

MOSUL QUESTION (1918-1926)

**The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of
Bilkent University**

by

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**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of
MASTER OF ARTS**

in

**THE DEPARTMENT OF
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA**

June 2004

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A Master's Thesis

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June 2004

ABSTRACT

MOSUL QUESTION (1918-1926)

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MIR in International Relations

Supervisor : Prof. Stanford J. Shaw

June 2004

This thesis aims to elaborate the Mosul question, which was dispute first between the Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire and later between the Great Britain and Turkey. It attempts to analyze the resolution process of the Mosul question as a result of a very complex process between the years 1918-1926, with various political, diplomatic, military and legal dimensions by taking the fact into consideration that the Great Briatin was the strongest member of the League of Nations, but Turkey was not even a member.

Keywords : Mosul, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the League of Nations, oil, the Great Britain.

ÖZET

MUSUL SORUNU (1918-1926)

AYDIN, ALEV DİLEK

Uluslararası İlişkiler Yüksek Lisans

Tez Danışmanı : Prof. Dr. Stanford J. Shaw

Haziran 2004

Bu tez önce İngiltere ile Osmanlı İmparatorluğu arasında, daha sonra ise İngiltere ile Türkiye arasında geçen Musul Sorununu irdelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma İngiltere'nin Milletler Cemiyeti'nin en güçlü üyesi, Türkiye'nin ise üye bile olmadığı gerçeğini göz önünde bulundurarak, 1918-1926 yılları arasında cereyan eden ve birçok siyasi, diplomatik, askeri ve hukuki boyutları olan Musul sorununun çözüm sürecini incelemeye çalışmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler : Musul, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Milletler Cemiyeti, Petrol, İngiltere

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitudes to all those people who have been kind enough to lend their support to my study and contributed to my thesis in one way or another.

My special thanks go to Prof. Stanford J. Shaw who has supervised the work with his constructive comments and valuable recommendations.

I owe more than I can express to Asst. Prof. Nur Bilge Criss who has patiently guided me in the preparation of this thesis.

I am grateful to Prof. Mim Kemal Öke for spending his precious time to make an interview with me.

I deeply appreciate Asst. Prof. Oktay Özel for his participation into my jury.

Last but certainly not least, I am forever in debt to the unfailing support of my family. Without their encouragement, this thesis would not have been completed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1- The aim of research

When Mosul was occupied by British forces ten days after the Mudros Armistice was signed on November 30, 1918, the Mosul Question was bequeathed by the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. Because the Turkish army was busy with the National War of Liberation in Anatolia, the people of Mosul were expected to get rid of British occupation by their own efforts. After winning the war, Turkey had the choice of solving the problem either through force or diplomacy. They chose the latter, considered more in keeping with Turkish Foreign Policy. The purpose of this research is to analyze the decision not to use force by taking into consideration the internal and external imperatives of that time.¹

1.2- The conceptual and methodological framework

Because the topic of this study is a historical one, the events related with the Mosul Question are elaborated on a chronological basis to provide a picture of the general framework. The two agreements, which are crucial to an understanding of the beginning and the resolution of the Mosul Question, can be found in the Appendices.

Events, together with individual actors, are given particular emphasis to analyze the case, and it is claimed that individuals can influence and even shape the decision making process. In this context it is argued that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and

¹ It is beyond the scope of this research to criticize or to judge the final decision of Turkey about the use of force to take Mosul back.

İsmet İnönü, the two most important decision-makers in the Turkish Foreign Policy, determined the destiny of the resolution of the Mosul issue.

However, because the Mosul Question was not one-sided, British policy making, and several important decision-makers such as Lord Curzon are also taken into consideration. Actually, the resolution of the Mosul Question with the inclusion of Mosul into Iraqi territory was the outcome of a multi-dimensional process that cannot be explained with regard to one single factor. Relations between Great Britain and Turkey and a number of other factors, including economic interests and particularly oil concerns were among the most important components of the resolution. Private financial institutions, which sometimes even determined British foreign policy and oil firms, competing for concessions in Iraq are also taken into consideration in an attempt to analyze the process within a wider scope.

1.3- Sources

This study heavily relies on secondary sources in Turkish and in English in the form of articles, books, and dissertations, which draw strongly on the first hand sources. In addition to the secondary sources, one original source, Question of the Frontier Between Turkey and Iraq : Report Submitted to the Council by the Commission instituted by the Council Resolution of September 30th, 1924, is used.

Researches of İhsan Şerif Kaymaz, Mim Kemal Öke and Hikmet Uluğbay provided considerable contributions to the study of Mosul Question. In recent years, though several works were published on the subject, none of them are as remarkable as the studies of Kaymaz, Öke or as that of the analysis of Uluğbay on Mosul issue since they inform the reader about the most up to date information.

1.4-Synopsis

Until the centralization of the Tanzimat reforms, the Ottomans had governed the Vilayet of Baghdad through local elements. However, even this process of centralization was insufficient and actually entailed only a change of local authority from one hand to another. By the end of 19th century, the Mosul province was a center of attention due to its rich underground resources, mainly oil. For this reason, Western countries such as Britain, France and Germany were racing to obtain concessions from the Ottoman Empire in Mosul. Later, in 1914, the Turkish Petroleum Company (T.P.C.) was founded with an agreement which furnished a basis for future claims to Mosul oil, in which Turkey did not have any shares.

The future settlement of the Near East was mainly determined in accordance with the secret agreements signed among the Entente Powers, which were the Istanbul Agreement, the London Agreement, the Sykes-Picot-Sazanov Agreement, and the Saint Jeanne de Maurienne Agreement. However, the withdrawal of Russia from World War I and the inclusion of the United States of America as an additional power changed British plans on the division of Iraq.

British occupation of Mosul (in violation of the Mudros Armistice, signed November 30, 1918) and the inclusion of Mosul into the Turkish National Pact (accepted by the last Chamber of Deputies on January 28, 1920) which aimed to create an independent Turkish Moslem nation-state, are the two most important developments in the formation of the Mosul Question.

After the final victory of the Turks in Anatolia and before the beginning of Lausanne Conference, Istanbul and the Straits were still under Allied occupation. For this reason Turkey considered diplomatic methods more appropriate and thus the resolution of the Mosul issue was left to the Lausanne Conference.

After the Mudanya Convention was signed, it was time to sign a peace treaty with the Allies. İsmet İnönü was selected as the head of the Turkish delegation to be sent to the Lausanne Conference to represent Turkey. Mosul Question was one of the most controversial issues of the conference. During the conference, İsmet Pasha advocated the Turkish point of view that Mosul should be left to Turkey and based his argument on several ethnographic, political, geographical-economic, and military-strategic factors.

The Lausanne Conference began on November 20, 1922, and adjourned on February 4, 1923. The second phase of the conference began on April 23, 1923, and was concluded with the signature of the Peace Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923. According to this treaty, the Mosul Question was left to direct negotiations between Turkey and Great Britain. As stated in the 3rd article of the Treaty of Lausanne, in the event of no agreement being reached between the Turkish and the British governments within nine months, the dispute would be referred to the Council of League of Nations.

Although Mustafa Kemal and his associates considered the use of force as a serious alternative, they conceded that the Mosul issue be solved by the League of Nations due to the urgency that Turkey be recognised by the Western countries as an independent state. The Turks would not jeopardize what they had already obtained and begin a new war for Mosul, where Great Britain had vital interests, when the National War of Liberation was just over. As long as the Mosul issue was not solved, Turkey would not be able to arrange its relations with the Western world. Therefore, it had to make sacrifices on the Mosul issue, and its resolution was postponed as stated in the 3rd article of the Treaty of Lausanne.

Before the Mosul Question was brought to the agenda of the League of Nations, it had to be directly negotiated between Great Britain and Turkey. The Haliç Conference was held in Istanbul from May 19 to June 5, 1924. However, the two sides could not reach an agreement because the British aimed to transfer the issue to the League of Nations, where Great Britain was dominant.

On August 6, 1924, the dispute was transferred to the League by the British Government. On September 30, 1924, the Council of League decided to establish a special commission to gather local opinion on whether the people of Mosul wanted to be included in Iraq or Turkey. This commission prepared a report and submitted it to the League of Nations on July 16, 1925. According to this report, Mosul would be incorporated into Iraq with the provision that it would remain under the mandate of Great Britain for 25 years more and the small Zap River would be determined as a boundary between Iraq and Turkey.

Based on this report, the Council of League of Nations on December 16, 1925 took the decision of leaving territory south of the Brussels line, the provisional border which was accepted as the *status quo* frontier by the League on October 29, 1924, in Iraq and its northern part in Turkey. On March 11, 1926, the Council of League of Nations announced that the decision taken on December 16, 1925 was final.

This decision was met with a great reaction in Turkey. Although Turkey seriously contemplated the possibility of war, it could not risk renewed fighting after intense wars, especially against a country such as Great Britain, the world's major power of the time. On June 5, 1926, Turkey, Great Britain and Iraq signed the Treaty of Ankara. According to this treaty, the Brussels line would become the border

between Turkey and Iraq as the League of Nations had decided and Turkey would take a 10% share from the revenue of Mosul petroleum for 25 years.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION OF MOSUL PROVINCE

2.1-History and the Ethnic and Geographical Structure of the Mosul Province

Historically many civilizations had developed in Iraq in the Mosul region. The most important ones were the “Assyrian” and “Babylonian” civilizations. Many Turkish states such as the Seljuks of Iraq, the Zengids, the Atabeylik of Erbil, Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu States were established in the Mosul-Kirkuk region and ruled there until the expansion of the Ottoman Empire to include Mosul. The Turkish population had increased considerably during the reign of these states, especially under the Seljuks in 1055. The cities Mosul and Kirkuk were conquered by the Ottomans in 1517 by Yavuz Sultan Selim after the Battle of Çaldiran. Ottoman sovereignty in the region lasted for 400 years (1517-1918) and during the reign of Kanuni Sultan Suleyman, as the region increasingly gained importance, Mosul was declared a province.²

The Ottomans governed El Cezire, which is known as Iraq today, through local elements. Individual tribes were virtually independent from the government and from each other, and were thus able to protect their own identities and remain strong against the central authority. The European imperialist states were able to cause trouble in the Mosul province, as in the rest of Ottoman territory, because of a lack of authority. The way the Ottomans governed Iraq was even criticised by a British resident in his political diary in 1910 as such :

the universal Turkish system of administration is in almost every respect unsuitable to Iraq. The Turks themselves must recognize that it is a failure

² Henry A. Foster. The Making of Modern Iraq. (Oklahoma : University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), p 24

here ..., Iraq is not an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, but a foreign dependency, very much in the rough, and its government by sedentary officials according to minute regulations, framed at Constantinople for Western Turkey can never be satisfactory. I had no idea before coming to Baghdad of the extent to which Turkey is a country of red tape and blind and dumb officialdom, nor of the degree in which the Turkish position in Iraq is unsupported by physical force.³

The Ottoman Empire initiated a process of centralization in the 1830s as part of the Tanzimat reforms. An effort was made to place all Kurdish tribal principalities under the command of Ottoman governors appointed by the central government. This process was completed in the 1850s, but caused several important changes in the sociopolitical structure of the region. The gap that resulted from the destruction of the tribal emirates was filled, not by governors appointed by the government but, rather, by the chiefs of the major heterodox religious orders, particularly the Nakshibendis and Kadiris. These sheikhs and their extended families dominated the nomadic, half-nomadic and settled tribes that roamed in the northern and eastern parts of Mosul, using religious and personal influence to gain possession of huge lands and enormous power over villages and tribes. The Tanzimat reforms thus failed to achieve the kind of central control originally intended as their aim, merely involving a transmission of local authority from one hand to another.⁴

In the last century of Ottoman governance, the Province of Mosul was bordered by Iran in the east, Diyarbekir in the north, Baghdad in the south, Damascus in the West, and the Province of Aleppo and the Sancak of Zor in the northwest. It was composed of the Sancaks of Mosul, Kirkuk and Suleymaniye. According to the Ottoman Yearbook (Salname) of 1914, the Sancak of Mosul included the districts of Mosul, Akra, Dahul, Imadiye, Zakho and Sincar; the Sancak of Kirkuk included the districts of Kirkuk, Revanduz, Kuşnuk, Köş, Raniye, Selahiye, and Erbil; and the

³ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq*, p 52.

⁴ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "Tarih Işığında Musul", *Görüş*, Vol. 54, No : 2, 2003.

Sancak of Suleymaniye included the districts of Kalambriya, Şehr-izor, Muhammerah and Bazyan.⁵

The region had become a center of outside attraction due to its oil and mineral-rich resources. However, the discovery of oil in the region did not make any positive contribution to the socioeconomic well-being of the people living there. At the beginning of 1920s, the population of the Mosul province formed a mosaic of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Ethnically, 55-60% of the population was composed of Kurds. This ratio reached to 65% when Yezidis were added. The ratio of Arabs and Turks was about 10-15% each. Christians had a share of 4-5% and the Jews had a share of 1-2%. The majority of the Christians were composed of Nestorians and the Chaldonians.⁶

2.2- Strategic, Military, and the Economic Importance of the Region for the Imperialist Powers

The essence of Britain's Near East policy was to keep the route to India secure. Thus Britain's strategic interest in Iraq in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a consequence of its control over India. For a long time, the Ottoman Empire's friendly attitude towards Britain was India's best safeguard against unwelcome states from the west. The Ottoman Empire constituted a natural barrier against a possible Russian expansion. Iraq was crucial for Britain because of its oil and its importance to the defense of India.

By the end of World War I, oil had become the most crucial raw material in industry and war. The countries with access to this resource gained great importance and effectiveness in the international arena. Even the French Prime Minister

⁵ Mim Kemal Öke, Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi (1918-1926), (İstanbul : Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı,1991),p9.

⁶ İhsan Şerif Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, (İstanbul : Otopsi Yayınları, 2003), p 29.

Georges Clemenceau during World War I said that “one drop of oil is as important as one drop of blood of our soldiers”.⁷

Britain’s interest in Mosul can be said to have started when Ottoman State was under threat from Russia at the end of the 19th century. The 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War was a turning point for Turkish-British relations. This war had indicated the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and Britain saw the difficulty of sustaining the policy of protecting the unity of the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of the increasing threat from Russia. However, Britain once more supported the Ottomans against Russia because the collapse of the Ottoman Empire was deemed harmful for British interests. Since the beginning of 1900s Germany, not Russia, had become Britain’s rival Great Power. While the influence of Britain was decreasing, Germany’s was increasing. Like Britain, Germany was also aware that the most important condition of being a Great Power would be to possess raw materials, especially oil.⁸

Britain had adopted a passive attitude towards the problems of Ottoman State after 1908, avoiding close relations with the Ottomans. Naturally, Britain and Germany became rivals to possess oil in Ottoman lands, especially in Mosul. However, the Germans were in a more advantageous position when compared to the British because they had acquired the privilege of construction of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, which was also going to pass through Mosul. This Berlin-Baghdad Railway concession was also the most evident indicator of Germany’s superiority in the war in establishing a presence within the Ottoman Empire. The Anatolian Railway

⁷ Mehmet Kocaoğlu, Uluslararası İlişkiler Işığında Ortadoğu : Parçalanmak İstenen Topraklar ve İstismar Edilen İnsanlar. (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1995), pp 175-176.

⁸ Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri (1919-1926). (Ankara : Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1978), pp 26-27.

Company, established with the capital of Deutsche Bank in 1888, obtained the contract in 1902. In 1904, an additional concession gave Deutsche Bank the right to process all mines within 20 km on each side of the railway route.⁹

In 1890, Abdulhamid II, declared that the Mosul area had become the private property (Memalik-i Şahane) of the Sultan. In addition, Abdulhamid later abolished the Hijaz Railway privilege by claiming that the Deutsche Orient Bank did not fulfill the requirements of the agreement. This situation continued until the dethronement of Abdulhamid in 1909.¹⁰

Russia and France also threatened British interests. Russia was at the center of the threat perception related to Britain's interests in the region. After entering Iraq in the 17th century France could not become as successful as Britain, because Napoleon's failure in the Egyptian war removed France's chance of establishing commercial and political activity in the region.¹¹

2.3- Oil Negotiations

Statements of German experts in 1871 that there were rich oil reserves in the Mosul region increased foreign attention towards the region, but at that time the use of oil was limited and the transportation of it was problematic. Large companies were able to benefit from oil sources outside their countries by obtaining privileges in the oil regions. Iran and the Ottoman Empire, the two countries which granted these privileges, made agreements at a time when they were not able to resist political pressure from abroad. In the Arabian Peninsula, this situation is more clear from the privileges given after World War I. States in this region were either under direct

⁹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 42.

