusual and strange.³⁰³

In contrast, Rothman postulates that the dynamics of conversion among the Venetians who embraced Islam were shaped by the evolving political and economic imperatives of the Mediterranean.³⁰⁴ In particular, the intensified commercial competition between the Dutch, French and English naval powers resulted in a mutual pragmatism and an increase in the number of cases of both “conversion to Islam” (*ihtidâ*) and “conversion from Islam” (*irtidâd*). Despite the lack of enthusiasm among Muslims seeking conversion to Christianity, occasional tolerance was shown towards Venetians who converted to Islam. The traditional practice of “devshirme” (*devşirme*), the forced recruitment of Christian children from mainly Balkan lands to create a class of soldiers and bureaucrats loyal to the Sultan, was a warning sign for the Venetians regarding the political radicalism of conversion to Islam. However, Rothman underscores that the overwhelming majority of early modern converts to Islam were not the Christian children forcibly recruited by the Ottoman Empire; but rather subjects of neighboring states who consciously and voluntarily entered the Sultan’s service. These individuals, who came to be labelled and recognized as “renegades” (*dönekler*), represented an amalgamation of the concept of conversion to Islam with a transformation in legal status and a new level of obedience to the Sultan. Therefore, the imaginary of a Turkified subject in the collective memory of Venetian elites consisted of a synthesis of both *devshirmes* and renegades, creating a deep sense of hesitation, suspicion and fear of disloyalty among Venetian authorities.

3.3.1. The Case of Giulia Franzoni as a Marginal Manifestation of Marital Conversion

The kinship of Italo-Levantines with other nationalities through matrimonial ties is a highly extensive but understudied topic. Prior to an exploration of the Franzoni case, it may be fruitful to consider a number of case studies and *données* from the pertinent literature, as these may offer valuable insights into the complexity and extent of Italo-Levantine familial networks.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ In addition to converts, the transimperial status of other subjects, such as Jews and freed slaves, aroused suspicion among the Venetian authorities regarding their loyalty and sense of belonging. An Ottoman subject seeking to become a Venetian was required not only to obtain a legal status within the city but also to cultivate and sustain a social affinity with its inhabitants. The Christian and Jewish communities which the Ottoman regime inherited from its Byzantine predecessor were able to forge extraterritorial connections with other major powers such as Venice through a complex network of religious, political, economic and kinship structures. When these groups attempted to establish a distinctive affectional bond with Venice, those who had previously served the Republic were treated with understanding and sympathy. Ibid., 56-57.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 92-94.

³⁰⁵ Christine Laidlaw’s extraordinary work discusses the intriguing encounters between the British and Italians in the Levantine commercial sphere during the eighteenth century, including marriage, family organization, inheritance and conversion. This can be interpreted as a sign that the British, who sought to get a share of the Levantine trade dominated by the Italians, began to establish familial and kinship ties in addition to diplomatic and commercial relations. In cosmopolitan Ottoman cities such as Aleppo and Izmir, British men in important positions such as chaplaincy married Italians and had Anglo-Italian children.

The case of Amalia Ruggiero offers a retrospective insight and elaboration on the social status and acceptance, advantages and disadvantages that an Austrian woman acquired through her marital ties with two different Italians.³⁰⁶ Although the case examined by Fuhrmann does not directly involve a conversion based on matrimonial bonds, it is nevertheless an intriguing example of the potential relations of interest between nationality, marital status and consular authority. Amalia Travniček, an Austrian citizen born in Moravia, had travelled to the Aegean region in 1888 to teach the children of the Kavala tobacco merchant Foskioğlu and met Nikola Vutzia, the cook of the Italian Consul. The couple quit their jobs and travelled first to Salonika and then to Vodena (Edessa), where they opened a temporary shop catering to railway workers and, once successful, replicated the same business model on the Salonika-Dedeağaç and Alaşehir-Afyonkarahisar railway routes. Although they had two children, Amalia married the foreman Alexander Ruggiero because Vutzia refused to marry her, refused to give her a share of their savings and treated her badly. However, when the unfortunate woman was also abandoned by Ruggiero two months later, she took her daughters and moved first to Istanbul and then to Salonika, where she took a job as a cook. When Vutzia requested custody of their daughters, Amalia applied to the Austrian Consulate in Salonika and requested protection for herself and her daughters, citing her Austrian nationality based on her Moravian birth.

According to Fuhrmann, this testimony involved a dialogue similar to that between “master” and “servant” and a violation of the particular norms set by the master.³⁰⁷ Thus, this dialogue could be attributed to particular frames of belonging such as God and Church, righteous ruler and loyal subjects, society and the common good, or social class and political party. Servants who were involved in or witnessed the violation were expected to present a convincing narrative during the dialogue that framed the violation and explained how it occurred. Fuhrmann argues that Travniček’s petition, both as a native Moravian and as a regular member of the Levantine community, creates a link between nationality and the utilization of consular authority for self-interest. Having gained acceptance and status in Levantine society through her personal and professional relationships as well as her chosen field of work, Amelia had not felt the need to interact with the country of her origins until then. As a resident of Ottoman territory for the last 12 years, she had become so detached and estranged from her homeland that she was unable to retain possession of her passport. Consequently, she was required to declare her place of birth

Laidlaw also mentions cases such as that of John Murray, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, who did not conform to moral norms. Murray, who was a close friend of Casanova, engaged in extramarital affair with an Italian mistress named Catterina Podrimolli in the 1760s, although he was married. Subsequently, he fathered four children with this woman and bequeathed his entire inheritance to them. On the other hand, the fact that an English chaplain like Robert Frampton learnt Italian as well as Arabic in Aleppo, where he was appointed in 1655, shows how important this language was at that early date throughout the empire. Moreover, the English traveler John Howard, who visited Izmir in 1786, mentioned the presence of Venetian/Italian, French, Jewish and Greek hospitals in addition to English and Dutch hospitals. Furthermore, Alexander Russell, a Scottish physician who practiced in Aleppo between 1740 and 1754, asserts that the majority of European doctors employed in the city’s medical facilities during that period were French or Italian. Christine Laidlaw, *The British in the Levant: Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 60-63, 70, 85, 108, 110, 128, 138-139, 188, 198, 211.

³⁰⁶ Malte Fuhrmann, “I would rather be in the Orient: European Lower Class Immigrants into the Ottoman Lands,” in *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity*, eds. Ulrike Freitag, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi and Florian Riedler (London: SOAS / Routledge, 2011), 232-233; Malte Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 329-333.

³⁰⁷ Fuhrmann, “I would rather be in the Orient,” 232-233; Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 329-333.

in the petition in order to claim her Austrian nationality. Fuhrmann points out that Amelia's adventurous life does not seem to be in line with either her native Austria's claim to cultural superiority over the Balkans or the moral values of Catholicism as the dominant faith of her country. Amelia portrays the image of a woman who disrespected her national origin and religious essence and only remembered her homeland years later when she was in trouble. Eventually, she had reinterpreted her life in order to present herself to the consular authorities not as a sinner or a Levantine, but as an Austrian girl in trouble. Nevertheless, Fuhrmann emphasizes that an exclusively instrumentalist perspective on the Travniček case, founded upon *a priori* assumptions, would fail to take into account the environmental factors to which a violated subject is exposed and the dynamics of her experiential testimony.

The case of a young Italian girl who converted from Catholicism to Islam in Adana in July 1911 is noteworthy in terms of illustrating the various manifestations of Italian identity in Anatolian contexts.³⁰⁸ Sixteen-year-old Giulia Franzoni (ژولیہ فرانزونی), who reportedly fled her father's residence and converted to Islam of her own volition, occupied the attention of both Italian and Ottoman authorities for a period, resulting in a brief diplomatic crisis between the two states. Born on 24 August 1895, Giulia had asserted her intention to adopt Islam "despite the repeated persuasive exhortations and counsel of the Catholic clergy" (*Katolik rüesâ-yı mezhebiyesince vuku bulan telkînât ve nasâyih-i mükerrereye rağmen*) and had adamantly declined to return to her family. Governor (*Vâli*) Muammer Bey of Adana reported that, in accordance with the request made by Giulia for personal freedom, she was handed over to the care of "a pious and veiled woman" (*mü'min bir muhaddere*). In spite of repeated requests from both the Italian Consulates in Mersin and Aleppo for "the underage girl's" (*sabî /sabiyye*) return, Adana Governor Muammer Bey asserted that she could not be handed over, given the absence of any evidence indicating that she was being held or detained. Giulia, who had formally requested religious conversion from the Ottoman authorities, was legitimately released following "the conversion process" (*muâmele-i ihtidâiye*) administered by the Provincial Council (*Meclis-i İdâre-i Vilâyet*).

From the perspective of the Governor of Adana, it was evident according to Ottoman law that a person who had reached the age of 16 and was about to turn 17 was "subject to criminal liability and possessed freedom of action" (*ehliyet-i cezâiyyeyi hâiz ve fâil-i muhtar*).³⁰⁹ Therefore, the young girl was "neither in government custody nor imprisoned in a government facility" (*merkûme ne hükûmetin vesâyetinde ne de tevkîfhânesindedir*). Muammer Bey had further inquired as to whether the Governor's Office assumed any legal obligation to detain a legally eligible individual and transfer her to the respective consulate merely for disobeying her parents. It seems that consular officials have threatened the Governor with escalating the issue to the Italian Embassy and exerting pressure on the Ottoman government. As the local decision-maker, the Governor was concerned that prolonging the issue would only lead to further complications and potentially result in a diplomatic crisis.

³⁰⁸ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 7, 30 Haziran 1327 – 13 July 1911; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 9, 01 Temmuz 1327 – 14 July 1911. From Muammer Bey, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Muammer Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³⁰⁹ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 9, 01 Temmuz 1327 – 14 July 1911; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 6, 04 Temmuz 1327 – 17 July 1911. From Muammer Bey, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Muammer Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

In response to the urgency indicated by the Governor, the Ministry of the Interior promptly dispatched a telegram the following day, stipulating the absolute necessity of a consular interpreter's presence during the religious conversion of a foreign subject.³¹⁰ The Ministry also requested confirmation as to whether an interpreter had been formally invited to participate in Giulia's conversion process and, if so, whether he had actively contributed to the proceedings. The governor's reports indicate that Giulia's escape from her father's home in Çakaldere village was announced by the Italian Consulate in Mersin on July 11. The subsequent developments within the case immediately began to be monitored by the Ceyhan District Governor's Office (*Ceyhan Kazâsı Kaimakamlığı*). Thereafter, the Consul was promptly informed of Giulia's arrival at the provincial center with the requisite documentation on the same day. On the following day, a delegation comprising a couple of Italian-speaking priests and nuns from the Jesuit (*Cizvit*) institution in Adana, accompanied by the Consular Interpreter, Çivicioğlu Odisef Efendi, was invited to the Provincial Council to "deliver religious tutoring" (*berây-ı telkînât-ı dîniye*) to the girl. At the initial stage of the process, both Giulia's father, Achille Franzoni, and the Jesuit priest, Predari, provided her with separate counsel and advice in the presence of the interpreter. However, despite their best efforts, they were unable to alter her decision and dissuade her from "her determination to embrace Islam" (*kabûl-u İslâmiyetteki azîmetten*). To preclude any potential objections, Priest Predari and the nuns attempted to persuade her once again on the following day. Nevertheless, they were unsuccessful in persuading Giulia to revert to Christianity. Ultimately, her conversion to Islam was formally endorsed by the Provincial Council.

The Italian Embassy consistently portrayed the incident as "the abduction with consent of a 17-year-old girl by multiple Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire" (*Osmanlı tebaasından birkaç şahs-ı Müslim tarafından bi'r-rızâ kaçırıldığı*).³¹¹ It is important to note that the term "abduction with consent" (*bi'r-rızâ kaçırıldığı*) in this context refers to Giulia's deliberate and voluntary act of leaving her father's residence with the accompaniment of several Muslim individuals. The embassy officials indicated that the failure of the Ottoman local authorities to return the girl continued to have a negative impact on Italian nationals residing in Adana. Furthermore, the Italian officials argued that the conversion of the 17-year-old Giulia should not be legally recognized on the basis of Italian legislation, which defines "the age of majority" (*sinn-i rüşd*) as 21 years old. Consequently, the Italian government explicitly and persistently opposed the conversion process. In accordance with the universally accepted principle according to which boys and girls below a certain age are to be subject to their fathers' custody and supervision in all civil matters, the Ottoman Ministry of Interior could well have found the Italians' reasoning comprehensible.³¹² In the event of a "dispute" (*ihtilâf*) between the girl and

³¹⁰ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 1, 05 Temmuz 1327 – 18 July 1911. From the Communications Office of the Ministry of Interior to the Governorate of Adana (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberât-ı Umûmiye Dâiresinden Adana Vilâyetine*); DH.İD..20/16/Lef 10-11, 05 Temmuz 1327 – 18 July 1911. From Muammer Bey, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Muammer Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³¹¹ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 4, Sublime Porte Foreign Affairs Office, Private Secretarial Staff (*Bâb-ı Âli Dâire-i Hâriciye, Kalem-i Mahsus*).

³¹² COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 4 "Bu sinne vâsıl olmayan zükûr ve inas evlâdın muâmelât-ı medeniye ve hukukiyece pederlerinin hakk-ı velâyet ve nezâretine tâbi' bulunması hukuk-u husûsiye-i düvelin nazariyât-ı hâzırası mûcibince kabûl olunmuş bir kaide-i umûmiye olmakla mezbûrenin iâdeten teslîmi usûl iktizâsından bulunmuştur."

her father, it fell upon the consulate to arbitrate, which would have rendered the girl's consular handover a perfectly logical course of action.

It was of the utmost importance for the Embassy to guarantee the requisite handover in order to pacify the predominantly working-class Italian community in Adana and to forestall any potential unrest.³¹³ In response, on July 24, the Ministry of the Interior resolved that the investigative process concerning the age profile and conversion method of Giulia should be conducted in Istanbul. Therefore, the girl was required to be transported immediately to the aforementioned location, under the constant supervision of a reliable armed officer and an adult woman. As a consequence of the failure to comply with this request in a timely manner, the Italian Embassy was obliged to issue a warning to Minister of Interior Halil Bey. This resulted in the ministry sending a telegram to the governor on August 10, stressing the urgency and importance of the matter. On August 15, Giulia's father arrived in Istanbul, visibly distressed, and informed the relevant authorities. Despite the fact that his daughter had been dispatched to Istanbul some time ago under the escort of two gendarmes, he had yet to receive any information regarding her whereabouts or well-being.

Nevertheless, the matter would not be settled here, as the case of Giulia Franzoni's conversion would once again preoccupy the Ottoman Government and local authorities two years later.³¹⁴ In a telegram dispatched to the Adana Governor's Office in September 1913, the Ministry of the Interior indicated that the Italian Embassy had reactivated the matter for a further review. Given that the "convert" (*mühtediye*) was only 17 years old two years ago and had not yet reached the age of 21 at that time, her conversion had been the "subject of objections" (*dûcâr-ı itiraz*) from the Italian government. In accordance with Ottoman law, which designated the "legal age" (*sinn-i nizâmî*) as 15, the Adana Provincial Council based its decision to approve Giulia's conversion to Islam on her age of 17. However, following the Ottoman government's decision to raise the legal age to 20, the Italian authorities began to challenge the legality and legitimacy of the conversion process on a retroactive basis. According to Ottoman sources, "the issue originated from an existing dispute between the girl and her parents" (*esâsen işin kız ile ebeveyni arasında mevcut ihtilaftan tevellüd ederek*). If somehow "the two parties could be reconciled" (*bunların araları bulunduğu*), it was highly probable that the parents would refrain from pursuing the matter further with the consulate. In this regard, the ministry promptly requested the governor's office to intervene in the situation, in spite of it being a family matter, with the aim of "resolving the dispute" (*ihtilâfın izâlesi*) and "persuading Giulia's parents" (*ebeveyni irzâ*) to endorse their daughter's decision.³¹⁵

³¹³ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 2, 11 Temmuz 1327 – 24 July 1911; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 3, 28 Temmuz 1327 – 10 August 1911; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 5, 02 Ağustos 1327 – 15 August 1911. From the Communications Office of the Ministry of Interior to the Governorate of Adana (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberât-ı Umûmiye Dâiresinden Adana Vilâyetine*).

³¹⁴ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 12, 29 Ağustos 1329 – 11 September 1913, From the Ministry of Interior to the Governorate of Adana (*Dâhiliye Nezâretinden Adana Vilâyetine*).

³¹⁵ "bu babda sûret-i münâsebede teşebbüsât-ı lâzıme icrâsıyla âile arasındaki şu ihtilâfın izâlesiyle ebeveyni irzâ ve netîcesinin inbâ edilmesi."

On October 1, Governor Emin Bey announced that Giulia had married a local police officer named Rasim Efendi, hailing from the Bahçe district of Adana province.³¹⁶ However, just prior to Rasim Efendi's summoned appearance before the governor, Paolo Indelli, the Italian Vice Consul in Adana, made an unannounced appearance at the governor's office. It is evident that the Vice Consul sought to intervene in a procedure that fell within the exclusive jurisdiction of the civil administration. Indelli declared that he had been instructed by the Italian Embassy to find a resolution to this matter, which had been "a source of concern for the Italian public for some time" (*İtalya efkâr-ı umûmiyesini işgal eden bu mesele*). He requested that Giulia Franzoni be immediately summoned to the governor's office and subsequently sent to the consulate for a verbal statement to be taken. The governor then politely responded that, in light of the woman's current religious and civil status, it would be inadvisable to send her to the consulate. Indeed, the Ottoman central authorities had specifically requested that this highly delicate family matter be investigated in an informal manner, rendering her presence even at the governor's office an unsuitable option.³¹⁷

At this juncture, the governor put forth an alternative proposal, extending an invitation to the vice-consul and his wife to his private residence.³¹⁸ He suggested that the meeting with Giulia and her husband, Rasim Efendi, be held at this location. During the course of the meeting, "the intimate nature of the couple's spiritual bond and relationship" (*râbıta-ı mâneviyenin derecesi*) was gradually revealed.³¹⁹ Giulia presented herself before the consul as a woman who was clearly and convincingly satisfied with her husband and the quality of life he provided her. In response to the consul's remaining silent, the governor proceeded to the second phase of his plan to provide the consul with further reassurance. He suggested that the consul's wife engage in a private conversation with Giulia, in the presence of only women, in a separate room.³²⁰ In this method, it would be possible to achieve full conviction that the woman in question was indeed Giulia, that her conversion and subsequent marriage were not the result of any form of coercion or inducement, and that her responses were not influenced by any moral factors, such as fear or shame. After a period of time, the consul's wife exited the room and joined the others, indicating her confidence in Giulia's identity and her belief that the girl's demeanor and behaviour were not driven by external influence. Prior to his departure, the vice-consul articulated his satisfaction with the solution proposed by the governor to fulfil the Embassy's

³¹⁶ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 15-16, 18 Eylül 1329 – 01 October 1913, From Muammer Bey, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Muammer Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³¹⁷ "Kadının mevki-i hâzırına nazaran konsoloshâneye gönderilmesi muvâfık olamayacağı gibi bu işin sûret-i gayr-i resmîyede tedkîki muktezî bulunduğundan dâire-i vilâyete bile getirilemeyeceği lisân-ı münâsible mumâileyh-i Viskonsolosa bâ-tefhîm"

³¹⁸ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 15-16, 18 Eylül 1329 – 01 October 1913, From Muammer Bey, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Muammer Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³¹⁹ "Sûret-i ihtidâsı ile hâl ve maîşetinden ve zevcinden memnun olup olmadığına dair Viskonsolos tarafından İtalyanca irâd edilen suallere mezbûre zevcinden ve maîşetinden ziyâdesiyle memnun ve rahat olduğuna dâir kat'î ve muknî cevaplar verdi."

³²⁰ "İşbu cevaplara karşı diyecek bir şeyi olmadığını Konsolosun âcizlerine beyân etmesi üzerine bu kadının Matmazel Giulia olduğuna ve ihtidâ ve izdivâcın cebr ve teşvikten ve bu cevaplarının da havf veya hacâlet gibi bir tesir-i mâneviyeden münbais olmadığına kanâat-ı kâmile getirmiş olmaları için bir kere de madamın mezbûre ile ayrıca ve kadınca görüşüp isticvâb etmesini teklif ettim. Bu teklife binaen konsolosun madamı merkûme ile birlikte hâlî bir odaya çekilip bir müddet mükâleme ettikten sonra madam nezdimize gelerek mezburenin ef'âl ve akvâlinin hiçbir tesir-i hâricîyeden münbais ve kendisinin Matmazel Giulia olduğunda şüphe olmadığını ifade eyledi. Viskonsolos aldığı emrin infâzı için şu sûretle irâe edilen teshîlâtıdan dolayı memnun olduğunu ve cereyân eden mükâlemât ve tahkikâtı Sefârete yazacağını ve iş şimdi ebeveyninin irzâsı cihetinde kaldığını beyân ederek madamıyla beraber ikametgâhından ayrıldı."

order. He additionally stated that he would report the outcome of the dialogue and the subsequent investigation to the Embassy, and that the final decision rested upon the parental consent of the girl in question.

In light of this encouraging experience, the governor expressed optimism that the Italian Embassy would no longer rely and act exclusively on the statements of the girl's parents.³²¹ Nevertheless, the Franzoni case was still being pursued by the Italian consular authorities. Following the relocation of the girl's family from Adana to Samsun, the Italian authorities continued to keep the Italian Consulate in Samsun apprised of the latest developments. During her conversation with the governor, Giulia asserted that she had ceased all communication with her parents and was no longer in contact, indicating that she was unaware of their current whereabouts. In response to the governor's counsel and warnings, Giulia indicated that in case her mother were to visit Adana to see her, she would reconsider her relationship with her parents based on her mother's conduct and demeanor. However, despite Giulia's apparent contentment with her life, her parents could persist in their demands, and the Embassy could side with them to revive the process. In the event of such a scenario, the Adana Governor's Office stated that it would not be in a position to intervene with regard to individuals residing in Samsun.

On the other hand, the governor highlighted that the parents' intention may be "to secure a more favorable livelihood" (*daha iyi bir medâr-ı mâîşet*) and establish a better life for themselves in the Adana Province.³²² In other words, he suggested that the reunification with their daughter was a mere pretext for some other motive. Nevertheless, this observation did not result in a change to the prevailing circumstances. Should the Italian Embassy maintain its position that "the parental consent was a prerequisite" (*bunların irzâsı müstelzim*) and the Ottoman Imperial Government (*Hükûmet-i Seniyye*) endorse the petition and issue a corresponding ruling, the family would have to be reunited. In such a case, it was of the utmost importance to secure employment for Giulia's father in Adana. For this purpose, "a detailed account of the social status and professional career of the father in question can be requested" (*pederinin hâl ü şânına ve ne gibi işlerde kullanılabileceğine dair mâlûmat istihsâl*) from the Samsun District Governor's Office. Thus, "a suitable position could be offered to him within one of the railway companies" (*şimendifer kumpanyalarında kendisinin hâliyle mütenâsib bir iş*) operating in the Adana Province. In a message dated November 1, Governor Emin Bey reported that Giulia's husband had resigned from his position as a police officer and that the couple had departed for Istanbul. This indicated that no further action could be taken by the Adana Governor's Office since the matter was no longer within their jurisdiction.

Apart from the Ottoman archives, the issue has been addressed in Italian sources with a markedly divergent narrative and context. One of the most extensive and frequently referenced works on the Italo-Turkish War is Cesare Causa's 1912 publication, entitled *La guerra italo-turca e la conquista della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica, dallo sbarco di Tripoli alla pace di Losanna* (The Italo-Turkish War and the Conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, from the Landing of Tripoli to the Peace of Lausanne).³²³ The book effectively addresses wartime news,

³²¹ COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 15-16, 18 Eylül 1329 – 01 October 1913; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 13, 19 Teşrîniyevvel 1329 – 01 November 1913.

³²² COA, DH.İD..20/16/Lef 15-16, 18 Eylül 1329 – 01 October 1913; DH.İD..20/16/Lef 13, 19 Teşrîniyevvel 1329 – 01 November 1913.

³²³ Cesare Causa, *La guerra italo-turca e la conquista della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica, dallo sbarco di Tripoli alla pace di Losanna* (Firenze: Editore Adriano Salani, 1912), 29.

reports, and chronicles originating from Ottoman domains, and devotes a particular section to the Franzoni case, as below:

‘A grave incident has recently taken place: The abduction of a sixteen-year-old minor girl, Giulia Franzoni’, who was fraudulently taken from her family of honest laborers operating on the Ottoman railway in Adana. Despite the objections of her family and foreigners of other nationalities, and the intervention of the Royal Consulate and Embassy, she was forcibly converted to Islam and forced to marry a Muslim citizen. This event, of grave importance for any nation, is of even greater importance for Italy, which has to protect a large community of Italian emigrants employed in railway projects in Asia Minor. The failure to find a swift punitive solution to this barbaric system of forced conversions and the abduction of an innocent underage girl could encourage similar acts targeting the entire working population, the majority of whom are Italian, who have to live with their families in these regions.’³²⁴

The Dante Alighieri Society’s monthly journal, *Patria e Colonie* (Homeland and Colonies), was regarded as one of the most influential publications of colonial Italy.³²⁵ In its July 1914 edition, the journal presented a compelling perspective on the Franzoni affair. The article, situating the Young Turkish Revolution as a failed endeavor, delved into the historical context and rationale behind the capitulations in Turkey. It portrayed the Franzoni case as a manifestation of human rights violations that emerged from the ashes of a failed revolution:

“It is an undeniable fact that the Ottoman aspiration to liberate themselves from the capitulations, to fully reclaim their sovereignty, to subject foreigners to common law and to finally become a modern state is, at least in theory, justifiable. The fundamental nature of the capitulations, which entails the coexistence of multiple sovereign entities within a single territory, undoubtedly presents a significant challenge to the expeditious fulfilment of this aspiration. However, it would be reasonable to inquire whether the Young Turkey (Young Turk) movement has demonstrated any evidence of improvement in recent years. Has it introduced reforms to its judicial, fiscal, and economic institutions in accordance with modern civil standards? Can it provide tangible assurances for the safeguarding of foreign nationals’ assets, liberties, and even lives? Or has it remained the Young Turkey associated with the Adana massacres of 1909, the plundering of the Italian Navigation Agency at Santi Quaranta, the abduction of minor Giulia Franzoni, who was compelled to convert to Islam and wed a Muslim, the arbitrary incarceration of Gustavo Arbib, the killings of Father Giustino and Gastone Terreni, the numerous instances of piracy in the Red Sea, and the slave trade?”

³²⁴ “Un fatto gravissimo avvenne recentemente: il ratto della giovinetta minorenni Giulia Franzoni, d’anni sedici, rapita fraudolentemente alla propria famiglia di onesti operai adibiti ai lavori delle ferrovie ottomane ad Adana, sequestrata e convertita a viva forza all’ islamismo, e maritata con la violenza a un cittadino mussulmano, nonostante le proteste dei genitori e degli stranieri di altre nazioni, e nonostante l’intervento del regio consolato e della regia ambasciata. Questo incidente, che ha per ogni Nazione importanza grave, ne ha più ancora per l’Italia che deve provvedere alla tutela di una numerosa emigrazione italiana, la quale trova lavoro nelle opere ferroviarie dell’Asia Minore. Ora il fatto di non aver trovato una rapida soluzione punitiva per questo barbaro sistema di forzata conversione e di ratto di una ingenua fanciulla può essere incentivo ad altri fatti consimili, che vengano diretti a colpire tutta la popolazione operaia, che è in gran parte italiana, costretta a vivere con la propria famiglia in tali regioni.”

³²⁵ Attilio Fontana, “L’abolizione delle capitolazioni in Turchia,” *Patria e Colonie*, “Ai vicini, ai lontani,” *Lettture Mensili sotto gli auspici della Società Nazionale Dante Alighieri*, Milano, Casa Editrice Dottor Francesco Vallardi, Anno III- Sem II, N.7, Luglio 1914, 335-338.

As fascist institutions in Italy consolidated their power and began to dominate cultural life in the 1930s, retrospective interpretations of historical events were progressively shaped by their ideological agenda. The case of Giulia Franzoni, revisited in the context of fascist propaganda, is a notable example. The January 1931 edition of the monthly illustrated journal *Vita Nova* (New Life), published by the Fascist University of Bologna, offered the following commentary on the Franzoni incident:³²⁶

“I shall ignore the various provocative acts committed against us by the Young Turks: Suffice it to recall the unpunished crimes committed against Father Giustino in Derna, against Gastone Terreni in Tripolitania and the abduction of the sixteen-year-old daughter of one of our compatriots who resides in Turkey. This sixteen-year-old girl, Giulia Franzoni, was forcefully converted to Islam and subsequently given in marriage to a Muslim, regardless of the protests of our government and other foreign residents of Adana. Beyond the 'imperative necessities,' Turkey behaved arrogantly towards us because they still considered us a nation that had been defeated by the Abyssinians. As if the Muslims had never tasted the crushing defeat of those same Abyssinians who had won the Pyrrhic victory against the Italians.”³²⁷

As can be seen, in contrast to the Ottoman archives, Italian sources portrayed the incident as a complete coercion, barbarism or oppression, and sought to substantiate Giulia's victimization from diverse perspectives. Causa illustrated the magnitude of the risks that Italian nationals in Ottoman territory were exposed to and urged the Italian government to adopt a retaliatory stance to avert prospective threats. Fontana's article, centered around the failure of the Young Turkish Revolution, highlighted that Turkish institutions lacked the capacity to safeguard the fundamental rights and even the lives of foreigners. Macaluso Aleo, however, posited that this forced conversion was a brazen provocation orchestrated by the Turks to disgrace Italians. Both Fontana and Aleo reinforced their arguments by citing instances of war crimes purportedly perpetrated against Italians during the Italo-Turkish War that ultimately went unpunished.

³²⁶ Giuseppe Macaluso Aleo, “Nel ventennale della conquista della Libia 1911-1931,” *Vita Nova - Rivista mensile illustrata dell'Università Fascista di Bologna*, Edita a cura della casa del Fascio di Bologna, Anno VII, Num. 12 (L.5), December 1931, 1067-1070.

³²⁷ “Sorvolo sugli svariati atti di provocazione perpetrati dai giovani turchi contro di noi: basta comunque, enumerare i misfatti, rimasti impuniti, di padre Giustino a Derna, di Gastone Terreni in Tripolitania ed il ratto della sedicenne figlia di un nostro connazionale residente in Turchia. Questa ragazza di sedici anni, Giulia Franzoni, fu convertita a viva forza all'islamismo e data sposa ad un Mussulmano, malgrado le proteste del Governo nostro e degli altri Stranieri residenti in Adana. Indipendentemente alle “imprescindibili necessità,” adunque, stava il fatto che la Turchia agiva contro di noi con molta arroganza, perché ci considerava ancora come quelli che si erano fatti sconfiggere dagli stessi Abissini, quasi che i Mussulmani non avessero mai ricevute solennissime batoste da quegli stessi Abissini, che ottennero sugli Italiani una vittoria veramente alla Pirro.”

4. FROM CAPITULATORY PROTÉGÉ TO ENEMY ALIEN: INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL MARGINALIZATION OF ITALIANS (1911-1916)

The starting point of this chapter is the wartime designation of Italians residing within the Ottoman Empire as “enemy aliens” (*düvel-i muhâsama tebaası*).³²⁸ This civic status was designated in the context of wartime conditions, in response to a prevailing climate of anxiety engendered by internal hostile activities, including espionage and sabotage. The first documented instance of this designation applying to Italians in the Ottoman Empire occurred during the October 1911 invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania. Subsequent to Italy’s declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire in August 1915, the scope of policies introduced under this designation and targeting Italian subjects underwent expansion. The Italians’ increasing demands for Ottoman naturalization during the war period can be attributed to a profound fear of being labelled as “enemy aliens.” This fear was accompanied by a sense of social marginalization, the deprivation of certain rights, and even the threat of deportation. In this regard, the theoretical background of the concept of “enemy alien,” which forms the foundation of the fourth and fifth chapters, will be explored in detail. Daniela Caglioti, a pre-eminent academic in this field, has made a significant contribution to the conceptualization of enemy alien through her seminal work *War and Citizenship*. In the introduction to her book, Caglioti states that states whose security and sovereignty are threatened divide their populations into “members” and “non-members,” and pursue strategies of mobilization, inclusion, and exclusion based on this distinction. Drawing on this paradigm of “wartime redefinition,” as outlined above, she provides a definition for the concept of enemy alien as follows:

“Enemy aliens – in other words, civilians of enemy nationality who found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time, in a world where establishing who was a citizen and who was not grew more crucial every day – were at the core of that redefinition.”³²⁹

Utilizing an analytical periodization, Caglioti meticulously traces the historical trajectory of the enemy alien category, whose ambivalent position vis-à-vis the sovereign state has been a subject of scrutiny since the Magna Carta of 1215. The author elucidates and establishes historical trajectories regarding the increasing marginalization and demonization of civilians in war,

³²⁸ The term *düvel-i muhâsama tebaası* is literally translated as “the subjects of enemy states.”

³²⁹ At this juncture, Caglioti’s noteworthy observation evokes the notion that the distinction between the concepts of “enemy citizen” and “enemy foreigner” is not merely terminological but also conceptual and functional. From this standpoint, the concept of “enemy national” can be understood as an abstract status defined exclusively by the individual’s citizenship bond, irrespective of geographical location. In other words, the fact that an individual is a citizen of an enemy state is sufficient to determine their status as an “enemy national,” regardless of their place of residence. This defining characteristic does not necessitate a concrete relationship between the state and the individual and consequently does not yield any legal consequences. Conversely, the concept of “enemy alien” is predicated on the individual’s actual presence in the territory of the state at war, in addition to the citizenship element. Thus, the concept signifies a concrete and current legal relationship that has been established between the individual and the sovereign state. It is therefore evident that while “enemy national” is a passive and abstract designation, “enemy alien” is an active and practically applicable legal status. In this study, the term “enemy national” is employed exclusively in the context of naturalization, while the term “enemy alien” is employed in all other contexts. Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*, 1.

despite the legal and political reforms that accompanied the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789. Caglioti's analysis focuses on the detrimental effects of war on civilians and the phenomenon of the humanization of war that emerged in response to these effects, through major wars up to the twentieth century. The historical connection established between the concepts of war and non-national civilians, as well as the correlation drawn between the concepts of extraterritoriality and enemy alien, will prove to be instructive in understanding the transimperial liminality of Italians in the Ottoman Empire.

Throughout this chapter, the primary focus will be on the wartime transformation of Italian institutional functions, services, and employment in the Ottoman Empire, with a particular emphasis on specific sectors. This labor-based analysis constitutes the preliminary phase of the subsequent chapter, which will explore the predominant sociopolitical and demographic patterns and transformations that influenced the Italian population in its entirety. The initial section of the text provides an examination of the Ottoman policies that were initiated in the aftermath of the Italian invasion of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911. These policies were designed to ensure the marginalization of Italian nationals within the institutional framework of the Ottoman Empire, as well as their exclusion from key sectors and institutions. Following Italy's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire in August 1915, the scope of these policies was expanded and their content enriched. This state strategy aimed to neutralize risky elements in the empire's domains and minimize wartime vulnerabilities. The remainder of the section will focus on the process of systematically removing Italian employees from public service positions, with a particular emphasis on public economic enterprises and state banks. The present dismissal program, which did not adopt a wholesale approach in order to prevent disruption in vital sectors, but rather focused on individual employees, will be explored in depth through specific provincial cases, profiles, and experiences. A significant proportion of the Italian employees identified and profiled by Ottoman authorities on a province-by-province basis were ultimately dismissed. However, certain employees were retained in their positions for strategic and pragmatic reasons, such as the assurance of the continuity of domestic production and military supply under wartime conditions.

Within the same context, it is also necessary to trace the cautious stance adopted by Ottoman authorities toward foreign elements through an espionage incident, which occurred during the Italian occupation of Ottoman Tripolitania in 1911. Notwithstanding the escalating wartime sensitivities towards enemy aliens, the threat was, on occasion, emanating directly from within the Ottoman system itself. A notable example of this phenomenon was the collaboration of Salomon Efendi, an Ottoman Jew who held an official position in the local courthouse of Tripoli, with the Italian occupation forces. Despite the absence of direct involvement from an Italian national, this episode from Libya exposed a crucial truth to the Ottoman authorities: This was the potential for the Italian army to collaborate with local elements. The Italian army's capacity to engage non-Italian locals in espionage activities, and to incorporate them into an operation extending from Libya to Istanbul, is likely to have elevated the Ottoman Empire's alert level. A more detailed and comprehensive archival search of the period is therefore highly likely to reveal specific espionage cases in which Italian nationals were involved.

The abolition of Italian services and institutions within the Ottoman Empire encompassed consulates, postal and telegraph services, financial institutions and transactions, and numerous

entities such as private and public companies.³³⁰ The process of sectoral and institutional exclusion, which occurred in parallel with the suspension of capitulations during the war, would engender numerous complications for Italian subjects. Given that the contextual focus of this section is on Italian labor and human resources, it is not necessary to examine in detail all Italian institutions and sectors affected by this process. This is due to the fact that institutions that come into frequent and direct contact with large groups of people and individual lives, such as railways and postal and telegraph services, are more prominent at this point. Furthermore, these two sectors were regarded as being of critical importance by the Ottoman Government, due to the threats and vulnerabilities they presented to wartime security. The significance of railway routes for military transportation rendered both the Italian workforce engaged in railway operations and Italian residents residing in the surrounding areas into a potential threat to national security. As will be detailed in the following sections, both Italian workers employed on the railway lines and Italian residents along the railway corridors were affected by the various national security policies and practices that were required by the wartime environment.

Throughout the centuries, Italians have gradually established their own civil societies, sociocultural networks and public institutions within the Ottoman Empire. The Italian diaspora effectively cultivated its own distinct ecosystem within the Ottoman public sphere. This sociocultural ecosystem was facilitated and sustained by the existence of both capitulation agreements and the Ottomans' tolerance of foreign elements. However, the initial marginalization and subsequent expropriation of educational, religious, health and charitable institutions during wartime would mark another stage in the deterioration of this relationship. Italian schools associated with Catholic congregations in Istanbul, Izmir, and the Syrian Levant were occupied, evacuated, expropriated, and integrated into the Ottoman education system following Italy's entry into the war. A significant proportion of the Italian-owned educational, religious, health and welfare institutions, whose existence had been recognized prior to 30 October 1914, were either completely shut down or modified and integrated into Ottoman public utilities, particularly during the three-year period between 1914 and 1917.³³¹ The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne resulted in the recognition of these entities by the Republic of Turkey once again, accompanied by the restoration of their rights and the acquisition of a legal and administrative status equivalent to that of Turkish institutions.

³³⁰ COA, MV.157/8, 20 Eylül 1327 - 03 October 1911. The Minutes of the Council of Ministers Discussions (*Meclis-i Vükelâ Müzâkerâtına Mahsûs Zabıt Varakasıdır*) "İtalya Sefârethânesi ile taşralardaki konsoloslarının şifre ve açık telgrafnâmelerinin tevkif ya sevk ve İtalya ile telgraf ve posta ve paket ve havâle ve taahhütlü ve kıymet-i mukaddereli mekâtib muâmelelerine devâm olunup olunmaması hakkında istifsâr-ı muâmeleyi hâvi Posta ve Telgraf ve Telefon Nezâreti makamının tezkiresi okundu."

"Kararı: Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği tarafından ifâde olunduğu üzere İtalya Konsoloslarının nezd-i Hükûmet-i Seniyye'de sıfatları kalmamış olduğu cihetle bu konsolosların muâmelât-ı resmiye hakkında gerek şifreli gerek açık telgrafla muhâbereleri câiz değildir. Ancak gayet sarîh yazılmış olmak ve şifre mâhiyetinde ve mûcib-i iştibah bir ibâreyi hâvî olmamak şartıyla yazacakları husûsî telgrafnâmeler keşîde olunabilir. İtalya tebaası kezâlik açık telgrafla ve gayet vazîh ibârât ile muhâbere edebilirler. Kuvvet istîmalî câiz değildir. İki memleket arasında her türlü posta muâmelâtının tâtili ve İtalya postahânelerinin seddi icâb eder. Bu sûretle muâmele olunmasının Nezâret-i müşârûnileyhâya ve Dâhiliye Nezâretine iş'arı ve Hâriciye Nezâretine mâlûmat îtâsı tezekkür kılındı."; HR.SYS.2967/6/Lef 2, 12 Ağustos 1331- 25 Ağustos 1915. The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte - Consultative Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâviri - Nezâret-i Umûr-ı Hâriciye / İstişâre Odası*).

³³¹ Yaşar Ürük, "İtalyan Mektebi," *Kent Yaşam - İzmir'in Haber Bilgi Sitesi*, last modified March 7, 2022, accessed August 22, 2025, <https://www.kentyasam.com.tr/2022/03/07/112211/112211>.

Meanwhile, the supervision, control and takeover of foreign postal services and telegraph communications constituted another wartime measure. Espionage activities were widely prevalent in the Ottoman Empire, a region that was becoming increasingly unstable due to the ongoing hostilities. In such a highly sensitive environment, the unrestricted communication of foreign individuals posed a considerable security threat. The communication rights, opportunities, and infrastructure of foreign elements within the empire had been highly encouraged and facilitated by capitulations until then. This situation enabled major powers such as Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia to establish their own official and independent post offices within the Ottoman realm, thus providing communication services to their nationals. However, during periods of warfare, foreign postal services rapidly evolved into a significant national security concern. Subsequent to the abolition of the capitulations, the Ottoman authorities promptly assumed control of foreign post offices, along with their associated duties and functions.

Additionally, the second section of the chapter provides a synopsis of the restrictive policies adopted by the Ottoman Government with regard to Italians departing from its borders. While the travel restrictions under discussion are not associated with the Italian institutions in question, they have been explored as a paradigmatic example of Ottoman policies leading to the marginalization of Italians on an individual basis. The policy and practices initiated by Cemâl Pasha, the Military Governor of Syria, established a correlation between the departure of enemy aliens and the potential for espionage activities. In alignment with this perspective, a strategy was implemented that impeded enemy aliens from departing the country directly by sea and instead encouraged them to transit through Istanbul. During this process, departures from the ports of Izmir, Antalya, Mersin, Iskenderun, Tripoli, Beirut, Haifa, and Jaffa were subject to rigorous surveillance and control measures. These departures were frequently reported to the central authorities in Istanbul. Despite Italy's status as a neutral state at the onset of war, the Ottoman Government, acutely aware of the evolving international dynamics and intricate alliances shaped by backdoor diplomacy, maintained a constant vigilance towards Italian nationals. Despite the initial flexibilities and privileges that were granted as a result of the initiatives of Ambassador Marchese Garroni, relations reached a breaking point with Italy's official declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire on 21 August 1915. Nevertheless, the Ottoman government maintained an inclusive and accommodating stance towards Italians, who had constituted an integral component of the Ottoman Empire's socio-cultural ecosystem, public sphere, and commercial life for centuries. For instance, Italian residents were granted the option to evade the designation of "enemy aliens" and subsequent deportation, provided that they adopted Ottoman naturalization.

4.1 Historical and Extraterritorial Conceptualization of the Enemy Alien

Daniela Caglioti provides a pioneering and revelatory historical analysis of the emergence and conceptualization of the "enemy alien" status.³³² Caglioti reveals that traditional approaches, ranging from the Dutch legal philosopher Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) to the American jurist and legal scholar James Kent (1763-1847), converge on a common point. This common ground is the manifestation of a "legal state of hostility" that encompasses not only soldiers but all

³³² Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*, 17-18.

nationals of the enemy state from the outset of war. Accordingly, from the onset of hostilities, a state reserves the right to detain individuals belonging to the enemy state present within its territory, irrespective of their military or civilian status, and to confiscate their property. Emer de Vattel (1714–1767), a Swiss theorist renowned for interpreting, modernizing, and institutionalizing the international law, whose foundations were laid by Grotius, emerged as a game changer in the evolution of this ideological framework.³³³ In challenging this long-established, traditional, and rigid conviction, Vattel introduced a novel and more humane approach to enemy aliens in 1758. According to this approach, the subjects of the enemy state were individuals who found themselves in an unfortunate situation due to being in the wrong place at the wrong time; yet were still under public protection. Therefore, the host state has an obligation to ensure the complete freedom and security of these individuals until their repatriation. In other words, the act of declaring war by a sovereign was not accompanied by the ability to arrest enemy subjects within its jurisdiction or to seize their property. The state was obliged to allow these individuals a reasonable period to withdraw with their possessions. In the event that they remained beyond the designated deadline, it was entitled to treat them as "unarmed enemies." Although Vattel introduced a humane approach to international law through a moderate reform, he maintained a realistic and pragmatic perspective on warfare, eschewing blind romantic idealism. This approach is widely accepted as the foundation for a legal order based on mutual dialogue between sovereign states, with a commitment to universal values and, to a certain extent, a humanizing of war.

The category of enemy alien, whose existence and rights vis-à-vis the sovereign state had been questioned since the Magna Carta (1215), was now based on the existence of an order formed by equal, free, and independent sovereign states.³³⁴ At the core of this order, theorized by Vattel as the basis of international law, was the enduring bond between the individual and the sovereign. The notion of an enduring bond, which took concrete form in the concepts of citizenship, nationality, and the armed nation after the American and French Revolutions, had both a significant impact and created disagreement on the conceptualization of war. In his 1762 magnum opus *The Social Contract*, Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) advanced the argument that war constitutes an interstate conflict, rather than an inter-individual one. In opposition to this romantic and idealistic *Rousseauian* school of thought, more realistic figures such as Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), Grotius, and Vattel advanced the argument that war rendered all subjects of the warring parties, including women and children, into enemies. Hobbes's realistic and uncompromising approach to war legally rendered all individuals as partners in their government's actions, held them accountable, and unconditionally involved all individuals in the war. In contrast, Rousseau's idealistic and humanistic approach is characterized by a conception of war that is limited to the realm of states, thereby exempting individuals from hostilities. Hobbes, who rejected humanitarian restrictions in the name of state

³³³ The majority of international jurists of the nineteenth century played an active role in the development of Vattel's humanitarian perspective, either by endorsing it or by challenging it, thereby contributing to its transformation into a widely accepted principle. In 1826, James Kent advanced the argument that the civilizing spirit of trade had persuaded numerous governments to enact special provisions for the safety of enemy subjects' lives and property within their jurisdiction. In 1854, the British jurist and politician Robert Phillimore (1810-1885) advanced a novel conceptualization of enemy status, predicated upon an individual's birthplace, origin, or chosen official residence, rather than their citizenship or nationality. Many years later, the Russian diplomat and jurist Fyodor Martens (1845-1909) stated that respect for human personality played an important role in limiting brute force. *Ibid.*, 18.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

security, and Rousseau, who placed the inviolability of civilians above all else in war, had diametrically opposed approaches to warfare. Vattel, positioned between these two schools of thought, adopted a pragmatic stance by moderating Hobbes's perspective and distancing himself from Rousseau's romantic idealism.

Although the humanitarian approach pioneered by Vattel paved the way for the protection of civilians during war, the French Revolution (1789-1799) witnessed a shift in perspective, with foreigners increasingly regarded as potential enemies.³³⁵ The laws enacted in 1793 served to exacerbate xenophobia in the French Republic, while also providing for the arrest of enemy aliens and the confiscation of their property. Merely artists, workers, and individuals who had resided in France prior to the Revolution and could demonstrate their integrity and civic-mindedness were exempted from these provisions. During this period, when citizenship was defined solely on the basis of loyalty, both disloyal foreigners and French citizens who fled the country to avoid fighting for the revolution were considered enemies. When hostilities between England and France resumed in 1803, Napoleon's retaliatory arrest of all English people in France, irrespective of their status as women, children, or civilians, marked the first instance of a large-scale detention of enemy foreigners. The primary impact of the French Revolution on the Kingdom of Naples was the mass expulsion of French citizens and those suspected of French nationality.

The Aliens Act, which was enacted in Britain in 1793 due to concerns regarding espionage, permitted the deportation of undesirable foreign nationals following a security review.³³⁶ Concurrently, the John Adams administration in the United States promulgated laws in 1798 under the designation Alien and Sedition Acts, effectively classifying all suspicious foreigners as virtual enemies. The Alien Enemy Act enabled the arrest of men born in enemy countries during wartime, while the Naturalization Act increased the residency period required for naturalization from five to 14 years. In the wake of the War of 1812, President James Madison reintroduced the Alien Enemy Act and initiated a series of measures targeting British nationals on American soil. These measures impacted 7,000 British nationals, resulting in the registration of individuals, their removal from coastal areas, and their placement under surveillance. The Congress of Vienna, which was convened in 1815 following the Napoleonic Wars and which consequently ushered in a period of relative peace in Europe, heralded a new era in which international law would increasingly be based on positive law, i.e. written treaties. A plethora of international treaties, amounting to over 16,000, were ratified between 1815 and 1924. These treaties delineated the rights of citizens in times of war and peace, encompassing domains such as property, security, religious freedom, and fair treatment. Such treaties would serve as the foundational framework for subsequent international human rights instruments. It is evident that the humanitarian approach initiated by Vattel, which pioneered the protection of civilians in war, was superseded by a chaotic period in which the concepts of citizenship, loyalty, and enmity became intertwined. This period coincided with the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the establishment of early American laws. In the nineteenth century, the development of international law was characterized by a dualistic approach to warfare. On the one hand, there was an effort to humanize the laws of war, but on the other, there was a simultaneous institutionalization of exclusion and nationalism through the paradigm of the nation-state.

³³⁵ Ibid., 19-21.

³³⁶ Ibid., 21-32.

During the Crimean War (1853-1856), the belligerent states – Britain, France and Russia – treated enemy aliens with moderation and, within the framework of mutual agreements, permitted them to remain on each other's territories.³³⁷ While tolerance prevailed at the international level, in the war zone of Crimea, intolerance and even ethnic cleansing were observed at the local level. Jews who were in opposition to the Christianization policies, Crimean Tatars (Muslims of Turkish origin), and Caucasian Muslims such as Circassians, Chechens, and Ubykhs were arrested as traitors or forced to migrate. Between 1854 and 1863, approximately 30-50 thousand Tatars migrated from Crimea to Ottoman territories, and Christian populations were relocated in their stead. As Caglioti quotes Antonio Ferrara and Niccolò Pianciola, this event marked the first observable manifestation of the connection between external warfare and internal pressure on suspected civilians. Furthermore, this connection would permeate the forced migrations of the twentieth century, particularly the world wars that resulted in the destruction of multi-ethnic empires. The Declaration Respecting Maritime Law, which was adopted at the Paris Congress in 1856 following the Crimean War, introduced the principle of "civilized warfare." This principle was designed to protect private property and to prohibit looting and arbitrary confiscation.

The American Civil War (1861-1865) provides a compelling case study in which the distinction between loyalty and treason was sharply delineated through the enactment of specific legal regulations by both belligerent parties.³³⁸ The war, which resulted in the redefinition of concepts such as property rights, citizenship, loyalty, and the state's wartime powers, functioned as a proving ground for subsequent conflicts. During the war, the Union (North) and the Confederacy (South) regarded each other as foreign states and accordingly appropriated each other's property. In 1861, the Confederacy enacted the Sequestration Act, which granted it the right to declare U.S. citizens enemy aliens and to seize their property. Furthermore, the U.S. Congress passed the First (1861) and Second Confiscation Acts (1862), which granted the power to seize the property of the Confederacy's military and civilian leaders. Among the measures adopted by both sides were martial law and states of emergency, the expansion of executive power, widespread arrests, the suspension of civil liberties such as *habeas corpus*, the deportation of foreigners, and mass confiscation without compensation. The war, as evidenced by the 10,000 Jewish soldiers who served in both armies and participated in numerous relief efforts, also represented a period in which minorities and immigrants were subjected to tests of loyalty. Nevertheless, General Ulysses S. Grant's 1862 order for the mass expulsion of Jews from Tennessee, which Lincoln rescinded the following year, signaled the peak of anti-Semitism during the war. The Lieber Code, promulgated by Lincoln in 1863 and focusing particularly on prisoners of war, pioneered the first comprehensive codification of the laws of war. By regulating hostilities at the international level, it contributed to the development of humanitarian law.

As Caglioti observes, the treaties and regulations ratified in the nineteenth century constituted a complex legal system, wherein states were incorporated into the international community on diverse levels.³³⁹ Within a hierarchical framework that categorized states according to their levels of civilization, the legal status of foreigners in the eyes of states was divided into two basic regimes: symmetric and asymmetric. Symmetrical regimes consisted of fully sovereign,

³³⁷ Ibid., 33-35.

³³⁸ Ibid., 36-39.

³³⁹ Ibid., 31

civilized, and Christian states that placed foreigners on an equal footing with the nationals of the country in which they resided. Asymmetric regimes, on the other hand, encompassed states that were sufficiently civilized to establish relations with the West on an equal footing, yet not sufficiently civilized to renounce extraterritoriality. In this instance, the concept of extraterritoriality was predicated upon the notion that a state's sovereign authority extended to the provision of diplomatic protection to its citizens within the jurisdiction of another state, thereby achieving de facto geographical expansion. This form of sovereignty, extending beyond the geographical boundaries of the state, was regarded as an anomaly within the classical understanding of sovereignty. Moreover, it was impractical as it limited the host state's jurisdiction and thereby created bilateral legal complications.

At this juncture, it is noteworthy to observe the correlation that Caglioti establishes between extraterritoriality – defined as foreign or cross-border jurisdiction – and the designation of enemy aliens.³⁴⁰ Caglioti emphasizes that extraterritoriality in the Ottoman Empire served to exacerbate the legal fragmentation and pluralism of a system that was already characterized by parallel and competing rules. She posits that the millet system, an administrative entity conferring restricted autonomy to non-Muslim communities, has further complicated the situation. Indeed, the capitulation regime and millet system, which applied to foreigners and non-Muslim groups in the Ottoman Empire, constituted a precursor to modern protectorate systems. In the nineteenth century, France and Russia's broad interpretation of extraterritoriality in the Ottoman context resulted in a situation in which they assumed the protection of all Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Caglioti's argument is that this system, whose scope was constantly expanding, ironically facilitated the wartime designation of internal and external enemies in the Ottoman Empire.

Çiğdem Oğuz proposed the term “Ottoman paperscapes” to characterize the document-based yet ambiguous, complex, and controversial nature of the wartime citizenship in the Ottoman Empire between 1914 and 1923.³⁴¹ These paperscapes, reaching their widest extent during the war and armistice period, underwent fragmentation with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. They subsequently evolved into the citizenship regimes of the new nation-states established in the postwar period. Oğuz emphasizes that the “nationality policy” and “enemy alien regime” implemented by the CUP throughout the First World War played a pivotal role in reestablishing Ottoman sovereignty and eliminating the judicial and administrative inequalities created by the capitulations. In September 1914, the Ottoman government unilaterally abolished all capitulatory privileges and extraterritorial rights, thereby attempting to bring foreign institutions and individuals under its own jurisdiction. The ministerial decree, entitled Measures Regarding the Officials and Subjects of Enemy States (*Düvel-i Muhâsâma Memûrîn ve Tebaası Hakkında İttihâz Edilecek Tedâbîr*), issued on 15 November 1914, defined enemy aliens and determined the measures to be taken against such individuals. The 25-article decree declared the citizens of the Entente nations, including Britain, France and Russia, as well as their protectorates and colonial extensions, along with Montenegrins, Serbs and Belgians, to be designated as “enemy aliens” within the Ottoman Empire. With the escalation of the war, Italians in 1915 and Greeks and Americans in 1917 would also be included in this list. Among the measures implemented against enemy aliens were the following: banishment to inland towns in Anatolia; confiscation of corporate and personal property; employment restrictions;

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 32.

³⁴¹ Oğuz, “Ottoman Paperscapes,” 27-53.

and curfews and travel bans. This chapter will provide a discussion of corporate and employment-based measures applied to Italians, whereas the next chapter will address those measures based on demographic design.

As Oğuz also noted, at this stage, the Ottoman government had assumed control over all the institutions of enemy states, including banks, schools, and postal services.³⁴² The abolition of capitulations, which had previously led to a weakening of territorial sovereignty, also provided the financial, political and bureaucratic autonomy that the Unionist government had been anticipating for a while. Moreover, the newly promulgated Provisional Law on Passports (*Pasaport Kanun-ı Muvakkatı*), dated 15 March 1915, imposed stringent regulations on the entry of foreign nationals into the country, and in certain instances, completely prohibited the entry of specific individuals, irrespective of their possession of passports. On the same day, the Provisional Law on Residence and Travel of Foreigners in the Ottoman Empire (*Ecnebilerin Memâlik-i Osmâniyede Seyâhat ve İkametleri Hakkında Kanûn-u Muvakkat*) came into force, regulating the residence and travel of foreigners in Ottoman territories by imposing certain conditions. Despite the fact that certain enemy foreigners had attempted to evade the restrictions by acquiring the citizenship of another country, the Ottoman government did not recognize this and declared that all individuals would be treated according to their original nationality. The Ottoman state adopted the principle of reciprocity due to intelligence and security concerns, and the poor treatment of Ottoman citizens internationally. The status of enemy alien was employed by all states participating in the First World War as an instrument of naturalizing, denaturalizing, or reclassifying certain ethnic and religious groups. As will be examined in the next chapter, the Ottoman state had offered conditional naturalization rights to certain groups, such as Italian Jews in Syria and Palestine. Those who accepted the proposal made by Military Governor Cemâl Pasha were permitted to remain, while those who refused were to be deported.

4.2 Wartime Restriction, Marginalization and Deactivation of Italian Institutional Functions, Services and Manpower (1911-1916)

Daniela De Lorentiis states that on 29 September 1911, when Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire, the Italian community living in Ottoman territories consisted of approximately 80,000 people.³⁴³ This community constituted a substantial human resource, dispersed across the empire's various regions, encompassing a diverse range of professions, from unskilled workers to experienced professionals. The majority of Italians resided in Istanbul, Izmir, and especially in Salonika, a business city connected to the European hinterland. In the early years of the century, the Italian workforce in Salonika played an active and decisive role in a number of local construction projects, including the port, the new customs buildings, the tram lines, and the local railway. Moreover, a sizable colony comprising hundreds of families also settled in the Middle Eastern regions along the route of the Baghdad Railway, where a significant number of Italian workers were employed in its construction. As De Lorentiis quotes from Caglioti, Italians quickly fell into the category of "enemy aliens," whose loyalty and reliability had to be

³⁴² Ibid., 31-38.

³⁴³ Daniela De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano. Il fondo 'Contenzioso' del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (1911-1913)," in *Puglia e Grande Guerra. Tra dimensione adriatica e fronte interno: fonti e ricerche*, ed. Francesco Altamura (Lecce: Salento Books, 2017), 48-51.

constantly monitored and tested. This designation entailed the implementation of specific policies and measures with the objective of limiting the potential dangers they might pose. For instance, the Italian employees of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company, the concessionaire for the construction and management of the Anatolian railway network, were now considered "suspicious" subjects. Irrespective of their occupation, whether it be railway work, manual labor, skilled trades such as blacksmithing, or warehouse work, the subjects were dismissed at the outbreak of war on the sole grounds of their Italian nationality. The same unfortunate fate also befell the Italian employees of the *Societ  du Tunnel*, the Ottoman joint-stock company with French-Belgian capital responsible for managing the Constantinople funicular railway, the accountant of the Adrianople branch of the Bank of Salonica, the French language teacher in Turkish schools, the directors of the Italian Telegraph Agency in the capital, and many others.³⁴⁴

The institutional and individual marginalization of Italians in Ottoman territories has been the subject of discussion in Turkish literature, specifically under the heading of Adversarial State Policy (*Muhasım Devlet Politikası*).³⁴⁵ The Ottoman Government introduced and implemented Adversarial State Policy as a package of measures targeting Italian institutions and citizens on the grounds of Italy's violation of International Law of War. At this juncture, the master's thesis of İbrahim Berci, entitled *Osmanlı Devletinin Muhasım Devlet Politikası: Trablusgarp Savaşı ve Aydın Vilayeti İtalyanları* (The Hostile State Policy of the Ottoman State: The Turco-Italian War and Italians in Aydın Province) is a particularly remarkable piece of research. Berci's research focused specifically on the province of Aydın, where the non-Muslim population constituted a majority, and investigated the political, military, economic and social sanctions imposed on Italians at the provincial level. The region had long been a center of attraction for Italians, due to its substantial agricultural potential, well-developed railway network, and the commercial opportunities afforded by its capital, İzmir. In addressing the formation and development of International Law of War, the author also raised questions concerning the implications of Adversarial State Policy in the context of conventions such as The Hague and Geneva. The author has grouped the practices introduced under the aforementioned policy into four main headings:

- Military practices, such as taking of prisoners, exchange of prisoners, and military recruitment
- Political practices, such as closure of consulates and post offices, expulsion, and change of nationality
- Economic sanctions, such as confiscation of real estate and land, closure of workplaces and mass dismissal of workers
- Social Practices such as boycott, mass protest, philanthropy, and donation

Furthermore, the transition of such wartime policies from micro to macro levels or from local to national levels is inspiring and stimulating for research conducted in multidisciplinary fields such as political sociology. At this juncture, Berci addresses the evolution of the *İttihâd-ı*

³⁴⁴ *Societ  du Tunnel* was a French-Belgian-funded Ottoman joint-stock company responsible for operating the funicular railway system in Istanbul.

³⁴⁵ İbrahim Berci, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Muhasım Devlet Politikası: Trablusgarp Savaşı ve Aydın Vilayeti İtalyanları," (Master's Thesis, Pamukkale Üniversitesi, Denizli, 2020), 1-6, 9-21.

Husûmet (Union of Hostility) initiative, which sought to terminate all commercial, educational and cultural interactions with Italians. Initially adopted as a modest boycott campaign, the initiative underwent a transformation into a widespread social movement and eventually evolved into a national association.

A plethora of books and articles by various authors in Turkish literature have been published on the Adversarial State Policy and the repercussions of the war on the Italian community in Ottoman domains.³⁴⁶ Focusing particularly on mass movements and protest culture, Umut Karabulut's book examines the responses of the people of İzmir to several conflicts in which the Ottoman Empire was engaged with Austria, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy. In his book titled "The Culture of Political Protest in the City of İzmir: (1908-1912)," the author devotes a chapter entirely to the Italo-Ottoman War and elaborates the local reflections of the above-mentioned Union of Hostility practice in İzmir. The article by Sezen Karabulut, titled "An Example for the Ottoman Empire's Policy of 'Hostile State': The Turco-Italian War and the Italians in İzmir" and the article by Nurdan İpek Şeber, titled "The Implications of the War of Tripoli on Italian Communities in the Ottoman Land According to Archival Documents," call into question the legality of the sanctions imposed on the Italians, within the context of the Ottoman political landscape. Both authors provide an accomplished interpretation of the political and social contexts of the sanctions imposed on Italians, including boycotts, protests, deportations, and business and consulate shutdowns. While Şeber offers a more macro-level narrative of these practices at the imperial level, Karabulut approaches them at a more urban and local level through the İzmir case. Hasan Babacan's article, titled "The Issue of Boycotting Italian Goods During the Italo-Ottoman War," is one of the earlier works on this subject. In this article, the author traces the Italian boycott in the Ottoman geography, drawing on different local cases that he has identified through archives. Demet İlkbahar's concise and focused thesis, entitled "The 1911-1912 Italo-Turkish War and Ottoman Public Opinion," also examines the responses to Italian expansionism and occupation within various facets of Ottoman society, including ideological circles and the press.

A notable recent example of work under this heading is provided by Fatma Ürekli's chapter, titled "The Effect of the Italo-Ottoman War on Italian Craftsmen Working in Ottoman Institutions and the Administrative Practices."³⁴⁷ Ürekli's chapter explores the story of Fausto Zonaro, the Chief Painter of the Palace who served the Ottoman Empire for 14 years. Prior to the outbreak of the First World War, a period which witnessed the zenith of the Young Turk Revolution, Zonaro became the focus of ideological and political factions. Zonaro, who had accumulated significant influence, privileges and opportunities during the reign of Abdülhamid II, found himself unemployed and desperate following the conclusion of this period. The

³⁴⁶ In order to avoid overcrowding the paragraph, only the English translations of the work titles are provided above. Umut Karabulut, *İzmir Kentinde Siyasi Protesto Kültürü (1908-1912)* (İstanbul, Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2014); Sezen Karabulut, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin 'Muhasım Devlet' Politikasına Bir Örnek: Trablusgarp Savaşı ve İzmir'deki İtalyanlar," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları* 17, sy. 34 (Aralık 2018): 185-205; Nurdan İpek Şeber, "Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Trablusgarp Savaşı'nın Osmanlı Topraklarındaki İtalyan Tebaaya Yansımaları," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 38, sy. 38 (Aralık 2011): 236-262; Hasan Babacan, "Trablusgarp Harbinde İtalyan Mallarını Boykot Meselesi," *Arayışlar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, (1999): 91-100; Demet İlkbahar, "1911-1912 Trablusgarp Savaşı ve Osmanlı Kamuoyu," (Master's Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, İstanbul, 2009).

³⁴⁷ Fatma Ürekli, "Trablusgarp Savaşı'nın (1911-1912) Osmanlı Kurumlarında Çalışan İtalyan Sanatkârlara Etkisi ve İdari Uygulamalar," in *Tarihin Peşinde Bir Ömür: Abdülkadir Özcan'a Armağan*, eds. Hayrünnisa Alan, Ömer İşbilir, Zeynep Aygibin and Muhammet Ali Kılıç (İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2018), 647-678.

painter, who returned to his homeland upon learning that Italy would soon declare war against Ottoman Empire, was marginalized in his own country, as if he were a foreigner. Despite numerous diplomatic initiatives, he was unable to obtain compensation from the Ottoman Empire.

The reconfiguration and, in most cases, dissolution of Italian institutions, services and human resources operating within the Ottoman domains during wartime was initially influenced by both internal and external policies related to the Italo-Ottoman War, which officially commenced on 29 September 1911. In response to the occupation, the Ottoman Government issued a Supreme Decree (*Tezkire-i Sâmîye*) concerning Italians residing and operating in various capacities within the empire.³⁴⁸ This particular decree, issued by the Ottoman Council of Ministers (*Meclis-i Mahsûs-u Vükelâ*) presided over by the Grand Vizier (*Sadrâzam*), encompassed the subsequent points:

1. The “expulsion” (*tebâüd*) of Italian newspaper correspondents from the territorial domains of the Ottoman Imperial State.³⁴⁹
2. The postponement of the ongoing restoration of the Italian Embassy, entailing the temporary transfer of its affairs to the German Embassy.³⁵⁰
3. The termination of employment for Italians engaged in “official and public services” (*hidemât-ı resmiye ve umûmiye*), including railways, telegraphs, and healthcare.³⁵¹ This decision was made on the basis that the presence of Italians in these sectors was deemed to be inappropriate during wartime, in the interests of national security.
4. The dismissal of Italian nationals employed by the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (*Düyûn-ı Umûmiye*) was implemented, with the exception of the Italian Delegate (*İtalyalı Dâinler Vekîli*), whose position and function were safeguarded by the provisions of ongoing diplomatic accords.³⁵²
5. In the context of international trade, the rejection of goods and commercial products that had reached Ottoman customs on behalf of Italian nationals was to be facilitated, with these items being returned to their respective points of origin and owners.³⁵³
6. The “relocation of Italian workers to rural and isolated areas, particularly those engaged in railway operations, to more secure locations” (*kabil-i muhâfaza olan*

³⁴⁸ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.27/7/Lef 3, 13 Teşrîniyevvel 1327 – 26 October 1911, The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği*), Abstract: Grand Vizier’s Memorandum Concerning Italian Journalists, Workers, etc. (*Hülâsa: İtalyan Gazeteciler, Amele ve Sâire Hakkında Tezkire-i Sâmîye*)

³⁴⁹ “İşbu tezkire-i sâmîyeden müstefad olunduğu veçhile gazete muhâbirlerinin Memâlik-i Osmâniye’den tebâüdü”

³⁵⁰ “ve İtalya Sefâretinin el-hâlet’ül hâzihi devâm edilmekte olan tâmîrâtının imhâli münâsib olacağından Almanya Sefâretine ifhâmı”

³⁵¹ “ve hâl-i harbde İtalya tebaasının hidemât-ı resmiye ve umûmiyyede bulunmaları câiz olamayacağı cihetle demiryol, telgraf ve sıhhiye işlerinde”

³⁵² “ve İtalyalı Dâinler Vekîli müstesnâ olmak üzere Düyûn-u Umûmiye’de müstahdem İtalyalıların memûriyetlerine hitam verilmesi”

³⁵³ “ve İtalya tebaası nâmına gümrüklere vürûd etmiş olan eşyâ-yı ticâriyenin sâhiblerine îtâ olunması”

münâsib yerlere sevkleriyle muhâfazaları) was necessitated by the difficulty in ensuring their protection.³⁵⁴

This decree is indicative of the broader diplomatic and military tensions inherent in the Italo-Ottoman War, as well as the Ottoman Empire's efforts to regulate the presence of foreign nationals within its borders during a period of conflict. The decisions made in relation to Italian subjects within the Ottoman Empire were communicated to the relevant Ottoman ministries and local authorities, as well as to the German Embassy, which had assumed the role of wartime protector for Italian interests. The central government has asserted that it will undertake a rigorous and close monitoring process of the implementation and outcomes arising from these decisions. Moreover, it was imperative to clarify to the German Embassy that the resolution pertaining to Italian railway workers was not intended as an "instrument of pressure" (*tedbîr-i tazyik*) with the objective of "depriving them of their entitled salaries" (*istihsâl-i maâştan mahrûmiyet*).³⁵⁵ In order to avoid potential challenges under international law in the future, the Ottoman government was required to clarify that this measure was intended and implemented solely for the safety of the workers. In view of the fact that the decree also affected Italian workers employed by French companies, it was necessary to inform both the French Embassy, responsible for the institutions, and the German Embassy, responsible for the workers. However, precisely one month later, this displacement measure would acquire a wholly different dimension and result in the collective dismissal of all Italian railway personnel employed on specific routes throughout Ottoman territory. On 9 October 1911, the Ministry of Trade and Public Works (*Ticâret ve Nâfia Nezâreti*) formally notified the Grand Vizierate that "the Italian officials and workers" (*İtalyan memûrîn ve amelenin*) employed by various railways companies had been "dismissed from their positions" (*hizmetlerinden ihrâc*).³⁵⁶ These companies included the Damascus–Hama and Prolongations Railway, the Anatolian Railway, the Jaffa–Jerusalem Railway, the Oriental Railway, the Smyrna–Cassaba Railway and the Salonika–Constantinople Junction Railway.³⁵⁷ As will be demonstrated in the following subsection, this policy of purging Italian personnel from the Ottoman railways would extend into the First World War and as feared, lead to particular diplomatic crises.

Jonathan Claymore McCollum's innovative 2018 dissertation, which makes a significant contribution to the history of the Italo-Ottoman War, successfully traces the Ottoman Empire's

³⁵⁴ "ve taşrada tenhâ mahallerde bulunan ve demiryolu ameliyatında ve sâir işlerde amelelik eden İtalyalıların muhâfazasındaki müşkilâta binâen bunların kabil-i muhâfaza olan münâsib yerlere sevkleriyle muhâfazaları esbâbının istikmâli hususları Meclis-i Mahsûs-u Vükelâca takarrür etmiştir."

³⁵⁵ "tenha mahallerde bulunan İtalyan amelenin esbâb-ı muhâfazalarını istikmâlen münâsib yerlere sevk edilmeleri muâmelesine mezkûr amelenin istihsâl-i maaştan mahrûmiyetini temin için mürâcaat edilmiş bir tedbîr-i tazyik mâhiyeti atfedilmesine mahal bırakılmamak üzere bu husustaki kararı icâb eden niyet hakkında şimdiden Sefârete mâlûmat verilmesi muvafık zannedilmektedir."

³⁵⁶ COA, BEO.3947/295978/Lef 2, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911; BEO.3947/295978/Lef 3, 26 Eylül 1327- 09 October 1911. From the Ministry of Public Works-Directorate of Railways to the Grand Vizierate (*Ticâret ve Nâfia Nezâreti-Demiryolları İdâresinden Sadâretpenâhiye*).

³⁵⁷ The official titles of these railway companies in Turkish and French shall be outlined as follows:

1-Şam-Hama ve Temdîdi Osmanlı Demiryolu Şirketi (Société du Chemin de Fer de Damas-Hamah et Prolongements), 2-Osmanlı Anadolu Demiryolları (Société du Chemins de Fer Ottomans d'Anatolie), 3-Yafa - Kudûs ve Temdîdi Osmanlı Demiryolu Şirketi (Société du Chemin de Fer Ottoman de Jaffa à Jérusalem et Prolongements), 4-Şark Demiryolu Şirketi (Chemins de fer Orientaux), 5-İzmir-Kasaba ve Temdîdi Demiryolu Şirketi (Chemin de fer de Smyrne-Cassaba et Prolongements) and 6-Dersaâdet-Selânîk İltisak Demiryolu Şirketi (Société du Chemin de fer Ottoman Jonction Salonique-Constantinople).

asymmetric defense strategy against Italian occupation and annexation.³⁵⁸ As McCollum asserts, the *modus operandi* of this asymmetric warfare within the empire's borders entailed the measured yet persistent exclusion of Italian citizens and protégés. On 7 October 1911, the Ottoman War Ministry issued an urgent directive to all railway companies within the empire, ordering the immediate dismissal of all Italian citizens and their expulsion from the empire. According to the order, the positions vacated by this expulsion were to be filled exclusively by Ottoman subjects. In the subsequent process, all railway companies from Salonika to Izmir systematically dismissed and expelled all Italian employees under the orders of the Ottoman military. The supervision of these dismissals and expulsions was typically undertaken by the "Military Commissioners for the Coherence of the Railroad" (*İltisak Hattı Askeri Komiseri*), who generally held the rank of major. These commissioners systematically compared the names of personnel, who were unable to provide any documentation substantiating their Ottoman subject status, with the names on the Italian consulate's register. Those whose Italian nationality was confirmed were immediately expelled. Consequently, the Ottoman railway industry, regarded as sensitive from a military standpoint, became the initial location for the expulsion of Italian nationals, leading to the gradual Ottomanization of the workforce within the entire sector.

Since the outbreak of the Tripolitanian War in October 1911, Italian postal and telegraph services had become a focal point for the Ottoman state's security bureaucracy.³⁵⁹ Subsequent to Italy's formal declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire on September 29, the Ottoman Council of Ministers promulgated a decree on October 3, instituting specific measures against Italian postal services and telegraph communications. The dissemination of official communications by Italian consuls, who had relinquished their official status with the Ottoman Government, was prohibited, irrespective of whether ciphered or in plain text. Nevertheless, the transmission of private telegrams by consular authorities was permitted, on the condition that they were composed in clear and unambiguous language and did not contain any encrypted or suspicious phrases. Ordinary Italian citizens were also at liberty to communicate by means of unencrypted telegrams, provided that they employed very clear expressions. In addition, all postal and parcel delivery services between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy were to be suspended, and Italian post offices within Ottoman borders were to be closed. Therefore, all Italian nationals residing within the Ottoman Empire, including consular officials, were only permitted to utilize Ottoman post offices for postal services and to send and receive correspondence to and from countries other than Italy. In conclusion, the importance of open communication and postal control was found to be paramount in preventing hostile activities such as espionage, sabotage and conspiracy, potentially arising from the wartime vulnerabilities. Nevertheless, the decree explicitly stipulated that force should not be employed

³⁵⁸ McCollum's work successfully reveals how this colonial invasion, initially confined to North Africa, rapidly transformed into a global cause centered on Pan-Islamism and Muslim anti-colonialism. In accordance with this overarching global cause, which was founded on ideological, humanitarian, and voluntary principles, the Sublime Porte and the Committee of Union and Progress pursued a policy of "union among the elements" (*ittihâd-ı anâsır*). The dissertation explores the manner in which the Ottoman state skillfully adapted its constitutionalism and international law rhetoric to an anti-colonial ideology grounded in shared Islamic values. Jonathan Claymore McCollum, "The Anti-Colonial Empire: Ottoman Mobilization and Resistance in the Italo-Turkish War, 1911-1912," (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2018), ii-iii, 49-50.

³⁵⁹ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/25/Lef 2; Lef 3. The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte / Certified Copy of the Minutes (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği / Zabıtnâme Sûreti*).

against Italian nationals in the event of any dispute or disagreement. It is evident that the Ottoman Government was reluctant to project an image of oppression and exclusion before the international community while implementing these measures. Throughout the First World War, the prevailing control and restrictions on Italian postal services and telegraph communications in Ottoman domains remained in effect.³⁶⁰ With the outbreak of war imminent, the Ottoman Government took the decision to close all foreign-owned post offices within its territories effective from 1 October 1914. In the week prior, on September 24, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs had disseminated a circular to the embassies of Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia, providing comprehensive details on the closure procedures. Firstly, the circular stated that on the morning of October 1, an Ottoman police officer and a special official from the Ministry of Post, Telegraph, and Telephone (*Posta, Telgraf ve Telefon Nezâreti*) would be stationed in front of all foreign post offices. Upon the arrival of the foreign post office director and his deputy at the post office on that particular morning, the Ottoman ministry official would first inquire as to whether they would be willing to transfer postal duties and operations to him. In the event of consent being given for the transfer, the post office would be permitted to open, on the condition that only the foreign post office director and the Ottoman postal official were permitted to enter. Should the foreign postal director be unwilling to comply, the Ottoman police officer was authorized to intervene and prevent the post office from opening. A sufficient number of gendarmes would be stationed in the vicinity; in case the use of force was deemed necessary. More crucially, under no circumstances would the public be permitted to enter the post office. Following the completion of transfer procedures within the postal facility, further officials might be assigned to accompany the newly designated Ottoman postal authority, if deemed necessary.

Having received intelligence prior to the circular's dissemination, the Roman Postal Directorate transmitted the following telegram to the Italian Post Office in Izmir on 20 September 1914:

"Due to the closure of your post office on October 1, cancel all telegram operations. Immediately cancel all telegram operations with Istanbul and Jerusalem. Telegrams reaching after the date specified above will be forwarded to the Italian Consulate along with the communication receipt. Telegrams reaching post offices in other locations will also be forwarded to their respective consulates.

On behalf of the Director of Rome
Signed: Capuano"³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ COA, HR.SYS.2276/43/Lef 1, 24 September 1914. Sublime Porte Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Notice to the ambassadors of Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia (*Sublime Porte Ministère des Affaires étrangères / Notice aux ambassadeurs d'Allemagne, d'Autriche, de France, du Grand Bretagne, d'Italie et de Russie*); HR.SYS.2276/43/Lef 7, 18 Eylül 1330 - 01 October 1914. Chapter Four: Foreign Post Offices, Section One: Initial Procedures (*Bâb-ı Râbi: Ecnebi Postâneleri, Birinci Fasil: Muâmelât-ı İbtidâiye*)

³⁶¹ COA, HR.TO..546/24, 10 Eylül 1330 – 23 September 1914. This is a translated copy of the telegram sent by the General Directorate of Roman Postal Services to the Italian Post Office in Izmir on 20 September 1914; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translation Directorate (*Roma Posta Müdüriyet-i Umûmiyesi tarafından 20 Eylül 1914 tarihiyle İzmir İtalyan Postahânesine irsâl olunan telgrafnâme sûreti tercümesidir; Nezâret-i Hâriciyye Tercüme Müdüriyeti*).

"Teşrînievvelin 1'inde postahâneniz sedd edileceğinden bundan dolayı telgraf muâmelâtınızı lağvediniz. İstanbul ve Kudüs ile muâmelât-ı telgrafiyyeyi hemen lağvediniz. Mârrü'z-zikr tarihten sonra vürüd edecek telgrafnâmeler muhâbere makbuzu ile beraber İtalyan Konsolatosuna irsâl edilecektir. Mahâl-i sâire postahânelerine vürüd edecek telgrafnâmeler mensûb oldukları Konsolatoya tevdi edilecektir."

It is evident that Rome was concerned about the disclosure of confidential communications, despite not yet having entered the war at this juncture.³⁶² In response to the closure of foreign post offices, the Italian Embassy issued a note on 29 October 1914, invoking the “reservations” (*kuyûd-u ihtirâzî*) stipulated in the “capitulatory agreements” (*uhûd-u atîka*). The rights of foreigners within the Ottoman Empire to freely send and receive mail, and to establish telegraph and telephone communications, were determined within the framework of the privileges provided for in the capitulations. However, on November 23, the Ottoman Government declared that the capitulatory agreements had been terminated with the outbreak of war and were no longer valid, thereby rejecting the Italian Embassy’s request.

As demonstrated above, it is evident that the Italian Embassy assigned significant importance to Jerusalem with regard to postal and telegraph communications.³⁶³ On 2 October 1914, as part of a general closure of all foreign post offices in major cities such as Beirut, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Tripoli, and Haifa, Italian post offices were also closed. The signs and mailboxes of these offices were removed from city centers, and all ongoing operations, along with existing property and documents, were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ottoman authorities. However, several months after this closure, on December 5, the Italian Embassy submitted a remarkable note to the Ottoman Government. The Embassy has expressed its discontent regarding the handling of correspondence addressed to the Italian post office in Jerusalem, stating that the letters were opened and delivered with a delay of nine days. The issue was therefore referred to the jurisdiction of the Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği*), which was responsible for the management of capitulations. In response, the Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone was requested to provide detailed information. The first question concerned the timing of the opening of the 17 letters sent to the Italian Post Office in Jerusalem. Specifically, it was necessary to ascertain whether the letters had been opened before or after 30 October 1914, the date on which relations with enemy states were severed. The second question pertained to the rationale behind the opening of the envelopes and the nine-day delay in delivery. In an effort to persuade the embassy, the Sublime Porte demanded the disclosure of all relevant details concerning the process.

³⁶² COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.76/3/Lef 17, 10 Teşrînisânî 1330 – 23 November 1914. The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte / Capitulatory Agreements, The Italian Embassy’s memorandum regarding the abolition of foreign post offices, 29 October 1914 (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği / Uhûd-u Atîka, Ecnebi Postahânelerinin ilgasına dâir İtalya Sefâreti takrîri*, 29 Teşrînievvel 914).

³⁶³ COA, DH.EUM.KLU.3/2/Lef 6, 19 Eylül 1330 - 02 October 1914; DH.EUM.KLU.3/2/Lef 4, 20 Eylül 1330 - 03 October 1914. From the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, Mâcid, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kudûs Mutasarrıfı Mâcid’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.KLU.3/2/Lef 2, 20 Eylül 1330 - 03 October 1914. From the Governor of Beirut, Bekir Sâmî, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Beyrut Vâlisi Bekir Sâmî’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); HR.HMŞ.İŞO.76/3/Lef 19, 27 Teşrînisânî 1330 – 10 December 1914. The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte / Capitulatory Agreements, Verbal note from the Italian Embassy regarding the opening of letters addressed to the Italian Post Office in Jerusalem, 05 December 1914 (*Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliği / Uhûd-u Atîka, Kudûs-ü Şerif İtalyan Postahânesine vürûd eden mektupların açıldığına dâir İtalya Sefâreti takrîr-i şifâhisi*, 5 Kânûnuevvel 1914); DH.EUM.5.Şb.10/59/Lef 2, 11 Şubat 1330 - 24 February 1915. From the Governor of Jerusalem, Midhat, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kudûs Mutasarrıfı Midhat’tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.10/59/Lef 1, 10 Mart 1331 - 23 March 1915. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Jerusalem Mutasarrifate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdîriyetinden Kudûs Mutasarrıflığına*).

On 24 February 1915, the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem submitted a formal complaint to the Italian Embassy in Istanbul, expressing concerns regarding the delays experienced in the delivery of “official correspondence” (*muhâberât-ı resmîye*) via the Ottoman public postal service. The Consulate requested the Governor of Jerusalem to function as an intermediary for official Italian correspondence, and “to deliver the sealed envelopes entrusted to him to the Embassy in Istanbul” (*tevdî olunan mazrûfun irsâli iltimas*). Indeed, for some time already, all encrypted correspondence of foreigners had been cancelled, and even unencrypted correspondence was placed under the supervision of Ottoman postal authorities. It is therefore evident that Italian diplomatic and consular correspondence was already being monitored by Ottoman authorities. The direct delivery of correspondence to the local Ottoman authorities could at least prevent delays and disruptions in Italy’s current consular functions and operations. In the following month, the Ministry of the Interior informed the Jerusalem Governor Midhat that “sealed envelopes to be delivered by the Italian Consul could be accepted” (*İtalya Konsolosu tarafından verilecek mazrufların kabûlü tavsiye olunur efendim*) and subsequently forwarded to Istanbul. Despite the abolition of the capitulations, the granting of such privileges to Italy demonstrated the Ottoman government’s efforts to maintain peaceful relations with the country, which remained neutral at the time and not to gain a new adversary in the war.

During the First World War, concerns regarding the presence of Italian labor within Ottoman state institutions persisted, with the alarm level continuing to rise.³⁶⁴ Following the vital sectors such as transportation, communication, and health, the employment of Italians in certain state-owned economic institutions, considered the backbone of the public economy, began to be viewed as undesirable. On 10 November 1915, Talât Pasha disseminated a circular to all provinces, ordering the immediate dismissal of Italian employees engaged in “official departments” (*devâir-i resmîye*) and at the Ottoman Tobacco Monopoly (*Régie des Tabacs / Tütün Rejisi*) and the General Administration of Lighthouses (*Fenerler İdâre-i Umûmiyesi*). In accordance with the supreme decree issued by the Council of Ministers on November 3, all Italian personnel were to be dismissed from the aforementioned institutions, “provided that the current operations and duties were not impaired” (*müessesât-ı mezkûrenin umûr ve vezâifi haleldâr olmamak üzere*). Nevertheless, in an additional circular dated November 24, Talât Pasha specifically emphasized the functional continuity of the aforementioned institutions during the dismissal of Italian nationals.³⁶⁵ In this regard, it was asserted that the selection of personnel to be expelled should be determined by the respective ministries to which the institutions belonged. It was further stipulated that “provincial authorities should not act

³⁶⁴ COA, MV.199/86, 21 Teşrîniyevvel 1331- 03 November 1915. The Minutes of the Council of Ministers Discussions (*Meclis-i Vükelâ Müzâkerâtına Mahsûs Zabıtname*); DH.ŞFR.57/371, 28 Teşrîniyevvel 1331- 10 November 1915; DH.ŞFR.58/115, 11 Teşrînisânî 1331 - 24 November 1915. Cipher telegram from the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Vilayets of Edirne, Adana, Ankara, Aydın, Beirut, Hejaz, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Syria, Sivas, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Konya and the Mutasarrifates of Urfa, İzmit, Karahisar-ı Sâhib, İçil, Niğde, Bolu, Canik, Zor, Karesi, Jerusalem, Kal’a-i Sultâniye, Menteşe, Teke, Kayseri, Eskişehir, Maraş, Kütahya. “Reji, Fener ve emsâli müessesâtta müstahdem İtalya tebaasının müessesât-ı mezkûrenin umûr ve vezâifi haleldâr olmamak üzere çıkarılması Heyet-i Vükelâca tensib ve devâir-i müteallikasına tebliğat icrâ kılınmış olduğundan icâbının icrâ ve inbâsı.”

³⁶⁵ “Devâir-i Resmîyede, Reji, Fener ve emsâli müessesâtta müstahdem İtalya tebaasının Devâir-i Resmîye ve müessesât-ı mezkûrenin umûr ve vezâifi haleldâr olmamak üzere çıkarılması muktezî ise de kimlerin ibka ve kimlerin ihrâcî lâzım geleceği ancak tâbi oldukları nezâretlerce takdir ve tâyin edilmek lâzım gelip livâ ve vilâyetlerce hodbehod icrâata kıyâm edilmemesi ve âid oldukları nezâretlerle bil-muhâbere cevâb-ı muvâfakat alındıktan sonra muâmele ifâsı ve kimlerin ihrâcî matlûb ise âid oldukları nezâret nezdinde buraca da teşebbüsâtta bulunulmak üzere bir cedvelinin îzâhât-ı muktezîye derc ve ilâve-i mütâlâa ile irsâli.”

unilaterally without explicit approval from ministries” (*livâ ve vilâyetlerce hodbahod icrâata kıyâm edilmemesi*). A list of those to be expelled, including their names, positions, and relevant remarks, should be shared with both the respective ministry and the Ministry of the Interior.

