



Freemasonry's political and diplomatic entanglements in the last phase of Ottoman history: the peculiar case of the Committee of Union and Progress

Rüştü Murat Tiryaki

To cite this article: Rüştü Murat Tiryaki (2022): Freemasonry's political and diplomatic entanglements in the last phase of Ottoman history: the peculiar case of the Committee of Union and Progress, Middle Eastern Studies, DOI: [10.1080/00263206.2022.2109147](https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2022.2109147)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2022.2109147>



Published online: 14 Sep 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 63



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Freemasonry's political and diplomatic entanglements in the last phase of Ottoman history: the peculiar case of the Committee of Union and Progress

Rüştü Murat Tiryaki 

Department of History, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

On one of the first few days following the Young Turk revolution of July 1908, the celebrating crowds in the streets of Salonica witnessed the proud procession of the members of the Freemasons' lodges of the city in attire openly exhibiting their Freemasonic regalia.¹ Freemasonry's prior existence in the Ottoman lands had been mostly confined to networks of foreigners and certain local groups connected through commercial, diplomatic and intellectual interests, while the social visibility of the Freemasons had been mostly limited to philanthropic deeds and gatherings occasionally covered in the local press.² The Freemasonic organization had hardly aligned or involved itself in the political movements and factions up to that time. What was then the reason behind this bold action of the Salonican Freemasons which openly exposed their position and ideology within the political environment created by the revolution?

During the few years following the Young Turk revolution which witnessed the stepping of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) into a dominant political position, Freemasonry's existence and organization within the Ottoman lands took a new form and intensity. This predominantly European institution occupied a place within the Ottoman state and society which it had never attained before. The intention of this article is to present the position and involvement of Ottoman Freemasonry within the broader picture of the socio-political environment of the time, particularly in consideration of its association with the CUP. Even within a limited window confined to several historic sources and documents, the level and nature of involvement from significant individuals of the Ottoman state and society will portray the rather enhanced role and position of the Freemasonic institution during this period.

Jews, Freemasons and the CUP: an examination of the historiography and the possibility of a new perspective

The Young Turk movement as the precursor to the CUP and its relations with the Jews, the Freemasons and other active political groups of the period within the scope of power politics has been a subject of interest to numerous historians.³ These relations have often been evaluated on the basis of significant themes like antisemitism and Zionism, while the Freemasonic connection was also touched upon within the context of its Jewish adherents.

The extent of the influence of the Jews and Freemasons on the formative years as well as the post-revolutionary period of the CUP has been a topic under debate. Bernard Lewis argued that there seemed to be 'no evidence at all, in the voluminous Turkish literature on the Young Turks, that Jews ever played a part of any significance in their councils, either before or after the Revolution, or that the Masonic lodges were ever more than an occasional cover for their

secret meetings'.⁴ Feroz Ahmad, on the other hand, asserted that British Foreign Office Reports, the dispatches of the Istanbul correspondent of *The Times*, and the conservative press of the Ottoman capital propounded 'the outstanding role of the Jews in the CUP movement', whereas 'all these sources misunderstood the true character of the movement and therefore misrepresented it as a Jewish-Freemason conspiracy manipulated by the Jews for their own ends'. Ahmad assessed that 'Ottoman Jews did play an important part in the Unionist movement before and after 1908, but never as the force capable of manipulating the movement for their own ends'.⁵ The role of the British Foreign Office mentioned by Ahmad in relation to the creation of a Jewish-Freemason conspiracy theory was expounded in a seminal article of this subject by Elie Kedourie. According to him, the reports of the British Embassy in Istanbul, which were penned with an undercurrent of antisemitism, created a story 'all bound together by the occult ties of Freemasonry' where 'the Committee of Union and Progress, Freemasonry and Judaism were inextricably connected'.⁶ Kedourie argued that 'rule by doctrinaire officers such as the Young Turks was an ominous development in the Ottoman Empire, but to represent it as the outcome of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy was entirely to miss its significance'. However, these 'fictions', as Kedourie called them, had a significant influence on the British Foreign Office and 'helped to persuade the British government to fall for and take up Zionism' in a rather ironic development.⁷

While the abovementioned historians saw the Jewish and Freemasonic connections of the Young Turks as either exaggerated or at least misinterpreted, Robert Olson expressed the view that 'the historiography of the Young Turks, the Jews and Zionism should be updated and revised to include revisionist Zionist sources' mostly excluded from earlier research by others. In the light of these sources and also Paul Dumont's research revealing the activities of Freemasonic lodges of Salonica, he argued that 'the role and relationship of Freemasons, Jews and Ottomans and Young Turks was more interconnected than previously thought', albeit not necessarily yielding 'more or significant influence for either group after the Young Turks came to power'.⁸ The research done by Dumont and later by Angelo Iacovella, using the archival documents of the Grand Orient de France and Grande Oriente d'Italia, respectively, brought to light important information based on the registers of Salonica and Istanbul lodges belonging to the same period of interest.⁹ These records have revealed that the connection between the early organization of the CUP and these lodges was closer than previously thought. Many of the leading names of the CUP movement could now be associated with Freemasonry through the lodge records. However, as expressed by Dumont himself, the nature and extent of the probable influence exercised by these lodges, or Freemasons in general, on the later political role and deeds of the CUP is a matter open to debate.

Regarding the nature of relations between the Young Turks and other groups, Şükrü Hanioglu shifted the focus from the Jews to the Greek ethnicity of the empire. The sources he chose mainly from the Greek literature on the subject portrayed a quite different story going back to the 1870s where the origins of the Young Turks were connected to relations with prominent Greek individuals inducted into Freemasonry, with a view to creating 'a new Byzantine state to unite Turks and Greeks under the shadow of an enlightened Ottoman Sultan', for which the candidate agreed upon at the time was Murad V.¹⁰ Hanioglu wrote in conclusion that 'the Freemasons understood that their alliance with the Young Turks had been based on mutual interest and that similar alliances had been contracted with Armenian, Bulgarian and Albanian communities in 1907-08'.¹¹ However, the nature and scope of the interest on the part of the Freemasons in forging this alliance with the Young Turks has been left unclear.

Although the aforementioned research of historians on the subject has focused on estimating the extent of the Jewish and Freemasonic influence on the formation and subsequent policies of the CUP, an examination of the opposite aspect, i.e. the consequences of this relation on the part of Freemasonry itself are mostly overlooked. The Jewish community's interest in the Freemasonic organization as well as the latter's close contact with the CUP and the Young Turk movement led Ottoman Freemasonry into a more visible presence within Ottoman politics,

albeit with the ensuing challenges of a politically charged environment both within and without the organization. A direct consequence of this process was the formation of the Ottoman Grand Orient as a national organization of Freemasonry for the first time in the Ottoman lands. This made it possible for the Ottoman Freemasons to integrate themselves to the universal fraternal discourse of the Freemasonic philosophy during a last attempt of the Ottoman administration to keep its remaining lands intact. Although the subsequent turmoil of wars and political chaos of the following decade caused the eventual rifts in the young Ottoman national organization, it was, at least for a certain time, a concerted effort on the part of the Freemasons involved in this endeavour to bind the multi-ethnic elements of the empire with a common cause.