¹⁰ Raif Karadağ, Petrol Fırtınası, (3rd ed.), (İstanbul : AdakYayınları, 1979), p 69.

¹¹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 41.

political influence or the mandates of foreign countries to whom they had given privileges.

It was William D’Arcy, a British diplomat, who obtained the first Middle Eastern privilege in 1901 from the Persian Shah. Oil was found in Iran in 1908, but D’Arcy had to convince Burmah Oil, a British firm participating in this project, to provide the necessary capital for the search of oil. In 1909, William D’Arcy and Burmah Oil formed the Anglo Persian Oil Company (APOC).¹²

Britain, at that time, was buying most of its oil from the United States and Russia. The new Minister of Marine, Winston Churchill, wanted to guarantee the security of supply and the price stability of oil. Churchill believed that Britain should own its own oil company. For this reason, in 1914 – six days before World War I began – the British Government bought the 51% of the shares of the APOC.¹³

William D’Arcy was not satisfied with the extraordinary success he obtained in Iran. He also began to negotiate with the Turkish *Hazine-i Hassa* (Sultan’s Privy Purse) in order to receive a privilege in the Vilayet of Baghdad, which was an Ottoman Province at that time. However, he was confronted with the rivalry of an Armenian geologist, Gulbenkyan.¹⁴ Ottomans had also begun to realize the importance of oil, therefore, Sultan Abdulhamid had given orders to Kalust Serkis Gulbenyan, the son of an Armenian trader, to conduct a study into oil in Ottoman lands. At the beginning of 1890, as a result of this research, a positive report was submitted by Gulbenkyan to the Ministry of Mining, stating that oil could be found in the regions of Mosul and Baghdad. As a consequence of this development,

¹² Fevzi Altuğ, *Petrol Sorununun Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türkiye*, (Bursa : Bursa Akademi Kitabevi Yayınları, 1983), pp 33-34.

¹³ Altuğ, *Petrol Sorununun Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türkiye*, p 34.

¹⁴ Daniel Durand, *Uluslararası Petrol Sorunları*, (İstanbul : Gelişim Yayınları, 1974), p 41.

Abdulhamid declared Mosul and Baghdad oil regions as his own property by issuing an Imperial Command in 1890 and 1898.¹⁵

Negotiations with D'Arcy did not bear fruit because in 1908 the oil-rich regions of Mesopotamia were detached from the private property of Abdulhamid by the Government of CUP and passed on to the Ministry of Finance again. However in 1908 an American group called the *Ottoman American Development Company* represented by Colby M. Chester entered the competition for Ottoman oil. The European capital groups united against the Americans when they saw that the Americans were getting ahead after the political instability of the 1908 Revolution had settled.¹⁶ Thus, in 1912, there were four groups trying to obtain oil privileges in Mesopotamia : *Deutsche Bank Group*, *D'Arcy Group*, *Anglo-Saxon Oil Company*, which was a sub-company of *Royal Dutch / Shell Group* and the *Chester Group*.

Later, in order to exclude the American capital from the competition, the German Government in the name of Deutsche Bank, and the British Government in the name of D'Arcy Group and Royal Dutch / Shell Group began to negotiate with the Ottomans. Thus, the negotiations were held not between the Turkish Government and the groups trying to obtain privileges, but between the Ottoman Government and the British and the German Governments.¹⁷ In 1912 the Turkish Petroleum Company (T.P.C.) was established with the initiatives of a German-born Englishman Ernest Cassel and Gulbenkian in order to join oil negotiations and process oil in Mesopotamia and in the other regions of the Ottoman Empire. The Chester Group withdrew from the competition because it saw the difficulty in competing against such a strong coalition.

¹⁵ Kemal Melek, *İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu (1890-1926)*, (Tasvir Gazetecilik ve Matbaacılık İşletmesi, 1983), pp 12-13.

¹⁶ Kaymaz, *Musul Sorunu*, p 44.

¹⁷ Şükrü Sina Gürel, *Ortadoğu Petrolünün Uluslararası Politikadaki Yeri*, (Ankara : Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1979), p 56.

The British then raised the stakes by threatening that they would not deliver three ships being constructed for the Ottoman State and paid for in cash by the Ottomans, unless privileges were given to the T.P.C. . As a consequence of such threats, after World War I began, but before the Ottoman State joined the war, Minister of Finance Cavid Bey together with Gulbenkyan, who had an important position in Ottoman Debts Commission, went to London. When Cavid Bey had to leave London while he was negotiating with the British Foreign Office due to an urgent invitation from the Grand Vizier Halim Pasha, Gulbenkyan continued the negotiations in the name of Ottoman Government. Cavid Bey had hoped to return to London to continue negotiations, but was unable to once the Ottoman Empire had joined the war. Britain took advantage of this opportunity, and benefited from it by signing an agreement with Gulbenkyan.¹⁸

According to this agreement, the T.P.C. was established as a result of the Foreign Office Agreement, which was also signed by the Ottoman Grand Vizier on March 19, 1914. This was a partnership in which the D’Arcy Group had a share of 50%, and the Deutsche Group and the Anglo-Saxon Oil Company (A.S.O.C.) had shares of 25% each. Gulbenkyan also received a 2.5% share from D’Arcy Group and a 2.5% share from A.S.O.C. in return for his mediation.

In June 15, 1914 , an agreement was signed between the Ottoman Government, Britain and Germany determining the regions in which these two countries would possess influence. On June 16, 1914, Britain and Germany together applied to the Ottoman Government and demanded that the right to search and process oil in Mosul and Baghdad Provinces be given to T.P.C. . Grand Vizier Sait Halim Pasha informed the parties with a letter dated June 28, 1914 – the day the

¹⁸ Karadağ, Patrol Fırtınası, pp 104-105.

Sarajevo assassination materialized – that he accepted the application. This letter was not an absolute approval¹⁹, only a promise of approval, because Ottoman Grand Vizier Sait Halim Pasha had stated in the letter that “how the privilege will be given and how the shares will be distributed will be determined at a future date”²⁰.

The T. P.C.’s foundation agreement, signed on March 19, 1914, which formed the basis of the common application made by Britain and Germany to the Ottoman Government was never legally valid since it was not ratified by the parties. For this reason, the application made by Germany and Britain to the Ottoman Government was also not valid.²¹ Already the beginning of the war made the approval promised by the Ottoman Government impossible. However, while this agreement for British dominance in the exploitation of Persian and Turkish oil was not ratified, it furnished a basis for future claims to Mosul oil.

2.4- Secret Agreements Between the Entente Powers

The broad outlines of the future settlement of the Near East had been indicated in secret treaties between the Entente Powers in 1915, 1916, and 1917.

2.4.1- Istanbul Agreement

At the beginning of 1915, while Britain and France were trying to pass Çanakkale, Russia, which was anxious that Istanbul and the Bosphorus was going to be controlled by its allies, began to put pressure on Britain and France. As a result of these pressures, the Istanbul Agreement of 18 March 1915 was signed between Russia, Britain and France, which recognized Russia’s claim to possess Istanbul, the Straits, the European Shores of Dardanelles and of the Sea of Marmara on paper in

¹⁹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 46.

²⁰ Melek, İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu (1890-1926), p 15.

²¹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 46.

the event of an Entente Victory.²² In return, in a Russian diplomatic note, it was written that the British and the French interests would be respected and the plans which would be made by Britain and France concerning the other parts of the Ottoman Empire would be accepted by Russia.²³

2.4.2-London Agreement

With the London Agreement of April 26, 1915, which was made between Britain, France, Russia and Italy, Italy was given a share from the partition of Turkey in return for its participation in the war on the side of Entente Powers. According to this agreement, Italy was promised an ‘equitable’ share of the Mediterranean region adjacent to the Province of Adalia.²⁴

2.4.3-The Sykes-Picot Agreement

While World War I was going on Britain proposed negotiations with France on how to share the Ottoman State if the Entente Powers were victorious. Later Russia also joined these negotiations. The Sykes-Picot-Sazanov Agreement was signed on May 16, 1916. According to this agreement, Mesopotamia was left to Britain and the Mosul Province would become part of the French zone of control. Britain left Mosul to France as part of its plan to extend the French sphere of influence from the Mediterranean coast to the east in order to provide Britain with a shield against Russia. By giving Mosul to France, Britain aimed to place another barrier in the path of Russia’s advance

²² Salahi R.Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy (1918-1923) : Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement, (London : Sage Publications Ltd., 1975), pp 1-2.

²³ Kürkcüoğlu, Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri (1919-1926), p 40.

²⁴ Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy (1918-1923), p 2.

According to this agreement, the Middle East in reality was divided into French and British spheres of influence. France was going to receive the whole Northern coast of Syria (including Beirut), Mersin and Adana. The Tigris and the Euphrates regions between Baghdad and Basra would be given to Britain. In the remaining lands an Arabian State or a Confederation of Arabian states was going to be established. In return, Russia would get the provinces of Van and Bitlis; the region between Fırat, Muş and Siirt, which was in the south of Van; and the Black Sea shores in the west of Trabzon until a certain point as yet undetermined.²⁵

There are two important points about this agreement. Firstly, the territory of Mosul was neither included in the lands promised to Sherif Huseyin, nor in the lands promised to Faisal. Ismet Pasha had explained this situation to Lord Curzon during Lausanne Conference and shown personal declarations of Sherif Huseyin as proof.²⁶ Secondly, this agreement, which was revealed by the Bolsheviks following the Russian Revolution in 1917, created a big disappointment among the Arabs. After signing an agreement with Sherif Huseyin, the British had betrayed the Arabs by signing the Sykes-Picot Agreement with the French.

2.4.4-Saint – Jeanne de Maurienne Agreement

Italy had agreed to join the war on the Allied side in return for territorial gain from the partition of the Ottoman Empire. When Italy learned about the Sykes-Picot Agreement it began to demand its share from this agreement. The Saint – Jeanne de Maurienne Agreement was signed on April 17, 1917 between Britain, France and Italy to replace the London Agreement.²⁷ With this agreement, Italy recognized the

²⁵ Kürkcüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri*, p 42.

²⁶ Durmuş Yılmaz, *Musul Meselesi Tarihi*, (Konya : Çizgi Kitabevi Yayınları, 2003)pp 25-26.

²⁷ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Türkiye : Bir Devletin Yeniden Doğuşu I*, (İstanbul : Çağdaş Matbaacılık ve Yayıncılık A.Ş., 1999), p 82.

Sykes-Picot Agreement and in return the regions of Antalya, Konya, Aydın and İzmir were left to Italy.

Russia was not able to join this agreement due to political developments in Russia. However, by its terms, the agreement was subject to the assent of the Russians. Since the Russian government had been overthrown by the Bolsheviks and the new Bolshevik regime declared that it would not recognize any of the international contracts of the Czarist administration, this agreement never came into effect.

2.5- The Mudros Armistice and the Occupation of Mosul by Britain

The Ottoman Empire, which lacked the necessary resources to continue such a big world war, requested armistice at the end of four years as a result of dwindling material and human resources in Anatolia. The withdrawal of Germany from the war left the Ottoman State's frontiers in the Balkans and Europe defenseless. Under these conditions, the Ottoman administration requested armistice in October. The government of CUP headed by Talat Pasha resigned and was replaced with the government of Ahmet Izzet Pasha. Negotiations of armistice officially began on October, 27, 1918.²⁸

The British postponed the signing of the treaty for two weeks to enable their forces to occupy Mosul and Aleppo and to dominate Istanbul and the Straits. The Ottoman delegation, headed by the new Minister of War, Huseyin Rauf (Orbay), signed the armistice agreement four days after they arrived in Mudros on October 27. The armistice, however, was composed of ambiguous articles, intentionally put into the agreement in order to occupy any part of the Ottoman Empire which could not be

²⁸ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 62.

obtained before the end of the war. Without doubt, the worst or the most ambiguous articles of the armistice were the 7th and the 24th articles. The 7th article gave the Allies the right to occupy any important strategic point of the Ottoman Empire in the event of any situation arising which threatened the security of the Allies.²⁹ As Mustafa Kemal pointed out, this clause alone was sufficient pretext for the Allies to occupy the entire country.³⁰ According to the 24th article, the Allies reserved the right to occupy part of the six 'Armenian Provinces' if disturbances arose.

The Armistice of Mudros provided for a total and unconditional surrender. Just after the armistice terms went into effect on October 31, 1918, the Allied powers took advantage of these ambiguous provisions and began to apply their plans to dismember the Ottoman Empire by occupying the key points and gradually extending this occupation to include entire provinces, which were inhabited predominantly by Turkish Muslim people. The war did not end with the armistice, but lasted for four more bloody and painful years. However, even the signing of such a vindictive armistice was ultimately positive for Turkey since it led to the replacement of an outmoded imperial structure with a strong and relatively stable Turkish National State, powerful enough to secure its borders against the imperialists and to give its people what they deserved.

With the acceptance of Mudros Armistice, the Ottoman State was de facto, removed from world history. It was obvious that the aims of the British and French governments, who did not even obey the simple armistice rule of stopping where they were when the armistice was signed, were to obtain territories according to the secret agreements signed in 1915, 1916, and 1917.

²⁹ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy (1918-1923)*, p 3.

³⁰ Gwyenne Dyer, "The Turkish Armistice of 1918 : A Lost Opportunity : The Armistice Negotiations of Mudros", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 8, No : 2, (May, 1972), p 319.

In the last year of World War I, the Ottoman armies had concentrated on the Southern front. For that reason almost all of the prominent commanders, including Mustafa Kemal, were holding certain points on this front. On October 30, 1918, when the armistice was signed, Ali Ihsan (Sabis) Pasha, the commander of the 6th Army in Mosul, ordered his units to stop where they stood. The British also stopped, but only temporarily - in fact, the British did not have any intentions of stopping. When the armistice came into effect on October, 31, 1918, at noon local time, the units of the 6th Ottoman Army were on the line of Rakka, Miyadin, Telafar, Dibeke, Cemcema, Suleymaniyah and the British forces were on the line of El-Hazar, Gayyane, Altinköprü, Kirkuk, and Hanikin. Therefore, on the day the armistice was signed Mosul and the big portion of its province was under the control of the Ottoman Army except Kirkuk.³¹

In spite of the fact that the armistice clearly stated that all forces keep their positions, the British entered Hammalil on November 1. The British General Cassels on November 2 demanded the withdrawal of the Turkish forces from Mosul to the north and the surrender of the Turkish garrison according to the rules of the armistice. When Ali Ihsan Pasha informed Grand Vizier Ahmet Izzet Pasha of this demand the Vizier replied that there was not such an article in the armistice. He also instructed Ali Ihsan Pasha not to respond and to withdraw his army to the north if the enemy insisted on occupation and began to attack the Ottoman Army in Mosul.³²

On November 7 the British General Marshall issued an ultimatum demanding that Ali Ihsan Pasha withdraw the Ottoman forces from Mosul by midday of November 15 - if not, he would pay for it. Just after this ultimatum, with the order of

³¹ Semih E. Yalçın, "Misak-ı Milli ve Lozan Konferansı Belgeleri'nde Musul Sorunu", in Misak-ı Milli ve Türk Dış Politikasında Musul, Kerkük ve Erbil Meseleleri Sempozyumu, (Ankara : Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları, 1998), p 157.

³² Öke, Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi(1918-1926), p 21.

Ali Ihsan Pasha, the Ottoman forces began to move back from the city and the same day the British raised their flag in Mosul.³³ The last Ottoman soldier left Mosul on November 15, 1918 and the British occupied it on December 6, 1918.

Mustafa Kemal blames Ali Ihsan Pasha in *Nutuk* for the occupation of Mosul by the British and in this he benefits from the memoirs of Halit Bey, who was on the staff of Ali Ihsan Pasha. Halit Bey in his memoirs wrote that Ali Ihsan Pasha had made serious mistakes not only in the case of Mosul, but in other situations that would lead to serious military consequences. Likewise a British charged in the region, wrote in his published memoirs that the success of occupation of Mosul had belonged to General Marshall, who did not wait for a reply from his superiors and applied his own decisions with courage. If Ali Ihsan Pasha had called Marshall's bluff, the British would not have advanced. The correspondence between Istanbul and London would have taken time and Britain would not have given the order to occupy.³⁴ In addition, Marshall made the Ottomans accept that Mosul was a part of Iraq even if by force. This situation helped the British to decide the Mosul Question in favor of Britain.

