

## EDITORIAL NOTE

We are pleased to include in this issue a diverse range of articles and reviews. Among the pieces in Notes and News, that by Judge Ian Farlam is an expanded version of a talk he gave at the November 2018 meeting of Cape Town's Owl Club, held to commemorate the centenary of the conclusion of the First World War. Halim Gençoğlu, who writes on the significance of the Turkish archives for South African history, has recently opened an exhibition in the BoKaap Museum in Cape Town devoted to the leading Muslim figure in nineteenth century South Africa.

Lalou Meltzer, who worked for Iziko Museums for many years, links Cape slavery to the memorial to the slave tree in Cape Town's Church Square. Drusilla Yekela of the University of Fort Hare uncovers the history of the Thembu regents in the Transkei, while Catherine Corder uncovers the remarkable life of Betty Molteno, daughter of the first Prime Minister of the Cape. Bryan Rostron delves into the hunt for unicorns in Africa, while Zuleiga Adams offers her reflections on a recent major book on the man who killed Hendrik Verwoerd. Among our many distinguished reviewers in this issue is the Director of the famous Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Tristram Hunt. We thank all our contributors, and urge potential contributors to be in contact with the editorial team.

We regret an error that somehow—we do not know how; it happened after proof-reading—crept into the last issue, on the first page of the article by Dr Stephen Craven. The two visitors from India who visited the Cango Cave in 1928 were the Rt Hon Svrnista Sastri, Agent-General for India, and his secretary, Mr Loudavda Rao. Our apologies to Stephen, whom we would like to thank for his help with proof-reading of this issue, as well as the last.

—*Chris Saunders*



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TURKISH ARCHIVES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

The Ottoman presence in the African continent, particularly in the northern part, lasted about four hundred years, from 1517 to 1922.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the use of Turkish archival sources for African historiography by most historians in African universities is still scarce due to the language barrier.<sup>8</sup> As alternative sources, Turkish archival data can help scholars to bring a new dimension to African studies. The Ottoman archives, situated at the Ottoman State Archive in Istanbul, keep many cultural, sociological and historical records as official documents.<sup>9</sup> Apart from that, Ottoman historians, travellers and intelligences have bequeathed interesting written records as memoirs and official reports. As for other parts of the African continent, Turkish primary and secondary sources have not been extensively used in researching the history of South Africa. In this paper, I provide data about the Ottoman archives regarding South Africa in order to highlight the untapped historical sources for South African studies. Ottoman primary and secondary sources can be used for South African historiography as alternative sources. The Turkish archives also hold documents in English and French that await scholars in the field.

There are numerous archival documents in Turkish state archives regarding the political and mercantile relations between South Africa and Turkey. The first official paper dates back to 1852 when the Ottoman Empire appointed Honorary Consul-General John Williaam Greig at the Cape.<sup>10</sup> From that time, the Ottoman Empire established substantial relationship with Southern Africa. In the same year, the British Empire imported Angora goats from Turkey for her colonies, particularly South Africa and Mauritius. Mohair later became the reason for Cecil J. Rhodes to meet Sultan Abdulha-

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<sup>7</sup>Halim Gençoğlu, *Ottoman Traces in Southern Africa: The Impact of Turkish Emissaries and Muslim Theologians* (Osmanbey, Istanbul: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, 2018), 34.

<sup>8</sup>Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey (TPSA): (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü). East and Southeast European Archives [online resource] <https://www.e-se-archives.geschichte.uni-muenchen.de/?tag=state-archives-of-the-prime-ministry-of-the-republic-of-turkey>.

<sup>9</sup>Bernard Lewis, *Studies in the Ottoman Archives-1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 22.

<sup>10</sup>TPSA, HR/SFR. 3/13/430, William John Greig'in Ümit Burnu'na Osmanlı şebbenderi olarak tayini (17 July 1852).

mid for further imports.<sup>11</sup> In 1855, due to a request of South African Muslims the Ottoman Empire sent a donation to complete a mosque in Port Elizabeth.<sup>12</sup>