Ottoman Freemasonry's position within the broader world of European Freemasonries

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman Freemasonry developed in two distinct directions. One was under the influence of British Freemasonries which mainly continued the earlier tradition of sociability based on the commercial and diplomatic networks of European expatriates and officials resident in the Ottoman Empire. In this period, the names of Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, the British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, and John Porter Brown, an established official of the American legation in Istanbul, were highly associated with British Freemasonry. The second mode of Freemasonic activity in the major Ottoman cities was that of Latin Freemasonries (French, Italian primarily) which upheld the revolutionary ideology and was oriented towards the furthering of reforms, oppositional political positions, as well as nationalistic aspirations.

Freemasonry in the Ottoman lands in the last phase of the empire was dominated by the political and revolutionary character of the Latin camp. As the Freemasonic institution in Istanbul and Izmir more or less disappeared or existed in the form of a social club of foreigners living in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century, Salonica with its peculiar demographic and geographic characteristics would play a significant role in the future of the empire, also emerging as the leading venue of Freemasonic activity during this period.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Salonica was the main port of the Balkans as well as the cultural and financial capital of Macedonia. The rural areas of this multi-ethnic and multi-cultural province of the Ottoman Empire teemed with clashes of nationalist bands which had given rise to the Macedonian Question, an essential element of the much broader Eastern Question that surrounded the dismantling process of the Ottoman Empire. The irregular groups of fighting men were linked to their respective secret organizations headquartered in urban centres, Salonica being the major one. A group of Ottoman army officers and civil servants of the state joined forces with some prominent members of the local community to form a secret organization serving the Ottomanist ideology of the earlier generation of Young Ottomans. These proponents of the Young Turk movement had a revolutionary fervour to pursue the toppling of the Sultan and to realize the ideal of the 'unity of elements' within the Ottoman Empire. They lay the foundation of the secret organization which was to become the CUP. Having blossomed in the bosom of the lodges active in Salonica under primarily the Italian obedience,¹² the Committee benefited from the secretive nature of the Freemasonic organization with the additional immunity of capitulations extended to foreign sociabilities. It was no coincidence that they were integrated into the Latin camp of Freemasonry which was conducive to their revolutionary deeds and aspirations. Once the constitutional government was restored in 1908, the close affiliation of many of the Committee members with the lodges created the most politicized period of Ottoman Freemasonry and made it visible to the public eye. Soon afterwards, the lodges would become closely linked with the political ambitions of the CUP and a grand body as the first national Ottoman obedience would be formed in close affiliation with it.

Following the quick succession of events that unfolded with the reinstatement of the constitutional monarchy and the ousting of Sultan Abdulhamid less than a year later, Freemasonry found a most favourable position in the Ottoman lands and emerged as a significant actor in the socio-political climate of the empire. Some prominent members of the CUP like Mehmed Talat Bey and Cavid Bey, who were also Freemasons, had a first-hand experience of how certain organizational characteristics and secretive aspects of Freemasonry could facilitate the formation and growth of revolutionary groups and affiliations. The majority of the ten founders of the Ottoman Freedom Society, the precursor to the CUP, had been Freemasons whereas its central committee (*heyet-i aliye*) which was made up of four members, namely, Mehmed Talat, Rahmi [Evrano], Midhat Şükrü [Bleda], and Ismail Canbulat, had been all Freemasons.¹³ Up to three years prior to the formation of the society, these men had run their preparatory operations in conjunction with their Freemasonic involvement in Salonica lodges, primarily the Italian obedience lodge *Macedonia Risorta*, which was founded in 1901, and the French obedience lodge *Veritas*, founded in 1904. To reach their political aims, they had sheltered their secret activities under the roofs of Freemasons' lodges, in a way embedding their own political fraternity within the relatively safe confines of the lodge realm. This relative safety stemmed from the privileges and immunity conceded to citizens of foreign powers acting or residing within the Ottoman Empire. The extraterritoriality that was provided by the capitulations made it possible for foreign citizens to get involved in an environment of sociability that was much less penetrable to the watchful eye of the Sultan. The properties which enjoyed such immunity could double as venues for secret meetings that served the purposes of both the Freemasons and the secret organization of the Union and Progress movement.¹⁴

As noted earlier, the ideological scope of Latin Freemasonries created a suitable environment within the lodges of these obediences for the development of a revolutionary spirit. In an urban centre as socio-politically complex and active as Salonica, the secret political organization of the Young Turk movement reached a mature state within the Latin obedience lodges there. In particular, the Italian obedience claimed to have played an important part in the birth and growth of the Young Turk movement leading to the Union and Progress organization in Salonica, and often maintained its support and close relations with the subsequent political engagements of the organization following the overthrow of Abdulhamid.¹⁵ However, the British Freemasonries who had not been a part of this development process kept their distance also after the CUP turned into a legitimate political power through the restored Ottoman parliament and constitutional government. This attitude was to a great extent in agreement with the political stance of the British administration towards the Ottoman government during the same period.

Ottoman Freemasonry's immersion into the political arena

It has been argued that the foreign obedience lodges formed in the Ottoman territories in the second half of the nineteenth century served to a certain degree the commercial and political interests of the imperialistic states to which these obediences belonged.¹⁶ In the Ottoman case, it was not before its forging of a close relationship with the CUP that Ottoman Freemasonry engaged itself with Ottoman interests. Immediately after the Young Turk revolution of 1908, there was an apparent increase of motivation to form new lodges in the major cities as well as to join existing ones. This was especially the case for Istanbul where Freemasonry gained a momentum unseen up to that time and the growth in membership for the lodges was concomitant with the increase of adherents to the CUP's cause.

