



Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi
The Journal of International Social Research
Cilt: 10 Sayı: 52 Volume: 10 Issue: 52
Ekim 2017 October 2017
www.sosyalarastirmalar.com Issn: 1307-9581
Doi Number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2017.1898>

THE IDENTITY CONFLICT OF THE CYPRIOTS THE CYPRIOT MULE CORPS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR*

Nur ÇETİNER**

Abstract

Cypriot muleteers served in the British army in the Macedonian front during the First World War. Both Cypriot men and island mules were used in the war. Mules were used in the war due to their carrying ability under harsh geographical conditions. The British government utilized the existing economic problems in Cyprus to attract Cypriot support. For some Cypriots joining the war serving in the army was the only way to provide for the livelihood of their family. In fact, Turkish Cypriots participated in the Great War against the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, there were differences in terms of religious creed between Greek Cypriots and the British: the Greek Cypriots were Orthodox while the British people were Protestant. Hence, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had some troubles about joining the Great War. Despite these differences, Greek and Turkish Cypriots set aside their national and religious feelings and were united in the same army to serve Great Britain. Another important aspect of the Cypriot Mule Corps lies in the fact that the Turkish Cypriots joined the British army not only against their former Sultan but also against their compatriots who migrated to Anatolia and were subsequently recruited to the Ottoman army. Overall, this article aims to illustrate this complex situation of the Cypriot Mule Corps from the standpoint of Cypriots and to show that people can ignore their national and religious identities when they have to.

Keywords: Identity troubles, Cyprus, Cypriot Mule Corps, Muleteers.

Introduction

Repercussions of World War I reached numerous people who did not have any association with the decision-takers of the war. The main factor leading to a global impact of the war was colonization whereby European countries supplied their own needs through their colonies. These needs mainly included manpower, animal power, and export goods. Thus, many non-European countries were forced to join the war to support their mainland. For example, the Indian Army served in France from 1914 to 1915, and it comprised almost one-third of the British Expeditionary Force in France (Davis, 2008: 2).

In addition, during the First World War, technology, especially military technology, had been developed. For example, important innovations in weaponry, including the tank, submarine and poison gas were made (Tucker, 1998: 11). However, these innovations were not sufficient for enabling convenient access to the military fronts. Due to harsh geographical conditions in the fronts, European states needed pack animals to transport military equipment. War horses and mules helped transport ammunition in the Great War (C. Galtey, 1918: 13). For instance, Zion Mule Corps was one of the corps in the Great War for transforming ammunition with the pack animals. This corps was composed of Jewish people who served for the British army in Gallipoli (Mazza, 2013: 576).

Overall, various people from different colonies joined the Great War. They contributed to the war on behalf of the European colonialist states. On the other hand, the perspective of the history started to change in the 20th century. First, Antonio Gramsci who was a Marxist intellectual used the term '*subaltern*' to identify Italian peasants and workers. Then some Indian historians were inspired by Gramsci and used this term to explain different classes in India (Birdal, 2011: 30). However, it was Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak who brought the essential meaning to the term '*subaltern*' with her study '*Can the Subaltern Speak?*' (Spivak, 1988: 271-313). Thus, historians no longer research only the people from the upper class but also analyse the people from the lower class such as the people from different colonies in the Great War. History has included the history of ordinary, invisible and silent people thanks to the subaltern studies. In a broader context, postcolonial and subaltern studies affect the perspective of the history. The standpoint of the history has shifted from Europe to the other parts of the world (Young, 2003: 1-44). These changes to the historical perspective also influence this study. This article will analyse the condition of the ordinary Cypriots in the Cypriot Mule Corps during the Great War.

The main goal of this article is to show that people can ignore their national and religious differences when they have to. In other words, when necessary, people can participate in actions that conflict with their

* This article was written based on the author's master thesis at Sabancı University.

** PhD student, Boğaziçi University, The Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History.



identities. The history of Muslim Turkish and Orthodox Christian Cypriot muleteers in the Great War stands as a prime example for this phenomenon.

1. General View

Cyprus was under the control of Great Britain since 1878, although legally it was still a part of the Ottoman Empire (Heraclidou, 2014: 193). According to the Berlin Conference in 1878, Great Britain rented Cyprus from the Ottoman Empire for 87,676 British sterling. Great Britain accepted to protect the Ottoman Empire from the Russian threat according to this treaty (Kızılyürek, 2005: 214). When World War I broke out, Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire entered the war as opponents, and Cyprus was annexed as a British colony (Heraclidou, 2014: 193). Great Britain benefited from many resources of Cyprus. Cyprus was not one of the fronts of World War I but it was close to the main centres of the First World War including Egypt, the Dardanelles and Macedonia. Thanks to the strategic geopolitical location of Cyprus, Britain could use the island to provide food and some military necessities to the British army (Ibid: 194). In addition, Cypriot muleteers joined the Macedonian front and they officially came to be known as the Macedonian Mule Corps (Varnava, 2015: 100). They served for the British army in the Macedonian front to free Serbia from the Central Powers.

In the Great War, Serbia did not have an advantageous position, a position where it was surrounded by Central Powers on all sides. In addition to this, Serbia had a weak communication with its allies (Shepherd, 1981: 116-117). In 1915, the Central Powers, Austria, Germany and Bulgaria, attacked the Serbian territory and Serbian civilian population were compelled to withdraw to Greece. Serbian forces were not strong and for this reason the Allied Powers came to Salonika to assist the Serbian defence (Hassiotis, 2015: 10). Hence, the Macedonian Front was comprised of the Allied forces Britain, France, Serbia and Russia against the Central Powers Austria-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria. Additionally, two Ottoman divisions joined the fight on the eastern end of the Macedonian Front from autumn 1916 to spring 1917 (Hall, 2016). The geographical situation of the Macedonian Front needed help from the pack animals. Specifically, northern Greece has mountainous topography coupled with poor infrastructure and rail network. For these reasons, soldiers in the Macedonian Front required pack animals for transportation (Morgan, 2011: 79). These primitive factors in the Macedonian Front made the Mule Corps essential. Thus, in 1916, the Cypriot Mule Corps were sent to the Macedonian Front to serve in British army.

Cyprus hosts two main ethnic groups: Greek Cypriots who are Orthodox Christians and Turkish Cypriots who are Muslims. These two different ethnic groups used to live together since the Ottoman conquest of the island in 1571. Nevertheless, since the end of the 19th century, Greek Cypriots began to fall under the influence of nationalism. Compared with the Greek Cypriots, nationalism among Turkish Cypriots progressed slowly, but eventually both groups came under the influence of nationalism (Kızılyürek, 2005: 212-244). Nationalism can be identified as a process of identity formation. National identities had not been developed naturally but they had been created with the help of modernity and shaped within the process of the construction of the nation states (Ibid: 17). As Ernest Renan says; *The nations are not something eternal. They had their beginnings and they will end* (Renan, 1995: 20).

In the beginning of the 20th century, formation of the national identities among Cypriots had not been completed yet. Turkish Cypriots were a pre-Ottoman Muslim community (Kızılyürek, 2005: 217) and Greek Cypriots, especially those from lower class, belonged to the Orthodox Christian community (Varnava, 2015: 85). Greek Cypriots were affected by nationalism more strongly than the Turkish Cypriots even though their national identity formation had not been finalized in that time. It can be said that at the beginning of the 20th century, religion was an apparent feature of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots' identity.