2.6- The Paris Peace Conference, the San Remo Conference and Mosul

On January 18, 1919, the Paris Peace Conference was held to clarify the details of the peace treaties, which would be arranged eventually with the defeated countries of World War I. British Prime Minister Lloyd George was not pleased with the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Inadvertently, Mosul had been left to France; this could be corrected by making two important changes in the treaty. The first was to get Mosul under British control, and the second was to re-establish Palestine's borders

³³ Bülent Demirbaş, Musul Kerkük Olayı ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kuveyt Meselesi, (İstanbul : ARBA Ticaret, 1991), p 19.

³⁴ Demirbaş, Musul Kerkük Olayı..., p 19.

and status. The French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau's visit to London in December, 1918 before the Paris Peace Conference was a good opportunity to correct that mistake. In return for granting French authority in Ruhr Basin, Syria and Cilicia, British asserted their alternative statutes in Mosul and Palestine. Both sides were happy with the exchange. France would also take a share of Mosul's petroleum and transport it to Iskenderun through a pipeline. After returning to Paris, Clemenceau accepted these changes in a diplomatic note dated February 15, 1919.³⁵

The second phase of the Paris Peace Conference was the Berenger-Long Petroleum Agreement, signed on April 18, 1919, between France and Britain. After the end of the war France had begun to put pressure on Britain to share Mosul's petroleum immediately. France wanted the Deutsche Bank's 25% share in the Turkish Petroleum Company in return for its abandonment of Mosul Province. With the Berenger-Long Petroleum Agreement, this share, which had previously been held by Germany, was transferred to France. In return, Britain had the right to construct a pipeline across the French mandate from Mosul to the Mediterranean. However, on May 21, 1919, in a meeting of the Council of Four at the Paris Peace Conference, Lloyd George declared this agreement invalid after a discussion with Clemenceau.³⁶

The peace treaty to be signed with the Ottoman Empire was one of the biggest problems for the Allied states. The Allies had already shared the Ottoman Empire among themselves with secret agreements. However, each state had its own demands and interests and usually these were in contradiction with each other. In addition, the withdrawal of Russia from the war and the entry of the USA would affect the conditions of this treaty. But once the conflicts between France and Britain were solved with bilateral agreements, the fundamental principles of the peace

³⁵ Melek, İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu (1890-1926), p 24.

³⁶ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 216-217.

agreement were decided upon with the draft Treaty of Sevres at San Remo in April 24, 1920.

At the San Remo Conference, it was also decided that Britain and France would establish mandatory administrations in Syria, Lebanon and Mesopotamia, which were occupied by both countries. With a change in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, Mosul was left to Britain. Consequently, it was not until the San Remo Conference that Britain was awarded the mandates for Iraq and Palestine

The Greenwood-Berenger Treaty, signed in San Remo on April 25, 1920 and dealing with the issue of Mosul petroleum, was a slightly altered version of the old Berenger-Long Treaty. According to this new treaty, France would get 25% of the crude oil production and would own the 25% of the company's shares. The petroleum company would be kept continuously under British control. As a result, Britain owned 75%, and 25% share which had belonged to Germany, was transferred to France.³⁷

2.7- The National Pact, the Sevres Agreement and Mosul

Elections held in the post-armistice Ottoman Empire for a new Turkish Chamber of Deputies at the end of 1919 were concluded with the overwhelming victory of the Turkish nationalists. Newly elected deputies visited Mustafa Kemal in Ankara and there they were informed about a Kemalist declaration of political principles known as the National Pact. The National Pact aimed to create an independent Turkish Moslem nation-state and it was a formulation of a program calling for resistance to the partition of Turkish homeland. On January 12, 1920, the new Chamber of Deputies met in Istanbul. On January 28, 1920, the deputies met

³⁷ Melek, İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu (1890-1926), p 26.

secretly and voted to adapt the National Pact, and on February 17, 1920, they announced to the public that they approved the National Pact, which was mainly determined during Erzurum and Sivas Congresses.³⁸

The British were not pleased with the announcement of the National Pact and on March 16, 1920, Istanbul was put under martial law, and police entered the Parliament and arrested some of its leading members, after which it was dissolved on March 18. The Salih Pasha cabinet was replaced with one headed once again by Damat Ferit Pasha (April 5), who was now determined to carry out the Allied desire to suppress the nationalists. However, the Allied occupation of Istanbul helped Mustafa Kemal to strengthen the nationalist movement. On March 19, 1920, Mustafa Kemal announced that Turkish nation would establish its own parliament in Ankara, the Grand National Assembly (Büyük Millet Meclisi). On April 23, 1920, the new Assembly opened in Ankara, attended by 100 members of the Istanbul Parliament who were able to escape from Istanbul and 190 deputies elected around the country by national resistance groups. Mustafa Kemal was elected as the first president of the Assembly. The Grand National Assembly accepted the National Pact without any changes. The first article of the National Pact aimed to define Turkey's southern borders. This article was written as follows :

The destiny of the portions of Ottoman territory under foreign occupation and peopled by an Arab majority at the time of the signing of the armistice on October 30, 1918 should be determined by a plebiscite of all inhabitants. All such territories inhabited by an Ottoman Muslim majority, united in religion, in race, and in aspiration, are imbued with feelings of mutual respect, concern, and devotion, and form an indivisible whole.³⁹

³⁸ David Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace : the Fall of Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East, (New York : Henry Holt and Company Inco, 1989), pp 427-428.

³⁹ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel K. Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, (New York : Cambridge University Press, 1977), p 348-349..

The article stated clearly that territories with an Ottoman Muslim majority which were not under enemy occupation at the time the Mudros Armistice came into effect, would be part of Turkey. Taking into consideration the fact that British forces had occupied Mosul by violating the Mudros Armistice one week after it came into force, Mosul was considered inside the Turkish territory in accordance with the National Pact. In one of his speeches during the cabinet meetings, Mustafa Kemal defined the southern boundaries of Turkey as follows:

On the day the armistice was signed, the country comprised within these limits was practically under the control of our armies. The line delimiting this boundary starts from a point south of the Gulf of Alexandretta and goes toward Antioch, passing between Aleppo and the Katime Station and it meets the Euphrates at a point south of the Jerablus Bridge. Then it goes through Der Zor and turns eastward to include Kirkuk, Mosul and Suleymaniyah within or dominion. Besides the fact that the regions within this boundary were defended militarily, they were inhabited by Turks and Kurds, while the southern part of this limit is inhabited by our Arabic-speaking co-religionists. So the country included within this boundary has been adopted as the inseparable home of the Ottomans.⁴⁰

The main components of the Treaty of Sevres were determined on May 11, 1920 and it was handed to Tevfik Pasha in Paris. This treaty was like a death penalty for the Turks and was incompatible with the principles of independence. It was a punitive settlement which not only dissolved the Ottoman Empire but also proceeded to partition the Turkish homeland. Such a treaty would be hard to enforce, and its general consequences were unpredictable. Even some of the British leading officers found the treaty very severe. Admiral Sydney Freemantle, after reading the memorandum, stated that the conditions of the treaty were too severe and he also added that the Turks would not ratify this treaty. The Secretary of State for India,

⁴⁰ Stanford J. Shaw, *From Empire to Republic : The Turkish War of National Liberation (1918-1923)*, (5 Vol.s), (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), p 797.

Edwin Montague asserted that this treaty would not be applied and a better result would be obtained with Mustafa Kemal.⁴¹

The treaty indicates how the Allies wanted to treat the Turkish nation. It was a vindictive document. According to the Treaty of Sevres, the Arab provinces were detached from the empire as decided at San Remo; Greece, in addition to Western Thrace also acquired Eastern Thrace, including Edirne until the Çatalca line, only 40 kilometers away from Istanbul; Izmir and its environs were put under Greek administration for five years and this administration would be permanent and Izmir would be incorporated into Greek State if the majority of the population after five years wished so. The Aegean Islands were given to Greece and the Dodecanese including Rhodes to Italy. Armenia was recognised as an independent state and its boundaries were to be determined by arbitration of President Wilson. The region called Kurdistan in the east of Euphrates was given autonomy and the Kurds would be independent within a year if they wished so. The Straits would be under international control with adjacent lands demilitarized, and Istanbul would remain under nominal Ottoman control. As for Mosul, it would be located in the so-called autonomous Kurdish State.⁴²

The Treaty of Sevres, which aimed to wipe the Ottoman Empire from the face of history, was signed on August 10, 1920. However, after the National Pact was accepted as the fundamental aim of the Assembly, all treaties, contracts, or other obligations signed by the Istanbul government after March 16, 1920 were declared invalid by the Assembly. The Grand National Assembly (GNA) became the sole authority to make agreements and laws in the name of Turkish nation. Thus, with this decision, the Treaty of Sevres also became invalid.

⁴¹ Melek, *İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu*(1890-1926), p 27.

⁴² Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p 356.

2.8- Developments In Anatolia and In Mosul Leading up to the Lausanne Conference

After the victory of the Turks at the First Battle of İnönü, in January 1921, the Allied Powers for the first time realized the need to make some kind of arrangement with the Turkish nationalists in order to make them accept the Treaty of Sevres with minor changes. The possibility that Turkey would be thrown into the arms of the Soviets was also an extra factor which convinced Allied military officials to change their views on forcing the Turks to sign a harsh treaty. Thus, a conference was held in London (February 21-March 12, 1921) to convince the nationalists to agree with the Istanbul government, which was also represented during the conference. The London Conference achieved nothing since neither side was willing to compromise and the Ankara representative Bekir Sami Bey refused Allied demands to make the Treaty of Sevres the basis for the negotiations. The Ankara delegation believed that it did not need to change its demands when it saw the eagerness of France and Italy to negotiate separately. The contact of the Turkish delegation with the French was the only positive result of the conference, which made France the first of the Allies to recognize the Ankara Government.⁴³ Another major development for the nationalists was the signing of the Turkish-Russian Treaty of Moscow on March 16, 1921. With this treaty, it was stated that each party would not recognize any treaty which the other party accepted under pressure. In addition, the Soviet Union ratified the National Pact.⁴⁴

Following the Second Battle of İnönü, which went on from March 27 to April 1, 1921 before the Great Offensive, the Battle of Sakarya was won by September 13,

⁴³ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey*, p 348.

⁴⁴ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy (1918-1923)*, p 64.

1921. The foreign governments one by one began to make separate agreements with the Ankara Government. With the final Turco-French Treaty of Ankara, which was signed on October 20, 1921, for the first time one of the Allied Powers recognized the Government of GNA and this French recognition allowed the nationalists to transfer the soldiers and weapons of the army in the South to the Western front to be used in the final offensive against the Greeks. France also agreed to accept the National Pact instead of the Treaty of Sevres.

Mustafa Kemal ordered a general offensive on all fronts on August 26th, 1922. On September 9th, the Turks entered Izmir. By the middle of September the Greek army in Anatolia was completely destroyed. The nationalists, following their victory over the Greek army in Anatolia, were determined to take Istanbul and Edirne by force if necessary. Despite the Allies' threats that Turkish forces should move back from the 'neutral zone' on the Asiatic shores of the Straits, which Allied troops still occupied, Mustafa Kemal stated that Turkey did not recognize the creation of such a neutral zone and his armies were willing to do whatever was necessary to fulfill the Turkish National Pact in Thrace.⁴⁵ On September 19, French troops were withdrawn from Chanak and the region of Straits. The Italian troops were also withdrawn. Chanak was indefensible and the French withdrawal had made the situation even worse for the British. Because Britain was not militarily prepared to meet the Turkish threat both at the Dardanelles and in Iraq and Mustafa Kemal did not trust Soviet help, both sides chose to negotiate rather than to fight. The British cabinet's decision to force the Greeks to withdraw behind the Maritsa in Thrace and the beginning of the withdrawal convinced Mustafa Kemal to accept the opening of an armistice with the British, and thus the Chanak Crisis was avoided.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Shaw, *From Empire to Republic*, p 1757.

⁴⁶ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p 363.

The Armistice of Mudanya, which was signed on October 11, 1922 was a great diplomatic success for the Nationalists because for the first time the generals of the three Allied Powers negotiated officially with the representatives of the GNA Government in a town occupied by Nationalist forces. This armistice was at the same time a political victory completing the military victory, with Turkey obtaining Eastern Thrace, the Straits and Istanbul without using any force.

The struggle against the adversary in Mosul was similar to that which took place in Anatolia. People of the region, Kurdish or Turkish, had united in order to save Mosul from the occupying British. At that time there was an unofficial war between the British and the Turkish in Mosul. Both countries wanted to obtain as much land as possible and strengthen their positions before the peace conference started. However, Mosul was not perceived as a region that should be saved urgently by the Nationalists when compared to the other regions under occupation in Anatolia. Ankara expected the people of Mosul to save themselves with the help of material and morale support provided by the Turkish government. In this context, the attitudes of the tribes would be crucial.

The people of counties of Revandiz and Zebar revolted against the British on 26 May, 1920. After being defeated in Revandiz the British were forced to leave. In fact, this revolt was a good opportunity for the people of Mosul to get rid of the British occupation. During this revolt, the GNA Government, despite its limited resources, supported the rebels as much as it could. This revolt constituted a serious challenge to British rule in Iraq. The British forces were in such a difficult situation during this revolt that withdrawal was considered as a serious alternative. However the people of Mosul were not be able to benefit from events and by October the revolt was subdued, although pacification was not complete until February 1921.

By the beginning of 1921 Britain's authority had been shaken by the uprising in Iraq, and the nationalist forces in Turkey posed a serious threat to Britain's hold on Mosul. However, for Britain, withdrawal from Iraq was in fact impossible, because such a withdrawal from the region could have repercussions in other parts of the world. Failure in Iraq might shake British authority and encourage widespread revolts against the British.⁴⁷ To safeguard its links with India, Britain had to maintain the control of the route to India. Therefore, it had to dominate the Persian Gulf, and to do this it had to control Iraq. Loss of Iraq might jeopardize India's safety, even the British Empire's existence. Iraq was crucial for Britain both because of its oil and its importance in the defense of India.

On the initiative of Winston Churchill, who was appointed Colonial Secretary in January 1921, the Cairo Conference was held on 12 March, 1921. At the end of this conference, it was decided that an Arab Government would be established in the form of a constitutional monarchy and Amir Faisal, Britain's old comrade-in-arms, would be made king.⁴⁸ With this decision, Britain aimed to foster a formally independent state capable of functioning without British subsidy. King Faisal was installed on August 23, 1921, according to the result of a referendum. The British claimed that 96% of the Iraqi people (except 4%, who were mainly Kurds and Turks living in Kirkuk), chose Faisal as the king of Iraq. The basic treaty governing Anglo-Iraqi relations, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922, was signed on October 10, 1922. In fact, as Kaymaz points out, this Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was based on 94th and 132nd articles of the Treaty of Sevres, and because this treaty was never ratified and became legally invalid, this Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was also invalid.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ G.H.Bennet, British Foreign Policy During the Curzon Period (1919-1924), (London : St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp 120-121.

⁴⁸ William Stivers, Supremacy and Oil, (New York : Cornell University Press, 1982), p 76.

⁴⁹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 184.

The year 1922 was critical both for Britain and for Turkey in terms of capturing control of the territory of Mosul. The GNA Government was very much concerned with the developments in Revandiz. In order to strengthen the anti-British revolt, Lieutenant-Colonel Özdemir Bey, who was the commander of Kuva-yi Milliye forces in Antep, was appointed to the commandership of the regional forces. When Mustafa Kemal ordered the National Defense Ministry to forward a military force to Revandiz in order to save Mosul, which was within the National Pact borders, he was aware that majority of the people in the region were against the British administration.