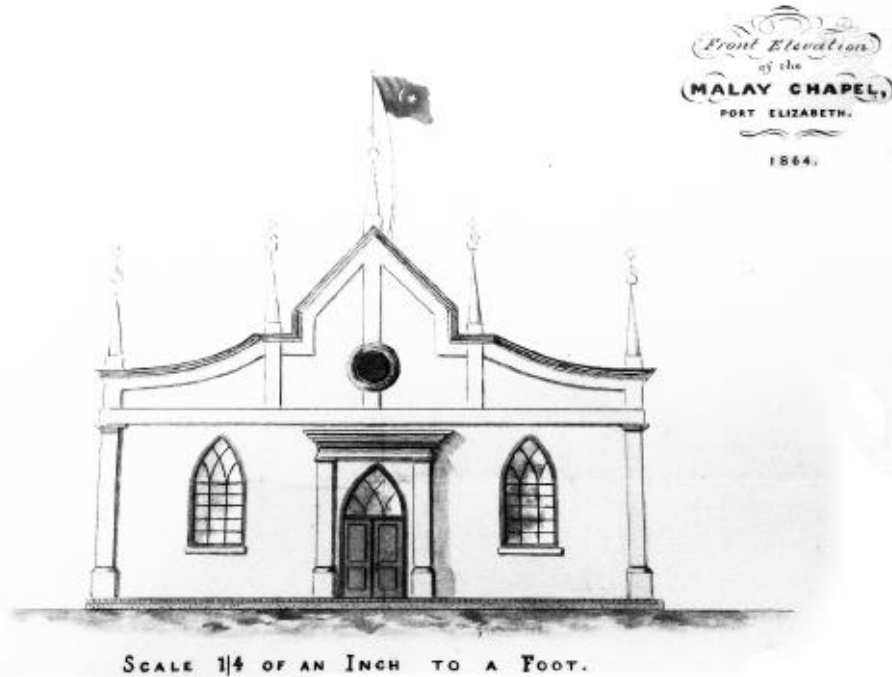


Fig. 1-2. The mosque in Grace Street, Port Elizabeth (note Turkish flag flying above)

*Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic*

Turkish documents show that the mosque was completed in 1862 and called Masjid'ul Aziz because of the donation made by Sultan Abdul Aziz. Contemporary historian Maximilien also noted that the Turkish Empire sent aid to South African Muslims in 1855.<sup>13</sup> Thereafter, the documents highlight that a Turkish Professor, Abu Bakr Effendi, was sent to South Africa in

<sup>11</sup>TPSA, DH/ID, 80401, İngilizlerin Ümit Burnunda Tiftik Keçisi yetiştirme gayesiyle.

<sup>12</sup>TPSA, HR/TO. 324.60.

order to resolve religious disputes between certain Muslim congregations at the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>14</sup>

The official order for the salary of Abu Bakr Effendi is in the Ottoman archives. Several Turkish archival documents also indicate remarkable relations between Muslim community and Turkish Sultans.<sup>15</sup> Abu Bakr Effendi established Muslim schools for males at Bree Street and for females at Buitengracht Street in Cape Town. His educational activities were supported by the Ottoman Caliphate until his death in 1880.<sup>16</sup>

The documents in the Turkish Archives are not only about the South African Muslims and Ottoman Empire. For instance, after the Ottoman-Russian War in 1878 some Ottoman Jews migrated to Southern Africa. The documents about the Galanti, Solomon, Benatar and Franco families prove that Jewish families established mine factories and butchery shops in Transvaal and Cape Town, naming them after their homeland Turquous.

Ottoman Jews also sent donations to the Turkish army for the Turco-Italian War in Libya in 1912. The invoice of this donation in the Ottoman archive may be proof of the first money transfer from the Standard Bank of South Africa to Turkey.<sup>17</sup>

Some Turkish documents were written by the school teacher Ahmet Ataulah Effendi from Kimberley and informed Sultan Abdulhamid about the diamond field in South Africa. Ahmet Ataullah also reported his educational activities in his Ottoman Islamic School in Kimberley until he became the Ottoman Consul-General in Singapore.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the Ottoman Empire appointed another Ottoman scholar in Cape Town in 1894 after the death of Abu Bakr Effendi. Professor Mahmud Fakih Effendi established a new

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<sup>13</sup>Maxmilien Kollisch, *The Musselman Population at the Cape of Good Hope* (Constantinople: Levant Herald, 1867).

<sup>14</sup>TPSA, HR/MTV, 608/5.

<sup>15</sup>Western Cape Archives and Records Service [WCARS], GH 1/295, 38 Papers Received From Secretary of State, London: General, 1863.

<sup>16</sup>WCARS, MOOC 7/1/4017, Effendi Abu Bakr Will, 1880.

<sup>17</sup>Halim Gençoğlu. *Güney Afrika'da zaman ve mekân: Ümit Burnu'nun umudu Osmanlılar* (Osmanbey, İstanbul: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, 2018).