The Cypriot Mule Corps which served in the Great War at the Macedonian Front is important not only for understanding the exploitation of colonies but also realizing that approximately 15,000 Greek and Turkish Cypriots joined this corps together. Indeed, Greek and Turkish Cypriots participated on the same side in the same war. Although written documents on the daily life of Cypriot soldiers in the British army are limited, it is indisputable that Turkish and Greek Cypriots joined the British army together. This study aims to show that Greek and Turkish Cypriots were able to fight at the same war in which they helped each other to fight a common enemy. Turkish Cypriots were a minority in the beginning of the 20th century as it is at present time. Consequently, the number of Turkish Cypriots joining World War I was less than the Greek Cypriots. According to the British World War I Medal Card index at least 785 Turkish Cypriots joined the war for which they had received Imperial Medals (NA: WO 372). Considering that some volunteers may have died in the war, it can be said that approximately 1,000 Turkish Cypriots joined to the Great War.



However, what really counts is that a certain number of Turkish Cypriots joined this war together with Greek Cypriots who followed a different religion, Christianity.

Both Cypriot men and island mules were used in the war. Mules were used in the war due to their carrying ability under harsh geographical conditions. Besides providing food and some military necessities from Cyprus, benefiting from local Cypriot people was a significant issue. These people were the people who did not contribute to the reasons of the war but contributed to the fighting in the war.

2. Identity Dilemma of Cypriots

Cypriot Mule Corps are significant for thoroughly understanding the concept identity in the context of Cyprus. As mentioned above, identities, especially national identities, have been created with the help of modernity. In the beginning of the 20th century, Turkish Cypriots were troubled because they were no longer a part of the Ottoman Empire, and neither they were Greeks nor Turks. Turkish Cypriots were only a Muslim community at that time and their national identity was not formed yet. This means joining the Great War with the Christian Cypriots on the British side was a religious problem for them. On the other hand, process of national identity formation had started among Greek Cypriots although it had not been completed yet. Thus, both Muslim Turks and Christian Greeks joined the same corps despite their religious differences. More interestingly, Turkish Cypriots participated the Great War against the Ottoman Empire. Attending the war against their previous Muslim Sultan was a dilemma for Turkish Cypriots. Although, national feelings progressed very late among Turkish Cypriots, religious fellowship was important for them. Despite these troubles, some Turkish Cypriots enlisted in the British army.

On the other hand, some Turkish Cypriots who migrated to the Ottoman Empire joined the war in the Ottoman front (BOA, October 1916: MV. 203,77,1). In this case the Turkish Cypriots who joined the British army not only fought together with Greek Cypriots but also fought against the Turkish Cypriots who were in the Ottoman front.

It is important to note that joining the Great War was not troublesome for Greek Cypriots, at least not in the same way it was for the Turkish Cypriots. Greek Cypriots also had some problems about joining war. At the beginning of the 19th century, in contrast with the elites Greek Cypriots, most of the Greek Cypriots who belonged to peasantry and working classes had not been Hellenized yet (Varnava, 2015: 95). In addition, an important fact which has not been discussed is the differences in religious sect between Greek Cypriots and the British: the Greek Cypriots were Orthodox but British people were Protestant (Bryant, 2004: 22). Greek Cypriots, especially the Orthodox Church in Cyprus, were not satisfied with the British administration. During the Ottoman reign, Cyprus was governed according to the *Millet* system whereby each religious community composed one *Millet* and people were classified according to their religion. Religious leaders had the power of political representation of their people under the Ottoman administration. However, British rule of Cyprus changed and undermined the political power of the Orthodox Church (Ibid: 16). Probably, if the British administration had given similar rights to the Orthodox Church, the Church would have been satisfied with the Great Britain. On the other hand, arguably ordinary Greek Cypriots did not want to be governed by different and heretic (at least according to the orthodox people) sects. Both the Ottoman and the British people were heretics according to the Orthodox belief. Because of this sect issue, Greek Cypriots perhaps were not totally enthusiastic about joining the Great War. Nonetheless, joining the side which included Greece, did not seem controversial to them. They probably got used to fight with Protestants because their cognates also fought and allied with them. Thus, their participation in the war was relatively easier than the participation of Turkish Cypriots. Cypriot Mule Corps was sent to Macedonia which is very close to Greece, and Greece and Great Britain was in the same front. Joining the war was more acceptable for Greek Cypriots. Nonetheless, serving with Muslim Turkish Cypriots in the Protestant British army was probably not totally acceptable for Orthodox Greek Cypriots. Hence, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had religious hesitations about joining the Great War.

3. Cypriots from the British Point of View

John Eugene Clauson became the Cyprus High Commissioner in 1915 as the successor of Goold Adams. Clauson was a military high flyer and he served as the assistant secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence for six years. These years taught him the intricacies of internal politics of the British Colonial and War Offices (Morgan, 2011: 77). The telegrams belong to John Clauson were investigated for this study. His reports to the Secretary of State for the Colonies will be examined to understand British perspective on Cypriots.

On 26 June Clauson sent a telegram to the Secretary for the Colonies to provide information on the muleteers and mules which were requested from Cyprus to meet army demands at Salonica (NA, 26 June



1916: CO67/181/176). He indicated that it was still in progress but 3,000 muleteers should be gathered for the British Army and 2,000 mules were for Serbian Army. He thought that raising of a Cypriot transport corps for British army could bring excellent results. Further, he referred to the military report on Cyprus which was prepared by the General Staff in 1913. According to this report, Cypriot transport corps could be profitable from military standpoint. Before the start of the Great War, British Government had prepared military reports on Cyprus.

Moreover, Clauson continued his telegram with discussing Cypriots. He believed that both Christians and Muslims 'with insignificant exceptions' keenly desired the success of the British arms. Of course, this opinion was not objective, but it is important to note that during these years any important uprising or disturbance did not happen in Cyprus. Had any significant uprising had occurred in Cyprus, the governor could not have mentioned gathering Cypriot transport corps easily. Nevertheless, in this case the Cyprus governor Clauson did not fear any opposition among Christian and Muslim Cypriots.

On the other hand, on 29 September 1916 Clauson sent a telegram to the Colonial Secretary about an article in a French journal, *Journal Lloyd de Constantinople*, which was published on 12 July 1916 (Ibid, 29 September 1916: 506). He mentioned that disturbances in Cyprus mentioned in this article were not true, and the disturbance refers to the four boatmen who sent a message to the enemy coast in two stolen boats. He added that the Muslims of Syrian origin implicated in the affair were under arrest. Moreover, on 20 October, the editor of the *Near East* sent a private telegram to an unknown sir (his name was not written). In addition, it is not known that the *Near East* was a journal or a newspaper because the editor did not give further information. He also mentioned the French Journal *Lloyd de Constantinople* which was under German control. He said that this journal printed an absurd article on 12 July 1916 about riots in Cyprus chiefly dealing with the supposed discontent of the Muslim inhabitants with English rule (Ibid, 20 October 1916: 508). Further, this article alluded to supposed riots against the British troops and claimed a wholesale arrest of Greeks. The editor of the *Near East* identified this article as false reports in enemy journals. He added that there has not been the slightest disturbance of any kind in Cyprus since its annexation to the British Empire in November 1914. He highlighted that people of the island are peaceful and prosperous, both Turkish and Greek Cypriots 'yield a ready and cheerful obedience' to the British government (Ibid.). These words sound exaggerated. Perhaps, the riots which French journal mentioned did not happen in Cyprus but why should both Greek and Turkish Cypriots yield a ready and cheerful obedience to the British government? Probably, the person who wrote the telegram tried to portray more peaceful situation in Cyprus than there currently was, which may be because of his fear to his superiors. Probably, he did not want to specify small-scale problems in Cyprus.