The young and dynamic Freemasonry of Salonica helped revive some formerly active Freemasons at the Ottoman capital. While the Italian obedience lodge *Bisanzio Risorta* was opened some months before the revolution in early 1908, *Italia Risorta* which had operated between 1868 and 1900 was reactivated at the end of 1908. *Calcedonia* started working in 1909 on the Asian side of Istanbul.¹⁷ Although the French lodges in Istanbul had ceased operating

for a number of years, even decades in the case of a couple of them,¹⁸ the new dynamism injected to the Freemasonry of the capital stirred a good deal of excitement among some former members of the aborted French obedience lodges there, as well. The time was ripe they argued, as there were now more candidates than ever before willing to join the fraternity due to the close relations between Freemasonry and those who were politically empowered after the restoration of the constitution.¹⁹ On the other hand, it would be under the auspices of a number of Salonican Freemasons that the next French obedience lodge, *La Renaissance* would be established in Istanbul, in August 1908, in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. As the political ambitions of the CUP were now transferred from Salonica to the capital, so were the Freemasonic aspirations of the Salonican Freemasons. Two leading figures of the French obedience lodge *Veritas* of Salonica, Michel Noradounghian (Noradunkyan in Turkish) and David Cohen (Kohen in Turkish) petitioned the Grand Orient de France to take advantage of the favourable political climate to restore the former prestigious position of the French obedience in Istanbul.²⁰ They were soon to become eminent names during the foundation processes of the Ottoman Supreme Council and the Ottoman Grand Orient, successively. Convinced in the high merits of the Young Turk ideals, the cooperative efforts of these men, an Armenian and a Jew, as citizens of the Ottoman Empire were emblematic of the high hopes ushered in by the restoration of the Constitution among the various ethnic elements of the empire. Despite their continuing allegiance to the ideals and administrative traditions of the French obedience, as their correspondence with the Grand Orient de France attests, they also realized the importance of establishing an Ottoman obedience for the Young Turk Freemasons. In that regard, they epitomized the will among Ottoman Freemasons of different national and ethnic origins to form a national obedience that would represent this diversity with a fresh view of freedom in accordance with the ideology preached by the new Ottoman political elite.

There was a deliberate effort in the formation of the Ottoman obedience to bring together Freemasons of different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds as manifested by the diverse composition of the founding members.²¹ The idea of a supra-national fraternal organization was in agreement with the Young Turk political ideology to keep the empire's diverse elements together in its remaining territories. On the other hand, only the Freemasonries of the Latin branch were involved in the endeavour to establish the Ottoman obedience. In addition to the members of the lodges newly formed under the auspices of the reorganized Ottoman Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR),²² all the Freemasons who took part in the process leading to the formation of the Ottoman Grand Orient in the summer of 1909 were members of the Latin obediences, predominantly Italian and to a lesser extent, French and Spanish. The Grande Oriente d'Italia stood out as the main endorser of the foundation of an Ottoman national obedience. While the support from the Italian obedience was more open and prompt, that of the French came with considerable delay despite the constant petitions by some members of the obedience in the Ottoman capital like Noradounghian and Cohen, as mentioned earlier. It was not until early 1911 that the French Grand Orient finally established official amicable relations with the Ottoman obedience.²³ The close affiliation of Istanbul Freemasons with the cause of the CUP may have also played a part in the initial ambivalence of the French obedience in recognizing its Ottoman counterpart given the political commitment of France to the Triple Entente. On the part of the British, an aloof attitude towards the new Ottoman obedience was most likely politically motivated as the Ottoman Freemasons' attempts to form their national obedience was seen as closely affiliated with the political ambitions and concerns of the CUP.

The reciprocal relationship between the newly formed Ottoman obedience and the political entity of the CUP is evident from the significant number of founding members related to the CUP.²⁴ As the Committee ascended into the ruling power zone, it not only needed to consolidate its domestic position within the Empire but also vied for international recognition by the European powers. For the new Ottoman obedience on the other hand, such recognition was

primarily dependent on its recognition by the Ottoman state.²⁵ Now that the CUP had a powerful participation in the Ottoman government, a national obedience in the Ottoman territories was sanctioned for the first time by its state and it was ready to seek recognition among foreign obediences. This pursuit for international association soon overlapped with the political aspirations and struggles of a rapidly dissociating empire and its government. A number of delegations representing the Ottoman people and their government embarked on visits to European states following the Young Turk revolution. Among them were some CUP members who were also Freemasons. As the following episodes demonstrate, they attended meetings with both government officials and Freemasonic bodies.

The CUP and the Ottoman Grand Orient aligned: International encounters and political endeavours

During a very early international engagement on behalf of the CUP, the visit of a small Young Turk delegation to Paris is worthy of interest.²⁶ Two leading members of the Committee, Doctor Nazım Bey and lieutenant-colonel Ahmed Cemal (later Cemal Pasha) were accompanied by a Salonican merchant, Henri de Toledo, and in Paris a seasoned advocate of the Young Turk cause, Ahmed Rıza Bey also joined them. Just a few months had passed since the revolution but the political agenda of the CUP was already teeming with international problems for the Ottoman government. Bulgaria's declaration of independence, the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Cretan proclamation of union with Greece all had taken place within a few days of one another in early October.²⁷ The Paris visit was a swiftly organized one which took place only days later in mid-October and lasted for a few weeks. It seems that this initiative to obtain support from the French government for the ongoing tribulations of the Ottoman Empire and to develop a lobby for the CUP capitalizing on the existing sympathy for the Young Turk revolution in France was not sanctioned by the Ottoman government as a whole, as the CUP was not yet the dominant power within the government. Despite several successful social encounters and maybe some progress in matters pertaining to education and commerce, the visit was without any concrete result for Ottoman international politics. A propitious social engagement on the part of Doctor Nazım and Ahmed Cemal resulted in several cordial meetings with the Freemasons of Paris. Despite the interest shown by the French lodges and the Grand Orient, it is difficult to evaluate how much of an impact these encounters may have created, given the ambivalence of the French obedience towards the Ottoman Freemasonry during this time and the subsequent period of more than a year, as mentioned earlier.²⁸

Another interesting international engagement where the interests of the CUP and the then very young Ottoman obedience overlapped was a visit to Austria-Hungary held in late 1909. In an international public relations attempt to improve its image in the eyes of the Ottoman general public following the crisis created by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in October 1908, Austria-Hungary extended an invitation for a travel organization to include a diverse group of Ottoman citizens from all walks of life. Although this whole event does not seem to have occupied any major place in the rather convoluted domestic and international political affairs of the Ottoman administration at the time, a Freemasonic meeting that took place in Budapest is worthy of interest.

The social encounter of Ottoman Freemasons with Hungarian Freemasons at a 'solemn assembly' in Budapest organized by the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary was reported by the title of 'a Turko-Hungarian Fete'.²⁹ At the event that took place on 22 October 1909, Hungarian Freemasons welcomed a group of Ottoman Freemasons as representatives of Young Turks whom they perceived to have recently brought freedom to the Ottoman lands formerly suffering under the brutal rule of a despot.

A rather striking aspect of the speeches delivered at the gathering organized by the Hungarian Grand Lodge was the nature of the views pertaining to Freemasonry as expressed by the

prominent members of the lodges present at the event. These ideas clearly exposed the Hungarian obedience as one with a very liberal stance and with rather radical leanings towards political affairs. The Hungarian Freemasons expressed their admiration for the struggle of their 'Young Turk brethren' to establish freedom and fraternity within the Ottoman lands. A significant demonstration of transnational fraternal affiliation was a shared protestation of the very recent tragic event of the execution of Francisco Ferrer Guardia, a Catalan radical freethinker, libertarian pedagogue and Freemason.³⁰ The radical, libertarian and predominantly anti-clerical leanings of the Hungarian Freemasonic institution, similar to those exemplified in the person of Ferrer, were clearly voiced in the outcry of those who took the floor.