<sup>18</sup>TPSA, HR. Sicili Ahval Defteri, 96/187.

school in Castle Street with the name of Noor al Burhanul Arabic School and was paid by the Ottoman Empire until 1914.<sup>19</sup>

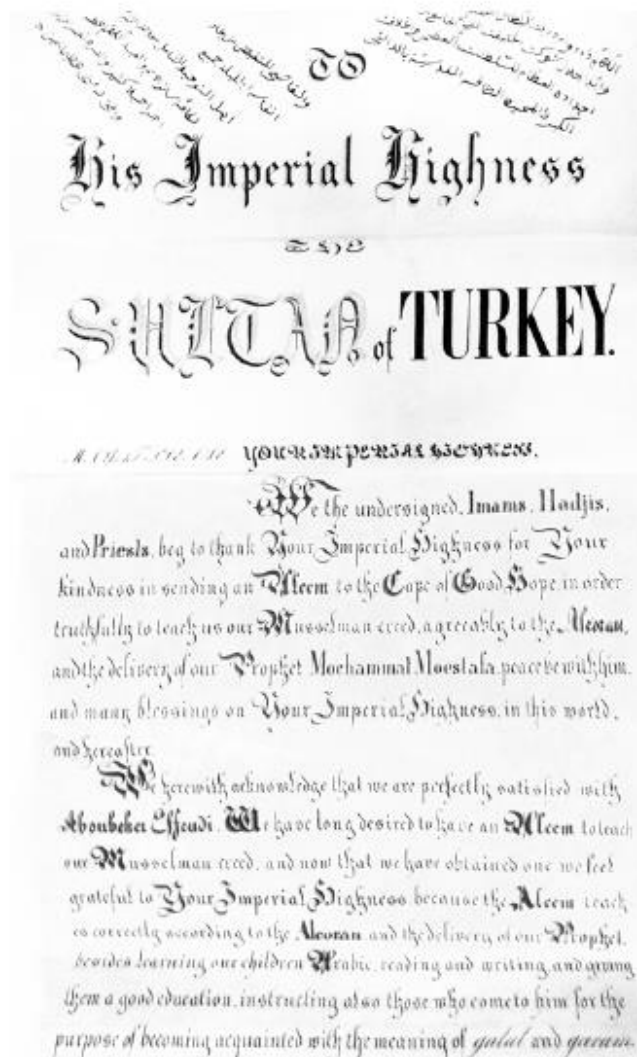


Fig. 1-3. Letter to the Sultan of Turkey about sending Abu Bakr Effendi to the Cape  
*Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic*

<sup>19</sup>TPSA, BEO, 3828/2870910 Cenubi Afrika'da Nur-I Burhanul Mektebi müdürü Mahmud Efendi maası. 1328.

Kimberley January 5<sup>th</sup> 1891

28 January 91  
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To His Excellency Rüstem Pasha  
Imperial Ottoman Ambassador  
London

Your Excellency

As my pupils are now enjoying their yearly vacation. I am about to proceed to Cape Town to meet my brother Hadji Hesham Kemallah Effendi who has recently returned from Mecca Sheriff. Business matters will also engage my attention whilst there as there are several details connected with my father's estate which require adjustment. My stay in the metropolis will however necessarily be a brief one as my duties at the school are to be resumed on the 26<sup>th</sup> inst. I have the honour to forward you a copy of the local newspaper containing a report of the distribution of Prizes at the Imperial Ottoman School, which I am pleased to inform Your Excellency was attended with great success. I humbly hope that Your Excellency will graciously accept my best Compliments of the season and beg to remain with profound respect  
Your Excellency's obedient Servant  
Ahmed. Attaoullah.

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Fig. 1-4. Letter Ahmed Ataullah, Kimberley, to H.E. Rüstem Pasha, London (5 January 1891)  
Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic

The Ottoman consul-general in South Africa, Ohannes Majakyan Bey, reported that Turkey exported tobacco to South Africa. Additionally, raw coffee and Turkish delight, were the most coveted products imported from Turkey until 1930s.<sup>20</sup> Ohannes Majakyan Bey also organized events with

local Muslims in South Africa in order to support the Hedjaz Railway Project.