Mete Hatay, a Turkish Cypriot intellectual, asserts that the information of Muslim Cypriots who joined the First World War is very limited due to the British annexation and the silenced Turkish press (Gazete 360, 28 March 2014). When one investigates the Turkish press in Cyprus in the war period it is understood that *Seyf* newspaper was shut down in 1914 and *Kıbrıs* newspaper was terminated in 1916. Social and economic life became difficult in this period because of the Great War and hence the Turkish Cypriots did not have any publications until 1919 (Gürçınar, 2014: 344). In the beginning of the war, Turkish Cypriots might have been unaware of the countries participating in the war. Probably, they did not know that Great Britain fought against the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, Famagusta which is one of the cities in Cyprus has a Monument of Fallen Soldiers for Gallipoli. Great Britain started to transfer the Ottoman war captives from Gallipoli, Suez Canal and Hedjaz to Famagusta on September 1916 and this monument belongs to these soldiers (Akkor, 2006:106-107).

Moreover, in one telegram dated to 2 August 1916, Clauson mentioned 3,500 Muslim prisoners (NA, CO67/181/304: 2 August 1916). He informed the Colonial Secretary about 1,500 proper huts for the prisoners. Thus, despite the silenced press and weak communication, Turkish Cypriots might have been aware that Great Britain fought against the Ottoman Empire. They must have realized the truth. The Battle of Gallipoli took place between 1915 and 1916, and hence it was before the formation of the Cypriot Mule Corps. In the light of these facts it is understood that Turkish Cypriots knew that they would fight against the Ottoman Empire when they joined the mule corps. Despite this, Cyprus High Commissioner Clauson was not worried about any uprising and furthermore he insisted that both Christians and Muslims keenly desired the British army to attain victory. Moreover, the editor of the *Near East* highlighted the fact of a ready and cheerful Cypriot population who were obedient to the British government. It can be inferred that British government in Cyprus did not face any serious social problems during the war period.

On the other hand, Mahmut Celalettin Efendi who was a Turkish Cypriot council member of the Parliament of Laws (Kavanin Meclisi) requested precaution about the poor conditions of the Ottoman



prisoner camp in Famagusta. The British administration took some precaution thanks to the request of Mahmut Celalettin Efendi. However, the British administration accused him of helping prisoners of the war and Mahmut Celalettin Efendi was exiled to the Kyrenia Castle until the end of the World War I (Akkor, 2006: 109). In addition, at the beginning of the 20th century Famagusta involved the lowest Muslim population, 20.7% (Varnava, 2015: 87). It means the British administration did not choose Famagusta randomly for the Ottoman prisoners. The administration placed the Ottoman prisoners in Famagusta where the population of Muslim Cypriots was few to create trouble for the British administration.

It seems like that 'insignificant exceptions' were not as few as Clauson thought. Some Turkish Cypriots tried to help Ottoman prisoners and this shows that they did not keenly desire the success of the British arms. Considering the general national and religious feelings in this period, these reactions are not unexpected.

Before the annexation of Cyprus, unsurprisingly, Cyprus was influenced by the Ottoman Empire which was its legal owner. For example, some Young Turks escaped from the Hamidian regime to Cyprus which seemed more liberal because of the colonial government. In the beginning of the 20th century Turkish Cypriot intellectuals started to be affected by Young Turks' opinions. On the other hand, ordinary Turkish Cypriots were still faithful to the Sultan. When Young Turks rose to power in Istanbul, their influence over Turkish Cypriots became explicit (Kızılyürek, 2005: 215-216). Hence, in the 20th century, Turkish Cypriots were not unaware about national feelings. Also, they did not sever their bonds with the Ottoman State. Turkish Cypriots continued to connect with the Ottomans through religion, language, commerce, and culture. For instance, zaptiehs (policemen) had worn the *Fez* which was hallmark of the Turkish man until 1930s in Cyprus (Morgan, 2011: 75). On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot community was divided because conservative groups still supported the old monarchist order while many Turkish Cypriots supported the government of Committee of Union and Progress in Istanbul (Ibid: 76).

On the other side, Clauson's word 'insignificant exceptions' was not totally exaggerated since after the annexation of Cyprus, some leaders of Turkish Cypriots came into British high commissioner's presence to highlight their loyalty. They wanted to protect Cyprus from Greece annexation. They consented to become a part of Great Britain forever (Kızılyürek, 2005: 215). It is understood that considerable number of Turkish Cypriots and some of the administrative actors were satisfied with British administration. For instance, after the British annexation of the island, the Kadi of Cyprus, Ali Rifat, and administrators of the endowments, Musa and İrfan Efendi, congratulated the British government and they travelled throughout the island to spread propaganda on behalf of the British government (BOA, November 1916: A.MTZ.KB.1E / HR.SYS.2428). Nevertheless, when it is investigated further, it is understood that the Ottoman government sent an inspector to examine the people who spread propaganda against the Ottoman state. The inspector reported that the administrators of the endowments, Musa and İrfan Efendi were not real administrators (Ibid.). Most likely, the Kadi of Cyprus Ali Rifat Efendi negotiated with the British government and kept Musa and İrfan Efendi for disseminating British propaganda. Conceivably, Musa and İrfan Efendi were not actual officers but the Kadi was the real Kadi of the Cyprus. In addition, the engagement ceremony of the eldest son of the Mufti, Ziyaeddin Efendi, took place in Mufti's house to which the British secretary Harry Luke was invited (Morgan, 2011:72). It is understood that Turkish Cypriot notables wanted to side with the British administration. On the other hand, the intellectual influence of the Young Turks on the Turkish Cypriots cannot be denied. Some, especially elites, supported the British administration but ordinary people had considerable national and religious links with the Ottomans.

Moreover, Turkish Cypriots were confused about the new status of the island because ordinary life style of the Turkish Cypriots was not changed. Their customs were still continuing. The birthday of the Sultan was celebrated every year. Also at night, they illuminated minarets of Ayia Sophia mosque in Nicosia (Ibid: 74). Ordinary Turkish people still felt they were subjects of the Ottoman Empire. This is also the reason of Turkish Cypriots' acceptance of the British administration as under this administration their social lives did not change dramatically. Most of the Ottoman rituals were maintained and they still felt the Ottoman hegemony in Cyprus. The British governor was already appointed in 1878 by the Ottoman Sultan and Turkish Cypriots were accustomed to foreign administrators. Hence, British High Commissioner Clauson either ignored the ordinary people among Turkish Cypriots or he did not want to inform his superiors regarding them. Possibly, he did not think Turkish Cypriots' loyalty to the Ottoman Empire was substantial and he may have believed he could resolve this potential problem on his own.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the decision of Greek Cypriots to join the British army meant that they could fight on the same side with Greece. In the beginning, Greece did not want to join the Great War against Germany because Greek King Constantine shared a line of descent with Germany. On the



other hand, Greek government was governed by Eleutherios Venizelos and he wanted to be in side of Great Britain. In the end, Greece joined the war on the side of Allied Powers (Palmer, 2011: 33-55). Considering Greek Cypriots' national feelings and their connection with Greece, joining to the Great War was not a controversial issue for them. However, as it was mentioned, in the beginning of the 19th century, in contrast with the elites Greek Cypriots, most of the Greek Cypriots who belonged to peasantry and working classes had not been Hellenized yet. In addition, an important fact which was mentioned above is the differences in religious sect between Greek Cypriots and the British (Bryant, 2004: 22).