The Hungarian Freemasons presented a rather vivid example of how, in certain European cultures of Freemasonry, the radical and anti-clerical sentiments went hand in hand with each other.³¹ A critical evaluation of the various Freemasonries of Europe at the time was given which was a bold and informative interpretation expressing a comparative view of the Anglo-Saxon and Latin Freemasonries already in conflict for a few decades at that time.³² Recognizing Ottoman Freemasonry as a notable contributor to the overthrow of a ruler, perceived as a despot by the European general public, the Hungarian Freemasons expressed their commendation to their Ottoman brethren present at the meeting, correspondingly exalting the significance of Freemasonry in the Ottoman revolution. Aware of their Ottoman brethren's affiliation with Latin Freemasonries, the Hungarians did not shy away from exposing their ideological stance with clear messages.

Excerpts from the speeches of two participating Ottoman Freemasons from Salonica do not exhibit anti-clerical sentiments similar to those of the Hungarians but are certainly in a similar vein when it comes to radical revolutionary spirit. These Salonica Freemasons who had also been active proponents of the Young Turk revolution were Kazım Nami Bey³³ and Sam Levy. In his memoirs which Kazım Nami wrote during a much later part of his life, there is no reference to any Freemasonic event during his visit to Budapest, possibly as a personal preference to avoid associating this official visit with Freemasonry. However, he gives a noteworthy account of his involvement in the organizing of the Salonican participants for the journey in question to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. He points out that on various occasions he delivered speeches to which he confesses to have felt rather uneasy about.³⁴

The other Ottoman Freemason cited to have delivered a speech at the event was Sam Levy who was a member of a prominent Jewish family of Salonica. Being a true polyglot, he worked as an interpreter for the Ottoman Municipality of Salonica. Having studied at the Sorbonne and lived in France a considerable amount of time, he contributed to the Salonica newspaper *Le Journal de Salonique* which had been started by his father Saadi Levy in 1895. He later assumed its editorship as well as that of his father's other newspaper *Epoca*.³⁵ An avid supporter and participant of the Young Turk movement, Sam Levy delivered a most enthusiastic speech with a very clear statement of the close connection between the revolution and the Freemasonry of Salonica.³⁶

The price of political entanglements: accusations and allegations against the CUP and Ottoman Freemasonry

In the immediate aftermath of the Young Turk revolution and the initial phase of the gradual rise of the CUP, the liberal discourse expressed by some adherents of the CUP, as exemplified above, demonstrated that they perceived Freemasonry as a vehicle which served their radical political pursuits. At least in this period, the ambitions of the CUP to unite the various elements within the Ottoman territories and the universal fraternal ambitions of the newly formed Ottoman obedience coincided. However, the subsequent political and social developments hindered the realization of both ambitions.

The position and involvement of Freemasonry during the several distinct periods of the CUP's existence as the most prominent element of Ottoman politics from 1908 to 1918 is a controversial topic. The contribution of the Salonican lodges to the formative years of the movement through their organizational and spatial capabilities which provided the much needed shelter for the development of the then secret organization is well-attested.³⁷ The statements of the CUP members expressed in the subsequent years also support this general opinion.³⁸ On the other hand, the extent of the contribution of the Freemasonic institution at large to the success of the revolution itself as well as the degree to which Freemasonry was later affiliated with the organization and political apparatus of the CUP are open to debate.³⁹

The CUP members who joined Freemasonry constituted only a minor part of the organization as a whole. The same was true for the membership of government level politicians or bureaucrats of the late Ottoman era. However, the common discourse in the press and the political arena often appraised Freemasonry as having a disproportionate role and weight in the state affairs of the period. This general interest in the relation of the CUP with the Freemasonic institution was justified by the Freemasonic affiliation of some names within the CUP leadership like Mehmed Talat Bey and Cavid Bey, and later within the principal cadres of other factions that split from the main organization, like Rıza Tevfik Bey. Another justification stemmed from the continuing secrecy aspect of the CUP which lingered until as late as August 1912 when its annual congress was for the first time held in Istanbul and monitored by a government inspector.

As the oppositional voices against the CUP and its leadership rose gradually through 1910 and 1911, various allegations were circulated through a collaborative effort of the opposition factions, their affiliated press outlets as well as foreign political networks. The most widely posited theory was that of a conspiracy of Freemasonry and Jews of Salonica which supposedly had taken control of the CUP from the very beginning.⁴⁰ Various ingredients of this conspiracy theory were picked and elaborated by the foreign political actors in accordance with their own interests and concerns, which gradually eroded the credibility of the CUP both within and without the empire. Members of the British diplomatic mission in Istanbul during the period between the revolution and the First World War furnished the British Foreign Office with an anti-CUP sentiment to a great extent, as demonstrated below.

The efforts of the CUP to improve relations with Britain following the revolution of 1908 would eventually fail due to the complexity of certain issues and the clashing interests. As nationalistic policies complicated the Balkan issues, the continuation of the former Pan-Islamic policy constituted potential threats to the colonial interests of particularly the British Empire concerning a vast territory from the Middle East to Iran and India. In addition to the tough negotiations of such issues like the Baghdad-Gulf Railway and the control of the Persian Gulf, the British concerns to preserve its accord with Russia made it difficult for the Ottoman government to win over the British from the very start. The concerns on the part of Britain were intensified by the personal contributions of the leading members of the diplomatic mission in Istanbul through their reports which enhanced the British anti-Ottoman and anti-CUP stance.

The British Ambassador Sir Gerard Lowther was appointed to the Sublime Porte very soon after the revolution of July 1908, succeeding the few months' office of George Head Barclay who was appointed as minister plenipotentiary after Sir Nicholas Roderick O'Connor died in March 1908 while still in post. O'Connor had witnessed the height of Sultan Abdulhamid's oppressive rule during his long tenure since 1898 but Lowther arrived in a radically changed political atmosphere. His lack of experience in Ottoman affairs was in most likelihood offset by the presence of Gerald Henry Fitzmaurice, who acted as the bridge between O'Connor and Lowther as the long-time dragoman of the British Embassy since 1897 and the chief dragoman since 1907.⁴¹

In the first decade of the twentieth century, as Britain kept on putting pressure on the Ottoman administration for further reforms in the country's rule and economy, it also wanted to preserve the concessions and capitulations in the way they were formerly established to

Britain's benefit. Furthermore, despite the frequent intrusions into Ottoman affairs, the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire was advocated until as late as the early Second Constitution era, albeit it with gradually less intensity.⁴² The hostile nature of the British policy had already reached a high point by the time of the Young Turk revolution and despite a temporary period of sympathy in its immediate aftermath, the ensuing antipathy of the Foreign Office towards the Ottoman Empire was to be epitomized in the person of Lowther in the years following the revolution.