Özdemir Bey, who left Ankara with a Turkish military unit under his command with the charge of recapturing Mosul as well as spreading anti-propaganda against Faisal, defeated the British forces in Derbent with the help of local tribes. The British, who had to withdraw from a large part of the region including Suleymaniya, used two means to improve their situation. Firstly, in order to weaken the support given to Özdemir Bey, they called Shaikh Mahmud back to Iraq from his exile in India. This divided the Kurdish tribes as pro-Turkish and pro-British. Secondly, they made violent and continuous attacks from the air on the regions supporting the Turks. Upon the successes of Özdemir Bey, in a telegram of September 7, sent by the Chief of General Staff, Fevzi Pasha to the commanders of Eastern and El-Cezire fronts, it was stated that Mosul would be taken by force.⁵⁰

The British were anxious that Turkey would attack Mosul after a Turkish victory in Anatolia. There are different points of view about why Turkey did not use force to get Mosul back from the British when Özdemir Bey was able to obtain half of Mosul from the British with a force of 200 people in two months. Bennet asserts

⁵⁰ Öke, Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi(1918-1926), p 89.

that Mustafa Kemal gave priority to chasing the Greeks out of Anatolia, and that his reluctance to begin a new war with Britain saved the British from a military defeat in Mosul during 1921 and 1922.⁵¹ Mim Kemal Öke claims that Ismet Pasha was influential in Mustafa Kemal's decision not to venture into a war with the British. Ismet Pasha thought that Turks would clash with the British and Britain would declare war on Turkey. Consequently, he was afraid of such a possibility and convinced Mustafa Kemal, too.⁵²

With the beginning of the Lausanne Conference, giving up military methods and applying diplomatic ones seemed more appropriate to Turkey. For Turkey, the use of force in Mosul would be suitable when thought only in terms of Mosul region, but such an operation was very risky in the context of Turkey's general military strategy. Istanbul and the Straits were still under occupation. There was a strong Allied fleet in the Sea of Marmara and the Straits. Fighting with Britain would drag Turkey into a very difficult situation not in Mosul but in the West. The Soviet Union was the only power that would help Turkey in such a situation however the relationship between the Turks with the Soviet Union was problematic, and the Soviets were not considered very reliable. Consequently, Mustafa Kemal, who had a broad vision and was a great leader, would take control and hinder such a military operation in the very last moment.

Before discussing alternatives to the use of force available to the Turks in Mosul, negotiations at the Lausanne Conference, which was a turning point in the history of the Mosul Question, will be analyzed in the next chapter.

⁵¹ G.H.Bennet, *British Foreign...*, p 117.

⁵² Interview with Prof. Mim Kemal Öke at the University of Beykent, 20th of November, 2003.

CHAPTER 3

THE MOSUL QUESTION AT THE LAUSANNE CONFERENCE

After the Mudanya Convention was signed, it was time to sign a peace treaty with the Allies. On October 26, 1922, on the initiative of Lord Curzon, the British Government sent out invitations to all interested parties including the governments of both Istanbul and Ankara, informing them that the Peace Conference would be held at Lausanne on November 13. It was obvious that by inviting both governments Britain aimed to weaken the Turks at the Peace Conference. However this problem was solved on November 1, 1922, with the decision of the GNA to separate the Sultanate and the Caliphate and to abolish the former. Sultan Vahidettin fled to Malta on a British destroyer and the GNA elected Abdülmecid II as the new caliph.⁵³

After the crisis was solved the members of the Turkish delegation to be sent to the Lausanne Conference were chosen. Mustafa Kemal selected Ismet İnönü as the head of the Turkish delegation. Ismet Pasha was very successful at the Mudanya Conference and although he was not very experienced in the field of diplomacy Mustafa Kemal trusted him. For this reason Ismet Pasha was appointed as Foreign Minister in place of Yusuf Kemal, who was the Foreign Minister of Rauf Orbay Government, to lead the Turkish delegation at Lausanne. The other two members of the delegation were Dr. Rıza Nur, the Minister of Health and Hasan Bey, the Minister of Finance. The delegation was accompanied by a group of political experts and translators to assist them. The Turkish delegation had received a list of fourteen instructions from the GNA, which stated not to compromise on the issue of Iraqi borders with respect to the inclusion of the livas of Mosul, Kerkik and Suleymaniya

⁵³ Shaw and Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, p 365.

into Turkey. However, it was also added that, in return for this, some certain economic privileges regarding oil distribution could be offered to Britain.⁵⁴

In the eyes of the imperialist states, Turkey was not a victorious state but, on the contrary, a defeated one. The most important evidence of this was the treatment of the Turkish delegation. When Ismet Pasha arrived at Lausanne on November 13 he learned that the conference had been postponed one week, but he had not been informed of the postponement. The attitudes of the Allies did not change after this first insult, which could be defined as a “diplomatic scandal” in the terminology of the Western World. The establishment of the committees is a good example of this. The countries attending were Britain, France, Italy, Greece, Japan, the USA, Romania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Turkey, but the conference had been held with the initiatives of Britain, France, Italy, and Japan. Consequently, the presidencies of the committees were shared between Britain, France and Italy, and the Turkish delegation was not able to determine or even influence the agenda of the conference. The representatives of Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine and Georgia also joined the conference while the matters about the Straits were being negotiated. The president of the conference was Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary. On his suggestion three committees, Territorial, Judicial, and Financial were established. The Territorial Committee would start functioning before the others and Lord Curzon was to be the president of it.⁵⁵

The conference officially began on November 20, 1922. The first part of the conference resembled a kind of duel between Lord Curzon, who wanted to dominate the conference and Ismet Pasha.⁵⁶ The Mosul Question was one of the most

⁵⁴ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy(1918-1923)*, pp 187-188.

⁵⁵ Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*, p 144.

⁵⁶ Mim Kemal Öke (ed), *British Documents on the Lausanne Conference(1922-1923)*, (2Vol.s), (İstanbul : Boğaziçi University Publications, 1983), p XII.

controversial issues; possession of Mosul region was vitally important for both Turkey and Britain. For Turkey, ethnic as well as economic reasons were influential. However, more importantly, Mustafa Kemal was afraid that with the possible inclusion of Mosul into Iraq the British would establish an autonomous Kurdish State, which would encourage the Kurds of Turkey to demand their full independence.⁵⁷ Thus Turkey's strategic position could not be regarded as secure as long as the Province of Mosul remained outside of Turkey. For Britain, it was essential to obtain Mosul because of its oil reserves as well as for the security of the route to India and for the success of its Middle Eastern policy.

The Mosul Question was negotiated for the first time at a private meeting between Britain and Turkey on November 26. In that meeting, Ismet Pasha asked Lord Curzon to discuss the issue in private negotiations, without bringing it onto the conference agenda. Lord Curzon was pleased with this suggestion. According to Öke, Lord Curzon was afraid of the possibility that Ismet Pasha would bring the Mosul issue to the agenda of the conference and dominate it from the beginning. If Ismet Pasha had applied that tactic, the real intentions of Britain as an imperialist power would have been revealed and the Turks would have been able to influence the agenda of the committees. Ismet Pasha lost that chance by choosing to privately negotiate the Mosul issue in hotel rooms with Lord Curzon.⁵⁸ In my opinion, the reason for this was the Turkish delegation's misperception that the British wanted Mosul only for its oil. They assumed that if a share of the oil was offered to the British, they would accept to give the territory back to Turkey. For this reason, at the private meeting Ismet Pasha pointed out that Turkey was a poor country which

⁵⁷ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Eskişehir-İzmit Konuşmaları(1923), (İstanbul : Kaynak Yayınları, 1993), pp 95-96.

⁵⁸ Öke, Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi(1918-1926), pp 91-92.

needed a regular supply of oil from the region and perhaps it did not need to actually control the territory in order to make such an arrangement.⁵⁹

On December 1, 1922, the British financial and oil experts discussed this matter with their Turkish counterpart, Muhtar Bey, whose main aim was Turkey's participation in the T.P.C. with the same rights as France and the USA. It was explained to him that the problem was participation in a commercial company, in which the British Government could not dictate terms, and that great difficulties were involved. Muhtar Bey was not much impressed with this argument since it had been the British Government that decided the participation of the French and the American companies in the first place. He stated that Turkey would not have any difficulty in finding necessary capital to buy its shares.⁶⁰ He also implied that if Turkey was not admitted, the company would face the difficulty of applying a prewar concession awarded by the Ottoman Government, since the GNA had nullified all such grants and Turkey would in such a situation fully press for its claims in the Mosul region. Then the British proposed that instead of participating in the company's operations, Turkey would receive a percentage of the royalties that the company would pay to the Government of Iraq. While negotiations were continuing to be examined, the Turkish delegation received a new instruction from Ankara that because such arrangements were insufficient, they should continue to press for the Mosul region as stated in National Pact.⁶¹

On December 6, Rıza Nur met Lord Curzon at a private meeting and stated that an agreement could be reached between Turkey and Britain. Turkey would even break with the Soviet Union if Mosul was left to Turkey.⁶² On December 10, İsmet

⁵⁹ Shaw, *From Empire to Republic...*, p 1922.

⁶⁰ Öke(ed), *British Documents...*, pp 354-355.

⁶¹ Shaw, *From Empire to Republic...*, pp 1921-1922.

⁶² Öke(ed), *British Documents...*, pp 370-371.

Pasha met once more with Lord Curzon and stated that Turkey could not make any concessions on Mosul.

3.1- British Claims

Failing in private negotiations, the Mosul Question was brought to the agenda of the Territorial Committee at the Lausanne Conference on January 23, 1923 by Lord Curzon. He claimed that the Mosul Question was a matter of determining a frontier line. This British argument aimed mainly to support the British opposition to the application of a plebiscite in the region. Because the application of the plebiscite principle was a truly Western idea, it was an embarrassing situation for Britain to oppose it as one of the leading countries of the Western World. According to Curzon, Kurds and Arabs had never asked for a plebiscite; besides, they did not even know what really it meant.⁶³ However, Lord Curzon, in contradiction of his own words, stated that the people of Mosul had joined the plebiscite that provided for Faisal to become king of Iraq in 1921. He also added that with the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922, both Britain and Iraq had undertaken the responsibility of protecting the territorial integrity of the land of Iraq. Britain, therefore, could not withdraw from Mosul due to its commitments to the Arabs, the people of Iraq and the League of Nations.⁶⁴ It was natural that Lord Curzon should be afraid of the possibility of a plebiscite, because the majority of people of Mosul, Kerkuk and Suleymaniya had voted against King Faisal. As to the numbers and distribution of the population of Mosul, Lord Curzon presented the following data⁶⁵ :

⁶³ Foster, The Making of Modern Iraq, p 143.

⁶⁴ K rk        , T rk- ngiliz  li kileri(1919-1926), p 277.

⁶⁵ Foster, The Making of Modern Iraq, p146.

Turks	66.000
Kurds	455.000
Arabs	186.000
Yezidis	-
Christians	62.000
Non-Moslems	-
Jews	17.000
Total	786.000

Based on these numbers, Curzon argued that most of the people of Mosul were Arab and Kurdish and Mosul could not be given to Turkey on the basis of its Turkish population, which composed only 1/12 of the entire Mosul population. Curzon also claimed that Kurds were of Persian origin and they did not support Turks during WWI.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Curzon added that all the economic relationships of the Mosul Province were with Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, it was argued that Mosul could not be left to Turkey due to the Christian minority living in Mosul. And finally, if Turkey took Mosul, the Turkish border would only be 60 km. away from Baghdad, which would put Iraq's security in danger.⁶⁷

One of the bases of the British thesis was the claim that Mosul was captured during the war with Turkey: consequently, Britain had the "right of conquest" over the Mosul Province. Curzon added that when the armistice was signed the important Turkish towns of the province such as Kerkik and Altınköprü had already been occupied. He also claimed that the city of Mosul was occupied after the armistice was signed because the information that the armistice was signed had reached to the front late.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Curzon said that the armistice contained several decrees which made the occupation possible, and that a war ends not with an armistice but with a peace treaty. Lord Curzon also denied that oil had any connection with the

⁶⁶M. Cemil Bilsel, *Lozan* (2Vol.s), (İstanbul : Sosyal Yayınları, 1998), p 19.

⁶⁷ Muhtar Can, "Musul Meselesi ve Çözümü (1918-1926)", Unpublished masters thesis. (İstanbul : Yıldız Teknik University, 2001), p 71.

⁶⁸ Kaymaz, *Musul Sorunu*, pp274-275.

British case; however, he also believed that the privilege given by the Ottoman Empire just before WWI (28 June 1914) to the T.P.C. - a British company - would be extended.⁶⁹

Finally, Curzon threatened Ismet Pasha that if he did not accept arbitration, the British Government would appeal to Article 11 of the League Covenant, which states :

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations".⁷⁰

By doing so, Lord Curzon wanted to use the League of Nations as a tool. He was aware that the Turks were eager to reintegrate themselves into the world community. Turkey wanted to be treated as a honorable nation and wanted respectability, acceptance and good relations. Lord Curzon was also aware that the Turks were afraid of offending world public opinion. In addition, Turkey wanted to become a member of the League of Nations. According to Curzon, if the Turks did not accept the arbitration of the League, then they would be isolated in the world and would have to fight not only with Britain , but also with the members of the League.

3.2- Turkish Claims

Ismet Pasha advocated the Turkish point of view that Mosul was an integral part of Turkey and it was included in the Turkish National Pact. For that reason it would be impossible to accept any solution of leaving Mosul outside of Turkish borders. He put forth some ethnographic, political, historical, geographical-economic, military-strategic arguments.

⁶⁹ Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri (1919-1926)*, p 278.

⁷⁰ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq*, p 149.

3.2.1-Ethnographic Reasons

According to Turkish statistics the population of Mosul Province was approximately 503.000. In addition, there were about 170.000 Turkish, Kurdish and Arab migrant tribes. Because these tribes changed their places from season to season, it was impossible to calculate their exact number. Ismet Pasha presented his statistics as follows:⁷¹

Turks	146.960
Kurds	263.830
Arabs	43.210
Yezidi	18.000
Christians	-
Non-Moslems	31.000
Jews	-
Total	503.000

According to Ismet Pasha, the sandjaks of Mosul, Kerkik and Suleymaniyah were mostly populated by Kurds and Turks and the number of Arabs was very few. Ismet Pasha claimed that Turkish statistics were more accurate than the British ones on the basis that they were gathered before the war for recruiting purposes when there was no reason for falsification.⁷² In Ismet Pasha's view, the Kurdish people were not different from Turks in terms of race, religion, and tradition. He responded to Curzon's claim that Kurds were of Persian origin by referring to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which stated that Kurds were Turanian in race.⁷³ In both states' statistics, the Kurds and Turks had composed the majority of the Mosul population. Because it was perceived that the issue of the Kurds would determine the result of the Mosul Question, it was imperative to both Curzon and Ismet Pasha to prove their arguments on the origin of the Kurds.

⁷¹ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq*, p 146.

⁷² Ali Naci Karacan, *Lozan*, (İstanbul : Milliyet Yayın Ltd. Şti, 1971), pp 243-244.

⁷³ Karacan, *Lozan*, p 245.

3.2.2-Political Reasons

Ismet Pasha responded to the British claims in the following way :

- The annexation of Mosul to Iraq is not possible since the Arabs are in minority,
- It is not true that Kurds do not want to live together with Turks. The GNA Government is the government of Kurds as well as Turks because Kurdish delegates joined the GNA with the same rights as Turks.
- Turkey does not believe that there is a necessity for a British mandate in Iraq. In addition, there is no legal basis for the treaties which aim to establish a mandate in Iraq, because it has been a part of Ottoman Empire.
- It is clear that Great Britain's basis for its occupation of Iraq and Mosul on the "right of conquest" went against the Wilson Principles and has no validity in the present century. Furthermore, British troops occupied Mosul after the Mudros Armistice was signed in violation of it. Therefore it must be given back to Turkey.⁷⁴

3.2.3-Historical Reasons

Ismet Pasha asserted that Mosul had remained under Turkish sovereignty since the 11th century.

3.2.4-Geographical-Economic Reasons

Ismet Pasha claimed that Mosul was a part of Anatolia in view of both its climate and the structure of its land. In terms of economics, the Mosul province had become more dependent on Anatolia than Iraq because of the railway line that

⁷⁴ Kürkcüoğlu, Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri(1919-1926), p 282.

connected Mosul to the Mediterranean. He also added that Mosul was more dependent on products coming from Turkey than that of Iraq.⁷⁵

3.2.5-Military and Strategic Reasons

Ismet Pasha opposed the British claim that the boundary suggested by Turkey, 60 miles from Baghdad, would constitute a threat to Iraq. He supported his view by pointing out that the capitals of many countries were located close to boundaries. Furthermore, he claimed that Turks and Arabs who had lived together peacefully for centuries would never attack each other.⁷⁶

While the negotiations were in progress, both sides had claimed that the reason they wanted Mosul did not have any connection with oil. However, in a letter he wrote to Lord Curzon, the British Prime Minister Bonar Law said that nothing could be worse than a failure to reach an agreement on Mosul, since in that case the whole world and half of the British people would think that the British had refused peace because of oil ambitions in the region.⁷⁷

Ismet Pasha, in the last part of his speech, declared that a plebiscite should be held in Mosul and that refusal of this offer by the British was the clear indicator of Turkey's righteousness.⁷⁸ However, the initiative of Britain to take the issue to the League of Nations and to threaten Turkey while doing that, changed Ismet Pasha's view and policy on the Mosul Question. In this context, the telegram of January 27, 1923, sent by Ismet Pasha from Lausanne to Ankara is perhaps the most important of

⁷⁵ Metin Çetin, "A Critical Analysis of the Change in the National Pact : The Resolution of the Mosul Question", Unpublished masters thesis. (İstanbul : Boğaziçi University, 1997), p 71.