In addition, on 19 April 1916, Commissioner and Provost Marshal C. Wodehouse informed the Chief Secretary about the Greek Independent celebration in Cyprus (NA, 19 April 1916: CO67/181/47). He wrote that the Greek Community of Larnaca used the anniversary of Greek Independence as an occasion and they held a national political celebration. Customary Religious Service took place at the Church of St. Lazarus. The ceremony of the administering oath followed this in the Euriviades School for Girls. Wodehouse said that clearly the oath administered was one of allegiance to a foreign monarch, King Constantine of Greece. Greek Cypriots concluded the ceremony by the singing of the Greek National Anthem. Also, he continued that the procession was formed under the Greek flag. In the end of his telegram, Wodehouse attached the translation of this oath '*Neon Ethnos*' which means new race;

I promise to keep faith to the Mother Country and the King, to assist every man and on every occasion and to obey blindly to the Law of the Scouts. So, let God help me in life (Ibid.).

After this oath leader of the Scouts Body, Metropolitan Bishop, the consul and the mayor talked to the scouts eloquently. Lastly, they closed the ceremony with the National Hymn. It is understood that some groups of the Greek Cypriot community felt faithful to the King of Greece and they tried to create loyalty among other Greek Cypriots. Thus, the participation to the Great War on the British side was a confusing issue for Greek Cypriots. As it was mentioned, the King of Greece had relations with Germany and he hesitated to join the war on the side of British Army. Some Greek Cypriots might have felt the same hesitation about joining the British army.

In the light of these discussions, it can be deduced that joining the Great War was not easy both for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. They did not keenly desire success of the British arms profoundly but especially Greek Cypriots did not cause any troubles during recruitment at least according to our current knowledge.

Furthermore, the population of Cyprus in this time should be considered. Most probably, Clauson considered this data as well. In 1881, the Christian Orthodox, Muslim and others in Cyprus were 137,631, 45,458 and 2,541, respectively (Kızılyürek, 2005: 213). In total, the population of Cyprus was 185,630 and a great majority of this population was Christian Greek Cypriots. Disturbance among Turkish Cypriots were not a great problem for British administration because they were a minority. Further to their small population, Turkish Cypriots were divided among themselves. Although the term '*insignificant exceptions*' appears confusing at first glance, when explored further it can be seen that Clauson was not entirely wrong. In the end, the number of people who could be potential exceptions was insignificant. Some Turkish Cypriots might not have been happy with either the annexation of Cyprus or becoming subjects of the enemies of the Ottoman State. Nonetheless, they did not amount to a large enough proportion to cause anxiety for the British government.

On the other hand, a telegram dating 6 September 1916, highlighted the difficult communication with Turkish Cypriots (NA, 6 September: CO67/181/418). It was sent by Clauson to the colonial secretary and he mentioned a secret telegram. He wrote that it was advised to minimize contact with Turkish Cypriots. He identified Turkish Cypriots as uneasy. When referred to Turkish Cypriots as uneasy, Clauson referred to his older telegram from 9 September 1915, approximately a year earlier. It can be inferred that the British administration have previously informed the colonial secretary about Turkish Cypriots. To do so, they must have conducted some investigations on Turkish Cypriots and therefore it can be inferred that most probably the British administration had observed the Turkish Cypriot community.

If one compares Clauson's previous use of '*insignificant exceptions*' about desiring the success of British arms with the term '*uneasy*', a contradiction can be seen. Probably, Military Mule Purchasing Commission encountered some problems among Turkish Cypriots. Such problems in 1915 is unknown yet presumably Turkish Cypriots may have regarded themselves to be the real masters of the island as they were descendent of the Ottomans. They did not realize their minority position at that time. In 1881, Turkish population formed approximately 24% of the total island population. In the line with this, according to the



1911 religious/ethnic distribution of Cypriot population, Muslim population was 20.6% (Varnava, 2015: 84). Presumably, some Turkish Cypriots were not satisfied with the British administration which may have caused some uneasiness. Nevertheless, any information on uprisings in these times is unknown.

This uneasiness was not apparent among the Turkish Cypriot community although it was realized by the British administration. Indeed, Niyazi Kızılyürek, a Turkish Cypriot political scientist, highlights the collaboration between Turkish Cypriots and British administration from 1882 to 1930 (Kızılyürek, 2005: 219). Also, this collaboration can be inferred from the reactions of Kadi Ali Rifat and administrators of endowment Musa and İrfan Efendi to British annexation. This shows that Turkish Cypriot notables were not uneasy as they collaborated closely with the British administration. Indeed, the difficult and uneasy Turkish Cypriot individuals seem to belong to the ordinary people. Probably, they still felt a sense of belonging to the Ottoman Sultan. This belonging might have stirred some uneasiness among ordinary Turkish Cypriots. Further, muleteers were mostly from rural areas and they were mostly peasants and laborers (Varnava, 2015: 87). Most probably, considerable amount of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot muleteers belonged to the lower class. It is plausible that when British administration observed Turkish Cypriot community they focused on ordinary people, but not on notables.

Furthermore, after the British annexation of Cyprus collaboration with Turkish Cypriot notables became more important because the Ottoman Empire declared holy Islamic war against the Allied Powers of Britain, France, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro. The important point was that the Ottoman caliph adjudged about Muslims against whom Muslims should fight and condemned Muslims to fires of hell if they fought on an opposing side, i.e. the Allied forces. British administration demanded that Kadi of Cyprus controlled Turkish Cypriot populations and kept them silent and harmless for the British administration. They saw the Kadi as 'soul expounder of the Turkish view' (Morgan, 2011: 76). The relation between the Kadi and British administration is not the subject of this study but this relation is important to thoroughly grasp the fear of the British administration for a potential opposition among Turkish Cypriot population. On the other hand, the caliph's condemning of the Muslims to the fire of hell was noteworthy for Turkish Cypriots. Indeed, this may have played a central role in Turkish Cypriots donations to the Cyprus branch of Red Crescent Society. These donations amounted to nearly 1,500 British pounds by December 1915 (Ibid.). Turkish Cypriots tried to show their side with the Ottoman Empire. Their minds still belonged to the Muslim Ottoman Empire. These factors could be the primary causes of the uneasiness of the Turkish Cypriots.

Hence, both Greek and Turkish Cypriots had reasons to be against British administration. Nevertheless, Cypriots joined the Macedonian Mule Corps in spite of their identities and they did not create remarkable problems for the British administration. The British administration did not consider Cypriots as a threat, instead the administration described Cypriots who keenly desired British success. This situation of Greek and Turkish Cypriots illustrates their identity conflict.