Evidence remaining from only a few years prior shows that the general sentiment prevailing in Istanbul towards Britain was rather positive during the early years of the century according to some British subjects living in the city. In a couple of letters dated 14 March 1902, and Good Friday, 1902, penned by Sir James William Whittall, founder of the British Chamber of Commerce of Turkey and a prominent member of the British community in Istanbul, and addressed to the then British Ambassador Sir Nicholas Roderick O'Connor, Whittall cites his high ranking local sources as saying that 'the Turks generally look upon England as their sole "harbour of refuge"' and 'as for the Germans, they are hated, and looked upon as blood suckers – as for the Russians they are feared'.⁴³ Although the views conveyed to Whittall by his purportedly important local acquaintances are possibly biased by a motive to appeal to the expectations of their interlocutor, they nevertheless reflect the fluctuating sentiments among the Ottoman officials and public, given the ever-changing political positions of European powers in their efforts to make the most out of the imminent resolution of the Eastern Question.

The change of regime in July 1908 ushered in a short period of a 'wait and see' strategy for Britain. Since the British Foreign Office had previously shown a lack of interest in regards to the Young Turk movement, the revolution caught it seemingly unprepared and with rather insufficient knowledge of the leading cadre of the movement now politically represented in the CUP.⁴⁴ Initially an encouraging attitude was exhibited towards the new regime by the British Foreign Office. The Sultan had close relations with Germany, but now that the Young Turks were in power, there was an opportunity to usurp the dominant position of Germany. The perception of the initial negative sentiment towards Germany was reflected in a couple of letters written within the same year of the revolution, by another prominent member of the British community in Istanbul, Sir Edwin Pears, who was a British barrister practising law at the Ottoman consular courts. In his letter from Istanbul dated 22 August 1908, and addressed to Lady O'Connor, a few months after the decease of her husband the late British Ambassador, Sir Edwin Pears shared his observations regarding the view towards Germany in the immediate aftermath of the revolution saying 'her prestige has gone, it is really remarkable how strong anti-German feeling is'.⁴⁵ In a subsequent letter dated 21 December 1908, and again addressed to Lady O'Connor, Pears was still highly satisfied with the favourable feeling in the Ottoman government towards Britain and the unpopular standing of Germany at the time.⁴⁶ However, this positive mood was soon to deteriorate as the British Foreign Office chose to secure its good relations with Russia, albeit at the expense of the Ottomans, completing its transition towards a policy favouring the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire acting in conformity with the other major powers.

The disillusionments of the CUP in the Ottoman foreign affairs, as well as the increasing opposition it experienced domestically, caused it to turn towards a German alliance and also adopt a gradually more nationalistic stance contrary to the earlier expectations of the non-Muslim elements. Sir Gerard Lowther, who had been sceptical of an enduring success on the part of the CUP since the day of his appointment to Istanbul, had justified his suspicions with the eventual failure of the CUP's policy of uniting the Ottoman elements. A particular letter which he sent on 29 May 1910, to Sir Charles Hardinge, the then Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office was published by Kedourie.⁴⁷ Although signed by Lowther himself, the letter was most likely written by Fitzmaurice as claimed in one of his private correspondences.⁴⁸ The detailed ideas and views expressed in the letter show a strong resemblance to those which

were recorded in the annual report of the same year, sent from the British Embassy in Istanbul to the British Foreign Office. The 'Turkey, Annual Report' of 1910 exhibited an exaggerated dislike of the CUP and its political actions within and without the empire as well as an effort to discredit it through associating it with an alleged conspiracy of Zionists and Freemasons, purportedly against the interests of the Christian elements as well as the Arab populations of the empire. In the report, the British Embassy's views of the CUP included the supposition of a strong influence of the Salonican Jews and Zionist aspirations on its members and policies through particularly the collaboration of the Freemasonic organization.⁴⁹ This supposed Zionist connection was also associated with a concern regarding the position of Russia with whom Britain had formed friendly relations at the time.⁵⁰

The report used derogatory language towards Ottoman Freemasonry particularly based on its affiliation with the CUP. The exaggerated and contemptuous remarks were most plausibly a result of the desire to exert more influence on the British Foreign Office with these views, as much as they were a reflection of Fitzmaurice's and Lowther's personal outlook on the Young Turk revolution and the policies of the CUP. In most likelihood the Foreign Office's approach also influenced the outlook of British Freemasonries and they chose to preserve their hostile position which was also expressed in the report in a condescending manner.⁵¹ These few years in the history of the Ottoman Empire were the first time Freemasonry had received so much mention in the British Foreign Office reports and correspondence, which may be explained by the increased significance of Freemasonry in its affiliation with the political apparatus of the state.

Sir Edwin Pears, having lived in Istanbul for more than 30 years at the time of the Young Turk Revolution, had an intimate understanding of Ottoman politics as well as a first-hand experience of living through this period in the capital. In his memoirs, some of his recollections were related to the speculation of the CUP being a conspiracy of Jews, atheists and Freemasons. Pears associated the opposition's portrayal of the CUP in such a conspiracy with the gradual accumulation of reactions against the CUP in the few years following the revolution.⁵² He claimed that the general disposition of the Turk had often been rather unfavourable towards the Jew, the prejudice being stronger especially among the poor Turks. The source of 'the accusation against the Committee relating to Israelites was that in the Committee certain men of exceptional intelligence became from the first specially prominent'. One among them was Cavid Bey, 'a native of Salonica, reputed to belong to a Crypto-Jewish sect largely represented in that city, and known as Dunmays [*sic*][*dönmes*], which professes Moslemism, but in secret practises the rites of the Jewish faith'.⁵³

As a Freemason himself and a British subject during a time when the relations between the CUP and Britain were not of an amicable nature, Pears's views on this subject are noteworthy. The fact that he remained unconvinced as to the plausibility of the said conspiracy theory may be to a certain extent due to his affiliation with Freemasonry as well as his general sympathy towards the Young Turk revolution. However, his observations of the political climate at the time reflected that at least for some segments of society these speculations were to some extent effective. Be that as it may, Pears's overall conclusion was that these suggestions of conspiracy brought hardly any harm to the cause of Young Turks.⁵⁴

The harm incurred to the public image of the CUP, on the other hand, may have been more significant than what was perceived by Pears. An interesting source that gives a good snapshot of the turning tides in the public view of the domestic affairs of the CUP and its affiliation with Freemasonry is an article written by Ebüzziya Tevfik. Although he had shared certain ideals of the transformation brought about by the revolution and initially had been politically aligned with the CUP, the article Ebüzziya published at the end of 1911, entitled 'Italian Lodges of Freemasonry and Zionism', showed a clear transformation in his political views and displayed certain suspicions towards the political alliances of the CUP.⁵⁵ Although he was never initiated into Freemasonry, he expressed in this article that he had previously sympathized with the philanthropic deeds and universal aims of the Freemasonic institution. Despite his initial approval

of the affiliation of the Young Turks and the Union and Progress movement with Freemasonry, Ebüzziya had taken a counter stance at this particular state of Ottoman politics, and his changing views were rigorously articulated in this article. The article clearly demonstrated the public dispute during the period in question concerning the alleged Zionist aims of certain members of the CUP and their supposed manipulation of the Ottoman Freemasonic organization in accordance with these ulterior motives.