In the aftermath of the decree of November 3 and the associated circular of November 10, the Ministry of the Interior began to receive reports regarding the numbers and identities of Italian officials engaged in service within Ottoman public institutions in specific provinces and districts.³⁶⁶ In a report dated November 27, Ahmed Mithat, the Deputy Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, disclosed that the Italian individuals Papaïanni, Josef Calamani, and Papaïanni’s son Odello were employed as “inspectors” (*müfettiş*) by the Tobacco Régie in the town of Bursa, while Alfredo (Jules) Boggetti was employed as “chief clerk” (*başkâtip*) by the Ottoman Bank in the same town. It was further noted that the governor’s office had already contacted the directors of these institutions in Bursa and issued the necessary verbal notifications regarding the termination of the employment of these individuals. Furthermore, a telegram received from Trabzon on the same day specified the presence of two Italian civil servants within the province. One of these individuals was employed as an “accountant” (*muhâsebe memûru*) at the Ottoman Bank located in the provincial center of Trabzon, while the other was engaged as a “clerk” (*tahrîrât kâtibi*) at the same branch. According to Governor Cemâl Azmi, the dismissal of these two individuals, who did not exhibit any suspicious behaviour, could have resulted in a disruption to bank operations to a certain extent.³⁶⁷ By December 6, it had been reported that there were no Italian nationals employed either in official service or in state-owned institutions such as the Tobacco Régie and Lighthouse Administration in the sanjaks of Zor, Kütahya, Kal’â-i Sultâniye, Niğde, and Izmir, or in the province of Sivas. It was only the Governor of Kütahya, Fâik Ali, who noted that the First and Second Directors of the Ottoman Bank branch in the city of Uşak were Italian nationals. On December 12, Mutasarrıf Midhat reported that Umberto Gargiulo, employed as a “teller/treasurer” (*veznedar/sandık emîni*) at the Ottoman Bank branch in the port city of Jaffa, was the only Italian employee in the Sanjak of Jerusalem. The District Governor of Jaffa had alleged that Gargiulo had been acting suspiciously and requested his transfer to the interior regions. Despite Gargiulo’s appointment as teller at the bank’s Jerusalem branch in March 1916, his suspicious behaviour continued, and his employment was terminated shortly thereafter in April 1916.

³⁶⁶ COA, DH.ŞFR.497/46, 01 Eylül 1331- 14 November 1915 (on behalf of the Sanjak Governor of Zor, Kâmil); DH.ŞFR.497/93, 03 Teşrînisânî 1331- 16 November 1915 (from the Governor of Sivas, Muammer); DH.ŞFR.498/3, 05 Teşrînisânî 1331- 18 November 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Kütahya, Fâik Ali); DH.ŞFR.499/8, 14 Teşrînisânî 1331 – 27 November 1915 (from the Deputy Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, Ahmed Midhat); DH.ŞFR.499/19, 14 Teşrînisânî 1331- 27 November 1915 (from the Governor of Trabzon, Cemâl Azmi); DH.ŞFR.499/25, 15 Teşrînisânî 1331 – 28 November 1915. (from the Sanjak Governor of Kal’â-i Sultâniye, Rauf); DH.ŞFR.500/13, 21 Teşrînisânî 1331- 04 December 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Niğde, Nâzım); DH.ŞFR.500/35, 23 Teşrînisânî 1331- 06 December 1915 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of İzmir, Fâik); DH.ŞFR.501/23, 29 Teşrînisânî 1331 - 12 December 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, Midhat); DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/10/Lef 6, 25 Şubat 1331 – 09 March 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/10/Lef 2, 23 Mart 1332 - 05 April 1916. From the Office of the Private Secretary of the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of the Interior (*Mâliye Nezâreti Kalem-i Mahsûs Müdîriyetinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³⁶⁷ “Dâ-i iştibah hiçbir halleri yoktur. İnfikâklerinde banka muâmelâtının az çok müteessir olması da tabiidir.”

The story of the aforementioned Alfredo Boggetti, whose dismissal was officially requested, was not so short and superficial to be dismissed in a single sentence.³⁶⁸ It is also important to note that the first name of Boggetti, which was erroneously recorded as Alfredo by the governor's office, is in fact Jules, and the position he was listed as, Bursa Branch Chief Clerk, was in fact Bandırma Branch Director. Jules Boggetti, who had previously worked at the Ottoman Bank's Çanakkale branch, was later transferred to the bank's headquarters in Istanbul for a period of time. Boggetti, who had overseen transactions related to Çanakkale for several months, was subsequently appointed as the Bandırma Branch Director following his assignment in Istanbul. In a petition to the Hüdâvendigâr Governorate dated 20 December 1915, he stated that he had relocated to Bursa shortly after the outbreak of the war and had recently been summoned to Istanbul by the General Directorate of the Ottoman Bank. However, he claimed that the local authorities had not provided the necessary documents due to his Italian nationality, that he was forced to reside in Bursa, where he no longer had any personal or professional connections, and that he was unable to join his family in Istanbul. Following Boggetti's petition for permission to go to Istanbul, the Hüdâvendigâr Governorate forwarded the request to the Ministry of the Interior the following day.

As with all matters concerning enemy aliens, applications for travel permits were immediately forwarded to Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha for approval. In his positive response on December 25, Enver Pasha stated that Boggetti had been transferred from his position at the Ottoman Bank in Çanakkale to the Bandırma branch due to the wartime expulsion of Christians from the city. It is therefore evident that, according to the findings of the present investigation, there was no objection to the transfer of Jules Boggetti from Bursa to Istanbul, as he was deemed to be a harmless individual. However, further investigation by the Ministry of the Interior yielded a more detailed telegram from the Kal'a-i Sultâniye Mutasarrif dated 16 January 1916. The message reported that Boggetti spent the majority of his time in Çanakkale engaging in discourse and fostering connections with consuls and individuals of a questionable character.³⁶⁹ Consequently, he consistently projected an image of unreliability to the Ottoman authorities. The Ministry of the Interior rejected Boggetti's transfer from Bursa to Istanbul on January 27, having concluded that he was a suspicious individual, and shared the investigation report with the Commander-in-Chief.

³⁶⁸ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/3/Lef 6, 07 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 20 December 1915. From Jules Boggetti, Director of the Bandırma Branch of the Ottoman Bank, to His Excellency the Governor of the Province (*Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniye Bankası Bandırma Şûbesi Müdürü Jules Boggetti'den Huzur-u Sâmi-i Vilâyetpenâhîye*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/3/Lef 4, 08 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 21 December 1915. On behalf of the Deputy Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, from the Kadı ed- dâî Mehmed Nizam to the Ministry of the Interior (*Hüdâvendigâr Vâli Vekîli nâmına Kadı ed- dâî Mehmed Nizam'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/3/Lef 5, 12 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 25 December 1915. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army, the Second Section, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâleti İkinci Şûbe'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/3/Lef 2, 03 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 16 January 1916. From the Mutasarrifate of the Kal'a-i Sultâniye Sanjak to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kal'a-i Sultâniye Sancağı Mutasarrıflığından Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/3/Lef 1, 14 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 27 January 1916. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Supreme Command (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdüriyetinden Başkumandanlık Vekâletine*).

³⁶⁹ "Kal'a-i Sultâniye'de Bank-ı Osmâni memûrluğunda iken Dersaadet'e aldırılan İtalya tebaasından Jules Boggetti'nin Kale'de bulunduğu esnada evkatını konsoloslar ve ahvâli dâima şübhe sâir eşhâs ile mülâkat ve temasla geçirdiğine nazaran pek de şâyân-ı itimâd eşhâstan olmadığı anlaşılmakta bulunmakla"

On 30 November 1915, the Aleppo Governor, Mustafa Abdülhâlik, reported that Luigi Levante, the Italian Vice-consul in Iskenderun, had been serving as a “lighthouse officer” (*fenar memûru*) for a considerable period.³⁷⁰ Levante had previously travelled to Italy with the authorization of the Fourth Army Command prior to Italy’s entry into the war. Subsequently, the Iskenderun District Administration (*İskenderun Kaimakamlığı*) had taken the decision to transfer his duties to an Ottoman national. Furthermore, the report revealed that only one employee of Italian nationality remained within the jurisdiction of the Régie Provincial Directorate (*Vilâyet Reji Baş Müdüriyeti*). Umberto Draghi, who had been serving as Director of the Aleppo Tobacco Factory (*Haleb Fabrikası Müdürü*), had been specifically retained in his position.³⁷¹ Governor Abdülhâlik further emphasized the significance of Director Draghi Efendi in the context of regional tobacco production and consumption, underscoring the necessity of his continued service as follows:

“The range of activities undertaken by military units concentrated in neighboring provinces has recently expanded and assumed a greater degree of importance than ever before. Consequently, the factory’s importance has increased further due to the necessity of supplying tobacco products to these units in a timely manner. The factory’s constant need for this individual (referring to Draghi), as well as the permission granted by the Fourth Army Command for him to remain in his position, have also been articulated by the Provincial Directorate of Régie in Aleppo. (*Haleb Reji Baş Müdüriyeti*). It is imperative for the individual in question to maintain his position in order to prevent any disruption to the factory’s operations.”³⁷²

As evidenced by the case of Draghi in Aleppo, the mass dismissals of Italians from the public sector were not carried out recklessly, and certain strategic exceptions were deliberately made.³⁷³ Another case that was subjected to close scrutiny by the ministries and which even caused disagreement among them concerned five Italian employees working in critical

³⁷⁰ DH.EUM.5.Şb.19/25, 17 Teşrînisânî 1331- 30 November 1915. From the Governor of Aleppo, Mustafa Abdülhâlik, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Haleb Vâlisi Mustafa Abdülhâlik’ten Dâhiliye Nezâretine*). For further information on Luigi Levante, please refer to the sub-section “The Efforts of Ambassador Garroni to Lift Ottoman Restrictions” in this chapter.

³⁷¹ In fascist publications such as *Il Legionario*, which gained widespread circulation in the early years of Mussolini’s regime, Umberto Draghi’s name appeared with the title of *Direttore della Regia dei Tabacchi* and as a member of the fascist solidarity movement abroad. “I fascisti all’estero per De Pinedo Asso degli Assi,” *Il Legionario: Organo dei fasci italiani all’estero e nelle colonie*, Editore a cura della segreteria generale, Anno II, N. 47, Roma, Novembre 21, 1925, 17.

³⁷² “Şu sırada muâmelâtı pek ziyade kesb-i vüs’at ve ehemmiyet etmiş vilâyât-ı mütecâvirede mütehaşşid kıtaât-ı askeriye vakt ü zamanıyla mâmûl-u tütün yetiştirmek mecbûriyeti bu ehemmiyeti bir kat daha tezyîd etmiş olan fabrikanın bu zâta dâima arz-ı iftikar eylediği ve aynı zamanda 4. Ordu Kumandanlığı tarafından da ibkasına müsâade olunduğu Haleb Reji Baş Müdüriyetinden ifâde olunmuş ve fabrika muâmelâtının halelden vikayesi için mumâileyhin devâm-ı memûriyeti îcâb etmiştir.”

³⁷³ COA, DH.ŞFR.497/105, 04 Teşrînisânî 1331 – 17 November 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/29/Lef 3, 5 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 18 December 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/29/Lef 2, 10 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 23 December 1915. From the Sanjak Governor of İzmit, Mazhar, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İzmit Mutasarrıfı Mazhar’dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/29/Lef 4, 03 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 16 January 1916. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Ministry of Finance (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyetinden Mâliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/29/Lef 1, 25 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 07 February 1916. From the Ministry of Finance, Directorate of Public Debt and Cash Transactions, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Mâliye Nezâreti Düyûn-u Umûmiye ve Muâmelât-ı Nakdiye Müdüriyetinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

positions at the Régie Office and the Military Cloth Factory (*İzmit Reji Askeri Çuha Fabrikasında*), located in the Sanjak of İzmit. One week after the issuance of the November 10 circular, the Mutasarrif of İzmit, Mazhar Müfit, expressed reservations regarding the legitimacy of the directive issued by the ministry, and thus requested confirmation. This was due to the competing demands for the preservation of institutional operations and functions, as well as the dismissal of critical personnel. To simplify, how could operational continuity and integrity be ensured in the absence of the key employees? In response to the term "dismissal" in the message, Mazhar Müfit articulated his hesitation, leading him to request a more explicit directive from the ministry. The following Italian employees were reported to the Ministry of the Interior by the Mutasarrif on 18 December on the grounds that no action had yet been taken against them:

Mario Morabito - Head of Personnel Department at the İzmit Régie Office
Charles Giuliano - First Assistant Accountant at the İzmit Régie Office
Aleko, son of Madella - Worker at the İzmit Régie Office
Carlo and Domilo Rustioni - Employee at the Military Cloth Factory
Monsieur Savino - Engineer at the Geyve Railway Company³⁷⁴

As demonstrated by the correspondence between the Ministries of the Interior and Finance from January to February 1916, it is evident that the employment of the aforementioned Italians had not yet been formally terminated and was still under discussion. Prior to the implementation of any measures concerning the Italian employees, it was imperative to ascertain the government departments accountable for the administration of the İzmit Régie Office and the Military Cloth Factory. The process becomes somewhat clearer once the fact is considered that the department conducting the investigation was the Ministry of Finance's Public Debt and Cash Transactions Directorate (*Düyyûn-u Umûmiye ve Muâmelât-ı Nakdiye Müdîriyeti*). This is attributable to the diversity of state institutions engaged in the internal financing of external debts within the vast and complex Ottoman bureaucracy, which could potentially complicate such employment and dismissal decisions. In such institutions, where international decision-makers such as foreign delegates could also be involved, employment and dismissal processes were subject to numerous and varied procedures.

4.2.1 Exploring the Origins of Ottoman Concerns Regarding Wartime Espionage

It is evident that the period commencing with the Tripolitanian War, continuing with the Balkan Wars, and immediately succeeded by the First World War, presented numerous national security threats, concerns, and justifications for a vast and cosmopolitan geography such as the Ottoman Empire. However, it is equally evident that the threats, concerns, and justifications posed by the empire's own internal components were by no means baseless, unnecessary, or exaggerated. From the outset, the Ottoman army had observed acts of espionage, provocation and sabotage

³⁷⁴ Mario Morabito – İzmit Reji Dâiresi Memûrîn Kalemi Müdîri; Charles Giuliano - İzmit Reji Dâiresi Muhâsebe Birinci Refîki; Madella oğlu Aleko- İzmit Reji Dâiresi Amele; Carlo ve Domilo Rustioni – Askeri Çuha Fabrikasında Müstahdem; Mösyö Savino- Geyve'de Şimendifer Kumpanyasında Mühendis.

perpetrated by certain local elements in collaboration with Italian forces during the invasions of Libya in October 1911 and the Dodecanese Islands in 1912. Consequently, the fundamental reasons for the considerable measures imposed on the Italians within the Ottoman realm during the First World War, including forced displacement, relocation /resettlement and travel restrictions, must be sought in such antecedents. However, prior to an in-depth examination of these practices, it would be beneficial to explore a relevant antecedent from Libya, as previously referenced. This would facilitate a more profound understanding of the underlying motivations.

The collaboration between Italian occupying forces in Libya and certain local non-Muslims during wartime conditions was subject to close monitoring by Ottoman law enforcement authorities.³⁷⁵ In certain instances, these intelligence-gathering operations had a significant impact on the course of the war, ultimately leading to unfavorable outcomes for the Ottoman army. Consequently, they played a pivotal role in shaping the internal security strategy that was subsequently introduced by the Ottoman authorities. One such example was that of Salomon Efendi (سلمون / صلامون افندی), a Jewish resident of Ottoman Tripoli during the Italo-Ottoman War of 1911-1912, where he served as a respected official in the judicial bureaucracy. Despite not being of Italian nationality or origin, Salomon's activities on behalf of the Italian army are of great importance for understanding the Ottoman Empire's strategic caution towards Italian subjects under wartime conditions. Taking advantage of the equal opportunities offered by the Ottoman judicial bureaucracy, regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation, Salomon had initially been engaged in "private legal practice" (*dâvâ vekâleti*) in the province. Due to his growing success and reputation, he was appointed to the "judicial intern" (*âzâ mülâzımı*) position at the Court of Appeal of the Tripoli Vilayet (*Trablusgarb Vilâyeti Mahkeme-i İstînâfiyesi*) on 18 September 1910. Shortly thereafter, reports began reaching the higher authorities, alleging that "he had engaged in treasonous acts contrary to his nationality and status" (*sıfat-ı tabiiyetine münâfi bazı ahvâl ve harekât-ı hâinânede*). An exhaustive investigation was conducted by officials affiliated with the Ministry of Justice, during which time allegations of "embezzlement and bribery" (*irtikâb ve irtişâ*) were levelled at Salomon. Despite the upswing in his career, shortly thereafter, he would be accused of spying on behalf of the Italian occupational forces and face an administrative investigation.

However, on 5 March 1911, a report reached from the Prosecutor's Office of the Tripoli Court of Appeal (*İstînâf Müdde-i Umûmîliği*), providing valuable clues about Salomon's past and indicating that he had an unblemished record.³⁷⁶ It was already a well-known fact that Salomon had been employed in "political and intelligence services" (*hidemât-ı siyâsiye ve hafîye*) by former governors due to his proficiency in French and Italian. Consequently, it was to be expected that he was labelled "a secret informant" (*hafîye*) by certain local groups. However, given that he had not previously held any position in the civil service, it seemed unlikely that he had been involved in such a crime prior to his current appointment. Furthermore, it was evident that "he had not been heard of or witnessed engaging in any unethical behaviour during his current tenure" (*bir gûnâ iffet-şikenâne hâli mesmû ve meşhud olmadığı ityan olmasıyla*). It

³⁷⁵ COA, BEO.4042/303147/Lef 2, 16 Mayıs 1328 – 29 May 1912. The Ministry of Justice and Religious Denominations / Personnel Records Directorate - Mehmed Memduh Bey, the Minister of Justice (*Adliye ve Mezâhib Nezâreti / Sicill-i Memûrîn Müdîriyeti- Adliye Nâzırı Mehmed Memduh Bey*); BEO.4049/303624/Lef 1, 26 Mayıs 1328 – 08 June 1912. From the Grand Vizier's Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³⁷⁶ COA, BEO.4042/303147/Lef 2, 16 Mayıs 1328 – 29 May 1912 ; BEO.4049/303624/Lef 1, 26 Mayıs 1328 – 08 June 1912.

was therefore indicated in the report that “no measures or actions had been required to be taken against Salomon” (*tâyin-i muâmeleye mahal görülememiş*) up to that point. Nevertheless, the suspicions and allegations against Salomon were not unfounded, and the truth about him would come to light a year later.

In the context of the ongoing Italo-Ottoman War, Ottoman judicial officials who were compelled to flee Tripoli in May 1912 and subsequently arrived in Istanbul held considerable influence over the investigation of Salomon.³⁷⁷ According to the aforementioned officials, Salomon had removed his fez and replaced it with a hat prior to the Italian occupation of Tripoli. From their perspective, Salomon’s actions, which appear to have included a welcoming and obedient response to the invaders, were interpreted as a flagrant act of treason against their homeland. Concurrently, Osman Tevhid Efendi, the president of the Court of Appeal of the Tripoli Vilayet, was among those who arrived in Istanbul. In his statement of 9 May 1912, Osman Tevhid confirmed that Salomon had been employed as a spy by the Italians in Tripoli and Tunisia. In response, the Ottoman authorities appeared to have acted prudently and successfully removed Salomon from the Ottoman judicial system on valid grounds. In view of “his incompetence in reading and writing Ottoman Turkish, the official language of the bureaucracy,” (*ve esâsen lisân-ı resmî ile okuyup yazması pek nâkıs bulunduğ*) the Personnel Commission (*Encümen-i İntihâbiye*) convened and formally decided on Salomon’s dismissal. Consequently, on 21 May 1912, he was entirely removed from his position. It is evident that the Ministry of Justice attributed the dismissal to ordinary and professional reasons, with the intention of avoiding the attention of the Italian authorities, not alarming Salomon without first obtaining the necessary evidence, and apprehending him red-handed. In fact, this was a very prudent move, as Salomon’s ongoing espionage operation in Tripoli would extend as far as Istanbul by June 1912.

In the meantime, a letter was dispatched to the relevant authorities in Istanbul by Muhammad al-Bedir Efendi and his associates, who were members of the Tripoli municipal council.³⁷⁸ This letter proved to be a pivotal moment in shaping the subsequent prosecution of Salomon. The document, “bearing the seals and signatures of numerous notables and dignitaries in Tripoli” (*Trablus eşrâf ve müteberânı nâmına birçok mühür ve imzâ ile vürûd ettiğ*), meticulously detailed “all the misdeeds and acts of treachery” (*seyyiâtı ve harekât-ı hâinânesi*) that Salomon had committed up to that point. More crucially, it was reported that “Salomon was on his way to Istanbul on a covert surveillance mission operating on behalf of Italian interests” (*İtalya menâfiine hizmet-i mütecessisede bulunmak üzere*). Those who endorsed the letter explicitly cautioned government officials to implement the requisite measures in this regard. As stated in the document, Salomon had been engaged in espionage activities in favor of the Italian forces and against the Turkish following the Italian army’s entry into Tripoli. The Italian authorities were aware that Turkish soldiers and local Bedouin fighters, in their joint struggle against the invaders in Tripoli, were also receiving substantial support from Tunisians. Salomon’s mission was to identify the Tunisians and their intermediaries who were furnishing these Turkish and *mujahideen* forces with supplies and provisions. To this end, he had been placed on the Italian

³⁷⁷ COA, BEO.4042/303147/Lef 2, 16 Mayıs 1328 – 29 May 1912.

³⁷⁸ COA, BEO.4049/303624/Lef 1, 26 Mayıs 1328 – 08 June 1912; BEO.4055/304057/Lef 1, 11 Haziran 1328 – 24 June 1912. From the Grand Vizier’s Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); BEO.4055/304057/Lef 2, 10 Haziran 1328 – 23 June 1912. From the Ministry of the Interior, General Communications Department, to the Grand Vizier’s Office (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberât-ı Umûmiye Dâiresinden Sadâretpenâhiye*).

payroll at the onset of the occupation and subsequently dispatched to Tunisia. Upon his arrival in Tunisia, Salomon had initiated “an investigation into the identities of these individuals, providing provisions and supplies to the Ottoman army, with a view to ascertaining the nature of their assistance and reporting his findings to the Italians” (*bize muayyen olanların hüviyet ve sûret-i muâvenetlerini öğrenip düşmana haber verdiği*). However, upon becoming aware of the situation, some Tunisians had initially assaulted and battered Salomon instead of discreetly monitoring his movements. Despite the fact that they had subsequently adopted a close watch on Solomon, he had now become more vigilant and cautious. Consequently, he was compelled to depart Tunisia and return to Tripoli, where “he had promptly apprised the Italian authorities of the identities of his assailants and pursuers” (*dârib ve muakkibleri İtalyanlara ihbâr*). Subsequently, the Italian authorities had issued a formal request to the Tunisian government, seeking their collaboration in addressing these concerns. It appears that the Tunisian government had acted in accordance with the Italian request, detaining the collaborators in question and subjecting them to coercion and physical abuse. The letter asserted that these Tunisians, “who had merely provided assistance to their Ottoman coreligionists” (*hem-mezheblerine iânenen başka bir şey yapmamış*), were “being subjected to pressure and torture by the Tunisian government” on this sole basis (*Tunus hükûmeti tarafından tazyik ve tâzîb*).

In order to perform his undercover assignment in Istanbul, Salomon had boarded the *Sinai* steamship, which was owned by the French company *Messageries Maritimes*.³⁷⁹ Upon disembarking from the steamship, which arrived in Istanbul on 4 June 1912, he was apprehended by the Ottoman police and found to be in possession of a Tunisian passport and various documents. His detainment was swiftly reported to the Ministry of the Interior and subsequently to the Grand Vizier. It appears that Edib Bey, the Istanbul Chief of Police, was reluctant to take any action regarding such a high-profile suspect without first obtaining the approval and directives from the superior authorities. In accordance with the Grand Vizier’s instructions, Salomon was to be referred to the Court Martial (*Dîvân-ı Harb-i Örfî*) for prosecution and trial. In the meantime, the letter from the notables and dignitaries of Tripoli, under the leadership of Muhammad al-Bedir Efendi, was promptly reviewed by the investigative committee and subsequently incorporated into the case file at the Court Martial. This document, when considered alongside other reports and complaints, would constitute the most significant component of Salomon’s case. However, due to the absence of additional documentation pertaining to Salomon’s case during the archival research, it remains impossible to ascertain the outcome and verdict of the case. Although Salomon’s fate remains unknown, the essence of the incident still retains its importance in providing a demonstrative case study of the wartime sensitivities of the Ottoman government, which were growing increasingly acute, and which cannot be attributed merely to paranoia or delusion. The Ottoman military paradigm had been profoundly influenced by such wartime collaborations between non-Muslim local populations and Italian occupation forces. Having drawn significant lessons from such incidents, Ottoman authorities were compelled to adopt a much more cautious and prudent approach toward Italian nationals during the First World War.

³⁷⁹ COA, BEO.4049/303624/Lef 2, 22 Mayıs 1328 – 04 June 1912. From the Istanbul Chief of Police Edib to the Ministry of the Interior (*İstanbul Polis Müdür-i Umûmisi Edib’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); BEO.4049/303624/Lef 2, 24 Mayıs 1328 – 06 June 1912. From the Ministry of the Interior, General Communications Department, Second Section, to the Grand Vizier’s Office (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberât-ı Umûmiye Dâiresi İkinci Şûbeden Sadâretpenâhiye*); BEO.4055/304057/Lef 2, 10 Haziran 1328 – 23 June 1912.

4.2.2 Wartime Integration of Various Italian Institutions into Ottoman Public Utilities

During the First World War, Italian institutions within the Ottoman Empire, along with all other enemy state institutions, were subject to strict and close monitoring by the state.³⁸⁰ In addition to financial institutions and commercial enterprises, non-profit Italian-origin organizations such as educational, health, religious and charitable institutions were also included in this program. At this juncture, on 16 November 1914, the Supreme Decree issued by the Council of Ministers against enemy state nationals, officials, institutions, companies and interests in the Ottoman Empire was to be extended to include Italy on 21 October 1916. However, a year and a half prior to this initiative, on 13 April 1915, Talât Pasha, who had issued a circular for certain provinces and sanjaks, inquired as to the presence of any “Italian educational or charitable institutions” (*İtalyan müessesât-ı tedrisiye veya hayriyesi*) within their respective jurisdictions. If such institutions were in existence, Talât Pasha requested that local authorities conduct an investigation and provide a report on whether they had been closed down by their own administrations. Although Italy’s involvement in the war alongside the Entente Powers and its declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire had yet to be officially realized, the Ottoman Government, alert to developments in world politics, anticipated potential alliances among the opposing blocs. Italy’s long-standing neutrality was officially terminated by the secret Treaty of London on 26 April 1915, which encouraged Italy to join the Entente Powers, subsequently leading to its declaration of war on Austria-Hungary on 23 May 1915. From this date onwards, all Italian institutions and functions within the Ottoman jurisdiction were subject to close monitoring by state authorities, which gradually rendered them ineffective and resulted in their seizure and expropriation.

On 30 September 1915, Fourth Army Commander Cemâl Pasha submitted a proposal to the government regarding “scientific and denominational institutions in Syria” (*Suriye’deki müessesât-ı ilmiye ve mezhebiye*) that were affiliated with enemy states.³⁸¹ The proposal included the establishment of a commission tasked with the resolution of issues concerning monasteries, schools and other institutions originating from enemy states that had been seized and expropriated by the Ottoman state since the commencement of the war.³⁸² In accordance with this proposal, on October 12, the decision was taken to establish a commission comprising

³⁸⁰ COA, DH.ŞFR.52/216, 31 Mart 1331 - 13 April 1915. Minister Talât - From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Adana, Ankara, Aydın, Beirut, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Syria, Konya, and the Mutasarrifates of Teke, Karesi, Jerusalem, and Menteşe; HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/25/Lef 2; HR.SYS.2967/37/Lef 13, 08 Teşrînievvel 1332 - 21 October 1916. Consultative Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs- The Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte (*Hâriciye Nezâreti İstişare Odası - Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşavirliği*).

³⁸¹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 36, 29 Eylül 1331 - 12 October 1915. On behalf of the Grand Vizier, Undersecretary Emin / From the Grand Vizirate, Department of Important Affairs, to the Ministry of the Interior “Abstract: Regarding the formation of a commission to conduct research on scientific and denominational institutions in Syria” (*Sadrâzam nâmına Müsteşar Emin / Dâire-i Sadâret Umûr-ı Mühimme Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*) “Hulâsa: Suriye’deki müessesât-ı ilmiye ve mezhebiye hakkında tedkikat icrâsı zımında bir komisyon teşkiline dâir” ; DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 28, 20 Teşrînievvel 1331 - 02 November 1915. From the Ministry of War, Public Security Department, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Harbiye Nezâreti Âsâyiş Şûbesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³⁸² “Düvel-i Muhâsamaya âid olup devlet tarafından işgal olunan manastır, mekteb ve müessesât-ı sâireye müteallik mesâil halletmek üzere bir komisyon teşkili ve işbu komisyonun Suriye cihetlerinde de tedkikatta bulunması lüzûmu Dördüncü Ordu-yu Hümâyun Kumandanlığından bildirildiğini”

officials from the Grand Vizierate, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Public Education (*Maârif-i Umûmiye Nezâreti*). This body would subsequently become known as the Commission for Abandoned Foreign Institutions (*Müessesât-ı Metrûke-i Ecnebiye Komisyonu*). The commission was assigned the task of investigating the prevailing conditions, legal statuses, and “founding certificates” (*fermân-ı hümayun*) of all scientific and religious institutions within Syria.³⁸³ By November 2, the Fourth Army Command had identified all educational and health institutions, orphanages, colleges, monasteries, and school buildings affiliated with enemy states in the Syrian region. Those that had not yet been expropriated were also seized, and the results were compiled in a report. Following the approval of the Ministry of Public Education, a decision was reached that these institutions would be activated and utilized in an appropriate manner, subsequently being incorporated into the Ottoman education system.³⁸⁴

In fact, as the war progressed, the same conditions would apply to Italian institutions in each and every province throughout the Empire, particularly in Istanbul.³⁸⁵ On 21 October 1916, the Grand Vizier promulgated an extension to the decree of 16 November 1914, which had previously been in effect within the Istanbul Province for a considerable period, to encompass the entire Empire. Concurrently, Minister Talât Pasha disseminated a circular to all pertinent provinces and independent sanjaks, thereby appraising them of the newly instituted regulation. The regulation initially outlined that certain institutions belonging to the Italian state and to its subjects within the Istanbul Province had already been gradually seized, expropriated, and subsequently administered by the Ottoman authorities over the past two years, pursuant to the decree of 16 November 1914.³⁸⁶ Among these institutions, the Italian Hospital (*İtalya Hastahânesi*) in Tophane was transferred to the control of the Red Crescent Society (*Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*), and all Italian schools within the borders of Istanbul were abolished and evacuated, with their buildings being converted into Ottoman schools.³⁸⁷ In accordance with the prevailing arrangement, directives were issued stipulating that similar Italian institutions in other provinces and independent sanjaks should be subjected to a uniform treatment. In other words, the Ottoman Government would take the following measures regarding Italian educational institutions throughout the empire: all such institutions would be abolished and evacuated; the buildings would be seized and expropriated by the government as necessary; the

³⁸³ “Suriye kıtasındaki bilumûm müessesât-ı ilmiye ve mezhebiyenin vaziyet-i hâzıra ve hukukiyesi ve külliyyelerin fermân-ı hümayunlarla müessis olup olmadığının tedkik edilmesi”

³⁸⁴ “Suriye’de düvel-i muhâsamaya âid müessesât-ı tedrîsiye, sıhhiye, eytamhâne ve fermansız külliyyeleriyle bilumûm manastır ve mekteb binâlarına defteri mûcibince şimdiden vaz’-ı yed edilerek sûret-i münâsibede istîmalî”

³⁸⁵ COA, HR.SYS.2967/37/Lef 13, 08 Teşrînievvel 1332 - 21 October 1916; DH.ŞFR.69/61, 08 Teşrînievvel 1332 - 21 October 1916. Minister Talât - From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Edirne, Adana, Ankara, Aydın, Bitlis, Baghdad, Beirut, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Diyarbakir, Syria, Sivas, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Konya, Ma'mûretü'l-Azîz, Mosul, Yemen and the Mutasarrifates of Urfa, İzmit, Bolu, Canik, Çatalca, Zor, Karesi, Jerusalem, Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Menteşe, Teke, Kayseri, Karahisar-ı Sâhib, İçil, Eskişehir, Kütahya, Maraş, Niğde, and the Guardianship of Medina (*Medine-i Münevvere Muhâfızlığı*).

³⁸⁶ “İstanbul Vilâyeti dâhilinde kain olup İtalya’ya ve tebaasına âid bulunan müessesâtın bazıları 3 Teşrînisânî 1330 tarihli ve 569 numarolu tezkire-i sâmiye-i Sadâret-i uzma ile Nezâret-i celîlelerine tebliğ olunan Meclis-i Vükelâ zabıtânâmesinin 18. Bendine tevfiқан taraf-ı hükûmet-i seniyyeden işgal veya idâre oluna gelmiş olmakla”

³⁸⁷ “ve ezcümle İtalya hastahânesi el-yevm Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyetinin taht-ı işgalinde olduğu gibi İstanbul’da bulunan mektebler ilga ve tahliye ve binâları Osmanlı Mektebi ittihaz edilmiş”

fixed assets and movable property inside would be recorded; and the administrative staff and educators would be deported.³⁸⁸ The program exempted churches, hospitals and orphanages from its provisions, albeit with specific conditions.³⁸⁹ It was specified that the utilization of churches was to be limited to the purposes of worship, as in the past, and that hospitals and orphanages were to be administered directly or indirectly by the Ottoman Government. As stated in the concluding remarks of the text, the gradual implementation of the program, primarily directed against the French and other enemy states, had resulted in persistent complaints from the Spanish and American Embassies. Consequently, it would be more appropriate to implement it simultaneously when applied to Italian institutions on this occasion.³⁹⁰

The seizure and expropriation of Italian institutions in Istanbul, the Anatolian provinces, and the Syrian Levant by Ottoman authorities had been protested on numerous occasions at different times by the American Embassy, and this situation had eventually become a source of irritation for the Grand Vizierate.³⁹¹ An investigation conducted by the relevant governors and police departments between April and October 1916 revealed that, up to that point, a significant number of Italian institutions, along with their movable and immovable property, had been seized, converted and integrated into Ottoman public utilities by Ottoman authorities. The most prominent group was constituted by the Italian educational, religious, health and charitable institutions whose properties were seized in the imperial capital of Istanbul. This was due to the considerable size and influence of the Italian community in the city. The Italian Hospital in Tophâne was seized by the Red Crescent Headquarters on the orders of the Health Directorate. The building was then placed under military guard and the movable property inside was recorded. The assets of the Italian Boys' School on Hayriye Street in Beyoğlu were confiscated by the Bebek State Orphanage (*Dârüleytâm Bebek Şûbesi*) and subsequently transferred to the Gümüşsuyu Hospital security unit, while the Italian Girls' School on Ağa Hamamı Street was directly transferred to the military authorities. The chapel, which formed part of the *Dominican* Order (Italian: *Frati Domenicani*, French: *Pères Dominicains*) Girls' School in Yedikule, was seized by the General Directorate of the State Orphanages (*Dârüleytâm Müdüriyet-i Umûmiyesi*) in the three-month period following the commencement of the war. Initially converted into a small mosque, this chapel was later transformed into the Yedikule State Orphanage, with the addition of dormitory and classroom sections. The *Istituto Bartolomeo Giustiniani* building in Feriköy, a property owned by the *Salesiani* order, was allocated to the Feriköy Model School

³⁸⁸ “müessesât-ı tadrîsiyenin ilga ve tahliye ve binâları icâbinâ göre hükûmetçe işgal edilmek ve erkân-ı müstahdemini memleket hâricine ihrâc olunmak”

³⁸⁹ “ve müessesât-ı sâireden yalnız kilise ve hastahâne ve eytamhâneler bu cümleden müstesnâ olup kiliseler kemâ-fi's-sâbık ibâdâta hasrolunmak ve eytamhâne ve hastahâneler Hükûmet-i Seniyye tarafından doğrudan doğruya ve yahud bil-vâsita idâre edilmek iktizâ eder.”

³⁹⁰ “tezkire-i sâmiye-i melfûfe ahkâmının bilumûm İtalya müessesâtı hakkında aynı zamanda tatbîki münâsib olacağına”

³⁹¹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 25, 17 Nisan 1332 – 30 April 1916. On behalf of the Grand Vizier, Undersecretary Emin / From the Grand Vizirate, Department of Important Affairs, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Sadrâzam nâmına Müsteşar Emin / Dâire-i Sadâret Umûr-ı Mühimme Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 11, 16 Teşrînievvel 1332 – 29 October 1916. From the General Directorate of Istanbul Police, Office of Correspondence, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İstanbul Polis Müdüriyet-i Umûmiyyesi Tahrîrât Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2967/37/Lef 18, 08 Teşrînisânî 1332 - 21 November 1916. Minister of the Interior Talât - From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Dâhiliye Nâzırı Talât- Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdüriyetinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*).

(*Feriköy Numûne Mektebi*) at the behest of the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Education (*İstanbul Vilâyeti Maârif Müdürlüğü*), and the contents were meticulously catalogued under the oversight of the priests. The structure located on Eczacı Street in Beyoğlu, currently known as *Casa Garibaldi* and previously owned by the *Società Operaia Italiana*, was seized by the Director of Galatasaray High School (*Mekteb-i Sultânî*) and a military physician, with the intention of converting it into a Red Crescent Hospital. The contents were initially stored in a room and subsequently handed over to representatives of the American Embassy and the Italian Workers' Society. The *Saint Pierre Han*, a commercial building owned by the *Dominican* order and located in Kuledibi, Galata, was seized to be converted into the Tailor and Weaver School for Orphans (*Dârüleytâm Terzi ve Dokumacı Mektebi*). During the evacuation of the building, the tenants removed their belongings and completely vacated the premises.

In the Anatolian provinces such as Antalya and Adana, and to a greater extent in Izmir, a number of Italian-owned educational institutions and orphanages, which were of a colonial or confessional nature, were seized by the Ottoman Empire and subsequently expropriated.³⁹² The closure of the Tuzla Burnu Italian Elementary School for Boys and Girls (Italian: *Scuola popolare maschile e femminile*, Turkish: *İbtidâî Zükûr ve İnas Mektebi*) and Italian Secondary School for Boys (*Zükûr Rüşdiye Mektebi*), established by the *Associazione Nazionale Italiana* in the Punta district of Izmir, and the subsequent seizure of their buildings along with their contents, have prompted protests from the American Embassy. Moreover, upon ascertaining that the building of the previously closed Italian High School for Orphaned Boys (*Yetim İdâdî Mektebi*) on Trassa Street was in fact owned by the Greek community, the structure was transferred to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis.³⁹³ The construction of the Italian High School

³⁹² COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 14, 18 Eylül 1332 – 01 October 1916. Minister of Public Education Ahmed Şükrü - From the Ministry of Public Education, Department of Inspection, to the Ministry of the Interior "Abstract: Regarding the Italian schools in Izmir" (*Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nâzırı Ahmed Şükrü - Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Heyet-i Teftîşiye Dâiresinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*) "Hulâsa: İzmir'deki İtalyan mekâtibi hakkında"; DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 22, 03 Mayıs 1332 – 16 May 1916. From the Governor of Aydın, Rahmi, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Aydın Vâlisi Rahmi'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 2, 14 Şubat 1332 – 27 February 1917. From the Sanjak Governor of Teke, İbrahim Edhem, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Teke Mutasarrıfı İbrahim Edhem'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.469/141, 22 Nisan 1331 – 05 May 1915. From the Governor of Adana, Hakkı, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Hakkı'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

³⁹³ Yaşar Ürük writes that the Italian Girls' School on Trassa Street, which was opened by the *Associazione Nazionale Italiana* in 1866, was the first secondary school in Izmir to be exclusively for girls. Nevertheless, no information could be found in the *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero* dating from 1907, 1913-14 and 1924 regarding the Italian High School for Orphaned Boys, which is referenced in the Ottoman archives as being on the same street and having been transferred to the Greek Metropolitan. It is possible that the name was changed or recorded differently, or that it was an unlicensed school and therefore not documented or officially registered. Furthermore, no records of the Italian High School for Orphan Girls in Çayaltı (*Alteau Tschai*), Izmir, which was later converted into the Ottoman Girls' High School, could be found in official Italian sources. As Ürük also states, the Italian Girls' School (Italian: *Istituto Centrale Femminile di Smirne*, Turkish: *İtalyan Kız Mektebi*) —locally known as *La Centrale*— was built by the *Società Cattolica Italiana* in *Bella Vista* (today's Gündoğdu Square in Alsancak) in 1906, before being converted into the Izmir Girls' High School in 1915 and eventually closing in 1945. Although it was initially thought that the two schools in *Alteau Tschai* and *Bella Vista*, which were very close to each other, could be the same school and may have been referred to differently in Ottoman archive documents, it is more likely that they were distinct institutions. The fact that some schools were unlicensed, established through private initiatives, or that changed hands and names from time to time increases the confusion and makes identification difficult in cities such as Izmir, where the Italian institutional presence was strong. For further research on the history of Italian schools in Izmir, Yaşar Ürük's above-mentioned article titled "Italian

for Orphaned Girls in the Çayaltı (*Alteau Tschai / Tchai Altéu*) area was also seized, expropriated, and the structure and its contents were converted into an Ottoman Girls' High School. In Antalya, the properties and assets of the Italian Boys' Primary School, associated with the *Salesiani* order, and the Italian Girls' Primary School, associated with the *Suore d'Ivrea* order (*Scuola elementare maschile / femminile della Associazione Nazionale*), were expropriated by the Ottoman authorities. The possession of these schools was formally documented, and the relevant inventories were dispatched to the Ministry of Public Education, the Health Directorate, and the military authorities. In the city of Adana, a private institution existed under the title of the Adana Italian Industrial and Commercial School (*Sinâi ve Ticârî İtalyan Mektebi*), which was founded by Signor Corio following the acquisition of a state license in 1914. However, following Italy's entry into the war, the school was closed by Corio himself and subsequently abandoned.

Following Italy's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire, Italian educational and religious institutions in the Vilayets of Jerusalem, Beirut, and Aleppo, which constituted the Syrian Levant, were progressively closed or expropriated by the Ottoman administration and converted to alternative uses.³⁹⁴ The "nuns who were responsible for the management and teaching" (*heyet-i idâre ve tâlimiye*) at two girls' schools affiliated with the Catholic community in Jaffa and Jerusalem closed their schools and vacated the region before Italy entered the war.³⁹⁵

School" (*İtalyan Mektebi*) and his book titled "The İzmir We Don't Know" (*Bilmediğimiz İzmir*) are quite inspiring and instructive: Yaşar Ürük, *Bilmediğimiz İzmir* (İzmir: İ.B.B. İzelman A.Ş Yayınları, 2022). For facts and figures such as the names, student numbers, and locations of Italian schools throughout the Ottoman Empire, the following official Italian sources can be consulted: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Ispettorato Generale delle Scuole all'Esteri, *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero governative e sussidiate 1907* (Roma: Tipografia Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 1907); Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Direzione Generale delle Scuole Italiane all'Esteri, *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero governative e sussidiate 1913-1914* (Roma: Tipografia Editrice Nazionale, 1914); Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Direzione Generale delle Scuole Italiane all'Esteri, *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero 1924* (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1925)

³⁹⁴ COA, DH.ŞFR.470/61, 25 Şubat 1331 - 09 March 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 19, 12 Mayıs 1332 - 25 May 1916. From the Governor of Jerusalem, Midhat, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kudûs Mutasarrıfı Midhat'tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 14, 15 Eylül 1332 - 28 September 1916. From the Commander-in-Chief Enver, Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army to the Ministry of Interior (*Başkumandan Vekili Enver, Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâletinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.34/37/Lef 15, 18 Eylül 1332 - 01 October 1916. Minister of Public Education Ahmed Şükrü - From the Ministry of Public Education, Department of Inspection, to the Ministry of the Interior "Abstract: "Regarding Italian educational institutions" (*Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nâzırı Ahmed Şükrü - Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Heyet-i Teftîşiye Dâiresinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*) "Hulâsa: İtalyan müessesât-ı tedrîsiyesi hakkında"; DH.ŞFR.470/90, 27 Nisan 1331- 10 May 1915. From the Governor of Beirut, Bekir Sâmî, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Beyrut Vâlisi Bekir Sâmî'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2967/38/Lef 2, 24 Teşrînisânî 1332 - 07 December 1916 "Regarding the Italian Schools in the Province of Beirut / Beyrut Vilâyetindeki İtalyan Mektepleri Hakkında"; HR.SYS.2967/38/Lef 3, 30 Ağustos 1333 - 30 August 1917 "Regarding the Italian Schools in Nazareth, Haifa, and Jaffa / Nâsıra, Hayfa ve Yafa'da bulunan İtalyan Mektepleri hakkında", Minister of the Interior Mehmed Talât- From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Dâhiliye Nâzırı Mehmed Talât- Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.450/5, 10 Teşrînisânî 1330 - 23 November 1914; DH.ŞFR.464/59, 24 Şubat 1330 - 09 March 1915. From the Governor of Aleppo, Celâl, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Haleb Vâlisi Celâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); TŞR.HL.3/1/Lef 3, 24 Mart 1332 - 06 April 1916. From the Governor of Aleppo, Mustafa Abdülhâlik, to the Fourth Army Command (*Haleb Vâlisi Mustafa Abdülhâlik'ten Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanlığına*).

³⁹⁵ According to Italian annuals from 1913-1914, two Italian girls' schools were located in Jaffa: the *Scuola femminile delle Suore di San Giuseppe* and the *Scuola elementare femminile Fedele Lampertico*, and two in Jerusalem: the *Scuola privata femminile Don Bosco delle figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice* and the *Scuola*

Following a decision by the Ministry of Public Education, these girls' schools were subsequently converted into Ottoman "kindergartens" (*ana mektebi*). Two "boys schools operated by the Franciscans" (*Scuola maschile dei Padri Francescani*) in Jerusalem and Bethlehem were appropriated and nationalized by the Ottoman army, along with their associated assets, for the purpose of military utilization.³⁹⁶ This military acquisition incited a formal protest from the American Embassy. Furthermore, a school in Bethlehem, along with the San Giuseppe Agricultural School (*Scuola agricola San Giuseppe*) in Beit Jimal, which had both previously been run by priests, were also taken over by the Local Education Authority. Ottoman reports also documented such institutions as the orphanage known as *Orfanotrofio Cattolica Antonio Belloni*, located in Bethlehem, the substantial church adjacent to it, a boys' school that was rented in Jaffa, and the Italian Hospital in Jerusalem (*L'ospedale Italiano di Gerusalemme*), whose construction was continued by the architect Antonio Barluzzi between 1912 and 1919.³⁹⁷

Following the Italian declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, all Italian schools in the province of Beirut were closed. The nuns of the Carmelite convent in Haifa, which operated a girls' school named *Scuola delle Carmelitane*, were expelled by the Ottoman authorities at the onset of the mobilization. However, the building and its contents remained untouched. Conversely, the two girls' schools in Tiberias and Nazareth, established by the *Associazione Nazionale Italiana* and entrusted to Franciscan missionaries, were appropriated and nationalized by the Ottoman army. The *Scuole delle Suore Francescane* in Tiberias was converted into a military hospital, while the *Istituto delle Suore Francescane* in Nazareth was closed following the outbreak of war and transferred to military administration. The two elementary schools, known as the *Scuola elementare maschile* and *Scuola elementare femminile*, which had been established in the provincial capital of Beirut in 1914, were closed by their respective administrations upon Italy's entry into the war. Subsequently, their teaching staff returned to Italy under the directives of the embassy. The Terra Santa Monastery and College (*Collegio dei Francescani di Terra Santa*), an institution associated with the

elementare femminile Don Bosco. However, due to the absence of specification in the Ottoman archive documents, it has not been possible to determine which of these were seized and expropriated.

³⁹⁶ As demonstrated in the 1913-1914 Italian yearbooks, the two other boys' schools in Jerusalem are listed as the Italian Boys' School of the National Association (*Scuola italiana maschile della Associazione Nazionale*) and the Don Bosco Boys' School (*Scuola italiana maschile dei Salesiani di Don Bosco*), both being operated by the *Salesians*. Despite the fact that certain official annuals and sources indicate these two educational institutions as the same entity, they are listed independently in the 1913-1914 annual. In the absence of any explicit reference to the matter in the Ottoman archive documents, it is conceivable that the seized school may have been one of these.

³⁹⁷ According to Italian annuals from 1913-1914, there was an orphanage named *Orfanotrofio Cattolica Antonio Belloni*, a boys' school named *Scuola dei Padri Francescani*, and two girls' schools named *Scuola femminile delle Suore di San Giuseppe* and *Scuola privata Maria Ausiliatrice* in Bethlehem. In Jaffa, in addition to the aforementioned schools for girls referenced in the text and footnotes, there were two boys' schools: the *Scuola italiana maschile dell'Associazione Nazionale* and the *Scuola dei Padri Francescani*. Furthermore, Jaffa was home to a night school for boys known as the *Corso serale dei Salesiani*, in addition to a kindergarten and laboratory that was affiliated with *Fedele Lampertico* (*Scuola asilo e laboratorio, succursale della Lampertico*). In the city center of Jerusalem, in addition to the boys' and girls' schools referenced in the text and footnotes above, there was a girls' orphanage under the jurisdiction of the Franciscan nuns (*Orfanotrofio femminile delle Suore Francescane*). However, the only Italian school in Beit Jimal was a boys' agricultural school called *Scuola agricola San Giuseppe*. Given the absence of clarity regarding this matter in the Ottoman archive documents, a precise determination of which schools were seized and expropriated has not been possible.

Franciscans in the provincial capital of Aleppo, was initially closed prior to the onset of hostilities in November 1914.³⁹⁸ However, given that Italy had not yet been designated an enemy state by the Ottoman administration, the building was reopened shortly thereafter. It was subsequently seized once more and rapidly converted into a Male Teachers' School (*Dârülmualimîn*) during the period leading up to 1916. The properties of the Terra Santa-affiliated girls' and boys' elementary schools (*Scuola dei Francescani di Terra Santa* and *Scuola delle Suore Francescane*) in Ayntab were also expropriated by the Ministry of Public Education and converted into a trade school and a girls' school, respectively. In addition, the structure of the Terra Santa Church in Anytab was placed under protection, along with its contents, due to the dispersal of the local community. The Terra Santa building in Iskenderun was vacated by the nuns during the Ottoman mobilization, its contents were handed over to a local individual, and the nuns returned to France.

In regard to the Convention of Residence (*İkamet Mukavelesi*)³⁹⁹, which was signed on the same day as the Peace Treaty of Lausanne (*Muâhede-i Sulhiye*) on 24 May 1923, the Republic of Turkey declared its intention to recognize the presence of British, French, and Italian "denominational, educational, health, and charitable institutions" (*müessesât-ı mezhebiye, tedrisiye, sıhhiye ve hayriye*), whose presence in Turkey had been recognized prior to 30 October 1914.⁴⁰⁰ Moreover, the Turkish delegation indicated a willingness to adopt a more favorable approach to the current situation, with a view to regulating the status of similar institutions of the same states that still existed in Turkey. Furthermore, the aforementioned institutions would be granted the same legal and administrative status as similar Turkish institutions with regard to all financial obligations and would be subject to the same laws and regulations. In summary, the Republic of Turkey would first reinstate the former rights of Italian institutions that had been suspended, abolished, or expropriated by the Ottoman Government at the onset of the First World War. In addition, it would adopt a regulatory, inclusive, and constructive approach toward other Italian institutions that had been inherited from the preceding period or newly established during the years of the National Struggle between 1919 and 1923. The joint letter written by İsmet İnönü, Head of the Turkish Delegation at the Lausanne Conference, and addressed to Rumbold (Great Britain), Pellé (France), and Montagna (Italy), who were the heads of the Allied Delegations, is documented as follows:

"Lausanne, July 24, 1923.

³⁹⁸ In addition to the *Collegio di Terra Santa* in Aleppo, there was also a boys' school known as the *Scuola dei Padri Francescani di Terra Santa* and a girls' school called the *Scuole delle Suore Francescane*.

³⁹⁹ The full title of the convention referred to in İsmet İnönü's letter only as the Convention of Residence (*İkamet Mukavelesi*), which constitutes the Fourth Part of the Treaty of Lausanne, is "Convention Respecting Conditions of Residence and Business and Jurisdiction." For the original full text of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne: "Treaty of Peace with Turkey and Other Instruments Signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923," Treaty Series No. 16, Cmd. 1929 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1923), UK Treaties Online (UKTO), Treaty Unit of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, accessed August 29, 2025, <https://treaties.fcdo.gov.uk/data/Library2/pdf/TS0016.1923.pdf>

⁴⁰⁰ "Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923, Volume II, Document 959, 711.672/170, Identical Letter from the Chief of the Turkish Delegation at the Lausanne Conference (İsmet) to the Chiefs of the Allied Delegations (Rumbold, Pellé, Montagna)," *United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, Shared Knowledge Services, Bureau of Administration*, last modified July 24, 1923, accessed August 23, 2025, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1923v02/d959>; Ürük, "İtalyan Mektebi,"; Dışişleri Bakanlığı Türk Diplomatik Arşivi (TDA), 95.1696/9959/2, 24 Temmuz 1923- 24 July 1923

Excellency: With reference to the Convention regarding the conditions of residence and business signed at Lausanne today, and following on the decision taken by the First Committee at its meeting of the 19th May, 1923, regarding the substitution of the declaration, which was to have been annexed to the said Convention, by an exchange of letters, I have the honor to declare, in the name of my Government, that the latter will recognize the existence of (British, French, Italian) religious, scholastic and medical establishments, as well as of charitable institutions recognized as existing in Turkey before the 30th October, 1914, and that it will favorably examine the case of other similar (British, French, Italian) institutions actually existing in Turkey at the date of the Treaty of Peace signed today, with a view to regularize their position.

The establishments and institutions mentioned above will, as regards fiscal charges of every kind, be treated on a footing of equality with similar Turkish establishments and institutions, and will be subject to the administrative arrangements of a public character, as well as to the laws and regulations, governing the latter. It is, however, understood that the Turkish Government will take into account the conditions under which these establishments carry on their work, and, in so far as schools are concerned, the practical organization of their teaching arrangements.

I avail [etc.]
M. Ismet”

Lozan, 24 Temmuz 1923

SULH KONFERANSINDA HAŞMETLİ İNGİLTERE KRALI
HAZRETLERİNİN MURAHHASI SİR HORACE RUMBOLD
HAZRETLERİNE

Ekselâns,

Lozan'da bugünkü tarihle imza olunan İkamet Mukavelesine atfen ve mezkûr Mukaveleye raptedilecek olan Beyannamenin mektuplarla tebdili hakkında Birinci Komitenin 19 Mayıs 1923 tarihli celsesinde müttehaz kararına tevfikân Türkiye'de 30 Teşrinievvel 1914 tarihinden mukaddem mevcudiyeti musaddak ve Büyük Britanya'ya mensup müessesatı mezhebiye, tedrisiye, sıhhiye ve hayriyenin mevcudiyetini tanıyacağını ve bugün imza edilen Muahedei Sulhiye tarihinde Türkiye filen mevcut sair İngiliz müessesatı mümasilesinin vaziyetlerini nizama tevfik etmek üzere hayır-hahane tetkik edeceğini Hükûmetim namına beyan ile kesbi şeref eylerim.

Hernevi mükellefiyatı maliye noktai nazarından balâdaki müessesat, müessesatı mümasilesile tamamen müsavi muameleye mazhar edilecek ve işbu müessesat hakkında cari olan nizâmı amme ahkâmile kavanın ve nizamata tâbi olacaklardır. Maahaza şurası mukarrerdir ki Türk Hükûmeti işbu müessesatın şeraiti faaliyetini ve mekteplere gelince tedrisatın amelî teşkilâtını nazarı itibara alacaktır.

Tazimatı ihtiramkâranemin teminatını kabul buyurmanızı rica ederim.

İmza : M. İsmet

21.04.2025 TARİHLİ VE 39900189 SAYILI KARAR İLE GİZLİLİĞİ KALDIRILMIŞTIR.

Archival Image 10: The original letter written by İsmet İnönü, head of the Turkish Delegation in Lausanne, to the British Delegate Sir Horace Rumbold. Copies of the same letter were also sent to the French Delegate Maurice Pellé and the Italian Delegate Giulio Cesare Montagna.

4.2.3 Mass Dismissal of Italian Railway Employees during the First World War

In the context of national security concerns arising from wartime conditions, the Ottoman government deemed it no longer appropriate to employ enemy nationals, such as Italians, in sectors deemed to be of strategic importance, including railways and communications. These policies, initiated with the invasion of Libya in 1911 and aimed at the dismissal of Italians engaged in critical sectors, would be reinstated following Italy's "declaration of war" (*ilân-ı harb*) against the Ottoman Empire on 21 August 1915.⁴⁰¹ In this section, two cases of Italian and French railway employees who were dismissed by the Ottoman government whilst working together on certain routes will be examined. The employees who refused to accept their dismissal and sought their rights brought the matter before neutral states that claimed to protect Italian and French interests. The Ottoman government, which faced diplomatic issues with the United States over "the Pesarini case" and with the Spanish government over "the Marteaux case," sought to justify its actions by invoking the norms of wartime law permitted under international law. These two cases are of particular significance in illustrating the scope and background of practices targeting the employment of enemy aliens during wartime.

On 13 September 1915, the American Embassy conveyed to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs the following information via a "note verbale" (*takrîr-i şifâhî*): Monsieur Pesarini, who had loyally served the Anatolian Railway for a period of 25 years, had been dismissed from his position along with all other Italian workers.⁴⁰² According to the embassy's official statement, the company's dedicated employee had been diligently serving on the Eskişehir line for a period of quarter of a century. Although he had not committed any personal wrongdoing, he was subjected to the wartime measures implemented by the Ottoman government and thus became a victim. The Embassy issued a reminder to the Sublime Porte of its obligation to address the grievances of Pesarini and his colleagues and "to provide compensation for the damage incurred" (*tazmînât îtâsî*). The memorandum also stipulated the implementation of "precautionary measures" (*kuyûd-u ihtiyâtiye*) to ensure the safeguarding of the rights of all Italian subjects who might face dismissal for this reason in the future. In the aftermath of the declaration of war between Italy and the Ottoman Empire, the American Embassy had assumed the responsibility of safeguarding Italian interests within the Ottoman territories, operating as a proxy for the Italian government. In accordance with this new mandate, the Embassy reserved the prerogative to formally communicate the aforementioned obligation to the Ottoman government in a diplomatic capacity. However, the Sublime Porte's response to this note was as follows: "In the instance of warfare between states, subjects of enemy states employed in

⁴⁰¹ As the declaration of war approached, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior began closely monitoring Italians employed on the railways and requested their number and demographic information from local authorities in specific regions. For example, information about the Italians employed on the Soma-Bandırma Railway, which passed through certain parts of Aydın Vilâyet and along the borders of Karesi Sanjak, was requested from the Railway Route Commissioner (*Şimendifer Hat Komiserliği*) by Ahmed Midhat (Kalabalık), the Governor of Karesi (now part of modern-day Balıkesir Province). This information was then shared with the Ministry of the Interior in June 1915. COA, DH.EUM.3.Şb.5/62, 10 Haziran 1331 - 23 June 1915. From the Karesi Sanjak Governorate Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*Karesi Mutasarrıflığı Tahrîrat Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁰² COA, HR.SYS.2967/22/Lef 1, 26 Eylül 1331- 09 October 1915. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs, to the Ministry of Public Works (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyesi'nden Nâfia Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2967/22/Lef 2, 13 September 1915. From the American Embassy in Istanbul to the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sublime Porte.

public services with a close relation to national defense, such as communications and railways, may be dismissed from their positions irrespective of the duration of their service.”⁴⁰³ Consequently, the termination of the employment of Italians by the aforementioned company could not be contested, and the Ottoman government could not be compelled to pay compensation for this. In order to furnish a thorough response to the American Embassy and to rebuff the request for precautionary measures, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be obliged to request that the Ministry of Public Works furnish precise figures, including the names, job descriptions and lengths of service of the Italian employees who have been dismissed.

⁴⁰³ “Bâb-ı Âli Hukuk Müşâvirliğinden ifâde olunduğu veçhile beyn’el düvel hâl-i harb hudûsunda Muhâbere, Şimendifer gibi müdâfaa-i milliyeye şiddet-i taalluku olan umûr-ı nâfiada müstahdem düvel-i muhâsama tebaasını müddet-i hizmetleri ne olursa olsun işlerinden ihrâc edebileceğinden mezkûr kumpanyada çalışan İtalyanların memûriyetine hitam edilmesine îtiraz edilemeyeceği ve bundan dolayı Hükûmet-i Seniyye tarafından bir gûnâ tazmînât îtâsı iktizâ etmeyeceği tabii olduğundan işbu takdirde serdedilen kuyûd-u ihtiyâtiyenin reddi lâbûd ise de Sefârete etraflı bir cevâb verilebilmek üzere hizmetlerinden afv edilen İtalyanların mikdârıyla esâmîsini ve müddet-i hizmetini mübeyyin bir cedvelin bi’t-tanzîm irsâli ve sefâretin iddiasını redde sâlih diğer mülâhazatın dahi inbâ buyurulması mütemennâdır.”

AMERICAN EMBASSY
CONSTANTINOPLE

September 13, 1915.

No. 634

Note Verbale.

The Embassy of the United States of America has the honor of bringing to the notice of the Sublime Porte that at the instance of the Imperial Ottoman Government the Anatolian Railway has summarily dismissed a number of its Italian employees. In certain instances this dismissal has been particularly harsh, notably in the case of Mr. Pesarini at Eski Chéhir, who was discharged after having proved himself a faithful servant of the Company for a quarter of a century. In view of the injury suffered by these parties through no fault of their own, this Embassy desires to notify the Sublime Porte that it reserves all rights for eventual redress, both on their behalf as well as for those Italian subjects who may subsequently be dismissed from their employments of this nature in the Ottoman Empire.

To the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Sublime Porte.

HR. SYS. 2967/22

Zurk (Jshfbos)

2

HR.SYS.02967.00022.002

Archival Image 11: The note verbale issued by the American Embassy on 13 September 1915, regarding the dismissal of Signor Pesarini.

Despite the expeditious request by the Minister of Public Works, Abbas Halim Pasha, for these lists of Italian personnel from the Baghdad and Anatolian Railway Companies, the lists were not received until November 1915.⁴⁰⁴ According to the register provided by the Anatolian Railway Company, there was no employee who had served for 25 years among those dismissed, contrary to the assertion made by the American Embassy. Indeed, the most senior and experienced member of the group, Pesarini, had a maximum service duration of three and a half years. As posited by Abbas Halim Pasha, the decision to dismiss Italians and subjects of other enemy states from railway services was driven by the exigencies of wartime requirements. As a consequence of these findings, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should provide the American Embassy with an explanation of the situation and disregard its statements and requests on this matter. On November 22, the American Embassy issued a further note verbale to emphasize the sensitivity and urgency of the matter. As stated in the document, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had formally declared its entitlement to claim compensation for damages and losses incurred as a result of the dismissal of officials from the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company (*İzmir-Aydın Şimendifer Kumpanyası*).⁴⁰⁵ The Italian government drew attention to the significant number of Italians who were experiencing a deeply deplorable situation as a result of their dismissal from service and the treatment they had received. The Ottoman government was reluctant to respond to either note until it acquired all the relevant details regarding the background of the employees from the relevant authorities. Ultimately, on December 21, the Ottoman authorities issued a memorandum to the American Embassy, thus resolving the situation. The memorandum emphasized that, consequent to Italy's declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman government reserved its prerogative to "prohibit Italian manpower from services which were of military importance and public safety" (*ehemmiyet-i askeriyeyi hâiz ve inzibât-ı umûmiyyeye müteallik hidemâttan teb'îd*). Within the context of the Ottoman discourse, the Embassy was not in a position to propose any precautionary measures in this regard. In addition, further investigation revealed that the service duration of Pesarini did not even reach three years. Given that no further objections were raised by the American Embassy following the Ottoman memorandum submitted in December, the Sublime Porte would proceed to shelve the file shortly thereafter.

Another notable instance related to the wartime dismissal of railway personnel was "the Monsieur Marteaux incident," in which the Spanish government also played a role as an intermediary.⁴⁰⁶ Upon the declaration of war, French and Italian engineers and officials employed in administrative capacities within the Ottoman territories, particularly at the

⁴⁰⁴ COA, HR.SYS.2967/24/Lef 1, 21 Teşrînievvel 1331- 03 November 1915. From the Ministry of Public Works-Directorate of Railways to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (*Nâfia Nezâreti-Demiryolları İdâresinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); COA, HR.SYS.2967/22/Lef 9, 09 Teşrînisânî 1915 – 22 November 1915. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translation Directorate (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Tercüme Müdîriyeti*); HR.SYS.2967/24/Lef 4, 22 Kânûnuevvel 1331- 04 January 1916. Consultative Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hâriciye Nezâreti İstişâre Odası*).

⁴⁰⁵ "Zabt ve müsâdere ve vaz'-ı yed muâmelâtından ve İtalya memûrlarının terhisinden mütevellid zarar ve ziyanlara gelince hükûmet tazmînât taleb etmekteki hakkını tamâmıyla muhâfaza ettiğini beyân eder. Ezcümle İtalya Hâriciye Nezâreti İzmir-Aydın Şimendifer Kumpanyası hizmetinden ihrâc edilip istihsâl olunan muâmelâta nazaran pek acınacak bir hâlde bulunan müteaddid İtalyanlar hakkında nazar-ı dikkati celbeder."

⁴⁰⁶ COA, HR.SYS.2131/26/Lef 1-2, 27 Temmuz 1332- 09 August 1916. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs, to the Supreme Command (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiyye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesi'nden Başkumandanlık Vekâletine*).

Damascus-Hama Railway and the Beirut Port, were dismissed from their positions.⁴⁰⁷ Following their dismissal, these employees were forcibly separated from their families by the Ottoman authorities and relocated to various locations, including Damascus, Urfa, and Kayseri.⁴⁰⁸ Spouses and children of those individuals were granted either repatriation to France or leave to remain in their residences, principally in Damascus and Beirut. However, employees “designated as civilian prisoners” (*sivil üserâ sıfatıyla*) were detained in locations where they were subjected to wartime measures and were not permitted to depart the Ottoman borders for a period of 18 months. On 31 May 1916, the Director of the Damascus-Hama Railway and the Beirut Port, Monsieur R. Marteaux, wrote a letter to the King Alfonso XIII of Spain on behalf of the engineers and officials suffering from their dismissal and relocation. In this letter written from Paris, the French director requested the intervention of the Spanish monarch as an intermediary, thereby appealing to the Ottoman government on their behalf. According to Marteaux, the repatriation of these employees and their families, who were held as civilian captives in Ottoman territory, was contingent upon the king’s benevolence and endorsement. On July 24, almost two months following its initial dispatch, the Spanish Embassy forwarded Monsieur Marteaux’s letter to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The letter, with its initial expressions of admiration, respect, and reverence for the King, was written in an emotional tone.⁴⁰⁹ The employees were lauded for their loyalty, contributions, and service to the Ottoman State as of that point in time. The aforementioned railway and port officials, including engineers, had been invited to take up these positions “under specific conditions, with assurances of favorable treatment” (*pek hayırhâhâne muâmele edilmesini istilzâm edecek ahvâl-i mahsûsa tahtında*). Furthermore, these foreign employees had brought “their unquestionable technical expertise” (*gayr-i kabil-i îtirâz olan mâlûmat-ı fenniyelerinden*), thereby contributing to the development of these significant Ottoman institutions and assuming the role of true servants of the Ottoman State. The greatest observers of the professionalism and success demonstrated in carrying out their responsibilities were, in fact, the Ottoman authorities themselves.

⁴⁰⁷ COA, HR.SYS.2131/26/Lef 1-2, 14 Temmuz 1332 – 27 July 1916. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translation Directorate (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Tercüme Mûdîriyyeti*) “It is the translated version of the petition submitted to His Majesty the King of Spain by Monsieur ‘Marteaux’, Director of the Damascus-Hama Railway and the Beirut Port, on 31 May 1916, attached to the memorandum number 208, which reached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Spanish Embassy on 24 July 1916.” (*Hâriciye Nezâret-i Celîlesine 24 Temmuz 1916 tarihiyle İspanya Sefâretinden vârid olan 208 numarolu takrîre melfûf ve Haşmetli İspanya Kralı Hazretlerine Şam-Hama ve Şuâbatı Demiryolu ve Beyrut Limanı Mûdîri Mösyö ‘Marteaux’ tarafından 31 Mayıs 1916 tarihiyle mütekaddim istidânâmenin sûret-i tercümesidir.*); HR.SYS.2131/21/Lef 1, 24 July 1916. From “Legación de España en Turquía” to “Halil Bey, ministre des Affaires étrangères”; HR.SYS.2131/21/Lef 3, 31 May 1916. From “MARTEAUX, Directeur du Chemin de fer Damas-Hama et Prolongements, Directeur du port de Beyrouth. 93, Avenue de Villers, Paris” to “À SA MAJESTÉ LE ROI D'ESPAGNE, Legación de España en Turquía.”

⁴⁰⁸ “Bu Fransız ve İtalyan memûrlar Devlet-i Osmâniye muhâsamâta girişikten sonra hizmetlerinden ihrâc olunmuşlar ve bâde âilelerinden tefrik edilerek bâzıları Şam’a bâzıları Urfa’ya ve diğer bâzıları da Kayseri civârında bir takım ufak yerlere ve belki de diğer nukat-ı sâireye sevk ve îzâm edilmiştir. Diğer taraftan bunların zevceleriyle çocuklarının ya Fransa’ya avdetlerine ve yâhud ezcümle Şam ile Beyrut’taki ikametgâhlarında kalmalarına müsâade olunmuştur.”

⁴⁰⁹ “Mâmâfih şu Suriye Şimendiferiyle Limanı memûrin ve mühendisini Memâlik-i Osmâniye’ye memûrin-i Osmâniye tarafından kendilerine karşı pek hayırhâhâne muâmele edilmesini istilzâm edecek ahvâl-i mahsûsa tahtında gelmiş ve en mühim bir müessese-i Osmâniye’yi kendilerinin gayr-i kabil-i îtirâz olan mâlûmat-ı fenniyelerinden müstefid etmişler ve şu sûretle Devlet-i Osmâniye’nin hakîkî hizmetkârları bulunmuşlardı.”

In the following passages of the letter, Marteaux referred to the fair treatment he had previously received and drew a comparison with the current situation. Following the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war, he had been granted authorization to depart Turkey and return to France in November 1914, in recognition of his considerable contributions to the institutions he directed. The Governor of the Province, who was responsible for notifying Marteaux of this special authorization on behalf of the civil and military authorities, even had delivered a laudatory speech explaining the reason for granting it. The authorization was granted in recognition of the significant and valuable services rendered by the Railway Administration to the Empire, particularly during the “Ottoman mobilization” (*seferberlik*) between 2 August 1914 and 3 November 1914. The Governor also made the following statement in the presence of various dignitaries: that no Ottoman subject could have rendered more devoted and effective assistance in such a capacity. In summary, prior to his departure, Marteaux was lauded for his service in a distinctive manner and “was assured that all the necessary support and endorsement for his departure would be furnished.” (*Bu azîmet münâsebetiyle hakkımda teshîlât-ı mümkin ve bilcümle ... nüvâzişkârane ibrâz olundu*).

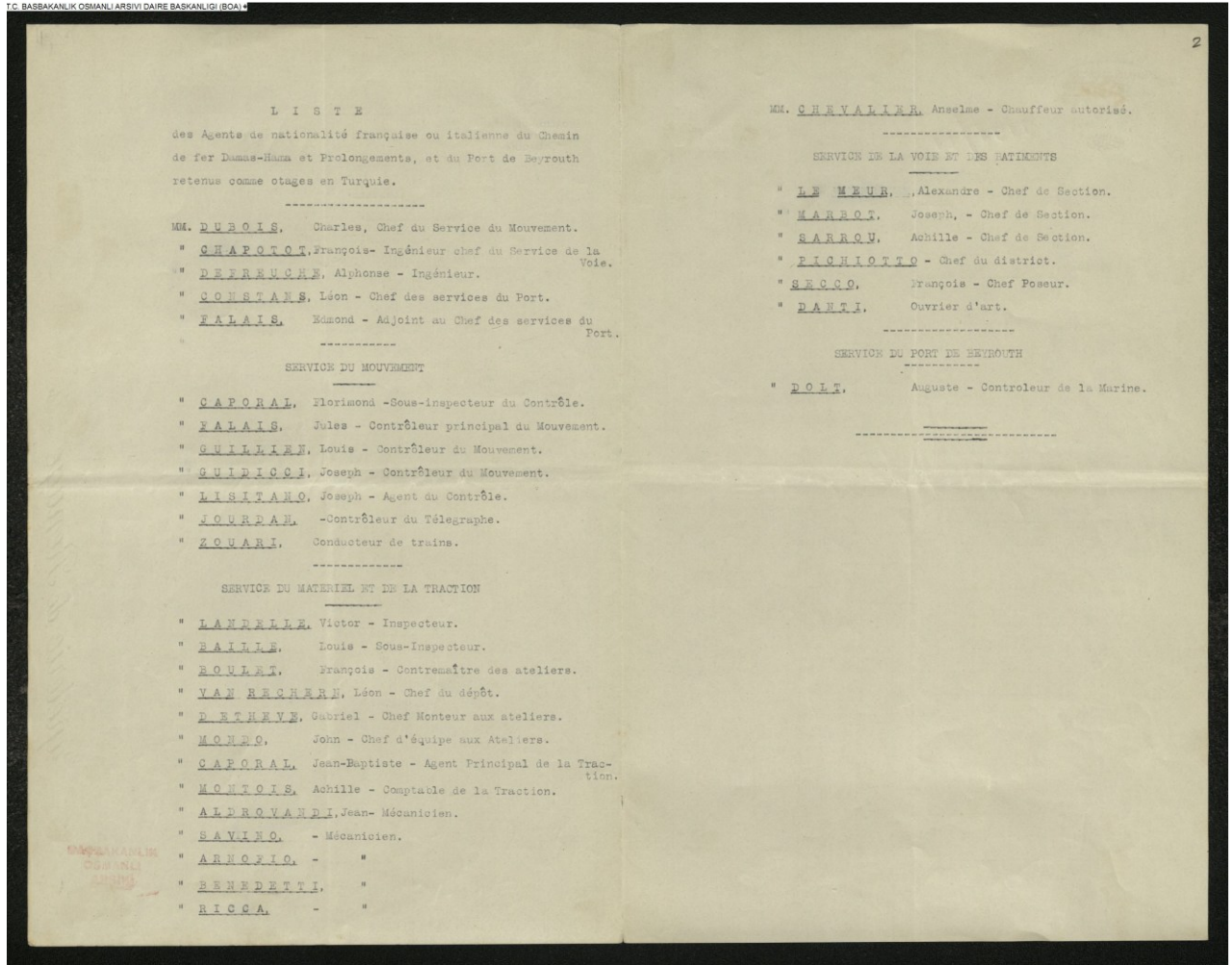
However, Marteaux recognized that the achievements of these institutions were not solely attributable to him, but rather the result of the collective efforts of all employees working under these administrations. Despite his aspiration for his colleagues to enjoy the same privileges he had, they were instead subjected to the customary treatment of wartime detainees and were subsequently arrested. He was assuming that such harsh treatment could only stem from the Ottoman government’s “inadequate documentation” (*fikdân-ı delâil ve vesâik*) of individuals. Furthermore, he was convinced of the necessity to establish a distinction between those who committed their time and resources to the advancement of Ottoman state institutions, and those who rendered no service to the government. According to Marteaux, despite the employees under his administration meriting considerably more favorable treatment, they “received their respective shares of the general wartime measures” (*tedâbir-i umûmiyeden hisse-mend*). The contributions of these individuals, who have demonstrated unwavering dedication and long-standing service to the Ottoman Empire, should have been duly acknowledged and recognized.

In the following paragraph, Marteaux devoted his attention to the harmonious relations and productive cooperation between French and Italian officials and Ottoman authorities. He placed particular emphasis on his extensive experience of living in Ottoman territory, which had enabled him to cultivate profound personal connections and numerous friendships with Ottoman people.⁴¹⁰ This, in turn, had furnished him with a comprehensive understanding of the “Ottoman character and mindset” (*Osmanlıların tabâyii*). Marteaux was acutely aware of the “profound sense of gratitude” (*hiss-i minnetdâri*) that the services they provided engendered in the Turks, and the manner in which this gratitude was expressed. The permission and assistance granted upon his return to France constituted a prime example of this sentiment, and Marteaux anticipated a comparable equitable treatment for the employees under his administration. It is noteworthy that none of the officials under his command acted in a manner that might have provoked animosity from the Ottoman authorities.⁴¹¹ On the contrary, they were

⁴¹⁰ “Memalik-i Osmâniye’de epeyce bir zaman imrâr-ı hayât ettiğim burada birtakım dostlar peydâ eylediğim cihetle Osmanlıların tabâyiini pek iyi tanırım. Kendilerine edilen hizmetlerin Türklerde ne derecelerde hiss-i minnetdâri uyandırdığını ve bu minnetdârlığın ne suretle izhâr olunduğunu bilirim. Benim memlekete azîmetim hakkındaki müsâade dahi bu babda bir misâl teşkil eder.”

⁴¹¹ “Maiyetimdeki memûrlardan hiçbirinin memûrîn-i Osmâniye’nin kin ve husûmetini celb edecek hiçbir hâl ve harekette bulunmadıkları ve bilakis bütün memûrîn-i Osmâniye’nin kendi aralarında yaşâyân ve

well-received and held in high regard by the local officials with whom they cohabited. Due to his high level of confidence in the favorable nature of the responses to be received from the Ottoman officials with whom they had direct contact, Marteaux was willing to accept any further investigation into his employees.⁴¹² He was convinced that all Ottoman officers, staff officers and commissioners with whom he had been professionally associated would unanimously corroborate the goodwill, adherence to order and discipline, and loyalty of his personnel.⁴¹³



HR.SYS.02131.00021.003

Archival Image 12: The list displaying the French and Italian nationals employed by the Damascus-Hama Railway and Extensions, and by the Port of Beirut, who were held hostage in the Ottoman Empire.

cümleten kendilerince mâlûm ve mârûf olan Fransız ve İtalyan memûrları hakkında takdir ve hizmet perverde ettikleri âcizlerince muhakkaktır.”

⁴¹² “Eğer Hükûmet-i Osmâniye’ce kendilerine istifsâr-ı keyfiyet buyrulacak olursa Fransız ve İtalyan memûrlarla münâsebâtta bulunmuş olan memûrîn-i Osmâniye’nin bu babda verecekleri hükme râzıyım.”

⁴¹³ “Muâmelâtlarını [...] olmuş olan her ne rûtbeye erkân-ı askeriye ile komiserlerin memûrlarımdan her birinin hüsn-i niyetini, nizâm ve intizâma riâyetini ve sadâkatini müttehiden teslim edecekleri cezm ve itikadındayım.”

Department	Name and Surname	Position / Role
-	Charles DUBOIS	Head of Traffic Operations (<i>Hareket Şûbesi Müdürî</i>)
	François CHAPOTOT	Chief Engineer of Track Services (<i>Tarik Şûbesi Başmühendisi</i>)
	Alphonse DEFREUCHE	Engineer (<i>Mühendis</i>)
	Léon CONSTANS	Head of Port Services (<i>Liman Şuabâtı Müdürî</i>)
	Edmond FALAIS	Deputy Head of Port Services (<i>Liman Şuabâtı Müdür Muâvini</i>)
Traffic Operations Dept. (<i>Hareket Şûbesi</i>)	Florimond CAPORAL	Assistant Inspection Officer (<i>Kontrol Müfettiş Muâvini</i>)
	Jules FALAIS	Senior Traffic Controller (<i>Hareket Müfettiş-i Umûmisi</i>)
	Louis GUILLIEN	Traffic Controller (<i>Hareket Müfettişi</i>)
	Joseph GUIDICCI	Traffic Controller (<i>Hareket Müfettişi</i>)
	Joseph LISITANO	Control Officer (<i>Kontrol Memûru</i>)
	JOURDAN	Telegraph Controller (<i>Telgraf Kontrolörü</i>)
	ZOUARI	Train Conductor (<i>Tren Kondüktörü</i>)
Material and Traction Dept. (<i>Malzeme ve Cerr Şûbesi</i>)	Victor LANDELLE	Inspector (<i>Müfettiş</i>)
	Louis BAILLE	Assistant Inspector (<i>Müfettiş Muâvini</i>)
	François BOULET	Workshop Foreman (<i>Destgâhlar İş Başı</i>)
	Léon VAN RECHERN	Depot Manager (<i>Depo Memûru</i>)
	Gabriel DETHEVE	Workshop Lead Assembler (<i>Destgâhlar Tesviyeci Başı</i>)
	John MONDO	Workshop Team Leader (<i>Destgâhlar Amele Başı</i>)
	Jean-Baptiste CAPORAL	Chief Traction Officer (<i>Cerr Baş Memûru</i>)
	Achille MONTAIS	Traction Accountant (<i>Cerr Muhâsibi</i>)
	Jean ALDROVANDI	Mechanic (<i>Makinist</i>)
	SAVINO	Mechanic (<i>Makinist</i>)
	ARNOFIO	Mechanic (<i>Makinist</i>)
	BENEDETTI	Mechanic (<i>Makinist</i>)
	RICCA	Mechanic (<i>Makinist</i>)
	Anselme CHEVALIER	Authorized Driver (<i>Mezûn Ateşçi</i>)
Track and Buildings Dept. (<i>Yol ve Mebânî Şûbesi</i>)	Alexandre LE MEUR	Section Chief (<i>Şûbe Memûru</i>)
	Joseph MARBOT	Section Chief (<i>Şûbe Memûru</i>)
	Achille SARROU	Section Chief (<i>Şûbe Memûru</i>)
	PICHOTTO	District Chief (<i>Dâire Memûru</i>)
	François SECCO	Track Laying Supervisor (<i>Vaziyye Memûru</i>)
	DANTI	Craftsman (<i>Sanatkâr</i>)
Beirut Port Services Dept. (<i>Beyrut Limanı İdâresi</i>)	Auguste DOLT	Marine Controller (<i>Bahriye Kontrolörü</i>)

Table 9: The list displaying the French and Italian nationals employed by the Damascus-Hama Railway and Extensions, and by the Port of Beirut, who were held hostage in the Ottoman Empire.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴ COA, HR.SYS.2131/26/Lef 1-2, 27 Temmuz 1332- 09 August 1916. "Liste des Agents de nationalité française ou italienne du Chemin de fer Damas-Hama et Prolongements, et du Port de Beyrouth retenus comme otages en Turquie." "Şam-Hama ve Şuabâtı Şimendifer İdâresi ile Beyrut Limanı İdâresinde

In the remainder of the text, Marteaux articulated his trust and faith in the King of Spain, as well as placing all his hopes in his future efforts. He was convinced that the mediation and appeal that the King Alfonso XIII would grant regarding these desperate men would be entirely efficacious.⁴¹⁵ In his opinion, instead of being rewarded for their unwavering loyalty, these individuals have been penalized for a period of 18 months. He was merely requesting that the king engage in the necessary diplomatic negotiations with the Ottoman government to facilitate the return of these individuals, together with their spouses and children, to their homeland. In addition, he considered it necessary to include a personnel list in the letter, indicating the names and positions of all the officials, and stating that all 33 personnel listed were exempt from military service. Those who were eligible for military service had already departed for their respective units in their homelands two months prior to the Ottoman Empire's entry into the war in August 1914. Therefore, all of the officials listed in the attached register were exempt from military service. Concluding his correspondence, Marteaux articulated that these unfortunate families would retain an enduring sense of gratitude towards Their Majesty for the favorable resolution of their circumstances. He further extended his deepest respect on behalf of all officials and staff under his authority.

However, the Ottoman government did not embrace this initiative with enthusiasm.⁴¹⁶ Despite the intervention of the Spanish king to mediate, the Ottomans did not bestow any privileges upon Marteaux's team. On August 19, War Minister and Deputy Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha provided a concise, explicit, and negative response to the letter that had been conveyed to him via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Enver Pasha asserted that no initiative had heretofore been undertaken between the Ottoman government and France with regard to "the exchange of civilian prisoners" (*sivil üserâ mübâdelesi*). Furthermore, he stated that no Italian subjects had heretofore been subjected to the "transfer and banishment" (*nakl ve teb'id*) measures applied to the subjects of other enemy states. Consequently, the Spanish Embassy was informed that there was no legal basis for the repatriation of French and Italian engineers and officials to their respective countries. It is evident that Enver Pasha's rejection of the request was due to the absence of an initiative for prisoner exchange between France and the Ottoman Empire, and the absence of any advantageous offers from the French in return. In addition, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the Ottoman government did not regard the Spanish king as a particularly influential diplomatic counterpart. However, it is interesting to note the special emphasis placed on Italian employees, suggesting their exclusion from any relocation or removal practices. That is to say, in contrast to Marteaux's assertions in his correspondence, were French and Italian workers treated and processed as two discrete entities? Given the absence of additional documentation pertaining to the process, the mediation attempt appears to have stalled and come to a standstill at this juncture.

müstahdem olup rehine olarak Memâlik-i Osmâniye'de tevkif olunan Fransız ve İtalyan memûrların esâmisini mübeyyin cedveldir."

⁴¹⁵ "Sadâkatinden inhirâf etmeyen ve mükâfaat olunacak yerde on sekiz aydan beri dūcâr-ı mucâzat olan şu biçâre adamlar hakkında taraf-ı haşmetânelerinden lûtfen icrâ-yı vesâtet buyurulacak olunur ise bu vesâtetin tamamıyla müessir olacağı derkârdır."

⁴¹⁶ COA, HR.SYS.2131/21/Lef 4, 06 Ağustos 1332- 19 August 1916. From the Commander-in-Chief Enver to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Başkumandan Vekîli Enver'den Hâriciye Nezâretine*) "Hükûmet-i Osmâniye'nin Fransa ile sivil üserâ mübâdelesi hakkında hiçbir teşebbüsü olmadığı gibi İtalya tebaasından bu ana kadar hiçbirinin diğer Düvel-i Muhâsama tebaası hakkında tatbik edilen nakl ve teb'id muâmelesine dūcâr olmadığından Fransa ve İtalya mühendis ve memûrlarının vatanlarına îadelerinde hiçbir sebep ve hakk-ı kanûni olmadığından İspanya Sefâretine tebliği ricâ olunur."

4.3 Travel Restrictions Imposed on the Departures of Italian Nationals (1914-1915)

The intense desire of Italian residents in the Ottoman Empire to leave, and the close surveillance and sanctions imposed on their departure, actually began on a regional scale with the Ottoman government's official entry into the First World War on 29 October 1914.⁴¹⁷ The prevailing security concerns, precipitated by the war, served as a catalyst for the Italian community's survival instinct, prompting a rapid and collective exodus to their homeland. However, from the perspective of the Ottoman authorities, the act of permitting individuals to depart from the empire implied the potential for military intelligence to be leaked abroad, thereby posing a threat that could potentially alter the course of the war to their detriment. The initial sensitivity towards departing Italian travelers was particularly evident in the provinces of Aleppo, Syria, Beirut, and the Sanjak of Jerusalem, which were under the jurisdiction of the Fourth Army Command. The cosmopolitan demographics of the Syrian Levant, where Cemâl Pasha, as a military governor, was the sole decision-maker, were characterized by numerous geostrategic sensitivities. Approximately one month following the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war, on November 24, it was reported that Italian nationals residing in the Aleppo Province were endeavoring to return to their homeland with both remarkable urgency and intensity. According to "classified intelligence" (*istihbârât-ı husûsiye*) acquired by Governor Celal, the Consulate had "discreetly advised" (*tebligât-ı hafîye*) Italian nationals to depart from the Ottoman Empire with all possible haste. It is interesting to note that the Italian Consul in Aleppo, Antonio Gauttieri, had also removed his wife from the city two days earlier under some pretext and taken her to Beirut. Given that the Port of Beirut constituted the most common exit point for Italians departing the Syrian Levant, it is plausible to assume that the consul was attempting to facilitate the evacuation of his family. On that same day, Talât Pasha provided a brief and explicit response to the Aleppo Governor, "stipulating that Italian nationals were required to remain in their current locations" (*İtalya tebaasından iseler kalmaları zarûrîdir*).