A considerable amount of money was gathered from Muslims in Mozambique, Mauritius and South Africa. Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid sent medals to prominent Muslims for their support. These documents are in the Turkish and South African Archives.<sup>21</sup> A Turkish magazine in the late nineteenth century pictured Muslim sympathy towards Ottoman Caliphs and this was reported in newspaper articles from Cape Town. A Turkish bath and coffee shops opened in South Africa, showing Turkish cultural impact.<sup>22</sup>

Ottoman travelogues and other sources have not been extensively used in South African studies. For instance official reports of Abu Bakr Effendi regarding the Muslim communities in South Africa, Mozambique and Mauritius contain insightful information about the history of South Africa between 1863 and 1880. Effendi mentioned an Ottoman mosque in Maputo that was built in the late sixteenth century. According to Effendi's report, he visited the mosque when he was in Mozambique to establish a religious school there for Muslims. A professor of theology, Effendi called Table Mountain *Mountain Qaf*, basing himself on a verse from the holy Qu'ran, Surat ul Qaf.<sup>23</sup> Apart from Muslim society, Effendi also shared his observation regarding urbanization in Cape Town and colonial government in South Africa. Abu Bakr Effendi's book *Beyan'ud Din* is considered as the first extensive Arabic-Afrikaans publication in the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup>

When Abu Bakr Effendi came to South Africa, his nephew Omar Lutfu accompanied him. He went back to Turkey in 1866 and published his memoir in Istanbul in 1876. This not only mentions Cape Muslims and South

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<sup>20</sup>WCARS, LBD, 4068. Q234, Turkish Tobacco industry, 1936.

<sup>21</sup>WCARS, CSO, 1788/4128. Hesham Neamatollah Effendi distributing Medals, 1905.

<sup>22</sup>HKL 147 71/30, Tobacco. South African Turkish Tobacco, 1931,1937.

<sup>23</sup>The name of the surah is taken from the letter Qaf at the beginning of the first verse. This surah is associated with Mount Qaf (in Turkish Kafdagi) in mystical tafsir. According to the traditions of Mount Qaf, it is the name of a mountain from the green emerald surrounding the Earth, and Allah is swearing in the name of this mountain and the Qu'ran at the beginning of the surah. See Qu'ran 78: 7.

<sup>24</sup>Abu Bakr Effendi, *The Religious Duties of Islam as Taught and Explained by Abu Bakr Effendi* (Leiden, Brill, 1960).

Africa but also provides important information about the inhabitants of the Western Cape. His book was partially translated into English in 1990 and then published in Cape Town.<sup>25</sup>

In 1866, two Ottoman warships called Bursa and Izmir were sent to the Indian Ocean in order to protect Muslim convoys heading for pilgrimage to Mecca. The warships left from Istanbul, passed Gibraltar, and visited Mumbai, Mauritius and eventually stopped in the Persian Gulf to protect Muslims against hijackers around the region.

After this voyage, an engineer of the Bursa corvet, Faik Bey wrote a memoir, published it in 1877, about the social life of Cape Muslims and Muslims in the Indian Ocean in the late nineteenth century. This source is one of the forgotten materials in African studies.<sup>26</sup>

Other interesting sources are the reports of colonial lieutenant Aziz Bey who came to South Africa in 1899 in order to observe the Anglo-Boer War in the Transvaal. As a Turkish Military attaché in Washington, Bey stayed in South Africa for a month and communicated his war reports to the Ottoman government. His photo with other observers and emissaries from different countries is in the National Archive of South Africa in Pretoria.<sup>27</sup>

In 1899, the Ottoman General Mahmud Muhtar Pasha wrote about the events of the Second Boer War, called *Afrika-i Cenubi Muharebesi*, published in Istanbul in 1900. Despite not knowing the result of the war, Mahmud Pasha provided unique information regarding British and Boer armies during the war. As a foreign source, his book provides another perspective about the reasons for the war.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Omer Lutfi Effendi, and Yusuf Z. Kavarcı. *A Travelogue of my Journey to the Cape of Good Hope*. (Cape Town: Al-Khaleel Publications, 1991). Cf. Omer Lutfi and Huseyin Yorulmaz, 1994, *Ümit Seyahatnâmesi: Yüz Yıl önce Güney Afrika* (Istanbul: Ses Yayınları, 1994).

<sup>26</sup>Mühendis Faik and N. Ahmet Özalp. *Türk denizcilerinin ilk Amerika seferi= Seyahatnâme-i Bahr-i Muhit* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2006).

<sup>27</sup>WCARS, Jeffreys Collection, J245, Anglo-Boer War 1899-1901. Lord Roberts: Staff.

<sup>28</sup>Mahmut Muhtar, *Afrika-yi Cenûbi muharebesi* (Kustantiniye: Matbaa-yi Ebüzziya, 1900). *Google Books* [online resource] <http://books.google.com/books?id=hsQsAAAAYAAJ>.