Conclusion

In the last phase of the Ottoman Empire, the domestic and international entanglements of the politically dominant CUP brought it into a closer relation with Freemasonry. In their relation, the expectation of gain was reciprocal. The CUP in most likelihood saw in Freemasonry's trans-national connections and capabilities a vehicle to further its political ambitions. In an attempt to curb the varied political expectations and aspirations of foreign obediences and their affiliated lodges within the empire, a national organization of Freemasonry came into being and became involved in the socio-political life of the empire due to this close association with the CUP. Despite controversial accusations and conspiracy theories against the Freemasonic institution during the period in question, its adherents and the number of lodges increased significantly. This increase is all the more striking given the fact that the Young Turk movement and its political apparatus the CUP, then acting most visibly, no longer needed the secret environment provided by Freemasonry. The notable attachment of the prominent officials of the state may on the one hand be attributed to an expectation of favourable connections for their individual advancement but it is also likely that many of them believed in a construct of Freemasonry parallel to the CUP's political power axis which could contribute to the solution of certain conflicts within and without the empire in favour of the Ottoman government. Unfortunately, the Freemasonic world was one that was already divided into separate camps and a unanimous response to Ottoman complications from different Freemasonries was not possible.

As divisions developed inside the Union and Progress organization as well as in the general political climate of the empire in the few years following the Young Turk revolution and further deepened while the empire drifted into the First World War, Ottoman Freemasonry was also adversely affected by these divisions which were felt within the lodges. During the world war, most lodges had to discontinue their activities as a result of the harsh wartime conditions of daily life as well as the state-imposed restrictions on the lodges. At the end of the war, Ottoman Freemasonry was purged of its former leadership and prominent members who belonged to the CUP organization. During this time of restructuring of the national obedience towards its future state under the Turkish Republic, some of the Istanbul lodges still working under foreign obediences associated themselves with nationalistic aspirations of minorities but this would phase out shortly afterwards as the provisional government of Ankara extended its political domination to Istanbul. As was the case through the challenging circumstances in the second half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman Freemasonry was able to adapt and position itself in the political environment of the revolutionary period of the first decade of the twentieth century as well as the ensuing CUP era and the First World War.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

ORCID

Rüştü Murat Tiryaki  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4413-8170>

Notes

1. Kemalettin Apak, *Ana Çizgileriyle Türkiye'deki Masonluk Tarihi* [An Outline of the History of Freemasonry in Turkey] (Istanbul: Türkiye Mason Derneği, 1958), p.40.
2. Orhan Koloğlu, *Abdülhamit ve Masonlar* [Abdülhamit and the Freemasons] (Istanbul: Pozitif, 2004), pp.165–74.
3. On the ideological roots and later evolution of the Young Turk movement, see Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
4. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (2nd ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.212.
5. Feroz Ahmad, 'Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914', in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society, Vol.1 The Central Lands* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), p.425.
6. Elie Kedourie, 'Young Turks, Freemasons and Jews', *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol.7, no. 1 (Jan. 1971), pp.91, 93.
7. Kedourie, pp.92, 94.
8. Robert Olson, 'The Young Turks and the Jews: A Historiographical Revision', *Turcica* Vol.XVIII (1986), p.235.
9. Paul Dumont, 'La Franc-Maçonnerie d'Obédience Française à Salonique au Début du XXe Siècle' [Freemasonry of French Obedience in Salonica at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century], *Turcica* Vol.XVI (1984), pp.65–94; Paul Dumont, 'La Turquie dans les Archives du Grand Orient de France: Les Loges Maçonniques d'Obédience Française à Istanbul du Milieu du XIXe Siècle à la Veille de la Première Guerre Mondiale' [Turkey in the Archives of the Grand Orient de France: The Masonic Lodges of French Obedience in Istanbul from the Mid-Nineteenth Century until the First World War], in Jean-Louis Bacqué Grammont and Paul Dumont (eds), *Economie et Société dans l'Empire Ottoman (de la fin du XVIIIe au début du XXe siècle)* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1983), pp.171–201; Angelo Iacovella, *Gönye ve Hilal: İttihad-Terakki ve Masonluk* [The Square and the Crescent: Union and Progress and Freemasonry], trans. Tülin Altınova (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1998).
10. Şükrü Hanioglu, 'Notes on the Young Turks and the Freemasons, 1875-1908', *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol.25, no.2 (Apr. 1989), pp.186–87. Although Hanioglu's narrative is consistent from his own point of view in its portrayal of a Freemasonic involvement in support of the political aims of certain Greek elements of the empire, a number of his statements based on the Greek sources available to him are rather vague. Scalieri's assuming a position of high authority in what Hanioglu calls the 'Paris branch of the Union' in the 1870s or his reference to 'fanciful aspirations of eastern Masonary [sic]' where the nature of an eastern Freemasonry is unclear, are among these ambiguities. See Hanioglu, p.186. Also, Hanioglu cites from the work of Pollatos that 'Scalieri established under the auspices of the French obedience the *Envar-i Sharkiye* lodge which conducted its affairs in Turkish... From this nucleus the faction of the Young Turks was born.' Hanioglu, p.187. However, the cited lodge, a project of Murad V and Scalieri, was most likely never materialized and thus was not affiliated with the French obedience, as Dumont observes in 'La Turquie dans les Archives du Grand Orient de France', p.192.
11. Hanioglu, p.194.
12. An 'obedience' in the Freemasonic sense is an association of lodges under a common organization and administration. It often has a national character and is an autonomous entity within its national territories, bonding with foreign obediences only through mutual recognition. In countries spanning vast territories, multiple obediences exist. A plurality of obediences within a nation also exists when different Freemasonic principles and policies cause the disruption of a single Freemasonic organization and administration, creating multiple umbrella associations.
13. Ozan Arslan and Çınar Özen, 'The Rebirth of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress in Macedonia through the Italian Freemasonry', *Oriente Moderno, Nuova Serie* Vol.24 (85), no.1 (2005), pp.93–94, 106–7. The movement which later evolved into the CUP had its origins in a society formed in 1889 by the students of the Imperial School of Medicine in Istanbul. In the late 1890s the members of this Society were exiled from Istanbul along with other leading members of the Young Turk movement. During the early years of the twentieth century, many Young Turks operated from European cities like Paris and Geneva. A society independently formed in 1906 in Salonica under the name of *Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti* (Ottoman Freedom Society) later established contact with certain Young Turk leaders and in September 1907 it evolved into the CUP capitalizing on the more acknowledged name of the former Istanbul society.
14. Lucius Ellsworth Thayer, 'The Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire and the Question of their Abrogation as it Affects the United States', *American Journal of International Law* Vol.17, no.2 (1923), pp.215–18. The capitulations took as their basis the Islamic law and from very early on, the Ottomans gave concessions to the peoples living in the territories they conquered. Many of the provisions of the capitulations were amended over time in accordance with the requirements of custom and usage. The principal privileges granted to foreigners were personal, juridical and economic. They were all safeguarded by the provision that 'any act of an arbitrary nature on the part of a native official which controverts a privilege of long