⁷⁶ Bilsel, Lozan (2 Vol.s), p 233.

⁷⁷ Melek, İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu(1890-1926), p 36.

⁷⁸ Kürkcüoğlu, Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri(1919-1926), pp 284-285.

the Lausanne Telegrams.⁷⁹ Ismet Pasha, in his telegram, supported the view that abandoning Mosul and giving more importance to other issues such as capitulations would be the right policy. Rıza Nur Bey and Hasan (Saka) Bey were against Ismet Pasha's view of abandoning Mosul.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, Rıza Bey as well as Hasan Bey changed their opinions after a few days. A telegram of January 31, 1923, signed by the three men, stated that it was imperative to come to an agreement with Britain in order to solve more important problems.

On the morning of 31st January the draft treaty, which had been prepared by Lord Curzon, was officially handed to the Turks. All the delegates at the conference appealed to Ismet Pasha to accept it. In this draft, Mosul was not mentioned. Only, in Article 3, was it clarified that the boundary between Turkey and Iraq would be drawn according to the decision taken by the League of Nations.⁸¹ Ismet Pasha demanded eight days to give a reply. When he informed the GNA Government about this draft treaty, Rauf Bey responded that it contained unacceptable conditions and he also added that American support should be obtained on the Mosul Question.⁸² On February 4, Ismet Pasha accepted the postponement of the Mosul Question for a year. In his response, he stated : "... for ensuring that peace is not impeded and for the purpose of solving the problem in one year through direct negotiations between Turkey and Great Britain, we think that it will be appropriate to take this issue off the conference program."⁸³ On February 7, 1923, Ankara instructed Ismet Pasha to refuse to sign the treaty because it reflected Curzon's belief that Turkey had to be

⁷⁹ For the entire telegram, see Lozan Telgrafları – Türk Diplomatik Belgelerinde Lozan Barış Konferansı, ed. Bilal N. Şimşir, (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1990), pp 448-451.

⁸⁰ Fahir Armaoğlu, "Lozan Konferansı ve Musul Sorunu" in Misak-Milli ve Türk Dış Politikası'nda Musul Kerkük ve Erbil Meseleleri Sempozyumu, (Ankara : Atatürk Kültür ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları, 1998), pp 128-129.

⁸¹ Ayhan Aydın, "Musul Meselesinin Doğuşu, Gelişimi ve Çözümü", Unpublished masters thesis, (İstanbul : Marmara University, 1990), p 48.

⁸² Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy (1918-1923), pp 206-207

⁸³ Armaoğlu, "Lozan Konferansı ve Musul Sorunu", p 133.

treated as a defeated state. According to Ankara, the Mosul Question had to be directly negotiated between the two states, not by the League of Nations and all means had to be pursued to include Mosul within the Turkish national boundaries.⁸⁴

Britain was successful at Lausanne in removing the Mosul issue from the conference program. This was due to several reasons. First, as president of the conference, Lord Curzon was able to manipulate the agenda, so that the Turks were forced to negotiate over their weakest points at the beginning of the conference. Second, Curzon was aware of several important points, which supported him in his bluff. They were: First, that the British were superior in military technology particularly in terms of naval and air technology ; Second, the Greeks, who still had powerful forces in Thrace, could be rearmed and unleashed by the British ; Third, the Turks needed to establish good relations with the British if they wanted to strengthen their position in world politics ; Fourth, despite the Soviet Union being Turkey's ally at the time of the Lausanne Conference, this alliance was problematic and the Turks did not completely trust the Soviet Union. Turkey needed a British counterweight to Russian power; Fifth, British intelligence, which managed to intercept the messages exchanged between Ankara and the Turkish delegation, aided the British diplomats to determine how far they could press ; Sixth, Britain knew very well that the GNA Government hesitated to engage in military activity in the Mosul region while Istanbul and the Straits were still under Allied occupation.

The first part of the Lausanne Conference adjourned on February 7, despite French and Italian efforts. Lord Curzon returned to London on February 4. Ismet Pasha together with the Turkish delagate took the train back to Istanbul on February 7. The matter was brought to the GNA on February 21, where it was debated for

⁸⁴ Shaw, From Empire to Republic..., p 1943.

almost a fortnight. Ismet Pasha presented a detailed report about the Turkish delegation's activities in Lausanne. He opposed war and suggested that a satisfactory peace could be possible with minor sacrifices on both sides. Ismet Pasha's speech did not satisfy the opposition deputies, who were the members of the Second Group, and they accused him of ignoring the instructions given him by the GNA. The criticisms were so severe that Mustafa Kemal had to intervene. In his opinion, postponement of the Mosul issue for one year did not mean that it would be abandoned. Use of force would not solve the question, since Turkey would face a hostile world and the war would not end there.⁸⁵ The Kurdish members of Parliament were especially angry about Ismet Pasha's speech. When Yusuf Ziya Bey (Bitlis) asked how Ismet Pasha could think of discarding Mosul although it was included in the National Pact, Mustafa Kemal brought a new dimension to the issue stating that it would not be fair to criticise the Turkish delegation by claiming that they failed to defend the National Pact, because the National Pact had never drawn any particular boundary and what determined the borders was the interests of the nation. One of the members of the Second Group, Deputy of Erzurum, Hüseyin Avni Bey said that the League of Nations was dominated by the British and it would not make any decision to the advantage of Turkey. According to Hüseyin Avni Bey, Turkey's best option was to launch a military operation to recapture Mosul, under the responsibility of Mustafa Kemal as commander-in-chief.⁸⁶

The opposition deputies also complained about the communication problem between Turkey and Lausanne, which had caused serious problems for the Turkish delegation in receiving the government's instructions. These harsh reactions indicated that the GNA would not ratify any treaty without Mosul. Especially the

⁸⁵ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy(1918-1923)*, pp 211-212.

⁸⁶ Öke, *Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi(1918-1926)*, pp 109-110.

Second Group would make every attempt to block the ratification of a treaty leaving Mosul outside Turkish borders. Consequently, the majority of the first GNA except the opposition deputies decided to hold a new election on April, 1, 1923 and the GNA was renewed. In the new parliament there were not any members of the Second Group.

Meanwhile, in order to gain American support, on April 9, 1923, only two weeks before the second phase of the Lausanne Conference was to begin, the GNA ratified a new application for the Chester concession, three times as large as the original one. In addition to other extensive grants, it provided for the construction of a railway 4000 km long containing Mosul, Kerkik, Suleymaniyah and Anatolia. British and French reactions to this concession were fierce. Despite the fact that American representatives at Lausanne were in favor of Turkish claims over the Mosul issue during the first stage of the negotiations, with the decision that Mosul was to remain under British-Iraq control for at least one year, the Americans became unwilling to invest in this concession. The USA's global strategic interests required it to support the British because the USA would not give up the chance to take a quarter share of Iraqi oil because of a weak possibility of gaining a share of the Mosul oil. Britain and the United States were in complete accord and the British triumph was an American triumph as well, which meant that Britain had served American interests in addition to their own. Furthermore, the US State Department did not see the Chester Group, the Ottoman-American Exploration Group, as a serious business organization because it was undercapitalized and badly managed.⁸⁷ On these developments, the GNA cancelled the concession on December 18, 1923.

⁸⁷ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 277-278.

Özdemir Bey was a real threat for the British. So long as the Turks remained in the Province of Mosul and had a direct connection with the Kurdish tribes, it would be impossible to put the Kurds under British control. Therefore, it was essential for the British to cut the connection between the Turks and the Kurds of Mosul. To do that Özdemir Bey needed to be sent away from Revandiz. Additionally, it would not be possible to send the Turks away if they reinforced their forces in Revandiz. If the Turkish troops were reinforced, the neutral Kurdish tribes of the region would begin to support the Turks. Therefore, the British began their operation on April 11, 1923. As a result of heavy bombardment, the people of Revandiz left the city and withdrew to mountains. The British burned and demolished all of the cities they passed through and arrived at Revandiz on April 22, 1923. The Turkish unit, under the command of Özdemir Bey fled to Iran on April 29. From Iran they came to Van on May 5. Even the British were impressed with Özdemir Bey's resistance, which lasted nine months. This was the end of plans for a Turkish operation in Mosul and the tribes lost all hope that the Turks would come back to the region.⁸⁸

The first GNA rejected Curzon's draft treaty because it was incompatible with the National Pact. However, it also decided to restart negotiations with the Allies, because, in the meantime, Ankara was asked to send representatives to resume the conference. On March 7, 1923, the GNA formulated its own peace treaty and sent it to the Allied governments. This peace treaty was based on the complete abolition of the capitulations, postponement of the Mosul issue, abandonment of Turkish claims in Western Thrace, and the acceptance of all points settled at the first phase of the conference. On April 7, it was accepted that the conference would

⁸⁸ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 324-325.

resume in Lausanne on April 23, 1923. This time Horace Rumbold, British Ambassador to Germany was representing Britain instead of Lord Curzon. On July 24, 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed. The Mosul Question was left to direct negotiations between the two parties. At the end, the final decision on the issue was stated in the 3rd article of the Treaty of Lausanne :

The frontier between Turkey and Iraq shall be laid down in friendly arrangement to be concluded between Turkey and Britain within nine months. In the event of no agreement being reached between the two governments within the mentioned time, the dispute should be referred to the Council of League of Nations. The Turkish and British Governments reciprocally undertake that, pending the decision to be reached on the subject of frontier, no military or other movement shall take place, which might modify in any way the present state of the territories of which the final fate will depend upon that decision.⁸⁹

Mustafa Kemal and the GNA Government accepted resolution of the Mosul issue by the League, possibly because of the perceived importance given to international recognition of Turkey as an independent state. Mustafa Kemal and other leaders of the time kept the use of force as a serious alternative in their minds even after the signature of the peace treaty. However, first they chose to solve important problems with the other states, so that Britain would be alone in a possible war with the Turks.

Despite criticisms of some deputies of the delegation's concessions on the Mosul and Hatay issues, the Assembly approved the treaty on August 23 by a vote of 227 to 14. Lord Curzon stated that the Treaty of Lausanne was a bewildering contrast of the Treaty of Sevres.⁹⁰ The treaty of Lausanne was a triumph for the Turkish

⁸⁹ Yılmaz, Musul Meselesi Tarihi, pp 159-160.

⁹⁰ Marian Kent(ed), Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Sonu ve Büyük Güçler, (İstanbul : Yurt Yayınları, 1996), p 222.

nation since it overturned the dictate of the latter, which had threatened the very existence of the Turks.

There was some disagreement about the Mosul issue between Mustafa Kemal, the Government and the GNA. The Government and Mustafa Kemal were in favor of concession on difficult issues to ensure the materialization of full independence on political, economic, financial, and judicial issues. In this context, the Mosul issue was of secondary importance for the Government. Although the opposition deputies were in favor of the use of force to recapture Mosul, as Mustafa Kemal and the Government stated several times, uncertainties and the dangerous results of the use of force needed to be taken into consideration by all the members of the parliament. In this context, Ömer Kürkçüoğlu states that there was a parallellism between Mustafa Kemal's attitude towards the Mosul issue and the Chanak Crisis and refers to Mustafa Kemal's conversation with Aralov, the Soviet diplomat of that time. In that conversation Mustafa Kemal stated that the transfer of the army to the European side by obtaining Istanbul and the Straits would be risky, because the army would be seperated from Anatolia due to the Allied occupation. Added to this, it would not be right to leave Anatolia without an army.⁹¹

The alternatives of the Turks on the Mosul issue were very limited. Turkey had the possibility to use force and the Turkish army was even preparing to launch an attack on the Mosul region. But would Turkey really enter a new war against all the Great Western Powers for the sake of Mosul? The Turks would not jeopardize what they had achieved and begin a new war for Mosul, where Britain had vital interests, when the National War of Liberation was only recently over. Some other

⁹¹ Kürkçüoğlu, Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri(1919-1926), pp 244-245.

countries such as Italy would attack to Anatolia not to support Britain but for its own interests. Therefore, the Turks had to make sacrifices on the Mosul issue.

As long as it remained unsolved, Turkey could not arrange its relations with the Western World. As a result, the Mosul issue could not be defended during Lausanne Conference and its resolution was postponed. As stated in the 3rd article of the Treaty of Lausanne, the League of Nations was to decide the fate of the issue if it was not solved through bilateral negotiations at the end of nine months. The process of the League of Nations, culminating in the resolution of the issue will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESOLUTION OF MOSUL QUESTION

4.1-Haliç Conference(May 19-June 5, 1924)

According to the 3rd article of the Treaty of Lausanne, the resolution of the Mosul issue had been postponed, and the border between Turkey and Iraq would be determined in nine months in direct negotiations between Turkey and Britain. If these did not succeed, the issue would be referred to the League of Nations. In the interests of coming to a resolution, a meeting was held in Istanbul on May 19- June 5, between Turkey and Britain, known as the Haliç Conference. The head of the British delegation was Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq until September 5, 1923 , and the head of the Turkish delegation was Fethi (Okyar) Bey, the president of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA).

Before the conference, the representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Colony Affairs and War and representatives from the Allied forces had come together in Britain to decide the exact instructions to be given to Cox before he left for Istanbul. According to these instructions, Cox would demand that Hakkari be given to Nestorian Christians and he would not make concessions on Mosul in any event.⁹²

The Turkish delegation were instructed by the Turkish Government on April, 26, 1924, to demand a boundary including the cities of Suleymaniyyah, Kirkuk and Mosul. In return for this, a joint corporation in the Mosul petroleum would be offered to Britain.⁹³The Turkish delegation particularly emphasized Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood and the very fact that the majority of the Mosul Province was composed

⁹² Öke, *Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi*(1918-1926), pp 129-130.

⁹³ Melek, *İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu*(1890-1926), p 25.

of Kurds and Turks. Sir Percy Cox, in return, argued the problem of the future of Nestorian Christians.⁹⁴ Consequently, it was understood that there were significant contradictions between the claims of the two governments.

With the change of government in Britain in January, 1924 and the establishment of a Labour Government under the presidency of Ramsay Mc Donald, a positive expectation in Turkey that the British would apply a more flexible policy on Mosul issue prevailed.⁹⁵ However Cox not only demanded the Province of Mosul, but also the villages of Beytüşşebab, Çölemerik, and Revandiz, which were within the borders of Hakkari at that time, for the Nestorian Christians, who had migrated to Iraq.⁹⁶ Although the main purpose of the conference was to clarify the Mosul issue, it was recognized that the British committee had not come to Istanbul to reach an agreement. The main purpose of the British was to transfer the issue to the League of Nations, where they could reach the solution to which they aspired.

While Turkey was trying to guess what Britain's next step would be on the Mosul issue, the Iraqi Assembly accepted the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty on June 10, 1924 by a vote of thirty-seven to twenty-four. With this treaty, the assignment of mandate, its formulation, the negotiation of the treaty to be substituted for the latter and the determination of a government of Iraq were all left to the Supreme Council or to British supervision.⁹⁷

4.2- Mosul Question at the League of Nations

Direct Anglo-Turkish relations produced no result as the British had intended, and on August, 6, 1924, the dispute was transferred to the League of Nations by the

⁹⁴ Viladimir Minorsky, *Musul Sorunu*, (İstanbul : Avesta Basın Yayın Ltd. Şti, 1998), p 35.

⁹⁵ Kürkcüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri*(1919-1926), p 291.

⁹⁶ Öke, *Musul Meselesi Kronolojisi*(1918-1926), pp 130-131.

⁹⁷ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq*, p 180.

British Government. Britain was represented by Lord Parmoor and Turkey was represented by Rauf (Orbay) Bey in the negotiations, which began on August, 30.

On August 7, the day after the British applied to the League, the Governor of Hakkari was ambushed and captured and the Commander of the Gendarmes, together with three soldiers, were killed by the Nestorian Christians. Aga Pedros, the leader of the Nestoris, had demanded an independent Nestori state from Britain in 1922 in Mosul region, but this demand was rejected by the British. Because of these close relations between the British and the Nestoris, the revolt was attributed to British provocation. According to Mumcu, the rebels were supported by the British air force.⁹⁸ Cafer Tayyar Pasha, the Commander of the 7th Army Corps of the 3rd Army, who was charged with the duty of suppressing the revolt reminded Mustafa Kemal that the British had occupied Mosul after the armistice with a fait accompli and he said that he could do the same thing. He also believed that he could occupy Mosul Province in ten days if he received an order from Ankara.⁹⁹ However, he did not receive such an order and on September 28, 1924, the revolt was suppressed. While the clashes were going on, three Turkish officials and 270 soldiers with a considerable amount of ammunition fled to join the enemy lines. Later, it was claimed that they took part in the Shaikh Said Revolt.¹⁰⁰

The Council in its thirtieth session, on September 20, 1924, started its deliberations on Mosul. The two governments' arguments differed little from those made at Lausanne. Britain still argued for delimitation of a frontier line and Turkey for the whole province. The Turks still referred to themselves and the Kurds of Mosul as a unit, constituting a majority. Turkey defended the view that the most

⁹⁸ Uğur Mumcu, *Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması(1919-1925)*, (Ankara : Uğur Mumcu Araştırma Gazetecilik Vakfı, 1997), pp 51-52.