This isolated incident affecting the Italian community in Aleppo was, in fact, a precursor to certain standard procedures and practices that would be implemented along the Syrian coastline as of December 1914 and, moreover, along the Aegean and Mediterranean coastlines as of May 1915.⁴¹⁸ In accordance with the previously granted approval from the Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha on December 7, Cemâl Pasha dispatched the following telegram to Talât Pasha on 15 December 1914:

"Syria is full of spies. Enemy ships are also roaming the coastline. Allowing passengers to disembark from Syrian ports would be equivalent to providing the enemy with information about all our military operations. I have notified the provinces that no commercial or warships are to be permitted to enter any ports on the Syrian or Adana coasts. Therefore, it is only natural that no approval can be given for passengers to depart from these ports for foreign

⁴¹⁷ COA, DH.ŞFR.450/42, 11 Teşrînisânî 1330 – 24 November 1914. From the Governor of Aleppo, Celâl, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Haleb Vâlisi Celâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.47/148, 11 Teşrînisânî 1330 – 24 November 1914. Cipher telegram from the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Governorate of Aleppo (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdîriyetinden Haleb Vilâyetine Şifre*).

⁴¹⁸ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 8, 02 Kânûneuvvel 1330 – 15 December 1914. From the Fourth Army Command to the Ministry of the Interior (*Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanlığından Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

destinations. Anyone who wishes to travel abroad can already do so via Istanbul. I kindly request your endorsement of this measure.”⁴¹⁹

Following a thorough investigation, Cemâl Pasha concluded that “Syria has become a hotbed of spies throughout the entire province” (*Suriye’nin baştan aşağı câsus yatağı bulunduğ*), with “the vast majority of these malevolent agents being of enemy nationality” (*bu muzır âmillerin de hemen ekseriyetle düvel-i muhâsama tebaasından oldukları*).⁴²⁰ In consequence, he was of the opinion that the subjects in question should not be permitted to either depart from the empire or being set at liberty within its boundaries. Pursuant to this resolution, all teachers, missionaries, and priests affiliated with educational and religious institutions of enemy states, with the exception of the sons of clergy and children under the age of eighteen, would be relocated to Urfa.⁴²¹ The remaining enemy aliens would be gathered in the cities designated as relocation centers, such as Damascus and Aleppo. Furthermore, a significant proportion of these abandoned educational or religious institutions were to be expropriated by the Commission for Abandoned Foreign Institutions, which was formally established in October 1915. These institutions were then either integrated into the Ottoman educational system or utilized for military purposes.

Furthermore, Cemâl Pasha attached indisputable importance to a prohibition on enemy aliens departing from Syrian ports, regarding this as a necessity. In addition to endorsing the measure introduced by Cemâl with the aim of preventing potential espionage activities, the Supreme Command also ordered its extension to cover all travelers. Ultimately, Cemâl Pasha adopted this measure for all Syrian residents, extending even to Ottoman nationals. He attributed the broad scope of the measure to the espionage activities of some Syrian traitors collaborating with the British Empire. In response to certain grievances articulated by Italian foreign affairs, Cemâl asserted that the measure was implemented for all residents in the Syrian region, noting the limited Italian population in the area. Nevertheless, even at this early stage, when the Italian government had not yet officially declared war on the Ottomans, Italian nationals had also been affected by the restrictions imposed on overseas departures. In accordance with this decision, all overseas departures from the ports of Mersin, Iskenderun, Tripoli, Beirut, Haifa, and Jaffa would now only be permissible via Istanbul, irrespective of the passenger’s nationality. It is

⁴¹⁹ “Suriye câsusla doludur. Düşman gemileri de sâhillerde dolaşiyor. Suriye limanlarından hârice yolcu bırakmak tek mil harekât-ı askeriye-mizden düşmana mâlûmat vermekle mûsâvidir. Bilumûm Suriye ve Adana Sevâhiliindeki limanlara sefâin-i ticârîye ve harbiyeden hiçbirisinin duhûlüne mûsâade olunmamasını vilâyetlere tebliğ ettim. Buna nazaran bu limanlardan hârice yolcu bırakılmasına muvâfakat edilemeyeceğ tabiidir. Her kim hârice gitmek isterse İstanbul tarîkiyle azîmet edebiliyor. Tedbîrimin terviç buyrulması mâruzdur.”

⁴²⁰ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 7, 01 Kânûnuevvel 1330 – 14 December 1914; DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 13, 10 Kânûnuevvel 1330 – 23 December 1914. Cipher Telegrams Received from the Fourth Army Command – Fourth Army Commander Cemâl (*Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanlığından Alınan Şifreler – Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanı Cemâl*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 14. A copy of the correspondence received from Cemâl Pasha, Commander of the Fourth Army (*Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanı Cemâl Paşa’dan mevrud tahrîrât suretidir*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 15, 10 Kânûnuevvel 1330 – 23 December 1914. On behalf of the Commander-in-Chief, from the Minister of the Interior, Talât, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Başkumandan Vekili Nâmına Dâhiliye Nâzırı Talât’tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴²¹ At this juncture, Cemâl Pasha adopted a lenient stance, authorizing the deportation of all priests and missionaries over the age of 70, as well as those who were sick or disabled, on two ships scheduled to visit the ports of Haifa, Beirut, Tripoli, Iskenderun, and Mersin. COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 7, 01 Kânûnuevvel 1330 – 14 December 1914.

evident that the Ottoman Army had initiated a concerted effort to ensure that individuals could not leave the empire's borders without passing through central control and surveillance points.

In parallel with this, it was evident that the Ottomans were striving to manage the situation diplomatically, with a view to avoiding the alienation of Italy and America.⁴²² This was particularly evident in the Ottoman regime's efforts to avoid disrupting the ongoing high-volume maritime trade with Italy. Furthermore, there was no intention on their part to incur further enemies and new fronts in such a protracted and demanding war. In this regard, Cemâl Pasha declared that all passenger ships and commercial vessels flying the Italian and American flags would be permitted to call at Syrian ports as of December 28. Furthermore, Italian and American nationals wishing to depart would be permitted to do so, "on the condition that their honor, dignity, and good faith were officially vouched for by the relevant consulates in Syria" (*nâmus ve iffetlerine Suriye'deki konsolosları tarafından resmen tekeffül edileceklere*). However, their departure would be permitted exclusively from the ports of Beirut, Tripoli, and Mersin. Until 15 January 1915, all individuals, irrespective of nationality, would have been permitted to depart from these ports by means of maritime travel. Subsequent to this date, however, only Italian and American subjects would have been granted permission to travel.⁴²³ Nevertheless, Cemâl Pasha did not refrain from emphasizing that such wartime privileges were based on the generosity of the Ottoman administration. Furthermore, he issued a reminder to the consular authorities that they should adopt a selective and sensitive approach when assessing the "personal qualities of passengers" (*erbâb-ı nâmus ve haysiyet*) for whom they were to act as a guarantor. In other words, when communicating the matter to the Italian Ambassador, Marchese Garroni, and the American Ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, the Ottoman Foreign Ministry must have included this note. Cemâl concluded his message by suggesting that the same exceptional treatment could be extended to Ottoman nationals, provided that the necessary authorization was obtained from him.

The dates of May 20, August 5, and August 21, 1915, hold particular significance in the context of the Italian departures from Ottoman territories. This is due to the fact that following the Italian Parliament's approval of the declaration of war on Austria-Hungary on 20 May 1915, which was an ally of the Ottoman Empire, and subsequent official announcement on May 23, Italy's neutrality was brought to an end. From this date onwards, the departure of Italian subjects from Ottoman territories was to be subject to close monitoring by all local authorities, with continuous reporting to the ministries in Istanbul, and restriction by various means. The travel restrictions, which would be lifted on August 5 as a result of Italy's protracted diplomatic

⁴²² COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/18/Lef 13, 10 Kânûnuevvel 1330 – 23 December 1914.

⁴²³ However, the fact that as of January 15, only Italian and American passengers would be permitted to depart led to a reaction from states that still maintained their neutrality, such as Greece, and resulted in complaints against the Ottoman Government. Citing the "prevailing international treaties" (*muâhedat-ı mer'îye/düvelîye*), the Greek Government demanded that its own citizens be treated in the same manner as Italians and Americans. Consequently, unable to withstand international pressure, the Ottoman government was compelled to allow all neutral nationals to depart from the ports of Beirut, Tripoli (*Trablus Al-Sham*), and Mersin as of 12 January 1915. COA, DH.ŞFR.48/331, 30 Kânûnuevvel 1330 - 12 January 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Aleppo, Adana, and Beirut (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdriyetinden Haleb, Adana ve Beyrut Vilâyetlerine*); BEO.4331/324802/Lef 1, 29 Kânûnuevvel 1330 - 11 January 1915. From the Grand Vizirate, Department of Important Affairs, to the Ministries of the War, Interior and Foreign Affairs (*Dâire-i Sadâret Umûr-ı Mühimme Kaleminden Harbiye Dâhiliye ve Hâriciye Nezâretlerine*).

efforts, would be transformed into an overseas travel ban following Italy's formal declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire on 21 August 1915.

On May 9, the telegram sent by Interior Minister Talât Pasha to Izmir, a city with a substantial Italian population, clearly indicated an escalation in wartime sensitivities.⁴²⁴ The minister instructed Governor Rahmi Bey to delay the departure of Italian nationals from the country as much as possible, should the numbers exceed normal levels. On May 20, the Ottoman Army Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha transmitted a telegram of significant importance to the Interior Minister Talât Pasha, outlining his directives concerning Italian citizens seeking to depart from the Ottoman Empire.⁴²⁵ Enver Pasha asserted that it was deemed appropriate "to prohibit Italians from departing the empire" (*hârice çıkmak isteyen İtalyanların men'i*) via the coastline until Italy's stance and position regarding the war were fully clarified. The matter had even been brought to the attention of Fourth Army Commander Cemâl Pasha. In accordance with this directive, as of tomorrow and for a duration of one week, Italian passengers will be prohibited from departing from the coastlines of Izmir, Adana, and Syria. Enver requested that the Ministry of the Interior ensure the notification of the coastal provinces regarding the order, and that "the Police Directorate should create as many difficulties as possible for Italians wishing to depart from Istanbul" (*İstanbul'dan gitmek isteyen İtalyanlara Polis Müdüriyetince mümkün olan müşkilât ihdâsı*). The Minister of the Interior, Talât Pasha, communicated the decision on the same day to the coastal provinces of Adana, Aydın, Beirut, and Aleppo, as well as to the coastal sanjaks of Jerusalem and Teke. It was apparent that the Ottoman authorities, confronted with escalating wartime conditions, anticipated the imminent entry of the Italian state into the war on the side of the Entente Powers. Yet, they remained uncertain about the timing of this eventuality. In order to prevent any collaboration, such as espionage activities and information leaks, in which Italian nationals might be involved, the Ottoman authorities planned to resort to restrictive practices prohibiting their departure.

However, it was imperative to temper such a stringent policy, as it was inevitable that it would cause diplomatic irritation between the two states.⁴²⁶ It is evident that this could only be achieved by the facilitation of Italian departures from Ottoman domains, contingent upon specific conditions and procedures. In coordination with the Fourth Army Command, Minister

⁴²⁴ COA, DH.ŞFR.52/278, 26 Nisan 1331 – 09 May 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Governor of Izmir, Rahmi Bey (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdüriyetinden İzmir Vâlisi Rahmi Beye*).

⁴²⁵ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 23, 07 Mayıs 1331 – 20 May 1915. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army to the Ministry of Interior (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâletinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*) "İtalya'nın vaziyeti anlaşılınca kadar hârice çıkmak isteyen İtalyanların men'i için yarından itibaren bir hafta müddetle İzmir, Adana ve Suriye sâhilinden hârice yolcu çıkarılmamasını münâsib gördüm ve bu hususu Dördüncü Ordu'ya yazdım. Keyfiyetin sâhil vilâyetlerine emir buyurulmasını ve İstanbul'dan gitmek isteyen İtalyanlara Polis Müdüriyetince mümkün olan müşkilât ihdâsını rica ederim."; DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 26, 07 Mayıs 1331— 20 May 1915; DH.ŞFR.53/60, 07 Mayıs 1331— 20 May 1915. Minister Talât— From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Adana, Aydın, Beirut, Aleppo and the Mutasarrifates of Teke and Jerusalem.

⁴²⁶ COA, DH.ŞFR.53/203, 19 Mayıs 1331— 01 June 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Aydın, Beirut, Aleppo, Adana, Syria and the Mutasarrifates of Menteşe, Teke, Jerusalem and İçil. "Memâlik-i Osmâniye'den çıkmak isteyen İtalyanlara şübhe vermemek için müttefik ve bîtaraf tebaadan hiç kimsenin hasbe'l-icâb Suriye, Aydın Vilâyetinin İzmir sâhilinden ve diğer vilâyât sevâhilinden hârice çıkmayıp yolcuların ancak İstanbul üzerinden hareketleri mümkün olacağı sûretinde cevâb verilmesi ve mamafih askerlik edecek kabiliyette olan İtalyan tebaası mikdârının acilen tahkikiyle telgrafla inbâsı""

Talât Pasha disseminated a further ciphered circular on June 1, appending the Mutasarrifate of İçel to the aforementioned coastal provinces. The circular stipulated that, in order to avoid arousing suspicion among Italians seeking to depart from the Ottoman Empire, “no nationals of allied or neutral states” (*müttefik ve bîtaraf tebaadan hiç kimsenin*) be permitted to depart from the provincial coastlines of the empire, except in cases of absolute necessity. Particular attention was drawn to the Syrian coastline in general and the Izmir coastline of the Aydın Vilayet. Those who requested authorization were to be informed that travel would only be possible via Istanbul. It was evident that the restrictions previously imposed on Italians were being expanded to encompass other nationalities, in an effort to confer a more general character upon the measure. This was intended both to alleviate Italian concerns and to preempt any potential reaction from the Italian government. Furthermore, by ensuring that all departures were directed along a single route and executed in a methodical manner, the objective was to proactively prevent illegal, unauthorized, and espionage-related departures.

The circular included a further noteworthy directive, namely the urgent investigation and reporting of the number of Italian subjects capable of military service. "The Eliasciar Case," as discussed in the preceding chapter, addressed the phenomenon of Jews who had opted to acquire Italian citizenship with the intention of evading conscription in the Ottoman army. Of particular significance is the fact that Eliasciar family members were individuals who opted to fulfil their military service obligations in the Italian army upon acquiring Italian citizenship, and who sought to return to their homeland for this purpose. Aware of such potential risks, Talât Pasha attempted to estimate the proportion of individuals who had the possibility of enlisting in the Italian army upon their departure. In such a scenario, these departures would be no different from reinforcing the Italian army with fresh soldiers, which was widely anticipated to join the enemy alliance. An alternative possibility is that Talât's initiative may have been informed by the recently introduced regulations following the 1909 Conscription Law concerning the conscription of non-Muslims. In the context of the war, there was a potential need for each and every element within the empire, irrespective of ethnic or religious affiliation, to substitute for the military casualties and personnel shortages that were evident in numerous theatres of operation. Consequently, the retention of military-aged males within the empire's boundaries, irrespective of whether they were non-Muslims, had the potential to facilitate the mobilization of new personnel to the battlefronts and the replenishment of forces. This, in turn, could have resulted in a shift in the course of the war, favoring the Ottomans.

4.3.1 The Efforts of Ambassador Garroni to Lift Ottoman Restrictions

On 3 August 1915, the Italian Ambassador to Istanbul, Marchese Camillo Garroni Carbonara, delivered a written note to the Grand Vizier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Said Halim Pasha.⁴²⁷ Garroni's note commenced with the assertion that, consequent to the Ottoman Empire's entry into the Great War in Europe, its military authorities had imposed restrictions on the freedom of movement of Italian subjects within the Ottoman territories. Furthermore, he recalled his repeated attempts to draw the Sublime Porte's attention to these restrictions, which he had always considered to be unlawful. During periods of conflict, it was customary for

⁴²⁷ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 29, 03 August 1915. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translation Directorate (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Tercüme Müdüriyeti*).

warring states to restrict access to specific regions and localities for neutral states, citing military imperatives stemming from ongoing operations as justification. However, Garroni advanced the argument that the Ottoman Government had now normalized and generalized such measures, which should normally be exceptional. A compelling piece of evidence for this was the almost permanent closure of many ports in Ottoman domains to the navigation of neutral states. Furthermore, in a vast region such as Anatolia, the possibility of travelling beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire was severely confined to the ports of Istanbul, Urla (Izmir), and Beirut. Furthermore, Garroni asserted that local authorities within the empire deliberately created major obstacles to discourage Italian nationals from leaving. In addition to the challenges posed by bureaucracy, financial difficulties were also encountered as part of the travel process. Comprising largely of working-class Italians with limited financial resources, these individuals were compelled to board military trains, which were costly and not readily available to them. These trains were the only means of leaving the country by rail or reaching one of the three ports. Garroni further emphasized that these restrictions posed a direct threat to the personal rights and freedom of movement of Italian nationals within the Ottoman Empire. He also reiterated that he had previously notified the Ottoman government on multiple occasions of the potential risks that such circumstances might engender, with a view to preserving harmonious relations between the two governments.

In the continuation of the note, Garroni mentioned his numerous initiatives for the evacuation of Italians and how these initiatives were thwarted by the Ottoman government.⁴²⁸ Garroni's primary initiative entailed the evacuation of Italian families from the ports of Iskenderun and Mersin. In order to achieve this objective, he had finally succeeded in gathering Italian families into Mersin, organizing their transport by the American cruiser Des Moines, and obtaining the necessary permits from all the relevant Ottoman authorities. However, Garroni's plans were thwarted as the departure of Italian passengers from the aforementioned ports was obstructed by the Ottoman authorities. Notwithstanding prior instructions, military personnel stationed at the Port of Iskenderun denied the Italians working under Luigi Levante, the owner of a shipping agency, permission to board the cruiser.⁴²⁹ Luigi Levante, who held the position of Italian Vice-Consul in Iskenderun as his primary role, was a figure of prominence in the city, both in the field of diplomacy and in commercial activities. The grandparents of Levante had emigrated

⁴²⁸ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 29, 03 August 1915.

⁴²⁹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.11/9; DH.ŞFR.466/131, 19 Mart 1331 – 01 April 1915. Cipher Telegram from the Governor of Aleppo, Celâl, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Haleb Vâlisi Celâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine Şifreli Telgraf*) This was not the first occasion on which Luigi Levante's actions had given rise to the involvement of intergovernmental relations. In the early months of 1915, the Italian Consul in Aleppo, Antonio Gautturi, lodged a formal complaint with the local government regarding the practice of the Ottoman military authorities subjecting Levante to body searches on every visit to the port. In light of the ongoing hostilities and the presence of enemy warships in the port, the Ottoman government was particularly keen to minimize contact between local non-Muslim elements and commercial ships, with a view to preventing potential espionage activities. The practice of conducting frequent body searches at the port was a standard procedure adopted by the Iskenderun Command, with the objective of preventing enemy elements from transferring information, documents and money, both domestically and internationally. The issue of body searches on the Italian Vice-Consul and shipping agent Levante, which gave rise to a minor diplomatic crisis between the Italian and Ottoman governments in April 1915, preoccupied both local and central authorities for a considerable period. For a comprehensive account of the Levante family's origins in Italy, their genealogical history, their experiences in Iskenderun, and the subsequent trajectories of their descendants, please refer to the following source: Emilio Levante, "The Story of the Levante Family of Turkey," *Levantine Heritage: The Story of a Community*, last modified October 2011, accessed August 6, 2025, <https://www.levantineheritage.com/testi87.htm>.

from Larino (Campobasso) in southern Italy to Iskenderun in the late nineteenth century and had gradually become one of the city's most prominent non-Muslim families.

Hoping for a peaceful resolution to the difficulties faced by Italian passengers at the Port of Iskenderun, Ambassador Garroni recalled the previous "verbal notes" (*takrîr-i şifâhî*) he had conveyed to the Grand Vizier on July 27 and 31.⁴³⁰ However, as the Ottoman government found itself under mounting wartime pressures, its response to the Italian notes was characterized by increased strategic and pragmatic considerations, rather than a pacifist approach. Indeed, far from resolving the crisis in Iskenderun, Commander of the Fourth Army Cemâl Pasha issued a decree further prohibiting Italian subjects from departing by sea from the Port of Beirut.⁴³¹ At that time, another American ship was scheduled to stop first at the Port of Beirut to pick up Italian families suffering from great hardship due to war and unemployment and then proceed to the ports of Haifa and Jaffa. However, according to Garroni, Cemâl Pasha's rather unfriendly order had rendered the situation even more difficult, and after those in Iskenderun, the departure of Italian passengers from the Port of Beirut had also been prevented. Even more concerning, Garroni noted that the absence of transportation options effectively rendered Italian nationals in Iskenderun unable to travel to either Beirut or Mersin. In other words, the group of Italian passengers in Iskenderun, whose departure was blocked due to the sea route ban and the vehicle crisis on the roads and railways, were apparently stranded at the port. Moreover, the military authorities in Jerusalem, who had received orders to ensure the Italian residents remained within the interior areas, were also preventing Italian passengers from reaching the Port of Jaffa, by all means. According to Garroni, the travel crisis faced by the Italians was not limited to ports in the Eastern Mediterranean. The port of Urla, which had been rendered non-operational for reasons that remain obscure, had also substantially restricted departures from the Aegean coast.

At the conclusion of the text, Garroni stated that, given the failure of his amicable attempts to resolve the crisis, he was now responsible solely for conveying the demands of the Italian government to the Ottoman government.⁴³² The demands, which were expected to be approved by the Ottoman government within 48 hours of the note's delivery (i.e. by August 5), were listed as follows:

- The Port of Beirut should remain permanently accessible to ships from neutral states, thus facilitating the movement of Italian nationals.⁴³³

⁴³⁰ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 29, 03 August 1915.

⁴³¹ Among those requesting to depart from the Port of Beirut were the Italian Consul in Aleppo, Antonio Gauttieri, and his wife; Vice-Consul Luigi Levante and his wife; the wife of the director of the Ottoman Bank; several Italian priests; and numerous Italian workers. Guided by the Consulate, these individuals had submitted an application to Governor Celâl several days in advance, seeking authorization to travel by rail from Aleppo to Beirut, with an estimated arrival at the port on June 24. In response, the Governor informed them that they could only travel via Istanbul. Thus, Consul Gauttieri requested "travel documents" (*seyâhat varakası*) solely for Beirut, and the Governor had no option but to provide them. Nevertheless, Governor Celâl did not leave the matter to chance and sought final approval from the Ministry of the Interior, requesting permission for them to board the military train for their journey to Beirut. During wartime conditions, passenger rail services had been suspended in the region for a considerable period, and alternative travel options, other than the military train, were virtually non-existent. COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.14/17/Lef 2, 06 Haziran 1331 – 19 June 1915. From Governor Celâl to the Ministry of the Interior (*Vâli Celâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴³² COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 29, 03 August 1915.

⁴³³ "İtalya tebaasının serbestçe hareket edebilmeleri için Beyrut Limanının sûret-i dâimede bîtaraf sefâine küşâde bulundurulması."

- In circumstances where it was not feasible to board ships at the Port of Urla, Italian nationals should have been granted permanent authorization to depart from the Port of Sığacık.⁴³⁴
- Authorization shall be granted from time to time for neutral ships to call at various ports in Anatolia, Syria, and Palestine upon request by the Italian Embassy, with a view to facilitating the embarkation of Italian nationals wishing to return to their homeland. This authorization shall be granted immediately for the ports of Mersin, Iskenderun, Haifa, and Jaffa, where a significant number of Italian families are already present.⁴³⁵
- The local authorities operating within the empire shall refrain from creating any obstacles or difficulties for Italian nationals seeking to access the coast and instead facilitate their departure.⁴³⁶

The Ottoman Foreign Ministry's prompt response to Marchese Garroni the following day was very positive, constructive, and explanatory.⁴³⁷ Said Halim Pasha initially noted that strict measures, including the closure of specific areas and the prohibition of entry to certain neighborhoods, had assumed a more general character in accordance with the progression of the war.⁴³⁸ The implementation of such measures necessitated the closure of the majority of the affected ports, consequently resulting in the imposition of restrictions on foreign nationals seeking to access these ports.⁴³⁹ The key motivation behind these measures was the vast expanse of the Ottoman Empire's coastline, which posed significant challenges in terms of monitoring and control.⁴⁴⁰ Therefore, it was expected that the Italian Ambassador would understand and appreciate this complex situation. According to Said Halim, the government's objective in implementing these measures was evidently not to hinder the free movement of nationals of neutral states within the Ottoman territories. Especially in light of the "cordial relations" (*münâsebât-ı hasene*) between Italy and the Ottoman Empire at the time, such an act towards Italian citizens was inconceivable. Furthermore, the Sublime Porte had never hesitated to facilitate the departure of nationals from neutral states, "to the extent that military conditions permitted" (*icâbât-ı askeriye'nin müsâade edeceği mertebede*). With regard to the challenges

⁴³⁴ "Urla Limanından sefâine rûkûbun adem-i imkânı takdirinde İtalya tebaasının kezâlik sûret-i dâimede Sığacık Limanından harekete me'zûn bulunması"

⁴³⁵ "Memleketlerine avdet arzûsunda bulunan İtalya tebaasının sefâine râkib olabilmeleri için bîtaraf sefâinin Sefâret-i Kraliyenin talebi üzerine vakit vakit Anadolu, Suriye ve Filistin'in muhtelif limanlarına uğrayabilmeleri bu müsâadenin el-yevm birçok İtalyan âilelerinin zaten bulunmakta oldukları Mersin, Iskenderun, Hayfa ve Yafa Limanları için derhal itâsı."

⁴³⁶ "Dâhildeki memûrîn-i mahalliye'nin sâhile inmek arzûsunda bulunan İtalya tebaasına her gûnâ mevânî ve müşkilât ihdâsından tevakkî ve bilakis bunların azîmetlerine teshîlât irâe etmeleri."

⁴³⁷ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 20, 04 August 1915. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translation Directorate- This is a translated copy of the memorandum conveyed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Italian Ambassador Marchese Garroni on 4 August 1915. (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Tercüme Müdîriyeti - Hâriciye Nezâret-i Celîlesinden 4 Ağustos 915 tarihiyle İtalya Sefîri Marki Garroni'ye irsâl olunan müzekkerenin sûret-i tercümesidir*)

⁴³⁸ "Bazı menâtıkın seddi ve bazı mahallere duhûlün men'i gibi bir takım tedâbir-i kaviyyenin bizce daha umûmî bir mâhiyet iktisâb etmiş"

⁴³⁹ "ve bu [...] limanlardan ekserisinin seddini ve bunun netice-i zarûriye ve tabiiyesi olmak üzere ecânib için mahreç limanlarının tahdîdini intâc etmiş olması"

⁴⁴⁰ "Memâlik-i Osmâniye'nin hal ve mevkii ve taht-ı tarassud ve nezârette bulundurulması gayet müşkil olan sevâhilinin pek vâsi olmasından münbais olup"

faced by nationals of neutral states when departing from Ottoman ports to overseas destinations, the following measures were adopted:

- 1) Firstly, the Port of Beirut would be guaranteed to remain permanently accessible to ships from neutral states.
- 2) In circumstances where it was not feasible to board a vessel at the Port of Urla, departure could be facilitated from the Port of Sığacık.
- 3) Furthermore, these measures were expanded to encompass the ports of Mersin, Iskenderun, Haifa, and Jaffa, where nationals of neutral states were granted immediate authorization to board ships.
- 4) Neutral ships were authorized to transport nationals of neutral states wishing to depart from Ottoman territory via other ports in Anatolia, Syria, and Palestine, on the condition that an official request was made by the embassies to which they were subject.
- 5) Finally, local authorities in the inland regions were instructed to provide every possible convenience to nationals of neutral states wishing to travel towards the coastline.

On 5 August, Interior Minister Talât Pasha issued a circular to the Sanjak of Jerusalem and the Vilayets of Beirut, Aydın, Adana, and Aleppo, officially sanctioning Italian departures from the ports within these provinces.⁴⁴¹ The aforementioned circular outlined the designated and authorized ports as Urla and Sığacık in the Vilayet of Aydın, along with Mersin in Adana, Iskenderun in Aleppo, and Jaffa in Jerusalem. In addition, local authorities were explicitly requested to refrain from impeding the movements of the Italians, who were also granted military authorization to depart from the ports of Beirut and Haifa, and to ensure that no irregularities occurred. Nevertheless, it was evident from Garroni's subsequent note to Said Halim Pasha on August 20, which functioned as a formal declaration of war, that the Italian initiatives had proven unsuccessful. Garroni asserted that while orders facilitating the Italians' travel had been received by local authorities on August 7, the sections concerning Syrian and Palestinian ports had been revoked by August 9. To elaborate, vessels docking at these ports to collect and transport citizens of neutral states were unable to fulfil their designated duties. The rationale behind this shift was that Jews of enemy nationalities, who had been designated for deportation from the Ottoman Empire, were being placed on the ships instead of neutral nationals. In other words, Garroni argued that the passenger capacity reserved for the return of neutral nationals had been allocated to enemy aliens with the objective of accelerating their deportation.

⁴⁴¹ COA, DH.ŞFR.54/287, 23 Temmuz 1331 - 05 August 1915. From Minister Talât to the Vilayets of Beirut, Aydın, Adana, Aleppo, and the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem; DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 28, 20 August 1915. This is the translation of Note No. 263, conveyed by the Italian Ambassador to His Excellency the Grand Vizier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the distinguished Prince Said Halim Pasha, on 20 August 1915. (*Sadrâzam ve Hâriciye Nâzırı fehâmetli devletli Prens Said Halim Paşa hazretlerine 20 Ağustos 1915 tarihiyle İtalya Sefîri tarafından irsâl olunan 263 notanın tercümesidir.*)

According to Garroni's account, the Ottoman Government's unconditional and definitive commitments regarding the Italians' freedom of travel, delivered on 5 August 1915, were eventually proven to be null and void. Even more alarmingly, Garroni asserted that Ottoman authorities were fully aware that significant obstacles were still being imposed on the return of the Italians to their homeland. For instance, the American-flagged steamship *Caesar*, transporting a single Italian family, was only able to depart from the Port of Beirut due to a special permit obtained by the family from Cemâl Pasha. Moreover, the American ships *Chester* and *Des Moines*, which were prepared to repatriate Italian nationals, were also unable to depart the port for comparable reasons. In a similar fashion, the departure of Italian residents of Izmir from the port of Sığacık was also prevented by the local authorities on the grounds of the collection of certain taxes such as "dividends" (*temettü*). In Garroni's statement, it was asserted that despite the patience and tolerance that had been demonstrated thus far, the Ottoman Empire's recent practices had rendered the Italian Kingdom's efforts futile. Consequently, Garroni has declared these practices, which were in complete contradiction with the commitments made on August 5, to be illegitimate.

The remainder of the note placed particular emphasis on the Ottoman Government's persistent violations of the 1912 Treaty of Ouchy, which brought the Tripolitanian War to a conclusion.⁴⁴² The Ottoman Government was accused of several alleged transgressions, including the refusal to release Italian prisoners of war, the continuation of military activities in Tripoli and Benghazi, and the cultivation of anti-Italian cooperation with the Senussi Sheikhs and local tribes. Consequently, the Italian government declared that it would no longer resort to diplomatic channels in response to the clear, violent, and persistent violations of its nationals' rights, interests, and even liberties in Ottoman domains.⁴⁴³ The tone of the ambassador's discourse signaled the collapse of cordial relations and the onset of hostilities. He further articulated that in the face of the Ottoman Government's "persistent threats and hostile activities" (*tehdîdât-ı mütemâdiyesine ve harekât-ı fiiliye-i hasmânesine*), the Kingdom of Italy was compelled to safeguard its own interests and ensure the safety of its citizens. Operating in accordance with the directives and authority bestowed upon him by the Kingdom of Italy, Ambassador Garroni formally declared war on the Ottoman Empire, effective as of the next day, and announced the dissolution of the Ottoman Embassy in Rome.

4.3.2 Situation Subsequent to the Italian Declaration of War

The Ottoman authorities, who had already been exhibiting a degree of caution and vigilance towards Italian policies for some time, acted with swiftness on August 21 following Italy's official declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire. On that same day, a telegram was dispatched from the Ministry of the Interior to the border checkpoints in Çirmen (present-day Ormenio), Dimetoka (present-day Didymoteicho), and Urla, instructing that Italian nationals should not be permitted to depart until further notice, as the Ottoman Empire had now entered

⁴⁴² COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 28, 20 August 1915.

⁴⁴³ "Hükûmet-i Seniyyenin kâffe-i ihtârâta rağmen Memâlik-i Osmâniye'deki İtalya tebaasının hukuk ve menâfii ve hatta serbestilerini sûret-i ekîde ve bâhirede ihlâlâ musırrâne devâm eylemekte bulunmasına binâen Hükûmet-i Kraliye, Hükûmet-i Osmâniye'nin tehdîdât-ı mütemâdiyesine ve harekât-ı fiiliye-i hasmânesine karşı menâfi-i âliye-i devletin muhâfazası ve kendi tebaasının müdâfaası esbâbını sûret-i âharla istikmâl etmek mecbûriyetinde bulunuyor."

into a state of war with Italy.⁴⁴⁴ On September 1, another telegram was dispatched by Minister Talât to the Vilayets of Edirne, Aydın, Adana, Beirut, and Aleppo, as well as to the Mutasarrifates of Jerusalem, Menteşe, Antalya, and İçel. This telegram instructed that Italian nationals arriving from abroad should not be permitted entry to the empire and should be immediately returned. Consequently, the Ottoman borders were closed in both directions to the entry and exit of Italian nationals.

The second phase would involve the deactivation and retention of all Italian consular authorities within the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁴⁵ On September 5, Interior Minister Talât dispatched a cipher telegram to all relevant provinces and independent sanjaks, instructing that all Italian consulates within the Ottoman borders be sealed by Ottoman authorities and preserved in their current state. The functions and duties of the Italian consulates within the Ottoman Empire had already been transferred to American consuls since July 1915, and the consuls, like other Italian subjects, were being called back to their homeland.⁴⁴⁶ On September 14, the Minister formally requested that any Italian consuls still present in the province or sanjak following the declaration of war be duly reported, and that they be strictly prohibited from departing. This was due to the Ottoman Government's decision to withhold the release of Italian consuls on its territory until it had received official confirmation that all "consular officials" (*memûrîn-i şehbenderiye*) in Italy had departed Italian soil safely.⁴⁴⁷ According to an interministerial correspondence dated

⁴⁴⁴ COA, DH.EUM.SSM.2/55, 8 Ağustos 1331 – 21 August 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Inspectorates of Public Security in Çirmen, Dimetoka, and Urla (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Çirmen, Dimetoka, Urla Emniyet Müfettişliklerine*); DH.EUM.SSM.53/38, 19 Ağustos 1331 – 01 September 1915. From the Minister of the Interior, Talât, to the Vilayets of Edirne, Aydın, Adana, Beirut, Aleppo, and the Mutasarrifates of Jerusalem, Menteşe, Antalya, and İçil.

⁴⁴⁵ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/10/Lef 7, 23 Ağustos 1331 – 05 September 1915. Cipher telegram from the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Istanbul, Edirne, Aydın, Baghdad, Beirut, Hejaz, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Syria, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Van, Yemen and the Mutasarrifates of Bolu, Teke, Canik, Karesi, Jerusalem, and Kal'a-i Sultâniye; DH.ŞFR.56/6, 01 Eylül 1331 - 14 September 1915 / DH.EUM.5.Şb.19/32/Lef 2, 01 Eylül 1331 - 14 September 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Vilayets of Edirne, Adana, Aydın, Baghdad, Beirut, Hejaz, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Syria, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Van, Yemen, and the Mutasarrifates of Bolu, Canik, Karesi, Jerusalem, Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Teke, Kütahya, İçil, Eskişehir, Niğde, Maraş, Karahisâr-ı Sâhib; DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 27, 31 August 1915. This is a translated copy of the general correspondence numbered 239, transmitted from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ottoman Embassies on 31 August 1915. (*Hâriciye Nezâret-i Celîlesinden 31 Ağustos 915 tarihiyle Süferâ-i Osmâniye'ye irsâl olunan 239 numarolu tahrîrât-ı umûmiyyenin suret-i tercümesidir*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.19/32/Lef 1, 27 Ağustos 1331 - 09 September 1915. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs, to the Ministry of Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.19/32/Lef 1, 19 Teşrînisânî 1331 - 02 December 1915. On behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary Reşad Hikmet, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs / Office of Important Affairs, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Hâriciye Nâzırı nâmına Müsteşar Reşad Hikmet, Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesi / Mühimme Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁴⁶ COA, DH.ŞFR.54/404, 29 Haziran 1331 - 12 July 1915. From the Ministry of the Interior to the Vilayets of Beirut, Aleppo, and Syria "The duties of the Italian Consuls departing from Beirut, Haifa, Aleppo, Alexandretta and Damascus will be temporarily assumed by the American Consuls. The aforementioned consuls will be in charge of the affairs of Russian and Montenegrin subjects as well."

⁴⁴⁷ "Nezâret-i senâveride mevcut mâlûmata nazaran İtalya konsolosları Memâlik-i Osmâniye'den kâmilten çıkmış olup mâhâzâ bunlardan Devlet-i Aliyye ile İtalya arasında hâl-i harbin tahaddüs ettiği 8 Ağustos 331 tarihinden evvel çıkmayıp kalmışlar var ise İtalya'da bulunan memûrîn-i şehbenderiyemizin kâmilten ve

2 December 1915, it was understood that of the Ottoman diplomats in Italy, only the Consul in Naples (*Napoli Şehbenderi*), Aram Efendi, had remained in his post, and that he would soon return to Istanbul via Rome. Furthermore, it was planned that two of the four Italian officials serving at the American Embassy in Istanbul would soon return to their homeland, while the other two would remain in Istanbul for a while longer. Therefore, as of this date, there was no longer any objection to the departure of the Italian consuls in the Ottoman Empire.

The occurrence of certain cases requiring the individual monitoring of Italian consular officials by Ottoman authorities also appears to have played an active role in this decision.⁴⁴⁸ For instance, the case of Giovanni Miozzi (جیوانی میوزی), who was appointed as Italy's Consular Agent in Bursa in May 1913 and had been closely monitored by the Governorate over a period of time, is illustrative in this regard. Since Miozzi's family trip to Istanbul on 15 June 1915, his movements had been subject to close monitoring by local authorities and reported to superior bodies. On September 7, Ali Osman, the Governor of Bursa (*Hüdâvendigâr*), reported that Consular Agent Miozzi's home and store had been thoroughly searched. Alongside Italian consular documents, all diplomatic documents belonging to the Russian, French and British agencies, whose national interests were represented by the Italian Government throughout the war, were confiscated and stamped. In accordance with the directives issued by the Ministry, the Governor's report on 14 September stated that Miozzi was being confined to the provincial capital and was not permitted to depart. The issue which aroused the suspicion of the Bursa Governor was the close relationship between Giovanni Miozzi and the American diplomat Erwin Frederic Lange. In April 1914, Lange was appointed as a translator at the American Consulate in Bursa, following his service at the American Embassy in Istanbul. On 12 October 1915, the Acting Governor, Ahmed Mithat, reported that the two diplomats had been meeting frequently and in a conspicuous manner, almost every day in recent times. Disturbed by the situation, Ahmed Mithat noted that, even if a warning could not be issued to the American, the Italian Consular Agent could be relocated to another location on the grounds of the state of war.

In his response to the governor a month later, Interior Minister Talât asserted that the retention of Giovanni Miozzi within the city limits was a provisional measure. Following the repatriation of all Ottoman consuls in Italy, the Consular Agent in Bursa would also be permitted to return to his country. At the outset, it appeared that Talât Pasha did not attach great importance to the concerns of the Bursa Governorate. However, given the prevailing conditions of war, the prospect of an Italian-American collaboration could not be disregarded. Despite the fact that the United States would not enter the war for another two years, the Ottoman authorities were

sâlimen İtalya toprağından çıkmış olduklarına dâir haber-i mevsuk alıncaya kadar ötekilerin huruçlarına müşâade olunmaması muktezîdir.”

⁴⁴⁸ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Parte Amministrativa*, N.436, Aprile/Maggio 1913 (Roma: Tip. Elzeviriana Francesco Marcolli & C., 1913), 10,62; U.S. Department of State, *Register of the Department of State, October 15, 1912* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), 25,51,53-54,91; COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.46/21/Lef 6, 02 Haziran 1331 - 15 June 1915 ; DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/10/Lef 6, 25 Ağustos 1331 - 07 September 1915; DH.ŞFR.489/19, 01 Eylül 1331 - 14 September 1915. From the Governor of Bursa, Ali Osman, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Bursa Vâlisi Ali Osman'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/42/Lef 1; DH.ŞFR.493/49, 29 Eylül 1331 - 12 October 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/42/Lef 3, 19 Teşrinievvel 1331 - 01 Kasım 1915. From the Deputy Governor of Bursa, Ahmed Midhat, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Bursa Vâli Vekîli Ahmed Midhat'tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.57/67, 04 Teşrinievvel 1331 - 17 October 1915. Minister Talât - From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Governorate of Hüdâvendigâr (*Nâzır Talât- Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyetinden Hüdâvendigâr Vilâyetine*).

irritated by the intimacy between Miozzi and Lange. Therefore, the Minister inquired with the Governor as to whether it would be unfavorable for Miozzi to remain there, even temporarily. If it was indeed deemed to be detrimental to the interests of the state, the Minister requested that the Italian Consular Agent be relocated to Istanbul. Finally, on November 1, it was reported that Giovanni Miozzi had departed for Istanbul via Bilecik under the supervision of civilian police.

On September 13, Talât Pasha disseminated a further circular, inquiring into the number and provenance of Italian nationals who had departed from the Ottoman Empire since May 20.⁴⁴⁹ As previously referenced, from 20 May 1915, Italian nationals were prohibited from departing directly from the coastlines of Izmir, Adana, and Syria for destinations abroad and were only permitted to travel via Istanbul. Subsequently, on June 1, this prohibition was expanded to encompass all neutral and even allied state nationalities. While the Izmir designation extended along the entire Aegean coastline, encompassing the territory of Antalya, the Syrian designation embraced the entire Levantine coastline, extending to include the territory of Palestine. The minister also inquired as to whether any directives had been issued by any other authority with the aim of preventing Italian departures during this period. Moreover, in the event that such directives had been issued, from which authority had they emanated, and what measures had been implemented in response to these directives? It is a well-documented fact that military commanders such as Cemâl Pasha, who were entrusted with extensive civil authorities, would occasionally circumvent the ministries and exercise their own discretion in making and implementing decisions. It is probable that Minister Talât Pasha had sought to conduct a provincial-level analysis of Italian departures in response to complaints from Italian authorities and feedback from specific locations. The primary rationale for this vigilance pertains to the stringent surveillance measures that were necessitated by the prevailing wartime restrictions imposed on Italian travelers.

In the period following the September 13 circular, the central authorities in Istanbul received numerous reports of small and medium-scale mobilities involving Italian individuals.⁴⁵⁰ As discussed in the next chapter under the heading of “The 1915, 1916, and 1918 Population Censuses,” the largest wartime departure of Italians from Ottoman territory took place in Istanbul, with nearly a thousand people leaving the city. Istanbul Police Chief Bedri Bey reported that between May 20 and October 18, 1915, 949 Italian nationals had left the city without any obstacles having been raised by local authorities. It is also noteworthy that the mobility figures in the Syrian Levant region were also quite high. On 22 September 1915, the Governor of Beirut, Azmi, had also submitted a report on the mobility and departure status of Italians. Pursuant to a telegram from the Ministry of the Interior dated May 14, Italian nationals

⁴⁴⁹ COA, DH.ŞFR.55/232, 31 Ağustos 1331 - 13 September 1915. From the Minister of the Interior, Talât, to the Vilayets of Edirne, Aydın, Adana, Beirut, Aleppo, and the Mutasarrifates of Karesi, Menteşe, İçil, Teke, and Jerusalem.

⁴⁵⁰ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 2, 05 Eylül 1331 - 18 September 1915. The General Directorate of Istanbul Police, Political Section, Third Section, from Bedri, the Istanbul Chief of Police (*İstanbul Polis Müdüriyet-i Umûmîsi, Kısm-i Siyâsî Üçüncü Şûbe, Polis Müdür-i Umûmîsi Bedri'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.666/102, 05 Eylül 1331 - 18 September 1915. From Hakkı, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Hakkı'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 6, 27 Eylül 1331 - 10 October 1915. From Hüsnü, on behalf of the Governor of Aleppo, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Haleb Vâlisi nâmına Hüsnü'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.490/57, 09 Eylül 1331 - 22 September 1915 (*Beyrut Vâlisi Azmi'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*) From Azmi, the Governor of Beirut, to the Ministry of the Interior.

were initially permitted to depart from Beirut. However, following the receipt of a telegram from the Fourth Army on May 23, they were prohibited from doing so. Nonetheless, this prohibition was ultimately revoked, and their departure was permitted on the condition of transiting through Istanbul. It was evident that the initial divergent perspectives among the Ministry, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Fourth Army were reflected in the actions undertaken in the Syrian Levant. Inconsistencies were observed between the decisions of the Ministry, which were intended to be implemented throughout the empire, and the regional practices of Cemâl Pasha. The report by Azmi indicated that, within the one-month period spanning from June 21 to July 20, a total of 543 Italian nationals had departed from Beirut by sea, in addition to three individuals who had travelled to Aleppo and three others to Damascus. It should be noted that this figure, which is more than double the census results, consists primarily of Italians who had flocked to Beirut Port from neighboring regions to depart by sea, rather than Beirut's local Italian residents. Moreover, the Aleppo Governorate reported that between June 23 and September 24, 1915, a total of 43 Italian residents departed, with 39 travelling to Beirut, one to Hama, one to Alexandretta, and two to Istanbul. However, the telegram also stated that two members of the Marcopoli family had later returned to Aleppo. With regard to the Adana coastline, Governor Hakkı, who was responsible for the enforcement of the surveillance measures, has noted minor activity. In a telegram dated September 18, he reported that 22 Italian citizens had departed from the port of Mersin between May 14 and May 31, 1915. It is highly probable that the passengers in question were protected by bilateral agreements or enjoyed diplomatic immunity.

It is also noteworthy that Ottoman authorities along the entire Aegean coastline exhibited a comparable degree of sensitivity towards Italian travelers.⁴⁵¹ The highest volume of departures from the Aegean coast naturally emanated from Izmir, which boasted the largest Italian population. As reported in a telegram from the Izmir Governor's Office dated September 15, following the announcement of travel restrictions on May 20, the police had issued travel permits to 148 Italians, 62 of whom had departed from Urla. Another significant location for Italian habitation was Teke Sanjak, which was known for its proximity to the Dodecanese Islands and for being home to the famous city of Antalya. On 14 September 1915, Teke Mutasarrıf Sabûr reported that an Italian group had crossed over to the Italian-occupied Rhodes a few months earlier. Sabûr's telegram indicated that a warship had arrived at the port of Antalya on June 10 and had remained there for a period of six days, awaiting the evacuation of Italian citizens. Thereafter, on 16 June 1915, a total of 48 Italian nationals, of whom 29 were male and 19 female, had departed for the island of Rhodes aboard this vessel. As the Dodecanese Islands had been progressively ceded to Italian control since May 1912, they had evolved into a focal point of security and a point of attraction for numerous Italian nationals residing in Asia Minor and other regions of the Ottoman Empire. In a similar fashion, the island of Mytilene (Midilli / Lesbos), which had been under Greek rule since the Balkan War of 1912, was also a feasible

⁴⁵¹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 15, 02 Eylül 1331 - 15 September 1915. From the Treasurer Mehmed Tefvik, on behalf of the Governor, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Vâli nâmına Defterdâr Mehmed Tefvik'ten Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 18, 01 Eylül 1331 - 14 September 1915. From Sabûr, the Sanjak Governor of Teke, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Teke Mutasarrıfı Sabûr'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 7, 14 Eylül 1331 - 27 September 1915; DH.ŞFR.491/5, 14 Eylül 1331 - 27 September 1915. From Kemâl, Deputy Sanjak Governor of Karesi, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Karesi Mutasarrıfı Vekîli Kemâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.17/15, 06 Eylül 1331 - 19 September 1915. From Murad Fuad, the Sanjak Governor of Kal'a-i Sultâniye, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kal'a-i Sultâniye Mutasarrıfı Murad Fuad'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

destination for Italians departing the Aegean coast. On September 27, Kemâl, the Deputy Governor of Karesi, reported that Michail Suntari and his wife Eleni, Italian residents of Ayvalık (Aivali), had fled to Mytilene via the island of Cunda (Yunda). Furthermore, the Registrar (*Mukayyid*) at the Karesi branch of the Ottoman Bank and the Deputy Director (*İkinci Direktör*) at the Bandırma branch had submitted requests for permission to travel to Istanbul and Izmir, respectively. However, the Mutasarrif stated that he had denied permission to both Italian nationals after August 21. Moreover, despite the unavailability of census figures for Kal'a-i Sultâniye from 1915, the Mutasarrif Murad Fuad's report dated 19 September 1915 indicates that 5 of the 22 Italian residents in the sanjak had migrated to the Gelibolu Sanjak of the Edirne Vilayet, their place of origin. The migration of Italian residents from the relatively safer Biga Peninsula to the Gallipoli Peninsula, which was the theatre of numerous naval and land battles in 1915 and 1916, is a subject of particular intrigue. Despite the fact that the ultimate objective was to reach their homeland, this was a highly risky endeavor given the dangerous conditions of the war.

5. WARTIME REDESIGN: RELOCATION, RESETTLEMENT AND EXPULSION OF ITALIANS (1911-1918)

Drawing particular attention to the demographic shifts experienced by the Italian population during wartime, this chapter is founded on an analysis of their state-orchestrated displacement, resettlement, and, in certain instances, expulsion. This population design can be viewed as a reflexive response of the Ottoman state to the potential threat posed to national security by Italian residents during wartime. More concretely, it represents the manner in which the Ottoman Empire perceived and treated them during this period of military and diplomatic vulnerability. While the policies towards Italian institutions, services and manpower are analyzed in the previous chapter that places the Italians in an institutional framework, the focus of this chapter is on the state actions that touch the personal space, life and freedoms of individuals. It is evident that during this lengthy period of political unrest and ongoing warfare, the Ottoman government introduced a series of policies aimed at regulating the activities of non-national populations. Nevertheless, some of the questions that need to be answered will be the following. On what grounds did the central authority decide to pursue a particular policy with regard to the Italians? What were the potential concerns or risks to the state posed by the Italian inhabitants, who lacked comparable political influence and representation to the Orthodox Greek or Armenian populations within the empire? What measures did the state deploy to address these concerns or risks before they reached a point where they could be considered a threat? What were the grounds on which these measures were legitimized and justified? To be more precise, what type of demographic monitoring and engineering strategies did the state adopt and implement towards the Italians?

The origins of the cautious policies and demographic programs that were implemented against the Italians during First World War can be traced back to two specific operations that were carried out by the Italian military during the Italo-Ottoman War. The first of these operations was the naval bombardment of Beirut on 24 February 1912, and the second was the occupation of the Dodecanese between 28 April and 20 May 1912. Between these two major events, the bombardments of the Dardanelles on April 18 and Kuşadası on April 20 intensified the process, while the fall of Rhodes on May 17 alerted the Ottoman authorities at the highest level. In response to these operations, the Ottoman Government promulgated several decrees, including the expulsion of Italian nationals to varying extents. The Decree of February 25, which was issued in the aftermath of the bombardment of Beirut, stipulated the expulsion of Italian citizens from the four provinces that constituted the Syrian Levant. However, as the war rapidly expanded to the Aegean Sea and the western coast of Asia Minor, the Ottoman government was compelled to adopt more extensive measures. The geographical scope of the May 22 expulsion decree, issued two days after the completion of the Dodecanese occupation, concerned all Italians throughout the Empire. As the occupation of the Dodecanese will be examined in much greater detail in the sixth chapter, this chapter will not delve into its operational details. Instead, the primary focus is on the Ottoman justifications for the issuance of the May 22 expulsion decree, and the subsequent denial of these justifications by the Italian government. Furthermore, the reflections of the decree in the Italian parliament, its influence on government policies, and its transformation into a propaganda tool by the Giolitti government will be discussed. On the other hand, the political, legal, military, and sociocultural contexts of the Beirut Bombardment will be addressed in considerable detail within this chapter. The incident under discussion pertains to the Italian Naval bombardment of Beirut Port, which was situated within an

unfortified urban area, on 24 February 1912. This action constituted a flagrant violation of international law, resulting in the tragic loss of approximately a hundred lives, including soldiers and civilians. The social unrest that erupted in the city following the bombardment, the rapidly escalating conflicts throughout the province, and the spread of anti-Christian jihadist demonstrations compelled the Ottoman authorities to immediately declare martial law. On the day following the bombardment, the Ottoman cabinet issued a supreme decree stipulating the expulsion of all Italians from the Syrian Levant. All Italian nationals residing in the provinces of Beirut, Syria, and Aleppo, as well as in the sanjaks of Jerusalem and Mount Lebanon, were given a 15-day deadline to leave Ottoman territory. Pursuing a rigorous and effective crisis management strategy, the Ottoman administration cited the escalating anti-Italian sentiment in the region as the underlying cause for the expulsion decree, emphasizing the grave danger faced by the Italians. Notwithstanding, a subsequent amendment was issued one month later which exempted the Italian clergy from this expulsion.

The decree provoked a mixture of surprise and concern within the Italian government and was widely discussed in the Italian press, giving rise to a considerable degree of confusion and disagreement. While some Italian newspapers trivialized the expulsion decision, others suggested that it would be limited only to wealthy and elite Italians in Istanbul. However, there were also alarming reports that all Italians residing in Ottoman territories would be expelled shortly and unconditionally. The Ottoman authorities, however, regarded a 15-day deadline for expulsion as a reasonable response to the Italians' swift and ruthless attack on Beirut, which had been initiated within a mere 20 minutes. It is important to note that, as a consequence of this particular incident, the Italian identity underwent a significant loss of its local foundations and public legitimacy in the region where it had been firmly established for centuries. Once regarded as an integral component of the region's demographic configuration, Italian identity came to be perceived as incongruent with the prevailing peace and security dynamics, thereby precipitating a crisis of belonging. The social disintegration, which commenced with the bombardment, resulted in the alienation of the Italians in the Syrian Levant, the disruption of their cultural continuity, and the traumatization of their collective memory.

The fact that the occupation of Libya was confined to a distant and peripheral region of the Ottoman Empire arguably provides a rationale for why the Italian-Ottoman conflict was not widely felt across the entire Ottoman population. In this regard, the initial disintegration of Italian nationals from the Ottoman Empire was more limited in scope, occurring primarily at the institutional and state levels. However, the Italian bombardment of Beirut targeted one of the empire's most prominent and cosmopolitan port cities, alongside Istanbul and Izmir. Moreover, the bombing of coastal settlements in Western Anatolia and the occupation of the Dodecanese Islands served to escalate the war, thereby moving it further inland and raising the stakes for the Ottoman regime. From this perspective, the Ottoman-Italian conflict had shifted from the imperial periphery to the core, becoming more visible and palpable to the Ottoman public. In line with this, an argument can be made that the increased representation of the conflict in the Ottoman public sphere led to a greater degree of alienation and separation of Italians from the social ecosystem.

Throughout the course of the First World War, the Ottoman authorities implemented a series of programs targeting the Italian population, and conducted large-scale censuses of Italian nationals in 1915, 1916 and 1918. This chapter will provide a concise analysis of the wartime distribution, movements, and socioeconomic background of the Italian population based on

these three censuses. It is evident that these censuses are not to the same level of professional standard or comprehensive scope as the 1871 census of the Kingdom of Italy, which is discussed in the second chapter. Instead, the contents were compiled and synthesized by myself from dispersed figures in a variety of telegrams. These figures were requested by the Ottoman central government from provincial authorities at specific times in accordance with its wartime policies. It is noteworthy that Italians were subject to census despite their relatively low demographic proportion across the Ottoman Empire. This indicates the importance attributed to them by the Ottoman central administration, if not in quantitative terms, then in qualitative terms.

One of the issues to be explored under this heading concerns the plight of Italian Jews in Syria and Palestine, who neither accepted Ottoman naturalization nor managed to vacate the region in a timely manner. At the onset of the war, Aleppo, Damascus, and Urfa were designated as relocation centers for all enemy aliens in the region, including Italians. However, throughout the war, the strategy of Military Governor Cemâl Pasha regarding non-national elements was subject to frequent and unpredictable change, due to the turbulent nature of Syrian geography. Despite the approval of the departure of 90 non-naturalized Italian Jews residing in Aleppo from Ottoman territory, their scheduled journey via Beirut was cancelled due to a shift in policy. A total of 26 Italian Jewish families, who had been temporarily stranded in Beirut, contacted the American Embassy in an attempt to publicize their plight and secure assistance.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that during the First World War, the Ottoman government did not resort to such radical measures as the mass expulsion that was practiced in the aftermath of the Beirut Bombardment. Instead, practices such as resettling them from coastal settlements to cities in the interior of Anatolia and Syria, or to more suitable areas away from active combat zones and railway corridors, were implemented. As will be demonstrated in the fourth section, these more “situation-specific” practices were informed, encouraged and devised in response to wartime sensitivities and vulnerabilities. The overarching objective of these operations was to facilitate the evacuation of non-national residents from high-risk locations that had acquired a military significance during the war, with a view to minimizing their access to and interaction with enemy elements. Furthermore, notable Italians such as Edmond Dussi, a former British consul residing in Tekfurdağı – a coastal city that was concurrently an active war zone – would also be subject to these relocation policies.

5.1. Expulsion of Italians Following the Bombardment of Beirut and the Occupation of the Dodecanese (February 25 and May 22, 1912)

Anticipating that they would not be able to achieve the desired victory in the 1911-1912 Italo-Ottoman War, the Italians had decided to expand the war beyond North Africa, where the center of gravity and primary frontline was located.⁴⁵² Despite the fact that Ottoman military

⁴⁵² For the most recent, comprehensive, and innovative analysis of the geostrategic and socio-political contexts of the 1912 Bombardment of Beirut, as well as the most complete and thorough bibliography on the subject to date, please refer to the following source: Nurkan Sever, “A Geostrategic and Sociopolitical Analysis of the 1912 Beirut Bombardment at the Domestic and International Levels,” *International Journal of Military History and Historiography* (June 27, 2025): 1–44, <https://doi.org/10.1163/24683302-bja10088>.

resistance was broken in many battlefields throughout Libya, the Ottoman government rejected both peace talks with Italy and mediation offers from European powers. As a third option, the Italians attempted to open secondary fronts through naval and aerial bombardments in the Red Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean Sea and the Western Anatolian Coasts.⁴⁵³ In February 1912, the Giolitti government came to the realization that Italy's naval operations in the Red Sea, despite their capacity to cause concern to the Ottoman government, were inadequate to persuade the Ottomans to enter into peace negotiations.⁴⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the Ottoman government was convinced that any Italian attack on the Syrian coast would inevitably result in Paris intervening in Rome. Consequently, the Ottomans adopted an indifferent and unprepared stance regarding Beirut, operating under the assumption that Italy would never risk entering into conflict with France. However, the Italians' position towards Beirut was by no means indifferent, but rather exhibited a nuanced approach characterized by a balance between vigilance and proactivity. Reports from Italian sources operating within the region have indicated that the presence of the Turkish fleet in the vicinity of Beirut has had a detrimental effect on the maneuverability of Italian ships and has facilitated the transportation of contraband to the detriment of the Italian forces. From the Italian military's standpoint, the presence of the armored corvette *Avnillah* and the torpedo boat *Ankara*, which were anchored in the Port of Beirut, would hinder the transportation of Italian troops to the Red Sea.

Accordingly, Beirut was identified as the primary target in the Italians' strategy to extend the war into the Eastern Mediterranean.⁴⁵⁵ This decision was informed by several factors, including Beirut's strategic location on the Syrian coastline, its ethno-religious composition, and its geographical proximity to Jerusalem. The naval offensive that was carried out on the Beirut Port on 24 February 1912 was of such significance that it aroused considerable alarm throughout all the Ottoman domains situated along the Eastern Mediterranean coastline. This incident had a profound impact on the course of the Italo-Ottoman War as a whole and served to greatly increase the level of political tension in Europe. The operation, which is referred to in literature as the Beirut Bombardment, involved the Italian Navy's deliberate targeting and submerging of two Ottoman battleships, namely the *Avnillah* and the *Ankara*, which were anchored in the Port of Beirut. This action was undertaken without providing sufficient time for the Ottoman vessels to depart from the port or for their crews to be evacuated. Furthermore, the

⁴⁵³ According to the chronological sequence of events, these engagements were as follows: the *Battle of Kurfuda Bay* in the Red Sea (7-8 January 1912), the *Bombardment of Beirut* in the Eastern Mediterranean (24 February 1912), the *Bombardment of the Dardanelles* in the Aegean Sea (18 April and 18-19 July 1912), the *Bombardment of Kuşadası* on the Western Anatolian Coast (April 20, May 31, June 6, September 8 and October 3, 1912) and the *Occupation of the Dodecanese Islands* in the Aegean Sea (28 April-20 May 1912). The *Battle of Preveza* situated in the Ionian Sea requires separate categorization from other secondary fronts seeking the strategic expansion of the war, as it transpired on the very first day of the Italo-Ottoman War (29-30 September 1911).

⁴⁵⁴ Timothy Winston Childs, *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy and the War Over Libya 1911-1912* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 121-123.

⁴⁵⁵ "Il Bombardamento a Beirut produce grave sgomento in Turchia ed è accolto con calma in Francia. Gli italiani saranno espulsi dall'impero ottomano?," *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num. 10999, Febbraio 26, 1912, 1, accessed July 13, 2025, https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-26. Abdülgani Seni, *Beyrût Bombardımanı: Trablusgarb Harbi Esnasında İtalyanlar Tarafından İka Edilmiş Bir Şenâ-i Tarihiyye* (Beirut: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1332/1916), 6-7, 12-13, 17-44, 45-52, 52-77, 77-98, 99-147; COA, DH.SYS.75-9/1-13/Lef 26, 11 Şubat 1327 - 24 February 1912; Lef 31, 11 Şubat 1327 - 24 February 1912; Lef 33, 11 Şubat 1327 - 24 February 1912; Lef 73, 15 Şubat 1327 - 28 February 1912. From Hâzım Bey, the Governor of Beirut, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Beyrût Vâlisi Hâzım Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

bombardment escalated uncontrollably, resulting in collateral damage throughout the city, including the loss of civilian and military lives, and engendering widespread panic and chaos. In addition to its strategic and military importance, this defeat has left a profoundly traumatic imprint on the collective memory of the Ottoman people.

In other words, the symbolic period granted to Ottoman warships rendered any maneuver or evacuation in the port unfeasible, and the uncontrolled naval firepower spread beyond the port to the urban area.⁴⁵⁶ The total casualties on the Ottoman side, including military personnel and innocent civilians, amounted to more than 75 fatalities and nearly a hundred injuries. Of particular concern is the fact that, given Beirut Port's designation as an "unfortified location" (*mevâkî'-i gayr-i müstahkeme*) under international law, the Italian operation represented a flagrant violation of the Hague Convention (*Lahey Mukavelenâmesi / Konferansı*) before the global community. Immediately after the attack, a series of sociopolitical, administrative, and law enforcement consequences emerged, including a deeply shaken local administration, intense domestic unrest and the declaration of martial law in Beirut. Panic ensued when rumours spread that the Governor had been killed in the initial bombing, inciting some of the population to take up arms, exerting pressure for the release of prisoners in the city jail, and engendering widespread chaos in the city. The incidents, which included the killing of innocent people, looting of stores, and targeting of armories, posed a risk of spreading to Mount Lebanon. As tensions escalated between Muslims and Christians in the region, and even armed clashes broke out in some areas, an urgent military intervention was necessary to prevent a larger crisis. On 25 February 1912, the day after the bombardment, the Ottoman Council of Ministers, presided over by the Grand Vizier, issued a draft imperial decree of paramount importance to the region. The decree formally declared martial law in the city center of Beirut and stipulated the establishment of a court martial in the city. On the very same day, the Ottoman government adopted further measures in response to the Bombardment of Beirut, and the Council of Ministers enacted another crucial decree. This second decree stipulated the expulsion of Italian nationals residing in Beirut, Syria, Aleppo Province, and the Jerusalem Sanjak. Given the identity and demography-based context of the study, this subsection will focus exclusively on the expulsion of Italian inhabitants and its repercussions, as opposed to the full range of these grave consequences.

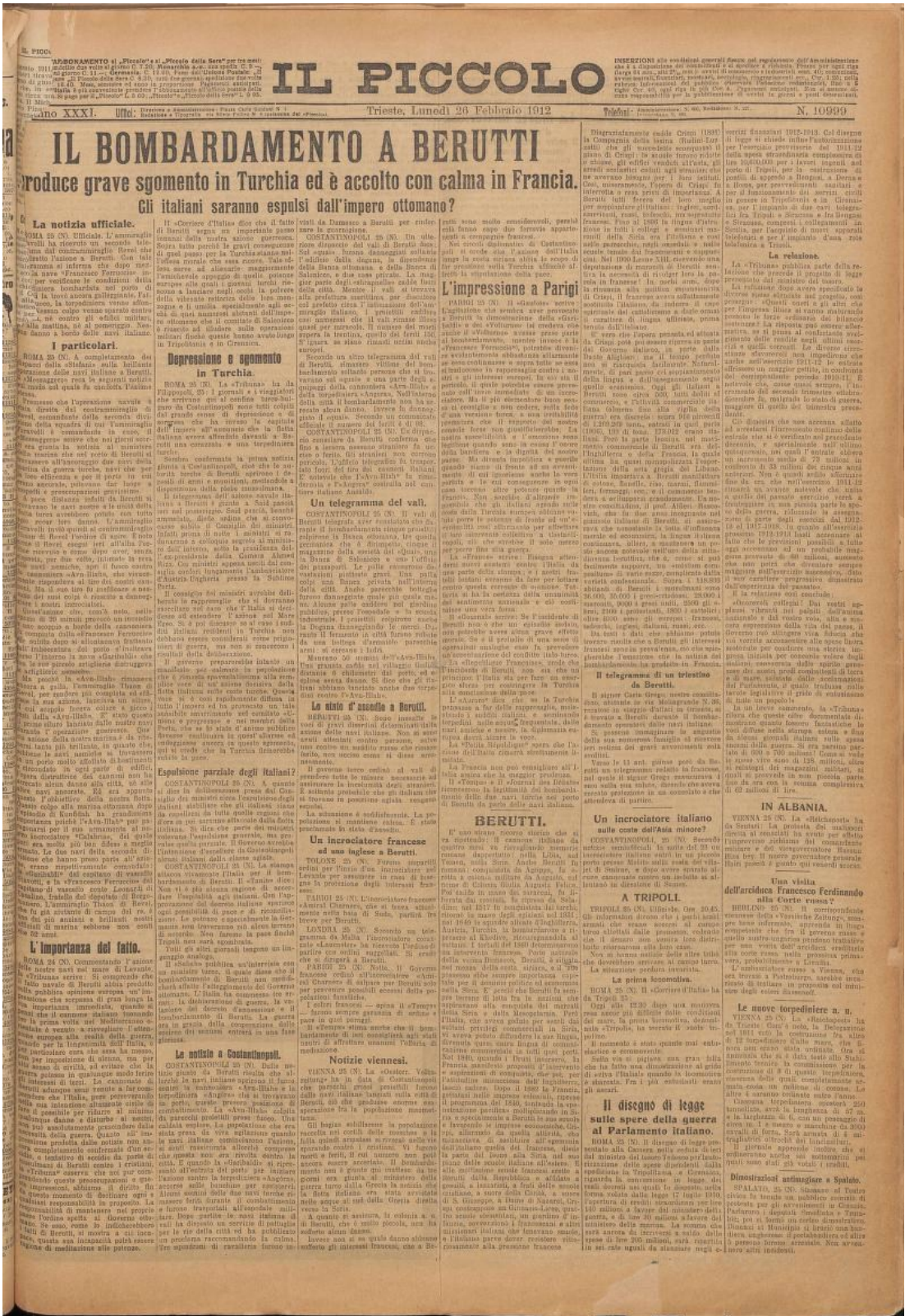
Although initially appearing to be an isolated incident or a mere military operation, the bombardment would later have broader and long-term demographic consequences through this decree.⁴⁵⁷ At the time, its scope was limited to determining the fate of the Italian population in the Syrian Levant region. However, it could be seen as a precursor to a more comprehensive

⁴⁵⁶ COA, MV.226/147, 12 Şubat 1327 - 25 February 1912. Draft of the Imperial Decree - Grand Vizier Said, Minister of War Mahmud Şevket, Acting Minister of the Interior Talât (*İrâde-i Seniyye Lâyihası - Sadrâzam Said, Harbiye Nâzırı Mahmud Şevket, Dâhiliye Nâzırı Vekîli Talât*) ; İ..MMS.147/16/Lef 2, 12 Şubat 1327 - 25 February 1912; Lef 4, 13 Şubat 1327 - 26 February 1912. The Privy Council of the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âlî Meclis-i Mahsûs*); Seniy, *Beyrût Bombardımanı*, 63-68; BEO/4007/300512, 11 Şubat 1327 - 24 February 1912. From the Grand Vizier's Correspondence Office to the Jerusalem Sanjak Governorate (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kaleminden Kudüs Mutasarrıflığına*); COA, MV.163/15, 11 Mart 1328- 24 March 1912. Minutes of the Council of Ministers Session (*Meclis-i Vükelâ Müzâkerâtına Mahsûs Zabıt Varakasıdır*) ; BEO.4008/300576/Lef 3, 14 Şubat 1327 - 27 February 1912. Cipher telegram from the Province of Beirut - Governor Hâzım (*Beyrut Vilâyetinden gelen şifre - Vâli Hâzım*).

⁴⁵⁷ COA, MV.163/15, 11 Mart 1328- 24 March 1912; BEO.4008/300576/Lef 3, 14 Şubat 1327 - 27 February 1912

population policy that would eventually encompass all Italians in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. The decree was promulgated as a protective measure against the potential targeting and harassment of Italian residents in the region following the incident, which had caused great “sadness and anxiety” (*teessürât ve teheyyücât*). It was declared that all Italian nationals residing within the specified region were required to depart from Ottoman territory within a period of 15 days from the date of the announcement. Failure to comply with this directive would result in the involuntary deportation of the individuals concerned. Moreover, in accordance with the recommendation of Governor Ebûbekir Hâzım Bey, the scope of the decree was expanded on February 27 to encompass Mount Lebanon, which is situated at the most critical point in the region. The rationale behind this decision was that exempting Mount Lebanon, which is adjacent to Beirut, from the expulsion order could potentially encourage the arrival and resettlement of displaced Italians from nearby areas. Furthermore, in consideration of Lebanon’s autonomous status and multi-ethnic government, Governor Hâzım emphasized that “the privileged and sensitive status” (*şekl-i imtiyâzı*) of the sanjak precluded the possibility of such an exception. In other words, while all Italian residents in the Syrian Levant were being deported, those in Lebanon could not be disregarded. On the other hand, in deference to the sensitivities surrounding religious beliefs, Italian priests and nuns residing in monasteries and churches under French protection were exempted from the provisions of the 25 February decree. In response, the German Consulate vehemently protested this one-sided decision, which granted immunity to Italian clergy operating under French protection while expelling those under German protection. In alignment with the German government’s response, the Ottoman authorities expanded the exemption to encompass all Italian clergy within the region, irrespective of the states providing them with protection. A subsequent amendment dated March 25 would ultimately ensure the exemption of all Italian clergy serving at the local level from the scope of the decree.

Archival Image 13: The Supreme Decree of 25 February 1912 stipulated the expulsion of Italian nationals domiciled in the Provinces of Beirut, Syria, Aleppo, and the Sanjaks of Jerusalem and Mount Lebanon and, in an amendment on March 24, exempted all Italian clergymen in the region from expulsion.



Newspaper Image 1: "The bombardment of Beirut caused a severe shock in Turkey but was accepted calmly in France. Will the Italians be subject to expulsion from the Ottoman Empire?," *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, 26 February 1912.

On the evening of February 27, the Ottoman government formally communicated the contents of its decree to the governors of Beirut, Damascus, Aleppo and Jerusalem, as well as to the German Embassy.⁴⁵⁸ Ottoman ambassadors around the world had also received instructions to convey the provisions of the decree to the major powers. According to Italian news outlets, the Italian government expressed both surprise and concern in response to this particular decree. Citing numerous decrees that had been issued and subsequently revoked, *L'Illustrazione Italiana* disparaged the current expulsion order as “a scarecrow with no concrete effect” (*uno spauracchio senza effetto*). Adopting an overtly aggressive tone, the newspaper asserted that the Ottoman government was relying on external factors to mask its cowardice, vulnerability, and hypocrisy. Nevertheless, the article did not hesitate to state that Italy would attempt to utilize every possible means and seize every opportunity to overcome the obstinate attitude of the Ottomans. It has been reported by *L'Italia Centrale* that the expulsion decision is likely to have a significant impact on several hundred Italian workers employed in the construction of the Baghdad railway. The newspaper reported that there was a tendency within the Ottoman cabinet to implement a policy of expulsion against all Italian nationals residing in Turkey. However, a partial model had prevailed by the conclusion of the session. The Italian press published unconfirmed reports that the Ottoman government had intentions to expel certain upper-class and wealthy Italians residing particularly in Istanbul. *La Stampa* asserted that the deportation would be restricted to affluent Italian nobles, with the intention of circumventing a response from socialist factions. It appears that the Italian press was affected by misinformation fueled by rumours lacking factual foundation, resulting in uncertainty and confusion.

⁴⁵⁸“Corriere- Le navi turche distrutte a Beyruth,” *L'illustrazione italiana*, Anno XXXIX, N.9, Marzo 3, 1912, 206,208, accessed July 14, 2025, https://archive.org/details/RAV0070589_1912_00009/mode/2up; “Come furono distrutte nel porto di Beirut dalla Garibaldi e dalla Ferruccio? - Una corazzata costiera ed una torpediniera Turche- Giudizi e preoccupazioni diverse della stampa francese: L'azione dell'Italia è legale ma vi sono gl'interessi francesi-Lo spettro dell'azione navale ridesta l'anima italofofa della stampa europea,” *La Stampa*, Anno XLVI, Num.57, Febbraio 26, 1912, 1-2,6, accessed July 14, 2025, https://archive.org/details/lastampa_1912-02-26/mode/2up; “La Guerra Italo-turca-Il Consiglio dei Ministri ottomano decide l'espulsione degli Italiani della Siria e di Beyruth,” *L'Italia Centrale - Quotidiano Della Democrazia di Reggio Emilia*, Anno L. N.57, Febbraio 27, 1912, 1, accessed July 14, 2025, <https://bdr.bibliotecapanizzi.it/visore2/index.php?pidCollection=italia-centrale:11314&v=-1&pidObject=italia-centrale:50569&returnPage=/Sezione.jsp?idSezione=99>; “Il Bombardamento a Berutti produce,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*; “La brillante azione della nostra flotta a Beirut- I telegrammi dei due ammiragli- La città non fu toccata-Il Mondo intero segue con ansietà la lotta dei minatori d'Inghilterra,” *Giornale di Udine - Quotidiano politico del mattino*, Anno XLVI, N.57, Febbraio 26, 1912,1,3, accessed July 14, 2025, https://archive.org/details/057_GiornaleUdine_26-02-1912; “L'espulsione degli italiani dalla Turchia Asiatica e da Costantinopoli - I commenti della stampa Italiana ed estera sull'affondamento delle due navi turche a Beyruth-La notizia dell'avvenimento di Beyruth provoca l'entusiasmo a Tripoli,” *Giornale di Udine- Quotidiano politico del mattino*, Anno XLVI, N.58, Febbraio 27, 1912, 1,3, accessed July 14, 2025, https://archive.org/details/058_GiornaleUdine_27-02-1912.

Un comizio socialista per la guerra

LIVORNO 26 — Al Politeama, tutto dal partito socialista doveva andare il Comizio protesta contro la guerra e doveva parlare l'avv. Modigliani. Il teatro era pieno di pubblico ma quando l'avv. Modigliani ha cominciato a parlare la folla ha interrotto ed è stato gridato: «Viva l'Italia, viva il Re, viva l'Esercito».

va la Mama. L'avv. Modigliani non
potuto parlare. La polizia ha scelto il
luzio. Intanto fuori del Politeama
avvenuti tafferugli. Sono operati 4 arre-
sti non sono stati mant'nuti. L'avv. Mo-
digliani si è poscia recato alla sede
partito socialista per parlare, ma la fo-
za lo ha impedito continuando a gridare
Viva l'Italia, viva Tripoli. Così il co-
nizio è terminato.

A Milano ieri gli amici di Arrigo Boito e non tutti i milanesi — festeggiavano il maestro che compie il suo settantesimo anno.

E noi, ci associamo con animo e cuore a queste feste, che sono un tributo di alta riconoscenza verso l'uomo illustre nelle sue più diverse manifestazioni: il suo multiforme ingegno artistico, la sua vita, la sua opera, che da cinquant'anni l'Italia.

Orribile disgrazia ad Ancon
splosione di grison a bordo

di vita

ROMA 26 sera

Il «Giornale d'Italia» ha da Anco-
se un'orribile disgrazia è avvenuta sta-
: verso le 7,30.

Oli apprendisti facchini. Sardaella, Ro-
Gianni dai quindici a diciott'anni era
niti sopra un vapore inglese arrivato
nata notte in porto, inglesi. Mi-

Furono raccolti e trasportati all'ospedale ove versano in pericolo di vita.

al Consiglio sup. del Lavoro

PARMA 25 — La «Confederazione» sindacale degli impiegati privati e commercio» (Cisl) ha eletto il suo presidente a Bologna nel settembre scorso, emetteva un comunicato a far parte del «Consiglio superiore del Lavoro» venisse chiamata una congrua rappresentanza della Confederazione stessa.

Inaugurandosi il 26 con la sua prima

« Associazione commessi impiegati ».
« Parma fa voti sia accolta domani
« confederazione generale impiegati pr.
« riflettente rappresentanza classe C
« lo superiore lavoro.

Da Carpi

Maestri di foot-bal

CARPI 26. Domenica scorsa, nel vasto p... fuori porta Mantova, si è sv... l'annunciato match di foot-b... la prima squadra della « Nic...

Applauditi furono gli studenti
macchioni, Gibertoni, Ledi e Fel-
Della « Nicolò Biondo ». Lu-

Fra Libri e Riviste
La Tribuna Teatrale
(Via Salaria - 40 - Roma)
Riprendendo la via - R. Albino

Teatri di Roma: Argilius de Robert

ers decides t

However, according to reflections in the Italian press, there was a palpably different atmosphere in the Ottoman capital regarding the expulsion of the Italians.⁴⁵⁹ The Istanbul-based newspaper *Tanin*, which was regarded as the loyal and hardline voice of the Young Turk government, demanded the immediate and complete expulsion of the Italians from Turkey.⁴⁶⁰ However, those who were expelled should be subject to a substantial war tax before departure, in order to compensate for the damage caused by the Italian army. The news was reported by the *Yeni Gazete*, a more moderate and impartial Istanbul newspaper, without comment and in accordance with the official government line.⁴⁶¹ Report indicated that the Ottoman Council of Ministers, expressing concern over the potential targeting of Italians in the region, has approved the decision to expel them from the three Levant provinces. According to the report published by *Il Piccolo*, which sought to justify these concerns, hundreds of people were amassed in front of the Beirut Governorate. The demonstrators, who issued grave threats against Italian residents, demanded their prompt expulsion by the government. In response to the violent naval offensive, which had targeted innocent civilians indiscriminately in Beirut, reactions took on a more Islamic tone at a certain point and spread to other cities. Similar demonstrations were held in Damascus, Aleppo, Alexandria and even in the Siberian city of Omsk to protest the bombardment and promote the rights of Muslim civilians. In the Mount Lebanon region, which was home to a significant Christian population, 1,500 Muslim individuals, some of whom were armed, mobilized, and pledged to fight in the name of Islam, marched through the streets.

Another salient phase was the manner in which local authorities addressed the crisis until the official decree was issued by the Council of Ministers.⁴⁶² Confronted with this critical situation, the Beirut Provincial Council convened with haste, declared a state of emergency and initiated deliberations on effective measures to quell the crisis. The initial proposal entailed the expulsion of Italians from the lower classes, at least until a decision regarding a general expulsion was reached, with the objective of pacifying the populace. Reports in the press suggest that the major

⁴⁵⁹ “L’impresa di Berutti e le potenze. La Turchia minaccia di far uscire la sua flotta e per intanto espelle gli italiani dalla Soria,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11000, Febbraio 27, 1912, 1, accessed July 15, 2025, https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-27; “Le Vicende della Guerra Turca-Italiana- Le rappresaglie della Turchia dopo il fatto di Berutti e le preoccupazioni delle potenze,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11001, Febbraio 28, 1912,1, accessed July 15, 2025, https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-28.

⁴⁶⁰ “Il bombardamento turco continua! I giornali deplorano l’ambiguità nell’espulsione parziale degli italiani. Il *Tanin* nega ai italiani il coraggio di un nemico leale (!). Perché non osano dice il giornale attaccare Salonico Smirne o le isole? Noi li aspettiamo nei Dardanelli ed a Costantinopoli! Il governo non deve abusare della pazienza del popolo. Tutti gli italiani devono essere immediatamente espulsi dalla Turchia, ma prima essere sottoposti al pagamento di un forte tributo di guerra. Qualora il governo esitasse e sopporterà la responsabilità per tutte le conseguenze.” (The Turkish bombardment continues! The newspapers deplore the ambiguity surrounding the partial expulsion of Italians. The *Tanin* denies the Italians the courage of a fair-fighting enemy (!). Why, the paper asks, do they not dare to attack Thessaloniki, Smyrna or the islands? We await them at the Dardanelles and in Constantinople! The government must not abuse the patience of the people. All Italians must be immediately expelled from Turkey, but first they must be required to pay a heavy war indemnity. Should the government hesitate, it will bear responsibility for all the consequences.) “L’impresa di Berutti,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*.

⁴⁶¹ “Gli italiani espulsi dalla Soria, da Berutti ed Aleppo: La *Yeni Gazete* Dice che il Consiglio dei ministri ha delle varato l’espulsione degli italiani da questi tre vilajet, perché secondo i dispacci dei vali, altrimenti sarebbero da temersi deplorabili avvenimenti.” (Italians Expelled from Soria, Berutti, and Aleppo: The *Yeni Gazete* reports that the Council of Ministers has approved the expulsion of Italians from these three vilayets, because, according to dispatches from the governors, otherwise deplorable events would be to be feared.) “L’impresa di Berutti,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*.

⁴⁶² “L’impresa di Berutti,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*; “Le Vicende della Guerra Turca-Italiana,” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*.

powers were offering the Ottoman government friendly advice not to continue expelling Italians and were trying to dissuade it from carrying out its decision. Conversely, local newspapers and Turkish youth organizations in the Beirut province continued to condemn Italy in stronger terms, increasingly voicing demands for the expulsion of all Italians. Aware that harsh practices against harmless merchants such as the Italo-Levantines would severely damage its reputation in Europe, the Ottoman government adopted a moderate stance as far as possible. In line with this prudent policy, measures to deport Italians would initially be limited to the Syrian provinces where the crisis was ongoing. Nevertheless, precautions would not be neglected, and should Italy launch a new operation on other Ottoman coasts or islands, the geographical scope of these measures would be expanded. Oscillating between two margins, the Ottoman government sought to manage both external pressure from the great powers and internal pressure from nationalist circles. The decision to limit the scope of the expulsion to the Syrian Levant was a strategic one, aimed at both appeasing the internal crisis and circumventing the substantial external pressure. Despite constituting one of the least numerous non-Muslim minority groups within the Ottoman Empire, the political repercussions of a mass expulsion would have far exceeded the initial expectations of the government at that time.



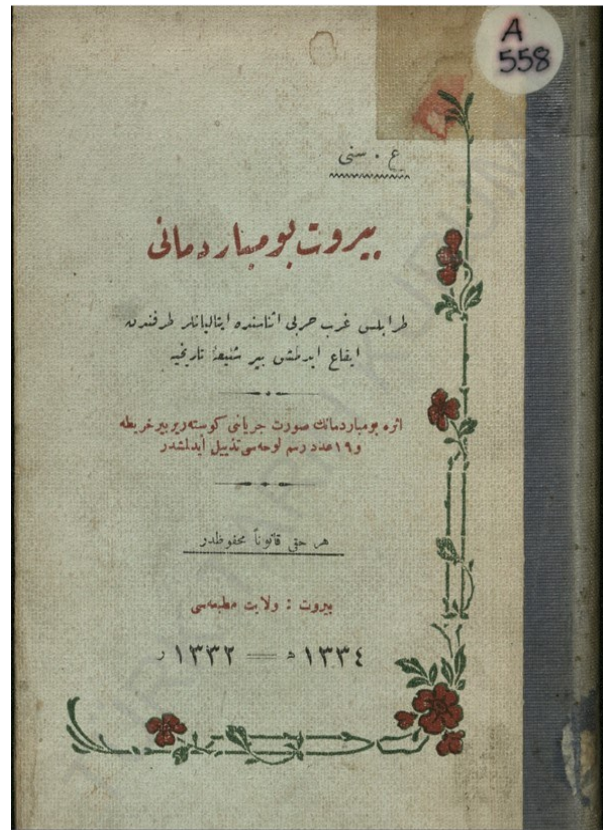
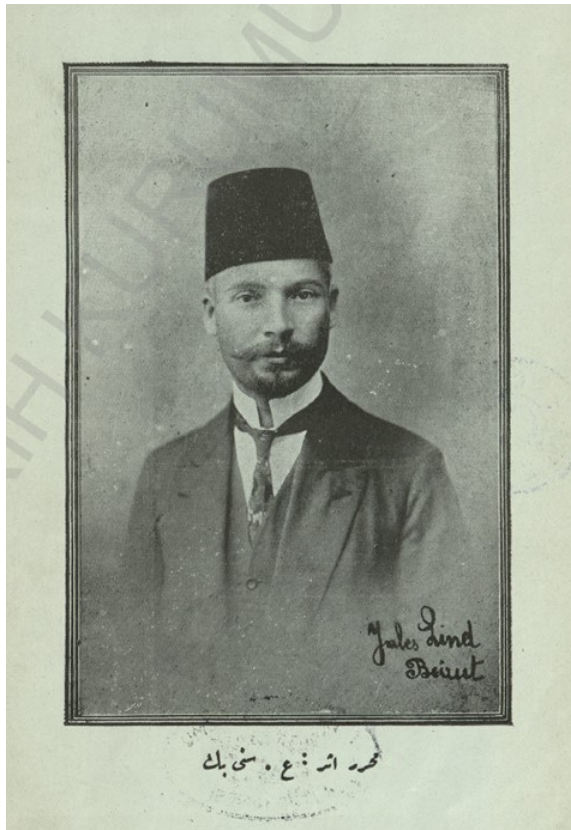
Newspaper Image 3: "The expulsion of Italians from Asian Turkey and Constantinople - Comments from the Italian and foreign press on the sinking of two Turkish ships in Beirut - News of the Beirut incident provokes enthusiasm in Tripoli," *Giornale di Udine*, 27 February 1912.