4. Reasons of the participation of Cypriots to the Great War

Why did Greek and Turkish Cypriots join a war which was totally irrelevant to them? The poor economic condition in Cyprus was the most determinant factor for joining the war. For instance, according to the annual report for the year 1915 and 1916 on police force, the crime rates increased substantially (NA, 14 June 1916: CO67/181/137). The officer admitted that there had been an increase of 1678 cases over the previous year (Ibid.). He showed the offenses for the last four years from 1912 to 1916 on the chart. Animal stealing consisted of 579 crimes in 1912/1913, a crime which rose to 769 instances in 1915/1916. Petty larceny consisted of 1070 crimes in 1912/1913 but it rose to 1900 crimes in 1915/1916. Prandial larceny and robbery and theft also increased in 1915/1916. These crime rates tell us about the living conditions of the Cypriots. These rates were not stratified further for Greek and Turkish Cypriots. These were mutual ratio of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. It seems like that the economic life was not good. From 1912 to 1916 their living conditions became even worse which was not extraordinary during war time. Probably, it was similar in many countries which suffered from the war. Cyprus was not a centre of the battle field, but this did not protect its people from economic crises. Cypriots did not have sufficient economic resources to take care of their family. The officer who prepared this report accepted that the crime rates increased because of poverty. The officer said that poverty exists in the villages especially during the winter months. In addition, he added that because of the war, many villagers were in abject poverty and they were unable to provide their families with basic necessities of life (Ibid.). It is understood that some people committed crimes to support their families. Moreover, the reason of the poverty of Cypriots was not only about the Great War. Great Britain made an agreement with the Ottoman Empire when they rented the Island which stipulated that they should pay Istanbul approximately 90,000 British pounds for a year (Bryant, 2004: 25). They levied more tax on Cypriots to pay the Ottoman Empire but this money never reached Istanbul (Ibid: 25). Nevertheless, the



taxes influenced the economic conditions of the Cypriots. The poverty of the Cypriots increased because of the ruthless taxes. British administration and its tax collection caused one of the greatest periods of extreme poverty in Cyprus (Ibid: 26).

The other important economic pressure for Cypriots in war time was exportation. The British government exported goods and animals not only to Salonica but also to Egypt (SA1, 6 June 1917: 758/1916/299). For example, the telegram dated 28 May 1917 informed that 258 donkeys had been shipped to Salonica, and 45 mules and 1 donkey for Egypt. Additionally, 1824 tons 271 okes potatoes, 8377 tons 284 okes carobs, 492,670 eggs, 299 tons 721 okes raisins, 6 tons 455 okes 455 okes cheese, 706 goats, 28,559 kilos oats and 21 tons 6 okes onions were set for exportation. In addition, a considerable quantity of barley, chopped straw and bran had been shipped for voyage rations of animals although there is no record of the exact amount (Ibid, 28 May 1917: 30). These foods and animals were exported from Cyprus to Salonica and Egypt. This exportation might create economic difficulties for both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Greek and Turkish Cypriots were forced to sell their goods to the government but they could not always supply the demands of the government. For instance, the Treasurer reported to the Chief Secretary that on 10 January 1917, out of 6,000 kilos of barley, only 500 kilos had been taken and they wished to know exactly what amount was available (Ibid, 6 June 1917: 299). Export of supplies for army in Salonica continued even after the end of the Great War (1918). Some documents inform us about food exportation in 1921 from Cyprus to Salonica (SA1: 582/1917). On the other hand, according to the report from 20 August 1920, cereals of the harvest were not available for exportation. Famine in these times is understandable because of difficult war-time economic conditions. As it will be explained below, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had no choice but to sell their goods. This mandatory exportation most probably negatively affected the life style of Cypriots for an extended period of time.

Moreover, acquisition of mules was compulsory in some places such as Limassol (SA1, 28 September 1916: 758/1916/212). The order belonged to Chief Secretary dated 28 September 1916, commanded compulsory acquisition of mules on 1 and 2 October 1916 to Limassol Commissioner. Chief Secretary said that a large number of mule owners in the villages of Lophos, Vouni, Kilani and Ayios failed to comply with the notice requiring them to bring their mules on the 25 and 26 August 1916. He attached a notice calling upon all such defaulters in those villages to bring their mules to Limassol on 2 October 1916 (Ibid.). It is understood that villagers were forced to sell their mules to the British army. They did not want to sell their mules because probably they did not have any other property or animals that could make money without their mules. In the copy of the notice, every person was called to the military purchasing office on 2 October 1916 at 8 o'clock in the morning. The order added that any person who did not complying with this notice would be punished under the martial law and would be subjected to a fine or imprisonment, or both. Both Turkish and Greek version of this notice were prepared (Ibid.). Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were obliged to sell their animals and if they did not sell, they were punished by the British administration according to the martial law. This condition is another proof of the financial difficulties of the Cypriot society. They did not have the right of choice regarding their properties. They were required to sell what the British government wanted from them.

Moreover, it is understood that the war period was difficult not only for men but also for women. For instance, although being a prostitute is forbidden to Muslim women, but a 1916 British administration survey exploring the diseases soldiers contracted from prostitutes at Famagusta Harbour documented seven women, five of which had Muslim names (SA1: 979/1916). Most likely, these women were Turkish Cypriots. The economic poverty of Cyprus society can be imagined in the light of this information. Joining the Great War and receiving salary from the British army might have been the last chance of survival for some Cypriots.

According to the letter of agreement which muleteers signed when they join the British army, the daily rate of pay was 4 drachmas rising to 5 for foremen and up to 90 drachmas per month for muleteers (NA, 28 August 1916: CO67/181/335). Probably some Cypriots became headworkers of muleteers and they were distinguished from ordinary muleteers as foremen. The payment of the muleteers was 90 drachmas per month and their food was composed of aliments per the scale fixed by superior British officers (Ibid.). 90 drachmas corresponded 3.15 British pounds (Varnava, 2015: 94). This would be 37.8 British pounds per a year, a sum which was deemed to be very high by the Cypriot muleteers as they could not make much many in Cyprus. For example, in Cyprus they made between 3 and 18 kuruş (piaster) per month from agricultural work, and this some corresponded to 2 to 20 Cypriot pounds for a year (Ibid: 94). According to Rebecca Bryant, the average annual income in a population of about 140,000 was approximately 30 pounds (Bryant, 2004: 25). Thus, the salary of muleteers was considerably high for Cypriots.



On the other hand, if one examines the percentage of the Cyprus population in the beginning of the 20th century and the percentage of enlistment in Cypriot Mule Corps, it can be realized that the regions which sent the highest number of volunteers to the Cypriot Mule Corps were Kyrenia (34.8%), Paphos (18.6%), Nicosia (18.0%), Limassol (15.5%), Famagusta (14.7%) and Larnaca (13.0%), respectively (Varnava, 2015: 85). These percentages were the percentages of enlistment of Cypriot Mule Corps, males aged 15-39. In addition, according to percentage distribution of Cypriot population in urban centres by religion, Orthodox Christian population constituted majority volunteers from every region. Nonetheless, the Muslim population in the top three regions, Kyrenia, Paphos and Nicosia, were not the smallest compared with the enlistment percentage of Mule Corps. For example, in Paphos 47.9% of the population were Muslim but this area was the region that the second region sent the most volunteers to the corps. The largest Muslim population lived in Paphos (47.9%), Nicosia (37.6%) and Kyrenia (33.0%), respectively (Ibid.). As demonstrated above these three regions were the top three cities which sent muleteers to the corps. It is likely that the regions which had relatively higher proportion of mixed population sent more muleteers to the Macedonian Front. It means that the decisions of the Muslim population might be influenced by their Christian neighbours' decisions. Probably, they were closer to the Greek Cypriots than Muslim counterparts living in more homogenous districts, and also these Turkish Cypriots did not blame themselves about joining the war. They had lived with Greek Cypriot neighbours for several hundred years and they might have been accustomed to share activities with non-Muslims. Furthermore, in some mixed population villages several Muslim Turkish Cypriots spoke Greek rather than Turkish as their first language (Bryant, 2004: 34). It means these Muslim Cypriots were very close to their Christian neighbours or they might be converted Greek Cypriots from the Christianity to the Islam. In any case, a complex situation can be seen on the aspect of identity.