⁹⁹ Demirbaş, *Musul-Kerkük Olayı...*, p85.

¹⁰⁰ Mumcu, *Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması(1919-1925)*, p 52.

appropriate course of action was to apply a plebiscite in Mosul Province, but Britain claimed that the League of Nation's duty was to draw a border between Iraq and Turkey. Parmoor concluded with a suggestion that the Council appoint a special commission to study and report on this dispute.¹⁰¹

The Council of the League of Nations came together on September 30, 1924, and decided to establish a special commission to investigate local conditions and generally to learn local opinion and to find out whether the people of Mosul wanted to be included in Iraq or in Turkey. Some members from Turkey and Britain would be appointed to help and counsel the commission. It was noted that three members of the commission should be neutral. The members of the commission were Count Teleki, the former Prime Minister of Hungary, De Wirsén, former Swedish Ambassador to Bucharest, and Colonel Paulis, a Belgian veteran officer. The Ankara Government appointed former inspector-General of troops, Cevat (Çobanlı) Pasha as the assessor to assist the Commission in its work and investigations.¹⁰²

Because of the increasing tension in the region between the British and the Turkish soldiers, the Council of League of Nations, upon the application of Turkey, accepted a provisional borderline called the "Brussels Line" on October 29. Until the final settlement of the dispute, this borderline separating Mosul and Hakkari was accepted as the *status quo* frontier.¹⁰³

The enquiry process needs to be carefully examined because it gives important clues about how the report was written. First, even if the members of the Commission were considered objective, the region to be surveyed lacked the necessary conditions to make an objective enquiry. The region was under British

¹⁰¹ Özden Zeynep Alantar, "Türk Dış Politika'sında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi" in Türk Dış Politikası'nın Analizi, ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul : Der Yayınları, 2001), p 79.

¹⁰² Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 428-429.

¹⁰³ Foster, The Making of Modern Iraq, p 156.

occupation and Britain was one of the sides of the dispute. This was a very serious obstacle against objective enquiry because the administration and the police were controlled by British authorities and the British were able to put pressure on the entire population. Secondly, during the studies of the commission, the British and the Turkish members used propaganda to influence the results in favour of their own states. However, the Turkish delegation was insufficient in promoting and advocating the Turkish case. Cevat Pasha was not suitable for this duty. Most probably, he was chosen in order to positively influence the people of Mosul as a high ranked military officer. In spite of the fact that, at the beginning, he had a positive influence on the public, he neither had the personal qualities or information on the Turkish case to be effective. Moreover, he did not know anything about the disputed region. He had assistants who were well informed about the region, but because the commission was separated into four sub-committees and Cevat Pasha did not object to this method, he lost the chance of consulting his assistants.¹⁰⁴

The report was completed on July, 16, 1925, and submitted to the League of Nations the same day. It was as insufficient, subjective and contradictory as the enquiry had made it. What the Commission did was to satisfy the British side by fully agreeing with the British demands in its conclusions. The report had several contradictions. Turkey claimed sovereignty of the area on the ground that it had never renounced it. On the one hand, it was stated in the report that “it is indisputable that Turkey retains her legal sovereignty over the disputed territory so long as she does not renounce her rights”.¹⁰⁵ However, on the other hand, it was mentioned in the report that Mosul had to stay under the mandate of Britain for an additional 25 years.

¹⁰⁴ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 453-454.

¹⁰⁵ Question of the Frontier Between Turkey and Iraq : Report Submitted to the Council by the Commission instituted by the Council Resolution of September 30th, 1924, (Lausanne : League of Nations, 1924), p 85.

Moreover, it was written in the report that if a plebiscite had been made, the residents of Mosul would have wanted to stay in Iraq; however, the Turkish proposal of plebiscite was not accepted.

The disputed area south of the Brussels line was about 87,890 square kilometers and contained a population of about 800,000. The area between the Brussels line and the line to the north of it claimed by the British, was about 3,500 square kilometers. According to the report, the Brussels line was accepted as the final boundary. Great Britain's wish to settle the Nestorians in this area of 3,500 square kilometers was rejected by the commission and the Council because it was not included in the disputed region.¹⁰⁶

The British mandate in Iraq would end in 1928, and Mosul would be incorporated into Iraq with the provision that it would remain under the mandate of Britain for 25 more years. In addition, the report stated that the autonomy and the rights of Kurdish people in such matters as administrative, personnel, education and language had to be guaranteed. If these two points were not observed, Mosul would default to Turkey. If the Council of the League of Nations decided to divide Mosul Province between Britain and Turkey, it was proposed that the small Zap line be determined as a boundary.¹⁰⁷ The report was based on four important claims.

4.2.1- The claim that it was not possible to make a plebiscite in the region

The Commission agreed with Turkey that the problem was not simply a matter of determination of border between Turkey and Iraq, but was related with the future of the Mosul Province. According to the Commission, a plebiscite was impossible because

¹⁰⁶ Quincy Wright, "The Mosul Dispute", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol.20, No.3 (July, 1926), p 456.

¹⁰⁷ Question of the Frontier..., pp 88-89.

a provisional neutral administration would have to be established and the neutral authority would have to be supported by a strong police force. This force could not be drawn from the British, Turkish or Iraq troops or police forces; neutral forces would have to be used instead.¹⁰⁸

However, the Commission's reasoning was illogical, because if the conditions were not suitable for a plebiscite, how could an objective enquiry have been made under those same conditions?

4.2.2-The claim that the number of Turkish population of Mosul is very low

It was stated in the report that not only the Turkish census but also the census carried out by the British officers and the Iraq Government cannot be compared with as carried out according to the principles of modern statistical offices. It was also claimed that the last census carried out by the Iraqi authorities is that which probably gives data nearest to the truth, although the value of this data can only be relative, and the data themselves should be always compared with all the former figures.¹⁰⁹

The censuses of Britain, Turkey and Iraq are as follows¹¹⁰ :

Gov.	Turkish census : statistics submitted in Lausanne	Estimate made by British political officers in 1921	Census by the Iraq (1922-1924)
Kurds	263,830	424,720	494,000
Arabs	43,210	185,763	166,941
Turks	146,960	65,895	38,652
Christians	31,000	62,225	61,336
Jews	-	16,865	11,897
Yezidis	18,000	30,000	26,257
Total settled population	503,000	-	-
Nomads	170,000	-	-
Total	673,000	785,648	801,090

¹⁰⁸ Questions of the Frontier..., p 18.

¹⁰⁹ Question of the Frontier..., pp 32-33.

¹¹⁰ Question of the Frontier..., p 33.

The number of Turkish people in the province was shown as 38,000 in Iraq, even lower than 66 thousand of British one. It is difficult to understand how the Comission could have considered the Iraqi statistics as those nearest to the truth. The only logical explanation of this is that they wanted to support the British view by indicating that the Turkish population was as low as possible, and using the Iraqi statistics were the best way to do this.

4.2.3-The Claim that the majority of the province wants to unite with Iraq

In the report, it was stated that the Turkish argument that the majority of the Mosul Province was in favor of uniting with Turkey was not true. It was naturally true that the majority of Turkish people wanted to unite with Turkey. However, their population was only 38,000. It was the majority of the population, the Kurdish people, who were going to determine the destiny of Mosul. The Liwa of Suleymaniye, where half of the Kurdish population lived, declared that they were in favor of uniting with Iraq. The majority of the Kurdish people living in Erbil and Kerkuk declared that they were in favor of inclusion in Turkey. The tendency of Kurdish people in the Liwa of Mosul could not have been predicted, but ultimately the majority of Kurdish people were in favor of Iraq.¹¹¹

4.2.4-The Claim that economic and strategic conditions required Mosul to unite with Iraq

In its report, the Comission stated that Mosul traded with Baghdad and Syria and that the amount of trade with Turkey - excluding Mardin, Diyarbakir and

¹¹¹ Questions of the Frontier..., p; 78,86,88.

Hakkari - was very limited. When considering these facts, economically, the Comission supported the view that the province should unite with Iraq. Strategically, it was stated in the report that “there is no doubt that the line proposed by the British Government is an excellent strategic frontier” and “the Brussels line offers almost the same strategical advantages as the northern frontier proposed by the British Government”¹¹².

Britain stated that it recognized the two conditions proposed in the report: extending the mandate regime for an additional 25 years and recognizing Kurds’ rights. As for the Turkish delegate, Rüşti Bey criticized the commission’s report and said that Turkey would not consider giving up its sovereignty rights on Mosul because it had not recognized the mandatory system at all. He also added that the committee was not an arbitrator, and for a binding decision, there had to be the consent of both parties.¹¹³

On September 19, 1925, due to the objection of Turkey, the Council of League of Nations resorted to the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on the following questions :

- (1) What is the character of the decision to be taken by the Council in accordance with the article 3, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Lausanne ? Is it an arbitration, a recommendation, or a mediation?
- (2) Is unanimity essential for such a decision or may it be taken by a majority ? May the representatives of both sides participate in voting ?

On November 21, 1925, the Court of Justice declared its judgement in this way:

¹¹² *Questions of the Frontier...*, p 87.

¹¹³ Alantar, “Türk Dış Politikası’nda Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi”, p 81.

- (1) “that the ‘decision to be taken’ by the Council of the League of Nations in virtue of article 3, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Lausanne, will be binding on the parties and will constitute a definite determination of the frontier between Turkey and Iraq ;
- (2) “that the ‘decision to be taken’ must be taken by unanimous vote, the representatives of the parties taking part in the voting, but their votes not being counted in ascertaining whether there is unanimity”.¹¹⁴

4.3-Shaikh Said Revolt

Despite the fact that autonomy was granted to Kurds with the Treaty of Sevres, during the National War of Liberation, in Anatolia, the Kurdish and Turkish people had fought against the enemy on the same side in order to save the sultanate-caliphate. With the abolition of the caliphate on March 3, 1924, an important religious symbol that had united the Kurds with the Turks was removed. Therefore, the year 1924 was a critical one for the newly established republic in terms of Kurdish loyalty.

Not only Kurds but also many Turks and the British were shocked by the removal of the caliphate. A British officer charged in Mosul with official duties had stated that the British in Mosul were so surprised with the decision of the Turks to abolish the Caliphate that they had difficulty in believing the news. The same British officer added that the Turkish propaganda was based on Kurdish loyalty to the Caliphate and it was unbelievably perfect for Britain that the Turks had relinquished

¹¹⁴ Foster, The Making of Modern Iraq, pp 168-169.

the benefits of such strong solidarity. He also stated that naturally they would benefit from this new situation.¹¹⁵

On February 13, 1925, the most serious Kurdish revolt in the history of Turkish Republic took place, involving thousands of in the Province of Genç. The revolt was planned by Aside (Freedom), a Kurdish organization founded in 1923 by former militia officers. The leader of this organization was Shaikh Said, who was a very influential chief of the Nakshibandi sect.

Because Fethi Bey was unable to suppress this revolt, he had to resign on March 2, 1925 and Ismet Pasha was appointed as the new Prime Minister. As a countermeasure, he enacted the Law of Maintenance of Order (Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu) on March 4. At the same time, two Independence Tribunals (İstiklal Mahkemeleri), courts with extraordinary authorities for immediate punishment were reinstated.¹¹⁶ The revolt, which caused serious problems for Turkey both politically and militarily, was suppressed on April 27. Shaikh Said with a group of rebels were caught on their way to Iran.

Although the Shaikh Said revolt was ostensibly religious, in fact it aimed for the establishment of an independent Kurdish State. This became evident when, during the suppression of this revolt, some written documents such as “Kurdistan Ministry of War”, “Government of Kurdistan”, and “the President of Kurdistan” were discovered.¹¹⁷ While it is claimed that the British supported this revolt in order to reduce Turkey’s fighting capability, and to influence the studies of the Mosul Commission and of the League of Nations, there is not enough evidence to prove these assertions. However, in a note written by the British Ambassador to Turkey

¹¹⁵ Yaşar Kalafat, Bir Ayaklanmanın Anatomisi : Seyh Sait, (Ankara : Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Yayınları, 2003), p 157.

¹¹⁶ Mumcu, Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması(1919-1925), p 80.

¹¹⁷ Mumcu, Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması(1919-1925), p 85.

dated April 22, 1925, it was stated that the documents captured during the suppression of this revolt indicated that even if Great Britain did not support this revolt, it approved it.¹¹⁸

Mim Kemal Öke, based on research conducted at the India Office Archive, states that the British played an important role in the Kurdish revolts in Southeastern Anatolia and in Northern Iraq. However, he points out that although it is not possible to prove a direct British role in the Shaikh Said revolt, it is understood from the British documents that before this revolt the British had implied they would support it to encourage the Kurds.¹¹⁹

All things considered, although this revolt played an important role in the loss of Mosul due to its effect on the decision made by the League of Nations, it also indicated Turkey's need for stability and consequently, its necessity to come to an agreement on the Mosul issue.

4.4- The Decision of League of Nations and Reactions in Turkey

The Council, acting on charges from both sides about serious violations of the status quo along the Brussels line decided to establish a special commission to investigate this issue. However, Turkey did not give permission for investigation north of the Brussels line. On September 28, 1925, the Estonian military officer, General F. Laidoner was appointed by the Council as the head of the commission to make investigations. The report was concluded on November 23. In the report, in summary, Turkish soldiers were blamed for the occupation of the Nestorian villages and for the imposition of very heavy punishments and for 'acts of violence' going as

¹¹⁸ Hikmet Uluğbay, *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyet'e Petropolitik*, (Ankara : Ayraç Yayınevi, 2003), p 433.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Prof. Mim Kemal Öke, at the University of Beykent, 20th of November, 2003.

far as massacre.¹²⁰ It was natural that the report of the Laidoner Commission, which claimed that the Nestorian Christians had been forced to migrate, had considerable influence on the decision of the Council; the Council contained not even one member from a Muslim country.¹²¹

Shortly before the League of Nations made its official determination on the Mosul issue, at the beginning of December, the British authorities warned the Turkish Ambassador in London about the grave consequences of a Turkish assault on Iraq. However, the British were willing to do more than merely warn the Turks. They wanted to soften the probable reactions that would come from the Turks in the aftermath of the decision of the League. The British interests required them to restore the Anglo-Turkish relations to their former level prior to World War I. In the eyes of British, Turkey would be a buffer state against Russia, serving as a stabilizing force in such a turbulent region as the Middle East. Therefore, the British wanted to give some concessions to the Turks to soften the forthcoming reactions.¹²²

After the decision of the Court of Justice, the Council of League of Nations on December 16, 1925, considering the report prepared by the commission, took the decision to leave the region south of the Brussels line in Iraq and its northern part in Turkey. In addition, the Council stated that before their decision become definitive, Great Britain should submit a new treaty with Iraq extending the mandate regime in Iraq for twenty-five years in the way proposed by the original treaty. If Iraq be admitted as a member of the League before the expiration of that period, the mandate regime would end. This treaty was signed on January 18, 1926, and on March 11,

¹²⁰ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq*, pp 169-170.

¹²¹ In the Council there were members from Italy, Belgium, Brasil, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, France, Japan, Spain, Sweden and Uruguay.

¹²² William Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*, (New York : Cornell University Press, 1982), p 167.

1926, the Council of League of Nations announced that the decision of December 16, 1925 was the final decision.¹²³

The decision of League of Nations was met with a great reaction in Turkey. A militant atmosphere developed against Great Britain. The antipathy against Great Britain in TGNA, in public opinion and in the press reached its peak. The decision had delivered Britain its every demand. The severe reactions were very normal in the beginning. Nevertheless, this attitude continued only for a short time because of external and internal pressures.