In the opening days of the Italo-Ottoman War, on 2 October 1911, all Italian nationals residing within Ottoman territory were placed under the political and consular protection of the German government, in accordance with the prevailing legal framework of European states.⁴⁶³ It is therefore evident that the implementation of the expulsion practice necessitated cooperation and coordination between the Ottoman and German Empires. As stated in the report published in the *Die Kölnische Zeitung* newspaper, the bureaucratic and operational implementation of the expulsion process would be carried out in coordination between two governments. In the aftermath of the formal declaration of expulsion by the Ottoman authorities, the German Embassy had disseminated the requisite directives to its consular offices in Syria. The departure of the Italian population would be organized in coordination with local Turkish authorities, and inhumane practices would be strictly avoided during the process. In addition to those protected by the French, the exemption of Italian clergy protected by the Germans from expulsion would be observed with great care. The prevailing sentiment in the Italian press was one of optimism that Germany was prepared to honor its obligations, initially established at the onset of the war, to safeguard Italian citizens residing in the eastern regions.

The book, which consists of anecdotes, observations and comments by Abdülganî Seniyy Bey, who served as Chief Secretary of the Province of Beirut during the bombardment, is the first and still the only independent work dedicated to the incident.⁴⁶⁴ First published in 1916 under the title *Beyrût Bombardımanı: Trablusgarb Harbi Esnasında İtalyanlar Tarafından İka Edilmiş Bir Şenâ-i Tarihiyye* (The Bombardment of Beirut: A Historical Act of Evil Committed by the Italians During the Tripolitanian War), this volume also addressed the expulsion of the Italians from the Syrian provinces. At this particular point, Seniyy Bey's article, which was published on 9 March 1912 in one of the local newspapers in Beirut and has also been quoted in the aforementioned book, deserves meticulous examination. The article, entitled *Karşılıklı İki Ders: Bizden Onlara, Onlardan Bize* (Two Mutual Lessons: From Us to Them, From Them to Us), conveys the Ottoman perspective of reciprocity embodied by the expulsion decree. The author, Seniyy, commenced his article by asserting that the Italian forces were responsible for the deaths of numerous innocent civilians in the war in Tripolitania. He further elaborated that these fatalities were indiscriminate, affecting children, the elderly, the vulnerable, and the sick alike. Fortunately, thanks to the reports of impartial war correspondents, the world had witnessed this tragedy moment by moment. In parallel with these events, observers had noted the compassionate treatment of Italian prisoners of war in Libya by Ottoman soldiers.

⁴⁶³ COA, BEO.3942/295590, 19 Eylül 1327 - 02 October 1911; From the Grand Vizier's Correspondence Office to the Ministries of Interior and Justice (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kaleminden Dâhiliye ve Adliye Nezâretlerine*); "Il bombardamento di Berutti: La Francia riconosce il diritto dell'Italia- L'espulsione degli italiani dalla Soria- I provvedimenti dell'ambasciata germanica," *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11003, Marzo 01, 1912, 1, accessed July 16, 2025, https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-03-01; "Il filo della politica," *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11005, Marzo 03, 1912, 1, accessed July 16, 2025, https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-03-03.

⁴⁶⁴ Seniyy, *Beyrût Bombardımanı*, 56-60.



Book Image 1-2: Chief Secretary of the Beirut Province, Abdülğanî Seniyy Bey, and the cover of his book titled “The Bombardment of Beirut,” Seniyy, *Beyrût Bombardımanı*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Kütüphanesi, <https://kutuphane.ttk.gov.tr/resource?itemId=258278&dkymId=1291>.

Seniyy further contended that the Ottoman government possessed the prerogative to promptly expel all Italian nationals from its territory.⁴⁶⁵ This was a perfectly legitimate response to the brutal Italian attacks targeting the sacred Ottoman homeland, stretching from Libya to Beirut. Moreover, given that this was a fundamental right recognized in international treaties, it would have been inconceivable for any of the major global powers to have objected to the Ottoman authorities exercising this right. According to Seniyy, by refraining from exercising this right until now, the Ottoman Empire had provided a lesson in civilization to the Italians and elevated its moral standing in the view of the entire European continent. However, following the inhumane bombardment of the port of Beirut, the Ottoman Empire could no longer demonstrate patience or remain indifferent. At the very least, the expulsion clause should have been partially enforced against the so-called “civilized” Italy, which had massacred nearly two hundred innocent people in Beirut.

At this juncture, Seniyy drew attention to the discrepancy between the two practices by comparing the inadequate 20-minute ultimatum given prior to the bombardment with the 15-day deadline given for deportation.⁴⁶⁶ The Italian Admiral Thaon di Revel, who had adopted a particularly ruthless stance, granted the governor a mere 20 minutes before proceeding with the

⁴⁶⁵ Seniyy, *Beyrût Bombardımanı*, 56-60.

⁴⁶⁶ Seniyy, *Beyrût Bombardımanı*, 56-60.

naval shelling. He then issued a command for the opening of fire upon a considerable number of innocent civilians in the port, who were within the range of the telescope. Notwithstanding these hostile circumstances, the Ottoman government had demonstrated leniency regarding the stipulated deadline, granting Italian citizens residing in Syrian territory a period of 15 days to depart. Following the promulgation of the expulsion decree by the Council of Ministers and its subsequent official announcement by the Governor's Office, a large-scale departure of Italian residents from the city had ensued. This mass departure was characterized by profound sorrow, as Italians abandoned their professional and personal lives in Beirut, leaving behind their jobs, businesses, and homes. Nevertheless, Seniyy Bey particularly stressed that the departing Italians were never subjected to “any form of insult or act of revenge” (*muâmele-i hakaret ve intikam*) by the grieving people of Beirut and were not left without assistance until the very last moment.



Newspaper Image 4: Governor General of Beirut, Hâzım Bey “When Beirut was bombarded by the Italians last February, Hâzım Bey’s composure, fortitude, and self-sacrifice earned him the admiration and respect of everyone, both local and foreign.” *Şehbâl*, aded 49, 01 Mart 1328 (14 March 1912), 2, <https://digitale-sammlungen.ulb.uni-bonn.de/ulbbnioa/periodical/pageview/3179388>.

William Henry Beehler, the author of one of the earliest and extensively accepted studies on the Italo-Turkish War, argued that the decree affected 60,000 Italian residents in the region and was immediately implemented in the relevant provinces.⁴⁶⁷ Nevertheless, an article entitled *L'espulsione degli italiani sarebbe in pratica sospesa* (The expulsion of Italians would in practice be suspended), quoted by Daniela Caglioti from the 29 February 1912 issue of *Corriere della Sera*, indicated that the implementation had been postponed. Caglioti's analysis, drawing on a range of sources, asserts that the Ottoman government, acting on the counsel of various diplomats, opted to defer the implementation of the decree. Notwithstanding, Caglioti also notes that on 20 May 1912, an imperial decree was issued with regard to the actual expulsion of all Italians from the Ottoman Empire. Announced in retaliation for Italy's bombing of the Dardanelles, its occupation of the Dodecanese, and its general attitude throughout the war, the decree cited newspaper reports of Italian atrocities in Libya and North Africa as justification. Recognizing the escalating tensions within the Ottoman populace ignited by these reports, the government was compelled to take this decision, citing its inability to guarantee the safety of Italian nationals within the country.

The initial response of the Ottoman government was to grant Italian civilians a period of 14 days; however, this was subsequently extended to a duration of 30 days.⁴⁶⁸ Furthermore, the decree exempted members of religious orders, the impoverished individuals, doctors and surgeons, widows, and workers, particularly those employed in the railways. By 28 May 1912, 5,000 of the approximately 6,000 Italians in Izmir had departed and were dispersed to Italian ports, Greece, the Balkans, the Black Sea coast, and the Americas. In citing *Corriere della Sera*, Caglioti further observes that, with Italians in Istanbul and Salonika also having joined this wave, German consulates had issued 750 collective passports for a total of 18,000 Italians as of May 30. Despite the option of avoiding expulsion through Ottoman naturalization being offered, very few Italians accepted it. By June 20, the Italian population in Western Anatolia had dwindled to a minimum. Italy, which rejected the accusations of atrocities and declared the Ottoman expulsion decision inhumane, demonstrated its response by intensifying its military occupation of the Dodecanese, rather than softening its stance. The Giolitti government utilized this process as a vehicle for propaganda, with the aim of enhancing the nation's international reputation and fostering social mobilization during the war. Refugees arriving at Italian ports such as Naples, Brindisi, and Ancona were greeted with great enthusiasm by the populace, and by the end of October, approximately 9,000 Italian expellees had been repatriated to their homeland.

A recent and original contribution to the issue of the expulsion of Italians from the Ottoman Empire is Daniela De Lorentiis's chapter, titled *Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano. Il fondo "Contenzioso" del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (1911-1913)* (Italians Expelled from the Ottoman Empire. The "Litigation" Fund of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1911-1913).⁴⁶⁹ De Lorentiis's rewarding work, which she characterizes as a "work in progress" in all respects, draws attention to the complexity of the expulsion phenomenon through a meticulous archival study based on the *Contenzioso* fund. In addressing the measures taken by both the Italian and

⁴⁶⁷ William Henry Beehler, *The History of the Italian-Turkish War: September 29, 1911, to October 18, 1912* (Annapolis, MD: The Advertiser-Republican, 1913), 58-59; Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*, 65-66.

⁴⁶⁸ Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*, 66-67.

⁴⁶⁹ De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 44-45.

Ottoman governments following the outbreak of the Italo-Ottoman War, the chapter highlights the package of measures targeting Italian citizens living in the Ottoman Empire. These measures encompassed a range of strategic actions, including boycotts, the suspension of the capitulation regime, a decree of mass expulsion, and subsequent emigration operations from Ottoman territories.

Drawing upon Italian archival sources, De Lorentiis asserts that the Sublime Porte had issued repeated warnings of mass deportation against Italians since the outbreak of war.⁴⁷⁰ She observes that the Ottoman government had taken its first decision on expulsion as early as October 1911, and that this had been swiftly reflected in the Ottoman press. According to this scenario, which is based on Ottoman internal political dynamics, the Minister of the Interior, who was also a member of the Committee of Union and Progress, had encouraged the Grand Vizier and other members of the cabinet to adopt expulsion. According to De Lorentiis's findings, the Committee sought to re-establish its waning influence in numerous provinces and demonstrate to the public that it was not remaining passive in the face of Italian initiatives. However, owing to the mediation of the German ambassador to Istanbul, Marschall von Bieberstein, the execution of this measure was temporarily suspended. This was due to the belief held by Bieberstein that the expulsion of 80,000 Italian citizens and the boycotting of Italian goods would not be considered a declaration of war on Italy. Noting that the Ottoman government had never completely abandoned this decision, De Lorentiis cites a memorandum sent by Foreign Minister Mustafa Asım Bey to all embassies in the empire in February 1912:

[...] Your Highness (Your Excellency) is well aware that the Imperial Government has not yet exercised all its rights of war. In a spirit of moderation and conciliation, and in accordance with certain advice, we have authorized Italian citizens to remain in the Empire. But since Italy is expanding the scope of its aggression every day, we no longer see any point in postponing measures that are within our power to implement, such as the expulsion of all Italians without exception. It seems that our right to resort to this measure cannot be ignored [...]⁴⁷¹

De Lorentiis posits that the expulsion measure, implemented at various times and in different forms in different provinces of the empire, reached its zenith with the 21 May 1912 Cabinet Decree (*Irade*).⁴⁷² In this segment of the text, she also introduces the term *xenelasia* – a concept derived from Ancient Greek – which denotes the planned and systematic expulsion of foreigners. De Lorentiis's findings, based on reports from the Italian Embassy in Istanbul in March 1912, suggest that the first expulsions occurred in Middle Eastern regions such as Aleppo. However, Italy's military operation in the Aegean in April 1912, the subsequent establishment of naval bases in the Dodecanese, and the Italian conquest of Rhodes between May 4 and 17 served to encourage the expansion of the practice. Immediately thereafter, the

⁴⁷⁰ De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 51-53.

⁴⁷¹ [...] Votre Altesse (Votre Excellence) sait bien que Gouvernement Impérial n'a pas usé jusqu'ici de tous ses droits de guerre nous avons, dans un esprit de modération et de conciliation et en obéissant à certains conseils, autorisé séjour des particuliers italiens dans l'Empire. Mais puisque l'Italie élargit tous les jours champ de ses agressions, nous ne voyons plus aucune utilité d'ajourner mesures qu'il est en notre pouvoir d'appliquer, telles que expulsion de tous les Italiens sans exception. Il semble que notre droit à recourir à cette mesure ne saurait être méconnu [...]

⁴⁷² De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 52-54.

Ottoman government proceeded to implement a decree for the collective expulsion of all Italian nationals residing within the imperial territories, with a stipulated timeframe of 15 days.

As McCollum notes, the expulsion practice was adopted by the Ottomans as a response to Italian aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean, and as a means to dissuade Rome from expanding the scope of its military activities.⁴⁷³ He interprets the Ottomans' resort to this practice as a significant shift in the empire's public relations campaign toward Europe. Having initially endorsed Bieberstein's proposition of avoiding expulsion to gain the sympathy of Europe, the Sublime Porte had now begun to pursue a policy of strategic flexibility. This policy entailed responding in ways that suited its own interests and legitimizing its actions as retaliatory. According to McCollum, the Sublime Porte's rhetoric had now concentrated on excluding European powers rather than involving them in the conflict, and on securing its own freedom of movement. In this sense, the Ottomans' declaration of the expulsion of the Levantine Italians could merely be regarded as a form of justification rather than a call for intervention. The circular addressed to the European powers connected the expulsions to the attack on the port of Beirut and the apparent violation of international law, particularly the explicit provisions of the Hague Conventions. Condemning the actions of Italy, the Ottoman Empire unequivocally asserted its right to expel Italian nationals, rather than requesting European assistance or intervention.

However, the circular issued for the comprehensive expulsion on May 25 employed a stronger and more decisive tone to disparage Italian war efforts, asserting that Italian forces, unable to achieve victory, had resorted to unlawful and ruthless methods.⁴⁷⁴ According to McCollum, the enumeration of Italy's alleged illegal actions was a discourse that disregarded European intervention instead of inviting it, thereby justifying the unilateralism and limitlessness of Ottoman actions. The Sublime Porte provided justification for the expulsion measure taken against the Italians by reference to "the anger felt by the entire Ottoman nation against all Italians without distinction." Among those expelled or at risk of expulsion were numerous Ottoman residents who had obtained Italian protection, including Sephardic Jews. As McCollum asserts, upon realizing that external enemies could not be defeated, the Ottoman Empire redirected its focus to internal enemies. The discourse of unity, civilization and international law that once united the Ottomans and Europeans around the same territorial integrity was now becoming the justification for expulsions.

On the other hand, the date of the mass expulsion decree, to which Caglioti refers as May 20, De Lorentiis as May 21 and McCollum as May 25, is documented as May 22 in official Italian sources. At this juncture, the incorporation of *La Libia, negli atti del Parlamento e nei provvedimenti del governo* (Libya, in Parliamentary Proceedings and Government Measures) into this analysis would provide a more sophisticated and insightful perspective.⁴⁷⁵ As a highly reliable source on the subject, the publication contains Italian parliamentary minutes and government decrees in relation to Libya between April 30 and December 31, 1912. In the aftermath of the complete occupation of the Dodecanese – particularly Rhodes – by Italy, the Ottoman government issued an expulsion decree on 22 May 1912 and notified foreign state

⁴⁷³ McCollum, "The Anti-Colonial Empire," 51-53.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali [Il Presidente del Consiglio Direttivo: Alfredo Capece Minutolo di Bugnano], ed., *La Libia, negli atti del Parlamento e nei provvedimenti del Governo, Parte terza (30 aprile 1912-31 dicembre 1912)* (Milano: Tipografia-Editoria e Libreria Luigi di Giacomo Pirola, 1913), 822-823.

representatives via a formal note. The decree stipulated that all Italian men, with the exception of women and religious officials, were required to depart from Ottoman territory within a period of 15 days. In order to justify this decision, the Ottoman side primarily alleged that Italian forces had committed massacres and deportations against the population of Tripoli and bombed open cities under the pretext of sinking Ottoman warships. The bombardment of coastal settlements such as Dardanelles on April 18 and Kuşadası on April 20 were particularly prominent among the reasons cited. The Ottoman note also alleged that bombs had been dropped on civilians and ambulances from Italian aircraft and zeppelins, and that an Ottoman hospital ship named *Kaiserie* had been unlawfully seized by the Italian navy. Moreover, it was asserted that in the aftermath of the occupation of the Dodecanese, prominent Rhodians and influential officials were taken prisoner, while the Muslim population residing on the islands was subjected to considerable pressure.

The Italian government issued an official statement on 1 June 1912, categorically denying all of the claims made in the Ottoman note.⁴⁷⁶ Firstly, it was not accurate to claim that thousands of Tripoli residents had been massacred and exiled. However, in the aftermath of the October 1911 uprising, a number of Tripoli residents have been executed following judicial trials, while others have been transferred to Italy for reasons related to security. Furthermore, the bombardments that were carried out targeted enemy ships, barracks, military installations, and combatant groups, rather than Ottoman open cities, civilian populations, or ambulances. According to the Italian naval inspection, the *Kaiserie* ship had been found to be in violation of the applicable regulations and to be sailing for war purposes. The ship had therefore been captured and subsequently taken to Massawa with its crew. The Italian denial proffered a number of justifications and refutations regarding the claims concerning the Dodecanese. It was accurate to state that a limited number of officials and dignitaries in Rhodes had been detained. However, this was a legal retaliation against members of the Italian mineralogical mission and Italian citizens who had been detained in Ottoman territory, even though they had no connection to the war. Furthermore, the Italian statement asserted that all residents of the occupied islands had been treated equally and humanely by Italian authorities, irrespective of their religious affiliation. No measures have been implemented to prevent the Muslim population from freely practicing their religion, professions and trade; on the contrary, food aid has been provided to impoverished Muslims.

The statement asserted that, despite the Italian government's lack of ratification of the Hague Convention, its actions had been in accordance with international law throughout the war.⁴⁷⁷ According to allegations, Arabs who had rebelled under the command and incitement of Turkish officers in Libya had displayed unprecedented brutality against Italian soldiers. Furthermore, the peaceful Italians had been subjected to innumerable attacks, harassment, oppression, and dispossession until they were collectively expelled from the empire. Confronted with the stringent Ottoman practices, the Italian government has maintained its composure, consistently prioritizing humanitarian values. As is apparent from this statement, Italy was striving to present itself to the global public as a nation that effectively complied with the Hague Conventions, demonstrated humanitarian values, and respected the principles of law

⁴⁷⁶ Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali, *La Libia*, 822-823.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

and order. Conversely, it depicted the Ottoman administration as an entity characterized by its illegality, retribution, and uncivilized conduct.

De Lorentiis's findings indicate that German Ambassador Bieberstein and Carlo Garbasso, First Secretary of the Italian Legation in Istanbul, who served as Acting Ambassador during the war, had collaborated to prevent the expulsion operations from taking place amid chaos and panic.⁴⁷⁸ This concern was predicated on the fact that the Ottoman press had been disseminating reports that Italians who insisted on remaining after June 8 would be involuntarily expelled. Senior Italian diplomats, appointed by Foreign Minister San Giuliano, expeditiously initiated the organization of the repatriation process, and on the evening of May 21, a vessel carrying 400 Italians departed from Izmir for Naples. According to Reuters, within a period of seven days, the number of exiles departing from the same city reached 5,000. In the following days, French, Austrian, and Russian ships were chartered to reach the ports of Bari, Brindisi, Venice, Genoa, Palermo, Catania, and Ancona from Istanbul and Piraeus. The precise number of exiles who departed during this period remains uncertain, as the Italian government furnished the exiles with travel vouchers, thereby granting them the autonomy to select the vessel and the departure date. Free transportation was provided for impoverished refugees, who also received a daily allowance of 10 francs to cover food expenses during their journey. The priority was to facilitate the expeditious departure of the exiles, in small groups, if necessary, with a view to preventing them from being subjected to additional scrutiny by Ottoman authorities. Indeed, according to the claims of passengers who arrived at their destinations on the Italian peninsula, Ottoman police had caused many difficulties and had attempted to derail the evacuation operations.

In an immediate response to the Ottoman expulsion decree, the Giolitti Government convened the Ministerial Commission for Expellees (*Commissione ministeriale pro-espulsi*) on the following day.⁴⁷⁹ In accordance with the ministerial decree issued on May 23, the Central Relief Commission for the Italians Expelled from Turkey (*Commissione di assistenza agli italiani espulsi dalla Turchia*) was officially established. The founding purpose of the commission was stated as the provision of financial, housing, and employment assistance to the Italians expelled. The commission, which comprised representatives from various ministries, including immigration, foreign affairs, public health, public works, and state railways, was presided over by Giovanni Gallina, who was at the time Commissioner General for Immigration. The primary objective of the institution was to facilitate the rapid placement and employment of Italians expelled from Ottoman territory, in addition to providing temporary assistance to those in need. Authorized as a central government body to achieve this objective with greater expediency, the commission was entrusted with the collection and distribution of donations from private individuals and public entities.

De Lorentiis emphasises that the commission's activities were coordinated and executed simultaneously along both the Bulgarian and Serbian borders, as well as within the Italian territory.⁴⁸⁰ She notes that the initial reception centers were established in Naples and Brindisi and subsequently expanded to encompass additional port cities and inland regions. Moreover, the structures were erected with a capacity and style designed to accommodate families, with the objective of preventing individuals from dispersing and encouraging their mutual

⁴⁷⁸ De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 53-56.

⁴⁷⁹ Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali, *La Libia*, 824.

⁴⁸⁰ De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 61.

assistance. Noting that the Immigrants' Home in Naples set a benchmark by hosting the first 1,250 exiles arriving in Italy from May 24, De Lorentiis adds that facilities of varying capacities in Bari, Catania, Milan, Palermo, Turin, and Verona followed suit. Furthermore, smaller but equally efficient shelters were established in Ancona, Trani, Rome, Livorno, and Genoa, with support provided by hotels and private lodgings. On the other hand, the activities of the Central Commission were supported to a large extent by municipal administrations. In the majority of cities where reception centers were established, local committees were also set up to provide clothing, footwear, and various forms of assistance to those who had been expelled. On June 18, Acting Ambassador Carlo Garbasso dispatched the following telegram to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

"[...] the mass exodus from Constantinople can be considered over. The last steamship chartered for Naples leaves tonight. From now on, I will direct workers coming from the interior to Genoa, Venice, and, subordinately, to Bari. To prevent unpleasant incidents such as the arrest of royal subjects who have not yet left, in agreement with the German chargé d'affaires, I have proposed to the General Directorate of the Sublime Porte that, starting tomorrow, the 19th of this month, the royal subjects who have remained here or who are not entitled to exemption be taken to the German Consulate and from there to the Italian hospital, from where they will be sent to Italy as soon as possible. [...] This does not apply to workers arriving from the interior, as they are not affected by the eviction and will be free to embark without hindrance."⁴⁸¹

During the relevant parliamentary sessions, the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Pietro Lanza di Scalea, presented an activity report detailing the measures taken and actions implemented in the previous process regarding this issue.⁴⁸² Since the outbreak of the Italo-Ottoman War, a significant number of Italian refugees and expellees have arrived from the Ottoman Empire and have been provided with considerable financial assistance. It was noted that the Italian government had taken swift action in response to the expulsion of Italians from Beirut, Izmir, and subsequently from Aydın by the Ottoman government. German consulates in the Ottoman Empire and royal offices at ports of arrival in Cyprus, Egypt, and Greece had been endowed with extensive powers to provide prompt assistance according to immediate needs. Italian consular agents in Greece, Cyprus, and Alexandria, Egypt, as well as the Italian embassy in Athens, had been instructed to provide all necessary assistance to Italian refugees in a timely and comprehensive manner. In anticipation of a substantial influx of refugees in Piraeus, an aid committee was constituted by the Italian colony in Athens, with an Italian aid organization in Athens receiving financial support from the Italian government. Members of the Emigration Commission had been dispatched to the Ottoman-Bulgarian border to receive refugees arriving by land and to provide them with urgent assistance. Furthermore, directives had been issued to the Emigration Office for Land Borders in Milan, instructing the expeditious employment of

⁴⁸¹ "[...] esodo di massa da Costantinopoli si può ritenere finito. Parte stasera l'ultimo piroscampo già noleggiato per Napoli. D'ora innanzi dirigerò gli operai che venissero dall'interno a Genova, Venezia e subordinatamente a Bari. A prevenire spiacevoli incidenti quali l'arresto di regi sudditi che ancora non fossero partiti, d'accordo con questo incaricato d'affari di Germania, ho fatto proporre a questa Direzione Generale della Sublime Porta che a partire da domani 19 corrente, i regi sudditi qui rimasti o che non hanno diritto all'esenzione, vengano condotti al Consolato di Germania e di là all'ospedale italiano donde verranno fatti partire al più presto per l'Italia. [...] ne sono esclusi gli operai che giungono dall'interno perché non colpiti dallo sfratto che verranno lasciati liberi di imbarcarsi indisturbati."

⁴⁸² Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali, *La Libia*, 825-826.

workers arriving from the Ottoman Empire in suitable positions. Coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture had been established, with an employment inspector being appointed to Naples. Finally, a circular was dispatched to the governors of Venice, Ancona, Bari, Lecce, Syracuse, Catania, Messina, Naples, Livorno, and Genoa. The circular contained the following instruction:

“Please arrange that Italians expelled from Turkey who arrive at this port are promptly granted, if requested, the means to return to their places of origin and are assisted in obtaining passports for foreign travel, should they intend to emigrate again for work purposes. If refugees remain in the Kingdom, please notify the mayors of the municipalities to which they are directed, with a request to make every effort to find them work”⁴⁸³

The scope of the parliamentary debates surrounding the Central Relief Commission demonstrated that this project extended far beyond the scope of a mere foreign policy issue. The aid collected and distributed for Italian expatriates was also used as a rhetorical device to unite the Italian domestic public around nationalist sentiments. In the context of parliamentary debates, the expelled Italians were lauded as exemplars of loyalty, honor, and self-sacrifice. Conversely, the Ottoman Empire was depicted in a negative light, employing orientalist and derogatory terms to do so. Consequently, the Central Relief Commission, which possessed significance extending beyond the military aspect of the war, had evolved into a powerful propaganda instrument reflecting the imperialist and nationalist ethos of the era.

During this process, the Italian Parliament received an extensive number of questions and interpellations concerning the situation of Italian citizens expelled from Ottoman territories during the Italo-Ottoman War.⁴⁸⁴ For instance, there were heated debates surrounding German consular protection and the capitulatory regime in the context of expulsion, and the government chose to remain silent on the matter. The motion put forward by Deputy Barzilai sought to call into question Germany’s commitment to the protection of Italian citizens within the Ottoman Empire, with a particular emphasis on the stance adopted by the German consul in Izmir in this regard. At this juncture, a historical reference was made to Germany’s active protection of Russian subjects in Istanbul during the Russo-Turkish War of 1876 and its recognition of Russians as German citizens. However, according to Barzilai, Germany, now focused on major economic interests such as railway projects, was pursuing a more opportunistic and cautious stance. It is evident that there was considerable discontent within the Italian parliament with regard to German consular protection. Another deputy, Colonna di Cesarò, emphasized that the capitulations were not bilateral agreements, but rather a permanent and general legal regime applicable to all European foreigners residing in the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, he implied that the right of Italians to reside in Ottoman territory could not be revoked by a unilateral Ottoman decree. Colonna di Cesarò further questioned the measures that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had taken, or planned to take, to protect the rights of Italians in the face of this general expulsion, which violated the capitulation regime. As can be deduced from the parliamentary questions, the capitulations were not regarded as being confined to the Ottoman-Italian relations; but were also contemplated within the framework of the German-Austrian-

⁴⁸³ “Prego V. S. disporre che ad italiani espulsi dalla Turchia che giungeranno codesto porto siano prontamente, se richiesti, concessi mezzi rimpatrio luoghi origine ed agevolate pratiche concessione passaporto per estero, ove essi intendessero nuovamente espatriare a scopo lavoro. Qualora profughi restino nel Regno, ne avverta sindaci comuni cui sono diretti, con preghiera di adoperarsi per procurare loro lavoro.”

⁴⁸⁴ Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali, *La Libia*, 828-830.

Italian Triple Alliance. However, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Di Scalea declined to respond to either of these two parliamentary questions, citing wartime conditions and international sensitivities.

The parliamentary debates that transpired during this process demonstrated that the social and economic challenges emanating from the repatriation of expelled Italians were being addressed by the government as a humanitarian and national duty.⁴⁸⁵ The proposal to dispatch Italian workers expelled from the Ottoman Empire to Sardinia as a source of fresh labour is indicative of this phenomenon. The proposal was presented as a pragmatic solution with regard to both the integration of refugees and the development of neglected regions. Parliamentary debates also addressed the question of whether to suspend prosecutions and prevent the arrest of expelled Italians for crimes such as desertion and insubordination. A further issue that was raised was that of the Italian expellees, who were reportedly left hungry and mistreated on the *Messaggerie Marittime* ship during their journey from Istanbul to Genoa. This allegation gave rise to a greater level of criticism regarding the state's capacity to protect its citizens, and the slowness of the official investigation led to significant public outcry. On the other hand, Italian health professionals who had been expelled from the Ottoman Empire were granted provisional authorization to practice their professions in the Kingdom of Italy, on the condition that they had previously registered their diplomas. The provision applied to Italians working as doctors, surgeons, veterinarians, dentists, pharmacists, or midwives in Ottoman territories who had obtained their diplomas from Ottoman institutions. On 25 July 1912, a Royal Decree was issued, authorizing these individuals to practice their professions in Italian territory for a period of six months. Such initiatives demonstrated that the Italian state, both for humanitarian reasons and in the public interest, suspended the normal legal order and resorted to exceptional and temporary regulations.

Concluding her analysis, De Lorentiis poses two key questions: firstly, whether an alternative to the expulsion policy existed, and secondly, what policies the Ottoman and Italian governments adopted to manage the consequences of this decision.⁴⁸⁶ In the final days of May, when the expulsion operations had reached their peak, the Ottoman State offered Italian subjects the option of Ottoman naturalization, should they wish to remain in the Empire rather than being expelled. Furthermore, following the conclusion of the war, in January 1913, the Italian Embassy disseminated a circular to all consulates in the Ottoman Empire, requesting the names of Italians who had acquired Ottoman citizenship during the war. The regions with the highest number of citizenship changes were Istanbul with 209 people, Izmir with 182 people, Edirne with 29 people, and Salonica with 22 people. Furthermore, four Italian subjects had become Austrian citizens, while one had become a German citizen. De Lorentiis states that a total of approximately 500 Italians adopted Ottoman naturalization for various reasons, primarily to avoid losing their jobs. The author also observes that this sensitive process occasionally assumed a controversial character. For instance, Marco Levi, an Italian resident of Izmir, was expelled from the Empire in May 1912, remained in Alexandria until the end of the war, and returned to Izmir on November 13. Nevertheless, in the meantime, he was declared an Ottoman citizen without his consent or knowledge.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 830-836.

⁴⁸⁶ De Lorentiis, "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano," 58-59.

5.2. The 1915, 1916, and 1918 Population Censuses Covering Italian Residents

The extensive and sophisticated census conducted by the Kingdom of Italy in 1871 for the global Italian diaspora was the subject of discussion in the second chapter, which concentrated on the demographic origins and distribution of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. This section, however, is based on the manual compilation of province-based censuses conducted by the Ottoman government in 1915, 1916, and 1918, specifically targeting Italian residents. Following the Kingdom of Italy's entry into the war on 23 May 1915, through its declaration of war on Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire directed its attention towards Italian nationals within its territory on May 30. Exactly one year later, on 12 August 1916, the Ottoman central government conducted a further census of Italian nationals. The motivation behind this action was threefold: firstly, the need for precise management of enemy alien status; secondly, the increased importance of internal security conditions; and thirdly, the tightening of economic control. Nevertheless, it should be noted that wartime censuses may have yielded inconsistent figures, attributable to both population movements precipitated by the war and bureaucratic difficulties faced by authorities. Consequently, the interpretation of the demographic transformation of the Italians within the Ottoman Empire could only be made within the limits imposed by archival documents and within the scope of the wartime demographics reported by the governors. Within this framework, observations and remarks provided by governors regarding Italian residents within their respective jurisdictions have particularly been included.

On both 30 May 1915 and 12 August 1916, Interior Minister Talât Pasha disseminated a cyphered circular to all provinces and independent sanjaks, requesting governors to report the number of Italian nationals residing within their respective jurisdictions.⁴⁸⁷ Although both circulars stipulated the requirement for population figures to be reported “separately for men and women,” (*zükûr ve inas ayrı ayrı olarak*) the 1916 circular was further categorized and disseminated to two recipient groups, distinguishing between coastal and inland provinces. This was due to the fact that “the number of Italians residing in coastal settlements and nearby towns” (*bunlardan ne mikdârının sevâhil ve sevâhile civar kasabalarda bulunduğunun*) was also specifically requested. Nevertheless, both circulars excluded the Provinces of Hejaz and Yemen with the Sanjaks of Asir and Medine-i Münevvere, where the presence of Italian subjects was highly improbable, from the list of recipients. Moreover, while the 1915 ministerial circular specifically requested the ages of individuals, the 1916 circular did not include such a request. In accordance with this, a series of telegrams from specific provinces in the 1915 census furnished information on the ages of each resident to the greatest extent possible. In other cases, residents were categorized into groups such as under 17/20 years old, between 17/20 and 50 years old, and over 50 years old. However, to avoid any potential confusion or complication, as the telegrams were sometimes irregular or incomplete, it was deemed inappropriate to include

⁴⁸⁷ COA, DH.ŞFR.53/165, 17 Mayıs 1331 – 30 Mayıs 1915. Coded telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Governorates of Edirne, Erzurum, Adana, Aydın, Bitlis, Basra, Bağdad, Beirut, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Diyarbakir, Syria, Sivas, Trabzon, Kastamonu, Konya, Ma'mûretü'l-Azîz, Musul, Van, and the Mutasarrifates of Urfa, Karahisar-ı Sâhib, İçil, Kütahya, Canik, Çatalca, Zor, Karesi, Jerusalem, Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Menteşe, Teke, Kayseri, Niğde, Eskişehir and Maraş. DH.ŞFR.66/236, 30 Temmuz 1332- 12 Ağustos 1916. From the Ministry of the Interior to the Governorates of Ankara, Diyarbakir, Syria, Sivas, Konya, Ma'mûretü'l-Azîz, Musul and the Mutasarrifates of Urfa, İzmit, Zor, Kayseri, Kütahya, Karahisar-ı Sâhib, Niğde, Eskişehir, Maraş; DH.ŞFR.66/237, 30 Temmuz 1332 - 12 August 1916. Coded telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Governorates of Edirne, Adana, Aydın, Beirut, Aleppo, Hüdâvendigâr, Trabzon, Kastamonu, and the Mutasarrifates of İzmit, Bolu, Canik, Çatalca, Karesi, Jerusalem, Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Menteşe, Teke, and İçil.

age profiles in the following tables. As will be discussed in the sections on the relocation and resettlement of Italians, the Ottoman government requested this census to obtain information regarding the population density and geographical distribution of Italians during wartime conditions. Coastal regions were conducive to communication, collaboration, and espionage activities with hostile elements. Consequently, the government sought to prevent Italians from having any access to enemy's naval forces. The Ottoman authorities were also concerned about their proximity to railway routes, which had acquired a military character during wartime, and to other non-Muslim elements, particularly Christians. In this context, Italians residing along the coast, railway corridors, and in areas intermingled with other non-Muslim populations were to be subject to compulsory relocation to designated cities in the interior of Anatolia, such as Kastamonu and Çorum.

To circumvent any potential ambiguity, all archival documents amassed and utilized for the 1915 and 1916 censuses have been meticulously catalogued and consolidated within their respective footnotes.⁴⁸⁸ The data for each province has been subjected to a rigorous analytical process involving their synthesis and tabulation according to geographical and gender-based breakdowns. The first table from the 1915 census indicates that Izmir, the cosmopolitan port city of the Aydın Province, had the highest Italian population of 3,366 among all locations. While this was reasonably anticipated, the omission of Istanbul from the 1915 and 1916 censuses is a matter of intrigue. Despite extensive research, no correspondence, request, or report regarding the census of Italians in Istanbul was found in the archival documents of the period. The absence of the city's name in Talât Pasha's circulars, which divided the provinces into coastal and interior regions, suggests that the 1915 and 1916 censuses focused exclusively

⁴⁸⁸ COA, DH.ŞFR.474/25, 23 Mayıs 1331 - 05 June 1915 (from the Governor of Adana, Hakkı); DH.ŞFR.474/69, 25 Mayıs 1331 - 07 June 1915 (from the Chief Secretary of the Adana Province, Memduh); DH.ŞFR.473/65, 19 Mayıs 1331- 01 June 1915 (from the Governor of Aydın, Rahmi); DH.ŞFR.473/103, 20 Mayıs 1331- 02 June 1915 (from the Governor of Beirut, Bekir Sâmî); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 4, 05 Teşrînievvel 1331 - 18 October 1915 (from the Deputy Governor of Edirne, Zekeriya); DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 5, 14 Teşrînisânî 1331- 27 November 1915 (In the name of the Governor of Edirne, Kadî); DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 9 (from the American Embassy to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs); DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 11, 31 Teşrînievvel 1331- 13 November 1915 (from the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Edirne Governorate); DH.ŞFR.474/98, 26 Mayıs 1331 - 8 June 1915; DH.ŞFR.475/69, 1 Haziran 1331 - 14 June 1915 (from the Governor of Aleppo, Celâl); DH.ŞFR.474/30, 23 Mayıs 1331- 05 June 1915 (from the Deputy Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, Ali Raif); DH.ŞFR.474/45, 24 Mayıs 1331- 06 June 1915 (from the Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, Ali Osman); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 2, 05 Eylül 1331 - 18 September 1915 (from the Istanbul Chief of Police, Bedri); DH.ŞFR.473/97, 30 Mayıs 1331 - 12 June 1915 (from the Governor of Kastamonu, Reşid); DH.ŞFR.475/52, 30 Mayıs 1331- 12 June 1915 (from the Governor of Sivas, Muammer); DH.ŞFR.473/111, 21 Mayıs 1331 - 3 June 1915; DH.ŞFR.474/96, 26 Mayıs 1331 - 08 June 1915 (from the Governor of Syria, Hulûsi); DH.ŞFR.476/18, 4 Haziran 1331-17 June 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/2, 27 Eylül 1331-10 October 1915 (from the Governor of Trabzon, Cemâl Azmi); DH.ŞFR.473/124, 21 Mayıs 1331- 03 June 1915; DH.EUM.5.Şb.17/1, 29 Ağustos 1331- 11 September 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Canik, Necmi); DH.ŞFR.474/31, 23 Mayıs 1915 - 05 June 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of İçil, Esad Rauf); DH.EUM.5.Şb.17/15, 06 Eylül 1331- 19 September 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Murad Fuad); DH.ŞFR. 474/107, 26 Mayıs 1331- 08 June 1915 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Karahisar-ı Sâhib, Kadî Zihni); DH.ŞFR.473/38, 18 Mayıs 1331- 31 May 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Kayseri, Zekâî); DH.ŞFR.474/87, 25 Mayıs 1331- 07 June 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, Midhat); DH.ŞFR.473/91, 20 Mayıs 1331- 02 June 1915 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Maraş, Rızâ); DH.ŞFR.473/127, 22 Mayıs 1331- 04 June 1915 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Niğde, Fettah); DH.ŞFR.473/42, 18 Mayıs 1331- 31 May 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Teke /Antalya, Sabûr Sâmî); DH.ŞFR.475/8, 28 Mayıs 1331- 10 June 1915 (from the Sanjak Governor of Urfa, Haydar); DH.ŞFR.497/46, 01 Eylül 1331- 14 November 1915 (in the name of the Sanjak Governor of Zor, Kâmil)

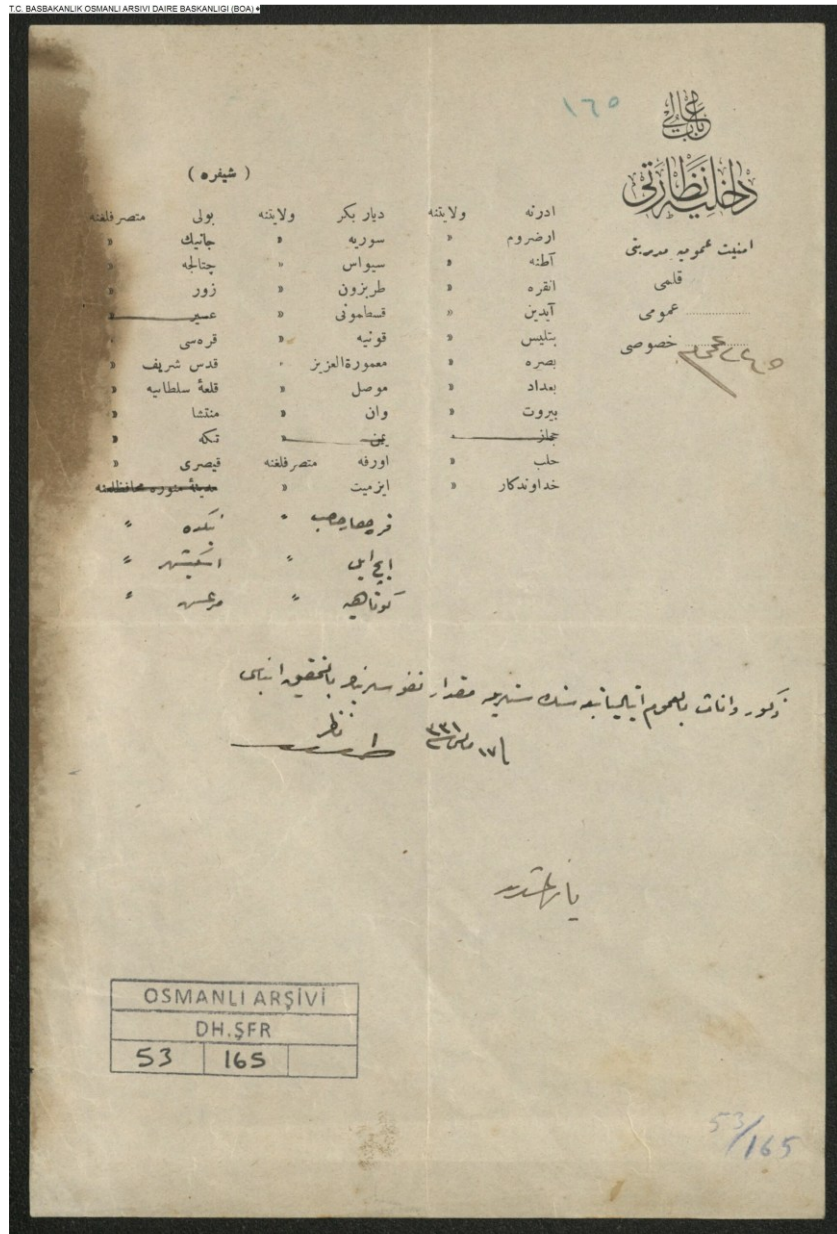
on areas outside Istanbul, or in other words, on provincial areas. However, on 18 October 1915, the Istanbul Police Chief, Bedri Bey, reported that 949 Italian nationals had departed the province since the beginning of May, and that “the state authorities had not exhibited any impediments to their departures” (*azîmet arzusunda bulunanlara hiçbir sûretle mümânaat edilmediği*). It is evident that the Italian residents of the city, having been apprised of the situation prior to Italy’s declaration of war in August, had commenced their departure from Istanbul several months prior. Despite the absence of Istanbul from the June 1915 and August 1916 censuses, and the uncertainty surrounding the number of Italians who remained following the departures in May 1915, the 1915 table has been augmented with a figure of 949 to provide a general overview. It is noteworthy that in 1918, two consecutive population censuses specific to Italians recorded the Italian population in Istanbul as just over two thousand in June and nearly four thousand in August. As will be examined in greater detail in the following paragraphs, Istanbul was a metropolis that consistently experienced waves of Italian immigration, both arriving and departing.

The provinces that exhibited the next highest population density following those of Aydın and Istanbul were Aleppo (301 people), Jerusalem (260 people), Beirut (160 people) and Syria (142 people). While it can be posited that the provinces and districts lacking population figures were devoid of Italian residents, it is conceivable that some telegrams may have been unrecorded or misplaced in the archives or were not identified during the search. As illustrated in the table, there is an absence of gender breakdowns in specific settlements, including the Bahçe District of Adana, all subdivisions of Aydın except for the city of İzmir, the Hayrabolu District of Edirne, and the Independent Sanjak of Kal'a-i Sultâniye. Indeed, the Kerek Sanjak and Bikâulaziz District of Syria Province is devoid of both gender and administrative distinctions. While both the female and male categories are given as subtotals, it should be noted that the gender of 117 individuals is still unknown. In Samsun, the Italian population exhibited an increase of one individual between the June and September censuses, rising from 30 to 31. Conversely, in Trabzon, the Italian population demonstrated a decline of 9 individuals between the June and October censuses, decreasing from 56 to 47.

Province (<i>Vilâyet</i>)	Sanjak (<i>Sancak</i>) - District (<i>Kazâ</i>)	Male	Female	Population
Adana	Adana (Provincial Center)	15		92
	Mersin Sanjak	23		
	Haçin (Kozan-ı Şarkî) District	1	-	
	Tarsus District	7	-	
	Bahçe (Ayran) District	46		
Ankara	-	-	-	-
Aydın	İzmir (Provincial Center)	1,637	1,709	3,366
	Subdivisions (<i>Mülhakat</i>)	20		
Beyrut (Beirut)	Province-wide	160	-	160
Diyarbakir	-	-	-	-
Edirne	Edirne (Provincial Center)	48	13	98
	Tekfurdağı Sancak	5	2	
	Hayrabolu District	30		
Haleb (Aleppo)	Haleb (Provincial Center)	146	114	301
	İskenderun District	30	9	
	Ayntab (Antep) Sanjak	1	1	
Hüdâvendigâr	Bursa (Provincial Center)	4		29
	Ertuğrul Sanjak	8	3	
	Mudanya District	6	8	
İstanbul	Province-wide	687	262	949
Kastamonu	İnebolu District	2	3	5
Konya	-	-	-	-
Sivas	Sivas (Provincial Center)	2	-	2
Suriye (Syria)	Şam (Provincial Center)	78	60	142
	Kerek Sanjak	4		
	Bikâulaziz District			
Trabzon	Trabzon (Provincial Center)	18	12	56
	Ordu District	-	2	
	Tirebolu District	3	4	
	Giresun District	8	9	
Independent Sanjaks (<i>Elviye-i Müstakille</i>)				
Bolu	-	-	-	-
Canik	Samsun (Sanjak Center)	17	14	31
Çatalca	-	-	-	-
Eskişehir	-	-	-	-
İçil	Anamur District	5	5	10
İzmit	-	-	-	-
Kal'a-i Sultâniye	Sanjak-wide	17		17
Karahisar-ı Sâhib	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
Karesi	-	-	-	-
Kayseri	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
Kudüs-i Şerif (Jerusalem)	Kudüs (Sanjak Center)	163	86	260
	Yafa District	9	2	
Kütahya	-	-	-	-

Maraş	Maraş (Sanjak Center)	3	-	5
	Yenicekale Sub-district (<i>Nâhiye</i>)	2	-	
Menteşe	-	-	-	-
Niğde	Nevşehir District	1	2	3
Teke	Antalya (Sanjak Center)	31	28	59
Urfa	Urfa (Sanjak Center)	6	2	8
Zor	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
		3,243	2,350	5,593

Table 10: Italian male and female populations in Ottoman provinces as of June 1915.



DH.ŞFR.00053.00165.001

Archival Image 14: The circular, issued by the Minister of the Interior, Talât Pasha, on 30 May 1915, specifying the recipient provinces and requesting information regarding the Italian populations therein.

Despite the absence of data from the archives concerning the June 1915 and August 1916 censuses for the Edirne Province, the report of Acting Governor Zekeriya on 18 October 1915 suggests that the circumstances were comparable to those in Istanbul. In other words, it was nearly impossible to obtain an accurate census, as people continued to leave major cities close to the battlefield, such as Istanbul and Edirne. Prior to the receipt of the telegram dated 21 August 1915, which prohibited the departure of Italians, a total of 68 Italians had already departed from Edirne, 61 from the provincial center and 7 from the Tekfurdağı Sanjak. Furthermore, due to certain national security risks engendered by the war in early 1916, Italians residing in coastal warzones such as Gelibolu, Tekfurdağı, and Enez in the Edirne Province were to be relocated to the Hayrabolu district in the interior of Thrace. Indeed, the transfer of 30 Armenian residents of Italian nationality from Tekfurdağı to Hayrabolu prior to November 1915 constituted the inaugural instance of this practice. In conclusion, both the 68 Italians who departed from Edirne and the 30 Armenian-origin Italians who were relocated to Hayrabolu were incorporated into the 1915 table to provide a general overview of the population based on the province. As illustrated by the 1918 census, Edirne was home to 214 Italian nationals in June and 47 in August, providing a valuable reference point for understanding the wartime fluctuations in the province's migratory traffic.

Moreover, the remarks in the telegrams sent by the provinces regarding the census contain some highly intriguing details about the profiles and personalities of the Italian residents. For instance, one of the two Italians residing in Ayntab (presently Gaziantep) held the position of "spiritual leader" (*reîs-i rûhânî*) at the Terra Santa Monastery, while the other was a nun employed at the same institution. In the center of Maraş, there were notable figures such as Father Superior (*Père Supérieure*) Dionissio, the "former abbot" (*reis-i sâbık*) of the Terra Santa Monastery, and his two priest associates, one of whom was Padre Francesco. Additionally, in the Yenice kale district of Maraş, distinguished individuals such as Father Silvestre d'Antonelli, the abbot of the Mucukdere Monastery, and his priest associate Sabbatino del Gaizo were in residence. With the exception of Father Dionissio, all other Italian residents had dispersed to other locations, leaving him as the sole Italian resident of Maraş. In the center of the Urfa Sanjak, there were eight Italian residents, including the director of the Ottoman Bank, his wife, three children, his brother-in-law, and two priests. The governor of Sivas reported that there were only two Italian males in the provincial capital. One of the subjects was a 30-year-old unmarried man serving as a "technical officer" (*fen me'mûrluğu*) at the Public Debt Administration (*Düyûn-u Umûmiye*), and the other was a 17-year-old youth named D'andrea (son of François / Franco Artom), who was employed at the office of Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Limited (*Şark Halı Kumpanyası*). The three Italians in Niğde were comprised of a 35-year-old technical officer employed in the town of Nevşehir, his Armenian wife, and their 10-year-old daughter. The sole Italian national residing in the Haçin district of Adana was also employed at the aforementioned carpet company. Moreover, the Governor of Beirut made a particular reference to the fact that some of the 160 Italian male residents were most likely employed on the Hejaz railway line, and that the Austrian Consul in Sidon was also of Italian origin.

At the behest of Talât Pasha on 1 June 1915, certain provinces determined and specified the Italian population eligible for military service during the census.⁴⁸⁹ For instance, the Governor

⁴⁸⁹ COA, DH.ŞFR.53/203, 19 Mayıs 1331 - 01 June 1915. Minister Talât - From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Governorates of Aydın, Beirut, Aleppo, Adana, Syria and to the

of Adana, Hakkı, specifically noted that there were 15 Italians of “military age” (*sinn-i askerîde*) in the provincial capital and 23 in the Mersin Sanjak. In a similar vein, the Mutasarrıf of İçil, Esad Rauf, asserted that within the Sanjak, there were merely two Italian individuals of military age, both of whom were residing in Anamur and were aged 24 and 42 respectively. As discussed under the headings “Eliasciars” in the third chapter and “Travel Restrictions” in the fourth chapter, Talât Pasha was reluctant to lose potential soldiers to the Kingdom of Italy, which was expected to join the war on the opposing front in the near future. At this juncture, it was imperative for the Ottoman authorities to exercise stringent control over the influx of fresh troops from their own territories to Italy. In addition, since the enactment of the new Conscription Law in 1909, the Ottoman government had adopted a political stance that encouraged and facilitated the conscription of non-Muslims. Consequently, with the escalation of the war, the number of Italian men of military age and capacity had become of paramount importance to the Ottoman Army.

Meanwhile, a situation of particular interest and inconsistency was observed in the Adana Province.⁴⁹⁰ While the census data from June 1915 indicated an average Italian population of 90, a telegram dated September 16 reported that 227 of the 272 enemy aliens in the province were Italian. Given the function of the ports of Iskenderun and Mersin as exit points for international travel, this notable discrepancy could be attributed to migratory movements in the vicinity. It is conceivable that Italians who had migrated to Adana from neighboring regions with the intention of departing from the aforementioned ports may have been stranded there due to the overseas departure restrictions. Consequently, their potential inclusion in the census may have resulted in an increase in the overall figure. Another region that was home to a very small Italian community whose international departures were prohibited was the Sanjak of İçil. Their initial figure, which had been declared as 10 in June, underwent a revision to 12 on September 21, with reports indicating that all individuals were being “closely monitored” (*taht-ı nezârette*) within the Anamur district.

In the census conducted in August 1916, figures were also recorded for places where the Italian population had not been declared in the previous year or where the relevant documents could not be found.⁴⁹¹ Provinces such as Ankara (8), Diyarbakir (2), and Konya (55) were included in

Mutasarrıfates of Menteşe, Teke, Jerusalem, İçil; DH.ŞFR.473/89, 20 Mayıs 1331 - 02 June 1915. From Hakkı, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Hakkı'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.474/12, 23 Mayıs 1331 - 05 June 1915. From Rauf, the Sanjak Governor of İçil, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İçil Mutasarrıfı Rauf'tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁹⁰ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/37, 03 Eylül 1331 - 16 September 1915. From Hakkı, the Governor of Adana, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Adana Vâlisi Hakkı'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 8, 08 Eylül 1331 - 21 September 1915. From Sadî, the Deputy Governor of İçil, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İçil Mutasarrıf Vekîli Sâdî'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁹¹ COA, DH.ŞFR.529/93, 11 Ağustos 1332- 24 August 1916 (from the Governor of Ankara, Reşid); DH.ŞFR.530/75, 18 Ağustos 1332 - 31 August 1916 (from the Governor of Aydın, Rahmi); DH.ŞFR.531/57, 25 Ağustos 1332 - 07 September 1916 (From the Governor of Beirut, Azmi); DH.ŞFR.531/3, 22 Ağustos 1332 - 04 September 1916 (from the Deputy Governor of Diyarbakir, Defterdar Ferid); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 8, 27 Mart 1332 - 09 April 1916 (from the Governor of Edirne, Zekeriya Zihni); TŞR.HL.4/3/Lef 1, 04 Ağustos 1332 - 17 August 1916 (From the Governorate of Aleppo); DH.ŞFR.530/96, 21 Ağustos 1332- 03 September 1916; DH.ŞFR.531/29, 24 Ağustos 1332- 06 September 1916 (from the Governor of Hüdâvendigâr, İsmâil Hakkı); DH.ŞFR.531/68, 27 Ağustos 1332 - 9 September 1916 (from the Governor of Konya, Sâmi Rîfât); DH.ŞFR.530/97, 21 Ağustos 1332- 03 September 1916; COA, DH.ŞFR.531/36, 25 Ağustos 1332- 07 September 1916 (from the Governor of Sivas, Muammer); DH.ŞFR.528/90, 02 Ağustos 1332- 15 August 1916 (from the Deputy Governor of Syria, Tevfik); DH.ŞFR.529/30, 6 Ağustos 1332 - 19 August 1916 (from the

this category, as well as the independent sanjaks of Eskişehir (33), İzmit (26), Karesi (60), Kütahya (26), and Menteşe (18). Conversely, in the Provinces of Adana, Istanbul, Kastamonu, Trabzon and in the Sanjaks of Niğde and Urfa, the 1915 census results were 92, 949, 5, 56, 3 and 8 respectively, yet no documents or data were found for the 1916 census. Despite the absence of documentation pertaining to the 1915 and 1916 censuses in the Bolu and Çatalca Sanjaks, the Karahisar-ı Sâhib Mutasarrıfs Kadı Zihni ve Ömer, Kayseri Mutasarrıf Zekâi and the Zor Mutasarrıf Zeki particularly attested to the absence of Italian residents or officials in their respective sanjaks during both censuses. Furthermore, *Mutasarrıf* Ali Haydar, who had declared eight Italian residents in the Urfa Sanjak during the 1915 census, reported that there were no Italian residents in the 1916 census. It is evident that the observed shifts or deficiencies in the data can be ascribed to numerous factors, including irregularities in census procedures and information flow, departures from specific locations, deportations, or inter-provincial relocations.

Province (<i>Vilâyet</i>)	Sanjak (<i>Sancak</i>) - District (<i>Kazâ</i>)	Male	Female	Population
Adana	-	-	-	-
Ankara	Ankara (Provincial Center)	3		8
	Çorum Sanjak	3		
	Kırşehir Sanjak	1		
	Ayaş District	1		
Aydın	İzmir (Provincial Center)	1,587	1,366	3,119
	Coastal Subdivisions (<i>Mülhakat-ı Sahil</i>)	22	29	
	Interior Parts (<i>Dahil-i Vilâyet</i>)	58	57	
Beyrut (Beirut)	Province-wide	143	129	272
Diyarbakir	Diyarbakir (Provincial Center)	1	0	2
	Mardin	1	0	
Edirne	Hayrabolu District	34		34
Haleb (Aleppo)	Haleb (Provincial Center)	89	100	189
Hüdâvendigâr	Bursa (Provincial Center)	10	14	43
	Mudanya District	2	8	
	Ertuğrul Sanjak	6	3	
İstanbul	-	-	-	-

Sanjak Governor of Canik, Müştak); DH.ŞFR.528/61, 31 Temmuz 1332 – 13 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Eskişehir, Yunus Şinâsi); DH.ŞFR.529/10, 04 Ağustos 1332 – 17 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of İçil [District Governor of Anamur], Fevzi); DH.ŞFR.529/49, 8 Ağustos 1332- 21 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of İzmit, Ali Galip); DH.ŞFR.529/7, 04 Ağustos 1332 – 17 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Kal'a-i Sultâniye, Rauf); DH.ŞFR. 529/35, 07 Ağustos 1332- 20 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Karahisar-ı Sâhib, Ömer); DH.ŞFR.530/50, 17 Ağustos 1332 – 30 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Karesi, Kemâl); DH.ŞFR.529/12, 4 Ağustos 1332 – 17 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Kayseri, Zekâi); DH.ŞFR.530/28, 15 Ağustos 1332 - 28 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, Midhat); DH.ŞFR.528/84, 02 Ağustos 1332 – 15 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Uşak, Ahmed Kemâl); DH.ŞFR.667/83, 6 Ağustos 1332 – 19 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Maraş, Kemâl); DH.ŞFR.550/53, 17 Ağustos 1332- 30 August 1916 (from the Deputy Sanjak Governor of Menteşe, Gâlib); DH.ŞFR.528/109, 3 Ağustos 1332 – 16 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Teke / Antalya, İbrahim Edhem); DH.ŞFR.532/83, 06 Eylül 1332- 19 September 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Urfa, Ali Haydar); DH.ŞFR.529/20, 05 Ağustos 1332- 18 August 1916 (from the Sanjak Governor of Zor, Zeki).

Kastamonu	-	-	-	-
Konya	Konya (Provincial Center)	19	13	55
	Seydişehir District	13	1	
	Koçhisar District	1	-	
	Isparta Sanjak	4	4	
Sivas	Sivas (Provincial Center)	3	2	12
	Amasya Sanjak			
	Tokat Sanjak	6	1	
Suriye (Syria)	Province-wide	89	73	162
Trabzon	-	-	-	-
Independent Sanjaks (<i>Elviye-i Müstakille</i>)				
Bolu	-	-	-	-
Canik	Samsun (Sancak Center)	2	1	5
	Çarşamba District	1	1	
Çatalca	-	-	-	-
Eskişehir	Sanjak-wide	13	20	33
İçil	Anamur District	5	5	10
İzmit	İzmit (Sanjak Center)	16	5	26
	Geyve District	4	1	
Kal'a-i Sultâniye	Biga District	5	7	12
	Ezine District			
	Bayramiç District			
Karahisar-ı Sâhib	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
Karesi	Bandırma District	9	6	60
	Ayvalık District	2	1	
	Balıkesir District	42		
	Bigadiç District			
	Fırt (Susurluk) District			
Kayseri	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
Kudüs-i Şerif (Jerusalem)	Kudüs (Sanjak Center)	102	63	241
	Sanjak Subdivisions (<i>Mülhakat-ı Liva</i>)	23	8	
	Beytüllahim Sub-district (<i>Nâhiye</i>)	45	-	
Kütahya	Uşak District	18	8	26
Maraş	Maraş (Sanjak Center)	1	0	1
Menteşe	Muğla (Sanjak Center)	3	1	18
	Milas District	8	6	
Niğde	-	-	-	-
Teke	Antalya (Sanjak Center)	3	8	11
Urfa	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
Zor	Sanjak-wide	0	0	0
		2,398	1,941	4,339

Table 11: Italian male and female populations in Ottoman provinces as of August 1916.

٧٩

الحاج ابي بكر

امنيته عمومه بدرستي

قلمی

عمومی

خصوصی

٢٩٨

(شيفره)

بلبل	متصرفلغه	ديار بكر	ولايته	الجزيرة	ولايته
جلاليك	»	سوريه	»	البحر	»
چتاليه	»	سيواس	»	الطيه	»
زور	»	طربزون	»	انقره	»
عير	»	قسطمون	»	كبين	»
قرعسي	»	قونية	»	بتليس	»
قدس شريف	»	معمورة العزيز	»	بصره	»
قلمه لطايف	»	موصل	»	بعلبك	»
منما	»	ولن	»	بيروت	»
تلك	»	يمن	»	حجاز	»
قيصري	»	اورفه	»	حلب	»
مدينة سمرقند	»	لبنان	»	خداوندگار	»

کتابخانه - قره صايب
نکده ، اسکندريه ، مصره

داره
راض و لايتيه موجود اتيالايتموندك مقدار نفوسك ذكره و اناس آيري آيري اوله ربه ساعته اشعاره
ناظر

66
236

OSMANLI ARŞIVI		
DH.ŞFR		
66	236	

DH.ŞFR.00066.00236.001

For instance, in Konya, located in the Anatolian heartland and characterized by a continental climate with harsh winters that were unappealing to Italians, a group of 55 Italians emerged within a year. This population is likely to have consisted of Italians who had been relocated from coastal areas to inland regions as part of a resettlement policy and were consequently compelled to reside in Konya. As evidenced by the relocation of 30 Armenians of Italian nationality to the Hayrabolu District of Edirne by November 1915, it is apparent that a comparable scenario could have unfolded in relation to the 1916 census. As documented by the Edirne Governorate on 9 April 1916, a total of 34 Italian residents were forcibly relocated from the central district of Edirne and coastal settlements such as Gelibolu, Enez, and Tekfurdağı to Hayrabolu in the rural interior of Thrace. Therefore, despite the absence of any province-level results for Edirne in the census conducted in August 1916, the 34 Italians resettled in Hayrabolu under wartime conditions were included in the following table. Recognizing the occurrence of sporadic transfers to the interior of Anatolia from this locale, it can be deduced that the population of Italians in Hayrabolu exhibited periodic fluctuations. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that although 272 men and women were counted and declared in Beirut in the 1916 census, only 160 men were declared in the previous 1915 census. This situation was undoubtedly related to the military priorities and conscription policies adopted by the empire toward its non-Muslim subjects after June 1915. Despite the absence of any additional documentation pertaining to the female population figures from the 1915 census, it is improbable that the women of the Italian colony in Beirut, who had resided there for centuries and were predominantly comprised of clergy, missionaries, and merchants, were either overlooked or not recorded in 1915. As will be demonstrated in the following sections, the Italian residents of Beirut were the subject of numerous correspondence between the Ottoman authorities throughout the First World War, particularly regarding travel restrictions and relocations. During this period, the majority of coastal provinces continued to witness small-scale and irregular movements of Italian nationals under wartime conditions.

Moreover, the gender of 84 Italians in the table remains unknown, as no information was provided regarding the gender of 8 individuals in Ankara, 34 individuals in Hayrabolu, and 42 individuals in Karesi. Furthermore, location-based population distributions were not provided for certain settlements in Sivas, Kal'a-i Sultâniye, and Karesi. The 1916 census also contains specific and intriguing details regarding the profiles of Italian individuals. For instance, one such individual residing in the provincial capital of Diyarbakir was known as Monsieur François (Franco) Artom, who occupied the position of Vice Director of the Bitlis Ottoman Bank branch.⁴⁹² Another individual was Daniel, a priest affiliated with the *Capuchin* order, who

⁴⁹² Judging by his non-Italian surname, Franco Artom, who was most likely of Sephardic Jewish origin, was generally mistakenly referred to as François (*Fransuva*) in Ottoman correspondence, and his origin was listed as Orthodox Greek. In October 1917, the Second Army Command “deemed it militarily inadvisable for Artom, who was serving as Vice Director at the Ottoman Bank in Diyarbakir, to remain in his current position and objected to his continued service” (*bilhassa me'mûriyet-i hâzırasında bulunması mahzurlu görülmüş*). Artom was required to be expeditiously extracted from the Diyarbakir Province, a region that was among “the most dynamic operational zones” (*harekât-ı harbiye mıntıkası*) of the Caucasus Front and had been the site of intense Ottoman-Russian confrontations. Following the endorsement of this “reassignment request” (*tebdîl-i me'mûriyet*) by the Deputy Governor of Diyarbakir, Bedreddin, the deliberations between the Ministry of the Interior and the General Administration of the Ottoman Bank culminated in a favorable outcome, with Artom being transferred from the Ottoman Bank branch in the provincial center of Diyarbakir to the branch in the Ayntab Sanjak of the Aleppo Province in November 1917. COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.50/4/Lef 3, 31 Teşrînievvel 1333 - 31 October 1917. From Bedreddin, the Deputy Governor of Diyarbakir, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Diyarbakir Vâli Vekîli Bedreddin'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.81/269, 28

resided in Mardin. The fact that another Italian national in Canik was also the director of the Ottoman Bank is significant in terms of demonstrating the place and importance of Italian bankers within the Ottoman financial system.⁴⁹³ Telegrams from sanjaks such as Kal'a-i Sultâniye and Karesi specifically noted the strategic importance of coastal towns such as Bandırma and Ayvalık, or close-to-coast towns such as Biga, Ezine, and Bayramiç. Furthermore, a telegram received from Mentеше Sanjak indicated that all 18 Italian nationals resided within a five-hour distance from the coast. It is also worthy of note that the number and status of Italian clergymen were indicated separately in telegrams, as far as possible. Of the 272 Italian nationals residing in Beirut, 15 priests were left in the temples in Nazareth by order of the Ottoman Army, while the remainder settled in coastal areas. Furthermore, it was documented that the 45 Italians residing in the Beytullahim (Bethlehem) District, located one hour from the city of Jerusalem, were exclusively comprised of priests. The Italian population in the Sanjak of İçil, documented as 10 individuals (5 males and 5 females) in the census of August 1916, was revised to 3 males and 4 females in June 1917.⁴⁹⁴ Mutasarrıf Ata Bey, who was tasked with reporting on the number of enemy aliens in the Sanjak, specifically noted that these seven Italian nationals had been residing in Anamur for a considerable period of time and that the men were engaged in manual labor. Hosting a symbolic Italian community numbering no more than a dozen people, İçil's meticulous approach to censuses was particularly noteworthy.

The Ottoman government conducted two further censuses of the Italian population in June and August 1918.⁴⁹⁵ These censuses, in contrast to those carried out in 1915 and 1916, included the extensive Italian community that had been entrenched in Istanbul for centuries. The 1918 censuses revealed the significant proportion of the Italian community in Istanbul within the empire's overall Italian population. However, the question remains as to why and how the number of Italians in Istanbul rose from 2,029 to 3,736 in the three-month period between June and August 1918. It is probable that the popular belief that the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of losing the war facilitated the return of Italians who had previously been forced to leave Istanbul for various reasons. Nevertheless, the fact that the return of Italians, who had been gradually leaving Istanbul since the 1911-1912 Tripolitanian War, reached such a peak within a period of three months is a subject that requires further investigation. The second strong

Teşrînisânî 1333 - 28 November 1917. From the Minister of the Interior, Mehmed Talât, to the Governorate of Aleppo (*Dâhiliye Nazırı Mehmed Talât'tan Haleb Vilayetine*) DH.EUM.5.Şb.50/4/Lef 1, 28 Teşrînisânî 1333 - 28 November 1917. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of General Security and Investigation, to the Governorate of Aleppo and the Ministry of Finance (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye İstidlâat Müdiriyyetinden Haleb Vilayetine ve Maliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁹³ In addition to the banking and finance sector in the Ottoman Empire, state-centered enterprises such as the tobacco industry and lighthouse authorities also employed significant numbers of Italian nationals. As discussed in the section titled "Wartime Restriction, Marginalization, and Deactivation" in the fourth chapter, priority was accorded to the purging of Italian labor from public economic organizations following the ministerial decree of 3 November 1915. The identities and positions of Italian officials working in these institutions were particularly investigated by higher authorities during the waves of dismissals.

⁴⁹⁴ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.38/19/Lef 1, 05 Haziran 1333 - 05 June 1917. From Ata Bey, the Sanjak Governor of İçil, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İçil Mutasarrıfı Ata Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁴⁹⁵ COA, HR.SYS.2246/28/Lef 3, 25 Haziran 1334- 25 June 1918. This is the list indicating the number of Italian residents registered in provinces and independent sanjaks (*Vilâyât ve elviye-i müstakillede mütemekkin ve mukayyed bulunan İtalya tebaasının mikdârını mübeyyin listedir.*) The Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdiriyyeti*); HR.SYS.2246/28/Lef 4, 25 Ağustos 1918. The number of Italians within the Ottoman Empire (*Memâlik-i Osmâniye'de bulunan İtalyanların mikdârı*)

possibility is that, although no specific details were provided in either censuses, these were in fact successive stages of a single census. In this case, the government may have opted to extend the census process over a period of three months, sharing the initial findings first and the definitive results later. In other words, not all Italians in Istanbul were included in the first census, and therefore they may have been recorded in the second round.

Province	25 June 1918	25 August 1918
Adana	113	-
Ankara	3	23
Aydın	3,676	4,039
Beyrut (Beirut)	102	201
Edirne	214	47
Haleb (Aleppo)	10	113
Hüdâvendigâr	33	35
İstanbul	2,029	3,736
Kastamonu	45	17
Konya	81	59
Musul (Mosul)	-	8
Sivas	15	25
Suriye (Syria)	122	164
Trabzon	-	15
Independent Sanjak		
Bolu ⁴⁹⁶	224	-
Canik	-	7
Cebel-i Lübnan (Mount Lebanon)	-	4
Çatalca	4	7
Eskişehir	32	29
İçil	8	7
İzmit	12	23
Kal'a-i Sultâniye	33	7
Karesi	76	43
Kudüs-i Şerif (Jerusalem)	-	234
Kütahya	22	26
Maraş	1	1
Menteşe	12	14
Teke	3	6
Urfa	-	3
Total	6,870	8,893

Table 12: Italian populations in Ottoman provinces as of June and August 1918.

⁴⁹⁶ Another noteworthy and intriguing issue is the finding that no documents from the 1915 and 1916 censuses of the Bolu Sanjak could be found in archival research, and yet the region declared 224 people in the 1918 census.

Another interesting point concerns the situation in Beirut, Syria, Aleppo, and Jerusalem, which is elaborated in the relevant sections of this chapter. In the aftermath of the Italian naval bombardment of Beirut in February 1912, the entire region was plunged into a state of considerable upheaval and instability, thereby endangering the security of Italian nationals. Consequently, a ministerial decree was promulgated, ordering the expulsion of all Italian citizens from Beirut, Syria, Aleppo, and Jerusalem, with the exception of priests. Despite the subsequent postponement of its implementation, the decree had a profound impact on the region, accelerating the erosion of Italian identity in the Ottoman domains. However, during the First World War, the Ottoman authorities reversed this decision, refusing to allow Italians in the Syrian Levant to leave the region and instead attempting to relocate them in inland areas far from the coast. From June 1915 to August 1916 and from August 1916 to August 1918, there was a 16 percent increase in the number of Italians residing in the Syrian Vilayet (from 142 and 162 to 164), a 10 percent decrease in the Jerusalem Sanjak (from 260 and 241 to 234), and a 26 percent decrease in the Beirut Vilayet (from 272 to 201).⁴⁹⁷ Given the substantial number of Italian residents seeking to depart the region, these data indicate that the Ottoman policy of restricting Italian departures was relatively successful. The only regional and quite notable exception to this pattern was the Province of Aleppo, which experienced a sharp decline of 63 percent over the three-year period (from 301 and 189 to 113). It is evident that with the onset of the war, a considerable proportion of the Italian populace in this area elected to vacate their settlements, a maneuver which ultimately proved successful. It was observed that the wave of departures, which had begun in September 1915 with a small group of 42 people to the surrounding regions of Aleppo, continued to grow and spread.⁴⁹⁸ However, considering that Aleppo was designated as a resettlement center for Italian nationals throughout Syria and Palestine during the war, there is a prevailing misconception that the number of Italian residents in Aleppo should have increased rather than decreased.⁴⁹⁹ Nevertheless, when the number of Italians who were later relocated is compared to the size of the indigenous Italian population that left Aleppo, it is likely that the proportion of Italians who were relocated was quite low.

⁴⁹⁷ As women were not included in the 1915 Beirut census, and the figure of 160 would therefore be misleading, it was not included in the calculation of proportional change.

⁴⁹⁸ Please refer to the sub-section titled "Situation Subsequent to the Italian Declaration of War" in the fourth chapter.

⁴⁹⁹ As will be demonstrated in the final section of this chapter, Aleppo functioned as a refuge for Italians who voluntarily decided to continue residing in the Syrian Levant or were compelled to remain there against their will due to restrictions on their departure. A notable instance of this phenomenon is documented in April 1917, when Cemâl Pasha reported the transfer of 271 Romanians and 33 Italians from the districts of Jaffa and Gaza, which had both been evacuated in connection with the establishment of the defense line, to Aleppo via Damascus. COA, DH.ŞFR.550/45, 02 Nisan 1333 -02 April 1917. From the Commander of the Fourth Army, Ahmed Cemâl, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Dördüncü Ordu Kumandanı Ahmed Cemâl'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

دریایه والدیه منقله ده منقله وفقیه بولان
ایالتی تهنه منقله بولان

الحضراتی
امین

۱۱۲	الفردی	شعبه :
۱۰	حلب	مردی
۱۰۰	بروت	مخصوص
۲۶۷۲	ایم	
۱۱۶	ایم	
۱۰۰۹	ایم	
۲	ایم	
۲۲	ایم	
۱۰۰	ایم	
۱۵	ایم	
۴۵	ایم	
۱۱	ایم	
۲۰	ایم	
۱	ایم	
۱۰	ایم	
۱۰۰	ایم	
۲	ایم	
۴	ایم	
۷۶	ایم	
۲۲	ایم	
۱۰	ایم	
۱	ایم	
۱۰	ایم	
۲۸۷۰	ایم	



ایم

HR. SYS 2246/28

3

- 1 -

ممالک عثمانیہ و برلیمانہ ایتالیاندرک مقاری

مقاری	دریاض اسلمی
۲۷۲۶	ایشانیر
۶۷	ادرنه
۲۴	آنقره
۶۰۲۹	آدیہ
۶۰۱	بیروت
۱۱۴	صلب
۲۵	ضادشکار
۱۶۴	سوریه
۴۵	جواس
۱۵	طبرزدہ
۱۷	ظریف
۵۹	قونہ
۸	مصل
۲	اورنه
۲۲	ارنیت
۶	نکله
۷	ہایک
۷	ہیانیہ
۴۴	قوس
۴۴	قدس
۷	فعلہ طابہ
۱۶	منتلا
۴۹	استمشہ
۷	ایچ الہ
۴۲	لوانالہ
۱	مرسہ
۴	جبلانہ
۱۸۹۲	

ایستمدادہ ضد اندرہ انستہ
۹۱۸
صفا انک طغیہ (۴۵) طغیہ

HR. SYS 2246/28

2vrk
(3 shf b08)

4

HR.SYS.02246.00028.004

Archival Image 16-17: Italian populations in Ottoman provinces as of June and August 1918.

5.3. Relocation of Italian Residents from Railway Corridors, Coastal Areas, and Military Engagement Zones (1915-1917)

In the context of the Italo-Ottoman War, the concept of “safety” was defined by the term *kabil-i muhâfaza*, signifying the “capability for protection” and referring to the safeguarding of Italian individuals from potential hostility and aggression by the local populace. However, it should be noted that the situation had undergone a significant transformation during the course of the World War, with the primary determinants of demographic displacements having become strategic and military priorities. The phrase previously cited as “more favorable or convenient,” which literally means “a place free from inconvenience” (*mahzûrdan sâlim bir mahal*), no longer implied any threat or security concern towards the relocated individuals. Rather, it implied a concern that Italian individuals might collaborate with the enemy and engage in activities such as espionage or sabotage. Therefore, the expression of “a favorable or convenient location” now signaled a geographical suitability and/or remoteness, immune from potential risks and threats to national security. This sophisticated understanding reflects the evolving priorities of the Ottoman government in wartime relocations. In this context, the strategic assessments of military operations superseded the prior emphasis on ensuring the safety of Italians against local hostility. In other words, the wartime focus has shifted from the protection of foreign individuals residing in Ottoman domains to the vulnerability of strategic locations.

The national security reasons that prevailed during the First World War resulted in the forced displacement of Italians, especially those residing in the coastal towns of Anatolia and Rumelia. In order to forestall the possibility of contact, interaction and even cooperation between enemy aliens and occupying naval forces, Ottoman authorities have systematically driven Italian residents into the interior of Anatolia and Thrace. Another significant criterion was the proximity to railway corridors, which were of paramount importance for military transport during wartime. The initial measure aimed at severing ties between the railways and Italian nationals was introduced in October 1911, following the outbreak of the Tripolitanian War. All Italian railway workers who had their employment contracts terminated *en masse* and were compelled to vacate the railway lines on which they were operating, were relocated to a considerable distance from their construction sites.⁵⁰⁰ However, during the First World War, the Ottoman government decided to extend this measure and relocate all Italian inhabitants living in proximity to railway lines, regardless of whether they were employed in the railways or not. This measure had a particularly significant impact on Italian subjects residing in close proximity to railway lines, such as Kostantin (Amédée Ivoy) in Izmit. Apart from their access to the coast and proximity to railway routes, further decisive factors in the relocation of Italians were their vicinity to engagement areas and other non-Muslim, particularly Christian, populations.

This section will firstly explore the strategic relocation of Italian residents living along the provincial coastline of Edirne to the town of Hayrabolu, which is located in the Thracian heartland. This demographic configuration appears to be an outcome of Hayrabolu’s considerable distance from the coastline, engagement zones, and non-Muslim communities. In the first subsection, the case of the relocation of Kostantin, an Italian national residing in the Izmit Sanjak, to Çorum will be addressed. This case is of particular interest as it demonstrates the pivotal role of military transport routes in relocation strategies. Finally, in the second

⁵⁰⁰ As discussed, and elaborated in the earlier section entitled “Wartime Restriction, Marginalization and Deactivation of Italian Institutional Functions, Services, and Manpower.”

subsection, the transfer of the former British consul Edmond Dussi from the coastal town of Tekfurdağı to Hayrabolu will be briefly discussed. Notwithstanding the persistent pleas of his elderly and ailing mother, Dussi was deliberately and strategically kept away from the coast, due to the potential risks that his diplomatic background could pose.

Following Italy's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire, the Governor of Edirne, Hacı Adil (Arda), stated that the Italian "residents" (*mukîm*) of coastal towns such as Gelibolu (Gallipoli) and Enez/İnöz (Ainos) should not be allowed to "continue residing" (*temdîd-i ikamet*) there.⁵⁰¹ He requested the Minister of the Interior's opinion on whether the whole Italian community, or only those considered suspect, should be relocated to the interior of the province. As of 18 October 1915, his successor, Deputy Governor Zekeriyâ Zihni, reported that a total of 68 Italian nationals "had departed from the Province of Edirne" (*müfârat eylediği*) since May 20. These departures included 48 men (*zükûr*) and 13 women (*inas*) from the "provincial capital" (*merkez-i vilâyet*) and 5 men and 2 women from the Tekfurdağı Sanjak (modern-day Tekirdağ). However, on 21 August 1915, Zekeriyâ had received "a further telegram from the Ministry of the Interior prohibiting the departure of the Italians" (*İtalyanların azîmetlerine mûmânaat edilmesi hakkında 8 Ağustos 331 târih ve 473 numarolu telgrafnâme-i aliyye*). As no further directives were received from other authorities, Zekeriyâ announced that the Italians were no longer allowed to leave as of that date.

As evidenced by the telegrams dispatched by Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Reşad Hikmet in December 1915, the initial plan involved the "exile" (*nefy*)* of Italian residents in the central district of Edirne to Keşan.⁵⁰² The American Embassy, which had assumed responsibility for

⁵⁰¹ COA, DH.EUM.3.Şb.8/25/Lef 2, 12 Ağustos 1331- 25 Ağustos 1915. From Edirne Governor Adil to the Ministry of Interior (*Edirne Vâlisi Adil'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.18/17/Lef 4, 05 Teşrînîevvel 1331 - 18 October 1915. Ministry of Interior Ciphred Correspondence Office, Outlet: Edirne, Acting Governor Zekeriyâ (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Şifre Kalemi, Mahreci: Edirne, Vâli Vekîli Zekeriyâ*)

⁵⁰² COA, HR.SYS.2144/24/Lef 5, 29 Teşrînîsânî 1331 -12 December 1915. From the Commander-in-Chief Enver to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Başkumandan Vekîli Enver'den Hâriciye Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2144/24/Lef 5, 29 Teşrînîsânî 1331- 12 December 1915. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâletinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/4/Lef 4, 12 Kânûnevvel 1331- 25 December 1915. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs, to the Ministry of Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiyye Müdiriyyet-i Umûmiyyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/4/Lef 3, 09 Kânûnusânî 1331- 22 January 1916. From Edirne Governorate Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*Edirne Vilâyeti Mektûbi Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*)

* Terms such as "to deport, to expel" (*ihrâc etmek*), "to banish, banishment" (*teb'îd*), "to be sent" (*îzâm edilmek*, *îzâm kılınmak*, *gönderilmek*), "to be transferred" (*nakledilmek*, *nakil olunmak*) and "to be forwarded, redirected, routed" (*sevk edilmek*, *sevk olunmak*) are frequently employed in Ottoman archival documents in connection with the "relocation/resettlement" and/or "deportation/expulsion" of Italian inhabitants. However, it is of particular interest that the term "exile" (*nefy*) is only used in this document and only once among all the documents. The reason for the use of such extreme and explicit terminology remains ambiguous, as the style of the document in question does not provide any clarification. In other words, the motivation for the employment of such term may have been either inadvertent, erroneous or attributable to the undersecretariat clerk's unfamiliarity with legal jargon. However, it has been observed that the utilization of these legal terms frequently intersects and becomes intertwined in correspondence. Despite the utilization of disparate terminology, the underlying objective in certain instances appears to be the "relocation" or "resettlement" of Italians from one region within the Ottoman borders to another, and, in more extreme cases, their mass "deportation" outside the imperial boundaries. This nuance of usage highlights the complexity of legal terminology in the Ottoman administrative context, particularly during a period of conflict in which the treatment of foreign nationals was under closer scrutiny. The distinction between the terms "relocation/resettlement" and "deportation/expulsion" could have significant

Italy's consular affairs and functions since August of that year, received intelligence regarding this plan and immediately initiated action. The Embassy issued a demand that, in the event of these individuals not being allowed to stay in Edirne, they should be relocated to Kırkkilise (present day Kırklareli) instead of Keşan. It is unknown how effective this request for a new destination was with the Ottoman government, but we can see that Hayrabolu would replace Keşan in future correspondence. Concurrently, reports from the Ottoman High Military Command indicated that the central province of Edirne was devoid of Italian inhabitants, suggesting a complete transfer of the population. Furthermore, Italian residents of Tekfurdağı and its environs, "whose behaviour was deemed suspicious" (*ahvâli dâi-i şübhe*), had been relocated to Hayrabolu two months earlier. A telegram sent by the Edirne Kadı on behalf of the governor on 27 November 1915 indicated that 30 Armenian residents of Italian nationality in Tekfurdağı had already been relocated to Hayrabolu by that date.⁵⁰³ In response to the American Embassy's request for their repatriation, the Edirne governor's office conducted an investigation into the circumstances of these Italian citizens of Armenian origin and reported its findings to the Ministry. The Hayrabolu resettlement area was regarded by Ottoman authorities as being highly suitable for the controlled resettlement of Italians. This was due to the area's distance from engagement zones, coastal areas and the living quarters of other non-Muslim populations. Governor Zekeriyâ Zihni asserted that Hayrabolu, situated in "the interior of the province" (*dâhil-i vilâyet*), was the least favorable location for "espionage activities" (*câsusluk*) due to its distance from military positions and its small Christian population. Consequently, the Governor has confirmed that "the necessity for relocation of the Italians was solely motivated by military exigencies" (*bunların lüzûm-u nakl ve izâmları sırf esbâb-ı askeriyyeye müstenid*).

In March 1916, the Governor of Edirne, Zekeriyâ Zihni, submitted a list of Italian citizens residing in Gallipoli and Keşan to the Minister of the Interior, Talât Bey.⁵⁰⁴ The Italians in Gallipoli and Kesan had not yet been relocated to a more secure area, despite the fact that it was considered unsuitable for them to remain in "the military campaign zones" (*mevâki-i / harekât-ı askeriyye*). Governor Zekeriyâ thus sought ministerial approval for the transfer of these Italians to Hayrabolu, a town located in the heart of Thrace. Ten days after the approval was given, Minister Talât Bey investigated the reasons for the delay in the transfer of these Italians and the sources of the orders authorizing and enabling the earlier transfers. Apparently, the

implications, both for the individuals involved and for the legal framework governing their status. For an extensive and up-to-date analysis of these penal conceptions and practices within the Ottoman law system, see Nurkan Sever, *The Mosul Incident of 1909: Its Sociopolitical, Judicial and Military Consequences*, (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2023), 42-43.

⁵⁰³ COA, DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 5, 14 Teşrînisânî 1331- 27 November 1915. From the Kadı, on behalf of the Governor of Edirne, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Edirne Vâlisi nâmına Kadıdan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 9. From the American Embassy to the Deputy Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs (*Amerika Sefâretinden Hâriciye Müsteşar Muâvinliğine*); DH.EUM.2.Şb.39/30/Lef 11, 31 Teşrînievvel 1331- 13 November 1915. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Governorate Office of Edirne (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinde Edirne Vilâyetine*).

⁵⁰⁴ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 1, 03 Mart 1332 – 16 March 1916. From the Edirne Governorate Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*Edirne Vilâyeti Mektûbi Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.ŞFR.62/139, 14 Mart 1332- 27 March 1916. Cipher Telegram from the Ministry of the Interior, General Security Directorate, to the Governorate Office of Edirne (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Edirne Vilâyetine Şifre*); DH.ŞFR.515/12, 15 Mart 1332- 28 March 1916. From Governor Zekeriyâ to His Excellency the Minister of the Interior (*Vâli Zekeriyâ'dan Dâhiliye Nâzırı Beyefendi Hazretlerine*).

delayed relocations from Gallipoli and Keşan were perceived by the ministry as suspicious and deliberate actions that may have occurred outside its jurisdiction. In his prompt response, however, Governor Zekeriyâ attributed the delay in the transfers to “the negligence and irresponsibility of the local authorities” (*mahallinin adem-i takayyüdünden*). Stranger still, the previous Hayrabolu relocations, for which the ministry questioned the source of authorization, were also based on a ciphered ministry telegram dated 26 August 1915. Throughout the war, the Ministry of Interior appears to have conducted such retrospective and sporadic inquiries into the functioning of demographic replacements. As the war progressed, the resettlement of Italians from coastal areas to the interior became a more urgent priority, and the central authorities tightened their monitoring and control of population movements.