In addition, the Muslim population in other regions also had lived with Greek Cypriots although their exposure to Greek Cypriots may have been limited. For instance, in Famagusta the ratio of Muslim to Christian population was almost one to four (20.7% Muslims vs 77.6% Christian) (Varnava, 2015: 85). Due to the relatively smaller numbers of Turkish individuals in areas with fewer Turkish Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots in such areas may have connected more tightly with each other compared with the Turkish Cypriots living more heterogenous regions such as Paphos or Nicosia. This tighter connection may have stemmed from their need for security, protection and identity formation.

Furthermore, In the persuasion process of Christian and Muslim Cypriots, the British administration used secular arguments. This can be seen clearly in the posters prepared to call Cypriots to the Great War both in Greek (SA1: 722/1916) and in Turkish (Ottoman language) (Ibid.). Posters in Greek and in Turkish had no dates but they were most likely prepared in 1916. (The Greek poster which is in the State Archives includes English translation above each words). It called the Cypriots to the British army advancing in Macedonia and Bulgaria to see the world. It portrayed volunteering for the army as a wonderful opportunity for young Cypriot men where they could gain a high salary, and receive free food and clothes. The poster did not mention any national or religious feelings. The British administration did not emphasize being soldier in the Great War but they stressed experiencing adventure and travelling the world. They tried to attract the attention and curiosity of the Cypriot men with these posters. They showed how much money volunteers could make and how exciting their lives could be if they joined the British army. In addition, they implemented a secular integrated strategy to attract Cypriots to the fronts. All Cypriots were considered as British subjects and they became subjects of British army without any differences. Cypriots were not separated in accordance with their nation or religion in the army. Moreover, the British administration did not emphasize their enemy in the front because one of them was the Ottoman Empire which was the former ruler of Cypriots. The British administration did not want to lose anyone who could join the army. For this reason, they did not emphasize the Ottoman Empire to avoid provoking the anger of Muslim Turkish Cypriots. Also, they did not emphasize Greece because they tried to implement peasant and worker classes for the Greek Cypriots and these classes had not been Hellenized yet. The British administration called all Cypriots to the Macedonian Front in the name of King George not the God.

Hence, both the First World War period and the British administration caused poverty and misery in the island. Cypriots did not have many resources to provide their family necessities. In this context, it can be seen that people can ignore both religious and national identities to survive and take care of their families. This displays how constructed issue the identities are. People can join a war to be in the same front with others to whom they may have hostile attitudes if participation in the front could allow them to support their families. This is the most significant facet of the Macedonian Mule Corps. When people struggle to



make a living, they can do unusual things. Religious ideologies and nationalities become insignificant in this situation.

5. Interviews with ex-muleteer Cypriots

Major J.P.B Condon who belonged to the Royal Irish Rangers compiled several records about the contribution of Cypriots to the First World War in the Macedonian Mule Corps (NA, October 1979: WO/405/1). Condon's document was found in the National Archive in Kew Garden, London. His work was not published but it is significant for this study because he investigated Macedonian Mule Corps on 1970s and he interviewed several muleteers who were still alive in that time. He obtained a British War Medal in bronze which had been awarded to muleteers in the Macedonian Mule Corps. The British War Medal piqued his interest in the Macedonian Mule Corps and he started to investigate the Corps. Condon could not reach detailed information on the muleteers' situation in the Macedonian Front yet he interviewed the volunteer muleteers of the Macedonian Mule Corps and attained important information about their experiences in the Macedonian Front.

The first ex-muleteer Condon interviewed was Mr. Charalambos Christodoulou (Ibid.). He was born in Paphos in 1898. He applied to Ktima Recruiting Office in 1916 to join the Mule Corps. Nevertheless, he was turned down because of his age. Probably he had not reached the age of 18 yet. He did not give up and walked to Famagusta. Condon said Christodoulou was very keen to enlist because he had paid 10 shillings to the recruiter to be a muleteer. In the end, he was accepted to the corps on 6 January 1917. However, it is not clear that why the Recruiter Office did not accept him without bribe because he must be 18 in 1917 in any case. Perhaps, Christodoulou remembered wrong the year he was born. The most important detail in his story is, Christodoulou gave bribe to the officer to join the war. This situation illustrates the very bad condition of Cypriots during the war time. Perhaps, he was unemployed for a long time and he thought this was a last chance for him to made money and survive.

Hence, he was accepted to the Mule Corps and he did 15 days basic training in Famagusta. Then he embarked on Egyptian Cargo boat which called 'Pouriana' for Salonika. Christodoulou described this ship as horrid old ship. The bow of the ship was shored with heavy Cyprus timber because of the submarine threats. The rest of the ship was loaded with men, material and mules. Christodoulou said the journey took 17 days. Apparently, this journey was so long and boring to him because he described the speed of the ship as about 4 knots. He continued to narrate and said their training in Salonika included weapon handling and mule handling. Their weapon was the Lee Enfield 303. In the agreement document which muleteers signed when they joined the British army, one of the clause indicated that muleteers must obey any commands except bearing arms (NA, 7 August 1916: CO67/181/334). However, according to Christodoulou muleteers had a weapon. Probably, British army gave them weapon to prepare them for a possible attack. British army did not trust Cypriot muleteers who were ex-subject of the Ottoman Empire but they took precaution for dangers of the war. The muleteers did not bear arms but they had their own weapon to protect themselves against any attack.

Christodoulou continued and mentioned that after service with No.186 Hospital, he was posted to No.111 Coy. This Coy included 200 personnel and 100 of them were Cypriots who were both Greek and Turkish. The other 100 of them were British. The uniform of muleteers was similar with the British soldiers without cap-badge or collar-dogs. Moreover, Christodoulou could not recollect what buttons they wore but he believed the buttons were general service patterns. He added their training ended at the beginning of April 1917. Later they travelled to the Dorian Front where was in the Macedonian Front and close to Salonika by train. Their job in Dorian Front was to carry supplies forward to the trenches. Christodoulou described their job very dangerous because they were moving over in open country as subject to fierce shelling. He clearly remembered death of his two friends who died in early morning shelling. Also, shelling was not their only problem, dysentery and malaria were their terrible worries. According to the agreement document, muleteers accepted to be inoculated against cholera but the document did not include any expression about dysentery or malaria (Ibid.). Probably, British Army did not have any protective medicine against dysentery and malaria. So, muleteers could be protected from cholera but they were helpless in the face of other illnesses.

Furthermore, Christodoulou said that in September 1918 his coy moved to Constantinople. Later, in February or March 1919 they moved to Odessa in Russia and they remained for eight days. After this short remaining in Russia the coy returned to Constantinople and Christodoulou was discharged at the end of 1919. It means some of Greek and Turkish Cypriots moved to Constantinople as British soldier. Most probably it was very complicated in the aspect of Turkish Cypriots. They joined the Macedonian Front and



they served in the British army but they were in out of the Ottoman Empire and they did not fight completely against to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was only one component of the Central Powers. Nevertheless, moving to Constantinople was another issue. Constantinople was the heart of their former Sultan and the Ottoman Empire. Condon interviewed with one Turkish Cypriot muleteer but very briefly. Their feelings about being side against the Ottoman Empire is unknown.

Christodoulou joined the Greek army in Izmir after he was discharged. He served Greece until August 1922. It is understood that Christodoulou had national sensibility and he wanted to serve for the ideology of Greek nationalism. Some years later he returned to Cyprus and he was summoned to his local police station at Paphos to taking his bronze British War Medal. Condon described the medal of Christodoulou as unique because the other medals which he had seen did not bear recipient's name, they showed only the numbers. The medal of Christodoulou showed both his name and number.