The first reaction to the decision of the League of Nations was the letter of Tevfik Rüşti Aras, the Foreign Minister of Turkey, which was presented at the meeting of the Concil, on December 16, 1925, where Turkish representatives were absent. In the letter, it was declared “that the sovereign rights of a state over a territory can only come to an end with its consent, and that therefore our sovereign rights over the whole of the vilayet of Mosul remain intact”.¹²⁴

In reaction to the decision of the League, Turkey signed an agreement with the Soviet Union on December 17, 1925, the day after the League made its final decision. This was a treaty of friendship and neutrality signed between Tevfik Rüşti Aras and Tchiterin, the foreign ministers of both countries, in Paris. With this agreement, neither party would take part in an alliance against the other. Tchiterin believed that the Turks were not willing to make war but were preparing for any sacrifice on the Mosul issue.¹²⁵

Reactions in Turkish public opinion and the Turkish press were severe. It was written in *Cumhuriyet* of December 17 :

¹²³ Uluğbay, *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyet’e Petropolitik*, pp 442-443.

¹²⁴ Alantar, “Türk Dış Politikası’nda Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi”, p 83.

¹²⁵ Kaymaz, *Musul Sorunu*, pp 566-567.

the League's decision "proves once more that the League of Nations is the servant of the strongest, namely Great Britain... Only in the medieval ages do we encounter such unjust and tyrannical decision... As the case was during our campaign for nationhood, so now the rights of the Turks are safe under the sharp bayonets of the Turks, and we know perfectly well how to take back with our hands 'Turkish Mosul' – given to Great Britain by the League of Nations – just as we saved Adana, Bursa, İzmir, and Istanbul.¹²⁶

4.5-Resolution of Mosul Question and the Treaty of Ankara

Although Turkey seriously contemplated the possibility of war, it could not risk renewed fighting only four years after the National War of Liberation, particularly against a country such as Britain, which was one of the world's major powers at the time. Such a risk would endanger the peace which Turkey needed for its rapid development. Turkey believed that Britain would consider going to war over the Mosul dispute since it was of vital importance for its interests. Therefore, Turkey was obliged to abandon this particular objective of the National Pact, and remained loyal to the fundamental features of Atatürk's foreign policy –realism and non-adventurism.

The first comprehensive meeting related to the Turkish-Iraqi frontier was on April 21, 1926, between the Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras and the British Ambassador R.C. Lindsay. The British were surprised, because Turkish Foreign Minister told Lindsay that Turkey was not primarily interested in territory and he made such an offer : 1) Signing of a neutrality agreement with Great Britain similar to the one made with the Soviet Union. 2) Transfer of the land south of the Brussels line to Iraq, not to Britain. In that interest, a tripartite agreement among the three countries that would not effect the relations of Great Britain with Iraq was

¹²⁶ Foster, The Making Of Modern Iraq, p 176.

proposed. 3) Participation of Turkey in the Iraqi oil industry as a pecuniary compensation.¹²⁷

Lindsay refused the first offer because it was found inadmissible by the British Government. There was not any drawback in the application of the second offer. However, there was discussion on the third offer. Owing to the problem of reorganizing the Turkish Petroleum Company (T.P.C.) shareholding at that late date, the Turks would have to accept a monetary compensation. However, Tevfik Rüşti Aras was insistent on this issue.¹²⁸

According to Lindsay, the Turks were in a hurry to come to an agreement with the British and an atmosphere of surrender was dominant among the Turks. After one day, it was understood that the reason of the Turks' hurry was due to the Soviet Union's advice that Turkey should come to an agreement with the British. This message of the Soviet Union indicated that because the Soviets felt weak politically and economically against the Western World, they wanted to establish normal political and trade relations with the West. To do that, Russia could easily sacrifice Turkey.¹²⁹ This situation proved that Turkey had made the best decision by not trusting the Russian support and therefore not making war with Great Britain.

On May 27, Lindsay wanted Tevfik Rüşti Bey to make a choice between payment of 10% royalty on oil rights in Mosul for twenty-five years or 500,000 Sterling in lieu of 10% royalty rights. Because of political turmoil and economic distress, Turkish Government did not object to this proposal and on 30 May, in return for complying with the League's boundary determination, the Turks agreed to accept 10% of the royalties over a twenty-five year period.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 586.

¹²⁸ Uluğbay, İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyet'e Petropolitik, pp443-444.

¹²⁹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, pp 586-587.

¹³⁰ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 592.

Turkey signed the formal treaty, the Treaty of Ankara on June 5, 1926, with Great Britain and Iraq. According to this treaty, the Brussels line became the border line between Turkey and Iraq as the League of Nations had aspired, and Turkey would take a 10% share from the revenue of Mosul petroleum for 25 years. In addition, it was decided that minor changes to the advantage of Turkey would be made in the Turkish-Iraqi frontier. Finally, according to a subsequently added article, if wanted, Turkey could receive 500,000 Sterling in place of its share within one year. As a result, the Mosul Question, unresolved since 1918, ended in the exact way Great Britain had aspired with the Treaty of Ankara.¹³¹

In a variety of sources, it was written that Turkey renounced its right of 10% royalty on Mosul oil in favour of a cash payment of 500,000 Sterling. However, Hikmet Uluğbay in his book published in 1995 (*İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyet'e Petropolitik*) proved that Turkey had chosen to take a 10% royalty. In his research, he also found that Turkey had received two million Sterling less than the amount of money it should have been paid. The real value of this money in today's value is somewhere between 755.2-1,644.7 million dollars.¹³²

The treaty was signed in such a hurry that Turkey did not bargain on any issue, and accepted almost every condition that the British dictated. Consequently, no minority rights for the Turqomans living in Mosul were provided. If such a demand had come from the Turkish side, most probably the British would have accepted it. It is possible that because Kurdish people living in Turkey would demand the same minority rights from Turkey in the future, it did not demand minority rights for the Turqomans intentionally.

¹³¹ Melek, *İngiliz Belgeleriyle Musul Sorunu(1890-1926)*, p 51.

¹³² Uluğbay, *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyet'e Petropolitik*, pp 446-447.

Although this treaty was met with grief in Turkey, it was also accepted as the unavoidable result of a logical attitude and necessity. Because Turkey was busy with the consolidation of peace and reconstruction of the country, it did not want to jump into new adventures like a new war and its growing isolation in the international arena hindered its ability to persist. There was an increasing threat from Italy and the agreement with the Soviet Union did not provide the assurance desired and needed by Turkey. Under these circumstances, Britain's friendship had become crucial for Turkey. After the settlement of the Mosul dispute, external threats, war weariness, and internal problems such as the revolts were summarized as the reasons for consenting to the loss of Mosul by the Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Bey. Nevertheless, the Treaty of Ankara gave Turkey's southern borders their distinctive shape, even if it was at the expense of the Turkish National Pact, and ultimately it ended the disagreement between Turkey and Great Britain.

4.6-Reasons Why Turkey Did Not Use Force to Take Mosul Back

After the League of Nations made its final decision on the Mosul Question on December 16, 1925, it was a matter of curiosity whether Turkey would accept the decision or try to take Mosul back by force. Mustafa Kemal and his associates, who had been heavily criticised about the Mosul issue, were aware that they had two options: To accept the decision of the League on Mosul issue, or to venture into war with Britain. They chose the first option due to several internal and external reasons.

4.6.1-Internal Reasons

While Turkey was busy with the Mosul issue, it was at the same time experiencing a process of fundamental change. Two crucial reforms – the

establishment of the Turkish Republic, and the abolition of the caliphate – had meant separation from the traditional Islamic and monarchist structure of the state. The success of the new reforms, particularly in the fields of culture and law was dependent on internal stability and for internal stability, the Mosul issue had to be solved at once. On the other hand, Turkey's external problems helped the government distract attention from internal problems such as the economy and provided national solidarity, decreasing the degree of possible reactions directed against the reforms. Consequently, it can be said that Mustafa Kemal was intentionally tolerant of the increasing tension about the final decision of the League of Nations on the Mosul dispute; however, this tolerance extended only up to a certain point.¹³³ These external problems could never have been solved through war and Mustafa Kemal prevented a military operation and chose peace instead.

It was not hard for the British to realize that the Turks would not fight for Mosul, because since the end of the Lausanne Conference until the final decision of the League of Nations on the Mosul issue, it had been three years and Turkey had not given any sign of invading Mosul. Peace and outside help were crucial for Turkey to achieve domestic reforms. According to R.C. Lindsay, there was no sign of aggressiveness in Turkish foreign policy, because the Turks were concentrating on modernization rather than war in Mosul. The colonial secretary agreed and in November 1925, he wrote :

The contingency of Turkish aggression is... very remote. Turkey stands to lose so much and to gain so little of real value to her in her effort at national regeneration that it is hardly conceivable that she will run the risk. She may bluff for a time or refuse to give a definite acceptance to the [Mosul] verdict, but she will eventually recognize facts there as she has always done elsewhere.¹³⁴

¹³³ Kürkcüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri(1919-1926)*, p 308.

¹³⁴ Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*, p 166.

The colonial secretary was right, because if Turkey tried to take Mosul back by force, it would not have been easy for it in terms of its military capability. First, it had been seven years since the British had occupied Mosul and the performance of the Iraqi army was improving. Second, especially after the abolition of the caliphate and the suppression of the Shaikh Said revolt, Kurdish people were not in favour of Turkish occupation of Mosul. For that reason the degree of support which would be given to Turkish soldiers in the event of war was unknown. Third, it would be very risky for the Turkish troops to enter Iraq through narrow mountain passes because of the bombardment capability of the British air force. Fourth, Britain would bring new troops from India to reinforce its army in Iraq and it would bomb strategic targets in Turkey such as harbours and industrial plants.¹³⁵

In addition, Atatürk had learnt the lesson of Ottoman history and was planning to establish a new Turkish state in a contemporary westernised and Europeanised fashion. Even during the War of Liberation, he had made his view clear: he was making a war against the West for the sake of westernisation.¹³⁶ Especially after the signature of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey was preoccupied with domestic affairs and was determined to cure its backwardness by means of a rapid orientation towards Western values. Consequently, all these new reforms would be interrupted because Turkey's financial resources were scarce and money would be spent on war instead of the realization of new reforms. Furthermore, Britain was the leading member of the Western world. Therefore, it would be a contradiction for the Turkish Government to prolong the Mosul dispute with Britain while it was trying to convince Turkish people to accept several radical reforms, which were Western-oriented.

¹³⁵ Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*, pp 166-167.

¹³⁶ Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri(1919-1926)*, p 305.

Another important internal reason that prevented Turkey from use of force in Mosul was the Shaikh Said revolt. Members of TGNA had to reconsider a possible military operation to re-occupy Mosul after they saw that the revolt had influenced a wide region in Eastern Anatolia and it had taken the revolt more than two months to be suppressed . Under these circumstances, it would be very difficult and risky for Turkey to take Mosul back by force while it was not able to establish its authority in Anatolia. After this revolt, ‘a strong Turkey in existing borders’ became the target of new Turkish Foreign Policy combined with the famous principle “peace at home peace in the world”.

Abolition of the caliphate, which was the main reason behind the Shaikh Said revolt, at the same time weakened Turkish claims on the Mosul region. It was obvious that the Kurdish people of Mosul were no longer very willing to support a Turkish military operation directed towards Mosul. According to Mim Kemal Öke, Atatürk was very much disappointed by the Shaikh Said revolt. Mustafa Kemal was in favour of including Mosul in Turkey as was envisaged in the National Pact, because he believed that the Kurds of Mosul would want to live together with the Kurds of Turkey. The support of the Kurdish tribes during the National War of Liberation proved this. However, the provocations of the British and the Shaikh Said revolt led Atatürk to make important changes in his Kurdish policy and he therefore abandoned the plan of a military operation in Mosul.¹³⁷

4.6.2-External Reasons

Turkey saw how lonely it was in the international arena during the resolution of the Mosul Question. It was not even a member of the League of Nations, while

¹³⁷ Interview with Prof. Mim Kemal Öke, at the University of Beykent, 20th of November, 2003.

Britain was the dominant power in the League. It was not hard for Turkey to realize that it should restore its relations with Britain in order to break its isolation. The Mosul dispute was the last obstacle in front of a *rapprochement* between Turkey and Britain.

Turkey needed British friendship for several reasons. First, Turkey's relations with Western states such as with France were affected negatively by the Mosul dispute. At that time, France needed British support in the international arena, and therefore it was reluctant to establish close relations with Turkey in order not to irritate Britain.¹³⁸

Second, while Turkey was maintaining a certain degree of friendship with the Soviet Union, it was anxious to balance Turco-Soviet relations with links with the West, particularly with Britain, which was seen as the most powerful of the Western countries. On December 25, 1925, the Supreme Military Council at Ankara considered the Mosul issue and Turco-Russian relations, which were two leading and related questions of that time. The possibility of unsatisfactory consequences from Russian aid to Turkey, in case it should go to war with Great Britain, seems to have led the council to decide against the use of force, at least for the time.¹³⁹

It was obvious that the Soviet Union would not support Turkey in the event of military operations in Mosul, although neither parts would take part in an alliance against the other with the treaty of friendship and neutrality signed between the two countries. The Soviet Union's political and economic interests required it to restore its relations with the West, especially with Britain. Added to this, because the Soviet Union was not a member of the League of Nations, Turkey's relationship with the Soviet Union would not alleviate Turkey's isolation in the League.

¹³⁸ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 585.

¹³⁹ Kaymaz, Musul Sorunu, p 569.

Third, Italy and Greece were sources of anxiety for Turkey, because it was believed that they would attack Anatolia if the Turks commenced military operations in Mosul. Italy especially was one of the determining factors in Turkey's decision not to use force to take Mosul back. According to a British report dated on March 23, 1926, sent from Athens, Italy and Greece were planning to attack to Turkey simultaneously when the most suitable time came.

In addition, the security anxieties of Turkey that forced it to be cautious about the use of force during the Chanak Crisis, had not disappeared in 1925. Turkey again had to avoid following a risky policy that would endanger the results it had obtained through troublesome wars. When all these internal and external factors are taken into consideration, it can be claimed that Turkey followed the best policy that any country would have done under the same conditions.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In these days when we wonder about the future of Iraq in the post-Saddam period, Turkey is very much concerned with political developments, especially in Iraq's northern provinces . The possible establishment of a Kurdish state in the region could well produce instability in Turkey as well as in Iraq's other neighbours. The Turqoman population of the same area, a group whom the Turks had not been very much interested in since the Mosul Question was resolved, constitute another reason for Turkey's interest in the region, with recent attacks on them in the area of Kirkuk increasing Turkish interest in the region.

Mosul has always been on the agenda of world politics because of the artificial political arrangements that the Imperialist powers made in the region at the end of World War I. Since 1932, when the independent kingdom of Iraq was established, most people have agreed that it is an artificial country which one day will break into pieces. What has happened in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussain seems to have confirmed this judgement. The Mosul region will remain on the agenda of world politics for a long time due also to the large oil deposits found in the area as well as the fact that a majority of its population is Kurdish. It is imperative for the Turkish people to understand how this situation came about, since it was compelled to deal with the Mosul Question at a very critical time, when it had just emerged from its National War of Liberation, when the Turkish Republic was in a period during which it was being created out of the ruins left by World War I.

During and after World War I, the Mosul area was the target of the imperialist powers, especially Great Britain because of its rich oil reserves. Britain claimed that the Mosul Question was a question only of borders and not of oil, but this of course was not true. For Turkey, however, there was a reason more important than oil: Turkey did not want to lose Mosul province, because it was afraid that the possible establishment of an autonomous Kurdish state in Iraq would provoke the Kurds of Turkey.

The main argument of this study has been that despite the fact that the use of force was always a possibility for the Turks in the Mosul Question, especially after the National War of Liberation and after the League of Nations made its final decision leaving Mosul to Iraq, Turkey's decision to employ diplomacy rather than force was the most suitable solution in the context of Turkish Foreign Policy of the time.

Mosul was in fact included in the Turkish National Pact (Misak-ı Milli), which was accepted on January 12, 1920 by the last Ottoman Council of Deputies (Meclis-i Mebusan) and became the basis for the Turkish War for National Liberation. However, Mosul was not perceived as a region that should be saved urgently by the Nationalists when compared to the other regions of Anatolia, particularly while the National War of Liberation was continuing. With the beginning of Lausanne Conference, giving up military methods and choosing diplomacy seemed more appropriate to Turkey. For Turkey, use of force for the Mosul region was very risky in the general military strategy, when Istanbul and the Straits were still under Allied occupation. Turkey had come out of a series of intense wars with the result of hundreds of thousands of deaths and injured people. The Turkish nation did not want to start a war for the sake of Mosul at that time. In addition, how could anyone be sure of the support of the people of Mosul while they were under British occupation?