At this juncture, Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha once again became involved in the proceedings and advanced the argument that it was inappropriate for Italians to remain in a “non-Muslim land” (*dârü’l-harb*)⁵⁰⁵ such as Thrace, even in the interior of the province.⁵⁰⁶ The primary concern at this time was not the potential danger to life that the Italians might face, but rather their potential to aid and cooperate with enemy elements. In response to this sensitivity shown by the military, the Governorate reported that so far, a maximum of 34 Italians had been transported from Edirne, Tekfurdağı and Enez to Hayrabolu. Nevertheless, Enver Pasha even refused to allow these 34 Italians to stay in Hayrabolu, which he considered to be a critical and strategic location and demanded that they be transferred to Anatolia. Talât Bey, the Minister of the Interior, expressed concerns that “such a move would present significant logistical and practical challenges, particularly in terms of the accommodation of the individuals’ families” (*cümlésinin maa-âile Anadolu’ya sevki müşkilâtı bâdi olacağından*). Consequently, he proposed to Enver Pasha that “only those considered to be potentially harmful, or high risk should be relocated” (*yalnız muzırının sevkiyle iktifâ olunması*) for the time being.

The final communiqué transmitted to the Edirne Governorate on May 2 announced that “the program of relocating the Italian residents in Gelibolu and other coastal areas to the interior of Thrace had been temporarily halted” (*şimdilik dâhile sevklerinden sarf-ı nazar olunması*).⁵⁰⁷ This decision seems to have been influenced by a disagreement between higher authorities over geographical preferences. The Commander-in-Chief’s ultimate assessment that Hayrabolu, although in the interior of Thrace, was infeasible as a transfer point probably prompted the Ministry of the Interior to review and update its strategy. However, the absence of further

⁵⁰⁵ *Dârü’l-Harb*: In Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the world is divided into *Dar-ul-Islam* and *Dar-ul-Harb*, with the former referring to the Islamic geography and the latter literally meaning “the house of the enemy” or “the world of infidels.” However, Enver Pasha’s use of this expression here is interesting as Thrace was both *de facto* and *de jure* under Ottoman rule at the time. He was probably referring to Thrace’s military vulnerability due to its territorial proximity with non-Muslim states such as Bulgaria and Greece and the large number of non-Muslim communities in the region.

⁵⁰⁶ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 7, 02 Mart 1332 – 15 March 1916. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army, Second Section, to the Ministry of Interior (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâleti İkinci Şûbe’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 8, 27 Mart 1332 – 09 April 1916. Ministry of Interior Ciphered Correspondence Office, Outlet: Edirne, Acting Governor Zekeriyâ (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Şifre Kalemî, Mahreci: Edirne, Vâli Zekeriyâ*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 9, 30 Mart 1332 – 12 April 1916. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Supreme Command (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Başkumandanlık Vekâletine*).

⁵⁰⁷ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.83/58/Lef 11, 19 Nisan 1332 – 02 May 1916. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Edirne Governorate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Edirne Vilâyetine*).

correspondence precludes determination of whether those residing in Hayrabolu were resettled in Anatolia and, if so, to which particular locations. While archival documents confirm in great detail the banishment of Italian subjects from various provinces of the Ottoman Empire to Çorum and Kastamonu, there is a paucity of evidence on the fate of the Italians in Hayrabolu. Consequently, their ultimate fate remains a mystery. In all cases, the eventual abandonment of Hayrabolu as a projected destination suggests that the Italians there were probably relocated elsewhere.

5.3.1. Relocation of Kostantin (Amédée Ivoy): An Italian Employee of the Singer Company in Izmit

One of the Italian nationals forcibly relocated due to the proximity of a strategic railway route was Kostantin, the son of Aberdi (*Kostantin veled-i Aberdi*-قسطنطين ولد أبردى), who had served as the Izmit agent for the American-owned Singer company.⁵⁰⁸ In May 1916, the company's headquarters in Istanbul appointed him to Adapazarı, a move that attracted the attention of the Ottoman authorities. The Governor of Izmit, Mazhar Müfit Bey (Kansu), considered the presence of enemy aliens in Izmit or Adapazari to be highly unfavourable, given that "both towns were located on the railway line and military supply route" (*şimendifer hatt-ı güzergâhı ve sevkiyât-ı askeriyye memerrî*). In addition to its strategic location, the fact that Izmit was a coastal town further increased regional vulnerability and potential threats. In his communications to the Ministry of the Interior, Mazhar Müfit Bey proposed two options: either the company be instructed to employ Kostantin in a different location, or the Ministry approve his "relocation to a more favorable area" (*mahzûrdan sâlim bir mahale îzâm*) in inland Anatolia. Subsequently, the Directorate of Public Security (*Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdüriyeti*) replied, indicating that Kostantin's assignment to Adapazarı was inappropriate in the first place. The Directorate instructed that if there were any suspicions about him, he should be reported immediately and detained until he could be transferred to a more convenient location in the interior.

According to the Governor Mazhar, Kostantin, who resided in Izmit with his family, exhibited no suspicious behaviour up to that point.⁵⁰⁹ However, as a subject of a hostile state, it was reasonable to assume that he would not refrain from acting against the Ottoman homeland and government in the interests of the Italian state and nation.⁵¹⁰ In the most recent investigation concluded in July, Kostantin was found to have travelled from Istanbul to Bursa and then to

⁵⁰⁸ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 7, 24 Nisan 1332- 07 May 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 6, 03 Mayıs 1332- 16 May 1916 From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Izmit Sanjak Governorate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdüriyetinden İzmit Mutasarrıflığına*).

⁵⁰⁹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 4, 30 Haziran 1332- 13 July 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 3, 17 Temmuz 1332- 30 July 1916. From the Izmit Sanjak Governorate Correspondence Office to the Ministry of Interior (*İzmit Mutasarrıflığı Tahrîrât Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 1, 15 Ağustos 1332- 28 August 1916 . From the Ministry of Interior Talât Bey to the Izmit Sanjak Governor Mazhar Bey (*Dâhiliye Nâzırı Talât Beyden İzmit Mutasarrıfı Mazhar Beye*).

⁵¹⁰ "Kostantin veled-i Aberdi'nin zâhirde dâi-i şüphe bir hâli görülememekte ise de muhâsım bir devlet tebaasından olan bu şahsın fırsat bulunca vatan ve devletimiz aleyhinde ve mensûb olduğu devlet ve millet lehinde teşebbüste bulunmaktan çekinmeyeceği umûr-ı bedîhiyyeden olmasına mebnî"

Izmit, and it was understood that his employment at the company had been terminated.⁵¹¹ Thus, his continued residence in Izmit was deemed both unnecessary and problematic. By the end of August, the Minister of the Interior, Talât Bey, communicated to the governor that Kostantin's relocation to Çorum would be appropriate, thereby bringing an end to four months of uncertainty. Kostantin, an Italian national, was expelled from Izmit due to its strategic and military importance and was subjected to forced resettlement in the Anatolian interior, despite the absence of any suspicion or accusation against him.

In the meantime, the story of Kostantin, whose life prior to Izmit extended to Bursa, did not conclude at this juncture and continued to preoccupy Ottoman and American authorities for a considerable period.⁵¹² On July 7 and August 19, 1916, the American Embassy transmitted two notes to the Sublime Porte concerning an Italian national named Amédée Ivoy, who would soon be identified as the same person known as Kostantin. The initial note dated July 7, revealed that Ivoy, who was compelled to reside in Izmit with his family, had been relieved of his duties at the Singer Company and was currently unemployed. Although he had received a favorable employment offer from a Swiss household in Bursa, the local authorities in Izmit would not grant him permission to travel there. The American Embassy has stated that Mr. Ivoy, who had resided in Bursa for a considerable number of years, was relocated from this city to Izmit following the termination of diplomatic relations between Italy and Turkey. Consequently, the embassy sought authorization for Monsieur Amédée Ivoy to travel to Bursa and reside in that city. The second note dated August 19, requested authorization for the same individual, who resided in "extreme poverty" (*fakr u zarûret*) in Izmit with his wife and three children, to travel to Istanbul with his family to seek employment and establish residence there. On September 2, Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha kindly "rejected the American Embassy's request for that particular favor, stating that it was not possible to grant it" (*Amerika Sefâretinin iltimâsı gayr-i kabil-i kabûl görülmüş*).

The American Embassy, having received an application from Amédée Ivoy's brother residing in Istanbul, sent a third note to Sublime Porte on October 27.⁵¹³ The note stated that Ivoy had

⁵¹¹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.28/9/Lef 3, 17 Temmuz 1332- 30 July 1916. In a telegram sent on July 30, Mazhar Müfit Bey reported that Kostantin had previously been employed by the Singer Company in Istanbul but had been expelled from the city during the Italo-Turkish War. Subsequent to the end of war, he returned with his family to Istanbul and resumed his position at the company. The investigation carried out by the *Mutasarrıfate* (Sanjak Governorate) revealed that Kostantin was appointed by the company from Bursa to Izmit on 23 January 1916, arriving in the central district of Izmit via Yalova. However, he would soon to be dismissed by the company. It seems that Kostantin either manipulated this transfer from the beginning as a strategic move to reach Adapazarı, or he was indeed transferred at the company's will in May and dismissed in July.

⁵¹² COA, HR.SYS.2131/15/Lef 1, 7 July 1916 (Aide-Mémoire No.253. American Embassy Constantinople); HR.SYS.2131/32/Lef 1, 20 Ağustos 1332- 02 September 1916. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümayunu Başkumandanlık Vekâletinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.31/2/Lef 3, 22 Teşrînievvel 1332- 04 November 1916. From the Directorate General of Political Affairs - Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-u Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁵¹³ COA, HR.SYS.2131/32/Lef 3, 27 October 1916 (Aide-Mémoire No.350. American Embassy Constantinople); DH.EUM.5.Şb.31/2/Lef 3, 22 Teşrînievvel 1332- 04 November 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.31/2/Lef 2, 02 Teşrînisânî 1332- 15 November 1916. From the Minister of the Interior, Talât Bey, to the Sanjak Governor of Izmir, Mazhar Bey (*Dâhiliye Nâzırı Talât Beyefendi tarafından İzmir Mutasarrıfı Mazhar Beye*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.31/2/Lef 1, 15 Teşrînisânî 1332- 28 November 1916. From the Sanjak Governor of Izmit, Mazhar, to the Ministry of the Interior (*İzmit Mutasarrıfı Mazhar'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

been informed by the relevant local authorities that he would be relocated to Çorum along with his family. However, his brother asserted that the Ivoy family would have been compelled to travel to Çorum by foot, due to their limited finance which precluded the purchase of train tickets. Recalling that the Ivoy family had not previously been permitted to go to Bursa or Istanbul, the Embassy requested that the relocation mandate to Çorum be revoked and that they be granted permission to remain in Izmit, at the very least. On November 15, Minister Talât transmitted a telegram to Mazhar Bey, the Governor of Izmit, enquiring about the rationale behind the relocation of Ivoy and his family to Çorum, and whether there were any impediments to their continued residence in Izmit. However, in his response dated 28 November, Mazhar stated that no such individual was present at his jurisdiction. The individual who was previously employed by the Singer Company, subsequently having been dismissed from his position, and ultimately relocated with his family to Çorum on September 4, was Aberdi's son, Kostantin. Given the strategic importance of Izmit as a military shipping center, a railway hub, and a coastal city, Mazhar asserted that the residence of Kostantin, an Italian citizen, posed a threat to national security and that his return would not be a prudent course of action.

5.3.2. Relocation of Edmond Dussi: The Former British Consul in Tekfurdağı

Among the individuals relocated to Hayrabolu in August 1915 was Edmond Dussi (ادمون دوسی), an Italian national who had previously served as the British Consul in Tekfurdağı.⁵¹⁴ Given the status of Tekfurdağı as a military outpost and the diplomatic background of Dussi, he was relocated from this coastal town to another location at the behest of the Commander-in-Chief. At a time when naval and land battles were raging with full intensity on the Dardanelles campaign, located about a hundred kilometers west of Tekfurdağı, the presence of an Italian-born British Consul in the town could have posed a serious security risk. Dussi, being both an Italian national and a former British servant, represented two enemy states embodied in a single personality from the Ottoman perspective. For a long period, Dussi's gravely ill and advanced-age mother was unable to reach her son and received no information about his fate from the Ottoman authorities. However, in December 1915, the desperate woman approached the American Embassy and requested information regarding her son's whereabouts. While it was presumed that Dussi had been relocated to Hayrabolu, a December 1915 correspondence indicates that he was in Çorum during that period. This suggests the possibility that Edmond Dussi, along with other Italians, may have initially been transferred to Hayrabolu in August and subsequently relocated individually to Çorum at a later date. There is also a high probability that all the other Italians in Hayrabolu were transferred to Çorum in addition to Dussi. It is a well-documented fact that Hayrabolu had lost its character as a resettlement destination in the eyes of the Ottoman military authorities due to its proximity to the engagement zone.

⁵¹⁴ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/13/Lef 1, 10 Kânûnuevvel 1331 -23 December 1915. From the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetinden Hâriciye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/13/Lef 8, 21 Kânûnuevvel 1915 -03 January 1916. Deputy Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs - From the American Embassy No:88. Deputy Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs - From the American Embassy, Number: 88 (*Hâriciye Müsteşar Muâvinliği - Amerika Sefâretinden, Numero:88*); HR.SYS.2145/18/Lef 2, 9 Şubat 1331- 22 February 1916. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Political Affairs, to the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Siyâsiyye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesinden Ordu-yu Hümâyûn Başkumandanlığı Vekâletine*); HR.SYS.2145/18/Lef 3, 14 Şubat 1331- 27 February 1916. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army, Second Section, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâleti İkinci Şûbe'den Hâriciye Nezâretine*).

Furthermore, the fact that Italian subjects from different regions of the Empire were transferred to Çorum at that time is also mentioned in other documents and supports this possibility. In any case, it is certain that Dussi somehow manage to return to Hayrabolu from Çorum in the following period. Indeed, the correspondence of February 1916 indicates that the Dussi family in Tekfurdağı petitioned the American Embassy for the return of Edmond Dussi from Hayrabolu to Tekfurdağı. The Commander-in-Chief's Office denied the request, citing the military status of Tekfurdağı, but offered the Embassy to transfer the entire family from Tekfurdağı to Hayrabolu. As can be seen, in principle, there were no restrictions on the reunification of an Italian family, inasmuch as the geographical location was favorable from a military standpoint.

However, given the absence of further details in the Ottoman archives, the following two questions remain unanswered. What were the circumstances that led to Dussi's family being permitted to remain in Tekfurdağı, despite their Italian nationality? Similarly, it is unclear how the former British consul, Dussi himself, was able to return to Hayrabolu from Çorum, where he had been subjected to forced resettlement. Our hypothesis suggests that he may have enjoyed the support of either the British Embassy, given his previous consular experience, or the American Embassy, which had assumed the wartime protection of the Italians. However, this remains speculative, as it is based on assumptions rather than on confirmed sources, such as American or British archives. A year later, the American Embassy approached the Ottoman government with another request regarding Edmond Dussi.⁵¹⁵ The documents clearly indicate that Dussi was not permitted to return to his family in Tekfurdağı, and his family did not agree to relocate to Hayrabolu to join him. In February 1917, Dussi's 90-year-old mother, who was "experiencing a gradual loss of vision" (*kuvve-i bâsıradan tedricen mahrum*), expressed a desire to reunite with her son "before she became completely blind" (*tamamıyla âmâ olmazdan mukaddem*). She requested that Edmond, her son, come from Hayrabolu to Tekfurdağı to visit her for a period of one month. In response, the Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha provided a concise and explicit reply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stating that Dussi's arrival in Tekfurdağı was not considered suitable. It is particularly noteworthy that during the First World War, the Commander-in-Chief Enver Bey's role and function in the state's decision-making mechanisms underwent a significant expansion. In May 1917, the mother had another attempt to see her son, but this time she chose the Spanish Embassy as an intermediary. According to the memorandum from the Spanish Embassy, the mother, who was advanced in age and in poor health, sought to see her son one last time before her death and requested permission to travel to Tekfurdağı for a few days. However, as no other archival documentation pertaining to subsequent events could be located, the acceptance of the request remains uncertain.

⁵¹⁵ COA, HR.SYS.2132/14/Lef 2, 10 Mart 1333- 10 March 1917. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Administrative Affairs, to the Supreme Command (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı İdâriyye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesinden Başkumandanlık Vekâletine*); HR.SYS.2132/14/Lef 3, 15 Mart 1333- 15 March 1917. From the Supreme Command of the Imperial Ottoman Army, the Second Section, to the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyûnu Başkumandanlığı Vekâleti İkinci Şûbe'den Hâriciye Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2149/8/Lef 2, 29 Mayıs 1333- 29 May 1917. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Directorate of Administrative Affairs, to the Ministry of Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı İdâriyye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

5.4 Relocation and Resettlement of Italian Jews in the Syrian Levant

During the period between November 1914 and October 1917, Fourth Army Commander Cemâl Pasha assumed the military governorship of an administrative division comprising the Provinces of Syria, Beirut, Aleppo, and the Sanjak of Jerusalem.⁵¹⁶ In his seminal book dedicated to Cemâl Pasha's tenure and career in Syria, Talha Çiçek examines why and how the Ottoman strategy of expelling Palestinian Jews was later replaced by a practice of naturalization. According to Çiçek, Cemâl Pasha's decision to expel the Jews from Palestine was a measure taken against Zionism, which he viewed as a threat to the integrity of the empire. It was an established fact that many of the policies enacted by the Ottomans towards the Jewish population were not unique to them; but rather were applied universally to all peoples in the region, due to the difficulties created by the war. However, this critical decision, taken by Cemâl Pasha at the onset of his governorate, provoked a strong reaction from the global Zionist community. Recognizing the considerable influence exercised by this influential global network within the international public sphere, the Ottoman government was compelled to back down. Çiçek observes that the Ottoman government, confronted with mounting pressure from German and American ambassadors, as well as pro-Jewish members within the Committee of Union and Progress. This pressure prompted the government to adopt a more accommodating stance in early January 1915, leading to the introduction of an exceptional practice. This practice enabled individuals of Jewish origin to attain Ottoman subjecthood within a period of 10 days, subject to the payment of an application fee amounting to 40 francs. According to Çiçek, this practice could be interpreted as a strategic move aimed at facilitating the integration of Jews into the empire and bringing them under state control.

Since the primary focus of his work is on the Syrian provinces, Çiçek's study addresses this naturalization program specifically in the context of Palestinian Jews.⁵¹⁷ However, it should be noted that the essence of this practice was based on the supreme decrees dated December 5 and 9, 1914, which applied to all non-Ottoman Jews residing throughout the Ottoman Empire. In the period that followed, those who did not opt for Ottoman subjecthood were subsequently deported on the orders of Cemâl Pasha in December 1914 and January 1915. Approximately 2,700 Jews who were nationals of the Entente powers were dispatched to Egypt on Italian ships. In an effort to facilitate the naturalization process for Jewish immigrants, Jerusalem Governor Midhat Bey, with the permission of the central government, extended the application period for a second time at the beginning of February and waived the application fee. As reported by Governor Midhat to Talat, the number of applicants had reached 3,000 by the beginning of February. Concurrently, Zionist circles engaged in an intense propaganda campaign, asserting that high-ranking Ottoman officials were methodically demolishing Jewish homes and property in Palestine and inciting Arabs to seize them. However, in contrast to the claims made by Zionist leaders, the German ambassador in Istanbul and the German consuls in Jaffa and Jerusalem concurred that these claims were exaggerated. In June 1915, approximately 970 non-Ottoman Jews were granted Ottoman status and were exempted from expulsion. Subsequent to this development, Zionist organizations noted that the expulsion of Jews from Palestine had become unfeasible. By the end of September 1915, the process of acquiring Ottoman status for Jews had been finalized. Consequently, on September 20, those who did not accept Ottoman

⁵¹⁶ Talha Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria: Cemal Pasha's governorate during World War I, 1914-1917* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014), 83-84.

⁵¹⁷ Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 83-84.

naturalization or whose applications had been rejected by the Ottoman government were expelled from Palestine. Approximately 500 people, predominately Russian nationals and largely affiliated with Zionism, were dispatched to Egypt.

As discussed in detail in the third chapter, under the heading “Avoiding Wartime Expulsion,” the situation of Italian Jews who refused to assume Ottoman identity had frequently been a matter of debate starting from October 1915. Pursuant to the imperial decrees dated December 5 and 9, 1914, all Jewish individuals of enemy nationality throughout the empire were encouraged to naturalize as Ottoman subjects, in exchange for exemption from possible expulsion.⁵¹⁸ However, following Italy’s declaration of war on 25 August 1915, these regulations did not officially extend to Italian nationals, and no supplementary decree was issued exclusively for Italians. Nevertheless, a further ministerial decree issued on 23 December 1915 adopted a flexible and tolerant stance towards Italian Jews and prevented their expulsion through a naturalization formula based on choice. An additional directive subsequently issued on December 27, informed all relevant authorities that Italians who had not yet assumed Ottoman nationality and had not acquired an Ottoman identification would be expelled, in a manner consistent with the treatment of all other enemy nationals.

In point of fact, Cemâl Pasha had already implemented the policy of “either naturalization or expulsion” for Italian Jews within his jurisdiction months before the decree in question was issued.⁵¹⁹ Acting on his own volition as a “super governor” endowed with extraordinary powers, Cemâl proffered this option to Italian Jews who had been designated as enemy aliens since August 21, 1915. He had set a deadline for Italian Jews residing in Syria and Palestine to become Ottoman subjects during Italy’s declaration of war and had given these residents the chance to remain in their own lands. However, those who refused to become Ottoman subjects would ultimately be expelled from the Ottoman Empire. Despite the December 23 decree granting Italian subjects a residency status contingent upon naturalization, the December 27 sanction expelling those who refused was both categorical and explicit. At the expiration of the deadline stipulated by Cemâl Pasha, a total of 90 Italian Jews residing in Aleppo who had not renounced their Italian nationality were dispatched to Beirut in December 1915, with the intention of being expelled from Ottoman territory. As with other enemy aliens who had departed from the Port of Beirut three months earlier, their deportation was scheduled to be carried out aboard an American cruiser. Nevertheless, during this process, the Sublime Porte had initiated the adoption of policies restricting the departure of neutral nationals and preventing that of enemy nationals.

Towards the end of December, the Ministry of the Interior and the Supreme Command reached an agreement regarding Italian Jews who had neither agreed to naturalization nor departed Ottoman territory.⁵²⁰ The remaining enemy aliens who had not yet managed to depart from Ottoman territory, or who had voluntarily chosen to remain, were systematically transferred to

⁵¹⁸ COA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.110/28/Lef 3, 31 Mart 1332 – 13 April 1916.

⁵¹⁹ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 1, 05 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 18 January 1916. From the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Ottoman Army, Enver, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyunu Başkumandan Vekîli Enver Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 2, 12 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 25 December 1915; DH.ŞFR.502/123, 12 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 25 December 1915. From the Governor of Beirut, Azmi, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Beyrut Vâlisi Azmi'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).

⁵²⁰ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 1, 05 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 18 January 1916.

Aleppo over the course of several weeks.⁵²¹ In this particular context, it was decided that non-naturalized Italian Jews would also be included in this program, in a similar fashion to the other groups. In summary, the Italian nationals, who had arrived in Beirut some time ago for deportation and had been held there under surveillance for a period of time, would be transferred back to Aleppo in gradual stages within a few weeks. The Ottoman government would no longer permit any individual of enemy nationality to depart its borders, irrespective of their religious affiliation, and would not grant any exceptions or privileges in this regard. As the transfer of enemy aliens from the coast to the interior progressively continued, the isolation of coastline from shipping traffic gained both greater importance and momentum. Indeed, on 18 January 1916, Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha declared that no steamship had been permitted to dock on the Syrian coastline for a period of one month, and that this policy would remain unaltered.

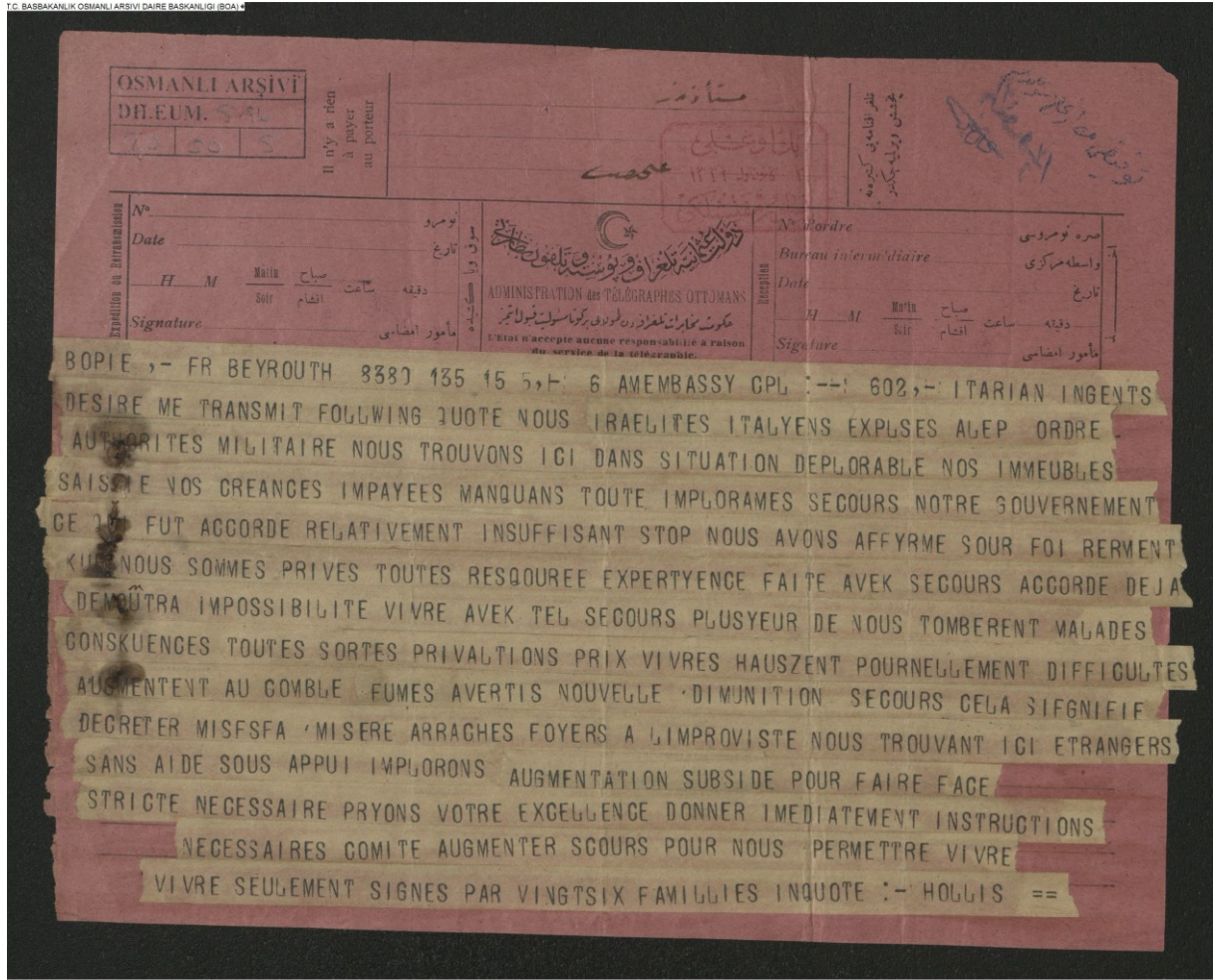
As is customary, the American Embassy was involved in the process and served as spokesperson for the Italian Jews who lodged complaints that they were stranded and distressed between Aleppo and Beirut.⁵²² On December 17, the American Consul General in Beirut, Stanley Hollis, transmitted a telegram to the American Embassy in Istanbul, which had been composed by 26 Italian Jewish families residing in Beirut. The translation of the French text, which was written in a rather emotional, even dramatic tone, was as follows:

“We, Italian Jews expelled from Aleppo by order of the military authorities, find ourselves here in a deplorable situation. Our properties have been seized, our debts remain unpaid, and we lack everything. We implored our government for help, which was granted but was relatively insufficient. We have sworn on our honor that we have been deprived of all resources. Our experience with the aid already granted has shown that it is impossible to live on such assistance. Several of us have fallen ill due to all kinds of deprivation. Food prices are constantly rising. Our difficulties are increasing to the point of crisis. We have been warned of a further reduction in aid. This means destitution and misery. Torn from our homes without warning, we find ourselves here as strangers, without help or support. We implore an increase in subsidies to meet our basic needs. We pray that Your Excellency will immediately give the necessary instructions to the committee to increase the relief to enable us to survive. Signed by twenty-six families”⁵²³

⁵²¹ As can be deduced from archival documents, Aleppo was not exclusively reserved for the resettlement program of Italians who had rejected Ottoman naturalization. Due to its sheltered location in inland areas far from the coast, the city functioned as a relocation center for all enemy aliens residing in the Syrian Levant who were unable to depart Ottoman borders during wartime conditions. It is evident that cities such as Aleppo, Damascus and Urfa functioned as wartime relocation centers, accommodating enemy aliens in general, extending far beyond the aforementioned Italian Jews. This fact renders the topic significantly more relevant in the context of wartime redesign, while also preserving the chronological and contextual integrity of the narrative. Aleppo, a Syrian city under the control of Cemâl Pasha and within the jurisdiction of the Fourth Army, became another major destination for Italian resettlement, alongside towns such as Hayrabolu in Thrace, Çorum and Kastamonu in Anatolia, and Damascus and Urfa in Syria. Due to its safer location within Syria’s vulnerable and volatile geography, Aleppo would be designated as one of the most convenient destinations for Italians subject to travel restrictions.

⁵²² COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 4, 05 Kânûnuevvel 1331 – 18 December 1915. From the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Ottoman Army, Enver, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Osmanlı Ordu-yu Hümâyunu Başkumandan Vekîli Enver’den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.20/50/Lef 3-5, 04 Kânûnuevvel 1331- 17 December 1915. From Beirut to the American Embassy in Istanbul (*Beyrut’tan Dersâadet’te Amerika Sefârethânesine*).

⁵²³ “Haleb’den hükûmet-i askeriye’nin emriyle nefyedilen biz Müsevî İtalyanlar acınacak bir vaziyette bulunuyoruz. Emlâkımız müsâdere edilmiş, matlûbâtımız tediye edilmemiş ve her türlü havâyic-i zarûriyeden mahrûm bulunuyoruz. Hükûmetimizin bu babda muâvenetini istirham ettik. Ve bu babda edilen muâvenet nisbeten kâfi değildir. Kemâl-i sıdk ile temin ettik ki (burada bir kelime okunmuyor) burada her türlü çâre ve vâridâtın mahrûmuz. Bize temin edilen muâvenetin kâfi gelmediğini ve bu iâne ile yaşamının



DH.EUM.5.Şb.00020.00050.005

Archival Image 18: Telegram written by 26 Italian Jewish families in Beirut and dispatched by American Consul General Stanley Hollis to the American Embassy in Istanbul on 17 December 1915.

Furthermore, the deportation of 248 Italians residing in Jerusalem to Aleppo in 1916 would be a subject of debate among Ottoman authorities for a considerable period.⁵²⁴ On February 7, the

adem-ül imkân olduğunu tecrübe irâe etti. Bizden birçok kimseler mahrûmiyet dolayısıyla hastalandılar. İhtiyâcât-ı zarûriye fiyatı günden güne tereffu etmekte ve bu babda uğradığımız müşkilât da artmaktadır. Üstelik de bize edilen muâvenetin tenkîs edildiği haberi verildi... (burada bir cümle okunmuyor. [...] ile anlaşıldığına göre bu muâvenetin tenkîsi demek hânûmanları söndüren sefâletin hüküm-fermâ olmasını emretmektir.) Burada muâvenetsiz, himâyesiz bulunan ecnebler ihtiyâcât-ı zaruriyemizi temin etmek için tahsîsâtımızın tezyîdini istirham ve ancak yaşamak için muhtaç bulunduğumuz iânenin tezyîdi için (muâvenet cemiyetine) lâzım gelen evâmirin îtâsını ricâ ederim."

⁵²⁴ COA, DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 7, 25 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 07 February 1916. From Midhat, the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kudûs Mutasarrıfı Midhat'tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.İ.UM.EK.100/6/Lef 7, 28 Kânûnusânî 1331 – 10 February 1916. From the Directorate of General Internal Administration to the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem (*İdare-i Umûmiye-i Dâhiliye Müdîriyetinden Kudûs-ü Şerif Mutasarrıflığına*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.21/42, 28 Kânûnusânî 1331 - 10 February 1916; HR.SYS.2967/30, 15 Şubat 1331 - 28 February 1916. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General of Political Affairs, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-u Siyâsiye Müdîriyet-i Umûmiyesinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/3/Lef 3, 18 Şubat 1331- 02 March 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/7/Lef 6, 02 Mart 1331 - 15 March

Governor of Jerusalem, Mehmed Midhat (Alam) Bey, raised the issue of the exclusive acceptance of enemy nationals into Ottoman naturalization thus far being limited to those of the Jewish faith. Governor Midhat inquired as to whether this opportunity could be extended to encompass Christian subjects and their respective clergy affiliated with enemy nations. In a matter of days, the Ministry of the Interior formally declared that Christian subjects and associated clergy who aspired to become naturalized Ottoman nationals could also be included within the same scope. Yet concurrently, the American Embassy, having been briefed by the American Consulate in Jerusalem, conveyed a diplomatic note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thereby instigating a fresh debate. The note indicated that Italian residents of Jerusalem were being compelled to undergo Ottoman naturalization by February 15 at the latest. It was stated that any Italian resident who insisted on retaining their original nationality would be relocated to the interior region following the stipulated deadline. Recognizing this, the American Consul in Jerusalem intervened on his own initiative to request that “at least children and the elderly be exempted from this measure” (*bu karardan hiç olmazsa ihtiyarlarla çocukların istisnâsı*). In response to the Americans’ request, the Ottoman local authorities promised the Consul that the implementation would be suspended until the situation was clarified. Following deliberations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior, the Jerusalem Mutasarrifate was questioned in early March as to whether such a coercive measure had been decided upon. Should such a decision indeed had been reached, “the possibility and feasibility of exempting children and women” (*Mevcûd ise çocuk ve kadınların istisnâsı gayr-i kabil olup olmayacağıın inbâsı*) was also called into question.

In his response on March 18, Governor Midhat stated that following the order of 27 December 1915, which stipulated the expulsion of Italians who had not voluntarily naturalized, “no coercive measures had been taken” (*hâlen mecbûriyet-i kat’iyye olmayıp*) against Italian nationals in the region.⁵²⁵ Therefore, in contrast to the allegations, there had been no coercion exerted upon Italians to alter their nationality. However, due to the ongoing suspension of ferry services and the prior transfer of other enemy aliens to inland locations such as Aleppo and Urfa, the Governor’s Office and the Fourth Army Command reached a consensus on March 8 to also transfer the Italians to these locations. Therefore, the transfer, which had not yet initiated, and the exemption of women and children, which had not yet decided, were naturally subject to the approval of the Ministry of the Interior. Midhat’s in-depth analysis of the issue revealed that the previous practice in Jerusalem regarding non-naturalized enemy nationals had undergone a twofold process. Christians were relocated to the hinterland, and the Jews were expelled from the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, in light of the fact that the Italian population comprised both Christians and Jews, Governor Midhat and Cemâl Pasha conducted a reassessment of the situation and arrived at the decision to transfer Italian nationals to Aleppo as well.

1915. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyetinden Kudüs Mutasarrıflığına*).

⁵²⁵ COA, DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/7/Lef 3, 05 Mart 1332 - 18 March 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/7/Lef 2, 22 Mart 1332 - 04 April 1916; DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/3/Lef 1, 24 Mart 1332 - 06 April 1916. From Midhat, the Sanjak Governor of Jerusalem, to the Ministry of the Interior (*Kudüs-ü Şerif Mutasarrıfı Midhat’tan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.5.Şb.23/7/Lef 1, 27 Mart 1332 - 09 April 1916. From the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Public Security, to the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyetinden Kudüs Mutasarrıflığına*).

According to the further telegrams dated April 4 and 6, it appears that Midhat Bey, awaiting the Ministry's approval, had not yet taken any action and had suspended the transfer of Italians from Jerusalem to Aleppo. Midhat's state of confusion and indecision was primarily attributable to the absence of any subsequent directives from the Ministry or military authorities. Furthermore, if naturalization or expulsion procedures were to be applied exclusively to Italians "whose nationality status was contested" (*tâbiyetleri meşkûk*), what approach should be adopted with regard to the Italian community in the Jerusalem Sanjak, which consisted of 248 Christians and Jews? On April 9, the Ministry of the Interior issued instructions that Italians whose nationality status was not contested or deemed suspicious should be treated in a manner consistent with other enemy nationals. However, those deemed to be ineligible for continued residence in Jerusalem from a military standpoint could be relocated to Aleppo by decision of the military administration. The Ministry has issued a particular emphasis that "pressure should not be exerted on women, children, or individuals who are considered to be honorable, decent, and reliable" (*kadın ve çocukların ve ehl-i ber-nâmus ve emniyet olanların tazyik edilmemeleri*).

Initially harboring certain legal reservations, Governor Midhat questioned whether Italians in Jerusalem who were to be accepted into Ottoman naturalization would be subject to a distinction based on their Christian or Jewish confessional affiliation. The Ministry of the Interior, which did not discriminate on the basis of religious affiliation, clearly approved the eligibility of Christian individuals and clergy for naturalization akin to Jews. By incorporating them within the general provisions, the Ministry effectively eliminated any potential ambiguity. Furthermore, it appears that Midhat, the Mutasarrif operating under the authority and influence of Cemâl Pasha, adopted a stance in favor of the relocation of Italian nationals residing in Jerusalem to Aleppo, a practice that was also observed in the case of other enemy aliens. However, in a matter involving the American Consulate, it was certain that Midhat would not act without receiving final instructions from the central authorities in Istanbul. It is evident that American mediation, which sought to exempt children, women, and the elderly from such relocation measures, exerted significant pressure on Istanbul during this process. While the policy of "either be Ottoman subjects or be resettled in the interior" became apparent to Italian residents, American involvement resulted in a significant shift regarding the situation in Jerusalem. The central government was compelled to adopt a middle-ground strategy, a compromise necessitated by the need to maintain its stringent policy while also responding to diplomatic pressure. The relocation of 248 Italians in Jerusalem, which had been suspended for a considerable time, was now subject to highly flexible conditions. It was formally assured that Italian residents, categorized within the same scope as other enemy nationals, would not be subjected to forced naturalization. In parallel, the adoption of a wholesale relocation approach was to be refrained. Consequently, the decision regarding relocation for Italian individuals who refused naturalization was entrusted exclusively to the discretion and authority of military officials. Furthermore, the utmost care and sensitivity would be exercised to ensure that children, women, and honorable and trustworthy individuals were not victimized during the process.

6. A CASE STUDY ON OTTOMAN-ITALIAN TRANSIMPERIAL JURISDICTION: THE AEGEAN ISLANDS (1912-1936)

The term “capitulatory protégé” is employed to denote non-national individuals to whom privileges are accorded and who are thereby granted protection within the framework of bilateral international treaties. Within the context of Italian nationals residing within the Ottoman Empire, capitulations were recognized as a legal manifestation of their transimperial and extraterritorial identity. It is therefore essential to consider the role and function of capitulations when examining the dynamic, amalgamated and multi-layered formation of the Ottoman-Italian identity. However, the capitulations referred to in this chapter indicate administrative and legal autonomy granted by the Ottoman Empire to the Aegean Islands for centuries, rather than an extraterritorial character. Many Aegean islands, including Chios, Samos, Rhodes and Lesbos, which had been under Ottoman rule since the sixteenth century, were granted special statuses despite being under Ottoman sovereignty. These statuses were accompanied by privileges, including a special tax regime, local administrative rights, partial application of internal law, and local courts. However, the fact that these privileges were granted to the Ottoman subjects residing on the islands, including the Greek, Jewish, and Turkish populations, rather than to foreigners, indicates that these rights constituted an “intra-imperial autonomy” rather than an extraterritorial regime. In this respect, the framework of “capitulation” or “capitulatory regime” referred to in this chapter in the Dodecanese context does not characterize the extraterritoriality of the Italian regime extending to Ottoman borders. In a similar manner, the designation of “capitulatory protégé” employed here does not pertain to Italian nationals residing within the Ottoman borders and subject to Italian jurisdiction. In this specific context, the term refers to the indigenous populations of the Aegean Islands, comprising Orthodox Greeks, Jews, and Turks, who had undergone a transition from Ottoman rule to Italian colonial administration.

To a certain extent, the present chapter will engage with the administrative and judicial transformations that the Dodecanese, a region subject to the Ottoman rule for centuries, underwent after the Italian occupation in 1912. Following the occupation, the Italian authorities made considerable efforts with a view to avoiding the provocation of anti-Italian sentiment and antagonism among the communities of the Twelve Islands. These communities had long enjoyed various privileges granted by Ottoman sultans for centuries and had been living under the *Pax Ottomana*. One such initiative was to ensure the continuity of the existing legislative, executive and judicial institutions and public ecosystem inherited from the Ottomans. It is evident that prior to the implementation of a long-term colonial design, the Italian administration sought to comprehend the administrative nature of the locality. In doing so, they deemed it appropriate to establish a gradual process of authority, with the intention of avoiding missteps.

In the course of the examination of this transformation, brief reference will also be made to the historical background and administrative structure of the Dodecanese. From this standpoint, the geostrategic character and political implications attributed to the archipelago within the global context illuminate the broader patterns inherent in the backdrop of transformation. In this vein, a concise analysis of the islands’ recent past will be presented through the insights and findings of Turkish, Italian, and Greek scholars. This analysis will furnish us with the necessary understanding to interpret the broader political framework that constitutes the setting for the

regime transformation process in question.⁵²⁶ The Dodecanese was initially a colonial domain and the site of a power struggle between Italian territorial ambitions and Greek irredentism. However, with the advent of the First World War, it evolved into a focal point on a global scale, involving major powers such as Britain and France. During the conferences and treaties that ensued the war, Turkey also became embroiled in this struggle, with the islands becoming a diplomatic bargaining chip amongst the participants. Furthermore, during the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922, the Dodecanese extensions in Anatolia became valuable yet equally vulnerable demographic assets that the Italian regime was compelled to protect. Those individuals who were sought to be conscripted by both the Turkish and Greek armies regarded Italian protection as a means of exemption from military service.

The origins of this colonial design were embedded in the broader transformation that the Dodecanese Islands underwent from an Ottoman province to an Italian dominion, beginning with the Italian occupation in May 1912. The political and administrative integration of the archipelago, which had been under Ottoman rule since the early sixteenth century, into the Kingdom of Italy was a central tenet of this colonial design. In this project, the Italian state regarded the archipelago as neither a full province nor a full colony, instead defining it as a “possession” (*possedimento*), a term suggesting more profound territorial and political connotations.⁵²⁷ A thorough comprehension of this regime transformation, which can also be interpreted as a paradigm shift from imperial to colonial, is undoubtedly contingent on an analysis of the varied representations of the islands in Ottoman historiography. To summarize, the evolution of the administrative structure, sociopolitical milieu, demographic composition, and identity policies in the Dodecanese region following the Italian occupation is, in essence, deeply intertwined with a prolonged period of Ottoman governance spanning four centuries. This administration consisted of the reconfiguration and localization of the Ottoman Empire’s broader administrative, bureaucratic, and legal framework for the Dodecanese over the

⁵²⁶ Here, I use the term “regime” to describe a conjunctural transformation that encompasses not only the form of political governance, but also the entire legal, administrative, public, and bureaucratic framework. In a similar manner, the term “civic” refers not only to citizenship rights and population policies, but also to civic responsibility and participation, political pluralism, and representation.

⁵²⁷ Although the conceptual distinctions between the terms of *possedimento* and *colonia* in their historical context will be addressed in subsequent sections of this chapter, it would be beneficial to briefly examine the etymological origin of the word *possedimento*. In a multitude of Italian sources, the term *possedimento* is favored over *colonia* for the characterization of the Dodecanese Islands during their period of Italian rule. The Italian term can be translated directly into English as “possession”, which is primarily defined as “the state of having or owning something”. In addition to denoting ownership, the term can also imply meanings such as “personal belongings, property or land, wealth, and savings” in English vocabulary. However, it is particularly noteworthy that the term is extended to include meanings such as “colony, dominion, dominance, and sovereignty” through an emphasis on territorial ownership. Interestingly, the Italian dictionary also includes the word *possessione* as the equivalent of the English word “possession.” On the other hand, the Italian word *possedimento* is derived from the verb *possedere* and literally means “property” or “estate”, and in some cases, “territorial or colonial possession.” In this study, both the terms *possedimento* and “possession” are explicitly and unambiguously employed in a colonial context, corresponding to the English terms “colony,” “dominion,” or “domain.” “Possediménto: posediménto s. m. [der. di possedere] - Significato Ed Etimologia - Vocabolario - Treccani,” *Treccani*, accessed November 23, 2025, <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/possedimento/>; “Possession Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes,” *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.Com*, accessed November 24, 2025, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/possession>.

centuries, through certain adaptations. Despite the archipelago being detached from Ottoman jurisdiction following the occupation and designated as an Italian Occupation Command, the prevailing administrative and bureaucratic climate, a legacy of the Ottomans, never facilitated a swift and pragmatic transformation. This colonial site, which was the scene of turbulent fluctuations between Italian, Turkish, and Greek power projections, thus engaged in different dialogues with Italy's monarchist and fascist regimes.

Utilizing the coexistence of Italian and Ottoman presence in the post-occupation Dodecanese as a fundamental case study, this chapter explores the civic manifestations emerging within a transimperial climate. That is to say, the principal focus of this research is the forms of identity that were designed and introduced by the colonial administration, which oscillated between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. Adhering to the capitulatory regime inherited from the Ottomans to a certain extent and equipping it with colonial projections thereby encouraged the Italians to devise future citizenship models. At this juncture, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the Italian Occupation Command's adherence to the existing capitulations, initially inspiring and subsequently facilitating, gave rise to a novel civic status specific to the islands. Within this paradigm, the Italian administration's endorsement and continuation of the capitulatory regime inherited from the Ottomans, prior to its colonial adaptation, served as a pivotal catalyst. Thus, this chapter will extensively engage with the issue of the Aegean capitulations, which formed an administrative and judicial nexus between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. Island's native populations were the primary recipients of the civic doctrines promoted by the Italian administration. These colonized foreigners were subsequently offered Italian protection through a naturalization practice known as Aegean citizenship or status and were eventually integrated into the Italian Kingdom. As a socio-cultural frontier of the Italian realm in the east, the Dodecanese evolved into a site of social engineering where these identity forms were produced.

The Italian colonial initiative in the Dodecanese appeared to have been initially welcomed and endorsed by the local Greek councils, the *Demogerontias*, and the broader Hellenistic delegations under the Athenian influence. Nevertheless, the subsequent withdrawal of support, and even the emergence of opposition, would serve to expose this as a fallacy. The archipelago's local population, predominantly Orthodox Greeks, initially exhibited a relative detachment from both the political agenda and ideological discourse. Nevertheless, they appeared to greet the occupation by Catholic Italy with enthusiasm and satisfaction. This phenomenon can be attributed to the promotion of the cultural heritage and ethnic affiliations shared between the Italian and Greek peoples over the course of several centuries. Furthermore, Jews and Muslims, who were content with the previous Ottoman regime, readily welcomed Italian protection instead of being annexed to Greece. Despite the initial endorsement of the Italian occupation by the local *Demogerontia* councils, and the formal recognition of the occupation by the Hellenistic-oriented Patmos Congress in June 1912, a period of vacillation between conditional autonomy and Greek annexation soon followed. The Greek press of the time attested to the intense efforts of Dodecanese delegations lobbying political circles in Athens. The anti-Italian campaign, which reached its zenith in 1915, is significant in demonstrating the propaganda power of the Athens-based Hellenist circles in the international arena. This hardline campaign, which originated in Greek newspapers, rapidly disseminated to the American press and assumed a global scale. The newspaper reports and articles covered in this chapter provide a clear manifestation of the fierce resistance by the Orthodox Greeks against Italian colonialism.

By the 1930s, the “Aegean status,” implying a civic design specific to the islands, projected a commitment that the Mussolini regime could not afford to lose. In this regard, the Italian Senate granted full citizenship to these individuals in 1934, thereby manifesting the conditional acceptance and adaptation of Italian colonialism within certain echelons of the insular society. As the chapter will demonstrate, the Ottoman legacy, initially prevalent in the judicial, administrative and public spheres, had not promoted this colonial design. On the contrary, a significant resistance to the design was offered by Athens-centered Hellenic circles and Greek irredentists. Nevertheless, the fascist discourse, determined to penetrate deeper into Mediterranean territories, never abandoned this strategy. By 1936, the Mussolini regime, which had already embarked on the gradual assimilation of local populations, was attempting to create a transimperial generation in the Dodecanese. Governor Mario Lago, in office since 1923 and known for his relatively moderate and accommodating policies, was replaced in 1936 by Cesare Maria De Vecchi, one of the hardliners of the fascist regime. Following De Vecchi’s appointment, Mussolini’s Italy embarked on a rigorous assimilation policy in the Dodecanese, pursuing a radical *Italianization* program in the region’s education, culture, and architecture. Nevertheless, the primary focus of this chapter is on the transimperial identities of the Dodecanese region during the civic transformation process observed between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. Consequently, the Italianization of the Dodecanese in conjunction with the rise of fascism between 1936 and 1943 is not addressed in this chapter.

6.1. Dodecanese: An Archipelago where Italian Colonialism, Greek Irredentism and the Ottoman Legacy Collide

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the transimperial patterns of the civic and institutional transformation specific to this region, it is essential to first explore the significance of Dodecanese within the context of Italian colonial aspirations and political dynamics.⁵²⁸ Italian colonial ambitions in the Aegean region were primarily focused on the southwestern coast of Anatolia, specifically the region encompassing Izmir and Antalya (Adalia), as well as the islands situated along these coastal areas. This archipelago, recognized in geography as the Southern Sporades or *Menteşe Adaları* (in Turkish), began to be collectively designated as the “Dodecanese Islands” in the early Twentieth Century. As Nicholas Doumanis pertinently remarks, the term “Dodecanese”, which literally means “twelve islands,” is a misnomer.⁵²⁹ This

⁵²⁸ Giovanni Cecini’s meticulously crafted work (English title: *The Financial Police in the Italian Aegean Islands: 1912–1945*) unveils a comprehensive account of the transition from the Ottoman to the Italian regime, elucidated through the financial administration and customs policies orchestrated in the islands. Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 14. In the realm of Turkish academic literature, Pabuççular’s recent and comprehensive volume, *Türkiye ve Oniki Ada: 1912-1947* (English title: *Turkey and the Dodecanese Islands: 1912-1947*), emerges as a noteworthy exemplar of originality and inspiration. This particular study offers a profound exploration of the political background of the islands, standing as a testament to its significance within the broader academic discourse. Hazal Pabuççular, *Türkiye ve Oniki Ada: 1912-1947* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019), 5.

⁵²⁹ Nicholas Doumanis’s 1997 work, which has been frequently cited since its publication and is regarded as a foundational text in its field, offers a seminal example of historical and sociopolitical conceptualization of the Italian colonial period in the Dodecanese. The book employs a variety of trajectories and patterns to explore the contested legacy of the occupation in the collective memory of the local populations. The

is due to the fact that the number of inhabited islands covered by this term has always been more than 12. The Dodecanese, situated among seven distinct island groups in the Aegean Sea and geographically proximate to Anatolia, comprises over a hundred autonomous entities of varying dimensions, contradicting its toponymic designation. This geographical formation, which Cecini characterizes as "infinite fragmentation," consists predominantly of uninhabited islets and isolated rocks. However, it can practically be reduced to a minimum of 14 islands: *Rhodes, Leros, Symi, Kos, Astypalaia, Halki, Karpathos, Kasos, Tilos, Nisyros, Kalymnos, Patmos, Leipsoi, and Kastellorizo*.⁵³⁰ Prior to the Italian occupation in May 1912, the Dodecanese Islands (*Cezâyir-i İsnâ Aşer*) had been part of the Ottoman Province of Archipelago (*Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefid*), and they had maintained a certain degree of administrative autonomy.⁵³¹ The establishment of such administrative autonomy was predicated on the

author meticulously examines the multifaceted characteristics and parameters of the occupation, which persisted into the Fascist period, aiming to transform the Aegean islands into a showcase of Italian colonialism. Italian colonial policies were not uniform; they oscillated between investments in development and modernization and authoritarian and repressive interventions. Notably, the primary contribution of Doumanis's work lies in its implementation of a bottom-up analysis, addressing the intricate interplay between national and regional identities, the distortion of collective memory in the context of occupation, and the emergence of a Dodecanese-based Greek nationalism. The study stands as a significant historical and ethnographic analysis, transcending prevailing stereotypes and conventional narratives surrounding the occupation. The work was subsequently published in Italian in 2003 under the title *Una faccia, una razza* and has since garnered significant attention within academic circles. Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean's*, 15; Nicholas Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 34. The title, *Una faccia, una razza*, translates to "One Face, One Race" in English. This elegant Italian phrase, whose Greek equivalent is *Mia Fatsa, Mia Ratsa*, encapsulates the historical and cultural bonds shared by the Greek and Italian peoples over the course of centuries. The phrase underscores the striking physical resemblance shared by many Italians and Greeks, thereby suggesting that this shared trait serves as a compelling evidence for the existence of a unified ethnic identity between the two peoples. Nick Kampouris, "Una Faccia, Una Razza': The Fascinating Story of Greco-Italian Bonds," *GreekReporter.Com*, last modified November 16, 2019, accessed January 1, 2025, <https://greekreporter.com/2019/11/16/una-faccia-una-razza-the-fascinating-story-of-greco-italian-bonds/>.

⁵³⁰ However, in certain instances, the definition is narrowed to encompass a mere twelve islands, a reduction that occurs through the exclusion of Rhodes (*Rodi/Rodos*), the largest and primary island, and Kastellorizo (*Castelrosso/Megisti*), which, from a geographical perspective, is the most distant and is even situated outside the confines of the Aegean Sea. However, given the geographical impossibility of excluding Rhodes, the center of the archipelago, from this definition, the term "Rhodes and the Twelve Islands" must be employed in such cases. As indicated in his 1964 article (English title: The Secession of Rhodes and Twelve Islands from Turkish Dominion), Turan supported the argument that the Dodecanese archipelago consisted of at least 13 islands. However, Turan's list of twelve islands in addition to Rhodes excludes the island of Kastellorizo or Meis (Megisti), which is included in some other lists. Şerafettin Turan, "Rodos ve 12 Ada'nın Türk Hâkimiyetinden Çıkışı," *BELLETEREN* 29, sy. 113 (Ocak 1965): 77-120, <https://doi.org/10.37879/ttkbelleten.1204591>.

⁵³¹ Although both terms were adopted into Ottoman Turkish from Arabic, "*Cezâyir-i İsnâ Aşer*" literally means Twelve Islands, i.e. Dodecanese Islands, while "*Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefid*" means Mediterranean Islands. The latter is the official name of the "Archipelago Province" or the "Vilayet of the Archipelago" as an administrative division and represents a much wider region than the Sancak of Rhodes to which the Dodecanese Islands belonged. As of the 1903, with some administrative adjustments from time to time, the Ottoman Province of Archipelago (*Vilâyet-i Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefid*) was roughly composed of the following administrative divisions :

Rhodes (*Rodos*) Sanjak: Central Town of the province and sanjak was Rhodes. Juridical Districts (*Kaza*) were Symi (*Sömbeki*), Kasos (*Kaşot/Çoban Adası*), Karpathos (*Kerpe*), Kos (*İstanköy*) and Kastellorizo (*Meis*). Subdistricts (*Nahiyah*) were Lindos (*Lindoz*), Kritinia/Kastellos (*Kritinya /Kastelloz*), Halki (*Herke/ Herekyet*) and Nisyros (*İncirtli*). **Lesbos/Mytilene (*Midilli*) Sanjak:** Central Town of the sanjak was Mytilene. Juridical Districts were Plomari (*Pilmar/Potmoz*) and Mithymna (*Molova*). Subdistricts were Iera (*Yera/Gera*),

presence of specific rights, privileges and freedoms that had previously been granted, constituting a significant Ottoman legacy within the islands. In 1521, all islands except Rhodes and Kos surrendered to the conquest of Sultan Süleyman without offering any resistance, in return for which significant tax and political privileges were bestowed upon them. Consequently, under the relatively constrained Ottoman rule and authority that prevailed in the region, these islands were more commonly referred to as the “Privileged Islands.”⁵³² In the nineteenth century, the principal figures within the islands’ political leadership fought to defend these privileges, motivated by their profound commitment to the Dodecanese. The central administration of the archipelago province under Ottoman rule was initially based on the island of Rhodes from 1849 to 1862; and subsequently relocated to the island of Lesbos (Mytilene) from 1862 to 1877. Following this period, Rhodes once again became the capital of the province in 1877. However, following the Italian occupation on 4 May 1912, the administrative center of the province was gradually and temporarily transferred to the Sanjak of Mytilene for reasons including its proximity to Istanbul and ease of access to transportation and communication networks.⁵³³

Agiassos (Ayasu), Yunda/Cunda (*Alibey Adası*), Polichnitos (*Polihnit*) and Kalloni (*Kalonya*). *Chios (Sakız) Sanjak*: Central Town of the sanjak was Chios. Juridical Districts were Leros (*Leryos/İleryoz*), Kalymnos (*Kalimnoz/Kelemez/Kilimli*) and Nicaria/Ikaria (*Karyot*). Subdistricts were Kardamyla (*Kardamile*), Kalamoti, Volissos (*Voliso*), Psara (*İpsara*), Patmos (*Batnoz*), Astypalia (*Astipalya/Astropalya/İstanbulya*) and Oinousses/Inossa (*Koyun Adaları*). *Lemnos (Limni) Sanjak*: Central Town of the sanjak was Lemnos. Juridical Districts were Tenedos (*Bozcaada*) and Imbros (*İmroz/Gökçeada*). Subdistricts were Mudros (Mondros) and Aistradi (*Bozbaba*).

It is evident that the geographical and administrative groupings of islands within the Ottoman provincial system exhibited variability from period to period. These islands, which were occasionally classified as *kaza* and at other times as *nahiyah* according to the administrative formations to which they belonged, could be administratively subordinated to other islands outside the archipelago in which they were geographically included. For instance, Kalymnos, Patmos, Leros and Astypalaia, which were geographically part of the Dodecanese Archipelago, could be regarded as being administratively under the jurisdiction of the Sanjak of Rhodes. However, all of these four islands were instead under the jurisdiction of the Sanjak of Chios, which was geographically part of the Eastern Sporades. For a comprehensive and comparative source on Ottoman toponymy Sezen’s “Ottoman Place Names” is frequently consulted: Tahir Sezen, *Osmanlı Yer Adları* (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 2017). The following two sources are considered the most reliable for the study of the much-changed and controversial administrative division of the Ottoman Archipelago Vilayet: Sabri Can Sannav, “Tanzimat’ın İlanından Sonra Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid Eyaleti’nin Yeniden Yapılandırılması Süreci ve Limni Adası’nın Statüsü,” *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 7, sy. 1 (Mart 2005): 174-188; Fatih Özçelik, “19. yy ve 20. yy Başlarında Ege Adaları’nın İdari Yapısı ve M. 1903 (H. 1321) Tarihli Sâlnâme’ye Göre Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefid Vilâyeti’nin Genel İdari Birimleri,” *Yönetim ve Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, sy. 2 (2012): 51-68.

⁵³² Indeed, the Ottoman authorities exercised limited jurisdiction over the “Privileged Islands.” The Porte endeavored to revoke these special rights in 1867, 1869, 1872, 1897 and 1908, but each time encountered robust local resistance and, more significantly, the intervention of the Great Powers. The unique arrangement of the Privileged Islands within the Archipelago Vilayet is comparable to other instances in the Ottoman administrative history. The provincial administration of an empire that spanned such a vast geographical area was dependent on differential rule over different groups, each with different interests. In order to modernize the empire and transform it into a rational state, the Ottomans sought to streamline all anomalies but ultimately failed. Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 28-29; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 49.

⁵³³ Shortly before its invasion on 4 May 1912, Ali Subhi Bey, Governor of the Archipelago Province, had requested the transfer of the provincial center from Rhodes to Mytilene, citing the island’s disadvantageous location at the extreme periphery of the provincial borders and limited access to means of transport and communication as the reasons for this request. It was therefore impossible to establish communication with other islands regarding the operations and maneuvers of Italian ships in a timely manner.

Following the 1912 Italian invasion, the island group was renamed *Le Isole Italiane dell'Egeo* (Italian Islands of the Aegean), a designation that signified Italy's asserted right to the region and its ultimate objective in the Aegean.⁵³⁴ In Italian official sources and archival records, the term was formally and frequently referred to as *Possedimento delle Isole italiane dell'Egeo*, meaning The Possession of Italian Islands of the Aegean. It is conceivable that the emphasis on *possedimento* (*müstemleke* in Ottoman Turkish) in this context represents a post-Ottoman colonial setting in Italy's Mediterranean empire, or more precisely, a territorial acquisition from the Ottoman Empire. However, Valerie McGuire challenges the prevailing historiography by subjecting the Italian-occupied Dodecanese to a hybrid and isolated characterization as both the most privileged Italian colony and a highly strategic frontier region. By emphasizing that the Dodecanese was regarded neither a province nor a colony in the full sense of the term by the Italian state, McGuire suggests that the term *possedimento* has further territorial and political connotations. This is evidenced by the translation of the term as "department" by certain scholars, as opposed to the more common and literal translation of "possession." The unique status of the Dodecanese Islands, evidenced by their subordination to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than the Ministry of Colonies, is attributed to the implications of the term

Simultaneously, Ali Subhi designated Mytilene as the most significant, productive, prosperous and tax-generating island of the Archipelago Province. Its proximity and ease of access to Istanbul, where the central government was situated, also appear to have influenced Ali Subhi's request. While Mytilene held such importance politically, administratively and economically, the selection of a peripheral island such as Rhodes as the provincial center was deemed unfeasible by Ali Subhi. Nonetheless, two months following the occupation (as of 5 July 1912), it was resolved that all law enforcement procedures and administrative actions pertaining to the Sanjaks of Limni, Lesbos and Chios would henceforth be conducted by Istanbul. COA, DH.MUI.156/70, 04 Nisan 1328-17 April 1912; DH.ID..144/3/Lef 2, 17 Nisan 1328 - 30 April 1912. From Ali Subhi Bey, the Governor of the Archipelago Province, to the Ministry of Interior (*Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefîd Vâlisi Ali Subhi Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.EUM.THR.78/45/Lef 2, 13 Haziran 1328 - 26 June 1912. From the Police Commissariat of the Sanjak of Mytilene to the Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Public Security (*Midilli Sancağı Polis Komiserliğinden Dâhiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiyye Müdîriyetine*); DH.MUI.168/37/Lef 1, 29 Zilhicce 1331 - 29 November 1913. The Communications Office of the Ministry of Interior (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberat-ı Umûmiyye Dâiresi*).

⁵³⁴ Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 3, 5-7, 10-11; Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 15; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 34; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 143-145. Andreas Guidi's *Generations of Empire* is widely acclaimed as one of the most significant works of recent times in its field, making a substantial contribution to a highly original and understudied topic: namely, "youth education in the Mediterranean context." Employing an unorthodox approach that has hitherto not been attempted, the author focuses on the issue of the endorsement of inter-imperial continuities in a colonial and contested area such as the Dodecanese. Guidi employs the notions of "youth" and "generation" not as analytical categories, as has been previously done by other leading scholars, but as interpretative instruments. It is through this innovative approach that he provides an entirely new perspective on the transition from Ottoman to Italian rule in Dodecanese. Relying on factual data as far as it is available and reliable, in most of the book Guidi depicts micro-historical episodes in order to unravel macro dynamics. Guidi's approach is innovative in its construction of a theoretical framework, which he achieves by researching the adaptation and cohesion of certain prominent families during the transition from the Young Turk regime to the Italian fascist regime. The text meticulously examines the transformation of the educated Rhodian youth under the influence of accelerated "political socialization," which witnessed a transition from the "Greek irredentism" of the 1920s to the "revisionist Zionism" of the 1930s. It further delves into the role of successive youth movements, which have long preoccupied the clergy and educators, in shaping educational doctrine and policy in the islands. Guidi's seminal contribution to this field is the conceptualization of a "transimperial generation" that exhibited a high degree of permeability between the distinct administrative practices of two disparate imperial entities. In doing so, he addresses the rather niche question of how Italian colonialism came to be amalgamated with the preexisting regime that was inherited in the post-Ottoman territories.

extending beyond the confines of a colonial essence. Excluding the Italian context, the term “Dodecanese” prevailed as the standard designation, with “Rhodes and the Dodecanese” and “Southern Sporades” also employed on occasion as alternatives. Subsequent to the occupation, Greece made numerous attempts to assert sovereignty over the islands, seeking to consolidate its predominance over the broader Hellenic microcosm. Despite the often impractical character of these aspirations, the Dodecanese Islands remained under Roman control from the concluding phase of the Italo-Turkish War until the tumultuous events of the fall of 1943. The period of Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands formally commenced in May 1912 and continued until November 1943, when the Italian forces were ultimately vanquished by the German forces in the Aegean.

Cecini and Pabuççular’s noteworthy observations concerning the strategic motivation, diplomatic context, and temporal significance of the Dodecanese invasion offer valuable insights into the broader Italian vision in the Aegean during this period.⁵³⁵ In the spring of 1912, the balance of power between the Italian and Ottoman forces in Tripolitania had shifted in Italy’s favor. As the war approached its conclusion, the supply lines connecting the Anatolian and African coasts became increasingly vulnerable, leaving the Ottomans heavily reliant on local Sanusi forces. Recognizing the inactivity of the Ottoman Empire, Rome sought to compel Istanbul to surrender through the implementation of surgical strikes in the Red Sea and the Aegean, perceiving this as a crucial element in achieving its primary objective. These operations were not only pivotal in shaping the operational course of the war but also had the potential to curtail clandestine activities, such as smuggling, which significantly impacted the war’s financial dynamics and posed considerable challenges to the Italian Navy. Despite the potential repercussions on Russia, England, and France, who sought to maintain effective control and possession of the straits, Italy assumed the risks of occupying the Aegean Islands. The occupation posed a significant threat to the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, which sought to preserve the Ottoman Empire’s existence as a stabilizing force in the Balkans and to maintain balance in the region. On the other hand, Pabuççular identified the sensitivities and priorities of Istanbul, Rome, and London regarding the islands as follows. The Aegean Islands, which the Turks have referred to as “right under our nose,” were seen as a crucial vulnerability in Turkey’s national security, particularly due to their strategic location in the Aegean region. Emerging as a theater in which Italy’s assertive policy was evident, the events that transpired in the Aegean region compelled the Turks to recalibrate their regional policies and adapt their war strategy. In the context of the broader geopolitical landscape, the Aegean Islands were considered a vital component of the security of Anatolia and the Dardanelles, and, consequently, the city of Istanbul. According to Rome, the Dodecanese Islands represented a pivotal diplomatic asset in shaping the post-war landscape in Libya, and their retention was of paramount importance. Conversely, London viewed the islands as a potential threat to Anatolia, the Straits, the Black Sea, and the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly Egypt.

Pursuant to the stipulations outlined in the Treaty of Ouchy (Lausanne), a bilateral accord that was ratified in the aftermath of the Italo-Ottoman War, the Islands were to be provisionally

⁵³⁵ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 23; Pabuççular, *Türkiye ve Oniki Ada*, 2, 14.

ceded to the Italian side.^{536 537} This was conceived as a guarantee of the Turkish government's commitment to pacify North Africa by ensuring the complete evacuation of all belligerent elements from Libya. However, when the conflict in the Balkans escalated, Turkey anticipated that Greece would endeavor to capture the island of Dodecanese under the pretext of safeguarding the settled Greek populace. In response, Turkey opted to pursue an alternative balance policy. This strategy entailed the endangerment of Italian colonial affirmation in Libya, as well as implicit entrustment of Anti-Hellenic defense of the Aegean Islands to the Italians, by failing to withdraw Turkish extensions in Libya. The treaty stipulated that the Italians could not return the islands to Turkey unless the Turks evacuated Libya, thereby necessitating Italy's direct involvement in defending the islands. This complex and potentially advantageous situation for Italy was further solidified by the ambiguity surrounding the Italian intentions regarding Rhodes, a matter that was a subject of discussion at the London Conference of 1912–1913. The Italian Delegation reiterated that the stipulations outlined in the Treaty of Ouchy, signed on 18 October 1912, had not been fulfilled until that point. They further asserted that if the status quo persisted, Italy would seek compensation from Turkey for the expenses incurred due to the protracted occupation and the investments made in public services. Subsequent to this period, Dodecanese was designated a transitional administrative domain of Italy, with a military government entrusted with fulfilling diplomatic obligations.

The second and fourth articles of the Treaty of Ouchy were of great importance for both the Italian officials stationed in Dodecanese and the transimperial Ottoman subjects caught between their homeland and the island regimes.⁵³⁸ The second article stipulated the evacuation of Ottoman officers, troops and civilian officials from Tripolitania and Benghazi, with the subsequent evacuation of Italian officers, troops and civilian officials from the Aegean Islands to follow.⁵³⁹ In response to the delay in the withdrawal of Ottoman military from Libya, the Italian government adopted a strategy of ensuring administrative permanence in the Aegean. Consequently, prior to the outbreak of the First World War, the Italians initiated a plan to retain some functionaries in the Dodecanese, whose titles and positions to be determined subsequently. The correspondence between Rome and Istanbul indicates that in March 1914,

⁵³⁶ The treaty, which brought the Italo-Ottoman War of 1911-1912 to a conclusion, was signed on October 18, 1912, in the Ouchy district of Lausanne, Switzerland. Consequently, it is referred to as the Treaty of Lausanne (*Trattato di Losanna*) in Italian history and the Treaty of Ouchy (*Uşi Antlaşması*) in Turkish history. In some instances, it is referred to as the First Treaty of Lausanne, a designation employed to differentiate it from the Treaty of Lausanne of 24 July 1923. Throughout the course of this study, the 1912 treaty is referred to as "Ouchy," and the 1923 treaty as "Lausanne," in order to avoid any potential confusion.

⁵³⁷ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 29, 31-32.

⁵³⁸ Pietro Bertolini, Guido Fusinato, Giuseppe Volpi, Mehmed Naby, and Roumboyoglou Fahreddin. "Treaty of Peace Between Italy and Turkey," *American Journal of International Law* 7, no. S1 (1928): 58–62, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2212446>. COA, HR.SYS.1988/1/Lef 21, 11 Mart 1914. From Mehmed Nâbî Bey, Ottoman Ambassador to Rome to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Roma Sefîr-i Kebîri Mehmed Nâbî'den Hâriciye Nezâretine*); HR.SYS.2918/145/Lef 1, 25 March 1914; HR.SFR.04..280/65, 08 April 1914. From Mehmed Nâbî Bey, Ottoman Ambassador to Rome, to Said Halim Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

⁵³⁹ "ARTICLE 2: After the signing of the present treaty, the two governments pledge themselves to issue orders immediately for the recall of their officers and troops, and their civilian employes, that is to say, the Ottoman Government will recall these officers, troops and civilian employes from Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and the Italian Government from the islands occupied by Italy in the Aegean Sea, respectively. The actual departure of the Italian officers, troops and civilian employes from the said islands shall take place immediately after the Ottoman officers, troops and civilian employes shall have departed from Tripoli and Cyrenaica."

Ambassador Mehmed Nâbi Bey discussed the matter with the Italian Foreign Minister, the Marchese di San Giuliano. In essence, the Ottoman government issued a written note to the Roman government, stating that it would not tolerate the retention of any Italian officials in the islands following the evacuation, regardless of any circumstances. This was due to the fact that the continued presence of Italian officials in the islands would represent a clear violation of the terms of the Treaty of Ouchy and would undoubtedly not be endorsed by the Triple Alliance. Additionally, Mehmed Nâbi speculated that Italian intentions might have been driven by covert agendas with ulterior motives. In response, Minister San Giuliano sought to pacify the Ottoman authorities, asserting his personal conviction that the retention of Italian officials in the Dodecanese Islands would engender numerous diplomatic complications. Moreover, he underscored the support of the Giolitti government behind his position regarding the issue. Consequently, on April 8, the Italian government formally declared the abandonment of the aforementioned plan to maintain Italian functionaries in the Dodecanese Islands following the evacuation of the region.

The fourth article of the Treaty of Ouchy stipulated that the Italian government should declare a “full and complete amnesty” (*afv-ı umûmî*) for the peoples of Tripolitania and Benghazi, and the Ottoman government for the peoples of the Aegean islands.⁵⁴⁰ The scope of this amnesty should cover all subjects who had actively participated in “hostilities” (*muhâsamet*) during the war or who had compromised themselves in that connection, and should exclude “ordinary offences” (*cerâim-i âdiye*) against civil law.⁵⁴¹ The restoration of civil and property rights was to be guaranteed for all individuals within this framework, and those who had been arrested and deported were to be released immediately. The first and most significant article of the law on amnesty issued by the Ottoman Council of Ministers in January 1913 stipulated that all Dodecanese people involved in hostilities, irrespective of their class, status or position, were to be eligible for amnesty.⁵⁴² This article of the law stipulated that no individual directly participating in hostilities, or who had attempted certain acts of responsibility for hostilities, or who had committed political or military acts, or who had expressed opinions, would be prosecuted or subjected to criminal sanctions. However, it should be noted that, since Rhodes

⁵⁴⁰ COA, İ..MMS.157/11/Lef 2, 15 Kanunusani 1328- 28 January 1913; İ..MMS.157/11/Lef 4, 16 Kanunusani 1328- 29 January 1913. “Draft Law on General Amnesty for the inhabitants of the islands occupied by the Italian military and to be returned to the Sublime State following the conclusion of a peace treaty with the Italian state.” The Sublime State, Grand Vizirate, Petitions Office of the Council of Ministers (*İtalya Devleti ile akd-i sulh edilmiş olmasına binâen İtalya askeri tarafından işgal olunup Devlet-i Aliyye’ye iâde olunacak adalar ahâlisi hakkında Afv-ı Umûmî Kanunu / Lâyiha - Bâb-ı âli, Dâire-i Sadâret, Meclis - i Vükelâ Mâruzât Kalemî*).

⁵⁴¹ ARTICLE 4: The two governments pledge themselves to grant full and absolute amnesty, the Royal Government to the inhabitants of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and the Imperial Government to the inhabitants of the islands in the Aegean Sea subject to Ottoman sovereignty, who took part in the hostilities and those who may have compromised themselves as a result thereof, excepting offenses against the common law. In consequence, no person, to whatever class or condition he may belong, shall be prosecuted or molested in his person or property, or in the exercise of his rights by reason of his political or military acts, or for opinions expressed during the hostilities. All persons detained and deported on such grounds shall be released immediately.

⁵⁴² COA, İ..MMS.157/11/Lef 4, 16 Kanunusani 1328- 29 January 1913. “Birinci Madde: İtalya askeri tarafından işgal olunup Devlet-i Aliyye’ye iâde olunacak adalar ahâlisinden hangi sınıfa mensub ve ne gibi bir hâl ve mevkide bulunursa bulunsun muhâsamete iştirak etmiş ve yâhud muhâsamet sebebiyle tasaddî eylediği dâi-i mesûliyet ahvâlden ve ef’âl-i siyâsiyye veya askeriyyeden ve yâhud beyân eylemiş olduğu efkârdan dolayı şahsî veya malî hiçbir kimse cihet-i adliyece tâkib edilemeyecektir.”

and the Twelve Islands were never returned to Turkey despite the treaty, this remained as a “draft law” (*lâyiha*), the relevant Imperial Decree (*Îrâde-i Seniyye*) was never issued and, naturally, its implementation was unfeasible.⁵⁴³

6.1.1. The Regime Transformation from an Ottoman Province to an Italian Colonial Possession

In her sophisticated work titled *A Search for Sovereignty*, Lauren Benton challenges the interpretation of international legal history as merely a “transition from natural law to positive law” and pursues the uneven and irregular legal geographies produced by the phenomenon of “interimperiality.”⁵⁴⁴ According to Benton, imperial sovereignties, operating in a variety of spatial intensities and characterized by a fragmented and variable structure, gave rise to an “interimperial legal politics” through their interaction with each other. The range of actions and interpretations embodied by this spectrum of interactions constituted an “interimperial legal repertoire” that did not fully align with the principles of the prevailing international legal narratives of the past and present. Consequently, hybrid domains of sovereignty, such as “anomalous legal zones,” have become permanent features of the global legal order. Tracking the origins of international law back to centuries of complex legal practices within empires, Benton draws particular attention to the concepts of shared sovereignty, partial sovereignty and disputed areas. Following the 1912 occupation, the Dodecanese region was characterized by a legal framework that deviated from the established norms, wherein Ottoman and Italian jurisdictions coexisted to varying degrees. The citizenship design implemented on the islands was introduced and promoted through the Italian naturalization process. However, its basis was the incorporation of a “transimperial jurisdiction” into the former Ottoman capitulatory system.⁵⁴⁵ Consequently, the ideological foundations of the citizenship model in the Dodecanese, its methodologies of implementation, and the public response observed towards it were inherently dualistic in nature. Following the 1912 occupation, the Dodecanese experienced transimperial jurisdiction within a domain that was still under legal Ottoman rule. In this region, Italy had effectively exercised military and administrative authority but had not yet formally claimed sovereignty. From the perspective of international law, this ambiguous area, which cannot be characterized as either a full occupation or a full transfer of sovereignty, can be regarded as a combination of the two. To summarize, during the extended period of occupation, sovereignty and effective control were collectively exercised by the Kingdom of Italy and the Ottoman Empire for a period of time. This situation resulted in the establishment of a hybrid jurisdictional status and a jointly administered area.

In order to gain meaningful insight into case-specific phenomena, such as “Aegean capitulations” or “Aegean naturalization,” it is imperative to consider the political, legal, and

⁵⁴³ Although outdated, Turan’s 1964 article still remains a primary source on the Dodecanese Islands’ secession from Ottoman rule. As the title indicates, Turan refers to the archipelago as “Rhodes and the Twelve Islands” instead of “Dodecanese.” Turan, *Rodos ve 12 Ada’nın*, 97-98.

⁵⁴⁴ Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty : Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400–1900* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2010), xii-xiii, 5-7.

⁵⁴⁵ It should be noted that the term “transimperial jurisdiction” used in this study represents an analytical framework rather than a positive/normative legal term. For more detailed information about the concept’s scope and origin, please refer to the Introduction section.

social phases of the occupation climate in an analytical manner. In other words, some of the political practices, legal reforms and regulations, and social perceptions introduced or associated with this traumatic process constitute an inseparable system of common values. This suggests that the paradigm shifts experienced during the occupation depend equally on the occupation actors as a driving force and on the local communities as a driven element. In summary, without a comprehensive understanding of the various reflections of the occupation on Greek Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim island communities, the motives that encourage individuals to various patterns of transimperialism cannot be fully grasped. In this context, it would be beneficial to adopt a novel perspective on Italian colonialism, conceptualizing it as a post-Ottoman historical phenomenon.⁵⁴⁶ This frame, emphasized by Guidi and defined as an “imperial outcome,” underscores the influence of pre-existing systems on the actions of Italian officials in Rhodes. The encounter between the Italian officials and the existing system on the island of Rhodes led them to emphasize their own rationality and efficiency in the face of what they perceived as Ottoman backwardness. However, this encounter also resulted in the reproduction of an existing system of common values, thereby ensuring the institutional continuity of the system. As Guidi observes, the Ottoman institutions, social statuses and forms of belonging continued to resonate through various forms of representation in both the political and public spheres even after the dissolution of the Sultan’s rule. This phenomenon gave rise to both challenges and opportunities for fascist colonialism, as the Italian colonial administration elected to endorse imperial continuities by managing the diversity of the 1920s and maintaining the necessary resources. However, this continuity in the Aegean region would subsequently become a major point of contention in the 1930s, as fascist ideologies, characterized by their assimilationist and militarist objectives, resulted in a deeper penetration of Mediterranean territories. In this respect, a chronological overview of the social events, ideological tensions and political movements that affected civil society in the Dodecanese Islands during the occupation period will also be presented. It should be noted that the primary objective of this chapter is to address transnational categories such as the “Aegean Citizenship” that introduced by the Italian state mind, rather than a narrative-based historicization of the occupation. Nevertheless, it is not feasible to comprehend the practices of naturalization in the absence of recourse to political, legal and ethno-religious paradigms of “transactivity” and “permeability” between the Ottoman and Italian regimes.

A close examination of the legal texts published by the Kingdom of Italy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries suggests a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of the terms *colonia* and *possedimento*.⁵⁴⁷ Despite the fact that both terms denote a territorial acquisition or possession, it can be argued that “colony” refers to a more settled, institutionalized, and legally centralized status. In contrast, the concept of “possession” emerges as a comparatively more flexible or ambiguous category, denoting regions characterized by a strategically loose or unique status, occasionally held in a temporary manner. However, the term *possedimenti coloniali italiani* (Italian colonial possessions), referenced in many official Italian sources from the same period, underscores the intertwined nature of these two concepts. In contrast to the

⁵⁴⁶ Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 7-9.

⁵⁴⁷ Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia, *Indice generale alfabetico, analitico e cronologico della Raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia dal 1881 al 1890, Volume primo-Parte principale* (Roma: Stamperia Reale, 1892), 219, 486, 565-567; L'Istituto Coloniale Italiano, *Rivista coloniale: Organo dell'Istituto coloniale italiano, Anno I., Maggio-Agosto 1906, Volume primo, Fasc.I.* (Roma: Direzione ed amministrazione presso l'Istituto Coloniale Italiano, 1906), 27, 122, 267-268, 277.

Italian territories in Libya, Eritrea, and Somalia, which were recognized as colonies by Rome, the Italian Islands of the Aegean were specifically and strategically designated as a possession. In contradistinction to its predecessors, which regarded their citizens as *sudditi coloniali* (colonial subjects), the Dodecanese would be a possession in which unique Italian citizenship designs were first introduced and implemented.

The Italian occupation policy, predicated on the preservation and continuity of the existing civil administration, necessitated the consideration of certain points when acting in accordance with it.⁵⁴⁸ The administration of the civil services was assumed by Consul Gino Macchioro, operating under the command and authority of the Occupation Commander, Lieutenant General Giovanni Ameglio.⁵⁴⁹ Primarily, it is imperative to acknowledge that the occupation was conducted in accordance with the norms of international law established by the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, despite Italy's non-ratification of the latter. The maintenance of the status quo necessitated the unequivocal avoidance of any actions that might be interpreted as an intention to annex or relinquish the territory at the conclusion of the war. The most evident exercise of sovereignty and administrative authority among the peoples under Ottoman rule was the collection of taxes, and this practice must be acknowledged and maintained. An honest and moderate fiscal administration would also be functional and beneficial in fostering goodwill among the Greek peoples. Given the new conditions created by the occupation, all existing laws, regulations, and statutes were to be maintained, protected, and enforced. However, this norm could be relaxed only in exceptional cases where the security of the Italian army and public order required it. The enhancement of the administration's functionality, particularly in the enforcement of municipal laws, could assist the Italians in gaining favor with the islanders

⁵⁴⁸ Luca Pignataro's three-volume magnum opus, *Il Dodecaneso italiano 1912-1947* (The Italian Dodecanese 1912-1947), represents the most comprehensive narrative to date on the history of the Dodecanese during the Italian occupation. Drawing extensively on archival sources, this historiographical study meticulously reconstructs the institutional forms and practices of Italian rule in the islands. The author's approach is anchored in the analysis of how the Italian administration sought to legitimize the occupation through its promises of modernization and Europeanization of the islands. Due to the temporal focus of the thesis, the first volume, which deals with the first 10 years of the occupation between 1912 and 1922, was utilized and cited. The author examines the development of the legal system during this first decade, which he terms the 'provisory occupation', in the context of the transition from military to civilian administration. Pignataro's analysis categorizes the population of the archipelago into three communities: the numerically superior and pro-Hellenic Greek Orthodox, the Muslim Turks who had been inherited from the previous Ottoman rule, and the Sephardic Jews, whose fate would undergo a complete transformation after the Racial Laws of 1938. The volume addresses pivotal issues, including the manner in which the Italian authorities intervened in the local context, the organization of public services from the ground up, and the establishment of a legal foundation for the autonomy of the island of Rhodes. Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano 1912-1947*. Vol. 1, 64.

⁵⁴⁹ Lieutenant General Giovanni Ameglio was entrusted with comprehensive authority, both civilian and military, to command an expeditionary force in invading the island of Rhodes. The civilian officials accompanying General Ameglio were charged with the responsibility of providing counsel on all matters pertaining to non-military affairs. However, the initial plan devised by General Ameglio was to permit the island's prevailing civil administration to carry on with its operations, utilizing its existing personnel. This approach was adopted to mitigate any potential disruption or interruption in services. The commander, entrusted with leading an expedition of indisputable symbolic significance, gradually sought to adopt the methods that Italy's advanced civilization deemed most suitable. It was expected that all members of the detachment would take pride in their association with a force occupying an island that was a venerated cradle of civilization, eternally glorified by renowned military actions, and to which Italians had a profound connection through the legacy of the renowned House of Savoy. Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 63.

by elevating their prestige in relation to the Turks. Crimes against the occupation army and political crimes were considered a sensitive area, and Italian laws would apply to them. With regard to the suppression of ordinary crimes, the prevailing Ottoman legal framework would be applicable, provided that it did not contravene Italy's prevailing standards of civilization. The administration of justice was to continue in the customary manner and by the customary bodies, under the supervision of the military authority. Of particular significance was the stipulation that all legal judgments would be rendered "in the name of the law."

However, the detention of Ottoman officials in Lindos and their subsequent transfer to Taranto and then Caserta on the next morning of the invasion provides a stark contrast to the Italian policy of institutional continuity.⁵⁵⁰ These officials included the Ottoman Governor of the Archipelago, Ali Subhi Bey, along with the administrative, judicial, sanitary and harbor officials of Rhodes, and members of the municipal council. Furthermore, 90 members of the Red Crescent Society (*Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*), approximately 15 gendarmerie soldiers, and a number of civil servants and soldiers from the islands of Astypalaia and Halki were initially detained and transported to Caserta.⁵⁵¹ The prisoners were initially transported directly to Taranto by cargo ship, and subsequently by train to the town of Caserta, a military post, where they were accommodated in a barracks. Ali Subhi Bey, a prominent figure in the region, confronted the admirals in both Rhodes and Taranto, as well as the commander of the Caserta garrison, expressing his discontent with the Italian government's actions.⁵⁵² The Hague Conference (*Lahey Sulh Konferansı*) had established clear provisions regarding the status and treatment of non-combatant administrative officials and civilians. These provisions underscored that such individuals could not be recognized as military personnel, and their liberty could not be violated. Following the invasion, the governor, who was imprisoned in Caserta, was able to send a personal letter to his family a week later, despite the presence of Italian censorship. In this letter, he provided a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding his surrender and subsequent captivity. In response to the initial Italian ultimatum, the governor stated that he could not surrender the island without orders from higher authorities and protested against the invasion, stating that the bombing of a defenseless place was not in accordance with the

⁵⁵⁰ COA, BEO.4043/303201/Lef 3-4, 30 Nisan 1328 - 13 May 1912. From Ali Subhi Bey, the Governor of the Archipelago Province, to the Communications Office of the Ministry of Interior (*Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefîd Vâlisi Ali Subhi Bey'den Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberat-ı Umûmiyye Dâiresine*). HSDHADB.1/27, 04 Mayıs 1328 - 17 May 1912. From the Chief of Police to the Ministry of Interior (*Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefîd Polis Mûdîrinden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*). BEO.4043/303201/Lef 2, 10 Mayıs 1328 - 23 May 1912. From the Communications Office of the Ministry of Interior to the Grand Vizirate (*Dâhiliye Nezâreti Muhâberat-ı Umûmiyye Dâiresinden Sadârete*). BEO.4043/303201/Lef 1, 12 Mayıs 1328 - 25 May 1912. Correspondence Office of the Grand Vizirate (*Dâire-i Sadâret Tahrîrât Kalemî*).