The second alive muleteer was Xenophon Kyvenedes (NA, October 1979: WO/405/1). He enlisted Macedonian Mule Corps in May 1917 at the age of 18. He embarked on the '*Arcadia*' after twenty days of his enlistment. He embarked with 800 other Macedonians for Salonika. It is not clear that who were these Macedonians and why they embarked in Cyprus for Salonika. Further, he mentioned that on the same day, two other ships, one was French, loaded with Armenian soldiers and other loaded with goats sailed from Famagusta. He described that these Armenians were not Cypriot Armenians. He said that these two ships were torpedoed and the *Arcadia* could not take any more passengers but it assisted in summoning other ships to help. In addition, after their arriving to Salonika the Macedonians moved to Base Depot three miles outside the town. Kyvenedes and other 17 muleteers was attached to 81 Hospital of 22nd British division. They were employed on fatigues and general labour. Later, 22nd division moved to Palestine and Kyvenedes joined to No.800 Coy. His coy supported troops on the front between Serres and the mouth of the River Stremon. One year later, on 29 September 1919, war was over in that area and British Army moved to Constantinople with Macedonians (it is understood that Kyvenedes meant all veterans in the Macedonian Mule Corps not only Macedonian people). They had to sign a declaration that they continued with their own free will. After Base Depot in Constantinople they went to support units in Bulgaria. Different with other Macedonians Kyevenedes did not go to Russia and returned to Cyprus on 21 May 1919. His story almost same with Christodoulou but he did not choose to join Greek army in Izmir, instead he returned to Cyprus. Moreover, the rank of Kyvenedes was foreman. His rank was denoted by an arm brassard with the letters 'MMC' (Macedonian Mule Corps). Condon said that apart from recruit badge, this brassard and the interpreter's arm band were the only rank markings worn by Cypriots. Similar with Christodoulou, Kyvenedes was awarded bronze British War Medal but with no name.

After Kyvenedes, Condon gave brief information about a Turkish Cypriot muleteer (Ibid.). It does not clear that Condon spoke to him or not. Condon did not write muleteer's name. Condon only said one Turkish Cypriot now living in Trikomo in North Cyprus enlisted to the Macedonian Mule Corps in 1916. Condon said the Turkish Cypriot muleteer did not remember exactly when he enlisted to the corps. Why Condon did not write even the name of Turkish Cypriot muleteer? Perhaps Turkish Cypriot muleteer was not comfortable about speaking his joining the Great War against the Ottoman Empire or Condon did not have broad time to talk to him. Other possibility is, perhaps this muleteer was ill in that time and he could not speak very well. Unfortunately, Condon did not explain why he did not give further information about this Turkish Cypriot muleteer. Hence, we only know that the Turkish Cypriot muleteer joined the Great War in 1916 and he was discharged in 1918. He served in Salonika with No.362 Coy.

The fourth veteran was Menelaos Constantinides (Ibid.). He was born in Nicosia on 26 October 1900. He enlisted as an interpreter because he studied in English school in Nicosia and he knew English. He enlisted to Macedonian Mule Corps in 1918. Nevertheless, following these information Condon said Constantinides left Famagusta in May 1917 on board the '*Magda*' with 1,000 other muleteers who were Greek, Turkish, Armenian and Maronite Cypriots and 500 mules. Hence, either the enlistment date of Constantinides or his leaving time from Famagusta is wrong. How he could leave from Cyprus for Salonika without enlist to the corps. After Constantinides arrived at Salonika, he went forward to support British units fighting in the area of Lake Dorian. Constantinides mentioned that they used Hungarian mules who had much larger hooves than Cypriot mules. These mules were better able to deal with the mud. It is understood that British army did not use only Cypriot mules in the Great War. After Salonika, Constantinides served in Tutrakan and later moved on to Varna in 1919. Lastly, he moved to Constantinople for two months and then returned to Cyprus. He was awarded bronze British War Medal and Victory Medal but he lost his medals along with everything else during the fighting in Famagusta in 1974.



Condon met also a Maronite muleteer Johannes Mannarides from Kormakiti village. He enlisted in Macedonian Mule Corps in 1918. When he was 18 he went from his village to Morphou to enlist. He arrived at Salonika at the end of the war. He joined 121 Coy at Bulgarian borders. He also served in Constantinople for 6 months. Similar with other muleteers who Condon met he was awarded bronze British War Medal.

Victor Kassilian was another ex-muleteer. He was born in 1898 and studied in English school. He enlisted to the Macedonian Mule Corps in 1916 as an interpreter. On 5 September 1916, he sailed on 'Ele' together with other muleteers and mules. He spent the entire campaign at the hospital. He was interpreter for muleteers who were treated there. In 1917, he was promoted to interpreter grade A. After this promotion, he started to wear the cap badge and his pay increased. Further, he was entitled to carry a pistol. After the Macedonian campaign, Kassilian went to Constantinople with British army and served until September 1920. Nevertheless, he did not return to Cyprus after Constantinople and he went to Egypt. After Egypt, he served in Palestine until 1948. After all these serving he returned to Cyprus in 1948. He was awarded British War Medal in bronze. Condon described this medal as the only medal he had seen inscribed with the rank interpreter. Kassilian also said that he was awarded Victory Medal. It seems like that Cypriot muleteers did not serve in only Macedonia. Some of them moved to Constantinople and some of them continued to serve British army after the Great War like Kassilian who served in Egypt and Palestine.

The study of Major Condon is not professional academic work but it is very important for the history of Cypriot muleteers. Condon's study presents brief information about the Cypriot muleteers' condition during the Great War.

CONCLUSION

Approximately 15,000 Cypriot muleteers joined the Cypriot Mule Corps of which 1,000 were Muslim Turkish Cypriots. For Turkish Cypriots, joining the Great War with the Christian Cypriots on the British side and against the Muslim Ottoman Sultan created an identity dilemma. However, both Muslim Turks and Christian Greeks joined the same corps despite their religious dilemmas. The main reason to join the British army was the poor economic condition in Cyprus during the war time. Cypriots did not have ideals about the Great War. They did not try to save their nation, religion or country. The only important thing for Cypriot muleteers was the salary. Especially mandatory exportation adversely affected the economic life of Cypriots. The British administration exported goods and animals to Salonika and other places such as Egypt. Greek and Turkish Cypriots were forced to sell their goods. In addition, Cypriots had to pay heavy taxes to the British administration, which was driven by the rental costs of the island (the Great Britain rented the island from the Ottomans for approximately 90,000 British pounds a year). They levied more taxes on Cypriots to pay the Ottoman Empire but this money never reached Istanbul. Furthermore, crime rates for the year 1915 and 1916 increased substantially because of the deteriorating economic condition. It is understood that Cypriots suffered from economic difficulties. In these difficult situations joining the mule corps was very profitable for Cypriots. The salary of the muleteers was 90 drachmas per month and it corresponded 3.15 British pounds. This amount was very high for ordinary Cypriots. Moreover, the relatives of the muleteers would be paid 50 drachmas or more according to wish of the muleteers (SA1: 722/1916) In the end of the Great War, Cypriots were honoured by a bronze British War Medal.