standing is considered *ultra vires*. The inviolability of a foreigner's domicile was guaranteed by the capitulations and entrance was forbidden to local authorities except in cases of urgent necessity. Even then, the consul had to be notified first.

15. Iacovella, *Gönye ve Hilal*, pp.7–8.
16. Paul Dumont, 'Ottoman Freemasonry and Laicity', in Andreas Önnersfors and Dorothe Sommer (eds), *Freemasonry and Fraternalism in the Middle East* (Sheffield: The University of Sheffield, 2008), p.155. Dumont asserts that 'strong parallels between the Masonic geography of the [Ottoman] Empire and that of European colonial expansion' can be easily observed. He argues that 'it was not by mere chance that lodges were most numerous in regions most open to Western penetration (Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Cyprus), or in places characterised by their political instability (Macedonia)'.
17. 'Türkiye'deki İtalyan Locaları' [Italian Lodges in Turkey], *Mimar Sinan*, no. 156 (Oct. 2012), pp.53–56.
18. Dumont, 'La Turquie dans les Archives du Grand Orient de France', passim. *L'Étoile du Bosphore*, started in 1858 as the earliest among the French lodges of Istanbul in the second half of the nineteenth century, was also the longest to survive when it suspended its activities in 1901. *L'Union d'Orient* founded in 1863, became dormant as early as 1874. The lodge *Ser*, with predominantly Armenian members, was established in 1866 and ended in 1894. The Greek majority lodge *I Proodos*, founded in 1868, had ceased its existence by the end of 1901.
19. Eric Anduze, *La Franc-Maçonnerie de la Turquie Ottomane 1908-1924* [The Freemasonry of Ottoman Turkey 1908-1924] (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005), pp.28–30. Marachian (*Maraşyan* in Turkish), a former member of the French obedience lodge *L'Etoile du Bosphore*, wrote to the Grand Orient de France reporting the joyful atmosphere in Istanbul among young people following the revolution. He urged the Grand Orient to increase its efforts in recruiting among these candidates to expand its influence in Ottoman Freemasonry and 'rekindle the extinguished flame of French Freemasonry in Constantinople'.
20. Anduze, pp.32–35. Michel Noradounghian and David Cohen, both members of the French obedience lodge *Veritas*, the latter being its Worshipful Master, had settled in Istanbul for personal reasons. They corresponded diligently with the Grand Orient de France reporting on their Freemasonic involvements and aspirations as well as the political developments in the capital.
21. For the names of the Ottoman Freemasons who took part in the foundation of the Ottoman Supreme Council and the Ottoman Grand Orient see the related documents published in *Mimar Sinan*, no. 157 (Dec. 2012), pp.17–18, 20, 27–29, 32–45.
22. Freemasonic organizations associate themselves with certain 'rites' which consist of varying numbers of 'degrees' bestowed on Freemasons during the course of their affiliation with the rite. A prominent rite is the 'Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR)' and a 'Supreme Council' is the governing and regulating organization of the multiple degrees of this particular rite within a specific territory. Whereas the first three 'symbolic' degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft and master mason are regulated by a 'Grand Lodge' or 'Grand Orient', the Supreme Council is entitled to the 'jurisdiction' that bestows the degrees from 4 to 33.
23. Anduze, *La Franc-Maçonnerie de la Turquie Ottomane*, pp.98–99. In a letter by Vadécard, the general secretary of the Grand Orient de France, addressed to the French obedience lodge *La Renaissance*, on 16 January 1911, he informs: 'Since the Grand Orient de France maintains fraternal relations with the Grand Orient Ottoman, you need to treat the lodges and Freemasons of this Puissance amicably'.
24. Members of the lodge *Veritas*: Ahmed Cemal (later Pasha), Faik Nüzhet (Terem), Faik Süleyman (Pasha), Fazlı Necip, İsmail Hakkı (Canbulat), Mehmed Servet (Yesari), Osman Adil; Members of the lodge *Macedonia Risorta*: Edib Servet (Tör), Emanuele Carasso, Kazım Nami (Duru), Kazım (Özalp) (later Pasha), Manyasizade Refik, Mehmed Cavit, Mehmet Talat (later Pasha), Midhat Şükrü (Bleda), Rahmi Evrenos (Arslan). See Orhan Koloğlu, *İttihatçılar ve Masonlar* [The Unionists and Freemasons] (Istanbul: Pozitif, 2012), p.43 and Celil Layiktez, *Türkiye'de Masonluk Tarihi*, Vol.1 (Istanbul: Yenilik Basımevi, 1999), p.99.
25. Joachim Berger, 'European Freemasonries, 1850-1935: Networks and Transnational Movements', *EGO-European History Online*, published 3 December 2010, <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/transnational-movement-s-and-organisations/international-religious-and-humanitarian-movements/joachim-berger-european-freemasonries-1850-1935>. The emergence of Grand Lodges in European imperial territories was associated with their status of recognition by their respective states. The Grand Lodge of Hungary was formed after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 (*Ausgleich*) which re-established the former sovereignty of the Kingdom of Hungary, whereas the Grand Lodge of Vienna emerged only after 1918.
26. Paul Dumont, 'Une Délégation Jeune-Turque à Paris' [A Young Turk Delegation in Paris] *Balkan Studies* no. 28/2 (1987), pp.297–325. Dumont uses a collection of personal notes and documents left behind by this small delegation of CUP members to present a picture of their activities.
27. Frank Maloy Anderson, Amos Shartle Hershey, and National Board for Historical Service, *Handbook for the Diplomatic History of Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1870-1914* (Washington, DC: G.P.O, 1918), pp.380–85, 397.
28. Dumont, 'Une Délégation Jeune-Turque', pp.317–25. While Ahmed Cemal was a member of the Salonica lodge *Veritas*, Doctor Nazım was not a Freemason as he stated at the beginning of his speech delivered

at a reception of the Grand Orient on 7 November 1908. However, the content of the speech shows he was well-versed in the ideology of Freemasonry. According to Dumont's interpretation, the two Young Turks sought the support of the French obedience for the Ottoman cause in the ongoing Balkan crisis. Although they probably overestimated the influence to be wielded by the French Freemasonic institution on international affairs, the French obedience still maintained a positive stance on the subsequent political challenges of the Ottoman administration.