⁵⁵¹ The most comprehensive, authentic and up-to-date books published in Turkish literature concerning Ottoman soldiers, government officials and civilians captured by the Italians in North Africa, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea during the Italo-Ottoman War are Çakmak's "Ottoman Captives in the Italo-Ottoman War" and Şahin and Kozak's "The Captive Policemen in the Italo-Ottoman and the First Balkan Wars." Aydın Çakmak, *Trablusgarp Savaşı'nda Osmanlı Esirleri* (İstanbul: Aktif Yayınevi, 2023); Eyüp Şahin and Yasin Kozak, *Trablusgarp ve Birinci Balkan Savaşı'nda Esir Polisler* (Ankara: Zet Akademik Yayıncılık, 2021).

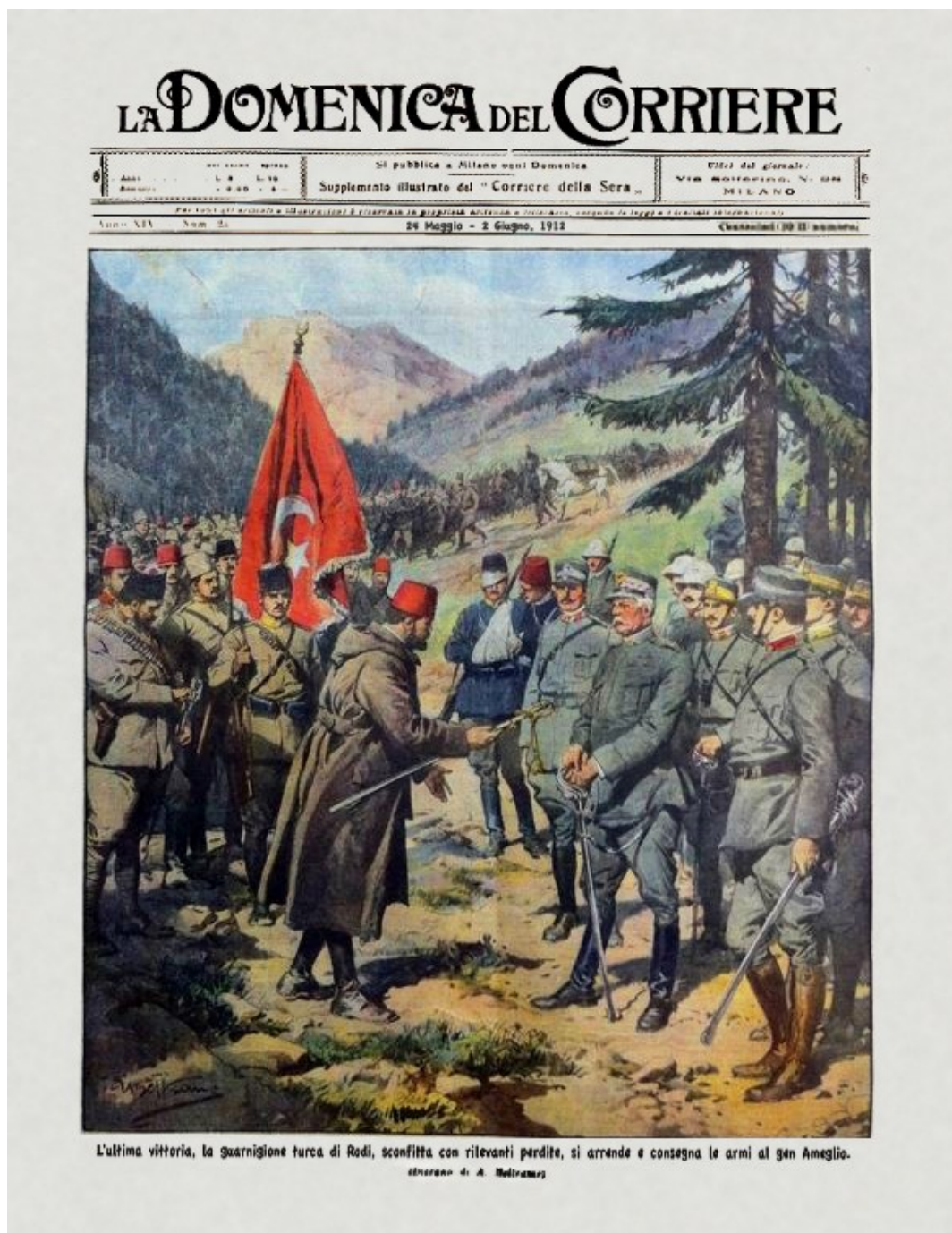
⁵⁵² COA, BEO.4043/303201/Lef 3-4, 30 Nisan 1328 - 13 May 1912. "Gerek Rodos'ta ve gerek Taranto'da amirallerle Caserta mevki kumandanına hükûmetlerinin bu hareketlerini protesto ettiğimi ve 'Lahey Sulh Konferansı' ahkâmınca memûrîn-i mülkiye ile harbe iştirak etmeyen efrâd-ı ahâlinin serbestilerine taarruz edilemeyeceği ve bu gibilerin merkumîn-i harbiyeden addolunamayacağı beyân ve ifâde edilmiş ise de..."

principles of international law.⁵⁵³ Despite the fact that the coastal town of Rhodes was occupied without encountering significant opposition, an Ottoman contingent numbering approximately one thousand soldiers, in conjunction with a number of civilians, retreated to the mountainous interior regions. Following the initial landing on May 5, the invasion proceeded with naval bombardment and a series of skirmishes between the two forces. The Turkish forces at Psinthos (*İspinoz*) surrendered honorably on May 16 due to a lack of ammunition, and the Island of Rhodes subsequently fell to the Italians. In his letter, the governor asserted that he had taken the utmost care to ensure that both Ottoman subjects and foreigners were not harmed by the attack; and reported that there were very few casualties on both sides as a result of the battle. Following the incident, a rumor circulated that Governor Ali Subhi Bey had immediately embraced captivity by not taking any initiative or defense during the Italian attack. In order to inform the Ottoman public about the facts of the matter and to prevent further damage to the governor's reputation, the Grand Vizier had intended to publish this letter from Caserta unofficially in the newspapers.

Nevertheless, Ameglio's account suggests that the Greek intelligentsia and elites, who were all politicians by nature, were aware of their incompetence in public administration.⁵⁵⁴ There was such a confusion of ideas and interests that it led to administrative inconsistencies in all local public bodies. The higher echelons of society recognized that until the educational and intellectual level of the population had been raised to a certain level, governance had to be left in the hands of responsible and strong people who were aware of their own power. At this point, Ameglio makes valuable observations on the sensitivity of this process of inclusion, as if to show that he was not only a military commander but also a very good strategist. He expressed the conviction that a straightforward annexation would not yield any political dividends for the Italians, would not align with their political agenda, and would run counter to their interests. This was predicated on the understanding that such a course of action would not only result in international tensions but also lead to the dissipation of their resources and energies, falling short of their expectations. Furthermore, it would place the Italians at odds with the region's deeply entrenched racial and religious prejudices, as well as its ingrained habits. This would result in antagonizing the majority of the Greek population and consequently drawing the Italians into an undesirable internal political struggle with the Greeks. Moreover, such a situation would be extremely favorable to the political manipulators in Athens, who would undoubtedly have provided unwavering support and encouragement. The outcome would be that Italy, on a mission to bring prosperity and civilization to the Dodecanese, would attract the enmity not only of the Greeks but of Hellenophiles worldwide.

⁵⁵³ COA, BEO.4043/303201/Lef 3-4, 30 Nisan 1328 - 13 May 1912. "Merciden emir almadığımdan adayı teslim edemeyeceğimi ve şehri müdâfaasız olduğuna bombardıman etmek muvâfık olmayacağını ve işgal hakkındaki teşebbüslerini hükûmetim nâmına protesto ettiğimi"

⁵⁵⁴ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 70.



Newspaper Image 5: Iconic cover of the Italian newspaper *La Domenica del Corriere* illustrating the ultimate surrender of the Ottoman troops at Psinthos to General Ameglio on 16 May 1912.⁵⁵⁵

During the First World War, the occupation forces were commanded by Generals Giovanni Croce and Vittoria Elia, respectively.⁵⁵⁶ Although Dodecanese was not a theatre of operations,

⁵⁵⁵ Achille Beltrame, "L'ultima vittoria, la guarnigione turca di Rodi, sconfitta con rilevanti perdite, si arrende a consegna le armi al generale Ameglio" (The Ultimate Victory, the Turkish garrison of Rhodes, defeated with significant losses, surrendered and handed over their weapons to General Ameglio), *La Domenica del Corriere*, Anno: XIV, Num.21, Maggio 26 - Giugno 2, 1912.

⁵⁵⁶ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 114-115, 139; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 150-152.

the fact that Italy and Turkey were once again in a state of war by August 1915 was an alarming development for the islanders. The prospect of the return of Turkish rule thus provoked a rise in tensions among the Greek-Orthodox islanders, leading to a rapprochement with the Italians. In April 1916, a daily newspaper, *Il Messaggero di Rodi*, was founded with the objective of providing information to the Italian and local populations of the islands regarding world events, particularly those related to the ongoing war. Initially conceived as a command organ, in the subsequent years it was edited by civilians, established a network of correspondents throughout the islands and remained the unofficial press organ of the government until the end of Italian rule in 1945. Engaged in all major problems, projects and campaigns at the local level, the newspaper was distributed in all the Dodecanese islands and had the additional mission of disseminating the Italian language and culture. Meanwhile, in September 1916, the Rhodes Committee of the Dante Alighieri Society was established, with an initial membership of 250 individuals, including merchants, professionals, and dignitaries from Dodecanese. The branch was chaired by Commissar Attilio Brizi, and its membership would subsequently rise to 400. However, as the war progressed, the Italian leadership gradually adopted a more nationalistic and authoritarian attitude. In March 1917, a circular issued by General Croce forbade the singing of national anthems other than the Italian national anthem. Furthermore, prayers were to be offered in churches for foreign heads of state only after those for the Italian monarchs had first been offered. It is also important to note that the organization of public meetings during wartime represented a sensitive issue for the Italian administration. With regard to meetings, assemblies, religious processions and public demonstrations, the provisions of the Italian Public Security Law of 1889 and the relevant regulation were to be observed.

The invasion, presented as an attempt to establish a secondary front in the African theater, incensed the major European powers and redirected the global focus toward Italy.⁵⁵⁷ The Italians' expeditious efforts to evacuate the islands prompted the Orthodox community to appeal for immediate assistance from Athens, seeking the annexation of the archipelago to Greece. However, the geopolitical chaos engendered by the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the First World War obscured the issue of Italy's presence in the archipelago, thereby diminishing international pressure regarding the occupation. Notwithstanding the 1915 Treaty of London, which stipulated Italian sovereignty over Dodecanese in exchange for Italy's alliance with the Entente powers during the war, Italy remained steadfast in its determination to annex the islands only upon achieving definitive victory. However, the resurgence of Orthodox-backed "panhellenic irredentism" after the war, coupled with Athens's persistent demands for Italy to relinquish its hold on the islands, posed a significant challenge to Italy's ambitions in the region. Although Italy had until then adopted a stance of avoiding tension with Athens by delaying the question of withdrawal, the Nitti Government (1919-1920) eventually conceded to cede the majority of the islands to Greece, driven by a delicate balance between Hellenism and mounting international pressure. However, subsequent governments, namely those of Giolitti (1920-1921) and Bonomi (1921-1922), exhibited a resolute stance in their pursuit of the Dodecanese Islands. These governments pursued the retention of the islands through the autonomization of local communities and the maintenance of the status quo.

⁵⁵⁷ Filippo Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant: Citizenship in the Aegean from the Ottoman to the Fascist Empire (1912–1936)," in *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, eds. Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli (New York: Routledge, 2022), 117.

Guidi's meticulous analysis emphasizes the significance of imperial continuities in offering a novel perspective on the reconfiguration of the Mediterranean in the early twentieth century.⁵⁵⁸ The period between 1911 and 1923, characterized by a series of conflicts known as the "Greater War," witnessed the hastening of the end of the Ottoman Empire. This geopolitical shift, precipitated by the war, formed the backdrop for the profound political and territorial reconfigurations that followed. The outcome of the Greater War was that fascist colonialism was defeated by the other expanding powers in the Mediterranean, France and Britain, leaving the Dodecanese vulnerable between Republican Turkey and Hellenic Greece. Throughout this extended period, the Italian-administered archipelago remained subject to the organizational and administrative transformations initiated by Rome. Nevertheless, in principle, its status and significance within the Kingdom's broader policy framework were considered secondary due to the escalating urgency of continental and African priorities. Rhodes and its hinterland were not situated within the geographical or political confines of a colonial dominion in Europe, thus not falling under the classification of a colony according to classical imperial-economic and socio-racial principles. Despite the prevalent image portrayed in ostentatious propaganda endeavors, there was a paucity of endeavors to transform the region into a prosperous and appealing area, or even a commercial hub or military base. Following approximately a decade of military governance, predominantly within the geopolitical milieu of the Great War and its peace treaties, the archipelago was designated a type of overseas Italian 'province' [department] in the early 1920s. Furthermore, a period of over a decade would elapse under the political governorship of Mario Lago, a technocrat who wielded nearly absolute authority in both the legislative and executive domains at the behest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1929, the national government designated the archipelago as the "Italian Islands of the Aegean," and in 1936, it was entrusted to Cesare Maria De Vecchi as part of Mussolini's strategic initiative to consolidate the prominent and controversial figures of early fascism. Throughout the period marked by ongoing peace and the Second World War, the Aegean archipelago remained a peripheral element in Mussolini's strategic considerations and preoccupations. The aforementioned peripherality is further exemplified by literary analogies and metaphors depicting the geographical remoteness of the islands and the Italian officials stationed there. The region of Dodecanese was characterized by an exotic and desolate environment, which led certain contemporary Italian commentators to refer to it as *Il deserto dei Tartari* (The Tartar Steppe). This allusion is attributed to Dino Buzzati's 1940 novel bearing the same title. Moreover, the term "sentinels on the borders of the homeland—the furthest, the loneliest ones" was used to refer to the members of the *Fiamme Gialle* who served in Dodecanese during the Great War.⁵⁵⁹ The Aegean Islands have historically been subjects of geographical and cultural

⁵⁵⁸ Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 8; Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 14-15.

⁵⁵⁹ The term *Fiamme Gialle* (Yellow Flames) was bestowed upon the *Guardia di Finanza* (Italian Financial Police Corps) due to the distinctive flame-shaped yellow insignia worn on their collars. Paradoxically, Cecini asserts that the *Guardia di Finanza* soldiers were not held in high regard by the Dodecanese populace, as they embodied a prevailing foreign authority. However, they were profoundly esteemed as symbols of integrity, discipline, proficiency, and the assurance of human assistance. Despite the presence of those who disparage the Italian past in Dodecanese, Cecini contends that the 30 years of colonial *Italo*cracy played a significant role in the modernization of the archipelago, which had previously exhibited characteristics reminiscent of the Middle Ages. Furthermore, he observes that the initial decade of Rome's political and military rule over the archipelago was characterized by an anti-Turkish and anti-British sentiment, rather than an anti-Greek one, as is frequently asserted. Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 16. For a comprehensive overview of the historical and organizational background of the *Guardia di Finanza*, as well as its distinguished sporting activities, which are conducted under the auspices of *Fiamme Gialle*, please

marginalization within the Italian imagination, despite their relatively proximity to the Italian peninsula. Consequently, the fascist government's ambitious intentions to transform Rhodes into a formidable stronghold akin to Malta or Gibraltar were rendered obsolete in light of prevailing international political developments.

McGuire proposes a theoretical framework delineating three successive ideological phases undergone by Dodecanese during its period of Italian occupation.⁵⁶⁰ The initial phase of the occupation saw the prevalence of *italianità*, or "Italianness," as a concept that represented an identity derived from the overseas expansion of Italian imperialism through a Liberal tendency. This phase aligns with the Italian government's pursuit in the Balkans, where the spread of Italianness was favored as the optimal strategy for establishing an imperial project. This entailed the adoption of a more adaptable concept of Italian identity, one that intertwined Italian national identity with patriotism and ethnic characteristics. This pragmatic Italianism provided both an ideological foundation and a legal basis for the long-term establishment of jurisdiction in the Aegean region. Following the formal incorporation of the Dodecanese Islands into the Italian overseas empire, this initial phase was superseded by the promotion of a concept of *mediterraneità*, or "Mediterraneanness." The strategically located Dodecanese people were now designated as significant potential actors, incorporated into the new Italian imperial expansion plans in the Eastern Mediterranean, and endowed with global significance through their propensity to migrate. Following the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1936 and the Fascist regime's adoption of an official racial policy, a new ideological framework, defined by the idea of *romanità*, or "Romanness," began to prevail. This ideological shift, characterized by the reinstatement of the concept of *romanità*, served to reinforce the notion that the Dodecanese was an integral part of a larger Mediterranean Empire, thereby fueling radical nationalist aspirations in the Balkans. This phase would ultimately lead to a radical departure from the original trajectory. In a strategic maneuver, the Fascist government began to interpret the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) from a new perspective, which ultimately led to the expulsion of the local Jewish and Turkish communities, effectively stripping them of their Italian Aegean citizenship. Consequently, the Dodecanese was reimagined not as an integral part of Italy's Mediterranean periphery but as a colonial possession.

6.1.2. Role of the Pro-Hellenic Press in the Promotion of Anti-Italian Sentiment

It is evident that the harsh criticism articulated by the pro-Hellenic press exerted an indirect influence on the formulation of Italian policies towards the Dodecanese regime.⁵⁶¹ Following an initial moderate atmosphere, the Greek press launched an intensive and reckless campaign

refer to the following source: Guardia di Finanza [Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze], "Homepage," accessed June 26, 2024, <https://www.gdf.gov.it/en/>.

⁵⁶⁰ McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 146-149.

⁵⁶¹ Archivio storico e diplomatico del Ministero degli affari esteri- Archivio politico ordinario e di gabinetto 1915-1918 (Historical Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Ordinary and Cabinet Political Archive), ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo (Dodecanese-Aegean), Busta (Folder): 55, Fascicolo (Fascicule): 1, Oggetto: Trattazione Generale 1915, Anni (Years): 1915, Posizione (Position): 1144/17/1-(12): From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No:37098/107-Divisione III) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri- Direzione Generale degli Affari Politici" (No: 059498), Subject: Circa estratto dal giornale "Lloyd Ottoman", Rhodes, 21 July 1916.

of vilification to discredit the Italian presence in the islands. The pro-Hellenic newspapers, including the *Keri*, *Embròs* and *Patris* based in Athens and the *Atlantis* based in New York, spearheaded this anti-Italian campaign. Furthermore, the Istanbul-based newspapers *Lloyd Ottoman*, *Sabah* and *Le Jeune Turc* also initiated a pro-Young Turk campaign against the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands. This campaign, however, was marked by a significantly lower rhetorical intensity and a much softer tone than the previous one. On the other hand, the Young Turk campaign did not cause as much concern among the Italians as the Greek press, given that the Dodecanese Turkish Muslim population was very small compared to the Greek Orthodox population. In response, during the First World War, the Italian censorship authorities stationed in the islands worked meticulously to legitimize and justify Italian policies towards the region. These censorship activities included measures such as the prohibition of the dissemination of newspapers that featured German, Austrian and Turkish war bulletins. Ultimately, the outcome of these anti-Italian campaigns was to compel the Italian capitulatory regime to undertake specific initiatives, assume certain risks, or to make specific concessions.

Following the period of relative autonomy, privileges and opportunities that the Dodecanese Greeks enjoyed under the previous Ottoman regime, they faced a climate of repression and control fueled by wartime paranoia and caution. Having occupied Dodecanese towards the end of the Tripolitanian War and positioned it as a naval outpost, the Italian Government would have to subject it to a gradual and strategic isolation throughout the First World War. This isolation, characterized by various demographic designs and policies of national, religious and cultural assimilation, would serve as the cornerstone of the process leading to the Italianization of the islands. Consequently, the Greek inhabitants of Dodecanese rapidly developed a strong dislike, and eventually, hatred, towards the Italians, whom they had initially welcomed and cherished as cousins at the onset of the Occupation. This animosity, further fueled by Hellenic propaganda centered on Athens, created a triangle of tensions between Rhodes, Athens and Rome. This section will therefore cover a selection of newspaper articles that particularly preoccupied the Italian authorities and prompted them to adopt a variety of different measures, strategies and policies. It will also include counter-arguments, refutations and denials of these reports, sometimes by the Occupation Command and sometimes by prominent local figures such as religious dignitaries. In this respect, the objective is to elucidate the paradigm shift between the Ottoman and Italian regimes with regard to individual rights, freedoms and the construction of national identity in the Dodecanese. Through the exploration of this paradigm shift, it will be possible to focus on the transimperial interactions regarding the sustainability, reappropriation or reinterpretation of the capitulations inherited from the Ottoman regime.

The initial case to be discussed pertains to a news article that was published in the Athens-based pro-Hellenic *Patris* newspaper on 12 November 1912.⁵⁶² The allegations in the article subsequently prompted a letter of refutation, which was dispatched by the Religious Tribunal (Sharia Court) of the Vilayet of the Archipelago to the Italian Chamber of Deputies. The

⁵⁶² Archivio storico e diplomatico del Ministero degli affari esteri- Affari politici, Serie “P”, 1891-1916 (Historical Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Political Affairs, Serie “P”), ASDMAE-AP/ Serie P, 1891-1916, Isole dell’Egeo (Aegean Islands), Busta (Folder): 154, Anni (Years): 1912, Posizione (Position): 17: From “Comando 6a Divisione Speciale – Stato Maggiore” (No:2206/107-Protocollo R.d.) to “Ministero degli Affari Esteri- Direzione Generale degli Affari Politici” (No: 101693), Subject: Lettera del Kadi di Rodi alla Presidenza della Camera dei Deputati, Rhodes, 06 December 1912. Attachment N.207: From “Tribunale Religioso del Vilaiet delle Isole dell’Arcipelago” to “All’Onorevole Presidente della Camera dei Deputati- Roma”, Rhodes, 05 December 1912.

interesting article concerned an anti-occupation interpellation submitted by Italian MP Eugenio Chiesa to the Ministry of War during a parliamentary session. In the interpellation, Chiesa advanced the argument that General Ameglio had been acting as a gendarme on the Aegean islands in favor of the Ottoman Empire. In line with this policy, Ameglio had been compelled to suppress the individual liberties of the islanders. Furthermore, according to Chiesa, this practice was incongruent with the General's prestige and established reputation. Upon the publication of Chiesa's parliamentary statement in the press, local Muslim clergy in Rhodes have taken action by authoring a letter to refute these claims.⁵⁶³ This letter, dispatched to the Italian Chamber of Deputies in response to Chiesa's interpellation, represents a particularly significant document for our understanding of the repercussions of the occupation on the Muslim spiritual leaders of the archipelago. The document was officially endorsed and signed by Ahmed Şâkir Efendi, who was the Qadi (Kadı) of Rhodes at the time, Mufti Sanis, and other prominent figures such as Mehmed Sâdik, Hasan Basri, and Mehmed Kemâl. The clergymen contended that the socialist deputy Chiesa had not yet fully grasped the circumstances and conduct of the insular Muslims. For this reason, he was far from articulating his views in an impartial and conscientious manner. Had he done so, he would undoubtedly have expressed his gratitude to the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies for the impartial and equitable actions of General Ameglio since the onset of the occupation of Rhodes. Ahmed Şâkir Efendi acknowledged the gratitude of the Muslims of Rhodes towards Ameglio, yet he emphasized that the Christian population derived greater benefit from the General's benevolence. The Christians of Rhodes could and should not disregard the favors bestowed upon them by that "Great and Great General" (*Grande e Grande Generale*) merely because Ameglio did not consent to or permit certain demands that contradicted common sense. Such an act would have been both slanderous and ungrateful.

Ahmed Şâkir advanced the argument that General Ameglio was indeed a commander who demonstrated a profound comprehension of the responsibility of his office and exhibited the capacity to safeguard both his position and his personal honor.⁵⁶⁴ Therefore, he observed that the inhabitants under Ameglio's administration, irrespective of their religious affiliation, exhibited unwavering adherence to the law. However, it is crucial to note that the allegations made by Christian populations and Hellenic circles, with the subsequent endorsement from Deputy Chiesa, have resulted in significant emotional distress for General Ameglio. This prompts the question of whether Ameglio would have received praise and admiration if, in contrast to acting in a fair and impartial manner, he had taken a stance in favor of the Christian peoples. Such a course of action would be regarded as wholly inconsistent with the notions of progress and civilization promoted by a prominent nation such as Italy. On the other hand, Qadi Ahmed Şâkir appeared to feel compelled to defend and justify the previous Ottoman regime against the retrospective defamations of the pro-Hellenic press. This was due to the fact that a plethora of testimonies and documents substantiated the freedoms and opportunities that the inhabitants of Sporades enjoyed under Ottoman rule. Moreover, it is evident that no foreign

⁵⁶³ The Italian names and titles of the signatories appear in the document as follows: TRIBUNALE RELIGIOSO dell'Arcipelago: IL CADİ DI RODI Ahemed Sciakia, IL MUFTI Sanis, I NOTABILI Mehemed Sadik, Hassan Basri, Mehemet Kemal. *Sanis*, which phonetically resembles a Greek word, is evidently not a Turkish or Arabic name or surname. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that a Mufti would bear this name. It is highly probable that the name was derived from a mistranscription of an Arabic name such as *Sânî* or *Sâlih*, or the word *Müftî-i Sânî*, meaning "Deputy Mufti."

⁵⁶⁴ ASDMAE-AP/Serie P, 1891-1916, Isole dell'Egeo, 154/17/1912, No: 2206/107-Prot:R.d., No: 101693, Rhodes, 06 December 1912.

subjects had ever been granted the privileges bestowed upon the islanders, nor had their individual freedoms ever been violated. The allegations levelled against the Ottoman regime were also found to be entirely unfounded. Furthermore, it was revealed that the reports in the Greek press, which claimed that all weapons in the hands of the Greeks of Rhodes had been confiscated by the Italian authorities, were in fact wholly false. In reality, following the occupation, all weapons in the possession of the island's Muslims were promptly confiscated, while only a symbolic amount were seized from the Christians residing in the city center. Ahmed Şâkir Efendi alleged that the Christians had amassed an arsenal of weapons, while the Muslims lacked even the most basic tools such as a breadknife. To corroborate this claim, one may refer to the reports submitted by the consuls of the major powers to their respective ambassadors. In light of these facts, the Muslims of Rhodes categorically rejected all the deliberate accusations against General Ameglio, both by Deputy Chiesa and the Greek press, and unequivocally denied all the news published on this subject.

Concurrently, Qadi Ahmed Şâkir Efendi was engaged in an attempt to inform and reassure the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior regarding the functioning of the Italian administration in Rhodes.⁵⁶⁵ For some time, a series of letters of complaint and disturbing reports had been reaching the supreme authorities in Istanbul, asserting that Italians were persecuting the Islamic community in Rhodes and that the local Greek inhabitants were involved in these atrocities. In the aftermath of the invasion, the Italian authorities issued a deadline for all Rhodians in possession of weapons to surrender them to the government. By the conclusion of the deadline, a rigorous search was conducted by Italian soldiers and specially appointed officers in the urban center of Rhodes and all Muslim villages in the vicinity. During the course of this search, some soldiers and civilians were arrested, some were deported from the island, but most were eventually released. Ahmed Şâkir reported that, apart from the reasonable amount of violence employed in the search for weapons, there were no irregularities that could be characterized as atrocities. However, he articulated that the prior correspondence reaching Istanbul accurately reflected the actions of the local Greeks. Since the first day of the occupation, armed Greeks in the villages had provided both tactical and operational assistance to the Italian troops, enabling them to gain the upper hand against the Ottoman army. Furthermore, it was evident that the local Greek community engaged in acts of oppression and persecution against the Muslim population, with the intention of preventing Muslim candidates from securing a majority of votes in the upcoming parliamentary elections. This suggests that the local Greek community was leveraging the Italian occupation as an opportunity to establish both military and political superiority over the Muslim community in Rhodes.

⁵⁶⁵ COA, DH.MUİ.159/73, 13 Haziran 1328 - 26 June 1912. From: Mehmed Şâkir Effendi, "From the Chief Qadi, Central Shariah Court of the Province of the Archipelago to the Ministry of Interior" (*Cezâir-i Bahr-i Sefid Vilâyeti, Merkez-i Mahkeme-i Şerîa'sı, Merkez Kadısından Dâhiliye Nezâretine*).



Newspaper Image 6 : Qadi Ahmed Şâkir Efendi, The Supreme Judge of the Muslims in the Vilayet of the Archipelago, at the Sulaymaniyah Mosque of Rhodes.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶⁶ Arturo Faccioli, "Il giudice supremo dei musulmani a Rodi, Ahmed Schiakir Effendi: Cadì (giudice supremo mussulmano) della provincia dell'arcipelago, residente a Rodi nelle Moschea Suleimanié," *L'Illustrazione Italiana*, Anno: XL, N.11, Marzo 16, 1913, 256.

An article bearing the title *Oppressioni non immaginabili degli italiani nel Dodecaneso* (Unimaginable Oppressions of the Italians in the Dodecanese Islands), published in *Keri* on 12/25 August 1915 (issue: 221), has been identified as a subject of considerable correspondence in archival records.^{567 568} This article is of particular interest in observing the effects that the pro-Hellenic press could potentially exert on the Italian authorities in the Dodecanese. The newspaper, which caused a great stir in Athens, contained extremely harsh accusations against the Italian authorities, causing considerable concern and engendering a prolonged period of preoccupation. It is evident that General Croce, the Commander of the Occupation Forces, attached great importance to this publication, sharing its translation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and proffering arguments in defense of his administration against the allegations. The newspaper viewed the restriction of Greek landing on the island and the obstacles that were placed in the way of the arrival of even those born in Rhodes as a flagrant threat to Greek demography. The imposition of restrictions on the arrival of Dodecanese natives residing in Egypt, many of whom are shopkeepers and merchants, has the effect of preventing the inflow of cash to the islands. The author contends that these measures, characterized by injustice, extremism and persecution, represent a systematic and persistent endeavor to eradicate the Greek essence of the Dodecanese Islands. Moreover, in the light of these data, the socio-economic panorama of the Dodecanese Islands becomes increasingly grave. According to the author, the island's agricultural output has declined due to export restrictions, resulting in the loss of income sources and a stagnant business environment. Royal Commissioner Brizi, the island's Mayor, has been accused of imposing exorbitant taxes on imported grain and flour, which he then sells at a premium. Brizi, known for his ruthless and repressive behaviour, imposes very high fines for the slightest offence, which economically exhausts the population. As legal fees are exorbitant, residents are hesitant to resort to the justice system, which is already not very well organized. Economic exhaustion caused by the vandalizing and unfair Italian administration has crippled the communities' living and educational budgets, many families have starved to death, and many schools have been closed. The administration of justice was not the responsibility of impartial judges, but rather of Mayor Brizi, who pursued exclusively Italian interests. Consequently, in instances where justice was not upheld, the establishment of a robust economy was rendered unfeasible.

In response to this, Commander Croce asserts that these protective measures against landings were implemented with the objective of avoiding the exacerbation of the economic conditions of the Dodecanese Islands, which were already worsened due to the wartime dynamics.⁵⁶⁹ Furthermore, he contends that this rigorous approach to arrivals was not applied exclusively to Greeks, but also extended to individuals of Turkish, Jewish, or Italian origin who lacked a fixed residence or domicile on the islands, or who did not possess a significant and urgent reason to settle. Despite claims in the press that they posed challenges to the supply and subsistence of the islands' population, the landing restrictions were an effective and advantageous method for General Croce to prevent war smuggling and espionage in favor of the Turks, Austrians and

⁵⁶⁷ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12): From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No: 3049/Ris.-Divisione 3) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 073141), Subject: Circa un articolo del giornale greco "Keri", Rhodes, 27 September 1915.

⁵⁶⁸ In lieu of the original Greek-language headlines that appeared in the newspapers, the Italian translations that have appeared in the Italian correspondence are provided.

⁵⁶⁹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12), No: 3049/Ris.-Divisione 3, No: 073141, Rhodes, 27 September 1915.

Germans.⁵⁷⁰ In this manner, the Italian authorities sought to ensure the exclusion of certain stateless persons whom they deemed to be politically unstable, unreliable, and unscrupulous. According to Croce, the restriction proved to be of utmost importance during wartime, as it hindered enemy elements from exploiting the topographical and geographical characteristics of the archipelago. Furthermore, Croce states that the export bans, which were purportedly responsible for the island's alleged paralysis of commercial activities, were imposed exclusively on goods declared contraband of war. The objective of these bans was to prevent direct or indirect supplies from enemy states, and they were relaxed for allied or neutral states. Moreover, the allegations made by *Keri* against Commissioner Brizi were deemed to be of no value. Brizi, held in high esteem for his probity, success and honor in the War Ministry, and whose reputation in government circles in Rome was unquestionable, was undeserving of such defamation. According to Croce, the widespread discontent with the Dodecanese government that was observed in Athens did not translate into the same degree of dissatisfaction in Rhodes. In other words, Croce's argument is that this antipathy towards the Italian administration was deliberately exaggerated and promoted by particular circles in Athens.

The remainder of the article addressed the repressive policies directed towards Greek identity, traditions and culture in the Dodecanese.⁵⁷¹ Under the heading *Soffocano il sentimento nazionale* (They Suffocate the National Sentiment), *Keri* contended that the Italian authorities sought to extinguish the Dodecanese national spirit and sever their ties with Greece. To this end, they had established a network of spies, infiltrated schools and even families, and were privy to all the Greeks did or would do. The prohibition of Greek songs in schools, the prevention of foreign teachers from landing, and the destruction or removal of all blue and white objects associated with the Greek flag were further measures implemented by the Italians. According to *Keri*, the Italian occupiers' marriages with Greek women and the family ties they established were intended to corrupt the traditional character of the Greek community in the islands. Indeed, the Italian propaganda campaign proved effective, as there were numerous Greek women who were willing to marry Italians for personal gain and lacked a sense of patriotism. Furthermore, there were many Greeks who were willing to spy for the Italians in exchange for small amounts of money, and there were affluent notables who were willing to donate substantial sums to the Italian army rather than to the Greek army. Despite their promises to respect the privileges of the Church, the Italians proceeded to take away religious freedoms, initiate persecutions and mistreatment of the clergy, and humiliate the honorable Metropolitan by disregarding any decision of the Church. Despite the aforementioned assertions, General Croce considers *Keri*'s article to be contradictory and lacking in substantiation. The article in question, however, through the aforementioned arguments, demonstrates that the Greeks of

⁵⁷⁰ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12): From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No:2655/Ris. -Divisione 3/Sez.2) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 067816), Subject: La stampa greca ed il Dodecanneso, Rhodes, 05 September 1915.

"Noto soltanto che il rigore nella applicazione del divieto di sbarco che fu giustificato dalle difficilissime condizioni di vettovagliamento delle isole occupate e che si è dimostrato finora vantaggiosissimo appare ora tanto più necessario nella nuova situazione derivante dallo stato di guerra con la Turchia; perché permette di tener lontani dal Dodecanneso molti elementi politicamente equivoci, ma ti individui senza patria e senza coscienza, che favoriti dalle speciali condizioni geografiche e topografiche di queste isole si dedicano con molto profitto al contrabbando di guerra e allo spionaggio in favore dei Turchi e degli Austro-Germanici."

⁵⁷¹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12), No: 3049/Ris.-Divisione 3, No: 073141, Rhodes, 27 September 1915.

Rhodes harbored an excessive affection for Italians. The fact that Greek shopkeepers contributed significant financial sums to the Italian army, or that Greek women seemingly relinquished their liabilities towards their husbands who had emigrated to America and entered into matrimony with Italian men, does not serve as the most salient evidence of this? However, the claims made by Hellenic circles in Athens are so unrealistic that they seek to explain even these marriages not by personal ties or emotional motivations, but by ideological motives. The allegations of persecution of the Orthodox clergy, of disrespect for the prerogatives of the Greek Church, or of the use of every possible means to stifle Greek national sentiment are also, according to Croce, completely unfounded. The Occupation Command's primary objective was to regulate popular movements and demonstrations of a political nature, a task inherent in the functioning of any government during wartime. This control, while not unconditional or unlimited, was predicated on the principle of the recognition and respect of Italian state authority at all times.

The 18 July 1915 issue of *Embròs* featured a remarkable article, entitled *Terrorizzazione del Dodecanneso-Persecuzione sterminatrice dei greci* (Terrorization of the Dodecanese-Exterminating Persecution of the Greeks).⁵⁷² The article detailed accounts by passengers arriving in Athens from islands such as Karpathos, who provided vivid descriptions of the alleged mistreatment by the Italian administration. According to the travelers, the inhabitants of the Dodecanese Islands had been promised good government, justice, education and transport by the Italian administration, but none of these had materialized. Instead, the only thing that existed was systematic and relentless persecution. The Greeks returning to their homeland were not permitted to disembark and were instead returned, under the pretext that the Dodecanesians' food supplies were insufficient. Furthermore, a policy of strict search procedures was enforced for all incoming ships in harbors, with Dodecanese residents who had resided in America for many years and were returning home via Piraeus prevented from disembarking. It was anticipated that legislation would be enacted and implemented, enabling the Italian army to conscript local Greeks. This measure was expected to result in the desertion of the majority of the local male population, thereby facilitating their subsequent expulsion by the Italian authorities. Nevertheless, according to *Embròs*, the ultimate intention of this Italian tactic of restricting arrivals to the islands was the programmed and gradual extermination of the male and especially the educated Greek population of the Dodecanese. This policy was further evidenced by the imminent expulsion of 20 notables from Karpathos. In order to identify and target members of the intelligentsia, the Italian administration had established an extensive network of paid "secret police" (*kafié /hafiye*) on the islands. These officials, who blend in with the public like detectives or spies, were registering and reporting educated people, denouncing voiced opinions and controlling freedom of expression. The dissemination of newspapers was prohibited, and censorship units were established in post offices to oversee correspondence. Furthermore, residents' rights concerning access to their property and the cultivation of land were suspended. According to *Embròs*, travelers reported that the overall situation was deeply alarming and represented an unprecedented shift in the social and political landscape. It was even noted that such practices had never been observed during the period of Turkish rule.

⁵⁷² ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12): From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No:2237/Ris.) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 061268), Subject: Stampa greca, Rhodes, 10 August 1915. Attachment: Giornale Greco "Embròs" N° 6735, Atene, 18 luglio 1915, "Terrorizzazione del Dodecanneso - Persecuzione sterminatrice dei greci."

A report from the Italian Embassy in Athens addressed both of these articles, which had caused a major disturbance within the Greek public sphere, and the measures taken by the Italian diplomatic mission in response to the smear campaign that had been unleashed in the Greek press.⁵⁷³ A commonality between *Keri* and *Embròs* was the fact that the Italian occupation, which the islanders had initially welcomed with enthusiasm as a potential harbinger of annexation or unification with Greece, ultimately proved to be a significant disappointment. It is evident that the Dodecanese Greeks had attributed an inauthentic and exaggerated significance to the occupation, and they had encountered a completely different picture in the initial year of the occupation. According to columnists, the unbridled frenzy of the troops under General Ameglio's command and the vandalism of the Carabinieri represented some of the shocking developments that the Greeks faced. *Keri* even accused the current Italian administration of going beyond all bounds in seeking to change the ethnological character of the islands, comparing it to the alleged debauchery and vandalism of the Young Turks. According to allegations made by *Keri*, upon arriving on the islands, travelers found themselves subject to a pervasive atmosphere of intolerance and cruelty. A group of Kasos natives who had been residing in Athens for some time and wished to return to their homeland were denied disembarkation upon their arrival. The group included an unfortunate student from the *Kersopoulo* school in Athens who had travelled to see his family in Kasos but was obliged to return to Athens with the other travelers. Ten Rhodesians on the same vessel underwent a series of searches and interrogations upon arrival in Rhodes, at which point they were repatriated at the order of Carabinieri officers, acting on intelligence provided by spies. In Symi and Kalymnos, *Keri* documented cases of a more brutal nature, with travelers unable to disembark jumping overboard, swimming to the shore and subsequently being arrested. In the context of the events in Kasos, it is noteworthy that the priests were prohibited from uttering the name of King Constantine. Furthermore, the dissemination of newspapers and the engagement in political discourse were strictly forbidden, and the populace was merely informed of the triumphs of General Croce and the defeats of Austria. *Keri*'s report underscores the profound desolation of the individuals who had cherished the prospect of liberty, only to find themselves subject to a more oppressive regime than the Turkish yoke. In this regard, the author issued a call to the Greek government, urging it to safeguard the rights of its fellow citizens.

The Italian Ambassador has attributed the sole tangible and enduring motivation behind the Greek press's renewed focus on the Dodecanese Islands through a fierce campaign, to the perpetual animosity of the Greeks towards Italian policy.⁵⁷⁴ Despite the fact that the Occupation Command had already legitimized the prohibition of landing on the islands, the Greek press continues to attack from this standpoint. The Ambassador had already disseminated and promoted the legitimate reasons for this ban throughout Greece via the press. Moreover, at the behest of the Greek authorities, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador had requested and obtained several exceptions to this ban from General Croce. Finally, the Ambassador endeavored to explain to numerous political and journalistic figures the need to put an end to the smear campaign against the Italian authorities in the Dodecanese Islands. However, the final endeavor by the Greek press to relaunch a deliberate and unconditional

⁵⁷³ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12): From "Regia Legazione di Atene" (No:1635/373) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 060212), Subject: Dodecanneso, Athens, 02 August 1915.

⁵⁷⁴ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12), No: 1635/373, No: 060212, Athens, 02 August 1915.

campaign of hostility revealed that the Ambassador's efforts had proved unsuccessful. In addition, Croce stated that all that had been written about the systematic repression of Greeks by the Italian command, the hiring of undercover policemen on a fixed salary, or the drafting of a conscription law for the inhabitants of the Dodecanese Islands was a fantasy animated by hatred of Italy.⁵⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Croce reiterated that both the landing restriction and postal censorship were strictly enforced due to wartime conditions and sensitivities. However, as mentioned earlier, both practices were applied fairly to all, without distinction of race or religion, and without any intent to persecute anyone. Furthermore, Croce noted that the Italians residing in the Dodecanese Islands, and most notably the officers and personnel of the Occupation Corps, were the first to endure the discomfort, inconvenience and damage resulting from these restrictive measures imposed as a consequence of the prevailing political situation.

The anti-Italian campaign of the pro-Hellenic press would subsequently move to a more global level, operating from the USA, a country where the Greek diaspora and lobby were rapidly gaining strength.⁵⁷⁶ A highly crucial article, published in the 16/29 December 1915 issue of the New York-based *Atlantis*, was divided into two subsections: "State of Terror in the Dodecanese" (*Stato di terrore nel Dodecanneso*) and "The Persecution of Church and Schools" (*La persecuzione della chiesa e delle scuole*). The author's primary source material comprised the first-hand testimonies and memories of the passengers of the ferry *Elena*, who had arrived in Athens the previous day from the island of Kasos. The passengers attested to the fact that the persecution and oppression were in full swing, claiming that a climate of terror prevailed on the island. Italian Carabinieri troops were patrolling all the villages of Kasos, forcing the villagers to pay arbitrarily imposed taxes and imprisoning or beating those who refused. A significant number of villagers were compelled to seek refuge in Egypt and Syria due to their inability to endure the conditions on the island. It has been alleged that the Governor of the island, in collaboration with the Carabinieri commander, took advantage of the desperation of the inhabitants by facilitating their voluntary deportation by willfully distributing passports to them. The second part of the article focuses on the experiences and observations of the persecution of churches and schools. It was reported that priests were prohibited from mentioning the name of King Constantine or the Royal Family, and that non-compliance was punishable by arrest or expulsion from the church.⁵⁷⁷ The columnist asserted that the schools were the most prominent locus of anti-Hellenic sentiment, with the singing of the national anthem and the teaching of modern Greek history being prohibited. Furthermore, geography teachers were instructed to refrain from mentioning regions such as Epirus or Albania, which were of significant Greek historical importance.

⁵⁷⁵ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/1-(12), No:2237/Ris., No: 061268, Rhodes, 10 August 1915.

⁵⁷⁶ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo / Trattazione Generale 1916, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4: From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No:844/Ris.) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 020846), Subject: Circa un articolo del giornale "Atlantis", Rhodes, 18 March 1916. [Attachment I](#): Giornale Greco "Atlantis" N° 4791, New York, 16/29 Dicembre 1915, "Stato di terrore nel Dodecanneso" and "La persecuzione della chiesa e delle scuole."

⁵⁷⁷ "The Vicar of the Island, The Most Reverend Mister Elia Mavris, having dared to mention the name of His Majesty the King on the feast day of St. Demetrius, when a great popular festival was being celebrated, was forcibly ejected from the Church during mass." (*Il Vicario dell'isola, reverendissimo Signor Elia Mavris, avendo osato ricordare il nome di S.M. il Re il dì della festa di S. Demetrio, allorché celebrata una grande festa popolare, è stato cacciato dalla Chiesa con la forza, durante la messa.*).

Furthermore, it is alleged that island communities were strictly forbidden from employing teaching staff from Greece.⁵⁷⁸ For instance, Euridice Adrianù, an Athenian who had been contracted as a teacher at the S. Marina primary school in Kasos, was not permitted to disembark, despite the protests of the island as a whole, and was instead sent to Samos. Those islanders involved in political discussions were subject to fines, Greek newspapers were prohibited from circulation, and islanders were not even allowed to board ships in order to avoid receiving news. Communications were disseminated twice weekly from the Occupation Headquarters in Rhodes, proclaiming the triumphs and advances of the Italian armed forces. According to *Atlantis*, the profound animosity felt towards King Constantine was beyond description, and all images of His Majesty and the Royal Family were swiftly removed from public spaces. The flag of Greece was prohibited from being flown on the island, and the display of paintings depicting historic Greek battles and victories in public spaces was strictly forbidden. The article concluded by stressing that the inhabitants of the Aegean Islands awaited the conclusion of their fate with the hope of imminent liberation from the threat of Italian terrorism.

However, the same correspondence was also enclosed with rebuttals to these extremely rhetorical, yet controversial allegations promoted by the pro-Hellenist propaganda.⁵⁷⁹ In response to the claims published in the 31 October 1915 issue of *Keri*, M.G. Minaculis, G.N. Cutlakis and N. Papadopoulos, the prominent members of the Demogerontia of Kasos, and Papa-Elia Mavris, the Archdiocesan Vicar, authored two letters of refutation and submitted them to the Garrison Command of the island. In that first letter, the members of Demogerontia expressed their profound dismay at the unfounded and false accusations that the newspaper had attributed to the Italian occupation authorities. According to the members of Demogerontia, these accusations had been deliberately published by certain malicious circles to arouse hatred and resentment towards the Italian authorities among the Greek diasporas. In response, the members of Demogerontia undertook the formidable task of categorically refuting these unfounded accusations. Firstly, they assured the Command that none of the events documented in the aforementioned report and attributed to the Italian occupation authorities had occurred. In other words, the Italian government had not imposed taxation by force, nor had Carabinieri officers travelled through the villages to collect taxes by harassing and beating people. Furthermore, it is evident that the Commander and the Carabinieri refrained from interfering in the internal processes and affairs of churches and schools. The names of King Constantine and the Greek Royal Family were openly and freely mentioned in the churches. The assertion that Pope Elia Mavris was physically abused, arrested, and expelled from the Church of St Andreas for invoking the name of King Constantine during mass is unequivocally false. This claim was explicitly and formally denied by Vicar himself in the enclosed letter. Furthermore, the portrait of King Constantine was never removed from cafés, and the Italian authorities did not interfere in the selection of teaching staff, curricula or textbooks.

⁵⁷⁸ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/4), No: 844/Ris., No: 020846, Rhodes, 18 March 1916. Attachment I.

⁵⁷⁹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/4), No: 844/Ris., No: 020846, Rhodes, 18 March 1916. Attachment II: From “I Demogerondi dell’ Isola di Casos - M.G. Minaculis, G.N. Cutlakis, N. Papadopoulos” to “Signor Comandante del Presidio dell’ Isola di Casos”; Attachment III: From “Il Vicario Arcivescovo Papà-Elia MAVRIS” to “Signor Comandante del Presidio dell’ Isola di Casos”, Kasos, 27 February/11 March 1916.

The fourth letter, attached to the correspondence, was addressed directly to the Dodecanese Occupation Commander in Rhodes, General Croce.⁵⁸⁰ The Demogerontia of Kasos praised Franco del Re, who had been appointed Garrison Commander (*Comandante del Presidio*) of the island, as an intelligent, courteous, active and energetic officer of the valiant Italian Army, and expressed their gratitude for his appointment. The letter stated that, since the day he was appointed, Sig. del Re had shown great enthusiasm and diligence in protecting, supporting, and improving the island's financial, agricultural, and judicial affairs. By cooperating with the Demogerontia members to understand and work in harmony, the commander had won the love and respect of all Kasos's inhabitants. In the midst of the prevailing, challenging wartime conditions that were currently experienced by the vast majority of humanity, the people of Kasos maintained high hopes and expectations for the future contributions of Sig. del Re, which they believed would be for the benefit of their island. Consequently, the members of the Demogerontia approached General Croce, requesting that he refrain from transferring or dismissing del Re, who, up to that point, had demonstrated unwavering commitment to the protection and defense of the islanders' interests, acting with impartiality and unwavering justice. The islanders' appeal to General Croce was motivated by their profound desire to retain del Re in his capacity as Garrison Commander, a decision that they believed would ensure the continued protection and defense of their island. The sentiment expressed by the islanders was one of profound gratitude, with the hope that General Croce would accede to their request.

The final example of the Greek press to be examined is a letter written from the island of Icaria and published by *Keri* on 8 April 1916, which is quoted from the Athens-based periodical *Political Review (Rivista politica)*.⁵⁸¹ The author of the letter claimed that the Dodecanese had been completely assimilated administratively by the Italian authorities. Alarmingly, the author asserts that an attempt is underway to systematically assimilate the archipelago's judicial authority into the Italian Kingdom. Prior to this, municipal councils were permitted to adjudicate cases falling within the jurisdiction of magistrates, as per island custom. However, municipalities have now been prohibited from imposing fines or issuing compensation in judicial cases. This situation entailed a lengthy and costly judicial process, causing considerable inconvenience to the island's inhabitants, who were unable to appear before regular courts in such cases of minor incidents. In the current situation, the Italians applied Ottoman and, at times, Italian legislation, depending on the case, in the courts of Rhodes and all the other islands.

Moreover, the ban on the return of islanders who had been abroad for more than two or three months continued and was strictly enforced by the military authorities.⁵⁸² This ban had two main consequences. Firstly, it ruined the island's economy. Secondly, it disrupted the community's income, leading families to reluctantly emigrate from the island. Returning after a long journey, the islanders could not set foot on their own land, could not even see their families, and returned abroad again, depleting their hard-earned savings. The author of the text,

⁵⁸⁰ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/4), No: 844/Ris., No: 020846, Rhodes, 18 March 1916. Attachment IV: From "I Demogerondi dell' Isola di Kasos - M.G. Minaculis, G.N. Cutlakis, N. Papadopoulos" "Generale Signor G. Croce - Comandante del Corpo d'Occupazione italiana del Dodecanneso", Kasos, 27 February/11 March 1916.

⁵⁸¹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, From "Regia Legazione di Atene" (No:848/140) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 027220), Subject: Dodecanneso, Athens, 09 April 1916.

⁵⁸² ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 1 / 1915, 1144/17/4, No: 848/140, No: 027220, Athens, 09 March 1916.

however, posits that the underlying motivation behind this ban, initially imposed by the Italian authorities under the pretext of a food shortage, was to eradicate the native Greek population and replace it with Italian migrants from Naples and Sicily. Nevertheless, the Italian government's expectation that these measures would effectively destroy the national sentiment of the islanders was, according to the author, a grave miscalculation.

Ottoman archival documents also reveal that a food supply problem existed in the islands.⁵⁸³ Indeed, the Italian administration was compelled to enter into a barter agreement with the Turkish authorities in 1915 in order to overcome the shortage of flour and wheat in particular. The terms of this agreement stipulated that the *Mutasarrifates* of Teke and Menteşe would export flour and wheat in exchange for sugar, rice, coffee, gas and petrol imported from Rhodes and Kos. The aforementioned cities, now known as Antalya and Muğla respectively, were the geographically closest points of the Anatolian coastline to the islands and were the most feasible ports in terms of transport. The precise terms of the agreement stipulated the export of two sacks of flour or wheat in exchange for each sack of sugar and rice, three sacks for each sack of coffee, three sacks for two crates of oil, and two sacks for three crates of gas. The Ottoman Council of Ministers determined a maximum monthly export quota of two thousand sacks of wheat or flour to the specified islands, a decree that was subsequently approved by the Grand Vizier's Office. However, the terms of the agreement between the Ottoman Government and the Italian authorities stipulated that the final destination of the aforementioned products was to be the two islands, strictly prohibiting their transit to other destinations, such as Greece, and subjecting their delivery to rigorous control. Furthermore, the Italian authorities were required to guarantee that the products would only be used for the consumption and needs of the Muslim inhabitants of the islands. The fact that the relevant notifications regarding the agreement were subsequently relayed to the customs offices of the ports of Izmir and Mersin could be interpreted as an indication of an upward trend in the volume of trade.

A report on the content of the letter received from Ikaria and published by *Keri* was prepared by the Italian Embassy in Athens and swiftly conveyed to General Croce.⁵⁸⁴ As also demonstrated by the urgency of his response, Croce's tone towards these accusations became increasingly robust and vocal.⁵⁸⁵ As anticipated, the accusations of Italianization of the islands

⁵⁸³ COA, DH.İ.UM.EK.92/69/Lef 1, 13 Nisan 1331 - 26 April 1915; DH.İ.UM.EK.93/91/Lef 1, 06 Haziran 1331 - 19 June 1915. From the Correspondence Office of the Important Affairs, the Grand Vizirate, to the Ministry of Interior (*Dâire-i Sadâret, Umûr-u Mühimme Kaleminden Dâhiliye Nezâretine*); DH.İ.UM.EK.93/91/Lef 2, 08 Haziran 1331 - 21 June 1915. From the Grand Vizirate to the Teke and Menteşe Sanjak Governorates / to the Ministry of Treasury (*Sadâretten Teke ve Menteşe Mutasarrıflıklarına / Mâliye Nezâretine*); DH.İ.UM.EK.94/26/Lef 2, 27 Haziran 1331 - 10 July 1915 (*Adana Vâlisi Hakkı'dan Dâhiliye Nezâretine*). From the Adana Governor Hakkı to the Ministry of Interior.

⁵⁸⁴ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, From "Comando del Corpo d'Occupazione dell'Egeo" (No:1142/Ris.) to "Ministero degli Affari Esteri" (No: 028295), Subject: Circa un rapporto del Regio Ministro ad Atene, Rhodes, 18 April 1916.

⁵⁸⁵ "These are the usual accusations, due to the pen of some discontented person, about the alleged oppressions against the Greeks of the Dodecanese and about the alleged tendency of this Command to Italianize the Aegean islands. These are stupid and false accusations; as this Ministry is well aware, the Command of the Aegean Occupation Force has no other task than that of militarily occupying the islands, of defending them if necessary, in the event of hostile action by the Powers with which Italy is at war, of maintaining public order and security, and of looking after the welfare of the populations." (Sono le solite accuse, dovute alla penna di qualche malcontento, circa le pretese oppressioni contro i Greci del Dodecanneso e circa la pretesa tendenza di questo Comando a italianizzare le isole dell'Egeo. Sono accuse stolide e false; poiché come ben sa codesto Ministero - il Comando del Corpo di occupazione dell'Egeo non

were the product of a disgruntled individual, comprising unfounded and foolish arguments. However, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was well aware, the Aegean Occupation Corps was solely responsible for defending the islands against hostile acts by Italy's warring opponents, maintaining public order and security, and ensuring the welfare of the population. Concerning the repeated complaints about the prohibition of landing of non-permanent residents, it should be noted that similar restrictions were imposed by numerous belligerent countries. For instance, the Anglo-Egyptian authorities imposed an extremely stringent disembarkation ban on individuals not of Egyptian origin or those who had not resided in Egypt for a period of time. Moreover, Croce dismissed the claim that this policy had precipitated the economic collapse of the islands as "ridiculous." Consequently, the diet of the Dodecanese population was not disrupted, thanks to the rigorous measures implemented by the Command. Furthermore, Croce found the magazine's references to the Dodecanese Islands' judiciary to be devoid of any meaningful content. In addition, he defended the success and continuity of the judicial system established by General Ameglio in the early days of the occupation. This system, he argued, respected local customs and traditions to the greatest extent possible, and functioned in an orderly manner thanks to the excellent judges appointed by the Italian Ministry of Justice. Consequently, as Croce explicitly articulated, the Command exhibited neither the necessity nor the intention to modify the judicial system.

A review of the anti-Italian campaigns waged by the pro-Hellenist press reveals a concerted effort to unfold the isolation of the islands and the material and moral destruction it engendered. The Italian Occupation Command's strategy was to shield the islands from external influences, with the aim of safeguarding them from potential wartime manipulation. It has been alleged that another objective was to prevent the return of the Greek inhabitants to the islands and to dissolve the Greek population, in order to facilitate the settlement of Italian migrants. These isolation policies ranged from landing bans upon arrivals to restrictive measures on communication, postal services and press circulation. Consequently, instead of rejecting this isolation and censorship, the Italian authorities constantly sought to justify and legitimize it in various domestic and international forums. Secondly, assimilation policies were implemented, allegedly aimed at undermining the national and religious identity of the islands. These policies, which encompassed a broad spectrum of practices ranging from the design of the education system in schools to the modification of religious rituals in churches, have purportedly prompted a substantial response from the local population. Notably, the alleged removal of the Greek flag, national anthem, historical symbols and the images of the royal family from public spaces has provoked both Greek nationalist circles and the island populations.

According to the pro-Hellenist press, the function of these policies was twofold: first, to facilitate the Italianization of the population by altering the demographic structure of the islands; and second, to realize the national, religious and cultural pillar of this Italianization process by eroding the dominant Greek Orthodox identity of the islands. In response to these allegations, which were voiced by pro-Hellenist circles, the Italians implemented various measures. The most significant of these was the tightening of communications and postal control in the islands, as well as increased press censorship of circulated newspapers. Additionally, local individuals were reportedly denied contact with ship crews and passengers

ha altro compito oltre quello di occupare militarmente le isole, di difenderle eventualmente in caso di azione ostile da parte delle Potenze con le qua li l'Italia è in guerra, di mantenervi l'ordine pubblico la sicurezza, di curare il benessere delle popolazioni.).

under certain circumstances and for specific periods. In this manner, the Italian authorities pursued to ensure that the populace of the islands remained uninformed with regard to the ideological awakening that was being promoted by Greek circles. In other words, Italian regime was seeking to prevent the infiltration of Hellenic ideology into the islands' population. A secondary measure was to cultivate positive relations with the Muslim elements in order to gain their sympathy and support. This approach aimed to create a counterbalance of the Muslim Turks against the Orthodox Greeks, who were strongly influenced by Hellenic ideology. For example, in October 1913, the Order of the Crown of Italy (قرونه دیتالیا / *Ordine della Corona d'Italia*) was awarded to Mehmed Şâkir Efendi, the Chief Qadi of the Archipelago Province, by the Occupation Commander of Rhodes.⁵⁸⁶ In December 1913, the Ottoman authorities, namely the Grand Vizier (*Sadrâzam*) Mehmed Said Pasha and Shaykh al-Islam (*Şeyhülislâm*) Esad Effendi, issued the necessary Imperial Decree (*Îrâde-i Seniyye*) for the Qadi to officially wear the order. Apparently, in response to Ahmed Şâkir's letter of December 1912 endorsing the Italian administration, the Italian authorities had resorted to such a gesture.

⁵⁸⁶ COA, İ..TAL. 488/20/Lef 1, 15 Teşrînievvel 1329- 28 October 1913. From: Mehmed Şâkir Effendi, "The Chief Qadi, Central Shariah Court of the Province of the Archipelago" (*Cezâir-i Bahr-i Sefîd Vilâyeti, Merkez-i Mahkeme-i Şerîa'sı, Merkez Kadısı*) to "Mehmed Esad Effendi, The Office of Shaykh al-Islam" (*Şeyhülislâm / Hazret-i Meşîhatpenâhî*); İ..TAL.488/20/Lef 4, 28 Teşrînisânî 1329- 11 December 1913. Imperial Decree (*Îrâde-i Seniyye*) by the Fatwa Office, The Office of Shaykh al-Islam (*Bâb-ı Fetvâ, Dâire-i Meşîhat*).

اراده سینه

دائرة مشيخت
٢٥٢١

رودس قاضی بنکر افندی یہ ایتالیا دولتی طرفہ سے دیویرلایہ قرون ویتا یا نشانک مومی الہ طرفہ سے قبول و لدی الایجاب بقیقہ
مسعدہ اولنشد

محمد

استوارده سینه بنکر اجر اسنه مقام مشيخت نامور در لایہ بریخت لایہ بریخت
صدر اعظم
مسعدہ

488/20
ITAL 1332/4-21

4

I.TAL.00488.00020.004

Archival Image 19: Imperial edict authorizing the Qadi of Rhodes to wear the *Ordine della Corona d'Italia*.

6.2. Aegean Capitulations as an Instrument of Civic and Institutional Continuity

Prior to an examination of the role and function of capitulations in this regime transition, it is imperative to consider the unique place occupied by the Dodecanese populations within Italy's colonial doctrine.⁵⁸⁷ As Nicola Labanca has observed, the ethnic composition of the Aegean Islands, inhabited by “whites” (*bianchi*), did not permit a colonial designation as in Africa, thereby engendering a terminological and juridical problem from the outset. Despite the fact that the attitude of the occupying commanders and Italian governors was not significantly different from that displayed in the African colonies, the usage of the term *colonia* was prohibited in the context of the Aegean Islands, and the term *possedimento* was instead chosen. However, Labanca contends that, despite its apparent consistency, this choice gave rise to unforeseen consequences and questions, particularly in terms of civil status and citizenship rights. At this juncture, the most significant question concerned the nature of the citizenship and subjecthood rights that the inhabitants of the *possedimento* should possess. The people of the Dodecanese, who did not share the African ethnicity of Eritreans or Somalis, or the Islamic faith of Libyans, could not be equated with Italy's other colonial subjects. The question therefore arises as to whether the liberal Italy, and subsequently the fascist regime, would consider the inhabitants of the islands to be equal to Italians. Andrea Micciché contends that the complex chain of historical events, in conjunction with the level of development achieved by the Aegean people, demonstrated that colonization was no longer a viable option for this region. Firstly, the subalternity and inferiority that characterized the indigenous populations of Africa in the eyes of the colonizers did not exist in this region. Moreover, the Dodecanese was administratively associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as opposed to the Ministry of Colonies. Within legal regulations, it was designated as a distinct property from the broader entity of colonies. Thus, the prevailing doctrine embraced a “third category” (*tertium genus*), situated midway between the metropolitan province and the colony. This category was recognized as follows:

“What prevented our government from defining the Aegean islands as colonies, while giving them a system of government suited to their civilization but partly analogous to the colonial one, was primarily political considerations. [...] Classifying them as colonies seemed to create grounds for moral impairment and discontent, an opportunity for internal protest and foreign criticism, without any justification of necessity. Furthermore, it was felt appropriate to place them from the outset in a moral and legal position somewhat superior to that of colonies, both to recognize the status quo and to encourage the assimilation of our civilization by their population.”⁵⁸⁸

Throughout history, the islands have been subject to numerous concessions, which have resulted in their exemption from various forms of taxation and impositions imposed by the Ottoman

⁵⁸⁷ Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare: storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), 179-180; Andrea Micciché, *Il diritto ecclesiastico coloniale italiano. Esperienze di pluralismo culturale e religioso tra legislazione, giurisprudenza e dottrina nei territori d'Oltremare (1869-1945) - Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Giurisprudenza dell'Università di Catania, Nuova serie: 300* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2024), 84-85.

⁵⁸⁸ “Ciò che ha trattenuto il nostro Governo dal definire come colonia le isole egee, pur dando ad esse un ordinamento adatto alla loro civiltà, ma in parte analogo a quello coloniale, è stato anzitutto un riguardo politico. [...] Qualificarle colonia è sembrato creare motivo di menomazione morale e di malcontento, occasione di protesta interna e di critica estera, senza la giustificazione di alcuna necessità. Inoltre, si è sentita l'opportunità di porle sin da principio in una condizione morale e giuridica alquanto superiore a quella delle colonie, sia per riconoscere lo stato di fatto, sia per favorire l'assimilazione della nostra civiltà da parte della loro popolazione. Micciché, *Il diritto ecclesiastico coloniale italiano*, 85.

central authority.⁵⁸⁹ Following the establishment of Greek independence in the 1820s, the Ottoman regime granted capitulations to the Greek Orthodox communities in the Dodecanese Islands, thereby exempting them from both taxes and military service. This customized policy indicated a degree of tacit Ottoman acceptance of Greek national claims to the islands. The financial, regulatory, administrative and legal autonomy of the local representative bodies of the islands was ensured by the payment of a fixed “lump-sum tax” (*maktû*) to the Ottoman local authorities. However, Cecini contends that these exemptions, privileges, and institutional autonomy have, in fact, engendered a state of apathy and neglect towards the public infrastructure and provision of the Islands on the part of the Ottoman central government. On the other hand, the rise of the Young Turks and their seizure of power in 1908 led to the termination of this region-specific status, as evidenced by the revocation of the capitulations. The new Unionist regime imposed considerable taxes on the Greek Orthodox majority in the islands and adopted a more repressive attitude towards them. Consequently, the arrival of the Italian army in 1912 was perceived as a liberation from Turkish oppression. During the ambivalent period of the occupation, Italians were confronted with a challenging question: did this autonomy offer any tangible benefits in terms of local services when compared to the potential contributions of an active, albeit distant, central government? Given the extant data and observations, it was determined that the answer to this question was a clear and definitive no. In the prevailing atmosphere of uncertainty, it became imperative for Ameglio and his heirs to ensure the continuity of pre-existing Ottoman administrative and legislative entities. This was deemed essential to avoid antagonizing local civil societies, averting a major rupture within the prevailing system, and forestalling the further alienation of the Ottoman authorities. Moreover, the maintenance of current levels of taxation, public services and authorities, as opposed to a potentially risky and costly transformation, would also provide a significant period of time. This period would have been necessary to comprehend the social particularities of the region and to incorporate them into Italian foreign policy.

During the Italo-Ottoman War (1911-1912), capitulations were a prominent subject in both formal and informal diplomatic negotiations.⁵⁹⁰ These negotiations also constituted an important and decisive part of the postwar arrangements. Article 6 of the Treaty of Ouchy stipulated that the Ottoman Empire would engage in commercial and customs transactions without reliance on capitulations. Instead, these transactions were to be conducted in accordance with a commercial treaty based on European public law. Meanwhile, Article 8 set forth the dissolution of the capitulatory regime within the Ottoman Empire, thereby ushering in a new system grounded in international law. Though the abolition of the capitulations was initially conceived by the Unionist government in the aftermath of Italy’s invasion of Tripolitania in 1911, its implementation was formally declared in October 1914, coinciding with the Ottoman Empire’s entry into the First World War.⁵⁹¹ However, the Entente Powers did not recognize this unilateral abolition as legitimate, leading to the restoration of the capitulations after the Ottoman defeat in 1918. Ultimately, these capitulations were fully

⁵⁸⁹ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 35-36; McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 149.

⁵⁹⁰ For a very comprehensive chronology and in-depth analysis of how the Capitulatory Regime, which dates back to the sixteenth century and which Ottoman diplomats have been seeking to abolish since the Paris Congress in 1856, has become a diplomatic trump card during the Italo-Ottoman War, please refer: Childs, *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy*, 12, 69, 73, 79, 89, 98, 127, 140, 147, 179-180, 188, 210-211, 216, 219-220, 229, 244.

⁵⁹¹ Childs, *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy*, 251-252; Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 111.

abolished through the establishment of the Lausanne Peace Treaty on July 24, 1923. These capitulatory protégés, regarded as “internal enemies” from Ankara, were regarded as “allies requiring protection from nationalist revanchism” from Rome.

Ameglio stated that the primary objective of the Italian Royal Government was threefold: first, to affirm its authority; second, to demonstrate the benefits of the occupation; and third, to endear itself to the local community without creating the impression of being permanent or transient.⁵⁹² In line with this, the Italian Occupation Command attached the utmost importance to the continuity of civil administration in accordance with prevailing norms and through the customary organs, as this was fundamental to the effective management of the populace. Officers of Greek nationality, if closely supervised, could provide valuable services; however, those of doubtful reliability had to be replaced. The General was aware of the possibility of armed resistance against a possible restoration of Turkish authority in the future by the local Orthodox population, and assumed that such resistance would not be deterred by the Italian Occupation Corps. Given the sensitivity of the international landscape, characterized by the tension between national aspirations and the threat of Ottoman retaliation, it was crucial to maintain the pre-existing local order. This was deemed to be in Italy’s best interests, as it would prevent the cultivation of nationalistic sentiments and mitigate the risk of economic disruption. The maintenance of integrity, security, and coordination within a territory fragmented and surrounded by water necessitated the deployment of high-level political and military forces. In this context, the role of the *Guardia di Finanza* (Financial Police) was deemed indispensable.

The second most significant method of ensuring institutional continuity between the two regimes was to respect the privileges granted to foreigners in the Ottoman Empire by the capitulations.⁵⁹³ Ameglio’s perspective underscores the imperative to preserve the prevailing privileges on each island, including the acknowledged rights of foreigners, the administration of Ottoman public debts by an international body of creditor nations, and the historical capitulations that have been established. The profound and long-standing implications of these capitulations, derived from international treaties, are such that challenging them would primarily inflict harm upon the Italian populace. Given the special importance of the peoples of the East, who were diverse in terms of ancestry and religion, the existence of all sects would be respected, and all worship and ritual practices would be allowed. With regard to the freedom of the press in the islands, however, the Occupation Command would not adopt such a lenient policy. The rationale behind this decision was that the vulnerability and risks posed by the occupation period rendered it unfeasible to permit the entry of newspaper reporters into the islands. This was due to the potential for the publication of news and articles that could excite the Hellenic world, thereby arousing separatist sentiments among the Greek population of the islands. Furthermore, one of Ameglio’s primary decisions was to purge the remnants of the Young Turk regime, which he regarded as a political threat for the future.⁵⁹⁴ In pursuit of this objective, a significant number of military personnel and numerous civilians who were deemed to be associated with or sympathetic to the Young Turks were deported to Italy. The ambiguous and undefined status of these deportees, oscillating between the categories of prisoners of war and political exiles, gave rise to diplomatic tensions.

⁵⁹² Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 65; Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 33-34.

⁵⁹³ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 65; Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 33-34.

⁵⁹⁴ Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 16-17.

The decision to maintain the preexisting system was seemingly influenced, at least in part, by the absence of codified customary and traditional practices within the established legal and judicial framework.⁵⁹⁵ This legal lacuna rendered it challenging for Italians to comprehend the scope and legitimacy of these practices. As the Italo-Ottoman conflict reached its conclusion, delegations from the islands underwent a transformation, shifting from oligarchic councils (*Demogerondie*) to more populist forms (*Demarchie*). These delegations petitioned the new military administration to guarantee the preservation of the privileges previously granted by the Sublime Porte over centuries. For instance, Ameglio notes that a commission of notables who journeyed from Symi to Rhodes to pledge allegiance remarked upon the long-standing privileges and petitioned for their continuity. While the populace rejoiced at having been liberated from the Turks, the Hellenic elders paradoxically delineated and reiterated the privileges they had inherited from the centuries-long Ottoman tradition. Subsequent to their initial enthusiasm for the Italian forces, the populations endeavored to preserve their economic benefits, stemming from the Ottoman Empire, as well as their legal independence from the Turks for a prospective autonomy. In essence, their demands centered on the liberation of the islands, subject to the condition of their continued payment of a lump-sum tax to the Italians. Cecini's analysis underscores the distinction between the financial liberation sought and the social or political motivations behind it. As Nicholas Doumanis notes, the primary impetus behind the protests was the preservation of traditional rights rather than ideological allegiance to Mother Hellas (*Mitera Ellas*).⁵⁹⁶ Cecini's apt articulation of this ambivalent situation is as follows:

"The Italians, therefore, confronted a multifaceted and intricate reality. In these domains, the uniformity of administration and law had undergone a transformation over the course of centuries, leading to the establishment of a dual regime comprising a centralized core and a fragmented periphery, thereby engendering the hallmark forms of polycentric autarchy."

Prior to the Italian occupation, the administration of justice was entrusted to the conventional Ottoman judiciary and specialized religious judicial authorities.⁵⁹⁷ In the aftermath of the Italian occupation, the ecclesiastical courts were maintained, and matters of civil status remained under the jurisdiction of the various religious authorities for a considerable period of time. However, the Ottoman *Nizamiyah* courts (*Nizâmiye mahkemeleri*), which were the non-religious courts established in the nineteenth century and had recently become dysfunctional, were replaced by newly established Italian institutions. Initially, on the smaller islands, the *Demogerontias* maintained their role as courts. However, the establishment of new courts was necessary, particularly in Rhodes and Kos, where social activity was more pronounced. The absence of judges on these islands, with the exception of the religious courts, resulted in the perpetuation of legal disputes. In response to this situation, General Ameglio promulgated a series of decrees in June and August of 1912. These decrees not only regulated the administration of justice in Rhodes and the other islands but also abolished the temporary authority of the *Demogerontias*, thus establishing a new legal framework in the region. However, a controversy emerged concerning the nature of the courts established by the Italian Occupation Command. Initially,

⁵⁹⁵ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 34-35.

⁵⁹⁶ Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 66; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 92.

⁵⁹⁷ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 43, 45-46.

the debate centered on whether these courts were to be regarded as Italian or as successors to the Ottoman courts.⁵⁹⁸ Additionally, there was a question regarding their jurisdiction, specifically whether it was limited to cases involving Italian subjects. In reality, when Italy occupied the Dodecanese Islands, the function of the Ottoman secular courts had already ceased. Consequently, the new judicial bodies differed from the previous Ottoman courts in both their compositional structure and the jurisdiction they were assigned.

Despite the legislation in force in the *Possedimento* being derived from multiple sources, the fundamental principle was that Ottoman legislation continued to prevail in all matters not addressed by governorate decrees.⁵⁹⁹ These decrees were inextricably linked to previous regulations issued by military commanders during the occupation period and gradually formed the backbone of the legislative system. Furthermore, a Governmental Decree of September 1924 prevented the abrogation of military regulations at the conclusion of the state of war, thereby ensuring their uninterrupted continuity. In other words, the legal system of the Possession was, in essence, a manifestation of the Italian update to the extant legal system inherited from the Ottoman Empire. This update was a synthesis of the military regulations initially enacted by the occupation command and the decrees subsequently issued by the Italian governors. This signifies that the laws that were in force in the Possession until 1932 were largely the same as those in force under the Ottoman regime, with the exception of a few specific Italian colonial laws and regulations. It is evident that the Ottoman civil and commercial laws and procedures remained in force to a large extent, with updates and amendments introduced by governorate decrees as required by customary and judicial practices. Furthermore, in matters delegated to the jurisdiction of the specialized courts of the communities, the laws specific to each community were in force and applied. By way of illustration, these included Byzantine law for the Orthodox, Talmudic law for the Israelites and Sharia law for the Muslims. It is also noteworthy that metropolitan and foreign citizens were subject to this customized legal system, which was principally formulated for Aegean citizens, with the exception of matters pertaining to family and inheritance law.

Ameglio's first quarterly report observed that the islanders were pragmatic yet, regrettably, lacked decisiveness and a propensity for risk-taking.⁶⁰⁰ Furthermore, the accounts of Catholic missionaries depicted the Greeks as being regarded by the Italian authorities as hypocritical, untrustworthy, and mendacious. Notwithstanding the Greeks' self-characterization of the Italians as their long-lost "cousins," the Italians, for their part, depicted the Greeks as a "brutal Greek race" (*brutta razza greca*). Despite their profound affection for Greece, they were averse to Greek annexation, as they feared it would intensify their prevailing economic deprivation. Conversely, they were reluctant to revert to Turkish governance due to the apprehension of the clergy. Ameglio's observations highlighted that these populations, while desiring the protection

⁵⁹⁸ A notable instance involved a judicial decision by the *Demogerontia* of Kasos, which was contested by an Egyptian court due to its issuance under the name of King Victor Emmanuel of Italy. Given that the *Demogerontia* of Kasos was a judicial body that predated the Italian occupation and based its jurisdiction on ancient traditions, the Egyptian court's refusal was arguably justified. To forestall future incidents, General Ameglio introduced an impersonal formula and ordered the communal courts to rule "in the name of the law." However, the situation was quite distinct for the courts established by Italy, which were Italian judicial bodies and therefore expected to deliver justice in the name of the King of Italy. Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 46.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 43-44.

⁶⁰⁰ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 67; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 150.

of a single power and even the autonomy of the islands, had relinquished their fate to the judgment of a select group of bishops and uninterested dignitaries. Following centuries of Turkish subjugation, these populations had become incapable of governing themselves. Consequently, they had developed a fear of, rather than respect for, the authorities and a tendency to blindly obey the clergy. The clergy, who had longed and hoped for a secular government to free their Christian people from the rule of the Crescent, were now clearly in favor of the Italians. Ameglio's position was that populations which were susceptible to subjugation by more intelligent figures required a gentler and more decisive form of governance. He reasoned that it would not be difficult to dominate such populations, who demonstrated a lack of recognition and concern for governmental forms, both ideologically and organizationally. Ameglio posited that success could be achieved through the treatment of the Church with the utmost respect, and by satisfying the populations, who evaluated governments solely on the basis of the material prosperity they provided. As he quoted Venetoclís, a learned, honorable and charitable judge of Rhodes, even the mere granting of administrative autonomy would prove as detrimental to the islands as the Political Constitution of 1908 was to the Ottomans. According to Ameglio, several years of just and enlightened Italian rule were necessary before these peoples could take over municipal administration honestly and competently. This was due to the fact that these individuals had not yet attained the necessary level of capability, discipline and organization to ensure and maintain administrative unity.

Ameglio's initial hypothesis was that a relatively small proportion of the local Orthodox population genuinely aspired to the annexation with Greece.⁶⁰¹ This assumption was based on the fact that the vast majority feared the potential imposition of higher taxes and compulsory military service that might be introduced by the Greek administration. The prevailing perspective among the majority was that freedom was defined as the absence of these perceived burdens, rather than the acquisition of additional national rights. Any change in this direction was therefore likely to be met with resistance among the islands, which were accustomed to autonomy and tax exemptions. Consequently, the transformation that the Italians sought to effect within the Ottoman administration in Rhodes had to be realized in a gradual and cautious manner, without causing undue alarm to the islanders. To this end, the Italian administrators initially confined themselves to the collection of the extant taxes that they had inherited, and the maintenance of public order. The measures undertaken by the new military government had to be aligned with the extant system, rather than causing its disruption. The Italian vision, predicated on the desire to ensure a seamless transition, necessitated the implementation of measures that were intended to be provisional, rather than indicative of a broader agenda for political reform. In order to avoid provoking discontent among taxpayers, revenues were allocated to the financing of public services and direct taxes to the development of local industry.

This approach was grounded in the *Guardia di Finanza*'s established practice of an integrated economic and fiscal policy, operating in close collaboration with the military command.⁶⁰² This integrated plan sought to modernize local infrastructure, stimulate production and trade, and impose strict regulations on agricultural production. Notwithstanding, the archipelago demonstrated a pervasive degree of underdevelopment in the domains of production, economy

⁶⁰¹ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 38-39.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 39-40.

and trade, which was characterized by an absence of infrastructure and organization. This inherited absence of institutional infrastructure, coupled with the profound ethno-religious divisions among the local populace, rendered the implementation of an effective fiscal policy unfeasible. Consequently, it proved to be a highly chaotic process for a foreign power to consolidate the complex, contradictory and rarely codified laws and customs of communities that had traditionally enjoyed cultural and judicial autonomy for centuries. Ameglio was aware of the potential advantages that an effective tax and customs system would offer to a provisional military government. Nevertheless, the primary challenge lay in the necessity to do so without compromising centuries-old traditions. The challenge, therefore, was to devise reforms that would simplify the complex Turkish system without violating existing traditional privileges. This necessitated a delicate balancing act, as Ameglio was tasked with addressing the financial imperatives of the government while also preserving the privileges and exemptions that were held in such high esteem by the local leaders.

The prevailing effect of the archipelago's long-standing social autonomy, despite its persistent flaws, rendered the alteration of the prevailing system during the period of occupation both unfavorable and risky.⁶⁰³ Under Italian rule, the inhabitants of the islands were exempted from direct taxes other than the *Maktû*, a combined tax package consisting of three basic and fixed taxes on land, buildings and agricultural products. This neutral approach was particularly well-received by the Muslim and Jewish merchant communities, leading to the Italian fiscal authorities becoming the focal point of their attention and appreciation. Cecini underscores that, despite its political unpopularity, the occupation actually stimulated numerous benefits in the islands, including economic development and job creation. He also acknowledges that this episodic phenomenon was driven by utilitarian and pragmatic needs. The initial scope of the measures was limited to the maintenance of internal duty-free trade between the designated islands, the regulation of the tobacco monopoly, and the registration of all boats in the archipelago. However, this scope underwent a gradual expansion, resulting in the reorganization of the tax authorities on all islands and the introduction of significant new taxes and customs duties.

Notwithstanding the pervasive local opposition, Ameglio and his successors persisted in the collection of taxes through the Italian Financial Police (*Guardia di Finanza*).⁶⁰⁴ They implemented a plethora of regulations to maintain the pre-existing framework, stabilize the administration, and assure Europe of Italy's adherence to international treaties. Nonetheless, the prospect of the archipelago's return to Istanbul prompted the Hellenic demarches to favor Athens over Rome, consequently engendering a hostile international environment for the Italian occupiers. This environment was further compounded by a determined Hellenic nationalist minority that was advocating strongly for autonomy. Ameglio's approach of quelling the resistance without creating victims or martyrs may have appeared lenient, yet the escalating rate of illegal arms and ammunition trafficking from Piraeus was indicative of unrest rather than peace. Fueled by ethnoreligious tensions and targeted media campaigns denouncing Italians, this resentment was exacerbated by Greece's exclusion from decision-making processes concerning the islands as stipulated by the Treaty of Lausanne. This rapidly led to an escalation in regional unrest. The initiative, chiefly instigated by mainland Greeks, comprised poorly

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 39-42.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 36-37.

organized socio-economic elites seeking to preserve their economic privileges. The campaign engendered confusion rather than fostering anti-Italian sentiment in the Dodecanese region. Furthermore, the Dodecanese, particularly Rhodes, never fully endorsed such an irredentist movement, which was directly aligned with proposals put forward by Athens.

From the 1920s onwards, while the Italians endeavored to create a new sphere of influence in post-Ottoman Anatolia by introducing wartime capitulations, they concurrently pursued a strategy of ethno-religious liberalization in the Dodecanese.⁶⁰⁵ By 1920, the Italian civil administration had implemented a broad autonomy in order to prevent the uncertainty that fueled tensions and to preserve the status quo of the islands' communities. This concessionary administration was characterized by limited interference in churches and communities, thereby maintaining the individual status of the inhabitants. However, the ongoing involvement of Aegean volunteers in the Greek army during the Greco-Turkish War led to a rise in Greek irredentism, with the Orthodox church becoming a target of claims and pressure. Consequently, the Governor of Rhodes, Alessandro De Bosdari, who had previously adopted a moderate stance, exiled and confined the Metropolitan and other high-ranking clergy members in 1921, effectively stifling an important voice of the local community.⁶⁰⁶ The subsequent 14-year tenure of the new Governor Mario Lago, who was appointed by Mussolini in 1922, witnessed an endeavor to transform the Church of Rhodes into an autonomous archbishopric.⁶⁰⁷ This archbishopric was to bring together all Dodecanese Metropolitans under a single entity, independent of Greece. This move by the Italians was part of a broader strategy to establish an independent Dodecanese Church, thereby creating a new and separate political entity within the Orthodox community of the archipelago. The use of the Patriarchal Seal was a symbolic gesture that would legitimize the Italians' sphere of influence in the Aegean region. The Italian authorities were acutely aware that the primary bond between the Church of Rhodes and Greece was the financial support and donations that underwrote the maintenance of Greek schools on the islands. In response, the Italian authorities proposed to assume responsibility for funding the Church. However, the Orthodox community found such a significant encroachment into the spiritual sphere intolerable and perceived the situation as a potential attempt by the Italians to monopolize the spiritual lives of the Dodecanese community.

6.2.1. A Retrospective Look at the Aegean Capitulations in the Hellenic Context

A congress that took place on 4 June 1912 on the island of Patmos and was attended by 10 delegates representing islands other than Leipsoi and Astypalaia is of great importance at this point.⁶⁰⁸ The convention is known as the Congress of Patmos in Dodecanese history and

⁶⁰⁵ Luca Castiglioni, "No More Greeks: Contrasting Identities in the Italian Dodecanese," in *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, eds. Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli (New York: Routledge, 2022), 204, 205.

⁶⁰⁶ De Bosdari served as Governor of Rhodes from 17 August 1921 to 15 November 1922.

⁶⁰⁷ Lago's tenure as Governor of Rhodes spanned a very long period between 16 November 1922 and 27 November 1936.

⁶⁰⁸ The date of the congress is documented differently in various archival sources. Ottoman archival documents indicate June 4, Hayta's article indicates June 3, and the Istanbul-based *İktiham* newspaper indicates June 16. Necdet Hayta, "Rodos ile 12 Ada'nın İtalyanlar Tarafından İşgali ve İşgalden Sonra Adaların Durumu (1912-1918)," *OTAM Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma Ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 5, no.5 (Haziran 1994): 131-44, https://doi.org/10.1501/OTAM_0000000208; Eminalp Malkoç,

Hellenic literature. The coordination of the event was overseen by Ion Dragoumis, Director of the Eastern Bureau of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the chairmanship was undertaken by Liatis, the Greek Consul of Rhodes. The delegates concluded their meeting with the proclamation of a ten-point resolution, expressing their profound gratitude to the Italian nation, its monarch, and its government. The text, drawing inspiration from Hellenism and exhibiting characteristics of a nationalist manifesto, asserted the complete autonomy of the islands and declared the establishment of an independent state designated as the Government of the Mediterranean Islands.⁶⁰⁹ In accordance with the aforementioned resolutions, a flag featuring a white cross on a blue cloth was officially adopted and hoisted, and stamps inscribed with the words “Aegean State” were issued. The text declared a profound and long-standing commitment to Greek nationalism, stating that the decision for autonomy was based on the reassuring statements made by General Ameglio and the firm support of the Italian navy. However, General Ameglio promptly dissolved the congress, detained some delegates, prohibited such gatherings and issued serious warnings to the mayors of the islands. Immediately afterwards, measures were implemented to prevent social mobilization, including the prohibition of gatherings of 10 or more individuals in a single location for the purpose of communication. Furthermore, the disembarkations of individuals from other islands were to be restricted, and the closing hours of public establishments such as restaurants and cafes were to be moved earlier. In addition, Ameglio would explain that the meeting had been planned and orchestrated meticulously and entirely in Athens. The stamps had been printed in Corfu on behalf of the Greek Foreign Ministry and were distributed by the Hellenic Viceconsul in Rhodes. It is evident that the pro-Hellenic faction in Dodecanese had advocated for autonomy before annexation as the way to reunification with mainland Greece, but they had failed in the face of Ameglio’s hardline stance.