Moreover, the British administration did not separate Greek and Turkish Cypriots or other minorities from each other. In the light of information from the correspondence between Cyprus High Commissioner and Secretariat State for the Colonies, it is understood that all Ottoman subjects resident in Cyprus on the 5 November 1914 have become British subjects regardless their ethnic and racial background (NA, 6 July 1916: CO67/181/536). British administration implemented integrative rules for all Cypriots. Similarly, they did not separate Greek Cypriots from Turkish Cypriots when they called Cypriots to the Great War. British administration did not emphasize religious or national identities of Cypriots. They called all Cypriots without exception in the name of King George not the God. All these reasons involved a considerable influence on the Cypriots to ignore their religious identities and join the Great War.

High Commissioner Clauson wrote in one of his telegrams that all Cypriots 'with insignificant exception' keenly desired the success of the British arms. This sentence of Clauson was discussed to illuminate the real feelings of Cypriots towards the British administration. It was understood that an important uprising did not happen during World War I. However, it cannot be said that all Greek and Turkish Cypriots keenly desired the British success. Some Turkish Cypriots were still faithful to the Ottoman Sultan and Greek Cypriots believed in different religious sect from the British people. Furthermore, the Greek Church lost some of its rights which they held in the Ottoman *Millet* system. Hence, various Greek



and Turkish Cypriots were not satisfied with the British administration. Nevertheless, they did not create considerable trouble for the British administration.

Next, the British policy for attracting Cypriots to the Great War was explained. The reasons why Cypriots decided to join the British army despite their religious identities were discussed. It is understood that Great Britain did not use national or religious propaganda to attract Cypriots. Instead, they carried out an advertisement policy through which the possibility of adventure and traveling the world were highlighted. In other words, the advertisements did not emphasize being a soldier in the Great War but stressed experiencing adventure and travelling the world. They tried to attract the attention and curiosity of the Cypriot men with the posters. They showed how much money volunteers could make and how exciting their lives could be if they joined the British army. Moreover, they did not stress the dangers of the war. In contrast, they portrayed a picture of safety and adventure for the muleteers. Both the muleteers and their relatives could gain money without facing any danger. Further, existing economic difficulties paved the way for Cypriots in joining the British Army. If Cyprus had not suffered from economic problems to that extent, the demand for being muleteer would not have been that high. Moreover, it is understood that the regions which had relatively higher proportion of mixed population sent more muleteers to the Macedonian Front. Muslim Turkish Cypriots might have been influenced by their Christian neighbours. They had lived with Christians for several hundred years and most likely they were accustomed to share activities with Christians. Nevertheless, in any case identity troubles are noticeable.

Lastly, the study of Royal Irish Rangers Major Condon was explained. Condon's study is not an academic work but it is pivotal for accessing the interviews of survivor muleteers. His study is central as it is the first written study on Cypriot muleteers. His contribution to the history of Macedonian Mule Corps cannot be denied. Condon investigated and found considerable information about Cypriots in the Salonika Front. It is understood that the enemies of the Cypriot muleteers in the front were not only the Central Powers but also diseases. Condon mentioned that during the three years of the Macedonian campaign, many soldiers—almost the amount of two infantry divisions—entered hospital with malaria and were subsequently invalidated as chronic malarial cases. In addition, his interviews with the survivor ex-muleteers are valuable sources for historians. Pivotal information about the Macedonian Mule Corps can be learnt from these survivor muleteers.

To sum up, one of the aims of this article was to highlight the constructed aspect of identities. As it was detailed, Greek and Turkish Cypriots were united in the same army to serve Great Britain. This showed that Greek and Turkish Cypriots can participate the same battle and the same front without fighting each other. It is understood that people can ignore national and religious differences when necessary. Indeed, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can set aside their national and religious feelings and work towards the same goal. Another important aspect of Macedonian Mule Corps lies in the fact that the Turkish Cypriots joined the British army not only against their former Sultan but also against other Turkish Cypriots who migrated to Anatolia and were subsequently recruited to the Ottoman army. Overall, this article aimed to illustrate that when it is necessary, people can take actions that may be incompatible with their identities. The Cypriot muleteers during the First World War serve as an outstanding example for this phenomenon. Indeed, approximately 1,000 Turkish Cypriots joined the Christian British army with Christian Greek Cypriots against the Muslim Ottoman army. In doing so, they chose not to act on their religious differences. Interestingly, they also chose to fight against the Muslim Ottoman army. On the other hand, the Orthodox Greek Cypriots joined the Protestant British army with Muslim Turkish Cypriots. This was not totally acceptable for Orthodox Christian Greek Cypriots; however, this did not stop them from participating in the muleteer corps.

REFERENCES

Primary sources

Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, Istanbul, Turkey.
Shropshire Archive, Shropshire, Shrewsbury, UK.
State Archives, Nicosia, Cyprus.
The National Archive, Kew Gardens, London, UK.
BOA: Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi).

NA: National Archive

CO: Colonial Office

WO: War Office

SA: State Archive

Secondary Sources



- AKKOR, Mahmut (2006). *I. Dünya Savaşında Çeşitli Ülkelerdeki Türk Esir Kampları*, MA Thesis, Sakarya: Sakarya University.
- BIRDAL, Serhat Celal (2011). "Madunu Dinlemek", *Kaos GL*, no.129.
- BRYANT, Rebecca (2004). *Imagining The Modern: The Cultures of Nationalism in Cyprus*, New York: I.B Tauris & Co Ltd.
- CAPTAIN GALTEY, Sidney (1918). *The Horse and The War*, London: Country Life.
- GÜRÇINAR, Pınar (2014). "Kıbrıs Türk Tarihi İçerisinde Kıbrıs Türk Matbaacılığının Doğuşu, Geçirdiği Modernleşme Aşamaları Ve Bu Aşamaların Kıbrıs Türk Toplumuna Etkileri Üzerine Bir Deneme", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol.7 Issue.31, pp.340-346.
- DAVIS, Alexander (2008). *The Empire at War: British and Indian Perceptions of Empire in the First World War*, Thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History, University of Tasmania.
- HALL, Richard C. (2016). 'Bulgaria, in: 1914-1918'-online *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin.
- HASSIOTIS, Loukianos (2015) 'Macedonia in the Great War.' *Macedonia Studies Journal*, vol.2.
- HERACLIDOU, Antigone (2014). "Cyprus's Non-military contribution to the Allied War effort during World War I". *The Round Table*, no.2.
- KIZILYÜREK, Niyazi (2005). *Milliyetçilik Kıskaçında Kıbrıs*. İstanbul: İletişim.
- MAZZA, Roberto (2013). "We Are Coming, Unafraid: The Jewish Legions and the Promised Land in the First World War", *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, no.12.
- MORGAN, Tabitha (2011). *Sweet and Bitter Island A History of the British in Cyprus* New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- PALMER, Alan (2011). *The Gardeners of Salonika: The Macedonian Campaign 1915-1918*, NUK: Faber and Faber.
- RENAN, Ernest (1995). 'What is a nation.' In *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K. Bhabha London and New York: Routledge.
- SHEPHERD, Gordon Brooks (1981). *November 1918: The Last Act of the Great War*, Boston: Little Brown.
- SPIVAK, Gayatri Chakravorty (1988). 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson, Lawrence Grossberg USA: Macmillan Education.
- TUCKER, Spencer C. (1998). *The Great War 1914-18*. London: UCL press.
- VARNAVA, Andrekos (2015). "Recruitment and Volunteerism for the Cypriot Mule Corps, 1916-1919. Pushed or Pulled?", *Itinerario*, No.38.
- YOUNG, Robert J.C. (2003). *Post-Colonialism A Very Short Introduction*, UK: Oxford University Press.