29. C.E. Cullen, 'A Turko-Hungarian Fete', *The American Tyler-Keystone* Vol.XXV (1910–1911), p.110. According to the article which was penned on 5 September 1910 based on the account of *The Bulletin for the International Bureau for Masonic Affairs*, published at Berne, Switzerland, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary commissioned the lodges *Comenius*, *Democratia*, *Elizabeth*, *Patria* and *Neuschloss the Old Faithful Ones* to organize the event in Budapest on 22 October 1909.
30. Léo Campion, *Le Drapeau noir, l'Équerre et le Compas* [The Black Flag, the Square and the Compass] (Brussels: Éditions Alternative Libertaire, 2012), pp.66–73. Francisco Ferrer Guardia (Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia in Catalan) was initiated into Freemasonry in 1884 at the lodge *La Verdad* in Barcelona. At the Budapest gathering, it is probable that there were Ottoman Freemasons who belonged to the Salonica lodge with the same name but in Latin: *Veritas*.
31. Cullen, 'A Turko-Hungarian Fete', p.110.
32. Ibid.
33. The name appears in the cited article as 'Bro. Kiazam Namyk Bey (Macedonia Resorta) [sic]'. In all likelihood this should refer to Mehmed Kazım Nami (Duru), who was an army officer, a pedagogue and a founding member of the Ottoman Freedom Society in Salonica which later evolved into the CUP. His name and birthdate (1876) match the records of a certain Kazım Mehmed in the lodge registers, with an initiation date of 27 March 1906. See Angelo Iacovella, *Gönye ve Hilal*, p.60. This initiation date agrees with his known life and activities during the said period, as he was appointed in 1903 as the aide-de-camp of the Third Army executive command in Salonica and later in September 1906 he became one of the founders of the Ottoman Freedom Society.
34. Kazım Nami Duru, *İttihat ve Terakki Hatıralarım* [My Recollections of Union and Progress] (Istanbul: Sucuoğlu Matbaası, 1957), pp.37–38.
35. Joëlle Dalègre, "Le plus beau rêve réalisé": Le Journal de Salonique et les Jeunes-Turcs, 1er juillet 1908-30 juin 1909' ['The most beautiful dream come true': The Journal of Salonica and the Young Turks, 1 July 1908–30 June 1909], *Cahiers Balkaniques*, no.40 (2012), pp.1–2. <http://journals.openedition.org/ceb/1062>.
36. Cullen, 'A Turko-Hungarian Fete', p.111.
37. Koloğlu, Iacovella and Dumont are in agreement regarding the significant contribution of Salonican lodges to the socio-political process that led to the Young Turk revolution in 1908.
38. Duru, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p.14.
39. Koloğlu, *İttihatçılar*, passim. Based on news and articles from the journals and newspapers of the period, Koloğlu argues that the movement's leaders saw in Freemasonry a means to their radical political aims before the revolution and then a vehicle to help establish beneficial relations with the European powers in keeping with the Ottoman interests. However, the efforts towards recognition of a national Ottoman Grand Orient by its foreign counterparts were eclipsed soon after its inception by the complications of international politics. The consecutive failures and challenges of the CUP in the political arena were also conveyed into the transnational relations of the Ottoman obedience, arresting its progress in the face of hostile attitudes from its foreign counterparts.
40. Koloğlu, *İttihatçılar*, pp.159–206. These conspiracy theories were brought to the public attention every now and then through the years 1910 and 1911 by the opposition elements within the parliament like the *Ahali Fırkası* founded in 1910 and led by İsmail Hakkı Bey, the deputy of Gümülcine (Komotini), and the *Hızb-i Cedid*, a faction formed within the CUP led by Miralay (Colonel) Sadık Bey and Abdülaziz Mecdi Efendi, both of which later evolved into the main oppositional party *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (Freedom and Accord Party) formed on 21 November 1911. A number of newspapers also provided the support to voice their criticism. For a retrospective view of the subject, see Mim Kemal Öke, *Kutsal Topraklarda Siyonistler ve Masonlar: İhanetler, Komplolar, Aldanmalar* [Zionists and Freemasons in the Holy Land: Betrayals, Conspiracies and Deceptions] (Istanbul: Çağ, 1990); also, Mim Kemal Öke, 'Young Turks, Freemasons, Jews and the Question of Zionism in the Ottoman Empire', in *Proceedings of the IIIrd Congress on the Social and Economic History of Turkey, Princeton University 24-26 August 1983* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), pp.29–46.
41. Based on his extensive archival research on Fitzmaurice, G.R. Berridge has published the biography *Gerald Fitzmaurice (1865-1939), Chief Dragoman of the British Embassy in Turkey* (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2007). Berridge has also published a collection of Fitzmaurice's letters to George Lloyd under the title *Tilkidom and the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2007).
42. Joseph Heller, *British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), pp.1–16.
43. Two Letters from J. William Whitall to Sir Nicholas Roderick O'Connor. <https://www.bibelotslondon.com/turkey-archive-of-signed-letters-queen-victorias-ambassador-young-turks-1902-10-4387-p.asp>

44. Heller, *British Policy*, pp.6–7.
45. Two Letters from Sir Edwin Pears to Lady O'Connor. <https://www.bibelotslondon.com/turkey-archive-of-signed-letters-queen-victorias-ambassador-young-turks-1902-10-4387-p.asp>
46. Ibid.
47. Kedourie, 'Young Turks', pp.94–103.
48. Berridge, *Gerald Fitzmaurice*, p.147.
49. 'Turkey, Annual Report, 1910' from Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey (14 February 1911), *Turkey-Annual Reports-(1909-1913)*, FO 424/250, p.3. www.archivesdirect.amdigital.co.uk.
50. 'Turkey, Annual Report, 1910', p.3.
51. Ibid.
52. Sir Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople: The Recollections of Sir Edwin Pears 1873-1915* (London: Herbert Jenkins Limited, 1916), pp.257–58.
53. Sir Edwin Pears, p.258.
54. Ibid., pp.258–59.
55. Ebüzziya Tevfik, 'İtalyan Farmason Locaları ve Siyonizm [The Italian Freemasonic Lodges and Zionism]', *Mecmua-i Ebüzziya* Vol.12, no.121 (17 November 1911), pp.129–34.