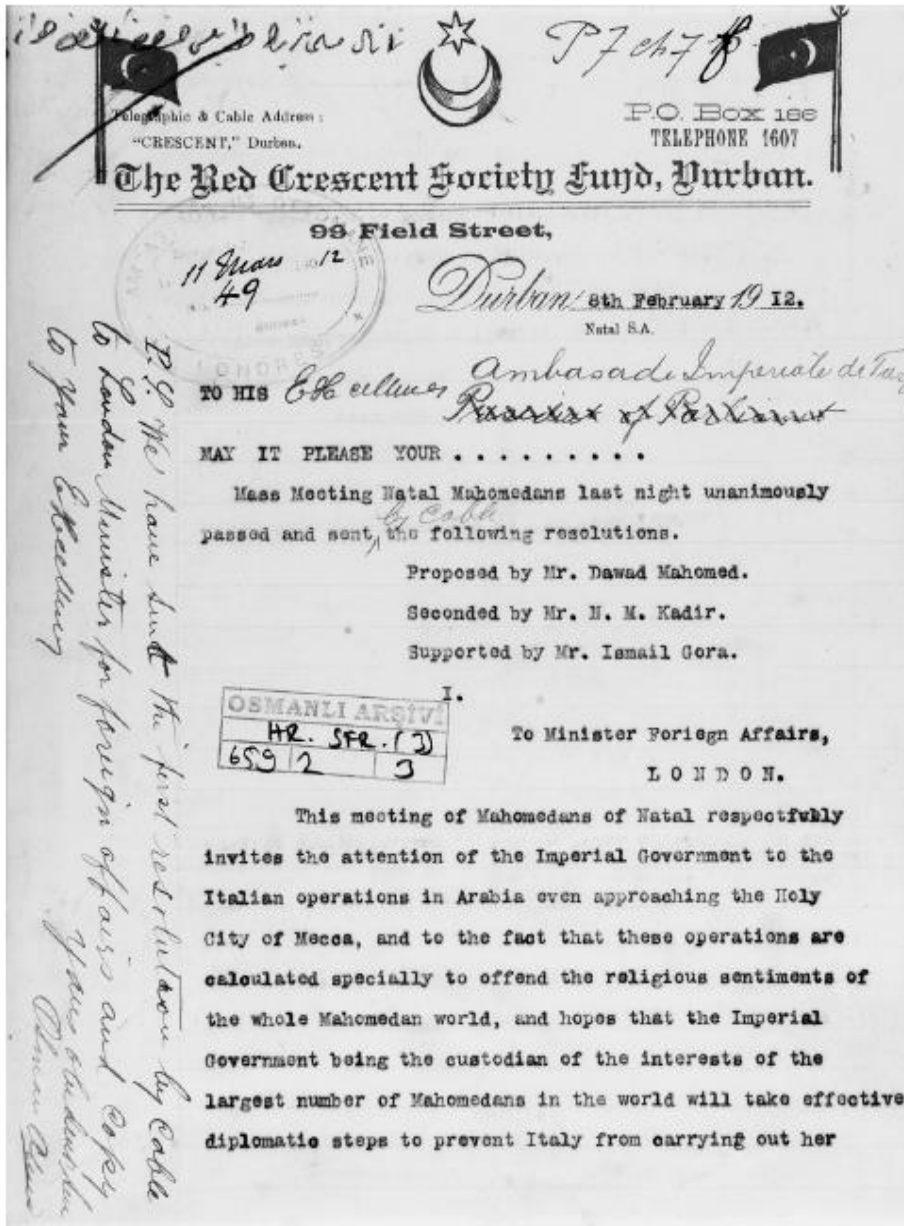


Fig. 1-5. Letter, Red Crescent Society, Durban to H.E. Turkish Ambassador about Italian military operations near Mecca, (1912)  
*Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic*

According to Mahmud Pasha, the scramble for diamond and gold in South Africa was at the heart of the war between Afrikaners and British.

In 1912, an Ottoman historian, Abdulkadir Sadi Kazancioglu published a comprehensive picture of the history of the African continent and its people in Istanbul in 1912.<sup>29</sup> His section regarding South Africa mentions native people and settlers in the region since 1652. His book also provides important geographical information with regard to mines and minerals in South Africa.

During the apartheid period, well-known Turkish musicians and Afro-Turco movie stars like Fikret Kizilok and Celal Yolat protested against the apartheid regime. According to a Turkish archival document in 1967, the Turkish government condemned apartheid rules in an international conference in Tanzania. Such documents have yet to be used as historical sources in African studies.<sup>30</sup>

—Halim Gençoğlu



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<sup>29</sup>Marasli Kazancizade Abdulkadir Sadi, 1926, *Umumi Cograyfa ile Cenubi Amerika, Avustrulya ve Afrika Kitalari*, Istanbul, 1926.

<sup>30</sup>TPSA, Hariciye, 6/8441, Guncy Afrikada Apartheid rejimini kinama.