The Patmos Congress represents the first and foremost attempt to revive the panhellenic irredentism in the Dodecanese following the Italian occupation. Nevertheless, as General Ameglio repeatedly noted in his reports, the ideology and operation of this movement were entirely guided and promoted by Athens. The core of this movement was constituted by the Permanent Committee established in Athens and Piraeus on behalf of the Christian inhabitants of the Archipelago Province.⁶¹⁰ *Commission Permanente des Associations des Insulaires Irrédimés de l'Archipel à Athènes et au Pirée* (Permanent Committee of the Associations of the Unredeemed Islanders of the Aegean Archipelago Based in Athens and Piraeus) was established to protect the privileges, immunity and independence of the islanders and to provide international defense of the cause. On 22 June 1912, the organization submitted a “memorandum” (*muhtıra*) to the ambassadors of the signatory states to the Treaties of Paris in 1856 and Berlin in 1878. The memorandum glorified King Victor Emmanuel, a member of the House of Savoy, remarked on the Italian government’s commitment to liberalism while praising the conduct of the Italian navy throughout the occupation. The declaration characterized the *ab*

“İtalyanların Trablusgarp Savaşı Sırasında Oniki Ada’yı İşgallerinin Türk Basınındaki Yankısı: İkdâm ve Şehbâl Örnekleri,” *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 16, no. 31, (Bahar 2020): 79-117; Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 68-69; HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 1-2, 17 October 1912. From Turhan Pasha, Ottoman Ambassador to Saint Petersburg to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sublime Porte.

⁶⁰⁹ In Pignataro’s work, this autonomous entity is referred to as *Stato Egeo*, the Aegean State. Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 68.

⁶¹⁰ COA, HR.SYS.2910/145, 22 June 1912. SERVICE D'INFORMATIONS No :1660, Commission Permanente des Associations des Insulaires Irrédimés de l'Archipel à Athènes et au Pirée. Le 22 Juin 1912.

antiquo privileges and immunities previously enjoyed by the Aegean Islands as “complete autonomy” under the nominal sovereignty of the former sultans. However, in the years following the Cretan Revolt of 1866, Sublime Porte allegedly pursued a systematic and determined policy of assimilation against the islands, adopting repressive measures and severely restricting their autonomy. Nevertheless, the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 (*Kanûn-ı Esâsî*) and the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 both reaffirmed the legitimacy of these autonomies and extended their scope. The ultimate objective of the irredentist declaration, predicated on meticulous diplomatic analysis, was to incorporate a specific article stipulating the future regime of the islands in the peace treaty that was to be signed.⁶¹¹ The scope and content of this article had to be in full accordance with the liberal principles of Italy and the fairness of Christian Europe.

The primary concept of the memorandum was predicated upon Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin, which referred to the model of autonomy on the island of Crete and adopted it as a benchmark for other European provinces.⁶¹² Indeed, the article in question stipulated the obligation of the Ottoman Empire to implement the Cretan Organic Law of 1868 (*Girit Vilâyet Nizamnâmesi*) in all European provinces, as was applied to the island of Crete. In accordance with this article, the Sublime Porte was required to establish special commissions comprising a wide representation of native elements, with the aim of ensuring legal and administrative localization by identifying local needs. However, the memorandum asserted that the Ottoman government has until now circumvented this obligatory clause, leaving the Aegean islands under an intolerable administration. Nevertheless, the populations of the archipelago, who had been patiently awaiting justice since the conclusion of the Greek War of Independence in the 1830s, had acted prudently and had not revolted like some other provinces. The memorandum, however, also suggested that this prudence had been misinterpreted by the great powers. According to this interpretation, the Aegean Islands, having refrained from disrupting the established order, were judged by default at the Berlin Congress and abandoned to their fate on the international stage. Nevertheless, the Permanent Committee placed its trust in the ancient and inviolable rights of the Greek race to the Aegean islands and in the common and unshakable will of the inhabitants of all the islands in favor of Hellenic identity. In this regard, the Permanent Committee appealed to “the glorious traditions of Italy, the valiant sister of Greece, and to the fairness of the other European powers.”

⁶¹¹ The term peace treaty here refers to the Treaty of Ouchy, which was to be signed four months later, in October 1912.

⁶¹² COA, HR.SYS.2910/145, 22 June 1912. Article XXIII: The Sublime Porte undertakes scrupulously to apply in the Island of Crete the Organic Law of 1868 with such modifications as may be considered equitable. Similar laws adapted to local requirements, excepting as regards the exemption from taxation granted to Crete, shall also be introduced into the other parts of Turkey in Europe for which no special organization has been provided by the present treaty. The Sublime Porte shall depute special commissions, in which the native element shall be largely represented, to settle the details of the new laws in each province. The schemes of organization resulting from these labors shall be submitted for examination to the Sublime Porte, which, before promulgating the Acts for putting them into force, shall consult the European Commission instituted for Eastern Roumelia. “Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878.” *American Journal of International Law* 2, no. S4 (October 1, 1908): 401–424, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2212670>.

S E R V I C E D' I N F O R M A T I O N S .
N° 1680

Commission Permanente
des
Associations des Insulaires
Irrédimés de l'Archipel à
Athènes et au Pirée. Le 22 Juin 1912

Ainsi qu'elle a eu l'honneur de vous l'annoncer dans son premier mémoire en date du 25/7 Juin, la nombreuse colonie d'insulaires irrédimés de l'Archipel établis à Athènes et au Pirée vous soumet aujourd'hui un exposé sur les privilèges et immunités dont jouissait ab antiquo les îles Egéennes. Mais, avant d'aller plus loin, interprète fidèle des sentiments et des vœux des populations de ces îles purement grecques, elle prie Votre Excellence de transmettre à S.M. le Roi Victor Emmanuel, continuateur des glorieuses traditions de la Maison de Savoie, au Gouvernement Royal, qui maintient haut les principes libéraux de l'Italie, leur reconnaissance profonde pour les déclarations et la conduite de la flotte et de l'armée italienne lors de l'occupation et après l'occupation des îles. - Ces déclarations cette attitude, nous inspirent la conviction que nous devons dès à présent attirer l'attention et la sollicitude de l'Italie sur le sort qui sera fait aux îles Egéennes après la cessation des hostilités, afin que, dans le traité de paix, une clause spéciale soit inscrite réglant conformément aux principes libéraux de l'Italie et à l'équité de la chrétienne Europe, le régime futur des îles. - Aux îles irrédimées de l'Archipel, exclusivement peuplées d'Hellènes depuis la plus haute antiquité, le Conquérant avait reconnu de vastes privilèges; aux unes, comme la Dodécannèse et Chios, pleine autonomie administrative; aux autres l'autonomie municipale des communautés helléniques. Ces privilèges étaient si larges, si étendus, que sous la souveraineté nominale des Sultans, l'autonomie était complète. - A maintes reprises l'Europe a proclamé la légalité du régime autonome des îles. Après la proclamation en 1876 de la Constitution Ottomane, elle lui a au Congrès de Berlin donné une sanction solennelle. Par l'art. 23 du traité de Berlin, elle a forcé la Turquie à doter toutes ses provinces européennes de réglemens analogues au réglemen organique de 1888 de l'île de Crète, c'est-à-dire au régime découlant du pacte de Halépa qui fut pour la première fois appliqué dans la plus grande île du groupe égéen dont nous faisons nous même partie. Ces réglemens toutefois devaient s'adapter aux besoins locaux. Et afin qu'il ne pût s'y glisser la moindre disposition contraire à ces besoins et aux conditions ethniques de chaque province, l'art. 23 stipula que les réglemens seraient élaborés par des commissions spéciales, au sein desquelles l'élément indigène se trouverait largement représenté, et que la Porte à laquelle serait soumis les projets d'organisation, ne pourrait promulguer les actes destinés à les mettre en vigueur sans prendre l'avis d'une commission européenne. - Cette clause impérative du traité de Berlin le Gouvernement Ottoman a réussi jusqu'à présent à l'éluder complètement. Les îles de l'Egée elles-mêmes ont été abandonnées à une intolérable administration. - Cependant il y a un demi-siècle à peine, l'autonomie administrative que la Porte vient d'octroyer aux Musulmans de l'Yémen et à certains districts de l'Albanie, existait encore, pour des raisons fort naturelles, dans toutes les communautés grecques de l'Empire Ottoman, plus large dans les îles de l'Egée, plus large encore dans les Sporades orientales. Ce n'est qu'en 1866 que

مجلس ايرانيه ضد اهل افرستانية سي نامه آنه در بيه ده تشكيل قومي سيور در انكي طرفه ده اولره دئي
مايس ذر ليه معااهده نامه لر تيره واضع الامضاء دندرك آنه ده قديم سفراسنه تود بوي ايرانيه ايراني
قوتوره ننه صورت در

H2, 525 2910/145

HR.SYS.02910.00145.001

Archival Image 20: First page of the memorandum issued by the Permanent Committee on 22 June 1912.

At the conclusion of the declaration, the Permanent Committee presented the following demands to the European powers, with particular reference to Italy.⁶¹³ Primarily, reparation was to be paid to the Aegean Islands, which had been unjustly disregarded following the Battle of Navarin in 1827 and separated from their homeland, Greece. In case it was deemed that this demand would jeopardize the peace of Europe, the Aegeans were ready to accept this new injustice with regret. Nevertheless, the Permanent Committee subsequently advanced an alternative proposal in the remainder of the paragraph. This entailed a request for Italy and the other European Powers to formally recognize the full independence and autonomy of the Aegean Islands through the legal framework of an international federation. In case they were called upon to justify their claim before Europe, the Permanent Committee also expressed its readiness and willingness to resolve the question of the islands through a plebiscite. This plebiscite would serve as a compelling evidence that these islands had belonged to the Greek State, with which they had been united for centuries by a common language, religion, customs, traditions, civilization and the same Hellenic aspirations. The final paragraph, which was a glorification of the Italians against the Turks, was written in a very poetic rhetoric. It articulated the profound sense of liberty that the Italian victory had instilled within them, and the invigorating and enchanting breath of that sense. This sentiment of freedom, which the Italian laurels had instilled in them, had become so deeply ingrained that the prospect of returning to the yoke of Turkish rule was no longer even a possibility.

As will be demonstrated in the subsequent section, the campaign of Greek irredentism, inspired by Panhellenism and fueled by the Patmos Congress and the Athens-based committees, would disseminate rapidly and fervently through the Greek press. A booklet published in 1912 under the sponsorship of the *Messenger d'Athènes*, the semi-official organ of the Greek Government, engendered a period of heightened diplomatic engagement between the Italian and Ottoman authorities.⁶¹⁴ The booklet, entitled *Les Iles de l'Egée, Leurs privilèges, Avec documents et notes statistiques* (The Aegean Islands, Their Privileges, With Documents and Statistical Notes) and written by Jeanne Z. Stéphanopoli, editor-in-chief of the newspaper, elaborated, justified and endorsed the decisions of the Patmos Congress of 4 June.⁶¹⁵ The booklet also contained many unfortunate slanders, falsehoods and falsifications regarding the practices and capitulations of the previous Ottoman regime. These issues quickly attracted the attention of the Ottoman authorities, thus prompting them to take the necessary measures. For instance, in October 1912, Turhan Pasha, the Ottoman ambassador to Saint Petersburg, had ordered the publication of a 57-page “refutation” (*reddiye*) in an attempt to disprove the claims made in Stéphanopoli’s pamphlet.⁶¹⁶ The title of the refutation was *La Vérité Sur Les "Iles De La Mer Egée et Leurs Privilèges"* (The Truth About the Aegean Islands and Their Privileges), and the identity of the author was concealed on the cover, with the anonymous attribution *par un Ottoman* (by an Ottoman). Turhan Pasha appended 20 copies of the publication to a telegram addressed to Gabriel Noradunkyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and provided a prospectus containing the

⁶¹³ COA, HR.SYS.2910/145, 22 June 1912.

⁶¹⁴ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 1-2, 17 October 1912. From Turhan Pasha, Ottoman Ambassador to Saint Petersburg to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sublime Porte.

⁶¹⁵ Jeanne Z. Stéphanopoli [Rédacteur en chef du *Messenger d'Athènes*], *Les Iles de l'Egée, Leurs privilèges, Avec documents et notes statistiques* (Athènes: Imprimerie Th. Apostolopoulos, 1912).

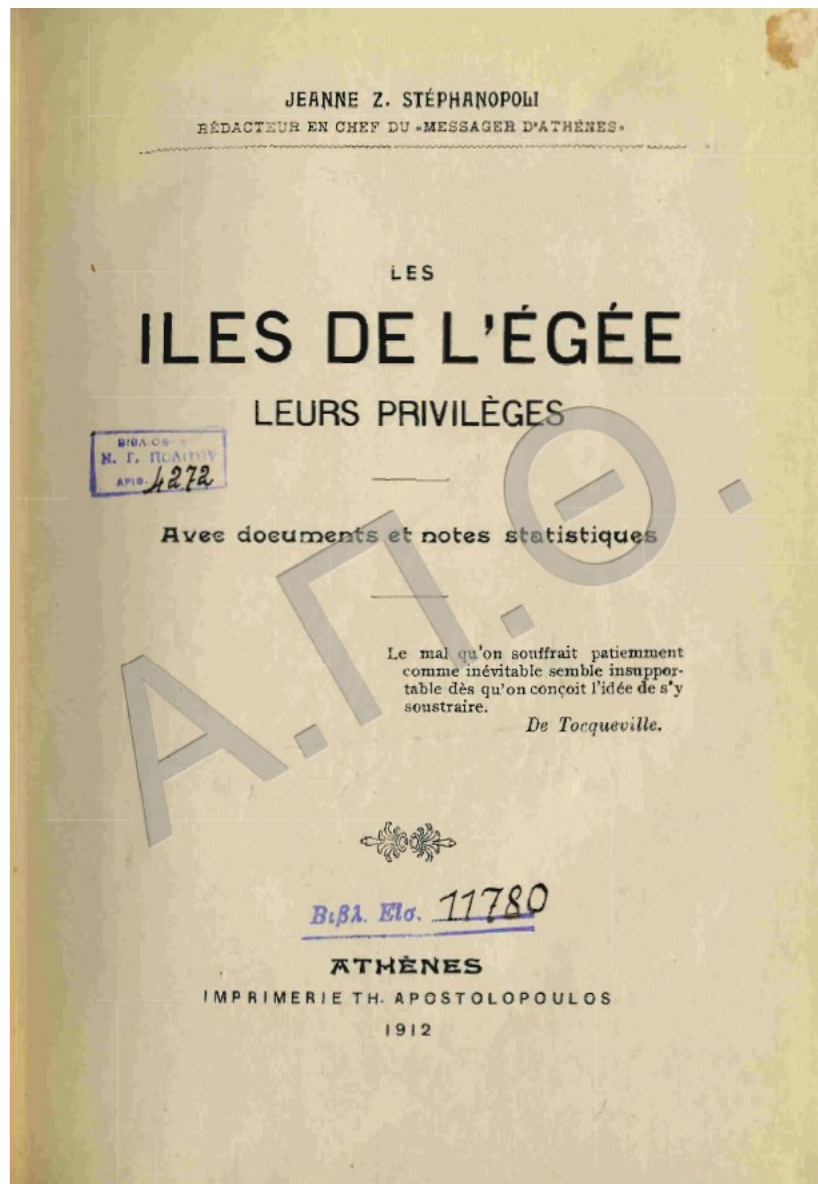
⁶¹⁶ As both publications are in booklet format, there is a possibility of confusion when referring to them in the narrative. For this reason, Stéphanopoli’s work will henceforth be referred to as the “booklet,” and Turhan Pasha’s as the “refutation” or “rebuttal.”

reasons for its publication and its areas of usage. It was anticipated that this rebuttal would furnish the minister with the arguments he would require in diplomatic discussions on major platforms, in government circles abroad, and in the international press. Furthermore, some copies of the publication were to be sent to major European newspapers, while others were to be offered for sale in Istanbul for a modest fee. The Ottoman diplomatic authorities were to carefully monitor any favorable or unfavorable reaction, comment or endorsement that the publication might receive.

The refutation published by Turhan Pasha primarily targeted the Greek irredentists, who were united around the concept of the “unredeemed” (*les irrédimés*) and were the driving force behind Stéphanopoli’s work.⁶¹⁷ The publication employed a rhetorical characterization of the members of this political milieu as opportunists and intriguers, accusing them of creating an entirely artificial agenda over the Sporades.⁶¹⁸ It accused them of distorting facts about Islam and the Turks to serve their agenda, of manipulating history according to their ideological preferences, and of inciting racial and religious animosity among their readers, as well as of falsifying official documents to achieve these objectives. The extensive research provides detailed rebuttals to all the arguments presented by Stéphanopoli in her propagandist release. It offers historical and legal analyses, references the wills and edicts of previous sultans, and presents an antithesis based on law and documents. The work brought a retrospective questioning to the historical background of Hellenic nationalism and claimed that approaching the Sporades problem exclusively with romantic nationalism was a Greek fallacy. The great powers, in their pursuit of safeguarding the strategic balance in the Mediterranean and the broader interests underlying this region, would never have endorsed such an impractical course of action. A similar scenario had transpired in the past with the islands of Chios, Crete and Cyprus, where the great powers demonstrated their reluctance to recognize Greece’s naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, even when it came to the territorial gains, they had acquired from the Ottomans. In the context of the Sporades, the same expectations were now extended to Italy, and naturally, the country would not consent to the annexation of its Aegean colony to Greece.

⁶¹⁷ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les "Iles De La Mer Egée et Leurs Privilèges"* (Constantinople: Imp. A. Zellich fils, 1912), 3-6, 8-11.

⁶¹⁸ It is noteworthy that both of these publications employ the term “Sporades” rather than “Dodecanese” in their reference to the archipelago.



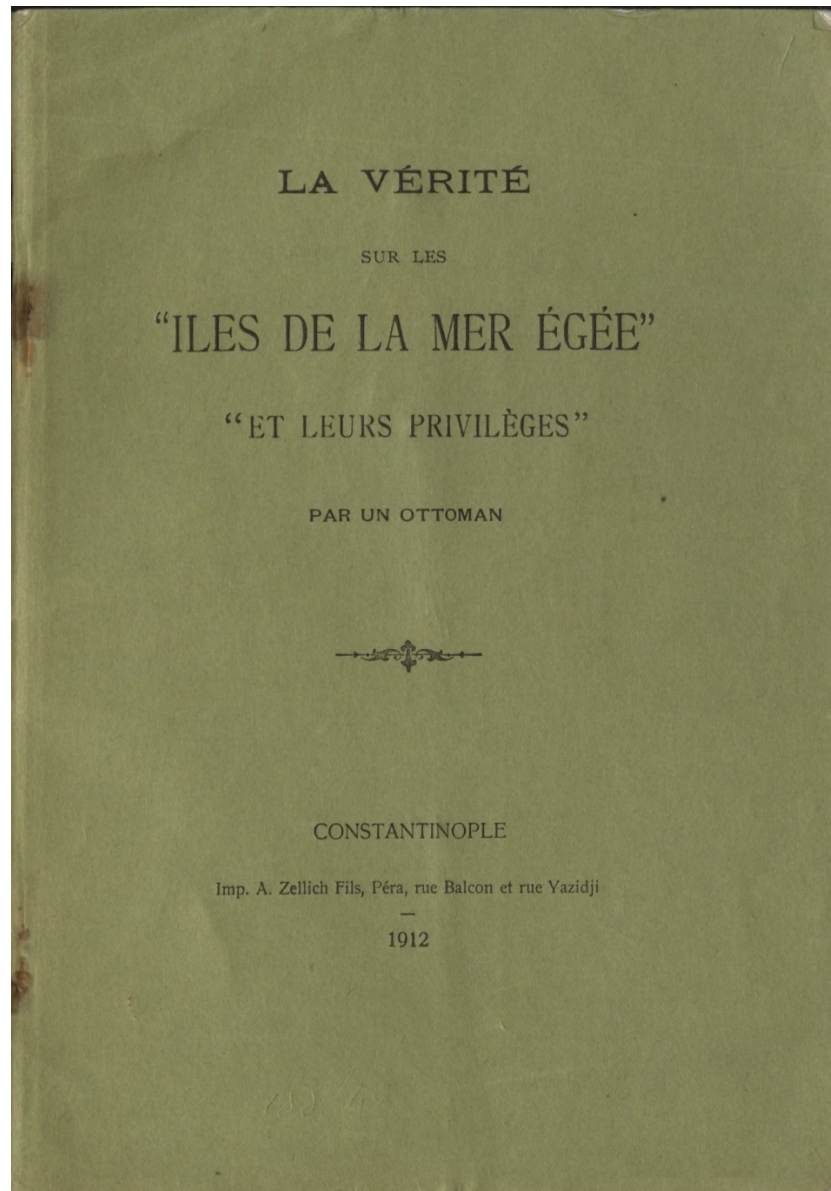
Book Image 3: The front page of Stéphanopoli's booklet.⁶¹⁹

In line with this, Stéphanopoli herself anticipates that this fundamental argument for annexation will be rejected by both Italy and the other European powers.⁶²⁰ Therefore, in the remainder of the text, she advances an alternative argument based on Ottoman capitulations. She contends that since the Ottoman conquest in 1522, the Aegean islands have enjoyed a distinct regime with complete administrative, judicial and financial autonomy, as stipulated by “imperial edicts” (*Firman/Ferman*). According to the author, this had led to the establishment of a quasi-vassal republic under the Sultan's suzerainty, and this secular regime had subsequently been recognized by the prevailing international law. However, the Ottoman rebuttal asserts that Stéphanopoli's primary objective in this discourse was not to garner international public opinion

⁶¹⁹ To view the entire booklet: Ioannis Z. Stefanopoulos [Ιωάννης Ζ. Στεφανόπουλος], “Les îles de l' Egée : leurs privilèges : avec documents et notes statistiques Jeanne Z. Stephanopoli,” *Psifiothiki AUth Digital Collections*, last modified May 2, 2014, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/115905/?ln=en>.

⁶²⁰ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 12.

for the annexation of the islands to Greece. Instead, it was her intention to draw the attention of foreign powers to the imperative of preserving the *status quo ante*. In this sense, the author's objective was to provoke the intervention of the major global powers by highlighting Sublime Porte's recent inclination to restrict or even abolish capitulations. To support her thesis, she referred to the major international treaties concerning capitulations and provided translations of the imperial edicts issued by the Sultans, along with the Ottoman official acts from which these privileges were derived.



Book Image 4: Cover page of the refutation published by the Ottoman government to disprove Stéphanopoli's claims.⁶²¹

The Sublime Porte did not deny the fiscal privileges granted to the islanders by the Ottoman rulers, especially with regard to taxes; however, it emphasized that these privileges did not

⁶²¹ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*.

extend to the rate and scope claimed by Stéphanopoli.⁶²² Furthermore, the refutation by Turhan Pasha categorically denied the existence of any Ottoman law or act that conferred any special administrative, legislative or judicial regime on the Sporades. The first Imperial Capitulation Charter (*Ahidnâme-i Hümâyûn*), issued by Suleiman the Magnificent (*Kanûnî Sultan Süleyman*) following his conquest of Rhodes in 1522, served as the foundation and nucleus of the capitulations in the archipelago. The edicts promulgated by Suleiman's successors, Mehmet IV, Ahmed III, Osman III, Abdülhamid I and Mahmud II, served to interpret or confirm the principles established in the *ahidnâme*, while remaining consistent with its original tenets. These edicts were chiefly concerned with preserving the status quo in the face of the arbitrary and illegal taxation, financial exploitation and administrative abuses that had been prevalent in the islands during the period of Ottoman rule. Furthermore, the contents of the edicts refuted the claims made in Stéphanopoli's booklet that the islanders enjoyed full judicial autonomy.

For instance, a *Firman* issued by Sultan Osman II in mid-1755 to the Qadi of Rhodes and the Deputy Qadi (*Nâib*) of Kos offers a valuable case study in the accurate realization of these facts.⁶²³ The edict stipulated that the punishment of an island subject who committed an offence should be carried out in the place and under the conditions determined by the authorities appointed by the Ottoman government. This indicates that the execution of a sentence was contingent upon the pronouncement of a judgement by the *Kadı* and the issuance of a "Documentary Proof of the Sharia" (*Hujjat al-Sharia /Hüccet-i Şeriyye*) by the same judicial authority. Furthermore, the same stipulation emphasizes that the location of execution could be outside the islands, as long as it was under Ottoman jurisdiction. Secondly, the document implied that a considerable number of Turkish civilian and military officials at both high and low levels could come and go to the islands at certain times and even reside there for specific periods. In other words, contrary to the claims made by the Hellenic media organ, a legal conjuncture completely free from the supervision and control of the Ottoman central authorities never flourished in the islands. Thirdly, and finally, yes, the act in question did contain the phrase "The aforementioned islands, paying the flat-rate tax, are free in every respect," as Stéphanopoli also noted.⁶²⁴ This phrase was intended to prevent any infringement of the liberties of the islanders, who were referred to as "subjects of pious foundations" (*evkaf reâyâsı*), in contravention of Ottoman law, authorities and registries. However, according to the wording of Ottoman law at the time and the style of financial management at the time, the term "liberty" did not describe a civil, political or judicial freedom, as Stéphanopoli implies. There is no doubt that what the Greek author interprets as "freedom to administer oneself as one wishes" actually means "exemption from any other, subsequent or additional pecuniary taxation."

The Ottoman refutation also exposed the blatant falsifications perpetrated by the Hellenic press in the translations of the edicts.⁶²⁵ The most recent and most significant of these was Sultan Mahmud II's *Firman* of 8 September 1835, addressed to the Governor of Rhodes, Şükrü Pasha, confirming the privileges of the four Sporades islands. The translation by Stéphanopoli suggested that the inhabitants of the islands were to be free to act as they wished and to maintain

⁶²² COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 13-15.

⁶²³ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 15-17.

⁶²⁴ "Les îles susdites, payant l'impôt à forfait, sont libres à tous les points de vue." Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 16.

⁶²⁵ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 17-20.

their customs and traditions. Moreover, it explicitly and categorically rejected any interference by the Ottoman Governor in the affairs of these subjects. However, the authors of the Ottoman refutation considered such an imperial order to be strange and incompatible with previous edicts. This was due to the fact that such a clause did not align with the role and profile that the previous edicts had assigned to the Governors and Kadis of Rhodes. Therefore, the authors located the Turkish original of the edict in the Ottoman archives and determined that the translation was not only not faithful to the original, but also completely distorted the meaning of the text and produced an order that was diametrically opposed to that of the Sultan. The following English translations of the aforementioned edict are provided in order to illustrate the extent to which the text has been distorted:

Original Edict in Ottoman Turkish

وڪند ولرك دخى (اطه ليلرك) محافظه سى اسبابى كذلك ردوس متصرفلى طر فلرندن استحصال اولنوب
بونلرك واقع اوله جق امور و خصوصلى دخى انلرك رأى و معرفتلىله تسويه واستكمال اولنمق شرطيله ايچلرندن صداقتكار و رضاي جوى
برى و كالتله ردوس جزيره سنه كوندريلوب اوراده اقامت ايندير لمك اوزره نظامه ربطى خصوصنه اراده سنیه ملوكانهم تعليله⁶²⁶

Exact Translation

I also order that, provided that the affairs concerning the inhabitants of these islands are regulated and perfected by the Mutasarrifs of Rhodes, these islanders be authorized by law to choose a delegate from among themselves, a faithful and compliant man, and send him to Rhodes to hold residence there.⁶²⁷

Translation Reproduced in Stéphanopoli's Booklet

I also order that neither the authorities of Rhodes, nor anyone else, have the right to intervene in their criminal and private affairs; but that any criminal and private affairs that may arise shall be settled according to their opinion and their will (!) and according to local customs. At the same time, they shall send representatives of their own choosing to Rhodes, faithful and good men, to defend their affairs.⁶²⁸

The Ottoman rebuttal exposes further inaccuracies in the translation of Mahmud II's edict, thereby demonstrating the fictitious nature of the claim that the *Mutasarrif* was prohibited from interfering in the affairs of the islands.⁶²⁹ Thus, it becomes evident that the administrative and judicial autonomy claimed by the Panhellenic committees in favor of the Sporades was based entirely on manipulation rather than on any authentic documents. The publication also clearly

⁶²⁶ For a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the subject, the original texts of the edicts in Ottoman Turkish, their exact translations in French, and Stéphanopoli's falsified versions are all provided in the Turhan Pasha's refutation. The translation of the text from the Ottoman into Modern Turkish is as follows: "Ve kendülerin dahi (Adalıların) muhâfazası esbâbı kezâlik Rodos Mutasarrıfları taraflarından istihsâl olunub bunları vâki olacak umûr ve hususları dahi onların re'y ve mârifetleriyle tesviye ve istikmâl olunmak şartıyla içlerinden sadâkatkâr ve rızâ-cû biri vekâletle Rodos cezîresine gönderilüb orada ikamet ettirilmek üzere nizâma rabtî husûsuna irâde-i seniyye-i mülûkânem tâlikiyle..."

⁶²⁷ Exact Translation in French: "J'ordonne aussi, qu'à la condition que les affaires concernant les habitants de ces îles soient réglées et parfaites par les Mutessarifs de Rhodes, ces insulaires soient autorisés par une loi à choisir entre eux un délégué, homme fidèle et complaisant, et l'envoyer à Rhodes pour y tenir résidence."

⁶²⁸ Translation Reproduced in Stéphanopoli's Memorandum: "J'ordonne également que ni les autorités de Rhodes, ni personne autre n'auront droit d'intervenir dans leurs affaires criminelles et privées ; mais que les affaires criminelles et privées qui pourraient surgir seront réglées selon leur opinion et leur gré (!) et selon les coutumes locales. En même temps ils enverront à Rhodes des représentants choisis par eux-mêmes, des hommes fidèles et bons, pour défendre leurs affaires."

⁶²⁹ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 20-27.

delineated the origin and extent of the special regime enjoyed by the group of islands from the Ottoman conquest to the present day. According to the authors, the decree issued by Sultan Suleiman in favor of the “Twelve Sporades” after the conquest of Rhodes was entirely concerned with the method of tax collection. This decree merely granted the inhabitants the right to apportion and collect taxes among themselves, independent of Ottoman tax officials. Subsequent edicts were regarded merely as regulations in accordance with contemporary needs, the principles of modern public life, and the evolution of the welfare state. In other words, the Ottoman government opted for a flat-rate tax policy in the subsequent period rather than leaving these islands, which were far from direct control, to the mercy of local “tax farmers” (*mültezim*). This approach enabled strict control of irregularities and violations in tax collection and gradual modernization and centralization of the system. For instance, a specific form of property tax, levied through a cadastral survey instead of the “tithe” (*öşür*), was now directly collected by tax officials on the larger islands.

A thorough and detailed examination of the edicts reveals that the islanders were not granted full or partial autonomy in terms of internal administration or the dispensation of justice.⁶³⁰ However, as in other regions of the empire, the *Demogerontia*, a type of “Council of Elders” or “Assembly of Non-Muslim Communities” elected by the populace, possessed a mandate that extended far beyond religious affairs. In addition to apportioning taxes amongst taxpayers, these institutions also fulfilled the functions of municipality, notary, magistrate and cadastral agent. In other words, these institutions, which were initially established for ecclesiastic and spiritual purposes, transformed into hybrid structures equipped with civil and administrative powers. In this process, the Ottoman administrators in Rhodes saw no harm in the *Demogerontias* assuming these functions. Contrary to this, the Ottomans adopted a policy of tacit acceptance of the gradual monopolization of regional administrative powers by these structures. Given the limited size and insignificance of their areas of operation, the Ottoman government deemed it more practical and economical to equip the *Demogerontias* with various powers than to appoint numerous officials from the center.

However, as the financial, administrative, judicial, political and strategic circumstances of the following centuries changed, the Ottoman governments began to reconsider these privileges.⁶³¹ The refutation emphasized that, even assuming that the former Ottoman sultans had granted all kinds of favors and privileges to the islands in previous centuries, their successors always retained the right to change them. The question was then raised: were states not independent in internal matters concerning their territorial sovereignty and their subjects? According to Stéphanopoli’s polemical booklet, the legal basis for foreign powers to intervene in this ongoing dispute primarily stemmed from Article 8 of the 1812 Treaty of Bucharest and subsequent treaties ratifying it.⁶³² The Ottoman rebuttal, in return, subjected these treaty articles to a

⁶³⁰ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 29-30.

⁶³¹ COA, HR.SFR.1..00188/48/001/Lef 2; Par un Ottoman, *La Vérité Sur Les*, 30-33, 37-38.

⁶³² The Article 8 of the Treaty of Bucharest, which promised a general amnesty to the Serbian rebels under certain conditions, also envisaged an autonomy to be agreed upon on common ground. Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 182. According to Stéphanopoli, the subsequent treaties and their articles, which ratified the Treaty of Bucharest of 1812, were respectively as follows. Article 28 of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, which granted full autonomy to the Principality of Serbia; Articles 23 and 63 of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, which obliged the Ottomans to make arrangements for all European provinces in accordance with the model applied to the island of Crete in 1868 and to grant and protect the religious

meticulous counter-analysis, seeking to invalidate these claims. The conclusion drawn therein was that the concessions granted to the inhabitants of the islands were purely financial and that none of the treaties stipulated any form of self-government or full autonomy. The Ottoman publication also analyzed the Imperial Edict (*Hatt-ı Hümayun*) of 1856, referenced in Article 9 of the 1856 Treaty of Paris, which, according to Stéphanopoli, constituted a justification for the intervention of foreign powers in the Sporades problem.⁶³³ Contrary to the raised claims, the edict issued by Sultan Abdülmecid only recognized and protected the religious immunities and privileges of minorities. Furthermore, the ninth article of the Treaty of Paris unequivocally safeguarded the internal sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire over its subjects, thereby precluding any form of interference by the contracting parties.

6.2.2. A Confusing Legacy of the Former Regime: The Ottoman Institution of Slavery

In September 1916, a highly intriguing advisory opinion was issued by the Libya Office of the Ministry of Colonies, which was addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁶³⁴ This opinion indicated that the Ottoman slavery legislation, which had been inherited by the Italian jurisdiction in the Dodecanese Islands, was being questioned by the Aegean Occupation Corps. The Aegean Occupation Corps raised queries regarding the compatibility of the Sharia provisions on slavery with the prevailing Italian legislation that had been implemented in other colonies. Consequently, the Command authority was seeking opinions and advice on this matter. These hybrid legislations, which drew upon local laws and jurisprudence, as well as the fundamental principles of Italian law, constituted the core of the prevailing positive legal system in force in colonies such as Libya. It is evident that four years following the Italian occupation, the legal system in the Dodecanese Islands remained subject to interrogation and reconfiguration. In summary, the Aegean Occupation Command sought to establish a benchmark for its own system by assessing the role and function of Sharia provisions on slavery in the legal practices of Italian colonies such as Libya. It appears that the process of abolition of slavery in the Ottoman Empire, which had been ongoing since the 1830s with numerous

freedom of all minorities to the fullest extent; and Article 15 of the Treaty of Constantinople of 1897, which granted administrative autonomy to Crete.

⁶³³ The French text and English translation of the edict are as follows:

“Tous les privilèges et immunités d'ordre religieux accordés *ab antiquo* et à des dates postérieures à toutes les communautés chrétiennes et d'autres rites non musulmans, établis dans mon Empire sous mon égide protectrice, sont confirmés et maintenus.”

“All religious privileges and immunities granted *ab antiquo* and at later dates to all Christian communities and other non-Muslim rites, established in my Empire under my protective aegis, are confirmed and maintained.”

Furthermore, Article 9 of the Treaty of Paris, which referred to the edict, contained the following statement: “It is clearly understood that it (this Firman) cannot, in any case, give to the said Powers the right to interfere, either collectively or separately, in the relations of His Majesty the Sultan with his subjects, nor in the Internal Administration of his Empire.” “Treaty of Paris - English (1856),” *The Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF)*, last modified January 17, 1970, accessed March 15, 2025, https://ecf.org.il/media_items/1488.

⁶³⁴ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecaneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, From “Ministero delle colonie – Direzione degli affari politici e dei servizi relativi alle truppe coloniali / Ufficio: Libia” (No:7501) to “Ministero degli Affari Esteri” (No: 065107), Subject: Legislazione ottomana riguardante la schiavitù, Roma, 21 September 1916.

initiatives undertaken, laws enacted, treaties signed, and conventions ratified, was continuing its trajectory by being transferred to the successor regimes.⁶³⁵ The Italian occupation regime had assumed responsibility for addressing and safeguarding the legal status of the Dodecanese populations, whose individual rights and freedoms had been guaranteed by the Young Turkish regime in the pre-occupation period.

The document from the Ministry of Colonies stated that in the Libyan legal system, family and inheritance relations for indigenous Muslims were regulated according to personal status.⁶³⁶ In all other relations, local customs and traditions were respected to the extent that they were compatible with the spirit of the law. However, it was acknowledged that the institution of slavery was not only contrary to Italian legal principles, but also to fundamental principles of international law. The institution of slavery embodied the absolute domination of the master over the slave, who was regarded as a thing and thus deemed to lack legal personality. Consequently, the Italian judicial authorities in Libya were unable to enforce any court decision that involved the recognition of this institution. Nevertheless, this was independent of the criminal sanctions against acts of slavery stipulated by Italian criminal law, which also applied to the indigenous population of Libya. International conventions ratified by the Italian state, including the Brussels Conference Act of 1890, further authorized the Italian judiciary in this regard. In line with this, The Brussels Slavery Act of 1890, ratified by the Ottoman Empire as well as Italy, offered other legal figures that emerged with the process and progression of time and were therefore secondary and transitional. The status of “domestic servitude” was one of these permitted roles, which the Italian Ministry of Justice justified through the following definition:

“Although condemnable, it represents a path of gradual transition between the system of absolute servitude and that of freedom and equality among people.”⁶³⁷

The document under discussion also makes reference to the provisions and practices of Sharia law, which provide a legitimate and legal basis for the relationship between slaves and their

⁶³⁵ The initial anti-slavery measures and policies in the Ottoman Empire were introduced during the reign of Mahmud II with the Edict of 1830. This edict resulted in the liberation of white slaves, particularly those of Circassian and Greek origin, and the prohibition of the white slave trade. This process was further accelerated during the *Tanzimât* period, which witnessed the abolition of the Istanbul slave market in 1846. It was during the reign of Abdülhamid II that significant legislative measures were enacted, aiming to restrict the slave trade. Following the Young Turkish Revolution of 1908, the government adopted increasingly proactive anti-slavery policies, culminating in the closure of the most prominent institutions associated with slavery and the emancipation of the Sultan’s personal slaves within the imperial harem. Despite this, the Ottoman slave trade persisted throughout the First World War, officially concluding only in 1933 with the ratification of the 1926 League of Nations Slavery Convention by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

The following two references provide a comprehensive overview of the historical and legal context of slavery in the Ottoman Empire, as well as the interactions with foreign powers in the context of the abolition of slavery: The former is Y. Hakan Erdem’s *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), while the latter is William Gervase Clarence-Smith’s *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁶³⁶ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, No: 7501, No: 065107, Roma, 21 September 1916.

⁶³⁷ “Per quanto condannabile, rappresenta una via di graduale passaggio fra il sistema di servaggio più assoluto e quello della libertà e della uguaglianza delle persone.”

masters.⁶³⁸ The Libyan legal system, for example, required *homologation* for the enforceability of judgements on matters falling within the jurisdiction of the Qadi, such as personal status, family law, inheritance law, and religious practices. However, it did not prohibit the voluntary enforcement of judgements by the parties concerned. In consideration of the subordination of the freedmen to their former masters and their respect for the authority of the Kadi, it can be observed that the freedmen willingly accepted and obeyed the judgements of the Kadi. From these facts, it can be deduced that even Italian positive law tacitly permitted the existence of some legal relations originating in the institution of slavery. Nevertheless, it is evident that disagreements and conflicts occasionally arose between the Sharia courts and the higher Italian courts. For instance, a recent judgement of the Qadi of Tripoli in a patronage case was rejected by the regional judge and an appeal was lodged with the Tripoli Court of Appeal. Parallel to this, the Colonial Ministry's assessment was derived from the reports of the Chief Prosecutor and the President of the Court of Appeal concerning the case in Tripoli.

In his report to the Court of Appeal, the Chief Prosecutor articulated his firm conviction that the provisions of the local customary law on slavery were incompatible with Italian public law.⁶³⁹ Accordingly, the Italian judiciary could not and should not recognize the applicability of these customary norms and principles on slavery under any circumstances. In contrast, although the President of the Court examined the issue from all angles and highlighted the arguments for and against, his report displayed a lack of decisiveness and exhibited a cautious reserve. As in other cases involving the potential conflict between traditional Islamic law and Italian law, the legal decision in this case was contingent on additional parameters, opinions, and precedents. In essence, this necessitated the preliminary acquisition of comprehensive practical knowledge regarding the social, religious and legal context of the region. Furthermore, it was imperative to await a substantial number of responses from the local judicial authorities, who were the optimal institutions for the initial formulation of colonial law. The President expressed the view that a legislative resolution should be postponed until these prospects were met.

Given the prevailing principles of Italian public law and the law of nations, it was not possible to recognize the status of slavery and the associated legally-derived consequences.⁶⁴⁰ However, with regard to all other such consequences, notably those of an intermediate and transitional nature, it was necessary to acknowledge the persistence of uncertainty within colonial geographies. At this juncture, the President of the Court provided further justification for his cautious and imprecise position in the report. He identified the brief background of Libya's recent occupation as the primary reason for the limited understanding of the legal and religious status of this Muslim population. Thus, in the absence of precedent cases or prior judgements, the challenges of providing an instant and generic solution to these consequences continued to prevail. In other words, according to the President of the Court, this state of legal unpreparedness did not and would not permit an explicit affirmation in one sense or another. However, if a conclusion were to be reached in relation to directly administered colonies such as the Dodecanese, the President added that he could do no more than agree with the Minister

⁶³⁸ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, No: 7501, No: 065107, Roma, 21 September 1916.

⁶³⁹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, No: 7501, No: 065107, Roma, 21 September 1916.

⁶⁴⁰ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, No: 7501, No: 065107, Roma, 21 September 1916.

of Justice's current view. This was because it was an opinion dictated not merely by legal but rather by political-legal criteria and reached in view of the hitherto provisional and essentially military character of the occupation.

By its very nature, the system in question necessitated the utmost respect for the private-family institutions that were in place in the occupied territories.⁶⁴¹ It is important to note that, although inherent to the slavery regime, these legal institutions did not extend beyond the more rigidly defined economic-private-family spheres of the native populations. Therefore, it would be unwise for the Italian authorities to categorically reject these legal institutions and invalidate the provisions that recognize them. It was precisely for this reason that one should have anticipated the introduction of an ideal legal system, one in which the principles of positive Italian law and the political and environmental conditions would be more harmonized. The President of the Court reiterated that it was these political and environmental conditions that constituted the essence of legal awareness and the formative infrastructure of the law in general. According to him, it was inevitable that a legal system detached from these local parameters, no matter how positive or universal, was bound to fail at some point.

6.3. Aegean Citizenship: A Civic Status Specific to the Italian-Occupied Dodecanese

Prior to further analysis on the "Aegean conception of citizenship," however, a brief overview of the history of Italian naturalization in the context of unification and nation-building would be worthwhile. As might be anticipated, the concepts of 'citizenship' and 'naturalization' are of significant relevance in elucidating the transformation of Italy's historical, demographic and sociocultural ties with the Levant.⁶⁴² Although the terms *cittadini metropolitani* (metropolitan citizens) and *regnicoli* (kingdom inhabitants / citizens) are sometimes used interchangeably in a Peninsular context to characterize non-colonial European Italians, the two concepts are in fact deeply differentiated and temporalized.⁶⁴³ The major difference between these two concepts, which designate the two main categories of citizenship in Italian political history, goes beyond the distinction between urban and rural habitats. The Constitution of Piedmont, promulgated in 1848 by Carlo Alberto of Savoy at the inception of the Risorgimento process, marked the transition of citizenship to imply membership of the nation-state. The period known as the Risorgimento, which spanned from 1848 to 1871 and culminated in the unification of Italy,

⁶⁴¹ ASDMAE-APOEDG, 1915-1918, Dodecanneso-Egeo, 55 / 2 / 1916, 1144/17/4, No: 7501, No: 065107, Roma, 21 September 1916

⁶⁴² Olindo De Napoli, "Between Governmentality and Indeterminacy: The Birth of the Legal Category of Subjecthood (1882–1909)," in *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, eds. Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli (New York: Routledge, 2022), 3–4, 17; Simona Berhe, "Rights, Mobility, and Identity: Colonial Citizenship in Libya in the Twenties," in *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, eds. Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli (New York: Routledge, 2022), 159; Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 193–194; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 99, 101; Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 109–111, 115–116.

⁶⁴³ The online dictionary *Treccani* asserts that the etymological origin of the word *regnicolo* is derived from the late Latin *regnicōla*, a compound of the Late Latin *regnum*, meaning "kingdom," and *colēre*, meaning "to inhabit." The dictionary meaning of the word is thus "an individual born or inhabitant in the territory of a kingdom" or "a citizen of a kingdom." In antiquity, the term was attributed specifically to the Kingdom of Naples and was later extended to the Kingdom of Italy. "Regnicolo - Significato Ed Etimologia - Vocabolario - Treccani," *Treccani*, accessed January 8, 2025, <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/regnicolo>.

marks a period when such civil status was first introduced and sanctioned. As the concept of national identity developed in a geographically fragmented setting, the term *cittadini metropolitani* emerged to denote individuals residing within the boundaries of a monolithic nation-state, while *regnicoli* referred to those residing beyond these state borders yet still within the kingdom's territory. It is also important to consider the question of 'citizenship' and 'subjecthood' in the realm of the kingdom, with roots going back to the pre-Risorgimento period. The terms "citizen" and "subject" continued to be used interchangeably and overlapped in the political and legal sources of the period, without necessarily implying democracy and rights. However, in the twentieth century, a conceptual distinction emerged between these two terms, attributed to the differentiation between "metropolitan and colonial citizenships." In essence, while "metropolitan citizenship" acquired a purely Peninsular character and came to denote white European Italians, "subject" assumed a more colonial character and became *suddito coloniale*. However, it is important to note that the term *regnicoli*, which referred to all Italian inhabitants of the kingdom's territory, now reasonably included naturalized colonial subjects. Consequently, it appears more accurate to use the term *cittadini metropolitani* to denote Italians born and raised in the peninsula, and *regnicoli* for Italians residing in all kingdom territories, irrespective of their status as colonial or naturalized citizens. Furthermore, the status of "naturalization" was also first sanctioned during the period of the Risorgimento. The definition of this status was contingent upon the geographical provenance of those who were entitled to citizenship. In this socio-political system, the definition of "Italian" was dependent upon the degree of affinity between "individuals protected by capitulations" (*protégés*) and those of 'metropolitan citizens.' The right to political participation was subsequently acquired through a further distinction. In accordance with this distinction, naturalized citizens were categorized into two distinct groups: "those originating from non-kingdom territories" (*italiani non regnicoli*), which were regarded as unredeemed domains, and those hailing from other regions. Until 1912, individuals in the first category were immediately granted full political rights under the status of "major naturalization" (*grande naturalizzazione*), whereas those in the second category were deprived of the right to elect parliamentary members under the status of "minor naturalization" (*piccola naturalizzazione*).⁶⁴⁴ At various periods throughout the 1920s, Italy extended "minor citizenship" to numerous Ottoman subjects. This form of citizenship was characterized by exemption from military service and the absence of political rights.

The transition from the Ottoman capitulatory protectorate to minor Italian citizenship during the initial phase of the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese islands (1912-1923) serves as an illustrative case study at this juncture.⁶⁴⁵ Following the extension of the 1911-1912 Italo-Ottoman War from Africa to the Aegean for strategic objectives, Italy sought to establish an "Aegean citizenship" model for the national identities that the Ottoman Empire had formerly

⁶⁴⁴ McGuire posits that the origins of the term "minor naturalization" (*la piccola naturalizzazione*) can be traced back to the nineteenth-century wars of unification that constituted the Risorgimento process. During this period, the concept of *piccola naturalizzazione* was introduced, offering foreigners residing in Italy on a permanent basis the opportunity to apply for naturalization. This status was accompanied by the right to exercise local political rights. This intermediate status differed from another status, known as *grande naturalizzazione*, or full citizenship, which was granted to foreigners with ethnic ties to Italy or who had fought for unification. McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 157.

⁶⁴⁵ Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 110; Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 42-43.

pacified through political means. The incorporation of Ottoman local communities in the Dodecanese into the Italian national body was predicated on their engagement with both the concept of Italian citizenship and the framework of the Ottoman capitulatory regime. In this system, which was based on numerous concession agreements concluded between the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âlî*) and various European states and defined as “capitulations”, foreign nationals were subject to consular jurisdiction and protection. However, the legal identities of the Levantine protégés, who had coexisted within this regime for centuries, had assumed a fluid and hybrid character that did not align with conventional notions of the nation-state. The designation “Levantine” encompassed a heterogeneous structure comprising Italo-Levantines, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, reflecting the region’s diverse religious, linguistic, and ethnic composition. Furthermore, following the year 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress administration strengthened the ties between the Ottoman state and its populations by introducing citizenship regulations with more precise and clearly defined borders, thus creating a more integrated state structure. In 1909, military service was rendered compulsory for all Ottoman subjects, irrespective of ethnicity or religion. Those non-Muslims who had previously avoided this service by paying “exemption fees” (*bedel*) began to pursue alternative solutions, such as naturalization, thereby changing their nationality.

The analyses in the preceding chapters have been concentrated on Italians who were naturalized as Ottoman subjects within the framework of the capitulatory protection.⁶⁴⁶ In contrast, this section will focus on a case study of non-Muslims seeking Italian naturalization, particularly within a region under Italian occupation. The intense need to create an “Italianized Dodecanese” following the occupation in 1912 also encouraged the establishment of a distinct protégé identity to protect and maintain Italian interests in the region. This status, defined as *cittadinanza* or *sudditanza italiana egea* (Italian Aegean Citizenship or Subjecthood), was a form of identity that emerged as an alternative extension between the colonizer and the colonized. Evidently, the status to which the majority of Rhodians under Italian rule were subject, was intended to function as a proxy for Rome in the future, if not initially. The progressive evolution of this status, referred to as “Aegean Citizenship” or “*Egei Status*,” falls partially outside the temporal scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, it offers a highly relevant and informative case study for exploring the notion of a “transimperial jurisdiction” between the Ottoman and Italian regimes. This unnamed, categorical design underwent numerous phases until the 1920s, at which point it underwent a transformation and was formalized on the international stage. This transitional status, initially based on capitulation-based decrees coordinated between Rhodes and Rome, would later assume a more tangible character, being addressed in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres and formally recognized in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. The rise of Pan-Hellenism during the Greek-Turkish War instigated this process of transformation, leading to a shift in the character of the design towards greater demographic pragmatism, assimilation and intervention. The evolution of the project, which would experience a revaluation during the Mussolini regime based on criteria such as service to the Italian regime and loyalty to Italian citizenship, would persist until the late 1930s.

In numerous sources, the distinction between Metropolitan Italian citizenship and the legal status of the Dodecanese is not interrogated, and at times the concept of “subjecthood” is

⁶⁴⁶ Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 15-16.

erroneously equated with “citizenship.”⁶⁴⁷ However, the difference of Aegean citizenship, defined as a “personal status” (*statuto personale*), lay in its customized nature. Its fundamental nature was predicated on the exemption of the individual from political rights and military obligations, in addition to the bestowal of confessional communal jurisdiction in matters such as inheritance and divorce. Nevertheless, recent academic research focusing on post-Ottoman transimperial spaces and identities has demonstrated a notable surge in exploration and elaboration of such nuances. This engagement has resulted in a growing precision and depth in the analysis of transitional periods between the Ottoman Empire and its territorial successors. Thus, the conceptualization and specialization of this particular category of Italian naturalization by scholars such as Filippo Espinoza, Luca Castiglioni and Valerie McGuire serves as a foundational inspiration for the present chapter.⁶⁴⁸ However, the fact that this region-specific categorical design was not formalized until the 1920s, and that it proceeded with more personalized and palliative solutions until then, naturally shifted the primary focus to the post-1920 period. Therefore, the post-1920 period of this interactive process has already been broadly conceptualized by the aforementioned scholars and constitutes an integral component of the context of “Italian naturalization in the Aegean region.” However, given the nature of the subject matter of this thesis, the primary focus shall be on the pre-1920 period, covering the initial interactions between the Italian authorities and Ottoman subjects. In other words, this section will mainly address the following questions: What were the environment, conditions and motives that led the Italians to design and introduce such a category of citizenship in the post-occupation period? What were the demographic and ethno-religious characteristics of the population in which this categorization flourished, along with the driving forces behind it? How did some Levantine subjects, who were subject to the provisions of the Ottoman capitulatory regime and benefited from its advantages, ultimately renounce this patronage and choose to seek refuge in Italian citizenship?

At the onset of the Italian occupation of the Aegean islands, the privileged religious communities recognized under Ottoman law included the Latin Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish confessional affiliations.⁶⁴⁹ The term *millet*, which now means “nation” in modern Turkish, originally denoted “community” and was employed to refer to these populations. Muslims, however, were neither organized nor regarded as a distinct community because they adhered to the official state religion. Muslims were therefore regarded as a legal category analogous to citizenship *optimo iure*⁶⁵⁰, in comparison to the less advantageous status accorded to adherents of other religions.⁶⁵¹ At the inception of the occupation, Muslims were eventually established as a distinct community, albeit not through an explicit legal designation but rather through a series of governmental decrees. The impetus behind these decrees stemmed from pragmatic considerations, namely the facilitation of the effective governance of Muslim religious

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 109-130; Castiglioni, “No More Greeks,” 202-222; McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 141-194. “Belonging in the Archipelago: Nation, Race, and Citizenship”

⁶⁴⁹ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 41-42.

⁶⁵⁰ *Non-optimo iure* status encompasses *ius commercii* and *ius conubii*, signifying the rights “to possess property and to enter matrimony.” Alternatively, *optimo iure* status comprises these rights, in addition to *ius suffragii* and *ius honorum*, which bestow further rights such as the right “to vote and the capacity to hold office.”

⁶⁵¹ The most significant rationale for this phenomenon pertains to the recognition of the state as a community of all Muslims under the leadership of a supreme head, a concept firmly embedded within the tenets of Islamic law.

institutions and the enhancement of communication between governmental authorities and the Muslim community. Significantly, these decrees signified a departure from the privileged status that Muslims had previously enjoyed under the Ottoman Empire, thereby placing them on an administrative and legal level that was equivalent to other religious groups. At this juncture, Micciché makes a remarkable observation that the Dodecanese exhibited a distinct religious policy due to its constitutional peculiarity.⁶⁵² This situation, leading to a reconfiguration of the relationship between state law and confessional rights, engendered persistent tension between the processes of assimilation and the respect for autonomy.

The Christian population of the Dodecanese islands, who believed they had been liberated from the so-called “Turkish tyranny,” initially welcomed and embraced the Italian occupation.⁶⁵³ Many accounts of the period attest to the fact that the Italian capture of Rhodes from the Ottomans in 1912 took only a few hours – indeed, many Greeks fought alongside the Italian army in certain battles. Luigi Federzoni articulated his elation, noting that the Greeks of Rhodes, long inspired by Italian nationalism and the unification of Italy, greeted the Italian army as their long-lost “cousins.” In the third month of the Italian rule, Ameglio’s initial assessment indicated that both the rural population, engaged in agriculture, and the coastal population, engaged in the maritime industry, were satisfied with the freedom and justice they now enjoyed. Prior to the ratification of the Treaty of Ouchy in October 1912, the Orthodox and Jewish religious communities residing in the Dodecanese Islands were, in principle, still under the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Empire. These communities were represented in their dealings with the Italian authorities by their respective leaders, such as Metropolitans and chief rabbis, and their local advisory bodies. These communities were regarded as part of a broader group of Turkish subjects who shared the same religious affiliation. They were subject to the authority of the central government in Istanbul, represented by the supreme religious authorities of the entire community or nation. These authorities wielded quasi-state powers that transcended strictly spiritual matters, encompassing judicial and administrative functions within a legal framework that Italy did not formally recognize. Following the establishment of Italian sovereignty over the islands, each community experienced a gradual disconnection from the broader Turkish co-religionist community. Italy’s refusal to acknowledge the authority of the religious leaders in Istanbul resulted in a series of interventions in the judicial systems of the Italian-administered islands.

According to General Ameglio, the Greek population, which constituted the overwhelming majority of the population in the islands, resented the prospect of the return of Turkish authorities, even under the auspices of foreign powers.⁶⁵⁴ Instead, they advocated for an Italian protectorate, a course of action they believed would foster a mixed administration in which they would be able to participate actively. Ameglio, however, was convinced that such an attempt on a people not yet capable of self-government would be a grave mistake. Instead, Ameglio emphasized the leading role of the Orthodox clergy in the population, who embodied all patriotic ideals, and promoted a form of government in which religion and politics would be

⁶⁵² Micciché, *Il diritto ecclesiastico coloniale italiano*, 85.

⁶⁵³ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 117; Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 42, 67; McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 149.

⁶⁵⁴ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 69.

fused. The clergy had long enjoyed unconditional influence over the vast majority of the islands' populations. More importantly, they had welcomed the liberation from Turkish hegemony by Italian arms with great enthusiasm and satisfaction. In other words, it can be argued that the presence of a public opinion that is predominantly influenced by the pro-Italian clergy would be instrumental in prompting the Italian authorities to assume an active role in the administration of the islands. In addition to the conservative and primitive mass, which lived in accordance with the dictates and guidance of the clergy, there was also a small but conscious elite that acted according to its own knowledge, experience and insight. Nevertheless, the decisive factor was that the clergy, in conjunction with the less elite part of the urban population behind them, were very favorable to the patronage of a great power like Italy. However, this pragmatic group envisaged an autonomous form of administration that excluded Italy's direct intervention in the administration of the islands. In essence, they exhibited a reluctance to relinquish their administrative autonomy in favor of Italy's patronage, which they sought to utilize as a bulwark against external threats. As Ameglio asserts, this reluctance stemmed from a fear that Italians' influence would result in the manifestation of their superiority and dominance.

In accordance with the directives issued by the Italian Government, the Governor of Rhodes, General Ameglio, conducted a census in May 1913 with the objective of demonstrating to the Panhellenists that the majority of the island's population was Muslim, rather than Greek.⁶⁵⁵ The census results revealed that of the 13,744 inhabitants, 4,890 were Muslim, 4,290 were Jewish, 4,246 were Greek, and 318 were Catholic. The Ottoman Ambassador in Rome, Mehmed Nâbi Bey, promptly conveyed the motivation and results of this census to the Foreign Minister Said Halim Pasha in Istanbul, thereby illustrating the role that demography played in shaping diplomatic relations.⁶⁵⁶ In fact, Ambassador Nâbi had even added at the end of his message that 'in my opinion, it would be useful to publicize this census widely'. Pignataro also asserts that the Muslim population, estimated at approximately 5,000 in Rhodes and 3,000 in Kos, did not exhibit overt hostility towards the Italians but were in favor of a return to Turkish rule. Pignataro

⁶⁵⁵ COA, HR.SYS.2915/79, 07 May 1913. From Mehmed Nâbi Bey, Ottoman Ambassador to Rome, to Said Halim Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 72, 74-75, 77-78. Following the conquest of the Dodecanese islands by the Ottoman Empire in 1522, large areas of land were converted into "agricultural-feudal estates" (*çiftlik*s), resulting in the settlement of Turkish communities on the islands of Rhodes and Kos. The majority of Dodecanese Turks resided in urban areas and were engaged in various forms of manual labor and artisanal trades. These trades primarily focused on the cultivation of garden vegetables and the breeding of horses. Additionally, the Muslim community comprised refugees who had sought refuge in Dodecanese following the Greek Nationalist uprising in 1908. These refugees were individuals who had converted to Islam and were speakers of a Greek dialect, a distinction that led to limited social interaction with the established Turkish community. The presence of substantial Turkish communities contributed to the delineation of an ethnic identity and national allegiances among the Greek populace, particularly among the educated segments. Furthermore, there was a modest population of African Muslims residing in Rhodes and Kos, who were mostly descendants of slaves that were brought from Libya. The majority of these individuals were employed in roles such as domestic servants and laborers. Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 27-28; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 47-48.

⁶⁵⁶ "S.E. Naby Bey à S.A. Said Halim Pacha — Rome, le 7 mai 1913, N².

Le général Ameglio, gouverneur de Rhodes, procède d'ordre du Gouvernement Royal, au recensement ille pour prouver aux panhellénistes que la majorité de l'île (n'est pas) grecque mais (musulmane). Recensement a eu le résultat suivant : sur 13 744 habitants, 4 890 musulmans, 4 290 israélites, 4 246 grecs et 318 catholiques. Il serait utile à mon avis faire donner une large publicité à ce recensement."

further emphasizes that the Jewish community of Rhodes, which was approximately 4,500 and predominantly engaged in trade, was perceived by Ameglio as being “more Turkish than the Turks.”⁶⁵⁷ This was due to the Ottoman authorities’ strategic approach of fostering sympathy among the Jewish community to deflect the animosity of the Christian population towards the Muslims. Pignataro argues that the initial relationship between the Jewish community and the Italian authorities was characterized by turbulence due to their pro-Turkish stance. However, following the flour aid to the Jewish community in November 1912 and the erection of a public fountain in honor of Ameglio in the Jewish quarter of Rhodes in 1913, relations improved and became cordial. Conversely, Doumanis contends that the Jewish community exhibited a tendency to endorse Italian rule from its inception, partly due to their non-Greek identity and lack of enthusiasm for unification with Greece.⁶⁵⁸ In January 1913, Ameglio made an official visit to the Catholic, Muslim and Jewish schools and was warmly welcomed by pupils and teachers alike. In a letter addressed to the Chief Rabbi of Rome, the Jewish community expressed their appreciation for “the spirit of charity, justice and equity” that the Italian authorities had consistently demonstrated. They further noted that General Ameglio “always sought to ensure the welfare of all inhabitants, without distinction of race or religion.” Additionally, they acknowledged the exemplary and praiseworthy conduct of the Italian soldiers, stating that it had “aroused in the Jews of Rhodes a genuine enthusiasm for all things Italian.” Jews, who had formerly endorsed Turkish governance, now favored Italian protection over Greek annexation or autonomy. Indeed, a delegation from the Jewish community even appeared before General Ameglio, openly expressing their preference for Italian rule. In February 1913, the Turks were poised to undertake a comparable action. A number of distinguished Turks convened with Ameglio, insisting on the continuation of the Italian occupation of Rhodes if a return to Ottoman rule proved unfeasible. Consequently, the Italians surprisingly gained the allegiance and support of both the Jews and Muslims before those of the Orthodox Greeks.

However, the attitude of the Orthodox population, oscillating between Greek irredentism and Panhellenic aspirations, was understandably quite different.⁶⁵⁹ In early 1913, there were attempts to raise the Greek flag in some small settlements and to secretly land arms on the island of Scarpanto. The local councils of the islands, the *Demogerontias*, were drafting resolutions endorsing Greek annexation and sending them to the Greek government through the respective mayors. Furthermore, the three islanders had established a delegation on their own initiative and travelled to Rome without any authorization from the Italian occupation authorities. This attempt, in which they presented themselves as “delegates of the Aegean islanders,” placed General Ameglio in a highly difficult position. It swiftly became evident that this initiative,

⁶⁵⁷ The Jewish community (*millet*) of Rhodes and Kos constituted a part of a broader diaspora of Sephardim who were granted admission to the Ottoman Empire subsequent to their expulsion from Spain in 1492. During the Italian occupation, the community maintained their use of a dialect of Spanish, known as *Ladino*, while refraining from intermingling with other ethnic groups on a social level. The Jewish population was predominantly engaged in commercial activities, particularly in the domains of shopkeeping, food processing, and textile manufacturing. They were renowned for their proficiency in commerce, money lending, and banking. A notable example of this is the *Alhadeff* dynasty in Rhodes Town, which was the preeminent banking family in the Dodecanese. The community was decimated in 1944 when the Germans forcibly relocated most of its members to concentration camps in Central Europe, marking the community’s destruction. Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 28; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 48.

⁶⁵⁸ Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, 28; Doumanis, *Una faccia, una razza*, 48.

⁶⁵⁹ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 73, 76, 78.

which had been meticulously orchestrated in Athens, was intended to provoke public opinion, ignite an ethno-religious conflict and tarnish the reputation of the Italian administration. The pro-Hellenic sentiment was also gaining favor among the diplomatic missions of foreign powers in the islands. For example, the French vice-consul of Rhodes, who had previously had a reputation for being openly pro-Turkish, unexpectedly began to support the Greek cause. In February 1913, demonstrations were organized by the Greek Orthodox population in two villages of Rhodes to promote unification with Greece. The primary rationale for these demonstrations was the apprehension of an imminent restoration of Turkish rule, which would have entailed the re-establishment of the former regime. A secondary concern, rooted in religious anxieties, pertained to the potential dissemination of Catholic propaganda by Italian priests dispatched from Rome during the Italian military occupation. It is noteworthy that the Greek Orthodox population, seemingly oblivious to the absence of a conventional relationship between the Kingdom of Italy and the Vatican, was driven to delusions that were divorced from global realities. Consequently, the Greek Orthodox population constructed an alternative reality, one that was distorted by ancient stereotypes, ethnic prejudices, and local interests.

In the long term, General Giovanni Ameglio's efforts to consolidate the Italian presence through recognizing the privileges of Orthodox Christians and securing their consent and support ultimately proved unsuccessful.⁶⁶⁰ Indeed, the Greeks, who viewed the Italian occupation as a liberation and anticipated that the islands would eventually be transferred to them, even provided support to the Italians in the Battle of Psinthos. However, the Italians were soon regarded as the new *Franks*, and in the eyes of the island's Orthodox clergy, they were seen as analogous to the "Latin Catholics who raided Constantinople." The public defiance of some members of the Orthodox clergy against the restrictions imposed by the Italians on religious gatherings resulted in their arrest and was interpreted as a violation of the autonomy and faith of the Orthodox Church. The initial overt conflict between the Greek and Italian populations occurred during the 1913 Easter celebrations. The *Demogerontia*, the council of the Orthodox community of Rhodes, demanded the replacement of Metropolitan Beniaminos due to his moderate stance towards the Italians. In other respects, Ameglio's hybrid administration, exhibiting characteristics of both civilian and military governance, confronted not only the legal and political challenges posed by this intricate geography but also endeavored to uphold local stability amidst mounting international pressures.⁶⁶¹ A further complication stemmed from the fact that the islands had heretofore functioned as a symbiotic social and commercial extension of the Turkish hinterland, a fact that was generally ignored. The occupation resulted in the abrupt disconnection of the islanders from the markets situated along the Anatolian coastline, thereby rendering them dependent on external sources for their critical supplies and resources. Despite requests for supplies from Italy to support the occupation forces and naval garrison units, the archipelago economy remained unable to attain sufficiency and sustainability through these remedial measures.

McGuire's research attributes the origins of Italian Aegean citizenship to the instrumentalization of capitulations, which were strategically employed to consolidate occupation and neutralize post-imperial nationalisms in the Aegean region.⁶⁶² According to

⁶⁶⁰ Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117.

⁶⁶¹ Cecini, *La guardia di finanza*, 30-32.

⁶⁶² Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117-119; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 153-154.

reports by the Italian Occupation Corps, the Dodecanese communities had demonstrated a notable interest in naturalization as early as 1913. The majority of applicants were Muslims, driven by concerns regarding the Greek annexation of the islands and the subsequent expulsion from their ancestral lands. By 1914, capitulations functioned as a conduit for diplomatic and consular protection, safeguarding local Aegean residents from the threat of arrest in foreign countries. This initiative was met with enthusiasm by many Dodecanesian Greeks, who perceived the benefits of adopting a preliminary form of Italian citizenship, albeit only in a nominal capacity. Correspondingly, there was a notable surge in applications from the Orthodox community, who expressed apprehension regarding the potential return of the Turks. Despite having previously agreed to cede the Dodecanese Islands to the Ottoman Empire in the Treaty of Ouchy, Italy was apparently reluctant to declare its long-term ambitions for the archipelagic territories and communities. Nevertheless, Italian state had in fact articulated its long-term intentions through its policies of favoritism and embrace of the Orthodox Greeks. Following Italy's entry into the war in 1915, Dodecanesian Greeks were able to avoid conscription in both the Ottoman and Greek armies by utilizing Italian diplomatic protection. Furthermore, Dodecanese individuals holding Italian passports were able to travel and emigrate freely, thus joining their relatives abroad. In conclusion, the efficacy of diplomatic intervention in mitigating post-Ottoman nationalist sentiments in the Aegean has been a significant outcome.

It was therefore unsurprising that the Dodecanese inhabitants continued to be granted capitulatory protection certificates, enabling them to emigrate freely to Entente countries throughout the First World War.⁶⁶³ Concurrently, inconsistencies emerged in the procedures pertaining to the marital status of islanders, which had been delegated to the jurisdiction of local religious authorities. The inability of all inhabitants to be affiliated with religious communities, and the unavailability of certain citizens to locate a religious authority of their denomination on the islands, are salient examples of these inconsistencies. Consequently, Attilio Brizi, the Italian Commissioner in the Municipality of Rhodes, was entrusted with these responsibilities in accordance with a regulation enacted in February 1913. Brizzi's authority encompassed the issuance of birth, marriage, and death certificates for Italian citizens residing in the occupied island, in addition to the validation of marriage contracts between Italian citizens and foreign nationals.⁶⁶⁴ The provision of a wide array of services to Italian citizens was a deliberate policy aimed at encouraging the naturalization of islanders from other origins. This initiative was undertaken with the objective of increasing the Italian population on the island, thereby ensuring a demographic shift that would favor Italian citizens. This strategy was implemented to facilitate a smoother transition process between the Ottoman and Italian administrations, which was characterized by uncertainty and discomfort.

⁶⁶³ Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117-119; Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 43.

⁶⁶⁴ Until the 1930s, the responsibility for civil registrations was primarily shouldered by religious authorities. However, two regulations in 1932 and 1937 authorized the *podestà*, the Italian administrative authorities of the islands of Rhodes, Kos, and Leros, to receive and execute procedures for civil status requests. A subsequent regulation, promulgated in 1938 during the administration of Governor De Vecchi, expanded the authority to regulate civil status to encompass the island possessions. Consequently, within each municipality of the Dodecanese Archipelago, an Italian-controlled civil registry office was established, entrusted with the maintenance of birth, marriage, and death records. Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 43.

As the end of the First World War approached, the Italian authorities' knowledge, experience and insights into local communities became increasingly sophisticated.⁶⁶⁵ Concurrently, this progression unveiled a series of post-war concerns for the communities, thereby creating diverse spaces for maneuver among the involved parties. The Jewish community on the island of Rhodes was concerned that if the islands were transferred to Greece, they would be forced to leave. These justified concerns emanated from the repressive measures instigated by the Greek army and the Greek populace against the Jewish community in Salonika following the occupation in 1913. Furthermore, they were prevented from rebuilding their destroyed homes following the Great Fire of Salonika in 1917 and were compelled to emigrate. Fearing the reaction of the Greek Orthodox community, the Jewish population of Rhodes discreetly approached the Italian authorities and declared their preference to remain under Italian rule. The Muslim community in Rhodes also exhibited a general inclination towards Italian rule, as their aspirations for a return to Turkey had become increasingly improbable. However, at the inception of the occupation, Ameglio's awareness and understanding of the social and political fabric of the region was rather superficial. One of his earliest observations in this regard pertained to the Young Turks, the Unionists who were presumed to be advocates or constituents of the CUP. Ameglio advanced the argument that the "Young Turks," whom he simply described as "politicized individuals," represented the manifestation of a rather protean and general social category. However, the reality on the ground was, of course, not so straightforward and uncomplicated, as his successors would come to realize more clearly. Pignataro contends that the Turks on the island were politically and ideologically divided into two distinct groups. The first camp consisted of the conservative or, in the parlance of the day, "Old Turks," who constituted the wealthiest gentry and were led by the Mufti.⁶⁶⁶ The second group, known as the progressive or "Young Turks," were supported by the Kadi, who was employed and paid by the Italians as a civil servant. Nevertheless, the Qadi occasionally exhibited signs of opposition to his superiors and experienced conflicts of interest with the Italian authorities. Of particular interest is the fact that he pursued a course similar to that of the Orthodox Metropolitan, who sought to establish an anti-Italian vision of a future reconciliation between Greeks and Muslims. Notably, among the Greek Orthodox populace of the islands of Rhodes, Kalymnos and Symi, there was a resurgence of pro-Hellenism with the cessation of hostilities. Even the Greek community residing outside the Dodecanese Islands, such as those in Egypt, voiced their support for the pro-Greek irredentist movement and unification. The final impetus came in April 1919, when the diocese of Rhodes, following the directives of the Metropolitanate, declared its support for unification with Greece. Subsequent to this declaration, demonstrations were organized in the aforementioned islands under the guidance of the clergy, and the Italian forces intervened extremely harshly against the demonstrating groups, arresting some civilians and priests and taking all churches under surveillance.

⁶⁶⁵ Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 139-141; Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 44-45.

⁶⁶⁶ Referencing an article that appeared in the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* at the initial stage of the occupation, Guidi cites a 25-year-old male individual who was designated "Old Turk" by the Italian forces. The narrative recounts the young man's allegiance to the *Ancien Régime* and his subsequent persecution by the Unionist government for political reasons. In seeking retribution against the Unionist regime, the young man informed the Italian command of the whereabouts of the Turkish soldiers who were still hidden in the town, thus inspiring great sympathy among the Italian soldiers. From this standpoint, Guidi observes that the ideological underpinnings of these political factions, such as "political fanaticism," have undergone a semantic shift, and the adjectives "young" and "old" that characterize these individuals have become less symmetrical. Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 44-45.

The Dodecanese Islands, whose fate was to be decided by the victorious states participating in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, once again witnessed a new period of political chaos.⁶⁶⁷ Following the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918, which brought the First World War to a conclusion for the Ottomans, the Italian forces occupied the majority of southwestern Anatolia by March 1919. During the Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922), the Italians adopted an ambivalent attitude, deviating from the alliance with Athens and embracing Turkish nationalists. Italian political circles harbored an aspiration that an independent Turkey would emerge as the “satellite state” of Rome in the east. However, when this aspiration proved to be illusory, the Italians adopted an “informal imperialism” in Asia Minor through a liberal method of protection. In addition to their usual caution in granting capitulations in recent decades, the Italians also complied with the rules and conditions set by the Ottoman authorities for naturalization. A salient aspect of these measures pertained to the stipulation that Ottoman subjects seeking to acquire citizenship of another nation were required to renounce their prior Ottoman citizenship. Nevertheless, Article 128 of the Treaty of Sèvres disregarded the previous laws regarding this stipulatory practice, thereby establishing a new legal framework. Henceforth, it was recognized in advance that individuals who acquired citizenship of one of the Allied Powers were considered nationals of that state and had automatically renounced Ottoman citizenship. In accordance with its objective of establishing a “strong group of protégés,” the Italian imperialism sought to facilitate the subsequent granting of Italian citizenship and forestall the potential dissolution of the capitulatory regime. The emergence of new commercial relations between the Italian forces and the local population during the occupation of Anatolia resulted in a rapid increase in applications for capitulatory licenses. Furthermore, the Italian military presence in Anatolia fostered a degree of security for the protégés through minimizing the potential risk of violence against civilians from the Greek army and Turkish nationalists.

In the immediate aftermath of the Treaty of Sèvres, the Turks had already declared the abrogation of capitulations, thereby indicating their intention to contest the stipulations outlined in Article 128 of the aforementioned treaty.⁶⁶⁸ Consequently, it was imperative for the Italian state to ensure the maintenance of the capitulations, as they served Italian interests in Anatolia in the long term. In response, the Italian government promulgated a royal decree on September 10, 1922, with the objective of confronting the Kemalists with a *fait accompli* before their complete takeover of Anatolia through the Treaty of Lausanne. This decree authorized the conferral of Italian citizenship to applicants who submitted their applications within a four-month period, contingent upon their being “deprived of political rights and exempted from military service.” The primary objective of this initiative was to facilitate the integration of the most industrious and intelligent elements of the local population into the Italian communities in Turkey, thereby augmenting Italy’s economic expansion and moral prestige in Anatolia. However, the attempt to replace the capitulations with a masked form of naturalization, which failed to effect any substantive change, provoked a backlash from the newly established Turkish government. Consequently, the Turkish delegation at Lausanne reserved the prerogative to deny naturalization to those who had not been stripped of their Ottoman citizenship. On July 23, 1923, the Turkish delegation proposed a retroactive renunciation, stipulating that a maximum

⁶⁶⁷ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 111-114; Pignataro, *Il Dodecaneso italiano*, Vol. 1, 139.

⁶⁶⁸ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 111-114.

of 1,500 individuals who had previously been admitted to Italian citizenship could be stripped of their Ottoman citizenship. However, the terms of the proposal excluded Muslims and Anatolian Orthodox Christians from this list, which was to be determined by the Italian authorities. Given that the number of applications from Jewish and Catholic protégés already far exceeded the number that the Turks could accept, the Italian authorities would have to deny a number of citizenships that had already been granted. Subsequently, the Italians found themselves in an awkward and potentially untenable position. In response to the perceived threat of Mussolini's government pursuing an unofficial policy of imperialism over Turkey, and adhering to Mediterranean expansionism, the Kemalist government anticipated an imminent reoccupation of Anatolia by Italy. According to a report on Mussolini prepared in October 1926, Turkey maintained a constant, skeptical, and vigilant concern for the Italians residing on its territory, fearing that they might be spies or officers in disguise. Consequently, the Turkish authorities imposed restrictions on the Italian community, prohibiting them from engaging in their professions, securing employment, constructing residences, and entering into service contracts. The Italian community in Izmir, which had initially numbered 30,000 individuals, experienced a precipitous decline during this period, eventually diminishing to a mere 5,000.

Furthermore, following its defeat in the Greco-Turkish War, the image of the Greek Kingdom suffered a considerable weakening on the global stage.⁶⁶⁹ Utilizing this opportunity, the Mussolini government firmly refused any territorial concessions in the Aegean region. In the aftermath of the war, the Italian authorities expanded the scope of their protection to encompass the Dodecanese population residing in Asia Minor, with the aim of averting their conscription by Greek or Turkish forces. However, the generous issuance of capitulatory certificates to the Anatolian communities, with the objective of acquiring political and economic influence, was swiftly observed and effectively countered by the Kemalists. By the late of 1922, it was evidently understood that the Dodecanesians residing in Asia Minor would neither serve nor contribute to Italian expansionism in the region. In other respects, the Dodecanesians were more inclined to return to the Islands under Italian naturalization than to remain in Western Anatolia, where the conditions were regarded as too complex. While this migratory flow may have posed certain operational challenges, it was nonetheless deemed both beneficial and essential for the ongoing process of Italianization within the islands. Furthermore, the Great Fire of Smyrna in September 1922, which engulfed much of the urban center in flames, represented a pivotal turning point and driving force in the ongoing wave of emigration to Rhodes.⁶⁷⁰ In the aftermath of the disaster, Rhodes, a place where the Italian flag flew, became a safe haven for thousands of Orthodox refugees, as well as for the many Levantines of Italian origin residing in Izmir. Those refugees who could prove family ties to island residents were permitted to stay, while others were isolated in refugee camps awaiting transfer to Greece. The Italian administration was found to be underprepared, both in terms of operational readiness and financial resources, to handle such an influx of refugees. Consequently, Governor De Bosdari requested additional funding from Rome. While the Governor prevented the island's Greek community from contacting the refugees, he also requested authorization from Rome on issues such as the use of military force for public emergency and cooperation with the Orthodox church for the provision of food to the refugees. Conversely, the Mussolini government instructed the

⁶⁶⁹ Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117-119; Castiglioni, "No More Greeks," 207-208.

⁶⁷⁰ Since the incident is referred to in literature as the Great Fire of Smyrna and is widely known by that name, the toponym Izmir has not been used in this instance.

governor to recognize that the Orthodox refugees were not within his remit and that he should exclusively address the concerns of his compatriots, namely the Italo-Levantines under capitulatory protection. To emphasize the acceptance and integration of the Levantines into the Italian community, a public event was organized with the participation of Catholic institutions, and charity campaigns were initiated to support their welfare.

During the interim period between the war and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, the selection and qualification procedures of immigrants arriving on the islands were conducted under the auspices of the new Governor Mario Lago.⁶⁷¹ Appointed on 16 November 1922, Lago sought to transform this humanitarian crisis into a strategic asset for the Fascist Regime, determining precisely who would benefit from Italian protection and delineating a distinction between the *Egei* and the broader Aegean world. Endowed with extensive authority, the Governor sought to reshape Dodecanese in accordance with his personal vision, transforming it into 'a nursery for intermediate-class colonial subjects and a functional proxy for the projection of Italian interests in the Levant'. In this regard, the selection of those permitted access to Dodecanese in the post-war era was determined by political and economic consolidations rather than geographical origin. Specifically, Greeks from other regions seeking the same protection and rights as those born in Dodecanese would face restrictions on entry, with only those able to demonstrate their origin through birth or long-term residence being granted permission. Furthermore, the social and economic status of the families, their political stance towards the Italian administration, and the volunteering of their male members in the Greek army would also be considered. The consequences of this policy were significant, with some families facing the heart-rending separation of their sons who had served in the Greek army, due to their exclusion from return. Conversely, individuals who had been absent for an extended period were granted permission to return to their homes, facilitated by their involvement in family business.

The Treaty of Lausanne (1923) formally recognized Italian sovereignty over the entire Dodecanese, thereby establishing a direct administrative link between the Italian government and the local populace.⁶⁷² The question of integrating the inhabitants into the Italian community was thus transferred to the jurisdiction of the Fascist government. Conversely, the 1923 Turkish-Greek Population Exchange, which stipulated the expulsion of Orthodox Christians from Asia Minor to Greek lands, would give rise to new concerns for the Italian authorities. The Dodecanese Islands were also potentially vulnerable to mass migration, and there was a possibility of a resurgence of panhellenic irredentism as the demographic structure of the archipelago underwent a shift in favor of Orthodox Christians. The Treaty of Lausanne, which came into force on 6 August 1924, included a stipulation in Article 30 that all Ottoman subjects residing on the islands were eligible to acquire Italian citizenship. A more significant stipulation was made in Article 34, which allowed for those residing in any country outside the island, with the exception of Turkey, to apply for Italian citizenship. However, the approval of this application was subject to the consent of the Italian diplomatic missions operating within the jurisdiction in question. The Italian authorities, relying on this clause, reserved the right to reject the claims of certain Dodecanesians, who were considered to have played an active role in irredentist campaigns and were largely comprised of hostile elements. In fact, the phenomenon of Italian Aegean citizenship was predicated on the recognition that the region was part of the

⁶⁷¹ Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117-119; Castiglioni, "No More Greeks," 207-208.

⁶⁷² Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 117-119; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 157-158.

Italian nation-state, yet its native inhabitants were considered foreigners. Consequently, the Aegean naturalization process was characterized by a repressive aspect, as it served to restrict the entry of undesirable individuals into the archipelago. Additionally, it was imbued with a promotional element, as it was exclusively granted to those deemed eligible by the regime. This state of affairs is emblematic of the complex and often paradoxical nature of European imperialism.

In Mario Lago's opinion, a "minor naturalization" would provide a meaningful solution to the problem of national claims in the Dodecanese as well as serving as a counterpoint to those who still denied the presence of the Italian state in the region.⁶⁷³ He was also in favor of the communities continuing to organize themselves as they had done under the Ottoman millet system. It was Lago's conviction that, by maintaining this organizational structure, the Italian state would accomplish its mission, fostering the adoption of the Italian language and the full embrace of the regime's benefits among the native populace. On the other hand, Governor Lago anticipated that a significant proportion of the influx to the Dodecanese would comprise Levantines of Italian origin. However, it proved challenging to attract this particular group, despite the privileges offered by Italian citizenship. In fact, Lago posited that Article 30 could be interpretively adapted in a manner favorable to Italy, thereby extending the possibility of naturalization to former capitulatory protégés who had not yet formally renounced their Turkish citizenship. Consequently, Italy could discreetly extend invitations to these non-Dodecanesian protégés, who, until that point, had loyally served the Italian state by representing its commercial activities and upholding its interests in Turkey. This approach, as Lago proposed in 1924, would ensure the benevolence these individuals had rightfully deserved. Lago further argued that this specific *status civitatis*, unique to the Levant region, would serve to safeguard a great power and secure its benefits without creating a military and financial imposition, in contrast to the "major naturalization" practice. However, Lago's proposal to grant citizenship to the non-Dodecanesian Levantines, which he described as beneficial and necessary for expansion, was ultimately rejected by the Italian government. This was primarily due to the fact that its implementation in the new Turkey, where the capitulations were abolished, was regarded as unfeasible. Furthermore, the Commission of Abandoned Property (*Emvâl-i Metrûke Komisyonu*) could confiscate the property of these people until their return to Turkey from Rhodes. Apart from that, their return would give the impression to the Turkish authorities that they have not been resettled in the Dodecanese region on a permanent basis. Rather than achieving a practical result, this suspicious situation could only endanger the articles of the peace treaty and cause problems between the two states.

Nonetheless, Governor Lago proposed the adoption of the "Aegean citizenship" model, with the intention of extending it to individuals beyond the confines of Dodecanese.⁶⁷⁴ This strategy was regarded as the pinnacle of efforts to Italianize the Aegean public sphere, with the aim of augmenting the influence of Italian communities in the Levant. Furthermore, this process of Italianization was to be accomplished through a phase of demographic engineering, involving the resettlement of Italians from various regions and their intermarriage with local Rhodians.

⁶⁷³ Castiglioni, "No More Greeks," 209-210; Espinoza, "An Italian Nationality for the Levant," 119-120; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 157.

⁶⁷⁴ Castiglioni, "No More Greeks," 209-210; Guidi, *Generations of Empire*, 174, 193-201; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 158.

In order to legitimize its colonial extension in the international arena, the Italian state also attempted to transform the Aegean into an outpost for national settlement. According to the Italian perspective, the most efficient method of managing local subjects through the colonial bureaucracy was the dissemination of Catholic confessional affiliation through policies of population settlement and intermarriage. From the outset of the occupation in 1912, an organized influx of Catholic immigrants to Rhodes had already commenced. The majority of these individuals, predominantly Catholic and generally referred to as *connazionali* (fellow countrymen / compatriots) in official archives, were native to the Italian peninsula. The second group of settlers were the Italo-Levantines, who were born and resident in Ottoman Anatolia. As former Italian protégés of the Ottoman Empire, most of these Levantines first obtained minor citizenship and were granted full citizenship only after the First World War. All these settlers perceived Rhodes as both an economic opportunity and a career path, in which professional occupations such as civil servant, lawyer or doctor could be pursued. The frequent intermarriage of Catholic men with Orthodox Rhodian women was significant as it underscored the profound impact of national affiliations on a colonial context. In the majority of these matrimonial unions, the bride had either converted to Catholicism or at least the wedding had been solemnized and celebrated according to the Catholic rite. It is evident that the patterns of migration, mobility and matrimony exhibited by the population would afford the local administration the opportunity to further extend state sovereignty within the region.