An important result of the Turkish War of National Liberation was the postponement of the Mosul Question until 1926. Britain, which realized the richness of Iraq in terms of oil at the end of 19th century, was of course very decisive not to leave Mosul to Turkey. Atatürk, who was a realistic leader, knew the limits of his success and was aware that the Turkish army was exhausted after the National War of Liberation and therefore, Turkey should come to terms with Western powers, especially with Britain, in order to survive. For this reason, Ankara wanted to solve the Mosul Question in a peaceful way with negotiations. However, the Imperialist powers were stronger in all the conferences and they did not have any intention of leaving Mosul to Turkey. After this question was not solved at the end of Lausanne and Halic Conferences, the destiny of the region was left to the decision of the League of Nations.

The League of Nations decided to establish a special commission to investigate the local conditions and to prepare a report. This report, which contained several contradictions, was submitted to the League of Nations on July, 16, 1925. It was stated in the report that Turkey would retain its sovereignty rights in the Mosul region so long as it did not renounce its rights. Contrarily, the report also mentioned that Mosul had to stay under British mandate for an additional 25 years.

Despite such a contradictory report, on December 16, 1925, the Council of the League of Nations decided to determine the Brussels line as the final boundary. Naturally, this decision was met with strong reaction in Turkey. A war-like sentiment developed against Great Britain, but it was a temporary situation for several internal and external reasons. One of the most important internal reasons that stopped Turkey from going to a war for Mosul was the Shaikh Said revolt. The caliphate had been a strong symbol among the Kurdish people and its abolition was the main reason behind

the Shaikh Said revolt. This revolt weakened Turkish claims on Mosul and played an important role in the loss of Mosul due to its effect on the decision of the League of Nations. In addition, it indicated Turkey's need for stability and the necessity to come to an agreement on the Mosul Question. Internal stability was also vital for the success of internal reforms. Turkey was preoccupied with domestic reforms and was determined to cure its backwardness by means of a rapid orientation towards Western values. These new reforms would be interrupted by an instable political environment.

Turkey's estrangement from the international arena was an important external factor that forced Turkey to accept the final decision of the League. The Mosul dispute had revealed that Turkey needed to restore its relations with Great Britain in order to break its isolation. British friendship was also important for Turkey in balancing Turco-Soviet relations, because Turkey was aware that relations with Russia was not enough to ensure its acceptance in the international arena. It was quite possible that Russia would not support Turkey in the case of a war with Great Britain. Italy and Greece also affected Turkey's decision not to use force. Turkey was anxious that both countries would attack Anatolia if it initiated a military operation in Mosul.

As a result of a very complex process between the years 1918-1926 with various political, diplomatic, military and legal dimensions, the Mosul province was ultimately left to Iraq, under the mandate of Great Britain at that time. When the fact that Britain was the strongest member of the League of Nations but Turkey was not even a member is considered, this result was not surprising.

Finally, after an 8-year struggle, Turkey agreed to leave Mosul by obeying the decision of the League of Nations and signed the Treaty of Ankara with Iraq and Great Britain on June 5, 1926. This treaty has given Turkey's southern borders their final shape even if it was at the expense of the Turkish National Pact. However, Turkey did

not bargain on any issues, not even demanding minority rights for the Turqomans living in Mosul, accepting almost every condition dictated by Great Britain . Economically, Turkey had to be satisfied with 10% of the revenue from Mosul oil for 25 years.

In the final analysis, Turkey and the leading Turkish decision makers should be applauded rather than criticised for the peaceful methods used to argue their rights in the Mosul Question. The Turkish people were aware how difficult it had been to regain their freedom after very intense wars. In this context, Atatürk and his associates followed a very logical policy, choosing not to risk the future of Turkey.

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APPENDIX A

TEXT OF THE ARMISTICE CONCLUDED AT MOUDROS

Sections included in the armistice project agreed at Versailles on October 6-8 but omitted in the final armistice agreement are in italics. Sections not in the Versailles draft but added at Moudros are in capital letters. The order of the terms as agreed at Versailles was different from that communicated to Calthorpe at Moudros and given below, having been rearranged in order of importance by Wilson on October 21.

1. Opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and secure access to the Black Sea. Allied occupation of Dardanelles and Bosphorus forts.
2. Positions of all minefields, torpedo tubes and other obstructions in Turkish waters to be indicated and assistance given to sweep or remove them as may be required.
3. All available information as to mines in the Black Sea to be communicated.
4. All Allied prisoners of war and Armenian interned persons and prisoners to be collected in Constantinople and handed over unconditionally to the Allies.
5. Immediate demobilization of the Turkish army except for such troops as are required for surveillance of frontiers and for the maintenance of internal order. (Numbers of effectives and their dispositions to be determined later by the Allies AFTER CONSULATION WITH THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT.)

6. Surrender of all war vessels in Turkish waters or in waters occupied by Turkey; these ships to be interned at such Turkish port or ports as may be directed, EXCEPT SUCH SMALL VESSELS AS ARE REQUIRED FOR POLICE OR SIMILAR PURPOSES IN TURKISH TERRITORIAL WATERS.
7. The Allies to have the right to occupy any strategic points IN THE EVENT OF A SITUATION ARISING WHICH THREATENS THE SECURITY OF THE ALLIES.
8. Free use by Allied ships of all ports and anchorages now in Turkish occupation and denial of their use to the enemy. SIMILAR CONDITIONS TO APPLY TO TURKISH MERCANTILE SHIPPING IN TURKISH WATERS FOR PURPOSES OF TRADE AND THE DEMOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.
9. *Use of Constantinople as a naval base for the Allies and* Use of all ship repair facilities at all Turkish ports and arsenals.
10. Allied occupation of the Taurus Tunnel System.
11. Immediate withdrawal of Turkish troops from North-west Persia and *trans-Caucasia* to behind the pre-war frontier HAS ALREADY BEEN ORDERED AND WILL BE CARRIED OUT. PART OF TRANS-CAUCASIA HAS ALREADY BEEN ORDERED TO BE EVACUATED IF REQUIRED BY THE ALLIES AFTER THEY HAVE STUDIED THE SITUATION THERE.
12. Wireless telegraphy and cable stations to be controlled by the Allies, TURKISH GOVERNMENT MESSAGES EXCEPTED.
13. Prohibition to destroy any naval, military or commercial material.

14. Facilities to be given for the purchase of coal and oil-fuel and naval material from Turkish sources AFTER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN MET.

NONE OF THE ABOVE TO BE EXPORTED.

15. Allied Control Officers to be placed on all railways, including such portions of trans-Caucasian railways now under Turkish control, which must be placed at the free and complete disposal of the Allied authorities. DUE CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.

This clause to include Allied occupation of Batum and Baku. TURKEY WILL RAISE NO OBJECTION TO THE OCCUPATION OF BAKU BY THE ALLIES.

16. Surrender of all garrisons in Hejaz, Assir, Yemen, Syria, AND Mesopotamia *Cilicia* to the nearest Allied Coomander or *Arab representative*; AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM CILICIA, EXCEPT THOSE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN ORDER, AS WILL BE DETERMINED UNDER CLAUSE 5.

17. Surrender of all Turkish officer in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to the nearest Italian garrison. TURKEY AGREES TO STOP SUPPLIES AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH THOSE OFFICERS IF THEY DO NOT OBEY THE ORDER TO SURRENDER.

18. Surrender of all ports occupied in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, including Misurata, to the nearest Allied garrison.

19. *The handing over of* All Germans and Austrians, naval military and civilian, *to the nearest British or Allied Commander* TO BE

EVACUATED WITHIN ONE MONTH FROM TURKISH DOMINIONS; THOSE IN REMOTE DISTRICTS AS SOON AFTER AS MAY BE POSSIBLE.

20. Compliance with such orders as may be conveyed for the disposal *and disposition of the Turkish Army and its equipment, arms and ammunition, including transport* OF THE EQUIPMENT, ARMS AND AMMUNITION, INCLUDING TRANSPORT, OF THAT PORTION OF THE TURKISH ARMY WHICH IS DEMOBILISED UNDER CLAUSE 5.

21. *Appointment of Allied officers to control Army supplies.* AN ALLIED REPRESENTATIVE TO BE ATTACHED TO THE TURKISH MINISTRY OF SUPPLIES IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD ALLIED INTERESTS. THIS REPRESENTATIVE TO BE FURNISHED WITH ALL INFORMATION NECESARY FOR THIS PURPOSE.

22. Turkish prisoners to be kept at the disposal of the Allied Powers. THE RELEASE OF TURKISH CIVILIAN PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OVER MILITARY AGE TO BE CONSIDERED.

23. Obligation on the part of Turkey to cease all relations with the Central Powers.

24. In case of disorder in the Armenian vilayets, the Allies reserve to themselves the right to occupy any part of them

b. The occupation of Sis, Hajin, Zeytin and Aintab in accordance with the 7th, 10th and 15th articles.

25. HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE ALLIES AND TURKEY SHALL
CEASE FROM NOON, LOCAL TIME, ON THURSDAY, 31ST
OCTOBER, 1918.

Signed in duplicate on
board His Britannic
Majesty's Ship
'Agamemnon' at Port
Mudros, Lemnos, the 30th
October, 1918.

Source : Gwynne Dyer, "The Turkish Armistice of 1918 : A Lost Opportunity : The
Armistice Negotiations of Mudros", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 8, No : 2, 1972.

APPENDIX B

TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IRAQ AND TURKEY REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE FRONTIER BETWEEN TURKEY AND IRAQ

**Signed at Angora, June 5, 1926 ; ratifications exchanged at Angora, July
18, 1926**

CHAPTER 1. Frontier Between Turkey and Iraq

Article 1

The frontier line between Turkey and Iraq is definitely laid down following the line adopted by the Council of the League of Nations at its session on the 29th October, 1924, and set forth hereunder : Nevertheless the above mentioned line is modified to the south of Alamun and Ashuta so as to include in Turkish territory that part of the road which connects these two places and which crosses Iraq territory.

Article 2

Subject to the last paragraph of Article 1, the frontier line described in the above-mentioned article constitutes the frontier between Turkey and Iraq, and is traced on the map annexed to the present treaty. In case of divergence between the text and the map the text will prevail.

Article 3

A boundary commission shall be appointed to trace on the ground the frontier defined in Article 1. This commission shall be composed of two representatives appointed by the Turkish Government, two representatives appointed jointly by

His Majesty's Government and the Government of Iraq, and a president, who shall be a Swiss national, to be nominated by the President of the Swiss Confederation, if he is willing to do so.

The commission shall meet as soon as possible, and in any case within six months from the coming into force of the present treaty.

The decisions of the commission shall be taken by a majority and shall be binding on all the high contracting parties.

The boundary commission shall endeavor in all cases to follow as nearly as may be possible the definitions given in the present treaty.

The expenses of the commission shall be divided equally between Turkey and Iraq.

The states concerned undertake to give assistance to the boundary commission, either directly or through local authorities, in everything that concerns the accommodation, labor, materials necessary for the accomplishment of its task.

They undertake further to safeguard the trigonometrical points, signs, posts or frontier marks erected by the commission.

The boundary marks shall be placed so as to be visible from each other. They shall be numbered, and their position and their number shall be noted on a cartographic document.

The definitive record of the boundary laid down, and the maps and documents attached thereto shall be made out in triplicate, of which two copies shall be forwarded to the governments of the two interested states, and the third to the Government of the French Republic, in order that authentic copies may be delivered to the Powers signatory of the Treaty of Lausanne.

Article 4

The nationality of the inhabitants of the territories ceded to Iraq in virtue of the provisions of Article 1 is regulated by Articles 30-36 of the Treaty of Lausanne. The high contracting parties agree that the right of option provided for in articles 31,31, and 34 of the said treaty may be exercised during a period of twelve months from the coming into force of the present treaty.

Turkey reserves nevertheless her liberty of action in so far as concerns the recognition of the option of such of the above-mentioned inhabitants as may opt for Turkish nationality.

Article 5

Each of the high contracting parties accepts as definitive and inviolable the frontier line fixed by Article 1 and undertakes to make no attempt to alter it.

Chapter II. Neighborly relations

Article 6

The high contracting parties undertake reciprocally to oppose by all means in their power any preparations made by one or more armed individuals with the object of committing acts of pillage or brigandage in the neighboring frontier zone and to prevent them from crossing the frontier.

Article 7

Whenever the competent authorities designated in Article 11 learn that preparations are being made by one or more armed individuals with the object of committing acts of pillage or brigandage in the neighboring frontier zone they shall reciprocally inform each other without delay.

Article 8

The competent authorities designated in Article 11 shall reciprocally inform each other as quickly as possible of any act of pillage or brigandage which may have been perpetrated on their territory. The authorities of the party receiving the notice shall make every effort in their power to prevent the authors of such acts from crossing the frontier.

Article 9

In the event of one or more armed individuals guilty of a crime or misdemeanor in the neighboring frontier zone, succeeding in taking refuge in the other frontier zone, the authorities of the latter zone are bound to arrest such individuals in order to deliver them, in conformity with the law, to the authorities of the other party whose nationals they are, together with their booty and their arms.

Article 10

The frontier zone to which this chapter of the present treaty shall apply is the whole of the frontier which separates Turkey from Iraq and a zone 75 kilometers in width on each side of that frontier.

Article 11

The competent authorities to whom the execution of this chapter of the treaty is entrusted are the following :

For the organization of general cooperation and responsibility for the measures to be taken :

On the Turkish side : the military commandant of the frontier ;

On the Iraq side : the *mutas-sarifs* of Mosul and Arbil.

For the exchange of local information and urgent communications :

On the Turkish side : the authorities appointed with consent of the Valis;

On the Iraq side : the *kaima-kams* of Zakho, Amadia, Zibar and Rowanduz.

The Turkish and Iraq Governments may, for administrative reasons modify the list of their competent authorities, giving notice of such modification either through the permanent frontier commission provided for in Article 13 or through the diplomatic channel.

Article 12

The Turkish and Iraq authorities shall refrain from all correspondence of an official or political nature with the chiefs, shaikhs, or other members of tribes which are nationals of the other states and which are actually territory of that state.

They shall not permit in the frontier zone any organization for propaganda and meeting directed against either state.

Article 13

In order to facilitate the execution of the provisions of the present chapter of the treaty, and, in general, the maintenance of good neighborly relations on the frontier, there shall be set up a permanent Frontier Commission composed of an equal number of officials appointed from time to time for this purpose by the Turkish and Iraq Governments respectively. This commission shall meet at least once every six months or oftener if circumstances require it.

It shall be the duty of this commission, which shall meet alternately in Turkey and Iraq to endeavor to settle amicably all questions concerning the executions of the provisions of this chapter of the treaty, and any other frontier question on

which an agreement shall not have been reached between local frontier officials concerned.

The commission shall meet for the first time at Zakho within two months from the coming into force of the present treaty.

Chapter 3. General Provisions

Article 14

With the object of an enlarging the field of common interests between the two countries, the Iraq Government shall pay to the Turkish Government for a period of 25 years from the coming into force of the present treaty 10 per cent. On all royalties which it shall receive :

- (a) From the Turkish Petroleum Company under Article 10 of its concession of the 14th March, 1925 ;
- (b) From such companies persons as may exploit oil under the provisions of Article 6 of the above-mentioned concession ;
- (c) From such subsidiary companies as may be constituted under the provisions of Article 33 of the above-mentioned concession.

Article 15

The Turkish and Iraq Governments agree to enter into negotiations as soon as possible for the purpose of concluding an extradition treaty in accordance with the usages prevailing among friendly states.

Article 16

The Iraq Government undertakes not to disturb or molest any persons established on its territory on account of their political opinions or conduct in favor of Turkey up to the time of the signature of the present treaty, and to grant them full and complete amnesty. All sentences pronounced under the above heading shall be annulled, and all proceeding already instituted shall be stayed.

Article 17

The present treaty shall come into force on the date of exchange of ratifications. Chapter 2 of the present treaty shall remain in force for a period of ten years from the date of the coming into force of the present treaty.

After the termination of a period of two years from the coming into force of the present treaty each of the contracting parties shall have the right to denounce this chapter in so far as its provisions concerned that party, the denunciation taking effect one year after the date on which notice thereof shall have been given.

Article 18

The present treaty shall be ratified by each of the high contracting parties, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Angora as soon as possible. Certified copies of the treaty shall be communiacted to each of the states signatory of the Treaties of Lausanne. In faith whereof the above-named plenipotentiaries have signed the present treaty and affixed thereto their seals. Done at Angora, the 5th day of June, 1926, in triplicate.

R. C. Lindsay.
Dr. T. Rouchdy
Nouri Said

Source : *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1927.