The eventual formulation of the Italian Aegean citizenship law did not include any reference to the concept of *piccola cittadinanza*.⁶⁷⁵ However, it should be noted that earlier debates on the subject, as well as the previous diplomatic protection regime, had already encouraged the adoption of this nomenclature and the practice falling within its scope. The term, whose origins can therefore be traced back to the Risorgimento, continued to be used extensively among Italian state actors in an informal context. McGuire contends that the propensity towards the informal utilization of this term suggests a strong indication of the assimilation of the local population into the Italian nation-state, notwithstanding the fact that they were not regarded as ethnically Italian. The foundation of Aegean citizenship was predicated on the utilization of the same instruments employed for the naturalization of capitulatory protégés. These instruments encompassed the reduction of specific duties and the conferral of certain privileged rights to those associated with the status of metropolitan citizen. There was a prevalent belief that the Greeks, upon annexing the islands, would institute military conscription and abolish tax autonomy. Recognizing this, Lago made arrangements that preserved the autonomy enjoyed during the Ottoman period, thereby strengthening local particularism and assimilating panhellenic irredentism. Furthermore, Lago's recognition of the reservations of the local Islamic community towards Kemalist secularism, coupled with his subsequent endorsement of Islamic law, served to win the loyalty and allegiance of conservative Aegean Muslims. Nonetheless, Lago's visionary leadership, profound insight, and unwavering dedication to the cause did not culminate in the anticipated outcomes, thus falling short of the desired Italianization of Rhodes. Despite their Italian heritage, the majority of Levantines who pursued Aegean citizenship and sought refuge in Rhodes were unwilling to attain long-term residency. A considerable number of these Italo-Levantines ultimately chose not to settle there, declined the prospect of residing under the Italian flag, and instead opted to return to their homes in Izmir or Anatolia at the first feasible opportunity. Despite the passage of a decade, the cosmopolitan

⁶⁷⁵ Castiglioni, "No More Greeks," 209-210; McGuire, *Italy's Sea*, 157-158.

and unconfined Mediterranean community remained unable to adapt to the Italian vision of Rhodes, which Luigi Federzoni designated as the “Eastern bastion of the Empire” (*Bastione orientale dell’Impero*). While Italian policies disrupted traditional connections and relationships across the Aegean Sea, some inter-imperial networks, including the Dodecanesian community in Egypt and the Jewish community of Rhodes, survived and adapted. Recognizing the necessity for population mobility, the Italian state granted Aegean Italian citizenship not only to Dodecanese immigrants in Egypt but also to their descendants.⁶⁷⁶ However, the Italian administration’s cautious attitude towards Greek army veterans would remain unaltered, with strict measures continuing to be implemented against them.⁶⁷⁷

In contrast, the Italian authorities in Crete adopted a more accommodating stance on naturalization, extending Italian protection to former Ottoman subjects, predominantly Cretan Turks, since 1918.⁶⁷⁸ Those who did not wish to become Greek citizens or serve in the Greek army, and who could affirm their organic ties with the Dodecanese, were initially granted Italian protection and subsequently *Egei* status. However, these Ottoman subjects would also face the prospect of involuntary expulsion from their traditional places of residence in 1926 and being compelled to opt for Turkish or Italian citizenship. A number of Cretan Muslims, notably those who had held Greek citizenship since 1913, sought to circumvent the mandated population exchange by asserting their claim to Ottoman or Italian citizenship in 1923. This was in response to the impending loss of their property and personal assets. A provisional citizenship accord was established between Greece and Italy on 4 July 1918, stipulating the military obligations of Cretan Muslims of Libyan origin. In 1923, Italy asserted that the Libyans of Crete were automatically Italian citizens and could be conscripted directly into the Italian army, given their subjection to Italy’s colonial domain. This contentious issue was met with staunch resistance from a faction of Greek refugees, who stood to benefit from the exchangeable Muslim property on the island, leading to a deterioration in Italian-Greek relations. In Kos and Rhodes, the Italian strategy entailed a balancing of the Muslim and Orthodox populations through the grant of citizenship to all Muslims and subsequent pressure to remain, thus averting the demographic predominance of a Greek majority on these two islands. The Italian authorities utilized local religious leaders, such as the Mufti, as a means to ensure the continued presence of Turks in Rhodes and Kos, thereby slowing the rate of Turkish citizenships applications. Concurrently, pro-Turkish propaganda was employed to encourage Turks in Rhodes to depart for Turkey. Turkish authorities successfully persuaded over 5,000 Turks to leave the island, asserting that their situation would deteriorate if they became Italian citizens. Following this voluntary departure, the Turkish population of the island experienced a progressive decline, reaching 12,000 in 1926 and 8,000 in 1936.

⁶⁷⁶ McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 142.

⁶⁷⁷ In 1926, a group of pilgrims, hailing from Astypalaia but having opted for Greek citizenship by their service in the Greek army, reached the island. The local authorities greeted them with suspicion and hostility. The *Carabinieri* (Italian Gendarmerie) confiscated the pilgrims’ equipment and prohibited them from entering the celebration, citing the colors and patterns of the crosses they carried as a reminder of the Greek flag. The *Carabinieri*, an agency that exerts significant authority over visitors on the islands where they are stationed, denied the pilgrims entry to event on the grounds that it was intended exclusively for the Aegean people and not for foreigners. Castiglioni, “No More Greeks,” 209-210.

⁶⁷⁸ Castiglioni, “No More Greeks,” 208-209; Konstantinos Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam in Greece: From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2012), 194.

From these perspectives, the Aegean functioned as a laboratory of integration for the Italians, where they developed communication and interaction skills with Eastern Mediterranean populations.⁶⁷⁹ Despite the ongoing debates surrounding it, the Aegean *status civitatis* proved unsuccessful due to its lack of political rights and its ambiguity regarding other guarantees linked to citizenship status. Nonetheless, the designation of *cittadini italiani* (Italian citizens) underscored that the Dodecanese inhabitants were not regarded by Rome as colonial subjects and that a fraternal form of citizenry integrating the Aegean to Italy had been forged.⁶⁸⁰ This term remained in use even after 1925. In the 1920s, Aegean citizenship was utilized to facilitate the expulsion of anti-Fascists and anti-Italians from the archipelago. Moreover, it played a pivotal role in the indoctrination of Dodecanese youth through the imposition of the Italian language in educational institutions and the integration of this demographic into Fascist youth organizations. This resulted in the partial assimilation of a new generation, a process that, according to Lago, culminated in the “Italianization” of the youth. Furthermore, Italy has proposed the conferral of full Italian citizenship to Aegean citizens who have completed their military service, in a manner analogous to the previously established procedure under Libyan citizenship.⁶⁸¹ This additional right, based on an option, has led to a significant increase in the number of applications from Dodecanesian males to enlist in the Italian army. By the mid-1920s, Aegean youth who had been educated in the mainland and completed the Italian school system sought to enlist in the Italian Army’s Officer Candidate School. However, their applications were consistently rejected on the basis that those without political rights could not attain senior ranks in the armed forces. This rejection, therefore, can be seen as a manifestation of the second-class citizenship experienced by Dodecanese youth, who continued to apply for enlistment in the armed forces until they attracted the attention of superior authorities.⁶⁸²

Nevertheless, the Italian Aegean citizenship initiative would evolve in a distinctly divergent manner compared to that of Libya, where the *Bedouin* community was excluded.⁶⁸³ The Italian Aegean citizenship project was to be applied to all the inhabitants of the Dodecanese and,

⁶⁷⁹ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 120-124.

⁶⁸⁰ McGuire’s argument posits that a Dodecanesian subject possessed the potential for a contradictory citizenship, whose loyalty was both desired and questioned in terms of the success of Italian governance. This subject was characterized as a diasporic people insofar as he provided opportunities for the Italian state to flourish along the peripheries of the Empire. However, given certain ideological aims, he also had the capacity to be perceived as undesirable by the governance and to become a colonial subject. The existence of these two contrasting views of the Dodecanese inhabitants is of particular interest, in that they reinforced each other simultaneously. The undesirability of one citizen confirmed the desirability of another subject. McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 146.

⁶⁸¹ McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 141-142.

⁶⁸² On 7 March 1930, a proposal was to be submitted to the Italian Senate. The idea was to grant minor citizenship to the “most influential Levantines” who could “indisputably prove their Italian sentiments” and “guarantee the preservation of the good name of Italy” (*il buon nome Italiano*). In fact, a year later, the draft was updated with an additional article stipulating that Aegean people who performed voluntary military service could acquire “metropolitan naturalization.” However, as the legislative process was delayed, applications for enlistment continued until Mussolini’s attention was drawn to the issue in 1933, and the potential risks that the refusals could pose to the Aegean had reached an alarming level. Finally, Mussolini, not wishing to lose the loyalty and commitment of the Dodecanesians, agreed and on 4 January 1934 a model of “full citizenship” was established by Royal Decree. This status was subject to the approval of the Governor of the Islands and the Council of State, or to the fulfilment of voluntary military service on the recommendation of the Governor. Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 122-124.

⁶⁸³ Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 121-125; McGuire, *Italy’s Sea*, 141-142.

eventually, to almost everyone who could prove a family or property connection to the islands. The most significant criterion for ascertaining the non-colonial status of the Aegean people was Italian racial belief; namely that the Aegean people were not required to be civilized because they belonged to a non-colored race. Despite the evident intolerance of Italian society towards linguistic and religious heterogeneity from as early as the 1920s, the concept of *Italianità* encompassed imperial acceptance, inclusivity and the embrace of the Levantines. For instance, the Royal Decree dated 14 June 1923 underscored the necessity for countermeasures to be implemented in order to forestall the escalation of intolerance and the jeopardy of integration with the islands. The document outlined the imposition of penal sanctions against discrimination, with the aim of ensuring full legal equality between naturalized Levantines and metropolitan citizens. In order to achieve this objective, it was necessary to establish a particular subcategory under the broad category of *Regnicoli*, within the framework of the minor naturalization status. The fact that the largest proportion of naturalized Levantines were Jews indicated that the notion of *Italianità*, which was founded on certain regulatory provisions concerning citizenship, had not yet adopted an anti-Semitic character.⁶⁸⁴ In essence, Aegean citizenship represented a hybrid model, neither colonial nor metropolitan in nature, which was designed to ensure the advantages of both and to attract the Aegean people to embrace the notion of *Italianità*. In pursuit of the objective of fostering loyalty and commitment among the Dodecanese inhabitants with a view to facilitating expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean, Italy placed its foreign interests above the ideal of uniting the national community.

⁶⁸⁴ However, prior to the proclamation of the Fascist regime in 1936, this concept was expressed with an accentuated emphasis on racial superiority based on Aryanist principles. The regime expected an explicit acknowledgement of consent with regard to its policies. The new Italian citizen was expected to demonstrate a heightened awareness of their racial identity and to meet specific physical, political, and moral criteria, all in the service of the broader objectives of Italian expansion and domination. The Governor of Rhodes, Cesare De Vecchi, stated in 1939 that Aegean Muslims should be categorized as Aryan, that Islam lacked a distinct racial identification, and that their integration into “metropolitan citizenship” would not contradict the Italian racist ideology. While this rationale was applicable to Aegean Christians, De Vecchi asserted that Jews, being ethnically Semitic and thus similar to their other colonial subjects, should be exempt from this privilege. Espinoza, “An Italian Nationality for the Levant,” 124-125, 127.

CONCLUSION

Although the initial objective of this thesis was to examine the “wartime transformation” of Italian identity in Ottoman territories, the research has touched upon a more extensive range of topics and answered questions extending beyond its original scope. As was demonstrated throughout the study, the issue of wartime transformation focuses on the designation of Italians as “enemy aliens” and, consequently, on their methods of survival under wartime conditions. However, it is evident that such an analysis would be incomplete without addressing the transimperial character of this particular identity, its ethnocultural and demographic origins, and the civic development that took root in a climate of extraterritoriality. Consequently, the study's findings and potential contributions begin with the exploration of the transimperial character of the Italo-Levantine identity, which is spread across a broader Mediterranean world. This extensive field of observation, grounded in a broader conception of Mediterraneanism, has therefore revealed an additional set of values concerning the Jewish origins of this identity and its extensions within the Ottoman realm. This finding has prompted me to investigate the demographic composition and distribution of the Italian community within the Ottoman Empire, thus enabling the identification of the ethnocultural origins of the identity in question within a tangible statistical framework. A further significant contribution of this study is the revelation of the implicit connections between the designation of the Italian subject as an “enemy alien” and its civic pragmatism empowered by extraterritoriality. To elaborate, the behavioral patterns exhibited by Italians under wartime conditions necessitated an investigation into survival mechanisms, such as naturalization. To comprehend the concept of naturalization within this context, it was also necessary to explore the civic and legal foundations of Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire. In conclusion, the foundational codes of the “wartime transformation” – which I have identified as my starting point and which pertains to the limited timeframe of 1911–1919 – lie much further back in history. It is evident that these codes necessitate a comprehensive analysis of the transimperial and extraterritorial nature of Italo-Levantine identity. Furthermore, this analysis must encompass both the Mediterranean imaginaries that underpin the identity and the Ottoman extensions that have contributed to its formation.

By drawing on a range of approaches from the extant literature, this research primarily examines the diasporic extensions of Italians within the Ottoman realm and frames this within the template of the “Italo-Levantine” identity. The formation process of this transimperial identity, spanning centuries and a vast geography, manifests a “temporal” and “spatial” transcendence. Following the unification of Italy in the late nineteenth century, generations of migrants amalgamated with pre-existing Italo-Levantine populations within the broader Mediterranean region, particularly within the Ottoman Empire. This supra-identity, with its multi-layered and diasporic character, established national and civic ties with the Kingdom of Italy founded in 1861, thus beginning the gradual development of a constitutional sense of citizenship. To summarize, the primary catalyst for the expansion and sophistication of the diaspora has been identified as the foundation of the kingdom, in conjunction with the post-Risorgimento migrations that ensued. It was revealed that this sophistication may have triggered the constitutional/civic/national affiliations of the Italo-Levantine subject with his homeland. Therefore, my conceptual analysis of the historical transformation and transimperial character of the Italo-Levantine diaspora in the Ottoman Empire was predicated upon the principles of “temporal continuity” and “spatial integrity.” This analysis facilitated the interpretation of the multi-layered and multi-stage structure of Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire through the

prism of spatial and cultural continuity. Hence, the concept of “temporal and spatial transcendence,” as elucidated through various theoretical frameworks, has been a pivotal argument in understanding the formation of a transgenerational Italian identity within the Ottoman context.

From this standpoint, the study has highlighted that disparate designations such as “Italo-Levantines” and “Italians in the Ottoman Empire” are, in fact, manifestations of a singular overarching identity within the Mediterranean and Ottoman contexts. The designation “Italo-Levantines” encompassed domains that were effectively autonomous and outside the direct control of the Ottomans, such as Egypt and Tunisia. Furthermore, the designation “Italians in the Ottoman Empire” was even applied to autonomous regions in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, such as Romania and Serbia. These dominions, which underwent a gradual process of secession from the Ottoman Empire from the early eighteenth century onwards, continued to provide a hospitable environment for Italians in subsequent periods.⁶⁸⁵ In summary, the Italo-Levantine identity was a designation that both encompassed and, in certain instances, extended beyond the official borders of the Ottoman geography. A further examination of the correlation between these identity definitions could also serve as a reference point for future diaspora and migration studies examining Italians. From this standpoint, the study is anticipated to stimulate interest in identity definitions, sociocultural categorizations, and civic statuses encompassing Italians, both within the broader context of Mediterraneanness and within the narrower context of Ottomanness.

Within the scope of this study, the transimperial identities oscillating between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy can be broadly categorized as follows:

1. The Italo-Levantine diaspora, consisting of Venetian and Genoese colonies that have been settled predominantly in Ottoman port cities since the thirteenth century. This group, which was particularly associated with the communities in the Pera district of Istanbul, has undergone a gradual transformation through the influence of the Ottoman and Greek cultures, acquiring a distinctive character.
2. The Italian Jews, who were compelled to flee the Italian peninsula in the fifteenth century due to Aragonese expansion and Papal pressure and who subsequently migrated to Ottoman cities. They regularly traversed both imperial domains via various commercial and religious networks, thereby connecting Italian and Ottoman ports.
3. The post-Risorgimento migrants, who found themselves unable to assimilate into the Kingdom of Italy due to a combination of factors, including rural poverty, onerous taxation, mandatory military service, and land tenure issues, and who subsequently emigrated in large numbers from the country between 1861 and 1914. These movements, which were predominantly composed of Southern Italians (*Mezzogiorno*) and characterized by labor migration, were mass, continuous, and global in scale.

⁶⁸⁵ The dates on which these dominions gained autonomy and full independence from the Ottoman Empire are, respectively, Tunisia (1705–1881), Egypt (1805–1914), Serbia (1817–1878), and Wallachia and Moldavia (1829–1879).

However, their orientation towards the Ottoman Empire was limited, selective, and qualified.

From the perspective of the first category, this study sought to provide an analytical view of the Italo-Levantine imaginary, primarily through Mediterranean-focused thalassological approaches. Utilizing a combination of Braudelian and post-Braudelian methodologies, my objective was to situate the Italo-Levantine identity within a holistic system of shared values across the Mediterranean region, whilst also tracing its diasporic formation within the Ottoman geographical setting. To this end, attention was also drawn to thalassological ideologies such as *Mare Nostrum*, which was employed by the Ancient Rome to emphasize Roman dominance in the Mediterranean region, as well as their colonial legacies extending into the twentieth century. In this regards, my research seeks to identify the place of Italo-Levantine identity amid Italy's hegemonic and imperialist ambitions towards the Mediterranean region, its revisionist foreign policy, and its claims to reestablish the Mediterranean as an Italian sphere of influence.⁶⁸⁶ In examining the dynamics and tensions between Italian migrations and the diaspora from a conceptual perspective, I also explored the Italo-Levantines' perception of "public space" through Fuhrman's conceptualization of "port city society."⁶⁸⁷ At this juncture, the crucial role and significance of discourses such as "The whole world is a village" (*Tutto il mondo è paese*) and "Italy outside Italy" (*Italia fuori d'Italia*) in the formation of a "global Italy" came to the fore.

Furthermore, I would like to express that I find Bossaert's observation, based on the codes of "Italianness" and "Ottomanism," suggesting that the Italians in Istanbul were both a "colony" and a "community," to be truly eye-opening.⁶⁸⁸ Despite their prioritization of an Italian identity as diasporic extensions of the Italian homeland, these individuals also functioned as subjects within the Ottoman social system. These Italians, who had occupied prominent positions within the Ottoman commercial sphere and state apparatus for centuries, subsequently transmitted this commercial and bureaucratic influence to their families. While certain families, such as *Segura* and *Nasi*, are renowned for their commercial activities and involvement in the Ottoman commercial relations and tax system, others, including *Missir* and *Guracucchi*, are distinguished by their specific professions, such as consular translation. This transimperial community, characterized by its oscillation between Italian and Ottoman identities, also acquired a political character with the post-Risorgimento migrations, thereby establishing different ties with the nation-building process that began on the Peninsula.

Following the Greek War of Independence (1821-1829), prominent figures such as Garibaldi and Mazzini established both ideological and practical contacts with Ottoman domains, leveraging the Ottoman Empire as a transit hub and an interaction zone for revolutionary networks. The capacity of Italian revolutionaries and nationalists to seek refuge within the Ottoman Empire also contributed to the dissemination of peninsula-centered political

⁶⁸⁶ It is unfortunate that the extant literature contains no independent study exclusively focusing on the impact and scope of Italian Colonialism within the Ottoman domains. Nevertheless, the colonial initiatives developed by the Kingdom of Italy with the aim of restructuring the Mediterranean region had unique reflections and traces within the Ottoman geography. A comprehensive and systematic examination is therefore required, particularly in the domains of education, religion, and propaganda.

⁶⁸⁷ Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*.

⁶⁸⁸ Bossaert, "Crisscross Italianities."

ideologies throughout the Orient. The Italians of Istanbul, who had previously been characterized as a “colony without a national spirit,” underwent a gradual process of political, sociocultural, and institutional transformation. It is evident that civil society organizations, such as the *Società Operaia Italiana*, and newspapers, such as *La Rassegna Italiana*, assumed the responsibility of fostering a sense of patriotism within the Istanbul diaspora, with the objective of fortifying the bonds that bind them to their homeland. Furthermore, the Italo-Levantines who had resided in Istanbul for centuries, along with the post-Risorgimento immigrants who constituted the second generation, had established matrimonial connections with each other, thereby beginning to transform the community’s social fabric. By contextualizing all these political, sociocultural, and generational developments within the process of Italo-Levantine identity formation, I am convinced that I have presented a multidisciplinary and multi-layered analysis of the subject.

While elaborating on the formation of transimperial identities through temporal and spatial continuity, the thesis makes a significant contribution to another understudied topic. This is the exploration of the ethnic and geographical origins of the Judeo-Italian extensions within the established Italo-Levantine diaspora in the Ottoman Empire. Delving into the ethnocultural origins of the Italian-Levantine identity has allowed me to uncover the profound extent to which Jewish elements are interwoven into its fabric. To this end, a comprehensive analysis has been conducted through various studies addressing both Italian Judaism, in general, and the Jewish community in the Ottoman Empire, in particular. A review of the relevant literature reveals that Italian Jews in the Ottoman Empire have been treated as part of the broader Jewish community in the Empire in the majority of studies to date. Consequently, these studies have approached them as part of a composite Jewish population within the Ottoman Empire, rather than focusing on their specific Italian identity or affiliation. Moreover, in academic discourse on Mediterranean, Imperial, and Levantine Studies, these actors have been examined as participants in commercial, confessional, and sociocultural networks established between the Italian peninsula and the Ottoman geography. These literatures, in which the focus is on individuals’ Sephardic origins and their commercial connections in port cities such as Livorno, Venice, and Ancona, emphasize Jewish affiliation rather than Italian identity. Through a comprehensive review of these two schools of thought, which interpret Italian Judaism through either the lens of the communities in the Ottoman Empire or the commercial networks in the Mediterranean, this thesis seeks to establish a synthesis. In this capacity, the objective of this synthesis is to demonstrate that Italian Jews constituted a pivotal element of the Italo-Levantine diaspora within the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, I would argue that the further exploration of the Jewish components inherent within the Italo-Levantine identity will inevitably result in a re-evaluation of the prevailing categorization that equates this identity with adherence to Christianity and Western origins.

Given the complex interweaving of ethnic and religious affiliations within the scope of this study, it is evident that the term “Italian Jew” may be viewed as both peculiar and, in certain instances, problematic. The majority of individuals identified as Italian Jews within the Ottoman Empire were, in fact, neither of Italian ancestry nor origin. Instead, they emerged predominantly from the Italianization of Sephardic Jews and, on occasion, Ashkenazi Jews who had migrated to the Italian peninsula. To elaborate further, it is an established fact that a significant number of the Sephardim who were compelled to flee the 1492 expulsion from Spain and the 1497 expulsion from Portugal migrated to southern Italian kingdoms, such as Sicily and Naples, and to cities in the Papal States, such as Ancona. Nevertheless, between 1493 and 1593,

all Jews residing in Sicily, Sardinia, the Kingdom of Naples, and the Papal States were systematically expelled and subsequently sought refuge in Ottoman cities. In consideration of this fact, it can be hypothesized that a significant proportion of the Italian-Jewish immigrants who arrived in the Ottoman Empire were not, in fact, of Italian origin or descent, but were simply Sephardim whose point of departure was Italy. However, the *Italkim/Italkian* and Roman Jews, who had been settled in the Italian peninsula, Sicily and Sardinia since ancient times and possessed unique cultures and distinctive dialects, constituted a significant difference in this respect. These Italy-centered groups, which can be described as both qualitatively unique and quantitatively limited, were present in these lands a thousand years before the 1492 Iberian expulsion or the Aragonese expansion. Nevertheless, it is evident that among the Jewish immigrants who migrated to the Ottoman realm, the proportion of those who could truly be considered of Italian origin, such as the *Italkim* and Roman, was minimal. It is a topic of considerable interest and intrigue, with significant potential for further research, to explore the proportion of *Italkim* and Roman Jews who migrated to the Ottoman Empire. However, the present thesis does not pursue the issue through further numerical or statistical research.

The question therefore arises as to what constituted the foundations of the “Italianness” of these Jewish individuals, who had become integrated into the Ottoman social ecosystem. In the pursuit of an answer to the aforementioned question, Asher Salah’s observations furnished me with a valuable source of insight and inspiration.⁶⁸⁹ While Salah acknowledges the formation of a distinct Italian-Jewish identity at the end of the sixteenth century, he argues that this is not necessarily tied to an essentialist categorization. In other words, Salah envisions a Jewish self-identification which transcends ethnic or genealogical origins and geographical or communal affiliations. This self-identification, driven by social and political motivations, manifests itself more clearly in ethno-geographical intermingling and non-linear connections concerning Jews. For instance, the transformation of the toponym Lausitz, representing a significant German region for Ashkenazim, into the Italian surname *Luzatti*, serves as a compelling illustration of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, the *Luzatti* family, associated with the Venetian Jewish community, were not Ashkenazi, and there was no inherent connection between them and Lausitz. It is evident that, among Italian Jews, such ethnic and geographical parameters have become devoid of their identity-defining quality, acquiring a transboundary character that renders the tracing of their origins a challenging task. Furthermore, Salah’s comparison of Italian identities in the Christian and Jewish worlds provides a more sophisticated insight into the definition of the boundaries of Italian Judaism in this study. According to this comparison, while the “Italian” identity in the Christian world only emerged as late as the Risorgimento, among Jews, the designation “Italian” had evolved from a geographical origin to a cultural-ethnic identity much earlier. Consequently, Salah’s observation indicates the emergence of a transnational Italian identity among the Jewish population at least a century before that of their Christian neighbors. Furthermore, by challenging the conventional approach that perceives Italian Jewry as a constituent element of a more extensive Sephardic world, Salah contends that it evolved as a middle ground between Ashkenazi and Sephardic traditions by the eighteenth century.

In order to conduct a comprehensive analysis on such an understudied topic, it was necessary to undertake an extensive literature review. To this end, I have conducted a systematic review of relevant studies, encompassing the ethnic and anthropological origins of Italian Jewry,

⁶⁸⁹ Salah, “On the meaning of ‘Italian,’”

Jewish communities within the Ottoman Empire, and the intricate network of Jewish connections in the context of Mediterraneanism and Levantinism. The role and importance of Jews in terms of commercial networks between Italian ports such as Livorno, Ancona, and Venice and Ottoman ports such as Istanbul and Izmir has been a subject examined in the literature to date. However, the study of the confessional and rabbinic ties established with the Istanbul and Izmir communities through cities such as Livorno and Pavia, which are important for Italian Jewry, remains an understudied topic. Lehmann's study, which examined Jewish charitable networks operating between Italian and Ottoman domains, has partially filled a significant lacuna in the field.⁶⁹⁰ However, the study's selective and specific focus suggests that there is considerable potential for further research in this extensive area. While Minna Rozen's work remains the most valuable contribution to the literature on this subject, a study dedicated to the sectarian and rabbinical extensions of Italian Judaism in the Ottoman Empire has yet to be written.⁶⁹¹ The influence of Maharik (Joseph Colon Trabotto), the chief rabbi based in Pavia and influential in Mantua and Lombardy, on the Ottoman Jewish congregation could be a particularly compelling prospect for future studies. The halakhic rulings (*responsa*) published by Maharik were accepted as authoritative and taught by Jewish congregations in Ottoman lands.

It is intriguing to note that the Italian identity, which has historically and traditionally been synonymous with Catholicism, has also come to be characterized by the Jewish faith over time. This process of intermingling has led to the emergence of an intermediate category such as Judeo-Italian. However, from the perspective of this study, the most intriguing aspect is the pragmatic flexibility of the transimperial individual in the Ottoman realm, who oscillated between Italian citizenship and the Jewish confession. This phenomenon occasionally manifested as an Italian-origin Ottoman Jew seeking Italian naturalization, and at other times, a Jew in possession of Italian citizenship applying for Ottoman naturalization. The establishment of a civic bond with the homeland through population records in Italian cities, and the subsequent declaration of this bond to the Ottoman authorities, was the most valid method of obtaining Italian citizenship. At this juncture, the letters and petition samples obtained from Ottoman and Italian archives regarding naturalization applications substantially enhanced the content. It is also evident that the decrees and regulations outlining the Ottoman government's naturalization policies represent a valuable body of material for comprehending the civic and legal backdrop of Italian Jews within the Ottoman Empire. I am convinced that my research will make a significant contribution to the existing literature on Judeo-Italian extensions in the Ottoman Empire, as well as to the broader corpus on Italian Jewry.

The extraterritorial jurisdiction of a transimperial Italian identity, primarily manifested through capitulations, is a field comprising both legal and civic levels. In order to achieve a more profound comprehension of these levels, I conducted an analysis of extraterritoriality from the perspective of international law, incorporating it within the scope of the study. Delving into the legal foundations of the concept, this analysis facilitated understanding of the general boundaries drawn by Ottoman law for Italian protégés. In other words, the identification of the intrinsic connection between the concepts of "extraterritorial jurisdiction" and "capitulatory protection" has facilitated my analysis of Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire, enabling its dissection into its legal, civil, and even political layers. Furthermore, as I have demonstrated

⁶⁹⁰ Lehmann, "La Puerta de la Franquía,"

⁶⁹¹ Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul*.; Rozen, *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi*.

in the research, Joseph John Viscomi's exploration of the interplay between Italian extraterritoriality and political participation was both a pioneering contribution to the field and a promising avenue for future study.⁶⁹² In addition, I must emphasize that I found Marie Bossaert's analysis to be both innovative and thought-provoking from a scholarly point of view. In her analysis, Bossaert successfully traces and interprets in what ways post-Risorgimento immigrants adopted a political identity based on their feelings of "Italianness" and "belonging to Italy."⁶⁹³ Although Viscomi and Bossaert's analyses concerning this subject are addressed in this thesis within a limited scope, I have to state that they motivated me to conduct further research on the political consciousness of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. It has been observed that the area, wherein the extraterritorial boundaries of the Italians in the Ottoman Empire intersect with post-Risorgimento political consciousness, has not yet been extensively researched.

In this regard, the following research questions have been identified as potential areas requiring further investigation. How did extraterritoriality exert an influence on the political consciousness of transimperial identities, while concurrently promoting cross-border permeability and, at times, legal ambiguity? In what manner did individuals who found themselves caught between the allegiances and constitutional obligations of two states following the Risorgimento begin to develop a political vision that straddled both "Italianness" and "Ottomanness"? It is an established fact that since 1861, the Kingdom of Italy had conducted general elections through parliamentary blocs, with a notable predominance of elite participation. In 1919, the nation transitioned to a more modern system of party politics, holding its inaugural elections based on party competition. The question of whether Italian nationals residing within the Ottoman Empire were impacted by this process, and the specific conditions and extent to which they were affected, remains a highly intriguing and as yet unexplored area of research.

The civic pragmatism evidenced in the naturalization practices of subjects oscillating between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Italy had not been situated within a theoretical and analytical framework until now. Referring to key theoretical patterns and analytical templates, this study seeks to classify and periodize the naturalization practices of these transimperial identities. Employing a typology that encompasses the categories of Instrumental, Defensive, and Postwar Naturalization, the study undertakes a systematic analysis of the conditions, motivations, and scope of naturalization processes pursued by Italians residing within the Ottoman realm. The periods into which this typology is divided can be delineated as follows: the pre-war period from 1861 to 1911, the war period from 1911 to 1918, and the post-war period from 1919 to 1923. This typological periodization is expected to make a substantial contribution to extant literature by offering a more detailed examination of the civic pragmatism exhibited by transimperial individuals situated between the Italian and Ottoman states. Moreover, the contents of naturalization and conversion cases, along with relevant Ottoman legislation, were obtained from archival documents and integrated into the research, thereby enhancing the value of the study. The clarity and institutionalization introduced by the 1869 Ottoman Nationality Law to the ambiguity surrounding the designations of nationality, subjecthood, and citizenship is extensively articulated. Furthermore, imperial or ministerial decrees, memoranda, and legislative amendments issued by the Ottoman state to regulate the

⁶⁹² Viscomi, *Migration at the End of Empire*.

⁶⁹³ Bossaert, "Crisscross Italianities."

process of naturalization have been transferred from the archives to the study, provided that their textual integrity was preserved. Tracing the evolution of civic standardization within the Ottoman context facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the legal trajectory of the naturalization practices pursued by Italians.

Utilizing the phenomena of “transimperial jurisdiction” facilitated my conceptualization of the hybrid regime that emerged in the Dodecanese Islands following the Italian occupation of 1912. This methodological approach subsequently enabled my investigation into the “administrative/legal/civic continuity” that existed between the Italian occupational regime and the Ottoman bureaucratic legacy. Indeed, the advent of a transimperial jurisdiction on an inter-regime paradigm did not merely engender a hybridity of administrative and legal character. Extending beyond this, it functioned as a civic laboratory, paving the way for the introduction of new citizenship designs and, consequently, the formation of fresh transimperial identities. Investigating the causality and continuity between the centuries-old Aegean capitulations inherited from the Ottoman Empire and Italy’s citizenship designs specific to the Aegean proved to be a journey that was, at times, challenging but ultimately quite insightful. Concepts such as “anomalous legal zones” and “inter-imperial legal repertoire,” defined by Lauren Benton as products of interacting imperial sovereignties, proved highly useful in my interpretation of the Dodecanese, a disputed region under shared sovereignty. Nevertheless, the fundamental motivation behind the interrogation of this shared sovereignty and dispute was to address the crux of specific civic designs introduced by the Italians during the occupation, namely “Aegean naturalization” or “Aegean citizenship.” In line with this objective, the citizenship designs introduced by the Italian colonial vision in the Aegean Islands were categorized and analyzed as a distinct form of transimperial identity. This identity, which emerged in the post-Ottoman period, was situated within the overarching framework of inter-regime continuity. Therefore, I have structured the final chapter as an extensive case study, with a view to offering an insightful and compelling perspective on the shared spaces and identity projects that accompanied this regime transition.

The Dodecanese, as recognized by Rome as the eastern frontier of the empire, differed from other colonies such as Libya, Eritrea, and Somalia in that it was characterized as a possession rather than a colony. The aforementioned archipelago, whose inhabitants exhibited marked distinctions from colonial subjects in Africa with regard to both phenotype and temperament, would subsequently become the site of assimilation policies in cultural, religious, demographic, and institutional dimensions. Indeed, the demographic engineering of Italy in the Aegean Islands extended beyond the transfer of Italian populations and the intermarriage of local Orthodox Greeks with Catholic Italians. The Italian colonial vision introduced a variety of naturalization practices and intermediate statuses, granting selected islanders first minor and then full citizenship. The political and ideological dimensions of this citizenship design extend beyond the timeframe of the thesis, reaching towards the Fascist Italy of the 1940s. Nevertheless, an exhaustive study of Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire would undoubtedly be incomplete without addressing citizenship design in the Aegean Islands. Therefore, I have deemed it essential to incorporate this subject into the thesis, albeit with a more limited focus on the period subsequent to 1923.

The legal and administrative complications that emerged between the Ottoman and Italian regimes, along with the accompanying Hellenic aspirations, formed the backdrop to these civic designs. At this juncture, I firmly believe that elevating the discussion surrounding these designs

from a mere legal or civic context to an inter-regime framework proved to be a highly insightful and strategic decision. This approach enabled me to realize that post-occupation citizenship models neither signify a complete rupture from the past nor a full restoration. Italian authorities, who had made commitments to the island communities regarding a post-occupation future, concurrently engaged in a reckoning with the past. Knowing that the most resilient examples were those founded on the transformation and renaming of old statuses, they preferred to maintain the existing Ottoman bureaucracy and the Aegean capitulations in different capacities rather than abolishing them. I should also note that the criteria of temporal continuity and spatial integrity, pervasive throughout the thesis, have been highly beneficial in creating such a multidimensional case study on the Dodecanese.

The 1911 Italo-Ottoman War marked a pivotal shift in the position of Italians within the Ottoman Empire, from both the perspective of the state and that of society at large. Individuals of Italian origin, who had previously been regarded as “capitulatory protégés” by the Ottoman state, were now designated as “enemy aliens.” As a result of this shift in designation, they rapidly came to be viewed as undesirable elements of Ottoman society. The formal declaration of war by Italy upon the Ottoman Empire in August 1915 represented a second critical juncture for Italian residents within the Ottoman Empire, further exacerbating their already precarious situation. Ottoman policies, shaped by wartime vulnerabilities, began to perceive Italian institutions and citizens as threats to national security. Consequently, their identity in Ottoman society underwent a process of sociocultural erosion, resulting in their marginalization as unreliable and undesirable elements. Initially driven by political and military motives, this institutional and individual marginalization became increasingly evident in certain areas and practices in the subsequent period. By examining the progression of this marginalization in meticulous detail, this study engages with the wartime transformation of the Italian individual in the Ottoman geography between 1911 and 1918.

At this juncture, Daniela Caglioti’s seminal work, which extends stereotypical narratives about the “enemy alien” concept into a much broader space, proved to be a particularly valuable resource.⁶⁹⁴ As Caglioti also points out, the status of enemy alien was something far beyond the experiences of civilian identities under brutal war conditions. Drawing attention to the wartime chasm between nationals and foreigners, Caglioti focused on the dilemma faced by the state in striking a balance between granting rights and ensuring security. Delving into the historical evolution of the concept in the context of political philosophy, Caglioti meticulously traces the progression of the humanization of war. More crucially for the purposes of this study, Caglioti examines the relationship between wartime dynamics and civic-national affiliations through the concept of “wartime naturalization.” Both Caglioti’s earlier findings, which were based on the concept of wartime naturalization, and this study’s archival findings on the wartime transformation of Italian identity in the Ottoman realm converge at a common point. This common point is that the practice adopted by a significant proportion of Italians after 1911, which I have classified as “defensive naturalization,” was a direct consequence of their designation as “enemy aliens.”

As demonstrated in chapters four and five, the marginalization of Italians within the Ottoman ecosystem commenced at the institutional level and progressively transitioned to the individual

⁶⁹⁴ Caglioti, *War and Citizenship*.

level. In the immediate aftermath of the occupation of Ottoman Tripolitania, all Italian nationals employed in Ottoman state institutions and public services were dismissed from their positions. Furthermore, as the Italo-Ottoman War expanded from North Africa into the Western Anatolia and the Aegean Sea, this institutional marginalization rapidly assumed an individual dimension and resulted in mass expulsions of Italians from the Empire. The expulsion decrees, issued in the aftermath of the Italian naval bombardment of Beirut in February 1912 and the occupation of Dodecanese in May, represent exceptional and immediate illustrations of how marginalization progressed to the individual level. It is important to note that the political, military, and demographic sensitivities in the Syrian Levant, consisting of four provinces, necessitated such a harsh measure even at this early stage. Furthermore, in November 1914, the regions of Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon were consolidated into a military governorate, with Cemâl Pasha, Commander of the Fourth Army, being appointed to the commanding role. This turbulent region, where numerous practices were initiated for the first time, functioned as a local laboratory and testing ground for the demographic policies targeting Italians at the imperial level.

During the First World War, the Ottoman authorities adopted a more moderate and internal approach, implementing measures such as relocation and resettlement, as opposed to the radical solution of expulsion. It is evident that concerted efforts to control and minimize espionage activities have also significantly influenced this decision. Such efforts comprised the resettlement of enemy aliens at designated locations, which was then followed by their monitoring. The process of institutional marginalization, which had its origins in 1911 with an increased focus on the workforce, was accelerated during the First World War with the seizure and expropriation of Italian institutions in the imperial realm. The ongoing and increasing removal of Italian labor from public-sector industries and services, including railways, postal services, telegraph communications, healthcare, lighthouse administration, and tobacco production, also continued. Italian labor was no longer tolerated in these sectors, which had gained even greater importance due to wartime necessities.

Under the heading of “enemy aliens,” I would like to draw attention to an issue that holds great potential for further research and covers a particularly substantial area in both Ottoman and Italian archives. This is the issue of “prisoners of war,” which is directly related to both international law and diplomacy, as well as military command. As demonstrated by the extensive documentation of both the Italo-Ottoman War and the First World War, it was a prominent subject of concern for both the Ottoman and Italian authorities. At this point, I should particularly mention that during my extensive archival research, which spanned over three years, I have encountered a substantial amount of documentation and accounts relating to prisoners of war. One such account relates to Italian residents who were interned in the Turkish quarter of Izmir, along with all other enemy aliens, as a reprisal for the aerial bombardment of the city in May-June 1916. A further account relates to the circumstances of Italian citizens who were relocated from Izmir and Istanbul to isolated towns in the interior, including Çorum, Kastamonu, and Deyrizer, as a consequence of the incursion on the village of Fenak in Marmaris in September 1916. It was revealed that Italian forces assumed an active role in such joint offensive operations, which were generally commanded and coordinated by the British and French armies.

In response to these actions, the Ottoman authorities, operating on the principle of reciprocity, subjected Italian civilians to a set of measures. The array of practices, which could also be classified as a demographic design program, encompassed various forms of relocation, resettlement, internment, and, in certain instances, expulsion. While this thesis addresses a select number of specific cases concerning these measures, the extensive archival collection provides a wealth of personal narratives. As reflected in archival documents, a proportion of these relocated prisoners experienced difficulties in acclimatizing to the regional climate, which resulted in health complications. Others encountered financial constraints due to their inability to communicate with their families. In the course of requests made to the Ottoman government for the return of these prisoners, the United States and Spain occasionally acted as intermediaries. It is evident that a proportion of these Italian prisoners were to be used as bargaining chips for the return of Ottoman officers and soldiers who had been held captive in the Italian peninsula or islands since the Italo-Ottoman War. However, due to the limitations imposed by the scope of this thesis and time constraints, I did not have the opportunity to focus extensively on such specific cases. Nevertheless, I consider this topic to be of significant potential for future research. As briefly discussed in the concluding chapter of the thesis, studies on Ottoman prisoners of war, particularly those from the Italo-Ottoman War, have recently emerged as a prominent theme within Turkish literature. Consequently, an independent study devoted to the issue of prisoners of war between the Kingdom of Italy and the Ottoman Empire during the First World War could be a promising prospect.

On the other hand, I am convinced that this research, with its frequent reliance on official publications and archival documents, will also make a significant contribution to demographic studies. In this regard, the thesis will provide a substantial update to extant studies on the demographic composition and distribution of Italians in the Ottoman Empire. The demographic findings of academics such as Grange, Gabaccia, and Shlala have been collated, synthesized, and incorporated into the thesis as preliminary reading. Nevertheless, the thesis's primary contribution to the demographic literature derives from an official statistical study conducted by the Kingdom of Italy and provincial censuses carried out by the Ottoman government. Firstly, I thoroughly examined the 1871 Census of Italians Abroad (*Censimento degli italiani all'estero*), widely regarded as the most comprehensive census of Italians residing abroad. The data pertaining to Ottoman geography has been meticulously filtered and extracted from the source material, subsequently tabulated, and subjected to an interpretive analysis under a separate heading. This distinctive regional analysis, focusing on Italians in Ottoman geography, will serve as a reliable reference point for future studies. A further significant contribution of the thesis to the demographic literature is the provincial censuses conducted by the Ottoman government in 1915, 1916, and 1918, which specifically targeted Italian residents. Utilizing archival documents as the primary source material, I carried out a comprehensive research, filtration, and synthesis on the abovementioned censuses. The censuses for June and August 1918 were discovered in the Ottoman archives in the form of complete documents and were transcribed and incorporated into the thesis. However, I have to admit that I was less fortunate in my attempts to locate censuses for 1915 and 1916. In order to generate such data, I was required to identify every piece of correspondence between the Ministry of the Interior and the governorates with regard to the numbers of Italian nationals. Furthermore, the process of acquiring settlement-based data from these correspondences and subsequently integrating this data into a meaningful whole necessitated a substantial investment of time, determination, and effort. Since these were not censuses conducted in a modern capacity, I was required to track

down updated figures transmitted to central authorities via successive telegrams and grapple with constantly changing tables. This challenging process necessitated months of meticulous labor, involving the transcription of hundreds of telegrams. In this regard, I have every confidence that the demographic content I have produced manually during this research process will make a truly valuable contribution to the field. The absence of alternative sources containing such detailed information on the demographic distribution of Italians in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War serves to emphasize the significance of this contribution.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere belief that this study would make a significant contribution to the understanding of the civic formation and transformation of Italian identity within the Ottoman context. The temporal continuity and spatial integrity, which I have adopted as a methodological approach, enabled the creation of a more comprehensive alternative to the fragmented typologies and period-based studies that have hitherto been applied to identity. From an academic perspective, I posit that the formation of Italian identity within the Ottoman Empire should be conceptualized as a dynamic, spatial-cultural continuum, shaped by the superimposition of multiple historical layers. This approach diverges from a monolithic, static, constitutional-national vision, as it acknowledges the complex evolution of cultural and political identities over time. The post-Risorgimento immigrants introduced a new generational and ideological dimension to the Venetian and Genoese colonies, which had been rooted in Mediterranean spatiality since the thirteenth century. The resulting fusion was not indicative of a homogeneous national community, but rather of a multi-layered extension of the diaspora, sharing different periods, affiliations, and experiences on common ground.

Consequently, the Italian identity that developed within the Ottoman Empire cannot be attributed exclusively to the legacy of commercial colonies that had been established since the Middle Ages, nor can it be considered a direct extension of the Risorgimento that emerged in the nineteenth century. This identity evolved within a temporal and spatial continuity where premodern Mediterranean networks encountered and intertwined with early modern civic and national imaginaries. Although the initial focus was on the wartime transformation of this identity in the twentieth century, I was required to avoid reducing it to an unnatural and anachronistic framework. To this end, instead of the initial periodization of 1911-1919, I decided to study Italian identity in the Ottoman Empire from a historical perspective that spanned a considerably earlier period and was grounded in a conception of spatial wholeness. This is due to the fact that the subject of my research was a transimperial identity form that had been reproduced, transformed, and differentiated over centuries in the Ottoman geography.

To illustrate, what was the experience of being an Italian in Istanbul or Izmir in 1911? This was a period when relations between the Ottoman Empire and Italy were at their lowest ebb, tensions were at their highest, and the two states were on the brink of becoming sworn enemies. To what extent did diplomatic notes, ultimatums, negotiations and military conflicts indirectly or directly concern or affect the Italian subject on the street? What happened to them and what were they subjected to? Did their Levantine background and heritage, hitherto perceived as sympathetic and friendly by the Ottoman authorities and communities, serve as a counterbalance to the aggressive image of Italy created by the hardening wartime conditions? What were their methods of coping with this difficult period? Nevertheless, the extensive scope of this research does not permit the exploration and investigation of these questions within the framework of a single study. In order to address the aforementioned questions, further micro-historical research, preferably based on ego-documents such as personal testimonies, memoirs,

narratives, letters and autobiographies, would be necessary. At this juncture, one of the primary objectives of this thesis is to encourage further discussion of the topic by posing a series of questions regarding the wartime transformations of the Italians in the Ottoman Empire.

A further area for future research suggested by this thesis could relate to Digital History, a field that has gained substantial momentum in recent years. As I noted at the introduction, over the course of nearly four years, I have accessed more than 1,000 documents from the Ottoman State Archives and transcribed them into modern Turkish. The primary focus of this vast collection is comprised of internal correspondences from 1910 to 1918 concerning Italian nationals, exchanged among Ottoman government bodies, state authorities, and provincial administrations. Approximately 600 documents pertain to the provinces of Adana, Aleppo, Beirut, Jerusalem, Syria, and the Dodecanese, while the remaining nearly 450 documents consist mostly of empire-wide correspondence. In my opinion, rendering this extensive collection digitally accessible, searchable and interpretable would represent a significant contribution to both the academic world and the realm of cultural heritage. Therefore, the digital analysis of all these archive-based official records could constitute the second phase of this comprehensive research. At this point, conducting a digital-based Social Network Analysis (SNA) of Italians in the Ottoman Empire—using “actors, entities, places, and events” (nodes) and their “relationships and interactions” (edges)—could prove to be a highly effective method. Another potential project would entail the creation of provincial monitoring and demographic visualizations of Italians in the Ottoman Empire through the utilization of Geospatial Mapping. I anticipate that a document-based and systematic visualization of communication patterns will provide a more sophisticated perspective on the Ottoman policies regarding Italians. Furthermore, a digital narrative platform based on the visualization of connections between individuals, institutions, and places could also serve to make previously unseen actors and relationships visible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Archival Sources

1. [COA] T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı – Osmanlı Arşivi
(Republic of Türkiye, Presidential State Archives – Ottoman Archives), İstanbul
 - (BEO) Babıali Evrak Odası Evrakı
 - (DH.EUM.2.Şb.) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti İkinci Şube
 - (DH.EUM.3.Şb.) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Üçüncü Şube
 - (DH.EUM.5.Şb.) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Beşinci Şube
 - (DH.EUM.KLU) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Kalem-i Umumi
 - (DH.EUM.SSM) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Seyrüsefer Müdüriyeti
 - (DH.EUM.THR) Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Tahrirât Kalem-i
 - (DH.İ.UM.EK) Dahiliye Nezâreti İdare-i Umumiye Ekleri
 - (DH.İD) Dahiliye Nezâreti İdare
 - (DH.MKT) Dahiliye Nezâreti Mektubî Kalem-i
 - (DH.MUI) Dahiliye Nezâreti Muhabberât-ı Umumiye İdaresi
 - (DH.SYS) Dahiliye Nezâreti Siyasi Kısım Evrakı
 - (DH.ŞFR) Dahiliye Nezâreti Şifre Kalem-i
 - (HR.HMŞ.İŞO) Hariciye Nezâreti Hukuk Müşavirliği İstişare Odası
 - (HR.İD) Hariciye Nezâreti İdare
 - (HR.SFR.04) Hariciye Nezâreti Sofya Sefareti
 - (HR.SFR.1) Hariciye Nezâreti Petersburg Sefareti
 - (HR.SYS) Hariciye Nezâreti Siyasi Kalem-i
 - (HR.TH) Hariciye Nezâreti Tahrirât-ı Hariciye Odası
 - (HR.TO) Hariciye Nezâreti Hariciye Tercüme Odası
 - (HSDHADB) Satın Alınan Evrak Hacı Adil Bey Evrakı
 - (İ.HR) İrâde Hariciye
 - (İ.MMS) İrâde Meclis-i Mahsûs
 - (İ.TAL) İrâde Taltifat
 - (MV) Meclis-i Vükelâ Mazbataları
 - (ŞD) Şûrâ-yı Devlet
 - (TŞR.HL) Taşra Evrakı Haleb Vilayeti
 - (ZB) Zabtiye Nezâreti Belgeleri
2. [TDA] T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Türk Diplomatik Arşivi
(Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Turkish Diplomatic Archives)
Ankara
3. Archivio storico e diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale (ASDMAE)
 - Archivio del Consolato sardo in Palestina poi Consolato d'Italia a Gerusalemme 1843-1943

- Pos.30.Naturalizzazione / “Cittadinanza” (Busta: 14 / Fascicolo: 58 / Anni: 1895-1922)
- Archivio politico ordinario e di gabinetto 1915-1918 (APOEDG)
 - Dodecanneso-Egeo (Busta: 55/ Fascicolo: 1 / Oggetto: Trattazione Generale 1915 /Anni: 1915 / Posizione: 1144/17/1- [12])
 - Dodecanneso-Egeo (Busta: 55/ Fascicolo: 2 / Oggetto: Trattazione Generale 1916 /Anni: 1916 / Posizione: 1144/17/4)
- Affari politici, Serie “P”, 1891-1916 (AP)
 - Isole dell’Egeo (Busta: 154 / Posizione: 17/ Anni: 1912)

B- Published Sources

1. Books, Monographs, Edited Volumes and Chapters

Abulafia, David. “What happened to the Jews of southern Italy?” In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 181-200. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Aciman, André. *Out of Egypt: A Memoir*. New York: Macmillan, 1994.

Al-Sayyid Marsot, Afaf Lutfi. *A Short History of Modern Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Aptekar, Sofya. *The Road to Citizenship: What Naturalization Means for Immigrants and the United States*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015.

Armutçu, Emel. *Bir Levanten Şövalye “Giovanni Scognamillo Kitabı”*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2008.

Aydın, Faruk. *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tanzimat'tan Sonra Askeralma Kanunları (1839-1914)*. Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1994.

Balı, Rıfat. *Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya: Amerika'ya İlk Göç Eden Türklerin Yaşam Öyküleri*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004.

Ballinger, Pamela. *The World Refugees Made: Decolonization and the Foundation of Postwar Italy*. Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2020.

Beehler, William Henry. *The History of the Italian-Turkish War: September 29, 1911, to October 18, 1912*. Annapolis, MD: The Advertiser-Republican, 1913.

Benton, Lauren. *A Search for Sovereignty : Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400–1900*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Berhe, Simona. “Rights, Mobility, and Identity: Colonial Citizenship in Libya in the Twenties.” In *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, edited by Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, 157-179. New York: Routledge, 2022.

Bettin, Cristina M. *Italian Jews from Emancipation to the Racial Laws*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Blackthorne O'Barr, Erik, and Burhan Çağlar, edited by. *Levantine of the Ottoman World: Communities, Identities, and Cultures*. İstanbul: Ibn Haldun University Press, 2023.

Borýsek, Martin, and Davide Liberatoscioli. "Introduction." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 1-24. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Bossaert, Marie. "Crisscross Italianities—Circulations, Identifications, and Sociability in Nineteenth Century Istanbul." In *Italianness and Migration from the Risorgimento to the 1960s*, edited by Stéphane Mourlane, Céline Regnard, Manuela Martini and Catherine Brice, 183-198. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.

Braudel, Fernand. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II: Volume One*. London and New York: Fontana/Collins, 1981.

Breccia, Alessandro. "Politiche e visioni della cittadinanza: Il personale consolare italiano al tramonto dell'Impero ottomano (1863-1923)." In *Citizenship under Pressure: Naturalisation Policies from the Late XIX Century until the Aftermath of the World War I*, edited by Marcella Aglietti, 21-33. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2021.

Caffiero, Marina. *The History of the Jews in Early Modern Italy: From the Renaissance to the Restoration*. New York: Routledge, 2022.

Caglioti, Daniela L. *War and Citizenship: Enemy Aliens and National Belonging from the French Revolution to the First World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Çakmak, Aydın. *Trablusgarp Savaşı'nda Osmanlı Esirleri*. İstanbul: Aktif Yayınevi, 2023.

Can, Cengiz. *İstanbul'un Yabancı ve Levanten Mimarları*. İstanbul: Arketon Yayınları, 2020.

Can, Lâle, and Michael Christopher Low. "Introduction." In *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, edited by Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens, 1-16. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020.

Carboni, Stefano. *Venice and the Ottoman Empire: A Tale of Art, Culture, and Exchange*. New York: Rizzoli Electa, 2024.

Castiglioni, Luca. "No More Greeks: Contrasting Identities in the Italian Dodecanese." In *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, edited by Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, 202-222. New York: Routledge, 2022.

Causa, Cesare. *La guerra italo-turca e la conquista della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica, dallo sbarco di Tripoli alla pace di Losanna*. Firenze: Editore Adriano Salani, 1912.

Ceccarelli, Alessia. *Nostalgia d'Oriente. Genova, Roma e il Mediterraneo nel Cinque e Seicento*. Roma: Donzelli Editore, 2022.

Cecini, Giovanni. *La guardia di finanza nelle isole italiane dell'Egeo: 1912-1945*. Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2016.

Çelebi, Mevlüt. *İtalyan Arşiv Belgelerinde Anadolu'da Yunan Mezalimi*. Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2010.

———. *Milli Mücadele Döneminde Türk-İtalyan İlişkileri*. Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2002.

———. *Türkiye-İtalya Siyasi İlişkileri (1923-1939)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020.

———. *Türkiye-İtalya Sosyal ve Kültürel İlişkileri, 1923-1939*. Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2022.

Champion, Matthew S. *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities of the Fifteenth-Century Low Countries*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Childs, Timothy Winston. *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy and the War over Libya, 1911-1912*. Leiden: E J Brill, 1990.

Choate, Mark I. *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Çiçek, Talha. *War and State Formation in Syria: Cemal Pasha's governorate during World War I, 1914-1917*. Oxford: Routledge, 2014.

Ćirković, Sima M. *The Serbs*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Clarence-Smith, William Gervase. *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Cleveland, William L., Martin P. Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East: 6th Edition*. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Colafermina, Cesare. *The Jews in Calabria*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

de Amicis, Edmondo. *Constantinople*. Translated by Caroline Tilton. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896.

de Haas, Hein, Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World - Sixth Edition*. London: Red Globe Press, 2020.

de Haas, Hein. *How Migration Really Works: A Factful Guide to the Most Divisive Issue in Politics*. London: Viking, Penguin Books, 2023.

De Lorentis, Daniela. "Italiani espulsi dall'Impero Ottomano. Il fondo 'Contenzioso' del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (1911-1913)." In *Puglia e Grande Guerra. Tra dimensione adriatica e fronte interno: fonti e ricerche*, edited by Francesco Altamura, 44-63, Lecce: Salento Books, 2017.

De Napoli, Olindo. "Between Governmentality and Indeterminacy: The Birth of the Legal Category of Subjecthood (1882–1909)." In *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies*:

Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943, edited by Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, 3-24. New York: Routledge, 2022.

de Silberstein, Carina Frid. “Migrants, Farmers and Workers: Italians in the Land of Ceres.” In *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*, edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli, 79-101. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

Di Nepi, Serena. “Others within others. On scole and diversity in the ghetto of Rome (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries).” In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 203-220. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Di Nepi, Serena. *Surviving the Ghetto: Toward a Social History of the Jewish Community in 16th-Century Rome*. Leiden: Brill, 2020.

Doumanis, Nicholas. *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean: Remembering Fascism’s Empire*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997.

———. *Una faccia, una razza. Le colonie italiane nell'Egeo*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003.

Edelstein, Dan, Stefanos Geroulanos and Natasha Wheatley, edited by. *Power and Time: Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2020.

Erdem, Y. Hakan. *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800-1909*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996.

Espinoza, Filippo. “An Italian Nationality for the Levant: Citizenship in the Aegean from the Ottoman to the Fascist Empire (1912–1936).” In *Citizens and Subjects of the Italian Colonies: Legal Constructions and Social Practices, 1882–1943*, edited by Simona Berhe and Olindo De Napoli, 109-130. New York: Routledge, 2022.

Findley, Carter Vaughn. *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.

———. *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Fiore, Teresa. *Pre-Occupied Spaces: Remapping Italy’s Transnational Migrations and Colonial Legacies*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2017.

Fogu, Claudio. *The Fishing Net and the Spider Web: Mediterranean Imaginaries and the Making of Italians*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

Fraser, Elisabeth A. *Mediterranean Encounters: Artists Between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, 1774–1839*. University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017.

Fuhrmann, Malte. “I would rather be in the Orient: European Lower Class Immigrants into the Ottoman Lands.” in *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity*, edited by Ulrike Freitag, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi and Florian Riedler, 228-241. London: SOAS / Routledge, 2011.

Fuhrmann, Malte. *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Gabaccia, Donna R. *Italy's Many Diasporas*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000.

Gabaccia, Donna, and Fraser Ottanelli, edited by. *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

Gallant, Thomas W. "Afterword: Writing Mediterranean Diasporas After the Transnational Turn." In *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, edited by Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou, 205-210. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

Genell, Aimee M. "The Well-Defended Domains: Eurocentric International Law and the Making of the Ottoman Office of Legal Counsel." In *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, edited by Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens, 36-54. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020.

Girardelli, Paolo, and Ezio Godoli, edited by. *Italian Architects and Builders in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Design Across Borders*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017.

Grange, Daniel J. *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896-1911). Les fondements d'une politique étrangère*. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1994.

Grazzini, Alice. "Italian Jewry in the 'Theater of languages'. Sephardic and Italian Jews in a Roman *giudicata*." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 125-143. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Guidi, Andreas. *Generations of Empire: Youth from Ottoman to Italian Rule in the Mediterranean*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022.

Gülsoy, Ufuk. "Cizye'den Vatandaşlığa: Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni." in *Türkler Ansiklopedisi, Cilt 14: Osmanlı*, edited by Hasan Celâl Güzel, Kemal Çiçek and Salim Koca, 143-163. Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002.

Gülsoy, Ufuk. *Osmanlı'nın Gayrimüslim Askerleri: Cizyeden Vatandaşlığa*. İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2010.

Hanioğlu, Şükrü. *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Hanley, Will. "What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not." In *The Subjects of Ottoman International Law*, edited by Lâle Can, Michael Christopher Low, Kent F. Schull and Robert Zens, 55-75. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020.

Hartog, François. *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

Hom, Stephanie Malia. *Empire's Mobius Strip: Historical Echoes in Italy's Crisis of Migration and Detention*. Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2019.

Horden, Peregrine, and Nicholas Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.

Isabella, Maurizio, and Konstantina Zanou. "Introduction: The Sea, its People and their Ideas in the Long Nineteenth Century." In *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, edited by Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou, 1-23. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

Isabella, Maurizio. "Mediterranean Liberals? Italian Revolutionaries and the Making of a Colonial Sea, ca. 1800–30." In *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, edited by Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou, 77-96. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

Isabella, Maurizio. *Risorgimento in Exile: Italian Émigrés and the Liberal International in the Post-Napoleonic Era*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Kalu, Kalu N. *Citizenship: Identity, Institutions and the Postmodern Challenge*. New York and London: Routledge, 2017.

Kansu, Aykut. *İttihadcıların Rejim ve İktidar Mücadelesi 1908-1913*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016.

Karabulut, Umut. *İzmir Kentinde Siyasi Protesto Kültürü (1908-1912)*. İstanbul, Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2014.

Kayaoğlu, Turan. *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Klein, Shira. *Italy's Jews From Emancipation to Fascism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Koselleck, Reinhart. *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

———. *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Labanca, Nicola. *Oltremare: storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002.

Laidlaw, Christine. *The British in the Levant: Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2010.

Lehmann, Matthias B. "La Puerta de la Franquía: Livorno and Pan-Jewish Networks of Beneficence in the Eighteenth Century." In *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: Bridging Europe and the Mediterranean*, edited by Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti and Guri Schwarz, 39-57. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Luconi, Stefano. "Italian Migrations and Diasporic Approaches: Historical Phenomena and Scholarly Interpretations." In *The Cultures of Italian Migration: Diverse Trajectories and Discrete Perspectives*, edited by Graziella Parati and Anthony Julian Tamburri, 153-168. Madison, WI and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011.

Mansel, Philip. *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

Maraşlı Göç, Gülşah Nezaket. *Beyoğlunda bir Levanten: Giovanni Scognamillo, Albüm & Biyografi*. İstanbul: Biyografi Net Yayıncılık, 2021.

Maresia, Fortunato. "Storia dell'Artigiana." In *Gli italiani di Istanbul. Figure, comunità e istituzioni dalle riforme alla repubblica (1839-1923)*, edited by Attilio De Gasperis and Roberta Ferrazza, 193-206. Torino: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2007.

Marmara, Rinaldo. *Osmanlı Başkentinde Bir Levanten Senti: Galata-Pera*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020.

———. *Pangaltı: 19. Yüzyılın Levanten Senti*. İstanbul: Şişli Belediyesi, 2001.

McGuire, Valerie. *Italy's Sea: Empire and Nation in the Mediterranean, 1895–1945*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020.

Meyer, James H. *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856–1914*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Miccichè, Andrea. *Il diritto ecclesiastico coloniale italiano. Esperienze di pluralismo culturale e religioso tra legislazione, giurisprudenza e dottrina nei territori d'Oltremare (1869-1945) - Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Giurisprudenza dell'Università di Catania, Nuova serie: 300*. Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2024.

Nahum, Henri. *İzmir Yahudileri: 19.-20. yüzyıl*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000.

———. *Juifs de Smyrne: XIX^e-XX^e siècle*. Paris: Aubier, 1997.

Ohana, David. *Israel and Its Mediterranean Identity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Öndeş, Osman. *Asıl Efendiler: Levantenler*. İzmir: Şenocak Yayınları, 2010.

———. *Son Levantenler: Gemi Acenteleri*. İstanbul: Denizler Kitabevi, 2004.

Pabuççular, Hazal. *Türkiye ve Oniki Ada: 1912-1947*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019.

Par un Ottoman. *La Vérité Sur Les "Iles De La Mer Egée et Leurs Privilèges"*. Constantinople: Imp. A. Zellich fils, 1912.

Parati, Graziella, and Anthony Julian Tamburri, edited by. *The Cultures of Italian Migration: Diverse Trajectories and Discrete Perspectives*. Madison, WI and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011.

Pignataro, Luca. *Il Dodecaneso italiano 1912-1947. Vol. 1: L'occupazione iniziale: 1912-1922*. Chieti: Edizioni Solfanelli, 2011.

Plag, Ingo. *Word-Formation in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Pongiluppi, Francesco, and Luis Miguel Selvelli, edited by. *Smirne e l'Italia. Comunità, relazioni, istituzioni*. Palio Faliero: ETP Books, 2022.

Pongiluppi, Francesco. "La Colonia Italiana di Costantinopoli attraverso gli articoli de La Rassegna Italiana – Organo degl'interessi italiani in Oriente." In *Imperia. Lo spazio mediterraneo dal mondo antico all'età contemporanea*, edited by Giampaolo Conte, Fabrizio Filioli Uranio, Valerio Torreggiani and Francesca Zaccaro, 219-235. Palermo: New Digital Frontiers, 2016.

Pugliese, Stanislaw G., edited by. *The Most Ancient of Minorities: The Jews of Italy*. Westport, CT : Greenwood Press, 2002.

Reeder, Lindra. "When the Men Left Sutera: Sicilian Woman and Mass Migration, 1880-1920." In *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World*, edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, 45-75. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022.

Reill, Dominique Kirchner. *The Fiume Crisis: Life in the Wake of the Habsburg Empire*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020.

Rothman, E. Natalie. *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012.

Rozen, Minna. *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul, The Formative Years, 1453-1566*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

———. *İstanbul Yahudi Cemaati'nin Tarihi (1453-1566)*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2010.

Rupert, Linda M. "Seeking the Water of Baptism: Fugitive Slaves and Imperial Jurisdiction in the Early Modern Caribbean." In *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500-1850*, edited by Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross, 199-232. New York: New York University Press, 2013.

Şahin, Eyüp, and Yasin Kozak, *Trablusgarp ve Birinci Balkan Savaşı'nda Esir Polisler*. Ankara: Zet Akademik Yayıncılık, 2021.

Salah, Asher. "On the meaning of 'Italian' in early modern Hebrew sources." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 43-62. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Salisbury, Robert H. *Key Concepts of Citizenship: Perspectives and Dilemmas*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare- U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978.

Savy, Pierre. "Responses to Jewish diversity of origins among Italian princes (1450–1550)." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 109-124. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Scirocco, Alfonso. *Garibaldi, Citizen of the World: A Biography*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Scognamillo, Giovanni. *Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları: İstanbul 1970*. İstanbul: Metis Yayıncılık, 1990.

Scuro, Rachele. "Building the ghetto: the many facets of Venetian Jewry in the sixteenth century." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 239-260. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Seniy, Abdülganî. *Beyrût Bombardımanı: Trablusgarb Harbi Esnasında İtalyanlar Tarafından İka Edilmiş Bir Şenâ-i Tarihiyye*. Beyrut: Vilâyet Matbaası, 1332/1916.

Şenocak, Bülent. *Levant'ın Yıldızı İzmir: Levantenler, Rumlar, Ermeniler ve Yahudiler*. İzmir: Şenocak Kültür Yayınları, 2003.

Sever, Nurkan. *The Mosul Incident of 1909: Its Sociopolitical, Judicial and Military Consequences*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2023.

Sezen, Tahir. *Osmanlı Yer Adları*. Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 2017.

Shlala, Elizabeth H. *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt: Hybridity, Law, and Gender*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Simoni, Marcella. "Young Italian Jews in Israel, and Back: Voices from a Generation (1945–1953)." In *Italian Jewish Networks from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: Bridging Europe and the Mediterranean*, edited by Francesca Bregoli, Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti and Guri Schwarz, 173-200. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Skloot, Joseph A. "Silkworms and bookworms: the partners of Bologna and their boundary-crossing Jewish library." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 85-106. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Stein, Sarah Abrevaya. *Extraterritorial Dreams: European Citizenship, Sephardi Jews, and the Ottoman Twentieth Century*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Stéphanopoli, Jeanne Z. [Rédacteur en chef du Messenger d'Athènes]. *Les Iles de l'Egée, Leurs privilèges, Avec documents et notes statistiques*. Athènes: Imprimerie Th. Apostolopoulos, 1912.

Stephenson, Charles. *A Box of Sand : The Italo - Ottoman War 1911-1912 : The First Land , Sea and Air War*. Ticehurst : Tattered Flag Press , 2014.

Tızlak, Fahrettin. *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kapitülasyonların Uygulanışı (İmtiyâzât-ı Ecnebiyenin Tatbikât-ı Hâzırası)*, Mehdi Fraşerli. Isparta: Fakülte Kitabevi, 2008.

Tsitselikis, Konstantinos. *Old and New Islam in Greece: From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2012.

Türker, Orhan. *Pera'dan Beyoğlu'na: İstanbul'un Levanten ve Azınlık Semtinin Hikayesi*. İstanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2016.

Ürekli, Fatma. "Trablusgarp Savaşı'nın (1911-1912) Osmanlı Kurumlarında Çalışan İtalyan Sanatkârlara Etkisi ve İdari Uygulamalar." In *Tarihin Peşinde Bir Ömür: Abdülkadir Özcan'a Armağan*, edited by Hayrünnisa Alan, Ömer İşbilir, Zeynep Aygibin and Muhammet Ali Kılıç, 647-678. İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2018.

Ürük, Yaşar. *Bilmediğimiz İzmir*. İzmir: İ.B.B. İzelman A.Ş Yayınları, 2022.

Ventresca, Robert, and Franca Iacovetta. "Virgilia D'Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile." In *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World*, edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, 299-326. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022.

Veronese, Alessandra. "Italian Jews encountering Ashkenazi Jews in northern Italy during the late Middle Ages (late fourteenth and fifteenth century)." In *The Many Faces of Early Modern Italian Jewry: Religious, Cultural, and Social Identities*, edited by Martin Borýsek and Davide Liberatoscioli, 27-42. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024.

Viscomi, Joseph John. *Migration at the End of Empire: Time and the Politics of Departure Between Italy and Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024.

Wilcox, Vanda. *The Italian Empire and the Great War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Yumul, Aras, and Fahri Dikkaya, edited by. *Avrupalı mı Levanten mi ?*. İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2006.

2. Academic Journals and Periodicals

"Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878." *American Journal of International Law* 2, no. S4 (October 1, 1908): 401-424. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2212670>.

Babacan, Hasan. "Trablusgarp Harbinde İtalyan Mallarını Boykot Meselesi." *Arayışlar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, (1999): 91-100.

Baydar, Advie İkbâl, and Cevdet Yılmaz, "Gündelik Hayat Bağlamında Levanten Kimliğinin Sunumu." *Sosyoloji Notları* 6, sy. 2 (Aralık 2022): 24-53.

Berkovich, Izhak. "Defensive Citizenship in Europe: Definition and Measurement." *Political Studies Review* 19, no. 1 (April 1, 2020): 148-156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929920906996>.

Bertolini, Pietro, Guido Fusinato, Giuseppe Volpi, Mehemmed Naby, and Roumboyoglou Fahreddin. "Treaty of Peace Between Italy and Turkey." *American Journal of International Law* 7, no. S1 (1928): 58-62. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2212446>.

Çakıcıoğlu Oban, Raziye. “Levanten Kavramı ve Levantenler Üzerine Bir İnceleme.” *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 22 (2007): 337-356.

Gasparoni, Michaël. “Inheritance and Wealth Among Jewish Women in the Ghettos of North-central Italy (17th-18th Centuries).” *Mélanges De L'École Française De Rome. Moyen Âge* 130, no. 1 (January 12, 2018): 183–97. <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.4060>.

Gilbertson, Greta A. “Regulating Transnational Citizens in the Post-1996 Welfare Reform Era: Dominican Immigrants in New York City.” *Latino Studies* 2, no. 1 (March 25, 2004): 90–110. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.lst.8600063>.

Gilbertson, Greta, and Audrey Singer. “The Emergence of Protective Citizenship in the USA: Naturalization Among Dominican Immigrants in the Post-1996 Welfare Reform Era.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 26, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 25–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870022000025261>.

Guidi, Andreas. “Storia italiana, storia mediterranea: nuove prospettive su un passato imperiale e coloniale.” *ITALIA CONTEMPORANEA*, no.298 (July 2022):350-369. <https://doi.org/10.3280/ic298-0a4>.

Hayta, Necdet. “Rodos ile 12 Ada’nın İtalyanlar Tarafından İşgali ve İşgalden Sonra Adaların Durumu (1912-1918).” *OTAM Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma Ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 5, no.5 (Haziran 1994): 131-44. https://doi.org/10.1501/OTAM_00000000208.

Horden, Peregrine, and Nicholas Purcell. “The Mediterranean and “the New Thalassology.” *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 722-740. <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.3.722>.

Karabulut, Sezen. “Osmanlı Devleti’nin ‘Muhasım Devlet’ Politikasına Bir Örnek: Trablusgarp Savaşı ve İzmir’deki İtalyanlar.” *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları* 17, sy. 34 (Aralık 2018): 185-205.

Kinser, Samuel. “Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism of Fernand Braudel.” *The American Historical Review* 86 , no. 3 (February 1981): 63-105. <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/86.1.63>.

Malkoç, Eminalp. “İtalyanların Trablusgarp Savaşı Sırasında Oniki Ada’yı İşgallerinin Türk Basınındaki Yankısı: İkdam ve Şehbal Örnekleri.” *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 16, no. 31, (Bahar 2020): 79-117.

Meyer, James H. “For the Russianist in Istanbul and the Ottomanist in Russia: A Guide to the Archives of Eurasia.” *Ab Imperio* 2008, no. 4 (January 1, 2008): 281–301. <https://doi.org/10.1353/imp.2008.0116>.

Mitler, Louis. “The Genoese in Galata: 1453-1682.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10, no. 1(Feb 1979) 71–91. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/162479>.

Oğuz, Çiğdem. “Ottoman Paperscapes: Subjects, Enemy Aliens, and Nationality Disputes in the Ottoman Empire from World War I to the Treaty of Lausanne (1914–1923).” *Archiv Orientalní* 93, no. 1 (May 31, 2025): 27–53. <https://doi.org/10.47979/aror.j.93.1.27-53>.

Özçelik, Fatih. “19. yy ve 20. yy Başlarında Ege Adaları'nın İdari Yapısı ve M. 1903 (H.1321) Tarihli Sâlnâme'ye Göre Cezâyir-i Bahr-i Sefid Vilâyeti'nin Genel İdari Birimleri.” *Yönetim ve Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, sy. 2 (2012): 51-68.

Öztan, Ramazan Hakkı. “When Emmanuel Carasso Turned Italian: A Biography of Extraterritoriality and Questions of Nationality in the Ottoman Empire.” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 63, no. 63 (July 7, 2024): 309–340. <http://doi.org/10.18589/oa.1513050>.

Sannav, Sabri Can. “Tanzimat'ın İlanından Sonra Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid Eyaleti'nin Yeniden Yapılandırılması Süreci ve Limni Adası'nın Statüsü.” *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 7, sy. 1 (Mart 2005): 174-188.

Sever, Nurkan. “A Geostrategic and Sociopolitical Analysis of the 1912 Beirut Bombardment at the Domestic and International Levels.” *International Journal of Military History and Historiography* (June 27, 2025): 1–44. <https://doi.org/10.1163/24683302-bja10088>.

———. “The Italo-Ottoman War in Turkish Historiography and Literature.” *Africa Rivista Semestrale Di Studi E Ricerche* 1/2025 (January 1, 2025): 67-94. <https://doi.org/10.52056/9791257010911/04>.

Şeber, Nurdan İpek. “Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Trablusgarp Savaşı'nın Osmanlı Topraklarındaki İtalyan Tebaaya Yansımaları.” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 38, sy. 38 (Aralık 2011): 236-262.

Turan, Şerafettin. “Rodos ve 12 Ada'nın Türk Hâkimiyetinden Çıkışı.” *BELLETTEN* 29, sy. 113 (Ocak 1965): 77-120. <https://doi.org/10.37879/ttkbelleten.1204591>.

Vercellin, Giorgio. “Mercanti turchi a Venezia alla fine del Cinquecento: Il Libretto dei contratti turcheschi di Zuane Zacra sensale.” *Il Veltrò: Rivista della civiltà italiana* 23, (marzo–agosto 1979): 243–276.

———. “Mercanti turchi e sensali a Venezia.” *Studi Veneziani*, n.s. 4 (1980): 45–78.

3. Theses or Dissertations

Berci, İbrahim. “Osmanlı Devleti'nin Muhasım Devlet Politikası: Trablusgarp Savaşı ve Aydın Vilayeti İtalyanları.” Master's Thesis, Pamukkale Üniversitesi, Denizli, 2020.

İlkbahar, Demet. “1911-1912 Trablusgarb Savaşı ve Osmanlı Kamuoyu.” Master's Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, İstanbul, 2009.

McCollum, Jonathan Claymore. “The Anti-Colonial Empire: Ottoman Mobilization and Resistance in the Italo-Turkish War, 1911-1912.” PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2018.

4. Government Publications and Websites

“Identic Letter from the Chief of the Turkish Delegation at the Lausanne Conference (Ismet) to the Chiefs of the Allied Delegations (Rumbold, Pellé, Montagna).” Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923, Volume II, Document 959, 711.672/170. *United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, Shared Knowledge Services, Bureau of Administration*. Last modified July 24, 1923. Accessed August 23, 2025. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1923v02/d959>.

“Treaty of Peace with Turkey and Other Instruments Signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923.” Treaty Series No. 16, Cmd. 1929 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1923). UK Treaties Online (UKTO), Treaty Unit of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. Accessed August 29, 2025. <https://treaties.fcdo.gov.uk/data/Library2/pdf/TS0016.1923.pdf>

Collegio di scienze politiche e coloniali [Il Presidente del Consiglio Direttivo: Alfredo Capece Minutolo di Bugnano], edited by. *La Libia, negli atti del Parlamento e nei provvedimenti del Governo, Parte terza (30 aprile 1912-31 dicembre 1912)*. Milano: Tipografia-Editoria e Libreria Luigi di Giacomo Pirola, 1913.

Guardia di Finanza [Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze]. “Homepage.” Accessed June 26, 2024. <https://www.gdf.gov.it/en/>.

Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato. “LEGGE 13 Giugno 1912, N. 555 Sulla Cittadinanza Italiana. (012U0555), Entrata in Vigore Del Provvedimento: 01/07/1912, (Gazzetta Ufficiale n.153 del 30-06-1912).” *Normattiva: Il Portale Della Legge Vigente*. Last modified 2024. Accessed June 28, 2025. <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1912-06-13;555@originale>.

L’Istituto Coloniale Italiano. *Rivista coloniale: Organo dell'Istituto coloniale italiano, Anno I., Maggio-Agosto 1906, Volume primo, Fasc.I*. Roma: Direzione ed amministrazione presso l’Istituto Coloniale Italiano, 1906.

Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Direzione Generale delle Scuole Italiane all’Estero. *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero governative e sussidiate 1913-1914*. Roma: Tipografia Editrice Nazionale, 1914.

Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Direzione Generale delle Scuole Italiane all’Estero. *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero 1924*. Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1925.

Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Ispettorato Generale delle Scuole all’Estero. *Annuario delle scuole italiane all'estero governative e sussidiate 1907*. Roma: Tipografia Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 1907.

Ministero degli Affari Esteri. *Bollettino del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Parte Amministrativa*, N.436, Aprile/Maggio 1913. Roma: Tip. Elzeviriana Francesco Marcolli & C., 1913.

Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia. *Indice generale alfabetico, analitico e cronologico della Raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia dal 1881 al 1890, Volume primo-Parte principale*. Roma: Stamperia Reale, 1892.

Ministero per gli Affari Esteri. *Annuario Diplomatico del Regno d'Italia per l'anno 1890*. Roma: Tipografia delle Mantellate, 1890.

Statistica generale del Regno D'Italia. *Censimento degli italiani all'estero (31 dicembre 1871)*. Roma: Stamperia Reale, 1874.

U.S. Department of State. *Register of the Department of State, October 15, 1912*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912.

5. Newspapers and Magazines

“Come furono distrutte nel porto di Beirut dalla Garibaldi e dalla Ferruccio? - Una corazzata costiera ed una torpediniera Turche- Giudizi e preoccupazioni diverse della stampa francese: L'azione dell'Italia è legale ma vi sono gl'interessi francesi-Lo spettro dell'azione navale ridesta l'anima italofofa della stampa europea.” *La Stampa*, Anno XLVI, Num.57, Febbraio 26, 1912. Accessed July 14, 2025. https://archive.org/details/lastampa_1912-02-26/mode/2up.

“Corriere- Le navi turche distrutte a Beyruth.” *L'Illustrazione italiana*, Anno XXXIX, N.9, Marzo 3, 1912. Accessed July 14, 2025. https://archive.org/details/RAV0070589_1912_00009/mode/2up.

“I fascisti all'estero per De Pinedo Asso degli Assi.” *Il Legionario: Organo dei fasci italiani all'estero e nelle colonie*, Editore a cura della segreteria generale, Anno II, N. 47, Roma. Novembre 21, 1925.

“Il Bombardamento a Berutti produce grave sgomento in Turchia ed è accolto con calma in Francia. Gli italiani saranno espulsi dall'impero ottomano?” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.10999, Febbraio 26, 1912. Accessed July 13, 2025. https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-26.

“Il bombardamento di Berutti: La Francia riconosce il diritto dell'Italia- L'espulsione degli italiani dalla Soria- I provvedimenti dell'ambasciata germanica.” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11003, Marzo 01, 1912. Accessed July 16, 2025. https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-03-01.

“Il filo della politica.” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11005, Marzo 03, 1912. Accessed July 16, 2025. https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-03-03.

“L’espulsione degli italiani dalla Turchia Asiatica e da Costantinopoli - I commenti della stampa Italiana ed estera sull’affondamento delle due navi turche a Beyrouth—La notizia dell’avvenimento di Beyrouth provoca l’entusiasmo a Tripoli.” *Giornale di Udine-Quotidiano politico del mattino*, Anno XLVI, N.58, Febbraio 27, 1912. Accessed July 14, 2025. https://archive.org/details/058_GiornaleUdine_27-02-1912.

“L’impresa di Berutti e le potenze. La Turchia minaccia di far uscire la sua flotta e per intanto espelle gli italiani dalla Soria.” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11000, Febbraio 27, 1912. Accessed July 15, 2025. https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-27.

“La brillante azione della nostra flotta a Beirut- I telegrammi dei due ammiragli- La città non fu toccata - Il Mondo intero segue con ansietà la lotta dei minatori d’Inghilterra.” *Giornale di Udine - Quotidiano politico del mattino*, Anno XLVI, N.57, Febbraio 26, 1912. Accessed July 14, 2025. https://archive.org/details/057_GiornaleUdine_26-02-1912.

“La Guerra Italo-turca - Il Consiglio dei Ministri ottomano decide l’espulsione degli Italiani della Siria e di Beyrouth.” *L’Italia Centrale - Quotidiano Della Democrazia di Reggio Emilia*, Anno L. N.57, Febbraio 27, 1912. Accessed July 14, 2025. <https://bdr.bibliotecapanizzi.it/visore2/index.php?pidCollection=italia-centrale:11314&v=-1&pidObject=italia-centrale:50569&returnPage=/Sezione.jsp?idSezione=99>.

“Le Vicende della Guerra Turca-Italiana- Le rappresaglie della Turchia dopo il fatto di Berutti e le preoccupazioni delle potenze.” *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, Anno XXXI, Num.11001, Febbraio 28, 1912. Accessed July 15, 2025. https://archive.org/details/Piccolo_1912-02-28.

Beltrame, Achille. “L’ultima vittoria, la guarnigione turca di Rodi, sconfitta con rilevanti perdite, si arrende a consegna le armi al generale Ameglio.” *La Domenica del Corriere*, Anno: XIV, Num.21, Maggio 26 - Giugno 2, 1912.

Faccioli, Arturo. “Il giudice supremo dei musulmani a Rodi, Ahmed Schiakir Effendi: Cadi (giudice supremo mussulmano) della provincia dell’arcipelago, residente a Rodi nelle Moschea Suleimanié.” *L’Illustrazione Italiana*, Anno: XL, N.11, Marzo 16, 1913.

Fontana, Attilio. “L’abolizione delle capitolazioni in Turchia.” *Patria e Colonie*, “Ai vicini, ai lontani,” *Lecture Mensili sotto gli auspici della Società Nazionale Dante Alighieri*, Milano, Casa Editrice Dottor Francesco Vallardi, Anno III- Sem II, N.7, Luglio 1914.

Macaluso Aleo, Giuseppe. “Nel ventennale della conquista della Libia 1911-1931.” *Vita Nova - Rivista mensile illustrata dell’Università Fascista di Bologna*, Edita a cura della casa del Fascio di Bologna, Anno VII, Num.12 (L.5), December 1931.

C- Internet Sources

1. Websites

“Doshisha University: Center for Transimperial History.” *Doshisha University*. Accessed December 9, 2025. <https://transimperial.org/>.

“Possediménto: possediménto s. m. [der. di possedere] - Significato Ed Etimologia - Vocabolario – Treccani.” *Treccani*. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/possedimento/>.

“Possession Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes.” *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.Com*. Accessed November 24, 2025. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/possession>.

“Regnicolo - Significato Ed Etimologia - Vocabolario – Treccani.” *Treccani*. Accessed January 8, 2025. <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/regnicolo>.

Stefanopoulos, Ioannis Z. [Στεφανόπουλος, Ιωάννης Ζ.]. “Les iles de l’ Egee : leurs privileges : avec documents et notes statistiques Jeanne Z. Stephanopoli,” *Psifiothiki AUth Digital Collections*. Last modified May 2, 2014. Accessed March 3, 2025. <https://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/115905/?ln=en>.

“Transimperial History Working Group | World History Center | University of Pittsburgh.” *University of Pittsburgh*. Accessed December 9, 2025. <https://www.worldhistory.pitt.edu/support/working-groups/transimperial-history-working-group>.

“Treaty of Paris - English (1856).” *The Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF)*. Last modified January 17, 1970. Accessed March 15, 2025. https://ecf.org.il/media_items/1488.

“Universität Leipzig: Centre for Transimperial History.” *Universität Leipzig*. Accessed December 9, 2025. <https://recentglobe.uni-leipzig.de/en/forschung/forschungsprojekte/centre-for-transimperial-history>.

2. Online Articles and Newspapers

“The APpaM Dialect: The Hebrew-Piedmontese dialect and the ‘APpaM’ prayer.” *Musei E Comunità Ebraica Di Casale Monferrato*. Last modified November 29, 2023. Accessed April 18, 2024. <https://www.casalebraica.org/en/jewish-monferrato/appam-dialect>.

“Vittorio Macchioro.” *Mimesis Edizioni*. Accessed June 14, 2025. <https://www.mimesisedizioni.it/catalogo/autore/5520/vittorio-macchioro>

A cura dell’associazione Libera Storia. “La Disperata Difesa Dell’isola Di Creta. Furono gli italiani a proteggere l’esercito greco in ritirata dopo l’attacco della Turchia.” *Corriere Dell’Umbro* [Regione Corriere edition, sec. 1861>2011>> 1500 anniversario Unità d’Italia],

November 15, 2010. Accessed October 18, 2024. <https://liberastoria.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/corriere-umbria-15-11-10-pagina-5.pdf>.

Ansaldi, Marcella [Director of Museo Ebraico di Venezia]. “The Jews in Venice (1516-1917),” *History of the Venetian Ghetto-Ghetto Venezia*. Last modified March 8, 2023. Accessed October 29, 2024. <https://www.ghettovenezia.com/en/the-history/>.

Borutta, Manuel. “Mediterraneum.” EGO | European History Online, January 11, 2021. Accessed April 25, 2025. <https://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/border-regions/manuel-borutta-mediterraneum>.

Kampouris, Nick. “‘Una Faccia, Una Razza’: The Fascinating Story of Greco-Italian Bonds.” *GreekReporter.Com*. Last modified November 16, 2019. Accessed January 1, 2025. <https://greekreporter.com/2019/11/16/una-faccia-una-razza-the-fascinating-story-of-greco-italian-bonds/>.

Levante, Emilio. “The Story of the Levante Family of Turkey.” *Levantine Heritage: The Story of a Community*. Last modified October 2011. Accessed August 6, 2025. <https://www.levantineheritage.com/testi87.htm>.

Musée D’Art Et D’Histoire Du Judaïsme. “2. Jews in France in the Middle Ages.” *Musée D’Art Et D’Histoire Du Judaïsme*. Last modified August 11, 2025. Accessed April 18, 2024. <https://www.mahj.org/en/permanent-collection/2-jews-france-middle-ages>.

Parisi, Antonella. “Macchioro, Vittorio.” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 67. Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, 2006. Accessed June 14, 2025. [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vittorio-macchioro_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vittorio-macchioro_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

Pugliese, Christian. “Vittorio Macchioro.” *Associazione Italiana di Filosofia della Religione*. Accessed June 17, 2025. <https://www.pensierofilosoficoreligiosoitaliano.org/node/60>.

Toso, Fiorenzo. “I Levantini, La più antica comunità storica Italofona all’estero: Europa e Mediterraneo d’Italia. L’italiano nelle comunità storiche da Gibilterra a Costantinopoli.” *Treccani Magazine*, October 2, 2020. Accessed September 22, 2025. https://www.treccani.it/magazine/lingua_italiana/articoli/scritto_e_parlato/Europa12.html.

Ürük, Yaşar. “İtalyan Mektebi.” *Kent Yaşam - İzmir’in Haber Bilgi Sitesi*. Last modified March 7, 2022. Accessed August 22, 2025. <https://www.kentyasam.com.tr/2022/03/07/112211/112211>.

